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Disertační práce

Ancient Egyptian Mythological Narratives

Structural Interpretation of the Tale of Two Brothers, Tale of the Doomed Prince, the Astarte Papyrus, the Osirian Cycle, and the Anat Myth

školitel: doc. Radek Chlup Ph.D.

2015

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Prohlášení:

Prohlašuji, že jsem disertační práci napsal/a samostatně s využitím pouze uvedených a řádně citovaných pramenů a literatury a že práce nebyla využita v rámci jiného vysokoškolského studia či k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

V Praze, dne 25.10,2015

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Martin Pehal

Abstract

This study is composed of two units: manuscript of the author's publication *Interpreting Ancient Egyptian Narratives: A Structural Analysis of the Tale of Two Brothers, the Anat Myth, the Osirian Cycle, and the Astarte Papyrus* (Nouvelles études orientales, Bruxelles–Fernelmont: EME, 2014) and an additonal chapter entitled *Accommodating Ambivalence: Case of the Doomed Prince and His Dog*, which follows directly after the *Index* of the first unit and which extends the applied methodology to yet another New Kingdom mythological narrative, the so-called *Tale of the Doomed Prince*.

Methodologically, the author follows the neo-structuralist approach. Both studies explain the strong configurational character of ancient Egyptian (mythological) thought which has the ability to connect various ontological levels of human experience with the surrounding world into complex synchronic structures. These symbolical systems are shown to be mediating between the various cultural paradoxes which were inherent to ancient Egyptian society. Axial role in this process is attributed to the institution of positional kingship represented by the Pharaoh. Its transformative function is also put into relation to the special status of female characters who are shown to play the part of the "powerful powerless ones" further personifying the aspects of the mediating function of myth. Gradually, the study outlines a genuinely Egyptian "structural net" of basic mythemes and explains in what way it was possible for such a system to change and incorporate foreign mythological motifs especially from the Near East.

Anotace

Tato studie sestává ze dvou celků: z rukopisu knihy názvané *Interpreting Ancient Egyptian Narratives: A Structural Analysis of the Tale of Two Brothers, the Anat Myth, the Osirian Cycle, and the Astarte Papyrus* (Nouvelles études orientales, Bruxelles–Fernelmont: EME, 2014) a z dodatečné kapitoly nazvané *Accommodating Ambivalence: Case of the Doomed Prince and His Dog*. Ta následuje hned za Indexem části první a zvolenu metodologii aplikuje na další novoříšský narativ, *Příběh o princi, kterému byl předurčen osud*.

Autor aplikuje neostrukturalistickou metodu výkladu. Obě studie si všímají silného konfiguračního charakteru staroegyptského (mytologického) myšlení, pro které byla charakteristická schopnost propojovat různé ontologické úrovně lidské zkušenosti do komplexních synchronních struktur. Autos následně ukazuje, že tyto symbolické systémy prostředkují mezi nejrůznějšími kulturními paradoxy vlastními staroeegyptské společnosti. Klíčovou úlohu v tomto procsu přitom, podle autora, hrál mechanizmus pozičního následnictví reprezentovaného faraonem. Transformativní funkce této kulturní instituce je

následně dána do souvislosti s ženskými postavami v mytologii, které jsou interpretovány jako "mocné bezmocné" a které je možné charakterizovat jako perzonifikaci prostředkující funkce mýtu. Postupně autor nastiňuje "strukturní mapu" základních mytémů a vysvětluje, jakým způsobem v takovémto systému dochází ke změnám včetně začleňovaní cizích motivů zejména z Blízkého východu.

Keywords
literature NK; text, structure of; Tale of two Brothers; Astarte-Papyrus; Osiris myth; Tale of the Doomed Prince; myth; mythology; cultural influence, foreign on Egypt; Anat; god, foreign in Egypt; Near Eastern religion; Near East; Syria-Palestine; narratives; Anat Myth; gender; king; positional kingship; structuralism.

Klíčová slova
literatura, egyptská Nová říše; text, struktura; Příběh dvou bratrů; Papyrus Astarte; Příběh o princi, kterému byl předurčen osud; Usirův mýtus; mýtus; mytologie; kulturní vliv, cizí na Egypt; Anat; bůh, cizí v Egyptě; blízkovýchodní náboženství; Blízký východ; Sýrie-Palestina; narativ; mýtus o Anatě; gender; král; poziční nástupnictví; strukturalizmus.

Introduction

This PhD dissertation is composed of two units. The first one is the manuscript of my monograph entitled *Interpreting Ancient Egyptian Narratives: A Structural Analysis of the Tale of Two Brothers, the Anat Myth, the Osirian Cycle, and the Astarte Papyrus* (Nouvelles études orientales, Bruxelles–Fernelmont: EME, 2014). Even though the core of the book was presented as my MA thesis in 2008, the level of reworking (amounting to approximately 75%) transformed it into a very different work. After careful consideration, I decided to use the book as the basis for my dissertation as I spent most of my PhD research time editing it into the present shape. The manuscript was finished in 2012 and after that, save some minor alternations, it has not changed or been updated. Since then my research interests in the topic of the Divine Eye shifted my attention to the *Pyramid* and *Coffin Texts*. Having decided to return to the New Kingdom narrative compositions through this dissertation, I felt it appropriate to supplement the book with an additional chapter that would actually be up to date on relevant literature. This lead to the second part of my dissertation framed as a unit independent on the book itself entitled *Accommodating Ambiguity: Case of the Doomed Prince and His Dog*. I decided to reapply the method—for which I was advocating in my book—to yet another New Kingdom narrative composition, the *Tale of the Doomed Prince*. I was rather curious whether I would still be persuaded about its effectiveness with the time lapsed and the thematic distance acquired by studying primarily non-narrative sources. The decision to chose the *Doomed Prince* was given by its motivic similarity mainly to the *Tale of Two Brothers* and by my personal taste: I have always liked the story and I wanted to have a deeper look into it. Another important impulse was the publication of *Foreigners and Egyptians in the Late Egyptian Stories* (Brill, 2013) by Camilla Di Biase-Dyson. I found her work to be most inspiring in many ways and wanted to see whether my approach, which differs from the method of systemic functional linguistics advocated by her in many aspects, can actually provide an additional view. Whether this is the case, I will let the reader judge for him or her self. With regard to the *Astarte Papyrus*, the study by Noga Ayali-Darshan (JANER 2015: 20–51) on the various versions of the Storm-gods's combat with the Sea from Hatti, Ugarit and Egypt represents the most relevant update to the study of the still fascinating *Astarte Papyrus*.

Last but not least, I would like to express my immense gratitude to everyone, especially my family and namely my children, Krištof and Dorotka, who have helped me finish this task by their unwavering support and often by just being there. Thank you.

Prague, 25.10.2015

INTERPRETING ANCIENT EGYPTIAN NARRATIVES

MARTIN PEHAL

INTERPRETING ANCIENT EGYPTIAN NARRATIVES

A Structural Analysis of the Tale of Two Brothers, the Anat Myth, the Osirian Cycle, and the Astarte Papyrus

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Contents

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Last but not least I want to express my sincere gratitude to my closest friends and family. Jan Dahms deserves my thanks for enabling me to understand how important and inspiring it is to work in a team. I am indebted to Marek Dospěl and our shisha soirées for his continuous support in my attempts to get to grips with the often unexpected facets of academia. Alena and Ondřej have always been there to help. My

parents, each in their own way, have greatly contributed to my efforts in Egyptology and Religious Studies. My wife Madla and my son Krištof both go to great lengths to enable me to focus on my work. Without their appreciation and support not only this study but everything else would be rather meaningless.

Prague, 30 December 2012

Note:
It is particularly unfortunate that the following studies could not have been included: Camilla di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians in the* Late Egyptian Stories. *Linguistic, Literary and Historical Perspectives*, Probleme der Ägyptologie [PdÄ] 32, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013; Debbie Challis, *The Archaeology of Race. The Eugenic Ideas of Francis Galton and Flinders Petrie*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013; Thomas Schneider and Peter Raulwing (eds.), *Egyptology from the First World War to the Third Reich: Ideology, Scholarship, and Individual Biographies*, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013; Thomas Schneider, "Wie der Wettergott Ägypten aus der grossen Flut errettete: Ein 'inkulturierter' ägyptischer Sintflut-Mythos und die Gründung der Ramsesstadt", Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquties [JSSEA] 38 (2011–12): 173–193.

I would also like to apologize to the reader for the unfortunate omission of Thomas Schneider's article entitled "Innovation in Literature on Behalf of Politics: The Tale of Two Brothers, Ugarit, and 19th Dynasty History", Ägypten und Levante 18 (2008): 315–326. I have realized my mistake too late into the preparation of the book. I therefore urge the reader to consult this most inspiring text which, in several points, coincides well with the ideas presented in this my study.

Signs used in translations

1,1	First page, line one of the original.
3rd month	Red rubrics indicate important passages in the text (beginning, etc.).
•	Verse points.
[...]	1–5 square groups[1] destroyed.
[... ... ...]	6 and more square groups destroyed.
[he]	Hypothetical reconstruction of the missing passage.
<for him>	Text omitted by the scribe.
(he)	Text not found in the original but necessary for fluent translation or obvious from the context; additional notes.
strength/victory	Different possible renderings of the passage.
x	Lines lost at the beginning of the page.
y	Lines lost at the end of the page.
(group of men)	Category of the preserved (traces of) the determinative following a missing word which can at least help us guess its general meaning.
⟨⟨[...]⟩⟩	Text written in a cartouche in the original.

[1] The Egyptians usually ordered the hieroglyphs into square or rectangular groups with either large signs occupying the whole group (or), two tall signs next to each other ( ), or two or more flat signs above each other ( ) sometimes supplemented by small signs ( ). According to this rule (which of course varied with the different developmental stages of the script), it is possible to estimate the number of destroyed groups.

PART I

Introduction

The situation which we face when studying ancient Egyptian religion and mythology is very similar to that of a scholar studying the ancient Egyptian texts:

> There is always a conceptual dilemma inherent in trying to write on stylistic or rhetoric devices of a culture whose views on language are very remote from our own, as is the case of ancient Egypt. We find ourselves in a quandary between two poles. On the one hand, we want to identify as precisely as possible these devices "-emically," i.e., within the frame of reference provided by that culture's own linguistic or literary practice. On the other hand, to help us achieve this goal, we can rely only on "-etic" hermeneutic categories derived from our own theoretical horizon. In the case of literary devices, there are categories we draw basically from Classical antiquity, mediated through the European Middle Ages.[2]

In the case of studying ancient Egyptian religion, we are first confronted with the problem of clarifying what exactly we mean by categories such as "myth" and "mythology". The basic question is not whether we have or do not have the right to impose analytical categories on foreign cultural material past or present (after all, these analytical categories are all that we have), but whether by doing so we are not distorting the material. The problem of emic and etic categories is very well mirrored in extensive discussions whether "myths" existed in the early phases of Egyptian history or not (see below). In my view, most of these discussions stem from an overvaluation of the

[2] Antonio Loprieno, "Puns and Word Play in Ancient Egypt", in S. B. Noegel (ed.), *Puns and Pundits: Word Play in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, Bethsheda and Maryland: CDL Press, 2000, p. 3. The terms "emic" and "etic" were first coined by the American linguist and anthropologist Kenneth Lee Pike in 1954 (explained in detail, for example, in Kenneth L. Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior* [especially part "Etic and Emic Standpoints for the Description of Behavior"], 2nd edition, The Hague: Mouton, 1967) and derive from the linguistic terms *phonemic* and *phonetic* respectively. An "emic" account comes from a person within a given cultural group and represents a description of behaviour or belief in terms meaningful to the actor (be they conscious or unconscious). On the other hand, an "etic" account is a description made by an observer in terms that may be applied to other cultures: an etic account strives to be culturally neutral (see, for example, Thomas N. Headland and Kenneth A. McElhanon, "Emic/Etic Distinction", in M. S. Lewis-Beck, A. Bryman, and T. Futing Liao [eds.], *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Social Sciences Research Methods*, London: SAGE Publications, 2004, p. 305).

etic categories which we have created to facilitate our understanding of ancient Egyptian thought. In other words, the terminology which we have created in our pursuit of understanding a culture so distant from ours in time as that of ancient Egypt uses primarily etic terms. These should not form the basis for a discussion with conclusions being drawn about the source material and ancient Egyptian society without actually first addressing the validity of the terms themselves. Even though they may, in the end, prove to be useful for our understanding of ancient Egyptian religion, they must, nevertheless, be used with a full awareness of their limitations. If there are questions to be answered, they are primarily questions about our own system of categories.[3]

The high standard of archaeological and philological work, typical for Egyptology, is on the one hand a great asset because these two specialisations form the basis of any further interpretative theoretical work – they provide the essential data. On the other hand, the strong emphasis placed on these classic methods can lead to an overvaluation of detail at the expense of a broader, reflexive framework in which the details have to be set to enable their interpretation. Once confronted with the thought of ancient Egyptians, one is definitely baffled by the many foreign and strange ideas which it presents. Authors equipped with a solid knowledge of historical methods have naturally applied these to their interpretation of ancient Egyptian religious material. This, in my opinion, has proven to be ineffective in most cases since these methods were not originally designed for interpreting religious thought, which is very specific and fundamentally different from that of a historian.[4]

3 Groundbreaking research in this direction was conducted by Eleanor Rosch (see, for example, "Principles of Categorization", in E. Rosch, B. Lloyd [eds.], *Cognition and Categorization*, Hillsdale [NJ]: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1978, p. 27–48), and by George Lakoff (see, for example, *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind*, Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1990). The conclusions arrived at by these authors have been largely applied to ancient Egyptian material by Orly Goldwasser (*From Icon to Metaphor: Studies in the Semiotics of the Hieroglyphs*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis [OBO] 142, Fribourg, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995; *Prophets, Lovers and Giraffes: Wor[l]d Classification in Ancient Egypt*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), Racheli Shalomi-Hen (*Classifying the Divine, Determinatives and Categorisation in CT 335–351*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000; *The Writing of Gods: The Evolution of Divine Classifiers in the Old Kingdom*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), Arlette David (*De l'inferiorité à la perturbation. L'oiseau du "mal" et la catégorisation en Egypt ancienne*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000), and Rune Nyord (*Breathing Flesh. Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, The Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Ancient Near Eastern Studies, Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2009).

4 In this sense, Herman te Velde remarks that: "One problem is that they [books by older authors] were often written by scholars, Egyptologists, whose main interest and specialisations were language, archaeology, art or history but not specifically ancient Egyptian religion in itself [...]. [...] ancient Egyptian religion was not only well described, but also explained, i.e. explained away into political, historical or literary factors." (Herman te Velde, "The History of the Study of Ancient Egyptian Religion and its Future" in Z. A. Hawass, *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century; Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists*, Cairo, New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2003, p. 43).

Compared with the situation in other fields of human sciences, it seems that critical awareness of Egyptology's own interpretational and methodological approaches is only gradually starting to gather pace.[5] Also, the methodological advancements in other fields of human sciences generally seem to be rather overlooked by Egyptology as a whole.[6] In the preface to the proceedings of a seminar called *'Being in Ancient Egypt' Thoughts on Agency, Materiality and Cognition* held in Copenhagen in 2006, Rune Nyord and Annette Kjølby quite explicitly write:

> As implied by the title of the seminar [...], we wanted to create a forum for presenting and discussing research on ancient Egypt dealing with questions of a more abstract or theoretical nature than those commonly posed in Egyptology and Egyptian archaeology.
>
> The theme of the seminar was inspired by the recent theoretical advances in anthropology, archaeology, and cognitive linguistics [...].
>
> In our view, such theoretical approaches offer an important way to supplement more traditional empirical studies of ancient Egyptian sources [...].[7]

5 Egyptology, for example, does not possess a monograph summarising and critically evaluating the various methodological approaches which are applied when interpreting ancient Egyptian religious thought. For example, Herman te Velde evaluates the oldest works on ancient Egyptian religion but stops short of any critical assessment of the more recent trends: "It would be going too far here to evaluate the individual contributions to the progress of the study of the Ancient Egyptian religion of Lanzone, Bonnet, Moret, Vandier, Blackman, Fairman and several others of previous generations, let alone all the contributions of our own generation." (te Velde, "The History", p. 44).

6 The volume A. Verbovsek, B. Backes, C. Jones (Hrsg.), *Methodik und Didaktik in der Ägyptologie: Herausforderungen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Paradigmenwechsels in den Altertumswissenschaften*, Ägyptologie und Kulturwissenschaft 4, München: Wilhelm Fink, 2011 is a crucial endeavour in this respect which fills a great gap (the editors grouped the papers into the following sections: I Kulturwissenschaft und Altertumswissenschaften; II Didaktik und Akademische Lehre; III.1 Archäologie und Bauforschung; III.2 Kunst-, Bild- und Medienwissenschaft; III.3 Museologie; III.4 Linguistik, Philologie und Literaturwissenschaft; III.5 Geschichts-und Sozialwissenschaft; III.6 Religionswissenschaft). On the one hand, the wide scope of topics covered by this volume is an immense asset because such a feat could hardly be achieved by a single scholar. Nevertheless, the contributions do diverge in their focus and depth. I therefore believe that we should not give up on synthetic methodological monographs by single authors or groups whose members coordinate their work and present a more coherent approach. See also Antonio Loprieno, "Interdisziplinarität und Transdisziplinarität in der heutigen Ägyptologie", in T. Hofmann und A. Sturm (Hrsg.), *Menschenbilder – Bildermenschen* [s. I.], 2003, p. 227–240. It has been some time now that David O'Connor remarked that the situation seems to be somewhat improving in relation to anthropology ("Ancient Egypt: Egyptological and Anthropological Perspectives", in J. Lustig [ed.], *Anthropology and Egyptology. A Developing Dialogue*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997, p. 13–24).

7 Rune Nyord, Annette Kjølby, "Preface", in R. Nyord and A. Kjølby (eds.), *'Being in Ancient Egypt' Thoughts on Agency, Materiality and Cognition. Proceedings of the seminar held in Copenhagen, September 29–30, 2006*, BAR International Series 2019, Oxford: Archeopress, 2009, p. iii.

There is one more reason why a critical evaluation of interpretational frameworks applied in Egyptology should be pursued. There are philosophical, political and cultural positions embedded especially in works on ancient Egyptian religion which are often not openly acknowledged by the authors (as they might be unaware of them themselves)[8] and which tend to be unconsciously adopted by later commentators.[9]

Even though mapping the ideological background of the whole of Egyptology is a task way beyond the scope and aim of this monograph (and also beyond the abilities of one single person), I shall venture in this direction in Part I of this book (Chapters 1–2). By reflecting on the most prominent approaches to interpreting ancient Egyptian mythological material, I shall argue that many Egyptologists have to date overvalued their analytical tools, stressing narrativity as the key criterion. I will argue that overrating of narrativity is caused by a certain logocentrism of the Western scholarly tradition, to use Jacque Derrida's term, and try to show that ancient Egyptian material (not only written) laid emphasis on a different type of unity which I call "configurational coherence". Because the relation between writing and actual objects in some contexts was very tenuous in ancient Egypt, the principles of configurational

8 As an extreme example of racial prejudice we may recall Petrie's theory of the "Dynastic Race" and other such concepts. A massive discussion on this topic was sparked by the publication of Martin Bernal's *Black Athena* volumes. (*Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization, Vol. I – The Fabrication of Ancient Greece 1785–1985*, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1987; *Vol. II – The Archaeological and Documentary Evidence*, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1991; *Vol. III – The Linguistic Evidence*, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2006).

9 This was recognised by the organisers of the *43. Ständige Ägyptologenkonferenz* (SÄK) held by the University of Leipzig (22.–24.7.2011). The topic was *Ägyptologen un Ägyptologie(n) zwischen Kaiserreich und der Gründung der beiden deutschen Staaten (1871–1949)*, and many papers focused on the relationship between Egyptology and the Nazi regime (see also studies in vol. 5/1–2 [2012] of the *Journal of Egyptian History* [JEgH] subtitled "Egyptology from the First World War to the Third Reich: Ideology, Scholarship, and Individual Biographies"). Using specific examples, they showed how science may be conditioned by politics (I thank Harco Willems for informing me about the event as I was not able to attend myself; personal communication, Leuven, 10.8.2011). Hans-Werner Fischer-Elfert, the head of the Egyptological Institute at the University of Leipzig, remarked in this context during a radio interview for the Deutschlandfunk (24.7.2011): "[…] Egyptology has not so far completed its homework in this respect unlike other scientific fields from classical antiquity studies […] to folkloristics, for example." (http://www.dradio.de/dlf/sendungen/kulturheute/1512256/, accessed 14.2.2012). Martin Bommas, in a very interesting article, analyses "the scepticism of students with a non-Christian background when confronted with concepts of ancient religions biased by Eurocentric traditions" ("Kulturwissenschaft[en] und Ägyptologie im Spannungsfeld multiethnischer Hochschullandschaften am Beispiel der Lehre altägyptischer religiöser Texte", in Verbovsek, Backes, Jones (Hrsg.), *Methodik und Didaktik*, p. 107–123). This topic is also discussed by Jürgen Mohn ("Theologieaffine Religionstypen oder Religion im Medium von Mythos und Ritual im Alten Ägypten? Anmerkungen zur Adaption religionstheoretischer Begriffe anhand von Jan Assmanns Unterscheidung zwischen primär und sekundärer Religion", in Verbovsek, Backes, Jones (Hrsg.), *Methodik und Didaktik*, p. 725–738) and Hubert Roeder ("Zwischen den Stühlen. Zugangsbeschreibungen zur altägyptischen Religion zwischen Transdisziplinarität und Eigenbegrifflichkeit", in Verbovsek, Backes, Jones (Hrsg.), *Methodik und Didaktik*, p. 739–766).

coherence can be expected to operate even in cases where a narrative, which is a modus of finding meaning or coherence in our system of categories, is clearly discernible. This shall lay the ground for the methodological framework in Part II, in which I am going to analyse several New Kingdom narratives (the Tale of Two Brothers, the Anat Myth, the Osirian Cycle, and subsequently the Astarte Papyrus). Even though I am going to be applying a modified version of the structuralist interpretation method, I want to stress that, with this interpretational framework, I will strive to overcome the fallacies which I believe are inherent to the structural analysis as introduced to anthropology in the 1950's by Claude-Lévi Strauss. Through adaptation and modification, it has been shown that the method has the ability to be remoulded into a tool which, in my opinion, largely respects the original material and, at the same time, uncovers a system with specific rules into which disparate units, chaotic though they might seem at first glance, fit like pieces of a puzzle.

Egyptian religious thinking seems very suited to structural analysis. Structuralist theory posits that the most elementary system in which any human mind operates is that of binary oppositions. The Egyptians themselves formulated a strongly bipolar view of the universe: the Egyptian kingdom was the outcome of the unification of the Two Lands; each king was installed after the consolidation of the two opposing rivals – Seth and Horus; the ordered cosmos (Egypt) was surrounded by chaos threatening its existence (foreign countries), etc. Even though I will try to show that this black-and-white division is in itself insufficient to account for the wealth of alternatives which we encounter in ancient Egyptian sources (a certain grey-zone, so to say), the binary scheme may be used as a functional starting point.

Structuralist theory can also cope very well with the fact that divinities and other characters change their positions within the pantheon, have ambivalent characteristics and generally defy the rules of logic so basic to the notion of our science and modern scholarship. In fact, this very flexibility of Egyptian deities and myths has very often been the main source of amazement for students of Egyptian religion.

Even though my method stems primarily from the Lévi-Straussian type of structuralism, the structuralist scene is not at all monolithic. Lévi-Strauss represents only one of the many possible interpretations (but surely one of the most loudly heard) of how basic structuralist principles may be put to use. Another very important structuralist tradition follows the work of the Russian folklorist Vladimir Propp. In 1928, he published his crucial work *Morphology of the Folktale*.[10] Unfortunately, the work was in Russian and therefore inaccessible to most Western scholars (translated for the first

10 Владимир Пропп, *Морфология Сказки*, Ленинград: Academia, 1928 (Vladimir Propp, *Morfologia Skazki*, Leningrad: Academia, 1928).

time into English in 1958).[11] This means that both Propp and Lévi-Strauss sculpted their systems without any knowledge of each others' work. This fact is important because Propp, unlike Lévi-Strauss, understands that the sequence of the narrative is of major importance and his further analysis bears witness to this.[12] Lévi-Strauss subsequently criticised Propp's work and systematically avoided references to it in his books and articles.[13] Propp's work is, however, important exactly because he tried to identify basic building blocks of narratives and at the same time took the narrative sequence as holding meaning for the overall organisation of a composition.[14]

At the same time, it is true that even though I talk of "structuralist principles" (system of binary oppositions, mediators, etc.), these ideas can hardly be claimed by the Lévi-Straussian structuralist tradition. The problem with structuralism is that once we get down to its very elementary concepts, we find that they are, in fact, trivial (the basic oppositions being nature × culture, man × woman, life × death, and the like). The truly original input of structuralism is that it is a means of interpreting material as sets of structured relationships where the individual units may disappear, be exchanged, or merge with each other. This principle was, however, applied by other scholars as well, and absolutely intuitively, without any reference to the structuralist tradition or theory itself. My proclaimed methodological inspiration by the structuralist method is therefore rather for the sake of clarity, as well as convenience. By stating openly that my approach lies in structuralism, I hope to introduce the reader directly to the source of my inspiration. However, I strive not to approach the structuralist framework with a methodological blindness. I try to reflect its limitations and methodological flaws and change the interpretational scheme to adapt it to evidence of the primary sources and avoid methodological dogmatism. However, that is a danger one cannot entirely avoid.

11 Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, edited with an introduction by Svatava Pirkova-Jakobson; trans. by Laurence Scott, Bloomigton, Indiana: Research Center, Indiana University, 1958 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968[2]).

12 Propp defined thirty-one narrative units which, according to him, characterised Russian folktales. Unfortunately, his mathematic-like renderings of narratives are aesthetically quite unpleasant and, in a way, unnecessary. They tend to transform the attractive narrative into a series of algebraic "functions" and "terms" detaching the scholar involved in the analysis from the flow of the narrative which, as I shall claim further on, is the crucial experience that a narrative provides.

13 For a very concise summary of the mutual relationship of these two scholars, see, for example, Alan Dundes, "Opposition in Myth: The Propp/Lévi-Strauss Debate in Retrospect", *Western Folklore* 56/1 (1997): 39–50.

14 For an interesting evaluation and acknowledgment of Propp's work (with regard to the Egyptian Tale of the Doomed Prince), see Anthony Spalinger, "The Re-Use of Propp for Egyptian Folktales", in: *Five Views on Egypt*, Lingua Aegyptia – Studia Monographica 6, Göttingen: Seminar für Ägyptologie und Koptologie, 2006, p. 124–136. I thank Prof. Spalinger for drawing my attention to the text.

The aims of this study

Part I

Chapter 1 is devoted to the summary of the classic(al) interpretational approaches to ancient Egyptian religion. My intention is to enter into the slowly developing debate which considers critical reflexion on methodology to be a crucial undertaking. I will show that traditional methods tend to organise and interpret mythological material through a sequential lense: they are historical, evolutionist, and narrative-oriented. I argue that by overemphasising this aspect as an interpretational criterion, we limit the potential of ancient Egyptian material because Egyptian categories were rather "configurational".

Chapter 2 analyses the "logocentric" focus of Western thought ("narrative coherence") and explains the concept of "configurational coherence". Subsequently, I try to show that narrativity seems to be only one of the possible ways in which ancient Egyptians conceptualised meaning. I will also outline the basic relationship between a sequential and configurational mode of constructing meaning.

Part II

Chapter 1 summarises the works which are related to the Astarte Papyrus. Entries are then listed in chronological order for the sake of clarity.

Chapter 2 provides a translation of both pBN 202+pAmherst IX, which together form the Astarte Papyrus. A synopsis of the text and a discussion about the Near Eastern characters which are present in the narrative is then included.

Chapter 3 analyses the character of mythological material in general. Based on the conclusions, the appropriateness of the structuralist approach is considered. Basic structuralist principles are explained, followed by the main criticism which has been raised against this method since its introduction into anthropology. The chapter concludes with an overview of scholars analysing Egyptian material who have been either directly influenced by structuralism in some of its forms or who share common methods or premises with the structuralist approach.

Chapter 4 forms the core of the whole work and comprises a structural analysis of the Tale of Two Brothers. The text of the myth itself is divided into a system of Episodes. After each sequence, there follows a commentary and a diagram depicting the relationships between the characters. In the commentary, I offer an explanation of the

various motifs which are contained within the text but, more importantly, I define the semiotic strategies of ancient Egyptian mythological thought, thus gradually building up a "mythological network" of the basic character constellations.

Chapter 5 focuses on the character transformations which we witness throughout the Tale of Two Brothers, especially with regard to Bata and Anubis. I try to show that Bata shares characteristics with four major gods: Horus, Osiris, Seth and Re, and that these gods are syncretised through their relationship with the office of divine kingship.

Chapter 6 presents the Tale of Two Brothers in relation to other ancient Egyptian narratives. It first focuses on structural similarities with the Osirian Cycle. What follows is an analysis of a set of magical texts known as the Anat Myth. These texts are important in that they feature a Near Eastern goddess, Anat, yet seem to contain distinctly Egyptian ideas. It also replicates one structural pattern which proved to be crucial in the case of the Tale of Two Brothers. The Anat Myth also depicts the pivotal role of female characters in ancient Egyptian mythological accounts in general, which tends to be that of mediators who facilitate contact between various opposing parties and, in fact, propel the narratives further. The chapter concludes with a "structural network" of several basic constellations which are contained in the previously analysed mythological compositions, but in varying combinations.

Chapter 7 returns to the text of the Astarte Papyrus. Based on the analyses of the previous chapters, I try to define the position of the Astarte Papyrus within ancient Egyptian tradition. I come to the conclusion that the Astarte Papyrus is firmly set in an ancient Egyptian context and that the various Near Eastern motifs are, in fact, very wittingly "re-labelled" so as to incorporate them into the Egyptian tradition. The mechanics of "myth migration" from one culture to another are also examined. Finally, more general questions arising from the structuralist method as applied in this work are addressed.

CHAPTER I

Evolutionist/Historicising/Euhemeristic Interpretative Approaches and the Myth-Ritual (Cambridge) School: An Overview and Critical Assessment[15]

One of the most widely utilised approaches for interpreting Egyptian religious material is the evolutionist/historicising (euhemeristic)[16] method. Harco Willems has named general features which this approach displays in the works of individual authors. According to Willems, it is based on the idea that religious thought developed from a primitive form and gradually took on a more highly developed one:

> The initial form either did not include gods at all or assigned them a very marginal role. Instead, man viewed the world around him as the outcome

15 Authors who have critically assessed these classic approaches in Egyptology include, for example, Robert A. Oden, Jr., "The Contendings of Horus and Seth" (Chester Beatty Papyrus No. 1): A Structural Interpretation", *History of Religions* 18/4 [1979]: 352–369; John Baines, "Egyptian Myth and Discourse: Myth, Gods, and the Early Written and Iconographic Record", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* [JNES] 50 (1991): 81–105; John Baines, "Egyptian Syncretism: Hans Bonnet's Contribution", *Orientalia* 68 (1999): 199–214; Heike Sternberg, *Mythische Motive und Mythenbildung in den ägyptischen Tempeln und Papyri der griechisch-römischen Zeit*, Göttinger Orientforschungen [GOF] IV.14, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1985, p. 1–7; Harco Willems, *The Coffin of Heqata (Cairo JdE 36418). A Case Study of Egyptian Funerary Culture of the Early Middle Kingdom*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 70, Leuven: Peeters, 1996, p. 11–14; Katja Goebs, "A Functional Approach to Egyptian Myth and Mythemes", *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* [JANER] 2/1 (2002): 28–38; Christopher Eyre, *The Cannibal Hymn. A Cultural and Literary Study*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2002, p. 138–141; Te Velde, "The Myth", p. 42–52. Whilst finalising this chapter, Prof. Harco Willems kindly provided me with his article (Harco Willems, "War Gott ein 'Spätling in der Religionsgeschichte'? Wissenschaftshistorische und kognitiv-archäologische Überlegungen zum Ursprung und zur Brauchbarkeit einiger theoretischer Betrachtungsweisen in der ägyptologischen Religionsforschung") in which he addresses very similar issues and comes to very similar conclusions. I heartily thank Prof. Willems for letting me work with his text before its publication in the *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* [ZÄS].

16 "Euhemerism is the view, named after the fourth-century b.c. historian Euhemeros of Syros, that the gods are dead men, heroes who made such contributions to the course of *civilization* that they were worshiped as gods after their death." (Oden, Jr., "The Contendings": 360–361).

> of the interaction of anonymous "powers" which manifested themselves in the air, animals, plants etc. and with which man could come into contact only by magical means. Later, man began naming these forces and started imagining them in a personalised manner. This process would then be called "anthropomorphization of powers". Thanks to the fact that, for example, the sky and the earth came to be understood as individuals (Nut and Geb), the natural forces lost their anonymity and stories would have started being narrated about them, therefore myths.[17]

Willems was then able to identify this structure in the works of prominent scholars of the field including K. Sethe, S. Schott, G. Jéquier, E. Otto, J. Vandier, S. Morenz, W. Helck, E. Hornung and others.[18] Willems also correctly realised that this evolutionist model laid the ground for a major discussion which developed within Egyptology and which, in various forms, still continues to this day: the tendency to distinguish between the "pre-mythical/magical" and "mythical"[19] periods, each characterised by a different type of thinking and also by different literary styles (see below).[20]

The second prominent feature which stems from interpreting source material in an evolutionist manner is a strong historicising viewpoint. A classic example of this is presented by Kurt Sethe.[21] He interprets a New Kingdom text known as the "Contendings of Horus and Seth"[22] by simply stating that it reflects historical events which

17 Willems, "War Gott", p. 1–2: "In der Urform spielten Götter dabei anfänglich keine, oder eine nur sehr begrenzte Rolle. Stattdessen betrachtete der Mensch seine Umwelt als ein Zusammenspiel anonymer „Mächte", die sich in der Luft, in den Tieren, in den Pflanzen und so weiter manifestierten, und mit denen man sich nur mit Hilfe magischer Hilfsmittel auseinandersetzen konnte. Erst später habe man die Mächte dann mit Namen versehen, sie also als Personen vorgestellt. Dieser Prozess wird gerne als die „Vermenschlichung der Götter" bezeichnet. Dadurch, dass z.B. Himmel und Erde als Individuen (Nut und Geb) vorgestellt wurden, verloren die Naturmächte nicht nur ihre Anonymität, sondern entstanden auch Personenbeziehungen über die man Geschichten erzählen konnte. Mythen also."

18 Willems, "War Gott", p. 2, n. 3.

19 For example, Siegfried Morenz (*Ägyptische Religion*, Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1960, p. 87), Erik Hornung (*Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many*, trans. by John Baines, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982, p. 100ff), and others.

20 The criticism of this approach is the main focus of Willems' article ("War Gott"). In his text he does something which is rarely done in Egyptology. He traces the motif outside of Egyptological discourse to British and French anthropologists (such as James George Frazer and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl). For a similar approach, see Sternberg, *Mythische Motive*, p. 1–7.

21 Kurt Sethe, *Urgeschichte und älteste Religion der Ägypter*, Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes [Abh.K.M.] 18/4, Leipzig: Deutsche morgenländische Gesellschaft, 1930, especially §85–93.

22 For the hieroglyphic text, see: Alan H. Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca, I, Bruxelles: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1932, p. 37–60. For a comprehensive summary of this motif throughout Egyptian history, see: J. Gwyn Griffiths, *The Conflict of Horus and Seth From Egyptian and Classical Sources*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1960. See also Michèle Broze, *Mythe et Roman en Égypte ancienne. Les aventures d'Horus at Seth dans le Papyrus Chester Beatty I.*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta [OLA] 76, Leuven: Peeters, 1996.

are cloaked in the narrative of the story and consequently reconstructs the history of the early Egyptian state as far back as the fifth millennium B.C.[23] Sethe's conclusions were followed by J. Gwyn Griffiths[24] and even found a proponent in Jan Assmann.[25] Slightly different, but also euhemeristic, is the interpretation by Joachim Spiegel.[26] This interpretative method is problematic in its essence. "The myth is certainly related to given (empirical) facts, but not as a *re-presentation* of them. The relationship is of a dialectic kind, and the institutions described in the myths can be the very opposite of the real institutions."[27] The euhemeristic method stems from a strictly historical (diachronic) handling of mythological/religious material. Scholars who decide to use this method are therefore very often amazed by the fact that there are several, often contradictory, versions of one myth or that one character plays different, often contradictory, roles. In order to cope with such a fact they tend to present complicated historical reconstructions which (1) cannot be proved at all and (2) do not tell us anything about the mythical material in question (see, for example, Mercer's interpretation of spells located in the underground chambers of Teti's pyramid as being the outcome of some kind of quarrel between the priestly "Osiris" and "Re" lobbies).[28] These scholars also very often decide to select one version of a text as the "correct/authentic" version or they conflate discrepant variations into an internally consistent narrative.[29]

Another interpretative tradition which found its way into Egyptology was based on the presumptions of the Myth-Ritual/Cambridge School.[30] This term might

23 Sethe, *Urgeschichte*, §110.

24 Griffiths, *The Conflict of Horus and Seth*, p. 119–124.

25 Jan Assmann, *Ägypten–Eine Sinngeschichte*, München: Hanser, 1996, p. 57 (translation by Goebs, "A Functional Approach": 39, n. 46): "The text can be successfully (*sehr gut*) understood as a mythical figuration of a historical situation, in which a period of two rivalling kingdoms is ended by the foundation of an all-inclusive unity. … Horus stands, of course, for the Horian kingship of Hierakonpolis, and Seth for the kingship of Naqada." Needless to say, the historicising interpretation was rejected, for example, by Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961 [1948[1]], p. 21–22, 212.

26 Joachim Spiegel, *Die Erzählung vom Streite des Horus und Seth in Pap. Beatty I als Literaturwerk*, Leipziger Ägyptologische Studien 9, Glückstadt: Augustin, 1937, p. 68–83, especially p. 76. As summarised by Goebs ("A Functional Approach": 39, n. 46): "Joachim Spiegel held that the primary conflict in this myth is between the creator and the Ennead, reflecting the terrestrial conflict between state/king and nomarchs at the beginning of the Middle Kingdom."

27 Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Story of Asdiwal", in E. Leach (ed.), *The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism*, London: Tavistock, 1967, p. 29, see also p. 11–12 for an example – tension between the patrilocal residence of married couples in reality as opposed to matrilocal residence stressed in the myth; (reprinted in R. Segal [ed.], *Structuralism in Myth*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1996).

28 Samuel A. Mercer (ed.), *The Pyramid Texts in Translation and Commentary*, Vol. I–IV, New York: Van Rees Press, 1952, p. 30–31.

29 See also Kenneth R. Walters: "Another showdown at the Cleft Way: An Inquiry into Classicists' Criticism of Levi-Strauss' Myth Analysis", *Classical World* 77 (1984): 342.

30 On the Myth and Ritual (or "Cambridge") School, see: Robert Ackerman, *Myth and Ritual School: J. G. Frazer and the Cambridge Ritualists*, New York: Routledge, 2002. Some of its proponents were

seem forced in a way because the authors who tend to be grouped under this heading do sometimes differ to a great extent in their methodology.[31] Nevertheless, if we should distill the main point which the various authors share, then it is the idea that ritual, in one way or another, anticipates myth and that myth "explains" ritual action. In Egyptology, it was mainly promoted by Siegfried Schott[32] and Eberhard Otto.[33] Schott presents the theory that there had once been a period in Egyptian history when there existed rituals and "stories" or "folktales" (*Märchen*)[34] with no relation to each other. Eberhard Otto extended Schott's theory and stated that there once were myth-free (*mythenfrei*)[35] rituals, "which were believed to be innately efficacious, whereas during the Old Kingdom this belief withered and the rites had to be supplemented by myths which rendered them efficacious once more."[36]

Siegfried Schott was also the first author to have seriously raised the issue of the (non)existence of myths in the early phases of Egyptian history.[37] He argued that there is no attestation of myths in Egypt in pre-dynastic times and that the first hint of their formation (in the form of "quotations" or "fragments") could be seen in the Pyramid Texts.[38] Jan Assmann[39] was even more radical than Schott. For Assmann, a myth is a written story about the divine world which has a beginning, middle, and end.[40] And because he did not find a fixed structure in the Pyramid Texts which could be considered a narrative, he came to the conclusion that there were no narrative

Jane E. Harrison, Gilbert Murray, Francis M. Cornford, and others. For a summary of the extensive works of these authors, see Stanley Edgar Hyman, "The Ritual View of the Myth and the Mythic," *Journal of American Folklore* [JAF] 68 (1955): 462–472. The Myth and Ritual School authors were strongly inspired by the work and theories of James Frazer's, *The Golden Bough: A study in Magic and Religion*, 12 vols., London: Macmillan and Co., 1906–1915[3] [1890[1]].

31 For a concise and very informative summary and evaluation, see, for example, Henk S. Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek & Roman Religion 2. Transition & Reversal in Myth & Ritual*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993, p. 1–88.

32 Siegfried Schott, *Mythe und Mythenbildung im alten Ägypten*, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ägyptens [UGAÄ] 14, Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1945.

33 Eberhard Otto, *Das Verhältnis von Rite und Mythus im Ägyptischen*, Heidelberg: Winter, 1958.

34 See, for example, Schott, *Mythe und Mythenbildung*, p. 87–90.

35 Otto, *Das Verhältnis*, p. 9.

36 Translation by Baines, "Egyptian Myth and Discourse": 83, see also n. 17. The idea that myths function as an interpretative instrument of rituals is explicitly formulated by Schott, *Mythe und Mythenbildung*, p. 29.

37 Siegfried Schott, "Spuren der Mythenbildung", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* [ZÄS] 78, 1942: 1–27, clearly formulated on p. 26. For a brief summary of his theories, see: Siegfried Schott "Die älteren Göttermythen", in B. Spuler (Hrsg.), *Literatur, Handbuch der Orientalistik*, 1/2, 2nd ed., Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970, p. 90–98.

38 Schott, *Mythe und Mythenbildung*, p. 135–136.

39 Jan Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit des Mythos in Ägypten", *Göttinger Miszellen* [GM] 25 (1977): 7–43.

40 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 20–21. This view does not seem to be contested, for example, by Heike Sternberg, *Mythische Motive*, p. 15.

myths at this time and that these only appeared much later. According to Assmann, the Pyramid Texts lack narrative but, at the same time, even though not explicitly, he acknowledges this bulk of written material to be of a religious character and of primary importance. Many episodes which are found in the Pyramid Texts appear later in narrative contexts. Therefore, Assmann cannot use the term "myth" or any of its derivatives, but at the same time he must acknowledge that in the Pyramid Texts there is some kind of interaction between numinous entities. In order to overcome this flaw in the analytical system, Assmann decides to refer to the gods and goddesses and to their actions as "constellations" (*Konstellationen*). Such "constellations" express relations within a relatively fixed group of deities without a narrative context.[41] These "constellations" were, according to Assmann, sufficient for the builders of the pyramids because the worlds of men and gods were at that time so close that there was virtually no space for the formulation of narrative myths.[42] In accordance with the main thesis of the Myth-Ritual School, he claims that rituals formed an older, "pre-mythical" (*vormythischen*)[43] stratum in which there was no space for gods in narrative sequences but only in "constellations", evoked when necessary. As I will show later on (see p. 97ff), the concept of "constellations" is actually a very useful analytical tool in our quest for discovering the structure of myths. It is the way Assmann treats this concept in his own interpretation which is problematic.

Apart from "constellations" Assmann introduces another term – "mythical statements" (*mythische Aussagen*).[44] At one point it seems that for Assmann one of the main prerequisites of a myth is its narrativity (beginning–middle–end) and he states that written material which would correspond to this criterion is not attested before the Middle Kingdom and that it is only in the New Kingdom that narrative myth started being deployed on a larger scale (unfortunately, he does not give any examples).[45] The reader is in a way reassured that at some point in history myths do appear and that Assmann will try to analyse the period before their appearance. Nevertheless, once he starts talking about the relation of mythical statements to myth, a quite different concept of the term "myth" appears.[46] In this new concept ,"myth" shifts to a certain meta-level. Assmann creates a strictly analytical, abstract and almost Platonic concept of a myth which, in the "real" world, is perceivable solely through its mythical

41 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 14.

42 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 14.

43 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 14.

44 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 28–39.

45 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 9.

46 Assmann unfortunately does not warn the reader about this shift in meaning, which is a little perplexing.

statements.[47] In Assmann's view the "mythical statement" relates to the "myth" itself in three possible ways[48] and every mode produces texts with different characteristics (note that literary narratives – the "genre" of ancient Egyptian literature which I would consider correspond most with Assmann's original concept of the term "myth" – are now considered to be mythical statements and not myths themselves). Assmann then goes on to introduce new terminology. The new "meta-myth" is called geno-text (*Geno-Text*)[49] and the mythical statements, which are in relation to the geno-text, become pheno-texts (*Phäno-Text*).[50] The geno-text would then represent a mythical motif latently present in the minds of individual Egyptians (which would together form "cultural memory" – a key term used by Assmann in his other works[51]); the pheno-texts would be expressions of this latently present pattern in individual texts (be it spells, theological treatises, folk narratives or other) through the process of "functional differentiation" (*Funktionale Differenzierung*).[52] As Assmann himself acknowledged, this distinction had already been made in linguistics by the structuralist scholarly tradition and, in accordance with their terminology, the geno-text would be a phenomenon on the level of *langue* and the pheno-text on the level of *parole*.[53] Assmann's arguments in the latter half of his article can be summarised thus:

> (1) The existence of myths implies an ontological distance between the divine and "real" worlds, and yet their inextricable involvement with each other, as shown in early rituals, is incompatible with such a distance; and (2) the detaching of divine and "real" involves disenchantment and the creation of a temporal frame between them. Assmann dates both of these assumed shifts to the First Intermediate Period and later.[54]

47 This had already been noticed, for example, by Broze, *Mythe et Roman en Égypte ancienne*, p. 221–223.

48 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 37–39; summary by Baines, "Egyptian Myth and Discourse": 88, n. 49; 50: (i) instrumental or analogical (*handlungsbezogen*); (ii) argumentative or etiological (*wissensbezogen*); and (iii) literary or noninstrumental (*situationsabstrakt*). These types correspond to the use of mythical material in such contexts as (i) magical texts; (ii) encyclopaedic or discursive material such as the "Memphite Theology"; (iii) literary narratives such as Horus and Seth.

49 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 37–39.

50 As the term "pheno-text" implies, this expression should be of a textual type and Assmann only uses it in his article within this meaning. Nevertheless, I would find this term more operative if it comprised not only written material, but also objects of art and daily use, social institutions, etc. – i.e. all spheres of human activity.

51 Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory: Ten Studies*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone, Stanford (California): Stanford University Press, 2006.

52 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 38.

53 "Der Mythos ist in Bezug auf die mythische Aussage ein Langue-Phänomen." (Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 38).

54 Baines, "Egyptian Myth and Discourse": 89; Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 23, 39–43.

In essence, then, Assmann follows the theory of the Myth-Ritual School. At one point, deep in Egyptian history, there were no myths because they were not needed – rituals were efficacious as such. Moving closer in history, this "golden state" started staggering due to the beginning of some form of secularisation.[55] Nevertheless, the two worlds ("divine" and "real") were still so close that there was no need for narrative myths and Egyptians were satisfied with "constellations" – small groupings of gods (such as attested in the Pyramid Texts). These constellations were fused with rituals through a process which Assmann names "sacramental exegesis" (*Sakramentale Ausdeutung*).[56] Once the process of secularisation reached a certain point, myths were created in order to infuse the emptied rituals with meaning.[57] As we have seen above, the moment of this definite separation which produced this type of disenchantment is, according to Assmann, in the First Intermediate Period.[58] I consider this claim to be Assmann's most problematic argument. It is obvious that he understands mythology as some kind of

55 Baines points out ("Egyptian Myth and Discourse": 87) that Siegfried Morenz had already formulated the idea that some sort of secularisation occurred during Egyptian history, see Morenz, *Ägyptische Religion*, p. 6–15, especially p. 13.

56 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 15–25.

57 Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 16: "Die Riten haben ihren ursprünglichen Sinn verloren und sind erklärungsbedürftig geworden. Der mythos liefert diese erklärung. Er bezieht sich als explanans auf das explanandum der Rituellen Handlung." Here Assmann cross-references Otto, *Das Verhältnis*, p. 14–15. This idea would be typical for the Myth-Ritual School. Unfortunately, it is based on a false presumption that rituals as such are static phenomena. On the contrary, functioning rituals are dynamic, constantly shifting their meanings and modifying both actors and society itself. See, for example, Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure*, (The Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures 1966 presented at the University of Rochester), Rochester, New York, Chicago: Aldine, 1969; Terence Turner, "Structure, Process, Form", in J. Kreinath, J. Snoek and M. Stausberg (eds.), *Theorizing Rituals: Issues, Topics, Approaches, Concepts*, Leiden, Boston: E. J. Brill, 2006, p. 207–261; Victor Turner, *From Ritual To Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*, New York City: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982, p. 79. It is true that rituals may become void of meaning, wither and die. In his works, Ronald L. Grimes strives to understand not only the processes which bring about the existence of rituals, but also the mechanics of their decline and potential death. See, for example, Ronald L. Grimes, *Beginnings in Ritual Studies*, Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982 and Ronald L. Grimes, *Ritual Criticism: Case Studies in Its Practice, Essays on Its Theory*, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1990.

58 This period is traditionally considered to be solely a time of havoc and chaos (see for example: John A. Wilson, *The Burden of Egypt: An Interpretation of Ancient Egyptian Culture*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951, p. 105). This view is based mainly on Egyptian texts where it is described as a period of absolute reversal of society and its rules. One of the most often quoted texts in support of this theory are the so-called "Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage/Ipuwer": "Verily, thieves [plunder] everywhere,/And the servant pilfers whatever he finds. [...]/Verily, paupers have become men of affluence,/And he who could not provide/sandals for himself is (now) the possessor of wealth. [...]/Verily, the children of the nobles are smashed against the walls,/And suckling children are thrown out onto the desert." (Raymond O. Faulkner, "Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage", in W. K. Simpson (ed.), *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, New Haven, London, Yale University Press, 2003³, p. 191, 194, for references see p. 188–189). For an alternative assessment of this period, see: Stephan J. Seidlmayer, "The First Intermediate Period", in I. Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 118–147.

supplementary, explicatory genre or a type of "savage science" which ancient peoples applied when they stopped understanding their surroundings. As I will try to explain in the second part of my work, myth has a cultural function of its own. In many ways myth may supplement ritual and vice versa, but to say that it *only* supplements and explains is a reductionistic view which is absolutely unfounded on any sound evidence. Even though myth and ritual do convey information about the individual and society, they do not do so mechanically, but in very subtle ways. As I hope to show in the analysis in Part II, through their use of symbols, they connect various levels of cognitive experience and the experience of each individual's being in the physical and social body. As such, they are full of paradoxes and antithetical messages, not all of which were (are) reflected on a conscious level. Explaining this process in historical terms seems to be a rather naive way of addressing the issue.

One more conclusion which raises major doubts ensues from the writings of some scholars, including Assmann. The idea of any secularisation process implicitly postulates the existence of some type of "golden age", i.e. a time before secularisation occurred. In such a time the Egyptians would have understood their ritual. They would have not needed narrative myths being so close to the divine sphere as almost merging. This, however, I consider to be a most bizarre idea.[59] Even religious studies scholars who have occupied themselves with the idea of a "golden age" in world mythologies,

59 Needless to say, Assmann seems to have somehow modified his view of these matters in the past. I quote from his unpublished text (in English) "Magic and Ritual in Ancient Egypt" handed out to the participants of the Ritual Dynamics and the Science of Ritual conference (29.9.–2.10.2008, SFB 619 Ritualdynamik) during the key note lecture given by Assmann in German (30.9.2008, Heidelberg, Neue Universität, Neue Aula): "The main difference between the temple rituals and the domestic application of magic is determined by the different settings. With temple rituals, the conditions for interventionist speech are subject to an absolutely unambiguous architectural and institutional structure. The healer, however, cannot embed his ritual actions and speech acts into a preset framework, and thus must first create this framework. [...] To achieve this, there are only three procedures, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The first is to invoke a god to ensure his support, with the healer effectively equipping himself with the god's power. The second approach is to introduce oneself as a god or goddess. Thirdly, the most common and classical procedure is the narration of a mythic episode that can be set in analogy to the case at hand." (p. 7–8); "The important difference between domestic magic and temple cult is the bridging of a time lag between the event *in illo tempore* and the actual crisis. This bridging takes place in the medium of narration. For the temple cult this time lag is of less consequence, as the performance happens not only at a sacred place, but also at a sacred, that is exactly defined time. [...] This is the reason why temple rituals do hardly feature any mythological narrations. [...] The death cult with its rituals and recitations stands halfway between temple cult and domestic magic. It is connected to the temple cult through the sacral structure of the embalming house and the funerary chapel. The death cult is not performed inside the house and is carried out by professional mortuary priests. The temporal frame, however, connects it to the ad-hoc rites and recitations of the medicine. It is not ruled by a temple calendar but by the contingent event of death. The death cult does not narrate either. The analogy between the mythical events and actions around Osiris' death and the respective death that just occurred and its ritual handling is not explicitly created in the medium of narration. It is rather part of an implicit and general framework of the cultic scene in which the priestly words develop their interventionist power." (p. 9). It is unclear from the text whether Assmann considers this to be in any way opposed to his older views with regard to narrativity.

such as Mircea Eliade,[60] for example, do not understand it as a period in actual historical time but as a certain self image of the given culture. As Baines remarks:

> In a sense, the view of early times as a period when divine and human were in close contact is an Egyptological "myth" with some of the etiological function of many ancient myths. In the modern context, such an age of innocence both legitimises conceptions of the pristine Egyptian state and fits an analogy between the duration of Egyptian civilisation and a lifespan that passes from innocence through experience to senescence.[61]

The problem seems to lie in the understanding of the word "narrativity". Many scholars have quite logically argued that the non-existence of a narrative in the early phases of Egyptian history is not caused by the closeness of the divine and the humane, but with all probability is due to a strong oral tradition which has not been preserved for us in writing.[62] I wonder why Assmann, in his quest for "myth" in ancient Egypt, focused only on one possible meaning of the Greek word μῦθος. One translation of it is "tale/story/narrative".[63] Nevertheless, its other meaning is "word/speech".[64] After all, mythology exists in societies which are both literate and illiterate. Willems very befittingly remarks: "I am unable to imagine, for instance, how Egyptian parents of the Old Kingdom could make their children familiar with the basic constellations without telling stories about their gods."[65]

If we take narrativity as a meaningful sequence of the content of texts (in its simplest form of beginning–middle–end, which I will from now on call "narrative coherence") and we deny the status of myth to that material which does not correspond to this criterion, then there is a great danger, which many scholars have not been able to avoid, of depriving any sort of ordering (or "meaning") of the given material

60 See, for example, Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*; trans. from French by Willard R. Trask, New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

61 Baines, "Egyptian Myth and Discourse": 92. For an overview of the "Golden Age" motif (also) in Western European literature, see Jonathan Z. Smith, "Golden Age", in L. Jones (Editor in Chief), *Encyclopedia of Religion, Second Edition,* Vol. VI, Thomson Gale, 2005, p. 3626–3630.

62 See, for example, Emma Brunner-Traut, "Mythos", W. Helck und E. Otto (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. IV, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1975, cols. 277–86; Baines, "Egyptian Myth and Discourse": 83, 84, 99, 103.

63 Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (with a revised Supplement), Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996[9] [1843[1]], p. 1151.

64 Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon,* p. 1151.

65 Willems, *The Coffin of Heqata*, p. 13. See also Eyre, *The Cannibal Hymn*, p. 69–70. The overt stress of Assmann on the criterion of written narrativity is even more perplexing because the issue of the textualisation of the oral tradition is also very closely examined by Assmann in several of his other works.

in general. The outcome may then be a tendency to dissect this seemingly illogically ordered material into tiny parts and subsequently try to uncover the historic and political origin of each motif and its development or postulate some sort of stronger divine presence in ancient times (we could consider this a certain attempt at narrativising the material). As Edmund Leach put it:

> [In orthodox scholarship] the occurrence of palpable duplication, inconsistency etc., is treated as evidence of a corrupt text. The task of the scholar, then, is to sift the true from the false, to distinguish one ancient version from another ancient version and so on. [...] I greatly wonder whether the effort can be worthwhile. The unscrambling of omelettes is at best laborious and is not likely to improve the taste![66]

The main problem with such orthodox scholarship (which understands narrative coherence as the main structure for mediating meaning) is that *it does not help us understand the material itself*. It rather seems that narrativity is only one of the possible ways in which the coherence of a given data set could be maintained. An example of an alternative concept, which I am going to explain in the following chapter, is called "configurational coherence".

66 Edmund Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon", in S. Hugh-Jones and J. Laidlaw (eds.), *The Essential Edmund Leach, Voll. II, Culture and Human Nature*, New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2000, p. 76 (originally published in *Journal of European Sociology* in 1966).

CHAPTER II

Western Logocentrism and "Configurational Coherence"

Before I explain the concept of "configurational coherence", I would like to point out that the methodological positions which I criticized in the previous chapter are not solely the problem of Egyptology and Egyptologists. Instead, they reflect a general tendency in Western thought which finds "meaning" primarily in language. It was Jacques Derrida who brought this idea to the forefront of modern debate. He claims that modern metaphysics and Western modes of thinking about the world in general are strongly logocentric.[67] According to Derrida, the speech act is considered the main vehicle of mediating the present. Writing (and we may also add other forms of expression) is considered only to be a sort of second-hand tool, not constitutive of the meaning itself, and only a derivative form of speech.[68] This, he argues, had already been established by Aristotle.[69] Derrida, therefore, focuses on the criticism of the logocentric (or also "phonocentric") concept of the sign. By doing so, he, in fact, attacks the very foundation of the whole Western system of thought. The concept of the logocentric sign later develops, according to him, when the world of "Christian creationism and infinitism"[70] appropriates the Greek philosophical classificatory system. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the problem with "narrativity" arises once we try to impress this criterion on ancient Egyptian material. To illustrate the basic difference between our system of categories, which we basically inherited from the Greeks, and the Egyptian view, we may turn to the Neo-Platonic philosopher Plotinus (Ennead V 8, 6.1–9):

67 Throughout his *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1997. However, this idea is formulated at the very beginning of his book, p. 3.
68 Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 30.
69 Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 11–12.
70 Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 13.

> The wise men of Egypt, I think, also understood this, either by scientific or innate knowledge, and when they wished to signify something wisely, they did not use the forms of letters out of which they would discursively put together words and propositions, nor did they imitate sounds [i.e. they did not use phonetic script] or enunciate philosophical statements; instead, they were drawing images, and by inscribing in their temples one particular ideogram of one particular thing they manifested the non-discursiveness of the intelligible world, that is, that every knowledge and every wise insight is a kind of basic and concentrated ideogram, and not discursive thought or deliberation.[71]

In this extract Plotinus exactly identifies the logocentric aspect in the Greek tradition, which Derrida criticizes almost two millennia later: "Phonetic writing, the medium of the great metaphysical, scientific, technical, and economic adventure of the West, is limited in space and time and limits itself even as it is in the process of imposing its laws upon the cultural areas that had escaped it."[72]

Although Algirdas J. Greimas was a linguist and therefore firmly embedded in the logocentric Western tradition, he did realise that the notion of narrativity as a sequence within language (let us say "narrative coherence") is not sufficient:

> [...] narrative structures can be identified outside of the manifestations of meaning that occur in the natural languages: in the languages of cinema and of dream, in figurative painting, etc. [...] But this amounts to recognizing and accepting the necessity of a fundamental distinction between two levels of representation and analysis: an apparent level of narration, at which the manifestations of narration are subject to the specific exigencies of the linguistic substances through which they are expressed, and an immanent level, constituting a sort of common structural trunk, at which narrativity is situated and organized prior to its manifestation. A common semiotic level is thus distinct from the linguistic level and is logically prior to it, whatever the language chosen for the manifestation.[73]

71 Translation by A. H. Armstrong, slightly altered by Radek Chlup, *Proclus: An Introduction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 19. In his commentary, Chlup remarks: "The Neoplatonists are certain that the nature of reality is too complex to be expressed in words. Language is all too limiting, and besides works discursively, introducing temporal sequence into all our propositions (this is why the Neoplatonists associate language with the level of soul, at which time comes into being). There are several ways to overcome this language handicap. If we simplify things a bit, we may say that Plotinus tries to use language so as to grasp the complexity of reality despite having limited means of expression at his disposal. To achieve this, he attempts to employ language in ways that allow him to 'blunt its edges', so to speak. On the one hand, he often has recourse to metaphors, attempting to capture the complexity of the intelligible world by means of impressive images. As Plotinus explains, images are appropriate for grasping intelligible reality for the simple reason that each of them captures its referent all at once, directly and in a concentrated manner." (Chlup, *Proclus*, p. 19–20).

72 Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 10.

Being a linguist, Greimas does not venture beyond the borders of language and rather tries to construct what he calls the "fundamental grammar".[74] But he is willing to accept that language might not be the only tool for the construction of meaning. Ancient Egyptian art and script (which we sometimes have great trouble in distinguishing)[75] and architecture is an ideal example with which we may illustrate this.

Ancient Egyptian script is specific for its use of what we consider to be "graphic plays" or "puns".[76] Relations were often established between words based on their phonetic or visual likeness. Thus mankind (*rmṯ.w*) was created from tears (*rmj.t*) of the Eye of the supreme god. We also come across "puns" which are composed of homographs, i.e. words which have a similar spelling but different meaning. So far, these concepts have their counterparts in our system of writing and thought. Nevertheless, in the case of ancient Egyptian script, they must be considered in a more complex way:

> Western stylistic devices operate bi-dimensionally: the interface addressed by the word play is located between the *phonetic* and the *semantic* sphere, whereby identity–or similarity–in the former is challenged by ambiguity in the latter. For ancient Egypt, we have to reckon with a third dimension: the sphere of *writing*. The grey zone invaded by the pun partakes of sounds, meanings, and *signs*.[77]

The whole idea of graphic plays becomes more complex once we realise that individual hieroglyphs also represent objects. A choice example is the case of a statue of the young king Ramesses II (see fig. 1).[78] In order to understand ancient Egyptian material

73 Algirdas J. Greimas (trans. by Catherine Porter): "Elements of a Narrative Grammar", *Diacritics* 7/1 (1977): 23. See also Algirdas J. Greimas, *Du sens : Essais sémiotiques*, Paris: Seuil, 1970. p. 158.

74 Greimas, "Elements": 26ff.

75 Naguib Kanawati, *The Tomb and Beyond: Burial Customs of Egyptian Officials*, England: Aris & Phillips Ltd, 2001, p. 73: "The famous papyrus Lansing at the British Museum [...contains] advice to become a scribe and [enumerates] the difficulties of other professions [...]. However, the advice does not include sculptors and painters, and in fact the latter must have been regarded almost as a special branch of the scribal profession, for the word painter in Egyptian is *seshn qedwet* which literally means 'scribe of the shapes/forms'."

76 See, for example, Antonio Loprieno, *La pensée et l'écriture. Pour une analyse sémiotique de la culture égyptienne (Quatre séminaires à l'École Pratique des Hautes Études Section des Sciences religieuses 15–27 mai 2000)*, Paris: Cybele, 2001, especially part "IV Le Signe étymologique : le jeu de mots entre logique et esthétique", p. 129–158.

77 Loprieno, "Puns and Word Play": 4.

78 Discovered by P. Montet during his excavations in ancient Tanis in 1934, the statue is now located in the Cairo Museum (JE 64735). Published for example by Mohamed Saleh und Hourig Sourouzian, *Das Ägyptische Museum Kairo, offizieller Katalog*, Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1986, cat. No. 203.

fig. 1: Statue of Ramesses II
Cairo Museum (JE 64735)
© Sandro Vannini

in general, one has to master a sort of "mental equilibristics". Interpretative processes should proceed simultaneously on several levels. In the case of our statue, one must start by decomposing it into separate units and subsequently interpret their iconic value with regard to their position within the ensemble (for example, a sun disk on a head is a typical sign of Egyptian deities, etc.). In this picture we see the pharaoh (his name is to be found on the pedestal of the statue) depicted as a child under the protection of the Near Eastern god Hauron in the form of a falcon. There is a close connection between the deity and the pharaoh, since the king also takes on one of the forms of Horus ("Horus the child" or Harpakhered, Greek Harpocrates) – a god who in his other aspects is most often depicted as a falcon (as Hauron is). The relationship between the pharaoh and the deity Horus, Hauron and Re (sun disk on the child's head) is physically expressed in the statue itself. The gods are identical *through their relation with the king*. At the same time, we must employ the phonetic perspective. The various units are assigned their phonetic equivalents and we gradually come to understand that the whole statue is also a three-dimensional pun: The child (*ms*) is adorned with a sun disk (*rꜥ*) and is holding a plant whose phonetic value is *sw*. If we put the signs together, we can read: *rꜥ* + *ms* + *sw* which spells the name of pharaoh Ramesses himself.[79] The processes which I have just described should, in the mind of a trained observer, take place simultaneously. At the same time, these two perspectives of interpretation supplement each other. The iconic view provides the information that "a pharaoh, divine in nature, is one with Horus, Hauron, and Re". The phonetic view provides the information "Ramesses". The two combined not only inform the observer that "pharaoh Ramesses, divine in nature, is Horus, Hauron, and Re", but the statue *demonstrates* this unity. The character of the Egyptian script represents "a semiotic system, in which a constant point of balance and tension is maintained through the triadic support

A similar piece has been studied by Vilmos Wesetzky, "Königsname und Titel Ramses II in doppelter rundplastischer Darstellung", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* [ZÄS] 97 (1971): 140–143. For a review of works pertaining to this topic, see Broze, *Mythe et Roman en Égypte ancienne*, p. 132–133, n. 15.

79 See also Joyce Tyldesley, *Ramesses: Egypt's Greatest Pharaoh*, London: Viking, 2000, p. 99–102.

of picture, emblem, and phonetic sign; a triple coexistence that will not cease until the very final phases of Egyptian civilization".[80] This example shows that a certain layer of meaning in ancient Egyptian material is mediated by the spatial relations which the given units have with each other. At the same time, this meaning is not necessarily coded in language. It does not provide a "narrative coherence" (as there is no obvious narrative in the Western meaning of the word) but a "configurational coherence".[81]

Another example illustrating this was very aptly described by Harco Willems in his intriguing analysis of the coffin of Heqata. Willems states that it is:

> [...] useful to investigate the coffin as a structured composition, whose decoration elements represent the building blocks. [...] the texts are not only reading matter and the object friezes not exclusively decoration. Rather, we must test whether their contents and their situation can be shown to reveal meaningful relationships.[82]

Further he concludes that:

> [...] position influences the decoration in two different ways:
> 1) by an outward orientation on the surrounding world. Here one can discern a) a cosmological approach, the sides of the coffin being interpreted as parts of the universe and b) a cultic approach, a relationship being established between a side of a coffin and the offering place of the tomb.
> 2) by an inward orientation to the occupant of the coffin.[83]

The texts recorded on Heqata's coffin demonstrate a strong configurational coherence which falls outside of the categories of narrative coherence. Willems remarks: "The admirable quality of A. de Buck's edition of the CT [*i.e. Coffin Texts, author's note*] may have had the unsuspected side effect that it made access to the CT so convenient

80 Goldwasser, *From Icon to Metaphor*, p. 6–7; see also Edmund S. Melzer, "Remarks on Ancient Egyptian Writing with an Emphasis on the Mnemon Aspects", in P. A. Kolers, M. E. Wrolstad, and H. Bouma (eds.), *Processing of Visible Language*, Vol. I, New York: Plenum, 1979.

81 Even though this term seems not to have been used in Egyptological literature so far, I do not lay any claim either to the term itself (it is sometimes used in works on philosophy of language and cognitive sciences) nor to the concept behind it. In formulating it, I was most influenced by Philippe Derchain's idea of "grammaire du temple" (see for example Philippe Derchain, "Un manuel de géographie liturgique à Edfou", *Chronique d'Égypte* [CdE] 37 [1962]: 31–65) which he used to conceptualise the elaborate distribution of symbolic meaning through the interaction of architectural features, script, and decorations on the walls and columns of the rectilinear temple in ancient Egypt. See also Michèle Broze, "Discours rapporté et processus de validation dans la littérature égyptienne ancienne", *Faits de Langue* 19 (2002): 25–36.

82 Willems, *The Coffin of Heqata*, p. 363.

83 Willems, *The Coffin of Heqata*, p. 365.

that it was easy to forget that it represents the texts in isolation from their original surroundings."[84] In other words, by organising the material according to a set of Western categories (as a sequence of spells), the other levels of meaning, which come up only after we relate the individual spells and decorations on the coffin to each other and also to various other aspects *outside* of the texts themselves (the deceased, parts of the tomb, etc.), have been either pushed into the background or completely lost. With reference to Plotinus (Ennead III 5, 9.24–29),[85] M. Broze and A. Cywiè repeatedly stress exactly this multi-layer aspect of myths which is to a certain level decomposed once a narrative-oriented ordering and interpretation is prioritised.[86]

84 Willems, *The Coffin of Heqata*, p. 363.

85 "But myths, if they are really going to be myths, must separate in time things of which they tell, and set apart from each other many realities which are together, but distinct in rank and powers, at points where rational discussions, also, make generations of things ungenerated, and themselves, too, separate things which are together; the myths, when they have taught us as well as they can, allow the man who has understood them to put together again that which they have separated." (Plotinus, *Ennead III*, trans. by A. H. Armstrong, Loeb Classical Library 442, Cambridge [Mass.], London: Harvard University Press, 1993[3] [1967[1]], p. 201).

86 Michèle Broze, Aviva Cywie, "Généalogie et topologie. Pratique du mythe dans la formule 219 des Textes de Pyramides", in M. Broze, A. Cywié (eds.), *Interprétation. Mythes, croyances et images au risque de la réalité*, Bruxelles, Louvain-la-Neuve: Société Belge des Etudes Orientales, 2008, p. 63–76.

CONCLUSION

Even though I have criticised the overtly "logocentric" approach of some scholars towards ancient Egyptian material (see Chapters 1 and 2), I must say I do not feel an urge to alter the basic presumption that compositions grouped under the term "myths" are (written/oral) narratives. Nevertheless, we must bear in mind that the notion of narrativity is an etic term created by us as part of a very specific categorisation system which enables us to group and somehow grasp the products of the ancient Egyptians' minds and subsequently "translate" them into our system. We may decide to use these analytical criteria to organise the material at hand, but we must be cautious when formulating conclusions about the ontological and mental world of the ancient Egyptians, especially once we find that they either did not share our categories or that they put them to use in a different way. In Chapter 2, I have tried to show that narrativity (or, more generally, sequential ordering) is the main mode in which the Judeo-Christian culture introduces meaning into the world. Subsequently, I have tried to show that in ancient Egypt meaning was transmitted in a more configurational manner[87] – hence the term "configurational coherence". From this point of view, narrativity in ancient Egypt seems to be only one of the alternative ways of infusing coherence into a given data set rather than the focal criterion by which everything should be measured. Katja Goebs correctly remarked:

> Rather than searching for coherence and narrativity in early Egyptian mythemes in an attempt to make them conform to a potentially artificial definition of myth, we should shift the focus of inquiry to the evidence itself and investigate its meaning. If narrativity is not one of the features displayed in the early sources, then it was probably not required.[88]

87 At the same time, I assume that one of the main reasons for the lack of written narratives is that there must have existed a strong tradition of oral narratives which, of course, left no trace in our sources, see above p. 33.

88 Goebs, "A Functional Approach": 33.

But even in those cases where we encounter narrativity in ancient Egyptian material, it often still seems to be of a different kind than we are used to. The stories are simply strange. Ancient Egyptian language stays symbolic even in narrative compositions.[89] And, because symbolism is the basic mode of religious language, it seems reasonable to expect that the principles of configurational coherence will operate even in ancient Egyptian narratives. One might remark that this is true for the language of myth cross-culturally. Nevertheless, in Egypt various concepts of configurational coherence seem to have evolved to a much more complex state than in other cultures. For example, an ancient Greek would, with all probability, be lost without a decent narrative. In ancient Egypt, configurational coherence seems to be applied in a much more open and inventive manner. Therefore, once we come across a narrative in ancient Egypt, it must be understood as having a very specific function – one which other modes of organising symbolic language (which the Egyptians had at hand) lack. Anticipating

89 The dividing line between language, script, and actual objects was always very tenuous in ancient Egypt. After all, ancient Egyptian script in its hieroglyphic form did not cease to depict actual objects and living beings. This fact has been often consciously exploited by the ancient Egyptians themselves. See, for example, Herman te Velde, "Egyptian Hieroglyphs as Linguistic Signs and Metalinguistic Informants" in Hans G. Kippenberg et al. (eds.), *The Image in Writing*, Visible Religion 6, Leiden, New York, København, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1988, p. 169–179. A very important fact mentioned in almost every work pertaining to the Pyramid Texts and their interpretation is the intentional mutilation of hieroglyphic signs representing potentially hostile objects, animals, people, or gods. See Pierre Lacau "Suppressions et modifications de signes dans les textes funeraires", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* [ZÄS] 19 (1914): 1–64. For a study of the phenomena of mutilation of texts in general, see: Willie van Peer, "Mutilated Signs: Notes Toward a Literary Paleography", *Poetics Today*, 18/1 (1997): 33–57. As attested by many examples from ancient Egyptian tombs where statues or mural representations of the deceased owners actually act as determinatives to their own names, a statue or a depiction of a person could, therefore, be considered as having the ontological status of a hieroglyphic sign. (Henry G. Fischer, "Redundant Determinatives in the Old Kingdom", *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 8 (1973): 7–25). It is also interesting to note that an individual hieroglyph was called *ữỉt*  ("sign, image, icon") which also means "the image of a God" (A. Erman und H. Grapow [Hrsg.], *Wörterbuch der ägyptische Sprache*, Berlin und Leipzig: Akademie Verlag, 1959, Vol. V, 239–240, A I, B I, C.). Hieroglyphs were "images of the divine" in a similar way as a transformed (mummified) individual. The moment which enabled the transformation of a living individual into a unit of the Egyptian universal onto-semiotic system was the moment of death and subsequent mummification. Through death and transfiguration rituals, even a non-royal person entered the sphere of the sign and writing and thus started participating in the eternity of the wor(l)d. It is a notoriously known fact that the verb used in texts to describe the creation of a statue was "to be born" (*msj*), i.e. the same term as was used in the case of a birth of a child (Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* II, 137–138.A–F). In a certain way we could say that people were born as signs and died as signs. Nevertheless, the most interesting example of the merging of script and an actual object has been documented by Stephan J. Seidlmayer ("Eine Schreiberpalette mit änigmatischer Aufschrift", in *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* [MDAIK] 47 (1991): 319–330). On a scribal palette of a certain Rinnafir, Seidlmayer shows a very clever usage of the material of the palette itself (*mrj*-wood) instead of the verb *mrj* ("to love"). Even though this represents a very unique example, it still serves as proof of the level of abstraction on which the character of the hieroglyphic script enabled its users to connect the script with objects from the external world.

the conclusions arrived at in Part II of this book, it seems that in the case of (ancient Egyptian) mythology, the narrative sequence functions as a sort of frame which shows us in what order the configurational (symbolic) structures of the myth are generated and relates them to one another in a specific order which, and this is very important, *mediates another symbolic level of meaning*.[90] The absence of a narrative, therefore, does not indicate a corrupt or in any other way incoherent text. Instead, it shows that sequential ordering was not necessary for the purpose of a non-narrative text because the meaning was mediated by other (configurational) means (sequence of texts and images on a coffin/in a tomb, ritual context, etc.).[91]

At this point it is appropriate to address a question from the Introduction: *How do we define "myth"?*[92] A myth is a configurational narrative which processes "underlying structures"[93] crucial for a given civilisation and is therefore considered to be "holy" or "sacred" to the people who narrate it.[94] Myth combines the principles and

90 For a discussion on this topic, see below, p. 163ff.

91 Also see Goebs, "A Functional Approach", who comes to very similar conclusions by analysing several mythemes from the corpus of the Pyramid Texts. In this context, it is worth noting that Jürgen Zeidler disagreed with Assmann's conclusions about the non-existence of myth in early phases of ancient Egyptian history due to a lack of narrative compositions. By using the methods developed by Vladimir Propp for analysing Russian folktales and applying them to Egyptian material, Zeidler demonstrated the (in part implicit) "narrativity" of some mythemes that are attested in the Pyramid Texts. This then served him as an argument for the existence of myths at the time when the Pyramid Texts were written down (Jürgen Zeidler, "Zur Frage der Spätentstehung des Mythos in Ägypten", *Göttinger Miszellen* [GM] 132 [1993]: 85–109). Michèle Broze and Aviva Cywiè in their article on Spell 219 of the Pyramid Texts also identified an implicit reference to a narrative (Broze, Cywiè, "Généalogie et topologie"). Chris H. Reintges studied the corpus from the perspective of information structure and discourse analysis, making the following observation: "The Pyramid Texts display traits of orality that are visible at every level of grammatical organization; [... they] represent a conceptually oral form of discourse, which emerges from composition in oral performance." (Chris H. Reintges, "The Oral-compositional Form of Pyramid Text Discourse", in F. Hagen, J. Johnston, W. Monkhouse, K. Piquette, J. Tait, and M. Worthington (eds.), *Narratives of Egypt and the Ancient Near East: Literary and Linguistic Approaches*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta [OLA] 189, Peeters: Leuven, 2011, p. 47).

92 I believe I am not exaggerating when I say that there are as many definitions of myth as there are authors writing on the subject. Even though settling the issue of the definition of myth is not the objective of this work, I feel it appropriate to outline my partial understanding of the term "myth" with regard to the terminology which I have decided to use.

93 This is a term coined by Fernand Braudel in his *A History of Civilizations*, trans. by Richard Mayne, New York: Penguin Books, 1987. In his book, Braudel claims that there are patterns and "underlying structures" in every civilization which are especially visible when they are examined over a longer period of time. At the same time, these structures are often unique and always essential for the existence and continuity of that civilization.

94 See, for example, Alan Dundes (ed.), *Sacred Narrative: Readings in the Theory of Myth*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1984. As has been shown by William Bascom, many tribal societies apply their own (emic) criteria for distinguishing different types of stories (written or told) based on the level of veracity and, therefore, sanctity (William Bascom, "The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives", in Dundes (ed.), *Sacred Narrative*, p. 5–29). In Egypt, unfortunately, we have no such concept of "true" and "false" stories. In fact, the hieroglyphic script itself had the designation *mdw nṯr*, which could be translated as "the word of god". As such, we

mechanisms of both narrative and configurational coherence in one composition. Interpreters such as Assmann and others have very correctly realised this in one way or another. The problem is that by interpreting this from the Western and "logocentric" point of view, they decided to separate these two modes and assigned them different places in a sequential historical scheme. The absence of sequential ordering was for them a sign of older strata of thought. All historicising interpretations which understand myths as reflections of historical events are in fact a product of this "logocentrically" biased view.[95]

Because the topic of narrativity is so important, as we have seen above, in Part II I am going to focus my analysis on selected ancient Egyptian narrative compositions. I will try to understand how the narrative sequence interacts with the symbolic configurational structures. I am going to show that it is possible to create a configurational map in which the symbolic relations of the various parts of the narrative are brought into meaningful relationships. A configurational map created for one narrative may in the next step be compared with maps of other compositions. By doing so, motifs which may look isolated, not related, or even antithetical are brought into new contexts and allow for a deeper interpretation.[96] Moreover, I will also try to show that there are certain rules by which the configurational coherence of narratives is constructed and that the process is, to a certain degree, predictable. I will try to discuss to what ends such an approach may lead in the final chapters of this book.

PART II

could see all types of writing as "holy" in a certain way. In Egypt, the level of "sanctity" of certain inscriptions was indicated by the place where they were carved/written or by the material used for transmission (I am thankful to Johanna Holaubek from the Viennese Institute of Egyptology, who pointed out this fact to me. Personal communication, 21.1.2008, Vienna). The importance of the media which is used for the transmission of a certain text is noted by Antonio Loprieno: "As a matter of fact, in the cases in which the same (or similar) text is transmitted both in epigraphic and in palaeographic form, the change of the channel often indicates a change in the scope of the text, including a reduction of the official character to the advantage of the literary (that is, individual and personal) dimension." (Antonio Loprieno, "Defining Egyptian Literature: Ancient Texts and Modern Literary Theory", in J. S. Cooper and G. M. Schwartz [eds.], *The Study of the Ancient Near East in the Twenty-First Century: The William Foxwell Albright Centennial Conference*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996, p. 224). This very effectively shows that the concept of "sacred" may be expressed in various ways and exhibit different shades of intensity.

95 Even though myth does in some ways reflect historical and social reality, the interaction seems to be much more subtle (see p. 27; 163–174).

96 As I have mentioned above, an important source of inspiration is the structuralist tradition. Nevertheless, the paradigm shall be altered based on other methodological approaches developed by anthropology, depth psychology, ritual studies, semiotics, etc.

Introduction

In Part I, I tried to summarise the classic(al) methods applied by Egyptologists when interpreting ancient Egyptian mythology. I attempted to show in what way these methods are inadequate and reductionist. I also tried to summarise the Egyptological discussion concerning the issue of narrativity or, more precisely, the supposed (non)existence of myths in early phases of the development of Egyptian civilisation.

Part II will deal with fragments of the so-called Astarte Papyrus (pBN 202 + pAmherst IX) which incorporates not only Egyptian deities but also numinous characters from the region of the Near East – Astarte, Yam, and Seth-Baal. It is a unique text since one of the main roles is played by Yam – the sea, which is a character foreign to the Egyptian pantheon. Because of the strong presence of these deities and also thanks to the existence of narratives with a similar structure in the mythologies of the ancient Near East, the text is traditionally considered to be an infiltration of foreign mythological material into the ancient Egyptian milieu. I wanted to test this hypothesis for several reasons. According to Phillippe Collombert and Laurent Coulon, the text in its entirety would have been the longest narrative of the New Kingdom compared to the other surviving compositions.[97] Also, the quality of the penmanship is very good. If the text was an attempt by foreigners living in Egypt to introduce their mythology into the ancient Egyptian milieu (as, for example, Thomas Schneider would see it),[98] how could they expect the ancient Egyptians to accept it and not discard it as foreign nonsense? The only way such a text could be accepted by native Egyptians could be that the structure of the story was recognisable as a variant of the ancient Egyptians' own tradition. If so, it should be possible to identify common structures which the Astarte Papyrus shares with other Egyptian compositions. Should this be true, the whole idea of the Astarte Papyrus being a foreign narrative would have to be re-evaluated. Answering these questions is crucial not only with regard to the Astarte Papyrus itself, but it can provide interesting material for discussing the mechanics of cultural change, appropriation, and influence.

97 Philippe Collombert et Laurent Coulon, "Les dieux contre la mer : Le début du papyrus d'Astarte (pBN 202)", *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* [BIFAO] 100 (2001): 199.

98 Thomas Schneider, "Foreign Egypt: Egyptology and the Concept of Cultural Appropriation", *Ägypten und Levante* 13 (2003): 155–161.

CHAPTER I

History of the Astarte Papyrus and its Study[99]

The papyrus was first mentioned in 1871[100] by Samuel Birch in his report about fragments of a mythological papyrus located in "Mr. Tyssen Amhurst's Collection".[101] How the papyrus came into Mr. Amherst's possession is not known, nor is the place of its discovery. Birch, who did not try to date the papyrus, gave a short description ("The papyrus was originally about 16 feet long and had about 11 lines in each page written in remarkably clear and neat hieratic hand."[102]) and a short synopsis of its content. He even translated a few fragmentary lines. Since this first mention, the papyrus, now called pAmherst IX or the "Astarte Papyrus", went unnoticed for 28 years until Percy E. Newberry published its photographic edition in 1899.[103] Based on the palaeography, he dated its origin to the 19th or 20th dynasty.[104] (Georg Möller later assessed[105] the papyrus to have been written sometime during the reign of Haremhab – the late 18th dynasty). Concerning the content, Newberry informs us that a "certain 'tribute of the sea' was paid to the Phoenician goddess Astarte by (?) a messenger of Ptah."[106]

99 In the following text, I do not comment on every translation of the pAmherst IX published if its author does not present any new interpretative approach worth summarising or if it is not original in some other way. A complete and chronologically ordered bibliography can be found below, p. 59–61.

100 Samuel Birch, "Varia", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* [ZÄS] 9 (1871): 119–120.

101 Birch, "Varia": 119.

102 Birch, "Varia": 119.

103 Percy E. Newberry, *The Amherst Papyri in the Collection of the Right Hon. Lord Amherst of Hackney*, London: Quaritch, 1899, p. 47, pl. xix–xxi.

104 Newberry, *The Amherst Papyri*, p. 47.

105 Georg Möller, "Zur Datierung literarischer Handschriften", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* [ZÄS] 56 (1920): 42.

106 Newberry, *The Amherst Papyri*, p. 47.

Wilhelm Spiegelberg provided a transcription into hieroglyphs and offered an interpretation which differs completely from readings by later interpreters.[107] He was convinced that it was Astarte, as one of the main protagonists, who strove for the "tribute of the sea", even though she had to fight for it with the "circle of gods" (Ennead). This struggle, Spiegelberg thinks, might have been indicated by the tattered state in which Astarte arrives at the seashore and asks the Sea for help against the Ennead. The idea behind the story is, according to Spiegelberg, the act of accepting Astarte into the Memphite triad and also the ascribing of possessions for the maintenance of her cult – "the tribute of the sea", i.e. a tax imposed on everything imported from the sea.

In 1923, Adolf Erman attempted to translate all the fragments from Newberry's edition into German.[108] In their re-worked edition (1926) of translated texts pertaining to the Old Testament, Hugo Gressmann and Hermann Ranke acknowledge Erman's translation, give a very sketchy commentary and present their own German translation of several fragments.[109] Günther Roeder's German translation (1927) gives yet another complete rendering of the text – he even tried to fill in the many lacunae.[110] Many of Roeder's reconstructions were later criticised by Alan H. Gardiner.[111] The title which Roeder gave to his translation is, however, misleading: "Astarte auf der Insel des Meeres". This is based on a false rendering by Spiegelberg of a hieratic group from line 1, x+7 as "island" instead of "region", which Roeder adopted and which was later corrected by Gardiner.[112] Roeder (also following Spiegelberg) wished to see Astarte as the main figure of the whole story.

Alan H. Gardiner, in his *Late Egyptian Stories* in 1932, presented another but more detailed transcription of the hieratic text of the "Astarte Papyrus" into hieroglyphs with an epigraphic commentary.[113] In the same year he also published a translation and commentary.[114] Gardiner managed to have the fragments of the papyrus rearranged in their correct order, found out that several of the fragments attributed by Newberry did not belong to the ensemble at all and also published some other fragments which

107 Wilhelm Spiegelberg, "The Fragments of the 'Astarte' Papyrus of the Amherst Collection", *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* [PSBA] 24 (1902): 41–50.
108 Adolf Erman, *Die Literatur der Aegypter: Gedichte, Erzählungen u. Lehrbücher aus d. 3. u. 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.*, Leipzig: Zentralantiquariat, 1923 [1978²], p. 218–220.
109 Hugo Gressmann und Herrmann Ranke (Hrsg.), *Altorientalische Texte und Bilder zum alten Testament*, Berlin: De Gruyte, 1926² [1909¹, 1927³], p. 7–8.
110 Günther Roeder, *Altägyptische Erzählungen und Märchen: Ausgewählt und übersetzt von Günther Roeder,* Die Märchen der Weltliteratur XXII, Jena: Diederichs, 1927, p. 71–73.
111 Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 76–81.
112 Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 81, n. 1.
113 Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 76–81.
114 Alan H. Gardiner, "The Astarte Papyrus", in A. H. Gardiner and H. O. Lange et al. (eds.), *Studies Presented to F. Ll. Griffith*, London: Oxford University Press, 1932, p. 74–85.

Newberry had omitted. Gardiner accepted Möller's dating of the papyrus to the reign of Haremhab (see above). Gardiner's assessment of the original length (based on the surviving fragments of the bottom part of the papyrus) was 4.2 m with a height of 27 cm and consisting of "at least fifteen pages of text on the *recto*, with five or six more on the verso."[115] As Gardiner put it: "In its restored condition the Astarte Papyrus presents itself to us as the lamentable wreckage of a most magnificent manuscript."[116] Whereas Roeder (following Spiegelberg) stressed in his translation the role of Astarte, Gardiner adopted a different stance and asserted that it was not Astarte who was the main focus of the story but that "another personage has a far better claim to be the real protagonist, namely [*Yam, aut. note*]  'the sea' (first mention, 1, x+6)."[117] It was Spiegelberg who had already noticed before Gardiner that the sea was personified in the story, thus becoming "the Sea". Gardiner took this point as the basis of his interpretation and using the scanty remains of the story he quite convincingly argued that "[…] the central theme was the conflict between the gods of Egypt and the sea with regard to the tribute demanded by the latter."[118] This means that the "tribute of the sea" was definitely not given by the Sea to Astarte (as Newberry argued, see above). Gardiner also wanted to identify Yam with "the Ruler", to whom several references are made throughout the story. This proves a very important conclusion because in Egyptian mythology there is no autochthonous divine personage representing the sea as an element.[119] What immediately springs to mind is that this motif must have been imported and borrowed by the Egyptians. Gardiner proposed a parallel to the Babylonian creation account from the *Enuma elish* in which Tiamat (the sea) is slaughtered by Marduk. A year later, Gardiner published a short notice stating that he had managed to find in the Hearst medical papyrus a passage (11, 12/4) mentioning Seth's struggles with the Sea as part of a medical incantation.[120]

A year following Gardiner's article, Archibald H. Sayce published a translation of a fragment of a Hittite legend in which we meet the supreme god Kumarbis of the city state of Urkis and the Sea.[121] In the fragment we find them at a banquet together with the "Father" or primeval gods. The gods of the earth and the sun gods did not answer the summons ([…] But to thee the sun gods and gods of earth came not. […])[122]

115 Gardiner, "The Astarte Papyrus", p. 76.
116 Gardiner, "The Astarte Papyrus", p. 75.
117 Gardiner, "The Astarte Papyrus", p. 77.
118 Gardiner, "The Astarte Papyrus", p. 81.
119 For a discussion about aquatic deities and, in particular, Syro-Palestinian Yam in Egypt, see below, p. 73–76.
120 Alan H. Gardiner, "Notes and News", *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 19 (1933): 98.
121 Archibald H. Sayce, "The Astarte Papyrus and the Legend of the Sea", *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 19 (1933): 56–59.
122 Sayce, "The Astarte Papyrus": 57, lines 7–8.

and Sayce is persuaded that the subject of the banquet was to arrange an attack of all the allies against these opposing deities. He does not conclude what sort of connection there should be between this text and pAmherst IX – he simply states that: "Kumarbis corresponds to Ptah, and 'the word' of the 'Mukis gods' takes the place of Astarte in the Egyptian account[123], while in both accounts mention is made of the throne upon which 'the Sea' took its place."[124]

William F. Albright made an interesting comment on the Astarte Papyrus in the context of his article which focused on the Ugaritic narrative of the battle between Baal and Yam:[125] "Curiously enough, Yam and Astarte appear together, apparently as friends [...]. The meaning of the friendship between Astarte and Yam is presumably that Astarte, like her doublet, Atirat-yam, was also a sea-goddess [...] and so was thought to have received this power of hers from Yammu himself."[126] Albright does touch upon an important element of Astarte's character here – her simultaneous positive connection with the two obviously opposing parties of Yam and the Egyptian gods. I shall analyse this role of hers in more detail later in the text (see below, p. 239–246).

Gustave Lefèbvre included a translation (which happened to be the first in French) in his anthology of Egyptian stories.[127] Even though he did not venture much into interpretation (he mainly limited himself to giving an overview of the contents of the story), at the end he pointed out several new and important details. First of all, he connected the fragmentary narrative with the mythological texts from the coastal town of Ugarit (Ras Shamra).[128] He showed that the Sea (Yam) had a very similar physiognomy (of being lecherous, terrifying and imperious) in both the text originating from Ugarit and the pAmherst IX, pointing out that his adversary was Baal in the Ugaritic version[129] and Seth in the Egyptian version, of whom we find a mention

123 The Mukis gods function as intermediaries between Yam and Kumarbis in the same way as Astarte does between Yam and the Egyptian Ennead.

124 Sayce, "The Astarte Papyrus": 58.

125 William F. Albright, "Zabûl Yam and Thâpit Nahar in the Combat Between Baal and the Sea", *Journal of the Palestinian Oriental Society* [JPOS] 16 (1936): 18–19.

126 Albright, "Zabûl Yam and Thâpit Nahar": 18–19.

127 Gustav Lefèbvre, *Romans et contes égyptiens de l'époque pharaonique*, Paris: Maisonneuve 1949, p. 106–113.

128 These texts were discovered in 1929 and tablets inscribed with cuneiform script, but in a language unknown at that time, were revealed along with Sumerian, Acadian, Hittite and Hurrian texts. This language was later named "Ugaritic" and, after its decipherment, provided a wealth of administrative and mythological texts. An accessible edition of the religious literary texts is: Simon B. Parker (ed.), *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, Writings from the Ancient World Series, Vol. 9, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997; Nicolas Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit. The Words of Ilimilku and His Colleagues*, The Biblical Seminar 53, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.

129 The texts which all present Baal as the main character include "six tablets and various fragments [CAT 1.1–1.6] variously called the Baal text, the Baal Cycle, or the Epic of Baal. [They] were excavated between 1930 and 1933 [...] The original length of the cycle is unknown. The physical remains of the attested tablets total about 1,830 lines, but estimates for the original text go as high as 5,000 lines. The date of the Baal Cycle has been fixed to about 1400–1350 B.C.E. based on textual and archaeological evidence." (Mark S. Smith, "The Baal Cycle", in Parker (ed.), *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, p. 81).

in one of the fragments. Lefèbvre also brought attention to another Egyptian text (the Tale of Two Brothers) in which Yam plays a similar (brutal) role in which the Sea attacks Bata's wife.[130]

John A. Wilson published a new English translation of the whole story in 1950, trying to fill in as many lacunae as possible so as to enhance the narrative coherence of the fragments.[131] He did not offer any new interpretative possibilities. Meanwhile, the scholarly work of translating and interpreting the Ras Shamra texts had proceeded a little further, allowing Theodor H. Gaster to publish an article in 1952 in which he advocated a direct dependence of the Egyptian text on its Ugaritic model.[132] He tries to prove this by analysing several details which he finds strikingly similar and also by showing that the Egyptian text preserved "several typically Ugaritic clichés."[133] He then draws our attention to two Hittite-Hurrian myths which include a very similar motif – the so-called Legend of Hedammu[134] and the Story of Ullikummi.[135]

Whereas Gaster tried to show the dependence of the Egyptian text on a foreign model, Georges Posener[136] tried to safeguard the originality of the text and postulated the existence of a long lost, forerunning, autochthonous Egyptian myth with the main theme of a conflict between the gods and an aquatic character as early as the First Intermediate Period, when the *Instruction for Merikare* was composed.[137] He then comes to the conclusion that the similarity between the Astarte Papyrus and the myths

130 See below, p. 118–129.

131 John A. Wilson, "Astarte and the Tribute of the Sea", in James B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* [ANET], Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950, p. 17–18.

132 Theodor H. Gaster, "The Egyptian 'Story of Astarte' and the Ugaritic Poem of Baal", *Bibliotheca Orientalis* [BiOr] 9/3-4 (1952): 82–85. This article is very inspirational in many ways, but, not in any way through Gaster's own fault, complicates the work of contemporary scholars. The problem is that in 1952 Gaster was not able to work with the standard edition of the Ras Shamra texts known as the KTU or the currently preferred CAT (Manfried Dietrich, Oswald Loretz and Joaquín Sanmartín, *Die keilalphabetischen Texten aus Ugarit* [KTU], Kevelaer & Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1976; English version: *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places* [CAT], Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995[2], enlarged edition) and therefore his references to Ugaritic texts are based on older publications. For concordances of different editions, see, for example: Parker (ed.), *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, p. 229–230.

133 Gaster, "The Egyptian 'Story of Astarte'": 84.

134 Harry A. Hoffner, Jr., *Hittite Myths*, Writings from the Ancient World Series, Vol. 2, Atlanta (Georgia): Scholars Press, 1998[2] [1990[1]], p. 50–55.

135 Hoffner, *Hittite Myths*, p. 55–65.

136 Georges Posener, "La légende égyptienne de la mer insatiable", *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire orientales et slaves* [AIPHOS] 13 (1953): 461–478.

137 Posener, "La légende égyptienne de la mer insatiable", p. 472ff.

originating from the Near East is only superficial. Posener tries to show that the author merely substituted Seth for Re, Yam for the Egyptian word for "sea" (such as *w3ḏ wr*) or "waters" (for example *mw*), and included Astarte in the narrative. The reason for this approach might have been an attempt to "modernise" an old Egyptian legend and adjust it to the more "cosmopolitan" tastes of New Kingdom Egyptian society which must have also included the West Semitic populace.[138]

Emma Brunner-Traut offered a new translation into German.[139] As she had already done with other texts in her *Altägyptischen Märchen*, she used other sources, context, her knowledge of ancient Egyptian literature and her imagination to connect the fragments with a story as she imagined it might once have been. Although her approach was not strictly academic, she nevertheless gave hints and suggestions for the interpretation of the whole story.

Rainer Stadelmann analysed the papyrus solely in connection with the Near Eastern cultural context, refuting Posener's suggestion of the autochthonous Egyptian origin of the myth and interpreting it instead as a cultural import with its model in the Ugaritic Baal Cycle.[140] A few years later, in his article entitled "Astartepapyrus" for the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie,* Stadelmann added another reference to a passage in the pBerlin 3038 (21/2–3), which could be an allusion to the mythological motif of the struggle between Seth and the Sea.[141] He also argued that, based on the paleography, the composition of the text should be dated to the time of King Haremhab.[142]

Herman te Velde, in a short comment, remarked that if the papyrus were solely the product of a foreign community in Egypt, there would be no reason to supplement Seth for Baal. "It would seem that the foreign god Baal, who is regarded as a manifestation of Seth because the latter is the lord of foreign countries, is now enriching the Egyptian concept of Seth with a new function."[143]

Wolfgang Helck[144] adopted a somewhat compromising attitude towards the possible foreign literary prototypes of the pAmherst IX. He pointed out that "(...) his

138 Posener, "La légende égyptienne de la mer insatiable", p. 478.

139 Emma Brunner-Traut, *Altägyptische Märchen, Mythen und andere volkstümliche Erzählungen*, München: Diederichs, 1963, p. 72–76, 268–269.

140 Rainer Stadelmann, *Syrisch-palästinensische Gottheiten in Ägypten*, Probleme der Ägyptologie [PrÄg] 5, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967, p. 125–131.

141 Rainer Stadelmann, "Astartepapyrus", in Helck und Otto (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. I, cols. 509–511.

142 Stadelmann, "Astartepapyrus", col. 509.

143 Herman te Velde, *Seth, God of Confusion*, Probleme der Ägyptologie [PdÄ] 6, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967, p. 122–123.

144 Wolfgang Helck, "Zur Herkunft der Erzählung des sogenannten 'Astartepapyrus'", in M. Görg (ed.), *Fontes atque pontes: Eine Festgabe für Hellmut Brunner,* Ägypten und Altes Testament [ÄAT] 5, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983, p. 215–223

two oxen [...]" (1, x+1), which are mentioned at the beginning of the first fragment of Gardiner's edition, have a direct relation to the two bulls which are an attribute of the Hittite-Hurrian weather god.[145] The *interpretatio aegyptiaca* would have had the god Seth in the place of the weather god even though Seth did not have bulls as his emblem animals. According to Helck, another motif originating in the same cultural region is the part where Astarte goes naked down to the sea shore singing and laughing (2, x+17–18).[146] He draws on the parallels from the Hittite-Hurrian mythography[147] in which Astarte/Ishtar uses her physical charms to fulfil her goals. Nevertheless, Helck also sees a Syro-Palestinian influence in the Egyptian text and, to him, the last part of the surviving fragments (8, y–15, y) resemble the threat of an impending fight between Seth and Yam just as we find it described in the Baal Cycle from Ugarit.[148]

Jacobus van Dijk, in his intriguing article "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", which shall be analysed in detail further on in the book (see below, p. 210–217), remarked that "it is in my opinion hard to imagine that the Egyptian text could have been written without any knowledge of the Canaanite myth."[149] He then draws a parallel between the pAmherst IX and several fragmentary texts (spells against scorpion poison) which seem to have been individual examples of a different narrative called, for convenience, the Anat Myth.[150] He argues that this story seems to share a similar structure with the basic mythological motifs of the so-called Osiris Myth with the actors altered, claiming that the whole plot of pAmherst IX essentially belongs to the ancient Egyptian tradition. Van Dijk also refers the reader to the three magical papyri which mention Seth defeating Yam in direct conflict.[151]

Robert K. Ritner presented an inscription from a stela (Chicago Field Museum, No. 31737), belonging to the "cippus" type,[152] dating, according to him, to the

145 Helck, "Zur Herkunft": 217.

146 Needless to say, this part of the papyrus was badly damaged and it is not entirely clear whether the text "(...) sang and laughed at him (...)/saw Astarte, as she sat upon the shore(?) [...]" does indeed refer to Astarte coming down to the sea shore.

147 Helck, "Zur Herkunft": 220–221.

148 Helck, "Zur Herkunft: 222.

149 Jacobus van Dijk, "Anat, Seth, and the Seed of Pre", in H. L. J. Vanstiphout et. al. (eds.), *Scripta Signa Vocis: Studies about Scripts, Scriptures, Scribes, and Languages in the Near East, Presented to J.H. Hospers by his Pupils, Colleagues, and Friends,* Gröningen: Egybert Forsten, 1986, p. 32.

150 For bibliographic references, see van Dijk, "Anat, Seth, and the Seed of Pre", p. 32–33.

151 pHearst 11, 13; pBerlin 3038 recto 21, 2–3; pLeiden I 343 + 345 recto 4, 12–13 = verso 7,7 (van Dijk, "Anat, Seth, and the Seed of Pre", p. 47, n. 2).

152 "From the New Kingdom also derive the earliest attestations of a new genre of curative and apotropaic stelae, the co-called 'cippi' depicting 'The Enchanter' Shed or Horus (-Shed) vanquishing the terrors of the river and desert as embodied by crocodiles, snakes, scorpions, lions, and gazelles. [...] Typically, these stelae depict the youthful god Horus standing atop [and thus trampling] two or more crocodiles, while firmly grasping in each hand an assortment of noxious animals suspended

Third Intermediate or Late Period.[153] As Ritner writes: "Because of the size of the stela, the sculptor was able to include the two standard cippus texts, two others which are rare, and a fifth which to my knowledge is unique and provides a new myth detailing the origin of venom. [...] the fragmentary tale recounts the visit of an unnamed goddess to the sea to bathe. When she removes her clothing, the sea god Nun is inflamed with passion, summons the crocodiles of his realm, and devises a stratagem. Once the goddess has entered the water, the crocodiles are to attack her, allowing the god to materialize suddenly as her protector. [...] The goddess is anything but defenceless. Raging like a storm, she sends forth a blast of fire which scatters the crocodiles and effectively puts to rest the passion of Nun." The text is most extraordinary as it places the genuinely Egyptian deity Nun in the position of the lecherous water entity which, in other texts, is occupied by *ym*.[154]

Even though Donald B. Redford, in his article from 1990,[155] does not present any new views directly in connection with the pAmherst IX (although he mentions it on p. 833–834), he gives a very useful overview of mythopoetic traditions from the Near East which employ the theme of the voracious sea/monster – female (goddess) – male god/hero.

In 1997 Robert K. Ritner offered a new translation into English and briefly summarised the conclusions of previous scholars.[156]

In 2001 Philippe Collombert and Laurent Coulon published an article in which they matched a previously known fragment archived at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BN) under number 202 with the pAmherst IX. Based on the structure and palaeography of both ensembles they proved that the Paris fragment constituted the "missing" upper section of the first page of pAmherst IX.[157] Their edition (and French translation) of the pBN 202 and of the pAmherst IX as one whole has become

harmlessly by the tail." (Robert K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 54, Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2008[4] [1993[1]], p. 106–107).

153 Robert K. Ritner, "Horus on the Crocodiles: A Juncture of Religion and Magic in Late Dynastic Egypt", in W. K. Simpson (ed.), *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt*, Yale Egyptological Studies [YES] 3, New Haven (CT): Yale University Press, 1989, p. 103–116 (specifically p. 110–113).

154 Ritner provided only a provisional translation of this most interesting text in his 1989 article as he he was "in the process of publishing the piece" (Ritner, *The Mechanics*, p. 109). However, I have searched in vain for any later edition. In his study from 2009, Ritner published three of the five texts from the stela excluding the one in question (Robert K. Ritner, *The Libyan Anarchy: Inscriptions from Egypt's Third Intermediate Period*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009, p. 69–74) and referring to his 1989 article (p. 74).

155 Donald B. Redford, "The Sea and the Goddess", in Sarah Israelit-Groll (ed.), *Studies in Egyptology Presented to Miriam Lichtheim I, II*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1990, p. 824–835.

156 Robert K. Ritner, "The Legend of Astarte and the Tribute of the Sea: P. Amherst (Pierpont Morgan) XIX–XXI", in W. W. Hallo (ed.), *The Context of Scripture/Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, Vol. I, Leiden, New York, Cologne: E. J. Brill, 1997, p. 35–36.

157 Collombert et Coulon, "Les dieux contre la mer": 193–242.

the new *editio princeps*. Originally, the pBN 202 had been part of the Rollin collection (W. Pleyte published it under the name pRollin 1887)[158] which has proven to contain more fragments of papyri which complement the fragments from the Amherst collection.[159] Thanks to the fact that the pBN 202 constitutes the *incipit* of the ensemble, we now know that the text was written in the fifth regnal year (and third month of the Peret season, day 19) of pharaoh Amenophis II and is therefore, by some hundred years or so, older than Möller (see above), Gardiner and others had previously supposed. Collombert and Coulon have also tried to assess, in the light of the new discovery, the extent of the original work and they have come to the conclusion that it was probably composed of 20 pages containing 25 lines each which would make it one of the longest literary papyri of the New Kingdom.[160] In terms of the contents of the text, the beginning shows that the pivotal theme of the work is the possible clash of the Ennead (represented by Seth) with Yam. It seems that Astarte only plays an episodic, albeit important, role.

Even though the possible Hittite-Hurrian and West-Semitic motifs in the pBN 202+pAmherst IX have already been mentioned (see above), it was Thomas Schneider who gave these theories a firm frame.[161] He makes a reference to a Hittite text in which the gods are bid to bring a tribute to Yam (god) consisting of a certain *ku(wa)nnan* rock, lapis lazuli, *parašhaš* rock, silver (and) gold.[162] Regarding the date with which the pBN 202 fragment starts (Amenophis II, 5th regnal year, 3rd moth of the *peret* season, day 19), Schneider concludes that it had some connection with the official acknowledgment of the cult of the goddess Astarte: in the 4th regnal year of Amenophis II the quarries of Tura were reopened in order to provide material for the construction of a shrine dedicated to Astarte of Perunefer (a war-port which, according to Schneider, was located in Memphis[163])

158 Willem Pleyte, *Le Papyrus Rollin, de la Bibiothèque imperiale de Paris*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1868, p. 23–24, pl. xv.

159 For a detailed discussion see Collombert et Coulon, "Les dieux contre la mer": 193–199.

160 Collombert et Coulon, "Les dieux contre la mer": 199. To make the assessment more imaginable, they estimated that the complete papyrus would have occupied about 70 pages of Gardiner's *Late Egyptian Stories* whereas the longest composition of the "Contendings of Horus and Seth" only occupies 24 pages.

161 Thomas Schneider, "Texte über den syrischen Wettergott aus Ägypten", *Ugarit Forschungen* [UF] 35 (2003): 605–627.

162 In the Egyptian text we find (I, x+12): "[...] And Renut [brought?] his tribute in silver and gold, lapis lazuli [and turquoise] ... the tribute of *Ym* [...]."

163 The issue of the location of Perunefer has been debated for decades. Recently it was reopened by Manfred Bietak in *Egyptian Archaeology* ("The Thutmoside Stronghold of Perunefer", *Egyptian Archaeology* [EA] 26 [2005]: 13–17). Bietak believes that the location of this port was on the western edge of ancient Avaris (Tell el-Daba). David Jeffreys ("Perunefer at Memphis or Avaris?", *Egyptian Archaeology* [EA] 28 [2006]: 36–37) in his reply summarised the evidence which connects Perunefer to both Avaris and Memphis and came to the conclusion that the matter cannot be definitively settled in favour of either location. Bietak then presented further evidence in two subsequent articles ("Perunefer: The Principal New Kingdom Naval Base", *Egyptian Archaeology* [EA] 34 [2009]: 15–17; "Perunefer: An Update", *Egyptian Archaeology* [EA] 35 [2009]: 16–17), one of his arguments

and, a year later, the building was finished.[164] Schneider also refers to a passage from pLeiden I[165] in which the conflict of Seth and *Ym* is explicitly described. In his article, he also drew attention to other Egyptian texts in which the Egyptian storm god Seth demonstrates strong affinities with his West-Semitic counterpart – Baal. In another article,[166] he defends the idea that the pBN 202+pAmherst IX is a copy of a West Semitic model (such as the Baal Cycle from Ugarit or the like) and he takes this as proof of the ability on the part of ancient Egyptians to innovate their religious and political ideas.[167]

The last article dealing with pBN 202+pAmherst IX by Anthony Spalinger focuses on the royal influence which is, according to the author, at the root of this story as well as that of the *Doomed Prince* and the *Tale of Two Brothers* (all three stories being inspired by contact with the Near Eastern cultural region).[168]

The pBN 202 was first published in 1868 by Willem Pleyte[169] and later received only brief mentions by a few authors (see "Bibliography to pBN 202: A Chronological Overview"). It was generally referred to as "Hymn to Amenophis II".

being that Perunefer would have been a seagoing port and therefore the location in Avaris/Per-Ramesses being more suitable (for more details, see Manfred Bietak and Irene Forstner-Müller, "The Topography of New Kingdom Avaris and Per-Ramesses", in M. Collier and S. Snape (eds.), *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K. A. Kitchen*, [S.I.]: Rutheford Press Ltd., 2011, p. 23–50). Based on inscriptions from blocks from the *cour de la cachette* in Karnak mentioning the cult of "Amun of Perunefer", Bietak argues that: "Amenophis II introduced the cults of Perunefer, his preferred place in Egypt, to the principal two residences in Egypt, Memphis and Thebes, as affiliated cults" ("Perunefer: An Update": 17). It is also worthy of note that the text of pBN 202 represents a eulogy of the very same pharaoh Amenophis II, who was a promoter of the cults of Perunefer.

164 Schneider, "Texte": 608, 610, n. 15.

165 Schneider, "Texte": 611, n. 16 (pLeiden I 343 + 345 recto IV 9 – V 2).

166 Schneider, "Foreign Egypt": 155–161 (specifically p. 160–161).

167 Below (p. 247–251) I will argue that even though, superficially, the narrative of the Astarte Papyrus looks like a direct copy of a foreign myth, it has been paired in the Egyptian mind with traditional religious and political concepts. This does not refute the fact that Egyptian civilisation was subject to change just as any other cultural complex, but it has serious consequences for the possible reconstruction of the missing text and its position within Egyptian mythography.

168 Anthony Spalinger, "Transformations in Egyptian Folktales: The Royal Influence", *Revue d'Égyptologie* [RdE] 58 (2007): 137–156 (specifically p. 151–152).

169 Pleyte, *Le Papyrus Rollin*, p. 23–24, pl. XV.

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Since the association of the pBN 202 with the pAmherst IX in 2001, the bibliography is identical for both papyri (see above "Bibliography to pAmherst IX: A Chronological Overview" year 2001 and further).

CHAPTER II

Translation of pBN 202+pAmherst IX[171]

pBN 202

1,1 The 5th year, 3rd month of the *peret* season, day 19•
May the king of Upper and Lower Egypt ⸢([...])⸣ live, l.p.h.•[172]
The son of Re, ⸢(Amenophis the Ruler of Heliopolis)⸣, l.p.h.•
may (he) be given eternal and everlasting[173] life.•
May [he] appear [...[174]] 1,2 as his father Re every day.•
Re[newal...] which he did for the Ennead•[175]
so as to combat with *Ym* [176] [...•].

171 I have based my translation on the new *editio princeps* (photographic edition and hieroglyphic transcription of the pBN 202 and pAmherst IX) published by Collombert et Coulon, "Les dieux contre la mer": 194, 196, 230–241. For a detailed philological analysis I refer the reader to the *editio princeps* (see above) and to the most interesting commentaries in: Schneider, "Texte": 610–617.

172 l.p.h. (*ʿnḫ.w, wḏʿ.w, snb.w*) is a standard Egyptian abbreviation regularly placed after the name of the king wishing him "life, prosperity, and health".

173 Here, there are two words in the Egyptian original designating eternity: *ḏḏ* and *nḥḥ*. For a coherent explanation of these terms, see: Gertie Englund, "God as a Frame of Reference: On Thinking and Concepts of Thought in Ancient Egypt", in G. Englund (ed.), *The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians: Cognitive Structures and Popular Expressions, Proceedings of Symposia in Uppsala and Bergen 1987 and 1988*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis Boreas [Uppsala Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations 20], Uppsala, 1989, p. 7–28 (specifically p. 7–19); Jan Assmann, *Ägypten: Theologie und Frömmigkeit einer frühen Hochkultur*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1984, chapter 3.4.

174 Schneider ("Texte": 610, n. 14) suggests "auf dem Thron des Geb"; Collombert et Coulon ("Les dieux contre la mer": 200) suggest "sur le trône d'Horus".

175 The term "Ennead" (i.e. the nine gods) designates the whole Egyptian pantheon (3×3 = a plural of plurals) or a certain grouping of gods not always regarding their actual number even though the most famous Ennead of Heliopolis did comprise nine deities. For further comments, see Lana Troy, "The Ennead: The Collective as Goddess. A Commentary on Textual Personification", in Englund (ed.), *The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 59–69.

176 For a discussion on the meaning of the word *Ym*, see below p. 75–76.

[I want to celebrate] 1,3 your strength/victory.•
[I] want to extol [...] recounting•
that which you did when you were only a child.•
Your heroic deeds[177] [...] 1,4 teachings for me.•
He did [...•]
where [Sh]ay and Renenut [...are]/[Sh]ay and Renenut are extolled [...]•
Shay (made a) decision for her with Renenut[178] [...] 1,5[•]
and that which he built (is) in me.•
Sur[pass...]•
his garments are armour[179] and bow.•
[He] created [...] 1,6 the mountains and mountain-tops•
[...] and greatness resembling the sky has been predestined for him.•
And mon[uments ...] constructed [...] 1,7 haste?•[180]
The two [mount]ains[181] were created•
to trample your enemies•
[...] 1,8 just as *g3š.w*[182] are trampled[•]
[...the s]ky and the earth•
to gladden the Ennead.•
Construct [...] 1,9 his head•
and his horn[s[183]...•]
[...] his enemies•
and his adversaries.•
When [...] 1,10 [...] the [...] was found [...]
[... ... ...•]
[...] in rejoicing [...] 1,11 [...]•

177 According to Schneider ("Texte": 611, n. 17)  is a loan-word from Hurrian.
178 Together, Shay and Renenut(et) were linked with the function of appointing destiny and Renenut was, moreover, a protective deity associated with birth (see, for example: Richard H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2003 p. 128–129, 225–226). Even though this passage is very unclear and translations are only very approximate, in general we witness the birth of the hero(?) and/or the appointing of his destiny by Shay and Renenut.
179 The word *ṯryn* (armour) is of Syrian origin. See, for example, James E. Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period*, Princeton (New Jersey): Princeton University Press, 1994, p. 366–367, n. 546.
180 This word represents a *hapax legomenon* and the determinative of the feet in motion and its onomatopoeic nature (*rwq3rwq3*) are reminiscent of some sort of fast movement. For details, see: Schneider, "Texte": 611, n. 18; Collombert et Coulon, "Les dieux contre la mer": 205, n. "t").
181 For a commentary, see below, p. 72–73.
182 Schneider, "Texte": 611 translates as "Schilf"; identically Collombert et Coulon, "Les dieux contre la mer": 200 translate as "roseaux".
183 For a commentary, see below p. 73.

The [... ... ...•]
[... ... ...] she was furious•
V[enerate]/S[star] [... ... ...•]

pAmherst IX

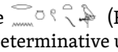
Page 1 *one or more lines lost*
1, x [...] he [... ... ...] he [... ... ...] 1, x+1 [...] his two bulls•[184]
I want to praise yo[u[185]... ... ...](group of men)•
I want to praise [...•]
1, x+2 I want to praise the sky [...] dwelling-place [...•]
[... ... ...] the earth•
[... ... ...] 1, x+3 the sky.•
When [... ... ...] the earth•
and the earth was satisfied/pacified [... ... ...•]
[...] 1, x+4 may I uncover/take away his [... ... ...•]
[...] then they bent as *šȝḳȝ*•[186]
[... ... ...•]
1, x+5 Then [each] man embraced [his fellow... ... ...•]
[...] after s[eve]n/f[ort]y days•
and the sky [... ... ...•]
[...] 1, x+6 descending upon [... ... ...•]
[...] *Ym*•
and [... ... ...the ea] 1, x+7 -rth gave birth [... ... ...•]
[...] four regions of the [world... ... ...•]
[...] 1, x+8 in its midst•
as if suspended [... ... ...•]
[...] his throne of (Ruler)| l.p.h.•
And then he [... ... ...•]

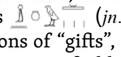
184 For a commentary, see below, p. 73, n. 207.
185 In this part, Schneider ("Texte": 612, n. 25) does not see the beginning of an independent pronoun for second person singular (*tj*) but the beginning of the name Teshub (Teššob). He also restored the lacuna, which follows as: "[ich will verehren Astarte-die-Zornigste-der-Wüten]den".
186 Schneider ("Texte": 613, n. 30) remarks that this must be a Semitic loan-word and refers to a passage in the Baal Cycle (CAT 1,2, 21–26) in which the gods assembled together at a feast bow low to the messengers of Yam – except for Baal who is vexed by this act.

[…] 1, x+9 to bring him tribu[te…•]
[… … …] to the assembly.•
Then Renut[187] brought […. … …•]
[…] 1, x+10 as ⟨Ruler⟩ l.p.h. […•]
[… … …the sk]y•
And behold, one brings tribute[188] to him[…•]
[… … …•]
[… … 1, x+11 …•]
[…] he or he will take us cap[tive•]
[… … …] 1, x+12 our own to […•]
[… … …] Renut his tribute in silver and gold,•
lapis lazuli […] the boxes.•
Then they said to 1, x+13 the Ennead:•
G[ive?… … …]the tribute of *Ym*•
so that he may hear our words […the eart]h•
protects from him.•
Will he

Page 2: *about 6 lines lost*

2, x+1 Then they are afraid of […. … …]
[… … …]
2, x+2 of *Ym*.•
Give […. … …th]e tribute of The S[ea…•]
[… … …] 2, x+3 evil.•
Then Renut took a […. … …] Astarte•
Then said […. … …•]

187 What is interesting here is the different spelling of the goddess' name  (Re[ne]nut) in connection with bringing tribute (in this case her name ends with a determinative used for male gods or deities in general). as compared to  (Renenut, 1,4) in connection with birthing and destiny (the cobra indicates a female goddess). Could it be that in the latter case it was not her connection with fertility and femininity but her role as the producer of wealth that caused the changed spelling? See also Collombert et Coulon, "Les dieux contre la mer": 203, n. "l". For a further discussion on the role of Renut, see below, p. 242–244; 247.

188 The word used in this context is  (*jn.w*) – gifts. For a very comprehensive work on the meaning and cultural implications of "gifts", see: Edward Bleiberg, *The Official Gift in Ancient Egypt*, Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996; Diamantis Panagiotopoulos, "Tributabgaben und Huldigungsgeschenke aus der Levante: Die Ägyptische Nordexpansion in der 18. Dynastie aus Strukturgeschichtlicher Sicht", *Ägypten und Levante* 10 (2000): 139–158. For these references I would like to thank Jana Mynářová from the Czech Institute of Egyptology of Charles University in Prague, personal communication, Prague, 25.8.2008.

[…] 2, x+4 the birds:[189] "Hear what I have to say.•
Do not depart […. … …•]
[…] another go to Astarte […. … …•]
[…] 2, x+5 her house•
and shriek below […•]
[… … …•] she sleeps•
and say to her:•
'If [you… … …•]
2, x+6 If you are asleep•
I will w[ake you up•]
[… … …*Y*]*m* as a <⟨>Ruler<⟩ l.p.h.>[190] upon […•]
[… … …] 2, x+7 the sky.•
Come to them at this […•]
[… … …•]
2, x+8 […] (foreigners)•
Then Ast[arte… … …•]
2, x+9 […. … …•]
2, x+10 […] (strength) the daughter of Ptah.•
The[n… … …•]
2, x+11 […] of *Ym*.•
The […. … …•]
2, x+12 […] go yourself•
with the tribute of [*Ym*… … …•]
2, x+13 […th]en Astarte we[pt… … …•]
2, x+14 […hi]s ⟨Ruler⟩ l.p.h. was silent.•
[… … …•]
2, x+15 […li]ft up your face [… … …•]
2, x+16 […li]ft up your face•
and it is you […. … …•]
[… … …] 2, x+17 out.•
Lifting is th[at which…] […•]
[… … …] sang and tittered at him […•]

189 Astarte (and her divine transformations in other traditions – Ishtar, Innana, Sauska, etc.) is traditionally connected with birds as her emblematic animals. For example, in a Hittite translation of an originally West Semitic myth of "Elkunirša and Ašertu" (A ii 4´–16´) we read that: "Astarte […] became an owl and perched on his wall. […] Astarte flew like a bird across the desert." (Gary Beckman, "Elkunirša and Ašertu", in Hallo (ed.), *The Context of Scripture*, p. 149).

190 The cartouche and the phrase "l.p.h." is missing in this case. Compare with 1, x + 8 and 10; 2, x + 14.

[...] 2, x+18 saw Astarte sitting on the seashore.•[191]
Then he said to her: "From [where] did you come, daughter of Ptah,•
you angry and furious 2, x+19 goddess•?
Have you ruined your sandals which were (on your) feet?"•
Have you torn your clothes which were on you•
by coming and going in the sky and in the Underworld?"•[192]
Then he said

Page 3: *about 22 lines lost*
3, y–2 [... ... ...the Go]ds•
If you give me your(m.) [...•]
[...] they, what will I do 3, y–1 against you, just me alone? Astarte heard that what *Ym*
had said and she got up to leave (and appear)•
before the Ennead on the place where they were gathered.•
And the mighty ones saw her,•
3, y they rose up before her,•
and the small ones saw her,•
and they lay on their bellies,•
and her throne was given to her,•
and she sat down,•
and they brought to her the

Page 4: *about 22 lines lost*
4, y–2 the earth [... ... ...•]
[... ... ...•]
[...] 4, y–1 the pea[rls...•]
[...] and the pearls [... ... ...•]
[...] 4, y the messenger of Ptah left to report these words to Ptah and Nut.•

191 A similar motif can also be found in the Hurrian myth, belonging to the Kumarbi cycle, the Song of Heddamu. Heddamu is a monster begotten by the god Kumarbi and the daughter of the sea god. The monster is a sea serpent with an enormous appetite for everything living. It is the Hurrian storm god Teshub who must fight this monster. His sister Shaushka (Hurrian version of Ishtar) tries to help her brother. She develops a plan very similar to that of Astarte in the pBN 202+pAmherst IX. She washes and anoints herself with fine perfumed oil, enhancing her already seductive qualities. Accompanied by music, she goes down to the seashore and tries to seduce the monster Heddamu with her charms (Hoffner, *Hittite Myths*, p. 50–55).

192 As Schneider ("Texte": 615, n. 38) remarks, Egyptians distinguished the phrase *ḥr tꜣ* (on earth) and *m tꜣ* "in the Underworld". This reminds us of the descent of Innana/Astarte into the netherworld in Mesopotamian mythology. See for example: Stephanie Dalley, "The Descent of Ishtar to the Netherworld", in Hallo (ed.), *The Context of Scripture*, p. 381–384.

Then Nut untied the pearls which were around her neck.•
Behold, she put (them) on the balance

Page 5: *about 23 lines lost*
5, y–1 [...] Astarte. O my [... ... ...•]
[... ... ...•]
[...] 5, y [...contention] it is with the Ennead (and) then he sent and demanded [...•]
[...] the seal of Geb [...] in which the balance (is). So

Page 6: *about 24 lines lost*
6, y (abstractum) of [... ... ...]

Page 7: *about 24 lines lost*
7, y [...] his with [... ... ...] my basket of [... ... ...]

Page 8: *about 24 lines lost*
8, y her and he [... ... ...]

Page 9: *the whole page lost*

Page 10: *about 24 lines lost*
10, y [...the tribut]e of *Y*[*m*...] (verb of motion) through the gates [...] the gates go

Page 11: *about 24 lines lost*
11, y [... ... ...] the [... ... ...] if they come [... ... ...]

Page 12: *the whole page lost*

Page 13: *the whole page lost*

Page 14: *about 24 lines lost*
14, y [... ... ...*Y*]*m* and he will cover the earth and the mountains and

Page 15: *about 22 lines lost*
15, y–1 [... ... ...h]is throne 15, y [...] of [...] you [...to com]e and to fight with him, then he sat down calmly (lit. cooly). He will not come to fight with us. Then Seth sat down

Page 16+x: *about 24 lines lost*
16, y you me and your(m.) [... ... ...]

Page 17+x: *about 24 lines lost*
17, y [...] *Ym* [... ... ...]

Page 18+x: *about 24 lines lost*
18, y [... ... ...] and he [... ... ...]

Page 19+x: *about 24 lines lost*
19, y [...] the s[even... ... ...] and the sky [... ... ...]

Synopsis and *dramatis personae* – foreign characters (Seth-Baal, Yam, Astarte)

To make some sense of this fragmentary text, we must first understand who the *dramatis personae* are and especially the enigmatic hero whose appearance, abilities and (childhood?) deeds are described in cosmographic settings at the beginning [1,3–1,11]. Since the whole papyrus seems to be a eulogy of the young Amenophis II, it is very probably him. However, the whole story has a theological setting and we can therefore expect that the pharaoh will be praised in the guise of a deity. As I am going to analyse the papyrus in more detail further on in the book (see p. 239–246), it will currently suffice to give a synopsis of the composition which will also outline the basic motifs of the whole narrative:

1,1–1,2	Introduction – date and epithets.	2,x+1–2,x+3	Tribute and Yam are mentioned now and again in connection with fear and "evil".
1,2	Mention of a renewal [of a cult or possibly a shrine for Seth-Baal-King?] so as to enable him to battle Yam on behalf of the Egyptian gods (the Ennead).	2,x+3–2,x+12	The Ennead is trying to resolve the impending situation – Renut sends a bird as a messenger to Astarte. She is bid to come before the Ennead and is entrusted with the task of bringing the tribute to Yam.
1,3–1,4	In the introduction, mention is made of childhood deeds of the hero which the composition wants to celebrate.	2,x+13–2,x+17	Astarte is crying (because of the harshness of the task?) And Yam (Ruler) seems not to be communicating.

1,4–1,5	The birth(?) of the hero and appointing of destiny(?) to him by the goddess Renenut and the god Shay.	2,x+17–2,x+19	Astarte finally goes naked down to the sea shore and tries to attract Yam's attention by singing and laughing.
1,5–1,9 and 1, x+1	The hero's appearance and the description of his attributes.	3,y-2–3,y-1	(After a series of negotiations?) Yam agrees to certain conditions remarking that he alone could not fight all the gods.
1,x+1–1,x+2	Incantation praising (the hero?).	3,y-1–3,y	Astarte goes back with the message. She is greeted and praised.
1,x+3	Cosmic setting – in fragments we hear of the sky, the (satisfied/pacified) earth.	4,y-2–4,y	Collection of the tribute starts – part of it is obviously a pearl necklace of Nut.
1,x+4	Subordinates are mentioned ("then they bent as *šȝḫȝ*").	5,y-1–5,y	(might Astarte be going there and forth always with further demands of the veracious Yam?) finally demanding the seal of Geb.
1,x+5–1,x+7	An allusion to a cosmological act(?) ("the earth gave birth", "four regions of the world" etc.). First mention of Yam.	10,y	We hear of gates (to a palace?).
1,x+8	In the midst of the creation(?) the throne of the Ruler is built.	14,y	A threat is formulated that Yam will cover the earth and the mountains.
1,x+9–1,x+13	We first hear of the claim to the tribute ("to bring him tribute") and of a certain "assembly". Renut brings precious stuffs, the "assembly" is threatened to be taken captive by Yam(?) who demands tribute. The tribute is a condition on which Yam(?) is willing to start negotiating with the Ennead.	15,y	Seth is persuaded that Yam will not dare to fight the Ennead (represented by him as the mightiest and strongest god). [*page 15–19 mainly destroyed*]

One of the main themes of the fragments are the repeated threats from Yam towards the Ennead. Yam, representing the force of an aquatic element, is a mighty opponent and only a mighty god-pharaoh could actually stand up to him and resist. This hero would then be in the position of a protector of order on behalf of the Ennead (Egypt) which is, of course, the main duty of a strong pharaoh. The ideal candidate for this role is the mighty and masculine god Seth, the vanquisher of Apophis on the prow of the sun god's bark.[193] This god, however, simultaneously exhibits strong disintegrative or chaotic traits which connect him especially to deities considered foreign by the Egyptians (see below). The Astarte Papyrus has obviously been inspired by similar works

[193] te Velde, *Seth*, p. 99–109; see also p. xxx, n. xxx.

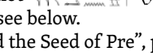
of West Semitic origin such as the Baal Cycle from Ugarit in which the mighty and powerful storm god Baal vanquishes his foe Yam.[194] Indeed, Seth and Baal were regularly associated in the Egyptian tradition.[195] Moreover, there are other attestations in the Egyptian material of a conflict between Seth and Yam (or *w3ḏ wr*).[196] The Astarte Papyrus, therefore, is not the only case. For example, in the Hearst medical papyrus (11.12–15) in a spell directed against the Asiatic malady we read: "Who is wise like Re? Who is as wise as this god, who blackens his belly in order to seize the God Above?[197] Even as Seth conjured the Sea[198], so will Seth conjure you, Asiatic disease! Then you will no longer wander about in the body of X son of Y"[199] In fact, the profile of Seth-Baal exactly corresponds to the epithets and attributes stated in the Astarte Papyrus in connection with the hero (especially in 1,5–1,9 and 1, x+1).[200] Thus he is obviously a warrior god ("His garments are armour and bow" – moreover, the word *ṯryn* [armour] is of Syrian origin[201]). The phrase "He created the mountains and mountain-tops" seems more like a literary ellipsis of his close proximity to the mountains rather than a recognition of Baal as a creator god. In this context, it is important to note that Baal has always been connected with mountains and mountain tops (his abode being on Mount Sapan[202] north of Ugarit). The mention of "the two mountains" (1,7) might reflect the epithet *ḥry-tp ḏw.w* (the one on the mountain tops) which is often attributed to Baal in Egyptian texts[203] and even the pharaoh was sometimes compared to Baal:

194 Smith, "The Baal Cycle", p. 81–180.

195 te Velde, *Seth*, p. 109–134; Tazawa, *Syro-Palestinian Deities*, p. 154–156.

196 For a reference on the relevant papyri and ostraca, see Collombert et Coulon, "Les dieux contre la mer": 206–207, n. 27–34. See also Susan T. Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers": A Mythological, Religious, Literary, and Historico-Political Study*, Oakville CT: Bannerstone Press: Bannerstone Press, 2008² [1982¹], p. 158, n. 85.

197 For a very interesting discussion on the identity of the God Above (*p3 nṯr ḥry*), see van Dijk, "Anat, Seth, and the Seed of Pre", p. 37 (m), n. 41–47: "[...]'the god who blackens his belly' is Re himself. Black is the colour of night and underworld, and Osiris, Re's nocturnal body, is called 'the Black One (*km*)'. When Re descends into the underworld he makes himself 'black', and he and Osiris unite. The visible proof of the united Re-Osiris is the moon. When Re makes himself black he 'seizes' the God Above, i.e. the moon, his nocturnal manifestation. Although *ḥry* 'above' (not *p3 nṯr ḥry*!) is used in at least one isolated case with reference to the Sun-god, I think it is highly probable that in all of the texts discussed above the phrase *p3 nṯr ḥry* denotes the Moon-god."

198 The Egyptian word used in this case is not  (*ym*) but *w3ḏ wr* (the Great green). For a discussion on these terms, see below.

199 Translation by van Dijk, "Anat, Seth, and the Seed of Pre", p. 37.

200 For the relationship between Seth-Baal and Amun-Re, see: Tazawa, *Syro-Palestinian Deities*, p. 156–158.

201 See above, p. 67, n. 179.

202 CAT 1.3, third tablet, col. 3, lines 28–31 (Smith, "The Baal Cycle", p. 110): "Come and I will reveal it/ in the midst of my mountain, divine Sapan,/in the holy mount of my heritage,/in the beautiful hill of my might."

203 See, for example: Stadelmann, *Syrisch-palästinensische Gottheiten*, p. 39, n. 4; p. 40, n. 4 and 17. For a comprehensive overview of the Egyptian material evidence connected with Baal, see: Tazawa, *Syro-Palestinian Deities*, p. 13–37.

sw mj Bʿr ḥb=f ḏw.w ("He is like Baal when he treads the mountains").[204] The mention of "his two horns" reminds us of a standard attribute of the Near Eastern storm gods[205] which was also adopted by Seth as depicted, for example, on the 400 Year Stela (see fig. 2).[206] At the beginning of the pAmherst IX we hear of "his two bulls". Schneider pointed out[207] that this could be in reference to the two bulls Serisu and Tella which, in the Ullikummi myth, accompany Teshub,[208] the Hurrian storm god – analogy to the West Semitic Baal. We can see that the physiognomy of the hero is ideally suited for a storm god of some sort (Baal, Teshub or other) – in the *interpretatio aegyptiaca* associated with Seth. The principal opponent of the Seth-Baal-Pharaoh hero is Yam – a non-Egyptian character introduced from the ancient Near East.[209] We could say that the two most important Egyptian aquatic deities were Nun and Hapy. The former represents the primeval "waters" which existed before creation but still surround the created world and are the source of un-ordered potency.[210] Nun is more passive than active (and definitely not actively aggressive), considered as the primeval abyss and therefore seems more often to be considered a location.[211] Hapy, on the other hand, is a direct personification of the yearly flooding of the Nile. In this aspect he was considered a benign deity and maintainer of order in the cosmos. The aspect which might connect Hapy to Yam is his sexual power. The Late Period Famine Stela expresses the yearly swelling of the waters of

fig. 2: Seth as represented on the 400 Year Stela. [te Velde, *Seth*, p. 125]

204 Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical,* Vol. I–VII, Oxford: Blackwell, 1969–1990, Vol. I, p. 21, § 3–4.

205 Izak Cornelius, *The Iconography of the Canaanite Gods Reshef and Baal: Late Bronze and Iron Age I Periods (1500–1000 BCE)*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis [OBO] 140, Fribourg: University Press Fribourg; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994, p. 247.

206 Pierre Montet, "La stèle de l'an 400 retrouvée", *Kêmi* 4 (1931–1933): pl. XIII and XIV; see also te Velde, *Seth*, p. 125, fig. 15; Tazawa, *Syro-Palestinian Deities*, p. 14 (Doc. 2), 154.

207 Schneider, "Texte": 612, n. 24.

208 Hoffner, *Hittite Myths*, p. 61, §38–39.

209 See also very interesting comments on this topic by Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 157–159.

210 See, for example, Otto Kaiser, *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres in Ägypten, Ugarit und Israel*, Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1959.

211 The only exception seems to be a unique text carved on the stela no. 31737 located in the Field Museum in Chicago in which Nun is depicted as a lecherous deity striving to trick a sensuous naked goddess bathing in a river (see above, p. 55–56; 215, n. 573).

the Nile as an act of copulation.[212] It is also the opinion of Claude Vandersleyen that *ym* is in many contexts actually identical to *ḥꜥpj*. The swelling of the Nile (described in sexual terms) coincides very fittingly with the idea of a (lecherous) aquatic character invading the earth. Nevertheless, the exact meaning of the word *ym* in ancient Egyptian is a topic of heated discussions among Egyptologists. Reinhard Grieshammer claims that the term *p3 ym* designated bodies of water alternatively referred to as *w3ḏ wr*.[213] On the other hand, Christine Favard-Meeks understands *w3ḏ wr* to be an area which may be covered either by water or by greenery (or both), whereas *ym* is a designation for a water surface only.[214] Alessandra Nibbi contradicts the statements that the *w3ḏ wr* could have meant "the sea" and favours the interpretation that it designates the vast, uncultivable marshlands of the Nile delta into which the Nile disappeared some 160 kilometres before reaching the shore of the Mediterranean.[215] At the same time, she agrees that the word *ym* does stand for "the sea" on many occasions.[216] Florence Friedman argued against Alessandra Nibbi and, by quoting ancient Egyptian texts, tried to prove that the translation of the term *w3ḏ wr* varied in different contexts and meant "generally waters, both fresh and salt water, covering the Delta, Nile, Red Sea[217] and later the Mediterranean and Aegean".[218] Claude Vandersleyen presented two major monographs on the topic of *w3ḏ wr* in which he also addresses the issues surrounding the term *ym*.[219] His general idea is that both *w3ḏ wr* and *ym*

212 Originally published by Heinrich K. Brugsh, *Die biblischen sieben Jahre der Hungersnoth nach dem Wortlaut einer altägyptischen Felseninschrift*, Leipzig, 1891; later re-published by Pascal Barguet, *La stèle de la famine à Séhel*, Institut français d'archéologie orientale [IFAO], Bibliothèque d'étude (34), Cairo, 1953. The historical background of the text is described by Gertrud Dietze, "Philae und die Dodekaschoinos in ptomlemäischer Zeit", *Ancient Society* [AncSoc] 25 (1994): 63–110 (especially p. 94–97). For a translation and bibliography, see, for example: Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. III: The Late Period*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1976, p. 94–105.

213 Reinhard Grieshammer, "Jam" in Helck und Otto (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. III, cols. 242–243.

214 Christine Favard-Meeks, "Le Delta égyptien et la mer jusqu'à la fondation d'Alexandrie", *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* [SAK] 16 (1989): 39–63.

215 Alessandra Nibbi, "Henu of the Eleventh Dynasty and *w3ḏ-wr*", *Göttinger Miszellen* [GM] 17 (1975): 39–44.

216 Alessandra Nibbi, "Further remarks on *w3ḏ-wr*, Sea Peoples and Keftiu", *Göttinger Miszellen* [GM] 10 (1974): 35–40 (specifically p. 35).

217 For an overview of other terms connected with the Red Sea, see: Wilhelm Spiegelberg, "Die ägyptischen Name für das Rote Meer", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* [ZÄS] 66 (1930): 37–39.

218 Florence Friedman, "On the meaning of *w3ḏ wr* in Selected Literary Texts", *Göttinger Miszellen* [GM] 17 (1975): 15–21.

219 Claude Vandersleyen, *Ouadj our : un autre aspect de la vallée du Nil*, Bruxelles: Connaissance de l'Égypte Ancienne (Étude 7), 1999. A chapter devoted to the analysis of *ym* can be found on p. 87–128 (Chapter 6). Several years later he updated and expanded his analysis in *Le delta et la vallée du Nil. Le sens de ouadj our (w3ḏ wr)*, Bruxelles: Connaissance de l'Égypte Ancienne (Étude 10), 2008. He included a number of texts which he omitted in his 1999 monograph and also responded to his critics. On p. 61, n. 2 in Chapter 6, § 1 *Le Nil et le Ym* Vandersleyen cross-referenced the chapter on *ym* in his publication from 1999 and added that "il n'y a rien d'essentiel à changer." A sort of summary

refer in one way or another to the Nile, i.e. *the* body of water which was so crucial for the ancient Egyptians. In this respect, Vandersleyen re-interprets the "traditional" renderings of several ancient Egyptian texts and puts them in a closer geographical association with the Nile and its valley.

The word *ym* is obviously a loan-word from the Semitic languages.[220] Taking into account the discussion which I have briefly summarised, for the sake of this study and for my translations I am going to avoid a direct translation of the term *ym*. The various interpreters do agree that this word designates some body of water, be it a sea, a river, or specifically the Nile. In the texts which I am going to analyse it is, to a certain extent, irrelevant what precisely was meant by the term. What is important is the fact that in all cases *Ym* (personified) acts as an avaricious and demanding character with the ability of leaving a designated space and invading a different geographical/ontological zone. This role puts *Ym* into a certain configuration with the other characters, regardless of the specific type of body of water which might be alluded to.

Another important actor of our narrative is Astarte, after whom the papyrus takes its name. This is because the earliest interpreters have considered Astarte the main character of the whole narrative (see above, p. 49–50). In my further analysis I will show that even though her role was important, it is always of a mediatory nature and not that of a main character. Astarte is not an autochthonous Egyptian deity.[221] She was probably imported with other foreign gods in the 18th dynasty after Egypt began its imperialist expansion in the Near East.[222] She is mentioned in connection

of his basic ideas is also found in Claude Vandersleyen, "*Ym* désignant l'eau de l'inondation", in Tomás A. Bács (ed.), *A Tribute to Excellence, Studies Offered in Honor of Ernö Gaál, Ulrich Luft, László Török*, Studia Aegyptiaca XVII, Budapest 2002, p. 473–475.

220 For a linguistic analysis of the origins of the word Yammu, resp. Eblaitic *wammum*, see: Pelio Fronzaroli, "Ebl. wammum « watercourse ; stream »", *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* [N.A.B.U] 3 (1998): 83. For this reference I thank Pavel Čech from the Institute of Comparative Linguistics at Charles University in Prague, personal communication, 2004.

221 For general information about Astarte in Egypt, see, for example: Wolfgang Helck, *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr*, Ägyptologische Abhandlungen [ÄA] 5, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1962, p. 456, 490–499; Jean Leclant, "Astarte à cheval d´après les répresantations égyptiennes", *Syria* 37 (1960): 1–67; Christian Leitz (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichungen*, Bd. II, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta [OLA] 111, Leuven: Peeters, 2002, p. 212–213; Izak Cornelius, *The Many Faces of the Goddess: The Iconography of the Syro-Palestinian Goddesses Anat, Astarte, Qedeshet, and Asherah c. 1500–1000 BCE*, Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004; Sakkie Cornelius, "The Egyptian Iconography of the Goddesses Anat and Astarte", in K. M. Cialowicz and J. A. Ostrowski (eds.), *Les civilisations du Bassin méditerranéen. Hommage à Joachim Sliwa*, Cracovie: Univ. Jagellone, Inst. de Archéologie, 2000, p. 71–77; Tazawa, *Syro-Palestinian Deities*, esp. p. 83–95ff.

222 Leclant, "Astarte à cheval": 4. The oldest written record of her name (a toponym containing her name) comes from the temple at Karnak (sixth pylon) from the lists of the Syro-Palestinian cities subjugated by the pharaoh Thutmosis III during his first campaign in this area. See: Jan J. Simons, *Handbook for the Study of Egyptian Topographical Lists Relating to Western Asia*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1937,

with Amenophis II (the hero of the Astarte Papyrus, ruled approx. 1424–1398 B.C.) on a stela alongside Resheph celebrating the virtuosity with which the pharaoh drives his chariot.[223] Astarte has always been very closely connected with the pharaoh, horses and especially with warfare.

In the West Semitic context, Astarte was closely associated with the goddess Anat.[224] In the surviving texts from the coastal city of Ugarit (Ras Shamra), Astarte and Anat accompany the storm god Baal in his battle against Yam (the Sea). The close connection between Anat and Astarte is also obvious from the Egyptian material. In the Contendings of Horus and Seth (3,4) we hear an order from Neith to the Ennead to: "Enrich Seth in his possessions. Give him Anat and Astarte [the daughters of the Universal Lord] and install Horus in his position of his father Osiris." In the Syro-Palestinian tradition these two goddesses are connected with war and aggression[225] but also with love and sensuality.[226] Both Anat and Astarte bear the epithet "Maiden" or "Girl" which is a way of emphasising their eroticism.[227]

p. 111–128 a., b., c.; Shmuel Ahituv, *Canaanite Toponyms in Ancient Egyptian Documents*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1984, p. 72–73.

223 K. Sethe, W. Helck, H. Schäfer, H. Grapow, O. Firchow (Hrsg.), *Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums*, Bd. IV, Leipzig/Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1955–1957, §1282, 15.

224 Tazawa, *Syro-Palestinian Deities*, esp. p. 72–82ff.

225 CAT 1.16, third tablet, col. 6, lines 54–57: "May Horon crack, my son,/may Horon crack your head,/Astarte-named-with-Baal, your skull!" (Edward L. Greenstein, "Kirta", in Parker (ed.), *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, p. 42). CAT 1.3, third tablet, col. 2, lines 3–16: "The gates of Anat's house are closed,/she meets youths at the foot of the mountain./And look! Anat fights in the valley,/battles between the two towns./She fights the people of the se[a]-shore,/strikes the populace of the su[nr]ise./Under her, like balls, are hea[ds,]/above her, like locusts, hands,/like locusts, heap of warrior-hands./She fixes heads to her back,/fastens hands to her belt./Knee-deep she glea[n]s in warrior-blood,/Neck-deep in the gor[e] of soldiers./With club she drives away captives,/with her bow-string, the foe." (Smith, "The Baal Cycle", p. 107)

226 CAT 1.14, firs tablet, col. 3, lines 41–45 (Kirta is imagining what his ideal wife should look like): "Who's as fair as the goddess Anath,/who's as comely as Astarte;/whose eyes are lapis lazuli,/eyeballs, gleaming alabaster;/who'll transfix (?) me [...];/I'll repose in the gaze of her eyes [...]" (Smith, "The Baal Cycle", p. 17)

227 In CAT 1.10 and 1.11 Anat is depicted (in the form of a heifer) as engaging in a love play with the storm god Baal. An Egyptian parallel to this text exists in which Seth's sexual act with Anat is described. See: van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 31–51 and Schneider, "Texte": 619–622. In the CAT 1.92, first tablet, lines 25–32 the epithet "Maiden" belongs to Astarte, bearing identical sexual meaning.

CHAPTER III

Interpretation: A Question of method

In 1899 P. E. Newberry stated that "the papyrus is unfortunately too fragmentary to permit of any connected translation being made." [228] Even though at present we have a larger part of the text at our disposition, still both the translation and the interpretation of the contents of pBN 202+pAmherst IX are rather difficult due to its fragmentary state. There are two main steps when interpreting ancient texts. The first phase is the translation accompanied by a philological analysis followed by a historical analysis with commentaries on separate motifs within the story, the *Sitz im Leben* etc. Collombert and Coulon were very successful in uncovering the historical context of the origin of the pBN 202+pAmherst IX. They have very convincingly shown that the identity of the hero is the personage of Seth-Baal with a eulogical reference to King Amenophis II. Their work is a beautiful example of an erudite and detailed approach, even though it is possible to supplement their views in many aspects, as Schneider did.[229] Nevertheless, another phase must follow and at this point Egyptologists often stop or fall back on traditional interpretational methods – the historicising method and the view of the Myth Ritual School. In Part I (see above p. 25–44) I have tried to show that these approaches present significant limitations in our effort to understand ancient texts. The method which I will be advocating falls into the tradition of the anthropological structuralist interpretative approach as started by Claude Lévi-Strauss and further developed by others. I will be trying to ground the few fragments of the pBN 202+pAmherst IX within a broader framework of the Egyptian literary tradition and show in what way this story, replete with foreign characters, vocabulary and concepts, fitted in the horizon of Egyptian thought. In order to do this, I first have to summarise and present the basic concepts of the structuralist theories, show their

228 Newberry, *The Amherst Papyri*, p. 47.

229 Schneider, "Texte": 605–619.

weaknesses, offer solutions to overcome these weaknesses and subsequently perform an analysis of Egyptian (mythological) material.

Claude Lévi-Strauss and Structuralism[230]

Lévi-Strauss' theory is based on the structuralist linguistic theory as proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure and later developed by the Linguistic Circle of Prague (PLK).[231] The crucial asset was the formulation of the rule of the "arbitrary character of the linguistic signs" posed by Saussure. This rule states that "[...] it is the combination of sounds, not the sounds themselves, which provides the significant data."[232] In other words, Saussure rejects the theory "that a sound may possess a certain affinity with a meaning: for instance, the 'liquid' semi-vowels with water."[233] This theory is shown to be unsustainable by the fact that "the same sounds were equally present in other languages although the meaning they conveyed was entirely different."[234] On the level of the study of mythology, Lévi-Strauss compares this theory to the one proposed by Jung, who sees "archetypes" as symbolic representations common to all mankind – that is, having meaning in themselves regardless of the cultural context.[235]

230 In 1955 Claude Lévi-Strauss' published an article in which he defined his basic concepts. I worked with a reprint: Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, trans. from French by Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf, New York, London: Penguin Books, 1977, Chapter XI, p. 206–231. In structuring my summary of Claude Lévi-Strauss' theory I have been strongly influenced by the articles of Radek Chlup, "Strukturální antropologie včera a dnes: Sto let Clauda Lévi-Strausse 1" [Structural Anthropology Yesterday and Today: One Hundred Years of Claude-Lévi Strauss 1], *Religio*, 18/1 (2009): 3–34; Radek Chlup, "Strukturální antropologie včera a dnes: Sto let Clauda Lévi-Strausse 2" [Structural Anthropology Yesterday and Today: One Hundred Years of Claude-Lévi Strauss 2], *Religio*, 18/2 (2009): 155–183.

231 The Linguistic Circle of Prague was founded in 1926 and among the founding members were personalities such as Vilém Mathesius (President of the PLK until his death in 1945), Roman Jakobson, Nikolay Trubetzkoy, Sergei Karcevskiy, Jan Mukařovský, and many others (http://www.praguelinguistics.org/, accessed 3.2.2013).

232 Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 208.

233 Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 208.

234 Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 208.

235 Even though Jung's method is in a way opposed to that of Lévi-Strauss, he also assumed the collective, unconscious quality of the human mind in that it works in structures even though the content of these varies in different societies. On the similarities of the psychological and structuralist approach, see: John Raphael Staude, "From Depth Psychology to Depth Sociology: Freud, Jung, and Lévi-Strauss", *Theory and Society*, 3/3 (1976): 303–338.

Lévi-Strauss draws on Saussure further and says that myth, just like language, has two temporal dimensions, synchronic and diachronic, or *langue* and *parole*. *Langue* represents the language as a system which serves as the basis for all speakers whether they are aware of its structure or not. *Parole* is one specific oral expression which is guided by syntax.

As a system, *langue* belongs to the *synchronic* (or, for Saussure, *paradigmatic*) reversible time structure, whereas *parole*, guided by its syntax, belongs to the *diachronic* (or, for Saussure, *syntagmatic*) irreversible time structure (something which is said in a specific time and place). In actual life it is *parole* that interests people – by this we communicate with others. Linguists, on the other hand, preoccupy themselves with *langue*, which they regard as a system of all possible *paroles*. Mythology is analogous to language, while each separate myth or mythical motif corresponds to *parole*.[236] Lévi-Strauss' endeavour was to uncover the synchronic structure of myths (parallel to the notion of *langue*) which forms the basis of all individual mythical expressions.

In order to identify the synchronic structure of myth, we must first recognise the basic themes which are repeated in myths again and again. These basic units of a myth are called *mythemes*.[237] "Because the structure of myth is synchronic in its essence, it manifests itself through *repetition*. [...] Paradoxically, the most meaningful aspect of myth is its redundancy. This rule has got significant methodological consequences: in order to discover the structure, it is necessary to work with as many versions of a single myth as possible. [...] Each separate version is equivalent to that of an individual act of *parole*; we are, nevertheless, interested in language as a repertoire of all linguistic possibilities and therefore it is in our interest to examine as many versions as possible."[238] Lévi-Strauss exemplifies this "mythical redundancy" in his famous but also very controversial analysis of the Oedipus myth[239] and of other myths also belonging to the so-called Theban Cycle. The first mytheme, which Lévi-Strauss identifies, is the *overrating of blood relationships*. This is manifest in Oedipus' marriage with his mother Iocasta, in the almost obsessive effort of Cadmos to find his sister Europa in the

236 This concept is precisely the same as in Assmann's *Phänotext* (*langue*) and *Genotext* (*parole*). Assmann decided to use these "new" terms instead of using the established structuralist terminology. See: Assmann, "Die Verborgenheit": 37–39.

237 Here again, Lévi-Strauss has been inspired by the linguistic theory which distinguishes *phonemes* (the smallest linguistically distinctive units of sound), *morphemes* (the smallest linguistic unit that has semantic meaning: in spoken language composed of phonemes and of *graphemes* in written language) and *semantemes* (a combination of morphemes creating a meaningful utterance). *Mythemes* stand a level even higher being formed by a combination of semantemes.

238 Chlup, "Strukturální antropologie včera a dnes 1": 15.

239 Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 210–213.

course of which he travels from Phoinikia to Central Greece where he founds Thebes, and also in Antigone's persistent demand to bury her brother Polynices even though he came as an enemy to conquer Thebes.

The second mytheme is an inversion of the first one and consists of a series of acts of *underrating blood relationships*. The separate *paroles* would be Oedipus murdering his own father, the fratricidal fight between the Spartoi, the men of the "dragon seed",[240] as well as another fratricidal episode whose actors are Oeidipus' sons Eteocles and Polynices.

However, mythology does not only repeat mythemes throughout different myths, it also *transforms* them. An example of such a transformation was given by Edmund Leach. He takes a myth in which the hero Hippolytos plays the main role. Seemingly, there is no relation to the myth of Oedipus – the characters have different names. However, from a structural point of view it is a direct transformation of the myth of Oedipus:

> *Story*: Hippolytos is the son of Theseus by Antiope, Queen of the Amazons. Phaidra, daughter of Minos, is wife to Theseus and step-mother to Hippolytos. Phaidra falls in love with Hippolytos, who rejects her advances; Phaidra then accuses Hippolytos of having tried to rape her. In revenge Theseus appeals to Poseidon to slay Hippolytos, and Hippolytos dies. Phaidra commits suicide. Theseus discovers his error and suffers remorse.
>
> *Comment*: This is very close to being the inverse of the Oedipus story. Here the father kills the son instead of the son killing the father. The son does not sleep with the mother, though he is accused of doing so. The mother commits suicide in both cases; the surviving father-son suffers remorse in both cases. [...][241]

Leach goes on and adds other ancient Greek myths which he interprets as transformations of the Oedipus myth.[242] To get a gist of his comparison, we can show the transformations in the different renderings of the father-son relationship: "*Oedipus*: son kills father and becomes paramour; *Agamemnon*: paramour kills father inviting vengeance from the son; *Odysseus*: father merges with son and destroys the would-be paramours. Odysseus has no descendants; *Menelaos*: paramour (Paris) is destroyed by a third party and there is no heir (son); *Hippolytos*: innocent son, falsely accused of being

240 Originating from the teeth of Areus' dragon sowed into the ground by Cadmos during the foundation of the city of Thebes.
241 Edmund Leach, *Claude Lévi-Strauss*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989[2] [1970[1]], p. 84–85.
242 Leach, *Claude Lévi-Strauss*, p. 78–87.

paramour, is killed by father."[243] What the structuralist method does is pair material which very often has little or no affinity in content (for example, different names of the main actors) but recognises them as transformed versions of a single mytheme.

Within each culture, we can distinguish "sets" (or, as Lévi-Strauss calls them, "transformation groups"[244]) of transformational variants of a certain mytheme. Nevertheless, these sets are not closed, as Leach remarks, but can be linked with an indefinite number of other sets through reference to the same characters, place names or other.[245] "Individual myths share these themes but each myth shifts them to a different level by completely or partially inverting their structure. It is only in their mutual transformations that the mythical structures fully reveal themselves [...]."[246]

The main point of structuralist analysis (and also of the myth system itself) is not the identification (or creation) of mythemes themselves, but to show their structural relationships – it is these that bear the meaning. Individual elements are exchangeable and therefore meaningless in themselves.

The basic assertion, which Lévi-Strauss makes throughout his work, is that the human mind has a natural ability (or is even compelled) to create categories by which individuals organise the world around them. The elementary type of structural relationships between these categories is that of binary oppositions.[247] This principle is so basic that it exhibits itself on all levels and spheres of existence with which man is concerned and which he is able to discern (geographic, social, cosmological, alimentary, etc.). And, because myths are also products of the human mind, binary oppositions work as the basic principle of their structure as well. In his analysis of the Story of Asdiwal[248] (a myth narrated by a Tsimshian Indian group from North America) Lévi-Strauss gives an example of what he means. The oppositions are framed by four various orders: (1) the physical and political geography of the Tsimshian country (east × west; north × south; upstream × downstream; etc.); (2) the economic life of the natives (mountain-hunting × sea-hunting); (3) social and family organisation (mother × daughter; elder × younger; man × woman; endogamy × exogamy; patrilocality × matrilocality; etc.); (4) cosmology (heaven × subterranean home of the sea-lions). In some

243 Leach, *Claude Lévi-Strauss*, p. 87.
244 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology*, Vol. I, New York and Evanston: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969, p. 2–3. (Originally published in French as *Le Cru et le Cuit, Paris: Plon*, 1964.)
245 Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon", p. 48.
246 Chlup, "Strukturální antropologie včera a dnes 1": 20.
247 Unfortunately, I do not have space in my work to go into detail as to why this is so. For more details, see, for example, Leach, *Claude Lévi-Strauss*, p. 16–33.
248 Lévi-Strauss, "The Story of Asdiwal", p. 1–47.

cases, these opposites pervade several levels at one time (famine × plenty – a cosmological concept and at the same time a fact of the economic reality of the natives, etc.).[249]

These sets of oppositions are, each within its own order, "being used according to the needs of the moment, and according to its particular capacity, to transmit the same message."[250] The "same message" would then be some kind of paradox with which the given culture is confronted – there are many paradoxes in one culture. Edmund Leach gives some examples of irresolvable paradoxes of logic or fact: "How could there be a first man and a woman who were not also a brother and a sister?"; "How can one fit a desire for immortality with a knowledge of the certainty of impending death?"; "How is it that human beings are on the one hand animals (natural) and on the other hand not-animals (cultural)?"[251]

We have seen that myths work with basic cultural paradoxes and that the mechanism is that of the transformation of individual motifs paired as binary oppositions. The last question we have to answer is: What is the relation of myth and its constituent parts to these basic cultural and existential paradoxes? The relation is twofold, each possibility offering a different solution to the existence of the paradox. What connects these two solutions is the fact that myth in both cases strives to cope with the troubling character of the inherent paradoxes. What differs is the way it is achieved.

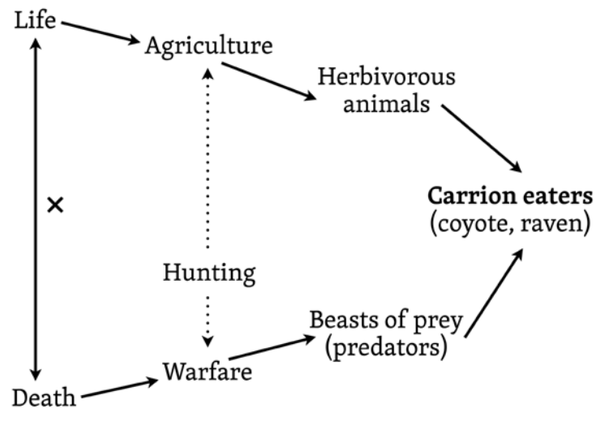
The first mechanism lies in the already mentioned transformations of individual mythemes throughout different myths. The outcome of the never ending permutations which myths undergo leads to the conclusion that the basic opposition (which is formulated at the end of a myth as the outcome of integrating separate, smaller oppositions throughout the narrative) is, in fact, insurmountable. This is shown on the level of the repeated failure of the main characters to overcome the individual oppositions. These oppositions, at the same time,

> [...] do not have to do anything with the reality of structure of the [...] society, but rather with its inherent possibilities and its latent potentialities. [...] [As] extreme positions, [they] are only *imagined* in order to show that they are *untenable*. This step, which is fitting for mythical thought, implies an admission (but in the veiled language of the myth) that the social facts when thus examined are marred by an insurmountable contradiction. A contradiction which, like the hero of the myth, [...] society cannot understand and prefers to forget.[252]

249 Lévi-Strauss, "The Story of Asdiwal", p. 7, 14.
250 Lévi-Strauss, "The Story of Asdiwal", p. 14.
251 Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon", p. 48.
252 Lévi-Strauss, "The Story of Asdiwal", p. 30.

But how does the myth help people to "forget"? As put by Leach, "the 'variations on a theme' which constantly recur in mythological systems serve to blur the edges of such 'contradictions' and thus to remove them from immediate consciousness."[253] Myths work with different sets of oppositions and, through the transformational process, connect them with other oppositions. The outcome is that the oppositions do not disappear – they cannot for they are inherent to society – but they become structured (they create relations with each other) and the fact of their existence thus becomes bearable. They cease being chaotic by becoming structured. Disorder (paradox) still lurks in the background but for that certain moment it is integrated into order.

The other possibility is that myths, through the process of transformation, relate those paradoxes (expressed by oppositions) which originally did not have a direct connection with each other, and then gradually mediate between them. This is done by the character of a *mediator* (or mediating actions). A mediator can equate an extreme opposition with a milder one and at the same time the narrower oppositions can be said to 'mediate' the great contradictions. A mediator is always a "liminal" character, somewhere in between the worlds or the contraries with which the myth deals. If we imagine myth as a pendulum (to this comparison we shall return later), theirs is the space between the swings. The so-called "tricksters" (not-good and at the same time not-bad) appearing in the mythologies of almost all cultures represent such mediators. To be more specific, Lévi-Strauss draws from the tradition of the Indian cultures of the Americas. He draws a diagram:[254]



253 Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon" p. 48.
254 Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 224.

> As we can see, the fact of life and inevitable death is an insurmountable opposition. But the opposition can be assimilated to economic activities which support life by means of killing, and to this extent lie somewhere between the two extremes of the initial opposition. Agriculture supports life by producing plant life and partakes of death only in the sense that harvesting kills the crops. It can be opposed to hunting, which sustains life through killing a life one has not produced, and an animal life obviously alive with a life like our own. A further opposition can be added by the opposition hunting/war. War is like hunting that it involves chase and killing, but it sustains life only indirectly, while it takes a human life and so produces a more serious form of death. To this triad of economic activities, one can compare the economic activities of animals. Herbivores harvest plants and so practice a kind of agriculture; though they do not themselves bring the plants to life. Predators are like hunters in that they kill what they eat, but also little like warriors in that they can kill men. Midway between these extremes stand carrion eaters, which are like predators in that they eat flesh, but like herbivores in that they do not kill what they eat.[255]

As mediators, the raven and the coyote occupy a very important position in the mythological complexes of the Indians.

In ancient Egypt, the importance of binary oppositions and gradual mediation between them was made evident by the Egyptians themselves.

> The temple material works very much with opposites. It constantly opposes concepts like **chaos** and **cosmos**, **night** and **day**, **death** and **life**, **Osiris** and **Re**, **female** and **male**. In this binary thinking the two opposed concepts are considered to be complementary and each pair of concepts forms a unit. […] it is the relation and interaction between these two poles and the integration of them (*coincidentia oppositorum*) that constitutes the unity, a living, creative, and life-giving unit.[256]

We will return to the role of mediators in the interpretation of Egyptian material (see p. 218–232).

The greatest advantage of Lévi-Strauss' approach is, at the same time, his greatest weakness. In his attempt to discover the aspects of myth which are not obvious

255 Eric Csapo, *Theories of Mythology*, Malden: Blackwell, 2005, p. 227–228.
256 Gertie Englund, "The Treatment of Opposites in Temple Thinking and Wisdom Literature", in Englund (ed.), *The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 77.

at first sight (synchronic structure of myth),[257] he has done away with the diachronic aspect of myth too abruptly. As accurately expressed by Eric Csapo: "Lévi-Strauss merely treats the syntagmatic chain as a means to the end of establishing the paradigmatic relations."[258]

To let Lévi-Strauss speak for himself: "[…] every syntagmatic sequence must be judged meaningless: either because no meaning is immediately apparent, or because we think we see a meaning, but do not know if it is the right one."[259]

As we have seen in Part I, "narrativity" is by many Egyptologists taken as being a prerequisite to considering some material to be a myth in the first place. We have now ended up with Lévi-Strauss' assertion that narrativity is actually meaningless in itself. I will argue that neither of these positions is correct, but before that, we have to give space to a critical evaluation of Lévi-Strauss' structuralist method.

Criticism and modifications of the structuralist method

Many objections have been raised against the structuralist method in the past and it would require an independent monograph to cover the discussion. From the many possibilities I shall only concentrate on two questions. Even though I do not consider the first one to represent relevant criticism, it needs to be addressed as it has repeatedly surfaced in the past in various contexts: (1) Is it possible to apply the structuralist method to "civilised" societies which acknowledge some type of "history" (i.e. they see meaning in gradual progress in time)?

The second question concerns Lévi-Strauss' tendency to reduce myth to its synchronic structure marginalising the diachronic aspect (or narrativity). Since this was also the main topic of Part I of this work, I consider this objection to be relevant and feel that this is indeed one of the main issues with Lévi-Strauss' approach: (2) Is not the narrative in some way important after all?

257 In this point Lévi-Strauss follows Troubetzkoy when stating that: "Structural linguistics shifts from the study of conscious linguistic phenomena to study of their unconscious infrastructure […]" (Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 33).
258 Csapo, *Theories of Mythology*, p. 235.
259 Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, p. 313.

Only fit for "primitive" societies?

(1) Paul Ricoeur objected that Lévi-Strauss mainly concentrates on investigating so-called "primitive" societies and, except for one case, when he analyses the myth of Oedipus, does not apply his method to more complex ("civilised") cultures, which do in fact have narrative as the main vehicle of mediating meaning.[260] This is also one of the main objections raised by the Egyptologist E. F. Wente[261] in his reply to a structural interpretation of the New Kingdom narrative known as the Contendings of Horus and Seth[262] by Robert A Oden, Jr.[263] Wente wrote:

> As far as methodology is concerned, how valid is it to apply the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss, derived from studies of primitive religions, to the religion of a highly civilized culture? If anything, in the sophistication of its ritualism and symbolism Egyptian religion is perhaps more akin to Eastern Orthodox Christianity, which I doubt can be easily reduced to the algebraic equations of structuralism.

This criticism is twofold. First it points to Lévi-Strauss' emphasis on interpreting solely the myths of "primitive" peoples. From this fact both Ricoeur and Wente deduce that the whole structuralist method is questionable because it has not been applied to "civilised" cultures such as the Judeo-Christian tradition. Ricoeur's criticism prompted Lévi-Strauss to react replying that "Old Testament mythology has been 'deformed' by the intellectual operations of biblical editors and he seems to imply that, on this account, a structural analysis of such materials must prove to be largely a waste of time."[264] By this Lévi-Strauss means that the mythology of "primitive" peoples is alive (mainly because it is transmitted orally and therefore does not lose contact with the living substratum of a given society) and can well demonstrate its synchronic structures. The mythology of more civilised nations, on the other hand, is somehow distorted because it has been cut off from the oral tradition, codified by only a few editors who have forced it into the boundaries of the media on which it is written, thus extinguishing its force to carry a synchronic structure of thought. We can see that there is a certain discrepancy between Lévi-Strauss's theory and its implementation. Lévi-Strauss would

260 Paul Ricoeur, *Le conflit des interprétations*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1969, p. 50–51, 53. For his other arguments, see p. 31–97 (especially p. 48–57).
261 Edward F. Wente, "Response to Robert A. Oden's 'The Contendings of Horus and Seth' (Chester Beatty Papyrus No. 1): A Structural Interpretation", *History of Religions* 18/4 (1979): 370–372.
262 For the hieroglyphic text, see Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 37–60.
263 Oden, "The Contendings": 352–369.
264 Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon", p. 42. Unfortunately, Leach does not refer to the source of this argument of Lévi-Strauss which he summarises.

like to arrive at the basic unconscious level on which any human mind, whether "primitive" or "civilised", operates. Nevertheless, he considers analyses of solely "primitive" cultures to be of some value. It was Edmund Leach who showed that a structuralist analysis of the Judaic tradition is also possible.[265] His main argument was that even though the sacred text underwent a long process of editing, the point of which was to eliminate the contradictions which were unwanted by the editor, new contradictions arose and "It is precisely the all-pervasiveness and random incidence of such inconsistency which makes these 'historical' texts appropriate material for structural analysis for, under these randomised conditions, the underlying structure of the story ceases to be under the rational control of the editors and generates a momentum of its own."[266] The text lives a certain life of its own, independent of its editors' intent, for they cannot grasp all its meanings and possible implications at once. In this way, it moulds the editors without them knowing.

The fact that even "civilised" traditions can be structurally analysed has been, in the case of the Greek tradition, shown by the works of Jean-Pierre Vernant[267] and Marcel Detienne.[268]

Also inherent to Ricoeur's criticism is the objection that Lévi-Srauss strongly undervalues the diachronic aspect in myths (see above) since, for example, the whole of the "civilised" Judeo-Christian tradition takes diachronic sequencing in its myth as a central mode of the pronunciation of God's will – it is a sacred history, a narrative. In the case of Ancient Greece, we perceive the immense importance that the Greeks paid to the genealogical sequences inherent in their mythical narratives[269] which, again, are diachronic in nature. What Edmund Leach tries to show in his article is that even though the Judaic tradition values a "linear" concept of time and therefore sees reason in a sequential ordering of events, it is still nothing other than another type of structure.

> For ordinary men, as distinct from professional scholars, the significance of history lies in what is *believed* to have happened, not in what *actually* happened. And belief, by a process of selection, can fashion even the most incongruent stories into patterned (and therefore memorable) structures.[270]

265 Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon", p. 40–79. A similar approach has been adopted by Karin R. Andriolo, "Structural Analysis of Genealogy and Worldview in the Old Testament", *American Anthropologist* 75/5 (1973): 1657–69.
266 Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon", p. 51.
267 Jean-Pierre Vernant, "Between the Beasts and the Gods" and "The Myth of Prometheus in Hesiod", both in *Myth and Society in Ancient Greece*, tr. by Janet Lloyd, London: Methuen, 1982 (French original 1974), p. 131–185.
268 Marcel Detienne, *Les jardins d'Adonis*, Paris: Gallimard, 1972.
269 Csapo, *Theories of Mythology*, p. 237–245.
270 Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon", p. 76.

A very illuminating example illustrating this quotation can be taken from ancient Egyptian culture itself. In the mortuary temple of the pyramid of Sahura on the southern wall of the *wsḫt* court we find a relief depicting the smiting of a Libyan chieftain by the pharaoh.[271] At the very bottom of the relief, the wife of the smitten chief and his two sons are shown in desperate poses, begging for mercy. They are named *Ḥw(j)t-jt(j).s* (the woman), *Ws3* and *Wnj* (the boys). This scene, which could be read as a historical record of Sahura's military conflict with the Libyans, has been copied many times in the pyramid complexes of later pharaohs (including the names of the Libyan and his family) which renders the historicity of this scene highly questionable.[272] This is not some kind of deceit from the side of the ancient Egyptians. What was important for them was the fact that the *relation* of the ruling pharaoh (whoever that might have been at a given time) is exactly that which the Egyptians expected – that of supremacy over the foreign chieftain, representative of disorder. This is the history which is *believed*. What was unimportant was whether a certain pharaoh *actually* battled the Libyans and what their names were – the units are exchangeable and unimportant in themselves. It is their relationship which renders the message. A truly structuralist approach shown by the Egyptians themselves.

Narrativity and myth

(2) "For Lévi-Strauss the narrative of a story is only a practical costume which does not have a meaning in itself but in which mythemes are clothed in order to attract the attention of the listener."[273] It is true that mythical stories or fairy-tales contain many situations not connected by rules of logic. But, based on our childhood experience with bedtime stories, we cannot rid ourselves of the feeling that there is an inherent meaning in their narrative development. There is a reason why a certain character appears at the beginning while another appears mid story, etc.[274] Lévi-Strauss, on the

271 Ludwig Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Sahure*, Bde. 2, Die Wandbilder: Abbildungsblätter, Leipzig: Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1913, Bd. I, figs. 11,12 (photos), Bd. II, pl. 1; Dagmar Stockfisch, *Untersuchungen zum Totentempel des ägyptischen Königs im Alten Reich: Die Dekoration der königlichen Totenkultanlagen*, Bd. II, Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2003, Dok. 5.2.10.

272 Andrzej Ćwiek, *Relief Decoration in the Royal Funerary Complexes of the Old Kingdom: Studies in the Development, Scene Content and Iconography*, PhD Thesis, Warsaw University, 2003 (pdf download available at: http://www.gizapyramids.org/pdf%20library/cwiek_royal_relief_dec.pdf – accessed 5.3.2013), p. 200–201.

273 Chlup, "Strukturální antropologie včera a dnes 2": 171.

274 This is very well reflected in semiotics or semiotic studies as demonstrated in the works of, for example, Algirdas Julian Greimas. In Egyptology, the methods of semiotics have been applied by Massimo Patanè, "Essai d'interprétation d'un recit mythique : le conte d'Horus et de Seth", *Bulletin*

other hand, would not agree and by considering the syntagmatic structure of myths only to be a means of ordering the paradigmatic structure randomly, he obviously fails to grasp an important aspect of mythical thought. A very original but unfortunately inadequately acknowledged article written by an American anthropologist, Terence Turner, presents an ingenious solution to the problem of Lévi-Strauss' undervaluation of narrativity in myths.[275] Turner's intention is a "partial reformulation and extension of the structuralist approach. Its major difference from earlier structuralist treatments of myth is that *it lays great emphasis on the temporal structure of the narrative as well as the logical structure of relations between its component elements*."[276] In other words, just what we are looking for.

Turner concluded that the diachronic aspect of myth is not expressed by the plot of the story as Lévi-Strauss assumed. "Narrative patterns are in themselves highly structured forms, analogous in many ways to the syntactic level of language."[277] Therefore the narrative cannot represent the historical time (diachrony) for that is *disorderly* in its essence. The relation between the story and the mythematic structure does not, therefore, represent the relation between diachrony and synchrony but a relation between two types of synchronic structures. Turner's thesis is "[...] that the synthetic aspect of narrative form is a cultural model for the process of interaction and synthesis between another pair of antithetical elements: the individual and the collective order."[278] Turner also describes the principle of the ordering of events and relationships in myths, which we could call the "mythomotorics". At the beginning we start either with a passive state of inertia (a classic example would be the beginning of all creation myths) in which everything is in its potentiality, or with a state of fixed order. In both cases, things are in some kind of equilibrium.

> [Then] an action or event violates or mediates the structure of the prevailing order, giving rise to a situation in which actors and elements stand in ambiguous or contradictory relationships to each other. The "plot" of narrative sequence proceeds from this point through a series of permutations of the relations between these actors and elements toward a final state of equilibrium in which all elements again stand in unambiguous (synchronic)

de la Société d'Égyptologie Genève [BSEG] (1982): 83–89. Michèle Broze (*Mythe et Roman en Égypte ancienne*) summarises Patanè's approach and shows it's weak points (especially p. 228–230, 234).

275 Terence Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure in Narrative Form", in R. Spencer (ed.), *Forms of Symbolic Action*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969, p. 26–68. Turner's view has been strongly influenced by the work of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget. See Terence Turner: "Piaget's Structuralism", *American Anthropologist* 75 (1973): 351–373.

276 Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 26, italics mine.

277 Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 32.

278 Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 34.

> relations to each other. The beginning-middle-end phase structure of such traditional narrative genres thus manifests itself at the level of content as a dialectical alternation between synchronic order and diachronic disorder.[279]

This dialectical alternation has the classical Hegelian form of a thesis–antithesis–synthesis. Every such triad is considered to be an "episode". These episodes then combine again on a higher level, still following the triadic pattern, forming new episodes and so on and so forth. "The narrative thus proceeds in terms of a series of complementary distortions of the fundamental 'synchronic' set of principles, each deviation engendering its compensatory negation until the final synthesis is reached."[280]

The two basic modes of this dialectic motion are "affirmation" and "negation". "'Affirmation' is regularly expressed as a double negative or 'negation of negation', or alternatively as a re-separation of improperly combined or 'synthesised' relationships."[281]

"Negations" either behave "in the opposite way to that normatively required in a given relationship (e.g., infanticide)" or combine "both incompatible poles of binary oppositions in a single unviable relationship (e.g., incest)."[282]

The last questions we have to answer are: In what way are the two synchronic structures (the mythematic system and the narrative) related and what is, then, the diachronic aspect if not the narrative?

Concerning the question of diachrony, Turner states that it is sustained by the subjective experience of the individual who perceives society:

> [...] as a temporal flow of acts and events which diverges at many points from the ideal, synchronic structure of categories of relationship and rules of behavior. [...] his temporal experience of society presents him with continual problems of reorienting and reintegrating himself with relatively disorderly aspects of his objective situation in terms of the ideal forms and categories provided by his culture. This experience is typically laden with anxiety, especially at times of life crises. Society, for its part, can of course only sustain itself by insuring that the individual's efforts at reintegration (together with the integration of new individuals) will be successful. [...] The temporal forms of social organization (ritual, judicial process, domestic group cycle, etc.) are cultural devices for the mediation of this process.[283]

279 Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 33.
280 Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 63.
281 Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 62.
282 Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 62.
283 Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 35.

At this moment, myth, with its two types of synchronic structures, steps in. The mythematic system with its constant transformations of its basic units represents structure in its ideal form: it is subsistent in itself in that it can create an infinite number of permutations of a few types of basic relationships and in this respect it has a life of its own (though it must always be a person who narrates or writes down the myth). On the other hand, we have the individual with his/her often very chaotic emotions, longings and wishes which must often be suppressed because their realisation would be in direct contradiction to the moral rules and etiquette of a given society. It is the function of myth in the form of a narrative to mediate between the individual and order. The narrative is, to some extent, similar to the diachronic level in that it also has a beginning, middle, and end. But, at the same time, it is a strictly organised structure which follows the same rules as the self-subsistent mythematic system. The narrative provides a matrix into which individuals project their own "chaotic" notions. At the same time, the narrative organises disorderly personal experience into meaningful structures. By "meaningful" I mean the sheer fact that something disorderly becomes integrated into a working system. Myths, in fact, do not offer any solutions to problems faced by individuals because most of the time these anxieties stem from the fact that within a given society there exist basic paradoxes which, essentially, cannot be resolved (problem of life × death, man × woman, young × old, etc.).

The relation between myth and individuals is of a dialectic character – without individuals there would be no myths, no disorderly "fuel" allowing the synchronic structure of myth to pursue the never ending structural permutations of its mythemes. But, at the same time, once the individual integrates his/her own feelings into the system, (s)he is moulded by the very same structure which (s)he has helped to create.[284]

284 Strangely enough, Lévi-Strauss, in a certain way, does realise the great importance that the narrator's personal experience plays in the process of myth transfer and its subsequent efficacy. When contemplating the relation between music and myth, which Lévi-Strauss sees to a certain extent as being two very similar phenomena, he writes that "below the level of sounds and rhythms, music acts upon a primitive terrain, which is the physiological time of the listener." (Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, p. 16). Nevertheless, he has never exchanged "myth" for "music" which would have inevitably led him to the notion proposed by Terence Turner. Lévi-Strauss then goes on and writes that "[...] yet music transmutes the segment devoted to listening to it into a synchronic totality, enclosed within itself. Because of the internal organisation of the musical work, the act of listening immobilises passing time; it catches and enfolds it as one catches and enfolds a cloth flapping in the wind. It follows that by listening to music, and while we are listening to it, we enter into a kind of immortality." (Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, p. 16). Yet again, the solution of the problematic phenomenon of "aesthetic perception" which, according to Turner's theory could in fact represent the diachronic aspect itself, is transformed by Lévi-Strauss into a synchronic quality. For a more detailed analysis and criticism of Lévi-Strauss's view of the relation between music and myth, see: Nikolaus Bacht, "Enlightenment from Afar. The Structural Analogy of Myth and Music According to Claude Lévi-Strauss", *Acta Musicologica* 73/1 (2001): 1–20, especially 10–11.

In this respect, myths have the same function as rituals of transition.[285] These, too, help the individual to re-integrate into the structures of society from which (s)he has been intentionally or incidentally excluded. It is exactly for this reason that we meet the characters of mediators in myths around the world: one of the functions of mythical narrative is to mediate (between the individual and society), and these characters represent the personalisation of this function. Further on I am going to be applying Turner's method in my analysis of ancient Egyptian material so that the theoretical framework which he outlines becomes more intelligible.

Structural analysis in Egyptology

Basic structuralist ideas were introduced into Egyptology by Jan Assmann.[286] He demonstrated the principles of the system of binary oppositions which form a "semantische Kohörenz" of a certain text.[287] Edmund Leach, in an article which, compared with his other works, seems to be just a short outing, analysed the story of the Contendings of Horus and Seth.[288] He focused on the relationship between Horus and Seth and on the special function of positional kin(g)ship in ancient Egyptian society. John Baines welcomed Leach's work as "novel interpretations of the Osiris/Horus and Seth myth. His analysis of its structural implications and his suggestion that a 'joking relationship' may be behind the burlesque episodes in the New Kingdom story go beyond any egyptological work on the subject." [289] I shall deal with Leach's argumentation in more detail further on (see below, p. 207–208).

285 For a basic overview, see Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage,* trans. by Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffe, London: Routledge & Paul, 1960 [2004²].

286 Jan Assmann, "Wort und Text. Entwurf einer semantischen Textanalyse", *Göttinger Miszellen* [GM] 6 (1973): 9–32.

287 Assmann, "Wort und Text": 10.

288 Edmund Leach, "The Mother's Brother in Ancient Egypt", *Royal Anthropological Institute News* [RAIN] 15 (1976): 19–21.

289 John Baines, "Introduction", *Royal Anthropological Institute News* [RAIN] 15 (1976): 3.

A strictly Propprian type of structural analysis was applied by Jan Assmann in his article on the Tale of Two Brothers.[290] He arrived at some very important conclusions which shall be discussed in more detail later (see below, p. 170–173, n. 440–441). Jürgen Zeidler also applied the Propprian categories in his analysis of the Pyramid Texts.[291] He came to the conclusion that even though the texts are not narrative in an obvious sense, an inherent narrative may nevertheless be detected. Robert Oden Jr. attempted to interpret the Contendings of Horus and Seth in a Lévi-Straussian manner.[292] He distinguished several basic oppositions within the text such as up × down, North × South, etc. He then grouped them in a diagram which is called the "semantic rectangle" (or rather "semiotic square") and assigned individual characters from the story to various parts of this diagram together with the oppositions identified.[293] As much as his article is very interesting in that he criticises the classic(al) interpretative approaches towards mythology, his application of basic Lévi-Straussian oppositions actually seems too general, almost bordering on the naive. Oden's article also displays the deficiency intrinsic to any Lévi-Straussian type of analysis: the undervaluation of the significance of the narrative.[294] Oden's text therefore did encourage a very critical reaction from the egyptological community, specifically from Edward F. Wente.[295] However, this reaction was strongly ill-informed about the basic structuralist principles.[296] He was appalled by Oden's work:

> Professor Oden's structuralist interpretation of "The Contendings," a text written during the Ramesside period, involves an approach that is otherwise ill suited to elucidating that class of religious literature which the Egyptians called "God's Word," for the meaning of such texts that possessed religious authority was not generally conveyed by the structure of

290 Jan Assmann, "Das ägyptische Zweibrudermärchen", *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* [ZÄS] 104 (1977): 1–25.

291 Zeidler, "Zur Frage der Spätentstehung": 85–109. Zeidler's article was a reaction to Assmann's claim that ancient Egyptians did not need narratives before a certain period (see above, p. 43, n. 91).

292 Oden, Jr., "The Contendings", especially: 363–369.

293 The concept of the "semiotic square" (derived from Aristotle's "square of opposition") was first defined in 1966 by the famous Lithuanian semiotician Algirdas J. Greimas. It maps the logical conjunctions and disjunctions relating key semantic features in a text. Using this diagram any basic opposition can generate at least ten possible combinations of the rudimentary pair and its negations. See Algirdas J. Greimas, *Structural Semantics*, Lincoln (NB): University of Nebraska Press, 1983; Fredric Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language*, Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 1972. To a very limited extent I will be taking advantage of this diagram later on for my interpretation of ancient Egyptian material, see below, p. 187–196.

294 For a more detailed discussion on this topic in relation to semantics, see Broze, *Mythe et Roman en Égypte ancienne*, p. 225–228.

295 Wente, "Response": 370–372.

296 To a certain extent it might also be attributed to Oden's lack of willingness to attempt to explain these principles. Still, Wente's text is striking for its utter and categorical refusal.

> an underlying narrative. A rigid application of structuralist methodology to the interpretation of Egyptian religious literature would, for the most part, yield results as unsatisfactory as if such a procedure were applied to determine the meaning behind the wealth of visual symbols present on religious monuments and objects of ancient Egypt.[297]

Fortunately for us and unfortunately for Wente's argument, the analysis of the structural layout of texts and visual symbols on religious monuments of Ptolemaic Egypt have yielded very interesting results.[298] Wente continues and unveils the depth of his misunderstanding of the basic concepts of structuralism:

> "The Contendings" does present an episodically structured narrative involving certain gods. The question that should be raised is whether "The Contendings" had the backing of religious authority, falling into the category of God's Word, or whether it was composed simply as a tale about the gods. [...][299]

The main point, which Wente is obviously missing and which is the cornerstone of structuralism, is that it does not matter whether certain written material had been backed up by religious authority or not. Peasants and religious and political elites all live in a certain cultural context and the basic paradoxes, inherent to any cultural system, are expressed in structures which have the ability to replicate themselves infinitely on all levels of society and in all literary types. What is more, cultural paradoxes operate in structures on an *unconscious* level – they are present in everything a member of a certain culture creates whether (s)he intends it or not. Therefore, if the story of the Contendings of Horus and Seth was not "something more than an often humorous and bawdy tale about the gods by an author of the Ramesside period"[300] – all the better for us. This does not disqualify the text nor the interpretative method. Humour forms an inherent part of ritual and mythological language – it allows a reflection of the cultural borderlines in a way other types of communication and expression do not.[301]

297 Wente, "Response": 370–371. Again, we can see the stress put by Wente on narrativity as the crucial criterion by which the appropriateness of the interpretative method should be measured.

298 Dieter Kurth, *Treffpunkt der Götter: Inschriften aus dem Tempel des Horus von Edfu*, Zürich, München: Artemis, 1994, especially p. 23–65; Derchain, "Un manuel de géographie liturgique": 31–65. I am very grateful to Filip Coppens from the Czech Institute of Egyptology (Prague) who has brought these articles to my attention (personal communication, Prague, 27 August 2008).

299 Wente, "Response": 371.

300 Wente, "Response": 372.

301 For a classic study of social functions of jokes, see Mary Douglas, "The Social Control of Cognition: Some Factors in Joke Perception", *Man* (New Series), 3/3 (1968): 361–376. For the Czech reader, see Radek Chlup, "Vtip a náboženství. Posvátno jako mysterium ludicrum et ridiculum" (Humour and Religion. The Sacred as Mysterium Ludicrum and Ridiculum), *Religio* 14/1 (2005): 259–278. I quote from the summary of his article (p. 278): "[this article] sees the essence of a joke in its ability to bring in relation disparate elements in such a way that one accepted pattern is challenged by appearance of another, making us realize that the accepted pattern has no necessity, that any particular ordering of experience may be arbitrary and subjective. The reason why jokes often appear in religion is that here, too, we see an attempt at transcending established patterns and getting in touch with what is beyond them. For while religion and ritual help to define the categories and structural principles that a society stands upon, they also make it possible to transcend them."

Wente concluded his article with the following statement: "Still less would I advocate the application of the Lévi-Strauss methodology to the bulk of surviving Egyptian religious texts that have religious authority."[302] Perhaps Katja Goebs did not read Wente's article or perhaps she just wisely ignored it, but in 2002 she published an article which, to some extent, uses the structuralist method in a very functional and convincing manner for the analysis of certain groups of mythemes found in the funerary literature of the Pyramid Texts, Coffin Texts and other sources.[303] As inspiring as her approach in the discussion of the relationship of myth and ritual undoubtedly is, she, yet again, underestimates the importance of the narrative sequence which must have been implicitly present in the minds of ancient Egyptians when they were conducting their rituals. As a consequence, she overstressed the importance of ritual in the shaping of mythology.

We may also mention van Dijk's article, in which he analyses a set of magical texts collectively called the Anat Myth.[304] His article is crucial in that it stresses the function of goddesses as mediators who, in fact, may be identified with each other thus creating a sort of bridge between the various antithetical male parties. He also suggested that the Anat Myth is a structural variant of the Osiris Myth.[305]

A very influential work which employs structuralist methods of interpretation is of course Antonio Loprieno's *Topos und Mimesis*.[306] By attributing certain characteristics to these two antithetical terms, Loprieno tries to categorise Egyptian literary texts through their depiction of foreign characters.[307] Very briefly summarised, *Topos* is by Loprieno understood as the ideas and values formulated by the elite and expressed as normative ethical standards in the genre of instructions. *Mimesis*, on the other hand, is representative of the individual as witnessed for example in narratives or literary texts

302 Wente, "Response": 372.

303 Goebs, "A Functional Approach": 27–59.

304 van Dijk, "Anat, Seth, and the Seed of Pre".

305 I shall deal with van Dijk's arguments in detail further on (see below p. 210–217).

306 Antonio Loprieno, *Topos und Mimesis. Zum Ausländer in der ägyptischen Literatur*, Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 48, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1988.

307 His second aim is to inquire into the development of *mimesis* in history.

in general.[308] Loprieno's work is especially important in connection with this study because he focused on the interaction of the individual and the society.[309]

Last but not least, the structuralist approach forms an important aspect of the work by Michèle Broze. She both draws inspiration from it and reflects this tradition especially in her analysis of the Contendings of Horus and Seth.[310]

I do not claim that I have been able to identify all authors who have been either directly inspired by structuralism or who share a common methodological approach. First, the structuralist method in its classic form has been in sharp decline since the 1980s. Second, Egyptology seems to be quite conservative when it comes to methods evolving in other fields of human and social sciences. Even though most of the above mentioned authors arrived at very interesting conclusions. Save Loprieno, however, they never went beyond the scope of individual articles. This study attempts to do exactly that and therefore pick up on the observations of previous authors in an attempt to include them into a more holistic interpretational framework.

308 Loprieno, *Topos und Mimesis*, p. 11–12, 16–17, 84.

309 However, as is typical for any structuralist approach, Loprieno's bipolar divisions (of literary genres and other categories) are at times overgeneralising (for a sharp critique, see, for example, Hannes Buchberger, "Zum Ausländer in der altägyptischen Literatur. Eine Kritik", *Die Welt des Orients* [WdO] 20–21 [1989–90]: 5–35). It seems that the relationship between the collective and the individual is more complicated transgressing any etic categorisation system based solely on oppositions.

310 Broze, *Mythe et Roman en Égypte ancienne*.

CHAPTER IV

Structural Analysis Applied to Ancient Egyptian Material

Introduction

Due to the fragmentary character of the Astarte Papyrus it would be very difficult to perform a structural analysis directly on the surviving text. Even though we can isolate separate mythemes, we do not have the plot or sufficient connection between the fragments. For this reason I will proceed in a roundabout manner, starting with a structural analysis of the New Kingdom narrative Tale of Two Brothers.[311] This will allow me to define the semiotic strategies of ancient Egyptian mythological thought, thus gradually building up a "mythological network" of the basic character constellations. This network will then serve as an interpretational matrix into which I will subsequently set the fragmentary contents of the Astarte Papyrus (Chapter 7).

Emmanuel de Rougé was the first to mention the existence of the papyrus containing the so-called Tale of Two Brothers in 1852.[312] Five years later it was acquired by the British Museum from Elizabeth d'Orbiney (hence the designation Papyrus d'Orbiney). It was assigned the number BM 10183. It has been considered by many to be the oldest "fairy-tale" in the world. Many a folklorist has since then analysed and worked with the text. However, their analyses are problematic. Papers devoted to this story from the 19th to the first half of the 20th century focused on a discussion of the

311 The tradition of commentary on the New Kingdom narratives is vast. The two most recent and most complex commentaries are those by Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, and Wolfgang Wettengel, *Die Erzählung von den beiden Brüdern: der Papyrus d'Orbiney und die Königsideologie der Ramessiden*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis [OBO] 195, Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2003. In many cases they have made observations which are very interesting and helpful and I shall include references to their texts as appropriate.

312 For an overview of the works of scholars interested in this story, see Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, esp. p. 11–45; Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, esp. p. 1–16; Alan Dundes, "Projective Inversion in the Ancient Egyptian 'Tale of Two Brothers'", *The Journal of American Folklore*, 115/457-458 (2002): 378–394 (esp. p. 382–383).

origins of folktales in general (two groups being the most prominent, one convinced that all motifs come from India, the other rejecting this). The second group of analyses focused on classificatory matters, revealing and comparing the different folk motifs organised, for example, by Stith Thompson and Antii Aarne.[313] Alan Dundes has very precisely summarised the outcome of this long and decidedly strenuous scholarly effort:

> The obsession with classification is understandable in light of pressing practical needs with respect to archiving and bringing order to huge masses of collected field data. What is perhaps most disappointing and disturbing is the virtual lack of any concerted effort on the part of folklorists to speculate about the likely meaning or meanings of the tale. The hint of mother-son incest combined with an overt act of self-emasculation, one would think, might have encouraged at least one folklorist to speculate about why the tale existed in the first place (and why it was thought worthwhile to have been recorded). But such does not seem to be the case.
>
> The problem may be couched by means of an analogy. If the fairy tale, as a genre, were perceived as a dream, then a fairy tale would consist of at least two levels of content: the manifest content and the latent content. The manifest content of a fairy tale would be the literal sequence of actions in the narrative while the latent content would be the tale's underlying symbolic (and unconscious) structure. Unfortunately, many folklorists tend to be literal minded to a fault and may absolutely reject any possibility of there being a symbolic or psychological structure at the base of fairy tales.[314]

I fear that exactly the same is the case when dealing with ancient Egyptian mythology. The amount of secondary studies devoted to various aspects of New Kingdom narratives is indeed quite voluminous. Some scholars, as we shall see below, have made insightful comments on the individual motifs within the Tale of Two Brothers and other New Kingdom narratives. Jan Assmann, followed by Wolfgang Wettengel, for example, divides the text of the Papyrus d'Orbiney into 24 parts based on the original division of the text into rubra. From this division he draws a complex interpretation scheme which interprets the various stages of the story as an allusion to the heavenly journey of the sun through this world and the nether worlds.[315] As fascinating as his idea surely is and as valid as it might be specifically for the Papyrus d'Orbiney, it has a basic limitation: it is not applicable to other texts which lack an internal division

313 Antii Aarne, *The Types of Folk-tale. A Classification and Bibliography*, trans. and enlarged by Stith Thompson, Helsinki: Academia scientiarum fennica, 1928 (with many later re-editions).

314 Dundes, "Projective Inversion": 382–383.

315 Assmann, "Das ägyptische Zweibrudermärchen"; Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*.

into 24 parts or which are too fragmentary for us to tell whether they have such internal division.

The analysis which I present bellow strives to uncover the inner mechanisms of myth and its dynamics in a form which may be also applied to other narrative texts. The Tale of Two Brothers has a great advantage in that it is virtually complete. Its analysis will provide a frame upon which I will subsequently show the basic concepts of ancient Egyptian mythical thought.

pD'Orbiney: Tale of Two Brothers (pBM 10183)

Initial Episode I (rubrum 1–5)[316]

1,1 Once, it is said, (there were) two brothers of one mother and one father; Anubis was the name of the elder (*ꜥ3*) and Bata the name of the younger (*šrj*). As for Anubis, he had a house and a wife **1,2** and his younger brother was with him in the manner of a son (*šrj*);[317] and he (Bata)[318] was the one who made (*jrj*) clothes for him, and he (Bata)[319]

316 As the text of the Tale of Two Brothers has already been translated many times, I did not feel the urge to create an absolutely "new" translation. I have therefore taken over the translation by Susan T. Hollis (*The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, esp. p. 1–9), cross-checked it with the *editio princeps* (Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 9–30a) and made changes to it where deemed appropriate. To view the papyrus, you may visit the British Museum web pages (http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/search_object_details.aspx?objectid=113979&partid=1&IdNum=10183&orig=%2fresearch%2fsearch_the_collection_database%2fmuseum_number_search.aspx, accessed 19.4.2012). The subdivision of the translation includes three basic groups: 1) Initial Episodes (I–III); 2) Episodes (A–O); 3) Terminal Episode. To a certain extent this division follows the rubra in red which were indicated by the Egyptian scribe. To a certain extent it does not. The relation between the three parts of my subdivision and the rubra of the original text is going to be explained in detail further on, see p. 163–177.

317 For a concise description of the father-provider role attributed to the male heads of households in ancient Egypt, see Jan Assmann, *Stein und Zeit. Mensch und Gesellschaft im alten Ägypten*, Wilhelm Fink Verlag: München, 1991, p. 100–104.

318 Hollis (*The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 1) and Wettengel (*Die Erzählung*, p. 32–33, n. 124) are persuaded that this passage concerns Bata. On the other hand, Edward F. Wente ("The Tale of Two Brothers", in Simpson (ed.), *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, p. 81) thinks it is Anubis who provides clothes for Bata as a father does for his family. The fact is that this description is part of several sentences supposedly referring to Bata, who tends the cattle, plows, and harvests. It does make sense that he also makes clothes for his brother.

319 The commentators agree that this pronoun designates Bata, who performs the duties of a son towards his older brother/father.

followed his herds into the fields, **1,3** and he (Bata) was the one who did the plowing <for him>. It was he (Bata) who harvested for him, and he was the one who took care of all the affairs of the field for him. Indeed, his younger brother **1,4** was a strong and beautiful man (*ʿḥ3.wtj nfr*)[320] there was none of his likeness (*ḳd*) in the entire land. The strength (*pḥ.tj*) of god was in him. And some time later his younger brother **1,5** tended to his cattle as was his [daily] custom. And he would [return] to his house each evening laden **1,6** with various vegetables of the field, with milk, with wood, [with] every [inviting product] from the field, and he would lay (*w3ḥ*)[321] it before his older brother, while he was seated with **1,7** his wife, and he (Anubis) would drink and he would eat. And he (Bata) would [sleep] in his stall in the [midst] of his cattle. **1,8** [...] And after the land became light and the second day began, [he would take food which] was cooked and he would lay it before his elder brother. **1,9** He would give him bread for the fields and he would drive the cattle to let them graze in the fields while he was walking behind his cattle, **1,10** who told him: "The grazing of this and that place is good." And he would listen to everything they said and he would take them to the place **2,1** of good grazing which they wished for. And so the cattle in his care became very, very beautiful. And they multiplied their offspring **2,2** very, very much. And at the time of plowing his [elder] brother told him: "Prepare for us a pair [of oxen] **2,3** for plowing. For the earth of the field has appeared and it is just ready for plowing. And also, come **2,4** to the field with seed corn because we shall start plowing tomorrow," so he said to him. Then his **2,5** younger brother did all the tasks (*sḏr.w*) which his elder brother told him to do. And after [the land became light **2,6** and the second] day began, they went to the field with their seed corn and they began plowing. [Their hearts] were **2,7** delighted very, very much because of [their] works concerning the beginning of their labour. (see fig. 102, fig. 3)

320 According to Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* I, 217,8 the phrase *ʿḥ3wtj* means something like "soldier/warrior" (Kämpfer/Krieger) sometimes used as the attribute of the King. However, it may also mean simply "man" or designate the male sex in general (Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* I, 217, 11–16). From the context it seems that the qualities which are stressed are Bata's "strength" (just like that of a soldier) and "beauty" (*nfr*), hence the translation "strong and beautiful".

321 The word *w3ḥ* can mean "to lay (something) on the ground" (Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* I, 253, 1–23). However, it may also be used with a meaning of "to offer" (Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* I, 253, 24–26). The whole scene of Anubis being seated with his wife and being offered/presented with food is strongly reminiscent of canonical depictions of this scene in Egyptian tombs. At the same time, it was the obligation of the son to provide for the funerary cult of his father. One might, therefore, consider this scene in the text to be yet another means of stressing the filial role of Bata towards Anubis.

Commentary

In the beginning we hear of two brothers (the older Anubis[322] and the younger Bata[323]). Both the divine determinatives following their names and the epithets used to describe their character[324] point to the fact that they are not ordinary people but have a godlike nature. Biologically, they are on the same level (siblings), economically their association is that of father and son (the younger living in the older brother's and his wife's household doing work for them traditionally undertaken by sons – ploughing, tending the cattle, etc.). Bata's ability to communicate with the cattle is also viewed by some interpreters as yet another display of his divine powers.[325] According to Wettengel, in this portion of the text Bata is most strongly associated with culture (offering cooked food as opposed to raw food) and fertility (he takes care of the fields and of the flocks, which multiply).[326] At the same time, Bata does not only exhibit strong male characteristics (strength, ability to take care of the flock) but he also performs typically female duties (prepares food, takes care of the house). Wettengel stresses the fact that the whole situation of the two brothers "ploughing" the fields must have had strong symbolic connotations. Because Anubis' name is determined by a sign for "god", he interprets the whole scene as Anubis "working" on the "body" of Osiris, i.e. the fertile land (Anubis at this moment also takes the initiative and starts giving orders to Bata).[327] This passage could, therefore, be understood as a prefiguration of the later events when Anubis "works" on Bata's body, thus enticing his life powers and bringing him to life, just as a farmer does with seed corn.

322 For a detailed analysis of the name and character of Anubis, see: Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 71–87.

323 For a detailed analysis of the name and character of Bata, see: Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 47–70; and Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 29–37.

324 Concerning Bata, the text states that: "the strength of god was in him" (*js wn pḥ.tj n nṯr jm=f*) [1,4]. As Hollis remarks: "The noun *pḥty* means both divine creative power and male power in the sexual sense. [...] The epithet *ʿ3 pḥty* 'great of power/strength' is a common one for different gods. For example Seth, Ptah, the Nile, Horus, and the king all bear it." (Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 89–90, n. 2–9). For a more detailed discussion, see Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 56, 233–263.

325 For a detailed analysis of this motif, see: Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 90–94. The motif of the divine/royal shepherd is analysed in detail by Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, especially p. 42–48 and relevant footnotes.

326 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 40, n. 147; p. 48–53 who stresses the similarity between Bata and Min.

327 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 48–53.

Graphical summary

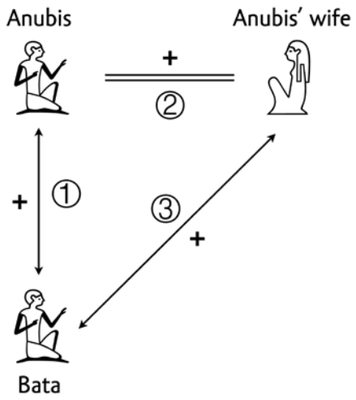


fig. 3: Initial Episode I

①,②,③
The relationships between these three individuals are ideal and in balance (indicated by the pluses). All parties involved are in normative social relations.

EPISODE A (RUBRUM 6)

And some time later **2,8** when they were in the field sowing corn, then he (Anubis) sent his **2,9** younger brother off saying: "Go and bring us some seed corn from the town." The younger brother then found the wife **2,10** of the older brother (while) one was sitting and combing her hair. And so he said this to her: "Get up and give me seed corn **3,1** so that I may run to the field. Because my older brother is waiting for me, don't delay things." Then she said to him: "Go **3,2** and open the granary and get for yourself what you want (*mtw=k jnj n=k pȝ ntj m jb=k*). Don't prevent [me] from having my hair done."

Then the youth (*ʿḏd*) **3,3** entered his barn and took a large jar intending to take a load of seed corn (*jw jb=f r jtȝ pr.t ḳnj*). Then he loaded himself **3,4** with barley and emmer and he went out with it.

Then she said to him, "How much weight is that on your shoulder?" And he said to her: **3,5** "Three sacks of emmer and two sacks of barley, five in total are those which are on my shoulder," so he told her. And then she spoke with him saying, "Strength is **3,6** great in you (*wn ph.tj ʿȝ jm=k*); I see your force (*ṯnr*) daily." And she desired (*jw jb=s*) to know him as to know a young man (*ʿḥȝw.tj*). And then she **3,7** got up, and she seized him, and she said to him, "Come, let us spend an hour lying down. It will be beneficial for you. Then I will make **3,8** beautiful clothes for you." [328] And then the

[328] Clothes as a means of payment, see Carolyn Graves-Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, London, New York: Continuum, 2010, p. 77–79.

youth (*ʿḏd*) became angry like an Upper Egyptian leopard because of the evil **3,9** word which she had said to him, and she was very, very frightened. And then he spoke to her saying, "Now see, you are **3,10** like a mother to me. Further, your husband (*hȝy*) is like a father to me. As the one older than me, he has raised me. What **4,1** is the great wickedness which you have said to me? Do not say it to me again. Further I will not speak (of it) to anyone, and I will not divulge[329] it to **4,2** anyone." And lifting his load, he went to the field. And then he reached his older brother, and they continued **4,3** with their work. (see p. 105, fig. 4)

Commentary

In this episode we witness the first breach of the idyllic, initial situation. Aroused by Bata's virility, Anubis' wife (i.e. Bata's mother) wishes to seduce Bata, her brother-in-law and at the same time her son. It is because of the resemblance of this part of the story with the Biblical episode of Potiphar's wife, who tries to seduce Joseph (Genesis 39), that the ancient Egyptian text attracted so much attention immediately after its translation in the 19th century.[330]

The whole of Episode A has strong sexual connotations. There are several motifs which supplement this message. Firstly, Anubis' wife had her hair attended to. The ancient listener was at this point already aware that trouble was approaching since the connection of women's hair with sexuality and sensuality is well attested.[331] In Ancient Egypt itself, hair is mentioned very often in lists describing a woman's sensual qualities, such as in the example of a love song inscribed in the Papyrus Chester Beatty I, Coll. 1, song 1:

> Long of neck, fair of breast,/her hair is (of) true lapis lazuli,/her arms surpass gold,/her fingers are like lotus flowers./Wide of hips, slim of waist,/

[329] lit. "cause it to go forth from my mouth".

[330] I intentionally avoid any comparative analysis of this motif. Much has been written about the possible relation between Egyptian, Hebrew and other similar stories from all around the world. See, for example, John D. Johannan, *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife in World Literature*, New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1968; Susan T. Hollis, "The Woman in Ancient Examples of the Potiphar's Wife Motif", in P. L. Day (ed.), *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989, p. 28–42; Karel Horálek, "The Balkan Variants of Anup and Bata: AT 315B", in L. Dégh (ed.), *Studies in East European Folk Narrative*, Bloomington: Indiana University Folklore Institute, 1978, p. 231–262, and many others. The reason why I am not going to enter into the discussion is that as interesting as it is to find parallels in other scriptural traditions, I do not feel that these will help us in discovering what position the story of the Papyrus d'Orbiney has in the Egyptian tradition itself. What is nevertheless very important is the role of Anubis' wife in the whole affair. For a further discussion, see below, p. 99–117; 218–232.

[331] Philippe Derchain, "La perruque et le cristal", *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* [SAK] 2 (1975): 55–74; Saphinaz-Amal Naguib, "Hair in Ancient Egypt", *Acta Orientalia* [AcOr] 51 (1990): 7–26; Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 94–98.

> her thighs stress her beauty./Balanced of <stride> when she walks the earth,/she seized my heart in her embrace./She makes the necks of all men/turn in order to look at her./Happy is everyone who embraces her,/being like the first of lovers.[332]

In the Papyrus Chester Beatty I, Coll. 1, song 3, we may read an even more explicit mention of hair in connection with sexuality:

> She knows how to throw a loop, (my) beloved,/(though) she was not born to a cowherd./She cast at me a loop out of her hair./With her eye(s), she pulls me in,/with her ornament she subdues me,/(and) she brands me with her ring.[333]

Philippe Derchain speaks of hair/wig as having clear sexual connotations, together with other animals and objects such as ducklings, the *tilapia* fish and persea tree fruits depicted in ancient Egyptian tombs.[334] Susan Hollis also makes a very apt observation:

> Furthermore, when the events are recounted to Anubis by his wife in the evening, not only the words exchanged but the facts of the hair are altered in the retelling: where initially someone else was attending the wife's hair, in the later version Bata is said to have told her to *wnḫw p3y.t nbḏ* (d'Orb. 5,2), "loosen (or put on) your hair or wig," depending on the translator's interpretation of the verb. Later in the tale, the odor of a lock of hair serves as the lure of Bata's wife for the king.

Wettengel also analyses the strong sexual aspects which were infused into agricultural activities in general.[335] The idea of women being "fields" which are impregnated by men's "seed" in the same way that ground is fertilised by the floodwaters of the Nile river is fittingly expressed in the Papyrus Leiden I 350 (hymn 90):[336]

332 Renata Landgráfová and Hana Navrátilová, *Sex and the Golden Goddess I: Ancient Egyptian Love Songs in Context*, Prague, [s. l.], 2009, p. 92–97.
333 Landgráfová and Navrátilová, *Sex and the Golden Goddess I*, p. 209.
334 Philippe Derchain, "Symbols and Metaphors in Literature and Representations of Private Life", *Royal Anthropological Institute News* [RAIN] 15 (1976): 7–10.
335 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 58–62.
336 John L. Foster remarks that this "cycle of poems" with its strong theological message dates to the fifty-second regnal year of Ramesses II, sometime around 1227 BC (John L. Foster, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001, p. 149). Hieroglyphic transcription available in Jan Zandee, *De Hymnen aan Amon van Papyrus Leiden I 350*, Leiden: Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, 1947, especially Bijlage I, "Hieroglyphische Tekst", pls. 1–6.

> The mind of God is perfect knowing [...] His consort the fertile field,/He shoots His seed into her,/and new vegetation, and grain,/grow strong as His children.[337]

Similarly, in the *Instructions of Ptahhotep*[338] the reader is informed that a man's wife "[...] is a fertile field for her lord."[339] These motifs, together with the woman's attempted seduction of Bata, show that the main focus of this part of the story is on (in)appropriate kin-relationships framed by both implicit and explicit references to the sexuality of the characters involved.

Graphical summary

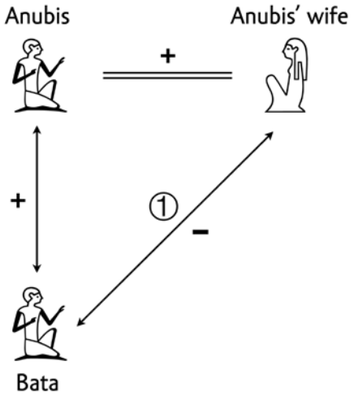


fig. 4: Episode A
①
Episode A establishes a negation of normative social relations between Bata and his sister-in-law/mother through her offer of an incestuous sexual encounter. The main cause is Bata's overt virility, his sexual strength (*ph.tj*) and his physical strength (*ṯnr*), and at the same time the woman's overt femininity (braiding of hair).

EPISODE B (RUBRUM 7)

Now when it was evening, his older brother returned to his **4,4** house, his young brother being behind his cattle, and he was loaded with everything of the field, and he brought his cattle **4,5** before him to have them spend the night (in) their barn in the village.

Now the wife of his older brother was afraid (*snḏ.tj*) **4,6** of the proposition (*smj*) she had made. And so she brought fat and bandages (*pdr*) and she pretended to

337 Foster, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, p. 168.
338 Translation with basic bibliographical references can be found, for example, in Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: Vol. I – The Old and Middle Kingdoms*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1976, p. 61–68.
339 Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. I, p. 69.

be an assaulted one **4,7** so to tell her husband: "It was your young brother who beat (me)." Her husband returned in the evening **4,8** in his daily fashion. He reached his house and he found his wife lying down pretending to be sick. And she **4,9** did not put water over his hands as usual, nor did she make a light before him, his house being in darkness because she was lying down **4,10** vomiting (*bšj*). And her husband said to her: "Who has quarreled with you?" Then she said to him: "No one spoke with me except your **5,1** young brother. When he came to fetch seed for you, he found me sitting alone, and he said to me, 'Come, let us spend an hour lying down. **5,2** Loosen your hair.' So he said to me. I did not listen to him. 'Now am I not your mother? Further, your older brother is like a father to you.' **5,3** So I said to him. He was afraid. He beat (me) in order that I not report to you. Now if you let him live, I will die. See, **5,4** when he comes [do not let him live] because I suffer from the evil thing (*smj bjn*) which he did yesterday."

And then his older brother became **5,5** like a leopard of Upper Egypt, and he had his spear sharpened, and he put it in his hand. And then his older brother stood behind the door **5,6** of his stable to kill his young brother as he was returning in the evening to let his cattle enter the **5,7** stable.

When the sun went to rest, he loaded himself with all the herbage of the field in his fashion of every day, and he **5,8** came. When the foremost cow entered the stable, she said to her shepherd: "Look, your older brother stands **5,9** before you carrying his spear to kill you. Run away from him." And so he heard the speech of his lead cattle and **6,1** another entered and said the same. And he looked under the door of his stable, **6,2** and he saw the feet of his older brother as he stood behind the door with his spear in his hand. **6,3** And he put his load on the ground, and he sprang up to run in order to flee, and his **6,4** older brother went after him, carrying his spear. And then his young brother prayed to Pre-Harakhty **6,5**, saying: "My good lord, it is you who distinguishes wrong from right." Pre **6,6** heard his whole petition, and Pre caused a great water to come between him and his older brother, **6,7** infested with crocodiles, so that one of them was on the one side and the other on the other (side). **6,8** His older brother struck his own hand twice for not killing him. And then his **6,9** young brother called to him on the (other) side, saying: "Stand here until the dawn. When the disk rises, I will **7,1** contend (*jw=j ḥr wp.t*) with you before him in order that he give the guilty to the just, because I shall never be with you, **7,2** nor shall I be in the place in which you are. And I shall go to the Valley of the Pine (*jn.t pȝ ʿš*)." (see p. 108, fig. 5)

Commentary

The most important event of this episode is the fact that a strong rift is created in the relationship of Bata and Anubis. Adultery was one of the crimes which was, according to Egyptian literary sources, severely punished in ancient Egyptian society.[340] Bata's act, were it true, would also be incestuous in character because Anubis' wife was described as being in the position of a mother to him. The text seems to take advantage of this motif to stress that the division between Bata and Anubis in this part of the story is of a major character. As we shall see, even though it is later settled and explained by Bata, the rift is so deep (and infested with vile and evil crocodiles) that it has already altered the situation beyond repair. This fact is also pronounced by Bata himself when he announces that "I shall never be with you, nor shall I be in the place in which you are. And I shall go to the Valley of the Pine" [7,1–2]. The story must then proceed and find an alternative solution to bridge this rupture in the relationship.

A very important issue concerns the localisation of the Valley of the ʿš (pine?). This has been disputed for a very long time. To summarise the whole discussion, the Valley of the Pine has been interpreted by various authors as a: (1) mystical designation of the Netherworld; (2) place directly in Egypt; (3) region outside Egypt; (4) region somewhere on the margin between the Nile delta and the desert regions.[341] At this moment I do not want to decide which of the four interpretations is the most probable as the term has appeared for the first time in the text. However, as the story progresses, the references within the text itself will show that the localisation is very problematic and that the text in fact offers contradictory images. Later on (see p. 144–146) I will argue that all four interpretations are actually somehow substantiated and that the

340 Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 97–98. The question is to what extent this was true in reality and to what extent we are dealing with a self-image of the ancient Egyptians. In this context, one may recall the Papyrus Salt 124 (Jaroslav Černý, "Papyrus Salt 124 [Brit. Mus. 10055]", *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 15 [1929]: 243–258). This text, dating to the 20th dynasty, represents a letter to the Vizier in which a certain Amennakht brings various complaints against the conduct of Paneb, who is the foreman of the worker's village at Deir el-Medina. Among other accusations, Paneb is said to have repeatedly committed crimes of adultery and sexual assault, his victims being mainly the wives of other workers. He, in fact, seems to have been a notorious adulterer which means that there must have been a certain tolerance for such behaviour, at least with regard to certain individuals. For further details on the case, see, for example, Jac. J. Janssen, "Two Personalities" in J. J. Janssen (ed.), *Gleanings from Deir el-Medîna*, Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten te Leiden: 1982, p. 107–131, esp. p. 113; 115, n. 32 and 38; also Morris L. Bierbier, "Paneb Rehabilitated?", in R. J. Demaree and A. Egberts (eds.), *Deir el-Medina in the Third Millenium AD*, Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten te Leiden, 2000, p. 51–54. I thank Harco Willems for drawing my attention to the issue (personal communication, Mainz, 28.10.2012). Teysseire (*The Portrayal of Women*, p. 78–110) also comes to the conclusion that the actual punishment of both men and women differed greatly from the severe ideas presented in literature.

341 For bibliographic references to interpretations (1), (2), (3), see Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 126–127; Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 96–98, 245–249. For (4), see Vandersleyen, *Ouadj our*, p. 97–98.

contradictory information serves as a means of conceptualising one of the main issues which the text addresses: *Where exactly can we draw the line between "Egyptian" and "foreign"?* For the time being, we have to make do with Bata's own explanation: "I shall never be with you (Anubis), nor shall I be in the place in which you are. And I shall go to the Valley of the Pine" [7,1–2]. Valley of the Pine is simply a region different from the "place in which Anubis is", i.e. Egypt.

Graphical summary

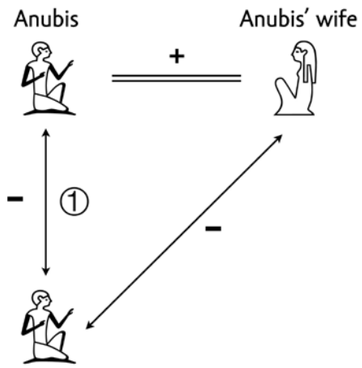


fig. 5: Episode B

①
Episode B establishes negative social relations between Bata and Anubis (attempt at fratricide) through the trick of a woman.

Episode C (Rubrum 8)

Now after the day became light and the second day began, **7,3** Pre-Harakhty arose and one saw the other. And then the young man (*ʿḏd*) spoke to his older brother, saying: **7,4** "What is your coming after me to kill falsely, not hearing my mouth speak on the matter? And further I am still your young brother, and **7,5** also you are like a father to me and also your wife is like a mother to me. Is it not so when you sent to bring seed for us, your **7,6** wife said to me, 'Come, let us spend an hour lying together.' But, see, she turned it about for you into another thing." And then he informed **7,7** him about all that had happened between him and his wife. And then he swore to Pre-Harakhty, saying, "As for **7,8** your coming to kill me wrongfully, carrying your spear on the word of a filthy slut (*kȝ.t tȝḥw.t*)!"[342] And he brought a **7,9** reed knife and he cut off (*šʿd*) his

342 For an alternative interpretation, see Wolfhart Westendorf, "… und durch Liebe (pD'Orbiney 7,8 frei nach Schiller)", in: B. M. Bryan and D. Lorton (eds.), *Essays in Egyptology in Honor of H. Goedicke*, San Antonio: Van Siclen Books, 1994, p. 349–352. He translates the passage from 7,7–8 as follows: "Was dein <Kommen> anbetrifft, um mich ungerechtfertigt zu töten, indem du deine Lanze bei

phallus, and he threw it into the water, and the *nʿr*-fish swallowed it. And he grew **8,1** weak (*jw=f ḥr gnn*) and he became feeble (*jw=f ḥr ḫpr ḫzj sw*). And his older brother was very grieved in his heart (*ḥȝ.ty*), and he stood and wept loudly for him. He was not able to (be) where his young brother was because of the crocodiles. **8,2** And then his young brother called to him, saying, "Indeed, if you recall an evil, do you not also recall a good or something I did for you? Now go to your house and **8,3** care for your cattle because I will not stand in the place in which you are. And I will go to the Valley of the Pine. Now as to what you will do for me <it is> your coming to care for me when **8,4** (you) learn that something has happened to me. I will have cut out (*šd*) my heart (*ḥȝ.ty*) and placed it on the top of the blossom of the pine. When the pine is cut and it falls to the **8,5** ground, you will come to seek it. If you spend seven years seeking it, do not let your heart (*ḥȝ.ty*) show dislike, and when you find it, put it in a bowl of cool water and I will live and I shall avenge **8,6** the transgressions against me. Further you (will) know something has happened to me (when) you are given a jug of beer to your hand and it ferments (*mtw=f ḥr jr.t stf*). Do not wait when this happens to you." And then he went **8,7** to the Valley of the Pine, and his older brother went to his house, his hands on his head, he being covered with dirt. He reached his house and killed **8,8** his wife, and he threw her to the dogs and he sat in mourning for his young brother. (see p. 117, fig. 6)

Commentary

This episode is crucial to the story as it carries several motifs which, in the Egyptian mind, sparked myriads of associations. Hollis has quite convincingly argued that the beginning of this episode has the setting of a judicial procedure in which wrongs which have been done are unveiled and rectified.[343] The brothers, each representing an opposing side in the suit, confront each other. Bata appeals his case to the sun, who, as the supreme lord of the sky, sees everything and is therefore the ideal judge.

What follows is Bata's intriguing act of cutting his phallus and throwing it into the water where a *nʿr*-fish eats it. In many cases, interpreters conclude that Bata wanted to add weight to his testimony and to prove his innocence.[344] Even though this idea

dir hast, [es] war (letzten Endes) wegen des weiblichen Geschlechtsteils, genauer: des sinnlich erregten!" (p. 351). In his view, the cause of the whole problem was therefore not specifically the woman but a more abstract sinful urge provoked by the female genitalia. For a lexicographic analysis of the term containing references to other articles, see Frédéric Servajean, "Le conte des Deux Frères (3) À propos de l'expression *kȝ.t tȝḥw.t*", *Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne* [ENiM] 5 (2012): 103–113. He comes to the conclusion that the term itself seems to have designated the female genitalia during the menstrual period, regarded as impure. However, given the circumstances which follow (Anubis brutally kills his wife), it does seem to be a derogatory designation of some kind, which Servajean does not rule out (p. 113).

343 Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 100–102.

344 For a bibliography see Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 113–114, n. 1–5.

might be true, in a way it plays down the significance of the castration motif. Since the issue of Bata's (lacking) masculinity returns again and again in the story, the act of emasculation must be of primary importance to the whole narrative and not just a "literary device" of some kind, as, for example, Gerald Kadish sees it.[345] Another interpretation links the whole episode to the fate of the similarly dismembered Osiris[346] (for further discussion, see p. 180–184).

To understand the castration motif, we must first realise that Episode C synthesises the first two episodes in such a way that it eliminates the causes of the negation of proper kin relationships which have arisen in Episode A (an attempt at incest) and Episode B (an attempt at fratricide). The mediations which are introduced in Episode C are at the same time obviously improper: Bata eliminated his masculinity (male element) by the violent and unnatural act of castrating himself; his brother eliminated his wife (female element) by the brutal and unnatural act of murder. At the end of Episode C, the relationship between the two brothers is thus stabilised (it is positive) but, at the same time, they are separated from each other by a border impenetrable at this point of the narrative. Their encounter takes place in a temporally and geographically liminal setting (at dawn, the gulf of water creating an explicit border between Egyptian × foreign) and it is paradoxical in its essence – the moment of their reconciliation is also the moment of their separation.[347] By his act of castration, Bata is excluded from orderly human society and is condemned to living beyond the border of order (here

345 Gerald Kadish, "Eunuchs in Ancient Egypt", in *Studies in Honor of John A. Wilson, September 12, 1969, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation* [SAOC] 35 (1969), p. 62.

346 An explicit mention of this mythological motif is made in a work by Plutarch named *De Iside et Osiride* (J. Gwyn Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride, Edited with Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1970, p. 144: "The only part which Isis did not find was his male member; for no sooner was it thrown into the river then the *lepidotus*, *phargus* and *oxyrhynchus* ate of it, fish which they most of all abhor. In its place Isis fashioned a likeness of it and consecrated the phallus, in honour of which the Egyptians even today hold festival."), which is very late in origin (approx. 120 A.D.). Nevertheless, Hollis has shown in other ancient Egyptian texts that the issue of Osiris' genitals (whether missing or functional) was generally an important motif (Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 116–120). For other mentions of Osiris' phallus, see also Horst Beinlich, *Die "Osirisreliquien": zum Motiv der Körpergliederung in der altägyptischen Religion*, Ägyptologische Abhandlungen [ÄA] 42, Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1984, p. 319 ("Phallus").

347 In this context it is most interesting to note an article by Jean Revez ("The Metaphorical Use of the Kinship Term *sn* 'Brother'", *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* [JARCE] 40 [2003]: 123–131). Revez points out that "the study of the metaphorical use of the kinship term *sn*, 'brother', has led us to observe that in most cases, *sn* refers to someone as an 'equal', namely a person who is well-intentioned towards his kin. However, the very nature of this relationship, based on parity and equivalence, may lead under circumstances where some struggle for power is involved, to turn the amicable nature of this relationship into animosity." (Idem: 130). He shows this on several instances in which the term *sn.wy* "two brothers" were interchanged with the term *rḫ.wy* "two disputants", especially in connection with the term *wpj* "to judge" (Revez, "The Metaphorical Use of the Kinship Term *sn*": 128) which is also the case in this text (see above 7,1).

symbolised by water) and in the foreign (chaotic) region of the Valley of the Pine, being neither dead nor alive (his heart is not in his chest but on the top of a tree in the form of a cone), neither man nor woman (castrate); he is in a marginal state of existence.

In her analysis, Susan Hollis comes to a similar conclusion.[348] The severing of Bata's phallus, his dislocation to the Valley of the Pine and the removal of his heart, all point to the fact that Bata is in a transitional state of some kind. "When each of these acts is considered separately, each has implications that suggest that Bata underwent a kind of death, and all three together emphasise that Bata entered the Otherworld by the time he settled in the Valley."[349] Once the judicial process is finished, Bata emasculates himself and leaves for the Valley – the situation once again rests in a certain equilibrium (bones of contention, Anubis' wife, have been eliminated – cut and thrown to the dogs).[350] Nevertheless, this new state represents a perversion of the balanced situation (see p. 102, fig. 3) as described at the beginning of the story. Although the relations are positive, the characters (Bata and Anubis) cannot communicate with each other according to their will. It is true that a connection is re-established but it will only become functional once an extreme situation should occur (once something bad happens to Bata).

The first triad of Episodes A–C provides the first example of the mechanism which Terence Turner called the "mythomotorics" (the inner dynamics of a myth, see above, p. 89–92) "[…] an action or event violates or mediates the structure of the prevailing order, giving rise to a situation in which actors and elements stand in ambiguous or contradictory relationships to each other."[351] This is a precise description of what has transpired in Episode A (thesis) and B (antithesis). Two swings and the pendulum

348 Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 113–142.

349 Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 113. John Baines ("Interpreting Sinuhe", *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 68 (1982): 31–44), for example, points out that existence outside Egypt was considered an existence of lesser quality. Assmann is also persuaded that the posture in which Anubis returns to his house stresses the idea that Bata was considered to be dead by his brother; see Jan Assman, *Textanalyse auf verschiedenen Ebenen: zum Problem der Einheit des Papyrus d'Orbiney*, in XIX. Deutscher Orientalistentag vom 28. September bis 4. Oktober 1975, Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft [ZDMG] Suppl. III, 1, Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1977, p. 10; 15, n. 52.

350 Wettengel (*Die Erzählung*, p. 111–112) remarks that we cannot confirm that the death penalty for adultery would have been practiced in Ramesside Egypt (for further comments on adultery in Egypt, see above, p. 107). He then quotes from the Deuteronomium (22,22) and states that this custom seems to have been practiced in the Ancient Near East. And because he considers the topic to be of Near Eastern origin, it seems logical to him that it is some type of foreign residue taken over by the Egyptians. Not only do I doubt that the Egyptians would keep a motif in their narrative which would be foreign to them, I also consider it unnecessary to venture into such quasi-historical interpretations. I find it more fruitful to try and see in what way the events fit into the dynamics of the story. In this case it seems that the structure of the story required the elimination of the female principle as represented by Anubis's wife. Just as Bata got rid of his overabundant masculinity (castration), Anubis got rid of his wife's overabundant femininity by murdering her.

351 Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 33.

comes to a halt in Episode C (synthesis). Episodes A and B can also illustrate the two basic modes of this dialectic motion (affirmation and negation). In Episode A we can see an example of what Turner called the "negation of both incompatible poles of binary oppositions in a single unviable relationship" (see above, p. 90) – attempted incest. In Episode B we see a negation which functions "in the opposite way to that normatively required in a given relationship" – attempt at fratricide. Episode C, on the other hand, gives an apt example of both types of "affirmation": a) "negation of a negation" (Anubis kills his wife); b) "separation of improperly combined relationships" (Bata and Anubis are physically separated after an attempt at fratricide). These basic modes of "negation" and "affirmation" are also distinguishable in other parts of the text.

Another motif which very fittingly shows mythomotorics at work is Bata's act of carving out his heart (*ḥ3.ty*) and placing it on top of a pine tree. To fully understand this motif, we must take a larger context into consideration, including passages which come later on.

Bata informs his brother Anubis about his plan to carve out his own heart right after he tells him that they cannot be together (8,3). At the same time, the act of parting with his heart does not seem to be threatening to Bata. What is dangerous is if something should happen to the heart. Anubis would then learn about it by certain signs and be urged by Bata to come to him and help. The heart in this context therefore represents the last remaining, albeit only latently, active communication channel between the two separated brothers (see below, p. 124, fig. 7, graphical summary of Initial Episode II). Another symbolical role of Bata's heart is connected with the act of his emasculation. By committing such an act, Bata has deprived himself of something which was integral to him but at the same time somehow inappropriate: his overt sex appeal was one half of the causes of the perversion of social relations (the other being the overt femininity of Anubis' wife). The role of the heart in relation to Bata's emasculation is revealed further on in the story when Bata explains the whole situation to his wife which by then will have been created for him by the Ennead:

jw=f ḏd n=s	And then he said to her:
m jr pr<.t> r-bnr	"Do not go out
tm pȝ ym **10,2** {*ḥr*} *jtȝ=t*	lest the sea **10,2** seize you
ḫr nn jw=j <r> rḫ nḫm=t m dj=f	because I will not be able to protect you from him
pȝ-wn twj z.t-ḥm.t mj-ḳd=t	for I am a woman like you!
ḫr ḥ3.ty=j wȝḥ ḥr dȝḏȝ n **10,3**	But my heart lies on top of **10,3**
tȝ ḫrr.t pȝ ꜥš	the flower of the pine
ḫr jr gmj sw ky	and if somebody else finds it,
jw=j <r> ꜥḥȝ m-dj=f	I will fight with him!"
wn jn=f ḥr wp.t n=s ḥ3.ty=f m ḳj=f	And then he reported his heart to her in its
10,4 *nb*	**10,4** entirety.

The fact that Bata is emasculated (i.e. a woman like his wife) is put into direct connection with his heart being on the pine tree. That which makes Bata a man and protector of his family (i.e. his masculinity) was inactivated by his emasculation. This very same ability, we are informed, will be re-activated if somebody tries to reach Bata's heart. Generally, both the castration and the removal of the heart are acts which mark Bata's transition to a state which is in direct contrast to his previous situation. Beforehand, he was a very strong, beautiful and virile young lad. He was so attractive that his own sister/mother-in-law attempted to have a sexual encounter with him. The act of castration and the removal of his heart therefore seem to represent the loss of exactly these characteristics i.e. life force (he became weak and feeble, once the tree with his heart is cut down, he dies) and sexuality (he calls himself a woman like his wife). In the Tale of Two Brothers, Bata's heart therefore seems to be an externalisation of the active/masculine part of Bata's character. At the same time, however, Bata is not deprived of it absolutely: a group of Egyptian gods addresses him as the "Bull of the Ennead". We also hear that right after he informs his wife about the whereabouts of his heart (*ḥ3.ty*), he divulges all of its secrets to her. This means that a certain connection between Bata and his heart is maintained. It is only temporarily limited. If we accept the idea that a connection is maintained between Bata and his heart even after its removal, we may interpret these events as a sort of "bifurcation" of Bata's character.[352] He is split, so to say, and a female-like Bata lacking his externalised life force/masculinity is created. The necessity for this act has arisen as a result of previous actions which included expressions of inappropriate femininity (Anubis' wife) and inappropriate masculinity (Bata).

It is also important to note that the text refers to Bata's heart by using the term *ḥ3.ty*. The idea that the heart represents the sum of an individual's character, emotions, and one's abilities in general is quite firmly rooted in ancient Egyptian thought. There are two basic terms which are used in Egyptian texts and which are variously translated as "heart" in this context: *jb* and *ḥ3.ty*. There has been a very long discussion concerning the meaning and relation of these two terms. Rune Nyord very aptly summarised the development of the whole argument and pointed out that there are basically two interpretation concepts.[353] The first he calls the "'*ib* as (metaphorical)

352 Another term coined by Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 43, when describing the splitting "of the figure of Laios into two complementary roles, representing, respectively, the affirmation and negation of his relationship to Oedipus." I use the term "bifurcation" more freely than Turner also for those cases when it does not concern a division of one figure into two roles but, such as in the case of Bata, the externalisation of part of a figure's character trait or ability (such as Bata's life force/masculinity). See below (p. 122–123) for further explanation.

353 Nyord, *Breathing Flesh*, p. 55–68.

heart'-hypothesis".[354] The second he calls "'*ib* as stomach/interior'-hypothesis".[355] After a summary of the arguments offered by both "schools", Nyord puts the theories to the test by analysing material from the Coffin Texts. He concludes that:

> The most immediately apparent difference in the distribution of the two terms is the great number of metaphors found involving the *ib* compared with the almost non-existent use of *ḥꜣty* in metaphors. [...] Still, the examination of the image-schematic and metaphorical structure of the terms presented here has clearly shown that *ib* an *ḥꜣty* are distinctive terms, and that the traditional physical/mental dichotomy is insufficient for their characterization. For this reason alone, translating both terms with "heart", thus interpolating a super-linguistic category of [HEART], would be problematical and obscure the quite noticeable distinction between what is clearly two ancient Egyptian categories. [...] the word *ib* will be rendered as "interior" and understood as designating primarily a *Leibesinsel* [*i.e. a source of life, aut. note*] centred somewhere in the torso (either the chest or abdominal region), but also at times referring to a part of the *Körper*, though the evidence does not allow for a more exact identification. On the other hand, *ḥꜣty* will be understood as "heart", either as a *Körper* organ (a use seen especially clearly in the references to the cutting out and eating of hearts), or as the *Leibesinsel* located in the chest."[356]

However, according to Westendorf, the term *ḥꜣ.ty* gradually replaces the older term *jb*, taking on its semantic meanings.[357] The case of the Tale of Two Brothers seems to prove Westendorf's observation to some extent. The four attestations of the term *jb* are all parts of phrases describing acts of volition (want/intent/desire).[358] In all other cases the term *ḥꜣ.ty* is used when referring to the heart (a) as an organ with which one can physically handle (it is cut out and placed on a pine, put in water, drunk,

354 Nyord, *Breathing Flesh*, p. 57–62. According to Nyord, the representative proponent of this theory is Wolfhart Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*, 1 Bd., Leiden, Boston, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1999, esp. p. 109–122; followed most recently by Robert K. Ritner, "The Cardiovascular System in Ancient Egyptian Thought", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* [JNES] 65/2 (2006): 99–109.

355 Nyord, *Breathing Flesh*, p. 62–65. According to Nyord, the representative proponent of this theory is Thierry Bardinet, *Les papyrus médicaux de l'Égypte pharaonique: Traduction intégrale et commentaire*, Paris: Fayard, 1995.

356 Nyord, *Breathing Flesh*, p. 108, 112–113.

357 Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*, 1 Bd., p. 109–113. Nyord remarks that even though the terms represent two distinctive categories at least in the corpus of the Coffin Texts, he cannot speak for later sources for which a more detailed study must be carried out (Nyord, *Breathing Flesh*, p. 110).

358 d'Orb. 3,2; 3,3; 3,6; 18,6.

etc.);[359] and (b) as the centre of strong (negative) emotions and cogitation.[360] In the Tale of Two Brothers, *ḥꜣ.ty* therefore seems to represent a term with more symbolical potential which takes on the metaphorical meanings attributed in older texts or in other contexts to the term *jb*, as, for example, Nyord summarises in relation to the Coffin Texts:[361]

> [...] A number of expressions dealing with what could be broadly termed as FUNCTIONALITY OF THE IB are found with various source domains. The source domains used to structure this notion are THRIVING OF LIVING ORGANISMS (*wḏꜣ*, *ꜥnḫ*, negatively *sk ib*), STABILITY (*mn ib*) and STRENGTH (*wsr ib*). A few more special cases are related to this general notion. One stresses the activity or lack of same with the conceptual metaphor INERTNESS IS TIREDNESS OF IB with the corresponding ACTIVITY IS WAKEFULNESS OF IB (*wrḏ ib* and *rs ib*). The second is an expression likely denoting some form of unconsciousness, in the metaphor UNCONSCIOUSNESS IS SWALLOWING ONE'S IB (*ꜥm ib*). The latter metaphor is likely structured image-schematically by the CONTAINER schema, with "swallowing" meaning that the *ib* becomes cut off from its interaction with things outside of the body. [...] The *ib* also plays a role in the defeat of the enemies. A clearly metaphorical example of the conceptualization of the power to do so is its identification with SHARPNESS (*mḏs ib*). A second example is found in the metaphor ABILITY TO DEFEAT ENEMIES IS (THE RESULT OF) PROTECTION BY THE IB (*mki ib*).[362]

Especially interesting with regard to the context of the Tale of Two Brothers is the idea noted by Nyord expressing the state of "unconsciousness" (inability to act) through the metaphor of "swallowing one's heart" in the sense that the heart "becomes cut off from its interaction with things outside of the body". Bata first "cuts off" (*šꜥd*) his phallus and then "cuts out" (*šd*) his heart. Not only are the two Egyptian terms describing the actions very similar, which is an argument especially relevant in the ancient Egyptian context where the phonetic/graphic similarity of words founds their ontological connection (see above, p. 37–40). Both actions also have very similar effects leading to

359 d'Orb. 8,4; 8,5; 8,9; 10,2–3; 12,6; 13,4; 13,8–14,3.

360 d'Orb. 8,1; 8,5; 9,5–6; 11,1–2; 13,5; 13,6; 16,5–6.

361 As both terms could, according to Nyord, represent *Leibesinseln* (sources of life) and supplemented by the fact that *ḥꜣ.ty* was used in the Coffin Text corpus in contexts describing physical handling of the organ (as Nyord remarks: "especially [...] in the references to the cutting out and eating of hearts [...]"), this might have prompted the author of the Tale of Two Brothers to limit the semantic scope of the term *jb* solely to acts of volition and move any metaphorical potential to the term *ḥꜣ.ty*. It could, therefore, represent a peculiarity of this one specific text and not be indicative of a more general trend, as Westendorf suggests (see above, n. 357).

362 Nyord, *Breathing Flesh*, p. 105–106.

Bata's becoming "weak and feeble", being unable to protect his wife because he "is a woman like her", and forcing him to move to an area which is qualitatively different from that where his brother Anubis lives (Egypt), neither of them being able to bridge the divide.[363] Both the castration and the cutting out of the heart, therefore, seem to be two alternative ways in which the text metaphorically describes Bata's temporary loss of life force/masculinity.[364] The necessity to conceptualise this as two parallel actions is conditioned by the fact that Bata's masculinity is paradoxical in its essence. It is highly destructive (the cause of a breach of social relationships through possible incest), but at the same time highly creative (Bata in the end begets himself). The phallus seems to represent the negative aspect and had to be eliminated completely (eaten by a *nʿr* fish). The heart, on the other hand, represents the positive aspect which will later be reunited with Bata empowering him to take on various forms culminating in Bata's act of self-engendering.

363 Interestingly enough, the description of Bata's abilities while still living in the household of his brother are exactly in accordance with the basic metaphors identified by Nyord and subsumed under the category Functionality of the ib: 1) Thriving of living organisms (Bata's flocks teem with life and multiply); 2) stability (the whole family constellation is balanced); 3) strength (Bata himself is exceedingly strong), see above.

364 Hollis presents a similar idea in her work (Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, esp. p. 140–142). However, her argumentation seems rather inconsistent. She bases her claim on the idea that the heart was supposedly considered by the ancient Egyptians to be the source organ of semen. This notion was developed in some detail especially by Dieter Müller ("Die Zeugung durch das Herz in Religion und Medizin der Ägypter", *Orientalia* 35 [1966]: 247–274), who analysed some unusual instances of the usage of the term *jb* in relation to procreation. Müller's conclusion was that the term in this context must have had sexual connotations (Müller, "Die Zeugung": 259; for a summary of the discussion which evolved around Müller's paper, see Nyord, *Breathing Flesh*, p. 420–424). Unfortunately, the whole argument becomes less controversial if one supplements the mechanical translation of the term *jb* as "heart" for the more nuanced term "interior" (see also Nyord, *Breathing Flesh*, p. 62–65, 419–424). Hollis is also forced to make unnecessary changes to the texts on which she bases her argumentation. One example will suffice: Hollis translates Spell 576 of the Coffin Texts (CT VI, 191m–n) in the following way (Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 141):

jw jb<=f> n ḥm.t ḫr=f	<His> heart comes to the woman under him
r ṯnw nk=f	every time he copulates.

However, the emendation of the masculine third person singular pronoun is absolutely unnecessary. The whole passage may be translated, for example, in the following way (CT VI, 191l–n):

jr s nb rḫ.t(y)=f(y) r3 pn	Concerning any man who learns this spell,
jw=f nk=f m t3 pn m grḥ hrw	he can copulate in this land day and night
jw jb n ḥm.t ḫr=f	and the interior of the woman will come under
r ṯnw nk=f	him every time he copulates.

According to Nyord, who analyses the term "*jw jb*", the "coming of the interior" is not limited only to males but also concerns the *jb.w* (interiors) of women (Nyord, *Breathing Flesh*, p. 421, 426–427): "[...] the semen must be able to enter the *ib* of a woman for her to conceive a child." This weakens the idea that the *jb* is a direct source of sperm as its procreative potential also concerns women. Hollis further quotes a passage from the medical Papyrus Ebers 103, 2–3: "As for the man, there are 22 vessels in him to the heart which give to all his body parts" (Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 141, n. 180). This passage, however, does not specify in any way that these vessels channel semen. I thank Hana Vymazalová (Czech Institute of Egyptology, Prague) for a very helpful discussion on the topic (personal communication, 17.–18. 12. 2012, Prague).

Graphical summary

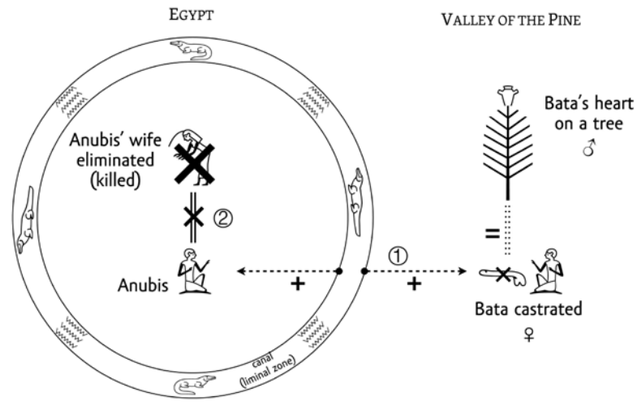


fig. 6: Episode C

①

The negative relationship between Bata and Anubis materialises in the gulf of water separating them from each other. This canal acts as a dividing zone because, in the present state of affairs, there is no coming back for Bata and there is no traversing for Anubis.[365] At dawn, which is a temporal liminal period *par excellence* (the sun is located in a region of the sky/netherworld called the Duat), the positive relationship between the brothers is recovered by Bata's act of castration – since it was his virility which caused all these problems, the only solution was to dispose of it, which Bata did. Bata's masculinity is therefore somehow enclosed in his heart, externalised and isolated from him (placed on a tree). Yet, it remains connected to Bata (once the tree is cut, Bata dies) which is indicated by the dotted line.

②

Anubis kills his wife thus eliminating the feminine cause of the separation between him and Bata just as Bata eliminated the male element by castrating himself.

365 The moment of Anubis and Bata's separation may be very well compared to the separation of Horus and Seth after their contendings. Herman te Velde writes: "Yet this rest after the conflict also means stagnation. Totality has been split into two without the possibility of fruitful interaction and co-operation. The boundary between the two countries proves the peace is of limited nature." (te Velde, *Seth*, p. 63).

Initial episode II (rubrum 9–11)

1) Now many days after this, his young brother was in the Valley of the Pine, **8,9** no one being with him as he spent all day hunting desert game (*j3w.t n ḫ3s.t*). He came to spend the night under the pine on top of whose blossom was his heart (*ḥ3.ty*). (see p. 127, fig. 7)

2) Now many **9,1** days after this, he built himself a country villa (*bḫn*) with his hand <in> the Valley of the Pine, **9,2** and he filled <it> with every good thing with the intention of establishing for himself a household. He went out from his country villa and he met the Ennead **9,3** as they were going out to administer the whole land (*t3 ḏr=f*). And then the Ennead spoke, one among them, saying to him: **9,4** "Ho, Bata, bull of the Ennead, are you here alone, you having abandoned your town because of the wife of Anubis, your older **9,5** brother? See, <he> killed his wife. Now you are avenged by him for all the wrong done against you."

Their heart (*ḥ3.ty*) was **9,6** very sore for him, and Pre-Harakhty said to Khnum, "Now make a wife (*z.t-ḥm.t*) for Bata that he not **9,7** live alone". And then Khnum made for him a companion (*jry ḥms*). She was more beautiful of body than any woman **9,8** in the entire land, <the fluid of> every god being in her. And then the Seven Hathors came <to> see her, and they spoke as **9,9** one, "She will die of a knife." And then he desired her exceedingly, and she sat in his house while he spent the day **10,1** hunting desert game and bringing (it) <to> lay before her. And he said to her, "Do not go out lest *ym* **10,2** seize you because I will not be able to save you from it because I am a woman (*z.t-ḥm.t*) like you. But my heart (*ḥ3.ty*) lies on **10,3** the top of the flower of the pine and if somebody else finds it, I <will> fight him." And then he reported (*wpj*) his heart (*ḥ3.ty*) to her in its **10,4** entirety. (see p. 125, fig. 8)

3) Now many days after that when Bata went out to hunt as customary, **10,5** the maiden (*ʿḏd.t*) went forth to stroll under the pine beside her house. She saw *ym* **10,6** surge up after her, and she rose up to run before it <wanting to> enter her house. And then *ym* **10,7** called to the pine saying: "Catch her for me." And the pine brought one plait of her hair. And then **10,8** *ym* brought it to Egypt, and he put it in the place of the launderers of the Pharaoh, l.p.h.[366] And then the odor (*stj*) **10,9** of the plait of hair turned up in the clothing of the Pharaoh, l.p.h. And one [i.e. the pharaoh] fought (*ʿḥ3*) with the launderers of the Pharaoh, l.p.h., saying: "The scent of ointment is in the clothes of **10,10** the Pharaoh, l.p.h." And the <king> became quarrelsome with them daily, and **11,1** they did not know what to do. And the head launderer of the Pharaoh, l.p.h., went to the bank, his heart (*ḥ3.ty*) **11,2** being very pained after the quarreling with him daily. And then he determined for himself he was standing on the land opposite the plait of hair **11,3** which was in the water, and (he) had one go down, and it was brought to him. And its odor was found extremely sweet, and he took it to the Pharaoh, l.p.h. **11,4** And then the learned scribes of the king were brought. And then they said to the pharaoh, "As for the plait of hair, **11,5** it belongs to a daughter of Pre-Harakhty with the fluid of all the gods in her. Now it is a tribute (*nḏ-ḥr*) <from> a foreign land (*ḫ3s.t*). Cause messengers to go **11,6** to every foreign land (*ḫ3s.t*) to seek her. As for the messenger who is for the Valley of the Pine, have many people **11,7** go with him to bring her." Then His Majesty, l.p.h., said, "What you have said is very, very good." And they were made to hurry. (see p. 126, fig. 9)

Commentary

I have called this part of the story "Initial episode II". The "Initial episodes" (three in total in our story) have a very specific function different from that of the triads of Episodes (see below, p. 171). Whereas the triadic structures of the Episodes can create an infinite number of permutations of certain elements within one order, there are certain parts of stories whose function is to shift the synchronic structure into a different "frame" which deals with a different set of structural oppositions. Before Bata's departure from Egypt we were dealing with (in)appropriate kin relationships in Egyptian society. Initial Episode II shifts the focus ("frame") of the story to include a different set of structural oppositions: order × disorder, Egyptian × foreign. At this moment it is important to realise that the structural oppositions are not presented within the myth as clearly defined categories. The myth does not provide any sort of encyclopaedic knowledge of what is and is not Egyptian. It introduces these categories precisely because they are problematic. The inner dynamics of the myth then address the questionable status of these categories through a series of interactions between the characters which stand on a scale in between two extreme positions, with the mediators being betwixt and between (for more on this topic, see below, p. 163–177).

"Initial episode II" also introduces two very important mechanisms necessary for the inner dynamics of a myth ("mythomotorics"). The first is embodied in the characters of the "mediators". I have explained the importance of these personae in the summary of Lévi-Strauss' theory (see above, p. 83–84). Generally speaking, a "mediator" is a character who stands on both sides of the opposing principles or in between them. For Lévi-Strauss, a classic mediator in North-America was the coyote or raven.[367] In the Tale of Two Brothers, two characters so far exhibit certain

366 See above, p. 63, n. 172.

367 See above, p. 83–84.

mediator character traits: Bata's wife and *ym* (see below). Their position somewhere "in between" gives mediators the opportunity to bridge distances and link orders which, from the point of view of the members of these orders, seem insurmountable. In religion, a classic example of a mediating action would be an offering, bridging the distance and the existential chasm between the world of men and that of gods.

Let us look in more detail at the mediators whom we meet in Initial Episode II of our story. We shall start with the maiden given to Bata by the Ennead as his wife. First of all we must realise that at this point of the story Bata is still castrated and therefore could not have fulfilled the main aim of marriage – the procreation of children ("I [Bata] am a woman like you [Bata's wife]") – the girl is therefore a wife and a virgin at the same time. She is married to a person living outside established order (i.e. Egypt), but, at the same time, she has a firm connection to order because "in her is the seed (lit. water) of every (Egyptian) god". This position enables her to bridge the gap between Egypt and the Valley of the Pine and makes her an ideal mediator. As Hollis stresses, Bata's wife also shares several aspects with the goddess Hathor.[368] To name just a few: both are beautiful and desirable; both are in some way connected to the Netherworld (for example, Hathor is one of the *Bas* of the West;[369] Bata's wife marries Bata – a "living dead"); both are closely connected with foreign lands, i.e. they come from a foreign land to Egypt and after they arrive they are greeted with great joy;[370] both strive to destroy native Egyptians (Hathor in the story of the "Destruction of Mankind";[371] Bata's wife's persistent attempts to dispose of Bata himself). Later in the story, Bata's wife subsequently becomes the main royal wife and Bata's mother.

368 Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 151–159,

369 Adriaan de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, Vol. I–VII, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935–1961, Vol. II, 386d–387a [B17C]:

jw=j rḫ=k(w) bȝ.w Jmn.ty.w	I know the *Bas* of the West:
Rᶜ pw Śbk pw nb Bȝḥw	it is Re, it is Sobek lord of Bakhu (*i.e. the place of sunrise*),
ḥw.t-ḥr pw nb.t mšrw	it is Hathor mistress of the evening time.

For Bakhu as a location in the east where the sun rises, see Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* I, 422.

370 Kurt Sethe (*Zur Altägytischen Sage vom Sonnenauge das in der Fremde war*, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Aegyptens V/3, Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1912 p. 36) first suggested that the narrative of the Papyrus d'Orbiney reflects the legend of bringing Hathor from Byblos in a similar fashion to the way the return of Tefnut-Hathor, the sun-eye, reflects the return of Hathor from Nubia (See also Eberhard Otto, "Augensagen", in Helck und Otto [Hrsg.], *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. I, cols. 562–567). The identity of Bata's wife as Hathor has been also argued for by Teysseire (*The Portrayal of Women*, p. 144–148), who refers to the title "Lady of (the mouth of) the Valley" (*nb.t rᶜ jn.t*) borne throughout Egyptian history by Hathor, Sakhmet, and other leonine goddesses related to Hathor.

371 Part of a longer composition called the Book of the Heavenly Cow (Charles Maystre, "Le livre de la vache du ciel dans les tombeaux de la Vallée de rois", *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archeologie orientale* [BIFAO] XL [1941]: 53–115; Erik Hornung, *Der Ägyptische Mythos von der Himmelskuh. Eine Ätiologie des Unvollkommenen*, Orbis biblicus et orientalis [OBO] 46, Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982).

Together with other female members of the royal court, royal wives were often active in the cult of Hathor.[372] In certain aspects Hathor merges with Isis, mother of Horus, in the context of the myths connected with Osiris.[373] Both goddesses also had a very similar iconography, being depicted with a sun disk placed between horns on their head. Later in the Tale of Two Brothers, Bata's former wife actually becomes Bata's mother after being impregnated by Bata himself in the form of a splinter of wood (for a discussion of this motif, see below, p. 154–155).

Bata's wife also shares many characteristics with other goddesses of foreign origin who were to some extent incorporated into the Egyptian pantheon, such as Qedeshet, Anat, and Astarte (see below, p. 216, n. 576). As I will show in some detail later on (see below, p. 239–246), the motif of the lecherous *ym* (or the sea) actually enables an understanding of the Tale of Two Brothers as being structurally similar to the story of the Astarte Papyrus. The narrative in this fragmentary papyrus concerns the widespread mythological motif of the Levantine coast concerning "[...] the sexually-avaricious Sea who turns his attention to the beautiful goddess, the Baal's consort, pursues her and either catches her or precipitates an act of aetiological importance to the cult." [374]

Another significant detail is that none of the female characters in the Tale of Two Brothers have names. It is not an omission of some kind and it is also not because the female characters would be marginal to the narrative. In fact, they play the most crucial roles and propel the story on. It almost looks as though their anonymity was desired. The reason for this can be fittingly explained directly using Bata's wife. Throughout the text she goes through several transformations. Each of these is specific or consistent with the characteristics of one or a few female deities (Hathor, Isis, Astarte, etc.). At the same time, all these goddesses share some similar traits. It is as if it were not a specific deity or character type which is important but femininity in its many forms. By not assigning a name to the individual female representations, the text stresses the importance of the principle itself regardless

372 See, for example, Schafik Allam, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches*, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien [MÄS] 4, Berlin: Hessling, 1963, p. 14–15; Marianne Galvin, "The Hereditary Status of the Titles of the Cult of Hathor", *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 70 (1984): 42–49.

373 Helck und Otto [Hrsg.], *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. II, col. 1029. In a magical text from the Papyrus Ramesseum XI we find a note concerning a lock of hair which Hathor loses in a manner very similar to the situation which will befell Bata's wife in the story. Georges Posener ("La légende de la tresse d'Hathor", in L. H. Lesko (ed.), *Egyptological Studies in Honor of Richard A. Parker, Presented on the Occasion of His 78th Birthday, December 10, 1983*, Hanover (NH): Brown University, 1986, p. 111–117) noted that in this text this mythological motif is directly connected to the better known motif of Horus losing his eye, of Seth losing his testicles, and even of Thoth losing his shoulder.

374 Redford, "The Sea and the Goddess", p. 831–835 and the accompanying notes.

of individual manifestations. In ancient Egyptian texts, women, and the female principle in general, are attributed a very paradoxical position. We shall return to this topic in some detail later on (see below, p. 218–231). At this point it shall suffice to say that in a society where positions of power are dominated by males (such as the case of ancient Egypt), social discourse also tends to interpret basic social values from a male perspective. Within this framework, females and femininity become, to a certain extent, marginal. Yet females played a crucial role in the social structure of Egyptian society. Being on the margin and at the same time having a firm connection with different levels of the social network generally characterises mediatory figures and as such they may be viewed as a group.

The second mediating character is *ym*, who tries to capture Bata's wife. It is *ym* who physically bridges the gap between the pharaoh in Egypt and Bata in the Valley of the Pine by delivering the lock of hair of Bata's wife to the pharaoh's washers.[375] The mediating role of *ym* in this case is quite obvious as the inability to bridge the divide between Egypt and the Valley of the Pine physically was quite explicitly revealed by Bata to his brother Anubis at the moment of their departure (7,1–2: "I [Bata] shall never be with you [Anubis],/nor shall I be in the place in which you are. And I shall go to the Valley of the Pine").

The other basic principle of "mythomotorics" employed by the Papyrus d'Orbiney is the splitting/merging of characters and their roles into more/less personae or objects. I have previously noted the close connection between structuralism and psychoanalysis. Even though there are major disagreements between those who represent both approaches, the basic task of uncovering unconscious patterns or structures present in the minds of people as biological beings is characteristic for both. It is thus logical that these two methods share certain concepts. For example, in the case of the story of Oedipus we witness the decomposition or splitting (or as Turner says "bifurcation") of Iocasta, Oedipus' mother. All the positive qualities stay with Iocasta and all of the negative qualities are projected and materialised in the character of the Sphinx.[376]

375 For a discussion concerning the meaning of the word *ym*, see above, p. 74–76. It was Vandersleyen who suggested that *ym* in this specific story might not designate the "sea" in any way but rather the Nile (Vandersleyen, *Ouadj our*, p. 97–98). Just as in the case of the question of the actual location of the Valley of the Pine, I must also say that in this case, for the coherence of the narrative, we do not need to determine definitely whether *ym* means "the sea" or "the Nile". As I have mentioned above (p. 75), what is important is that *ym* bridges the distance between the Valley and the pharaoh's residence.

376 For a full interpretation, see Richard Caldwell, "The Psychoanalytic Interpretation of Greek Myth", in L. Edmunds (ed.), *Approaches to Greek Myth*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1990, p. 344–389 (especially p. 351–353).

In the case of our story, we see that the character of Bata is divided. He himself lives on in a mutilated body (not being either a true man or a true woman), his virility and male qualities are, for the time being, put aside on top of a tree. Nevertheless, he also possesses a very strong female element (this is confirmed by Bata's own words to his wife: "Don't go outside lest *ym* carry you away, for I will be unable to rescue you from it, because I am a woman like you and my heart lies on top of the flower of the pine tree. But if another finds it, I will fight with him."). His female qualities find their exteriorisation in the person of the woman created for him by the gods.[377] The reason for such "bifurcation" is that being a man/woman at the same time is a paradoxical and therefore undesirable situation. As a solution, the genders are split and Bata's character is "bifurcated". This solves one problem of the text and eases the paradox of Bata's existence, nevertheless, it is not a permanent solution. Even though Bata's acquired femininity was at one point of the story important (it outweighed his overt masculinity which caused all the trouble), it is something which, as such, is inappropriate for Bata. He in fact needs his wife to be carried away and thus dispose of his feminine part. This is why his masculine part (the pine with his heart) actually takes part in helping *ym* obtain the woman's lock of hair. As we shall see, this act triggers the process at the end of which Bata's wife abandons him and becomes the wife of the pharaoh, thus only leaving Bata with his masculine part (the pine and the heart). Further on in the story, Bata reabsorbs his masculinity (recovery of his heart) and restructures it (in the form of a bull).

377 In the text itself she is called *ʿḏd.t* (maiden?) which is a female variant of Bata's designation while he was still with his brother in Egypt.

Graphical summary

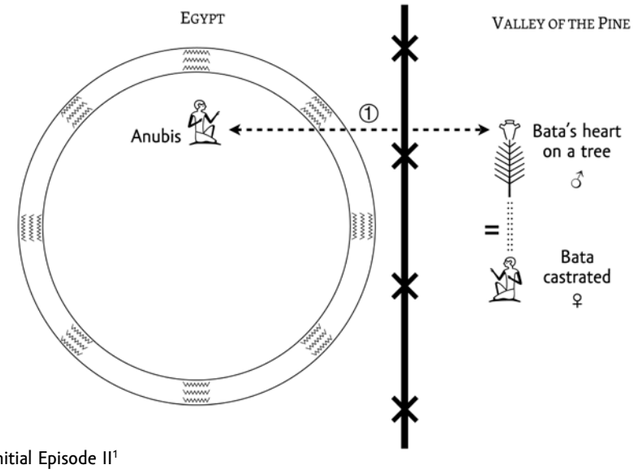


fig. 7: Initial Episode II[1]

①

A new and seemingly stalemate situation is introduced at the beginning of Initial Episode II. After being judged together with his brother, Bata leaves for the Valley of the Pine. He has started living in a foreign land. He has not established a household, he lives outside and sleeps under the pine on top of which his heart is located. He is in a marginal and also, in essence, a paradoxical state of existence (dead/alive, foreign/Egyptian, male/female, his food is based on desert game as opposed to the standard manner of acquiring food by agriculture[378]) and he is not capable of returning to order by his own means. The initial part of this Episode stresses the crucial difference between life in Egypt and abroad. It also emphasises the point that these two spheres are and must be kept divided. A seemingly impenetrable border between these worlds is drawn, in our story materialising in the canal infested with vile and dangerous crocodiles. Neither Bata nor his brother have the force to cross it on their own. Nevertheless, a certain connection between them exists after all. That is the connection between Bata's heart and his brother Anubis, established at the end of Episode C (Anubis would be informed by certain signs if something should happen to Bata's heart and he would come to help).

378 The motif of Bata hunting desert game for food is one of major interest. It has several connotations, all of which are very important for the understanding of the story. As Ćwiek remarks, in the Old Kingdom hunting desert game, especially with a bow and arrow, seemed to be a royal prerogative, based on representations in a funerary context (Ćwiek, *Relief Decoration*, p. 214). The same also applies in the period of the New Kingdom, according to Hartwig Altenmüller ("Jagd", in Helck und Otto [Hrsg.], *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. III, cols. 221–224, esp. 221). As Bata becomes pharaoh later in the story, this motif might well have hinted at the events yet to occur and stress Bata's association with the royal and divine. At the same time, scenes of the pharaoh hunting desert often decorate the pyramid temples and are generally regarded as

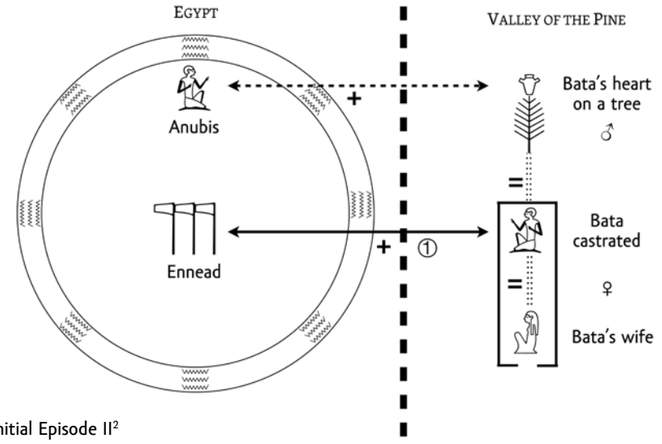


fig. 8: Initial Episode II[2]

①

By building a house in the Valley of the Pine, Bata shows his decision to settle and live in the Valley of the Pine. It is a continuation of Bata's endeavour to isolate himself as a solution to the problematic situation originating in Episodes A–C. Bata's separation was even enforced by the creation of an unsurmountable obstacle (water infested with crocodiles). It is understandable that such a state could only have been altered by the Egyptian gods themselves.[379] Through pity a beautiful maiden is created and

a symbolic expression of the force of order with which the pharaoh conquers the disorder represented by the chaotically arranged desert game (for an overview of all scenes of desert hunts from the pyramid complexes with references, see: Ćwiek, *Relief Decoration*, p. 214–217). Nevertheless, Bata does not hunt only to make merry or to conquer disorder, but primarily to survive. Bata, yet again, finds himself in a structurally opposing and paradoxical situation – on the one hand he is associated with the divine and the several motifs in the story all hint at this but, on the other hand, he is not yet a representative of order. He is in fact an outcast. The desert was considered to be the domain of the god Seth. In reality, Bata obtains nourishment in a manner directly contrasting the harvesting of plants which was to the Egyptians the predominant and most common way of obtaining food. Susan Hollis also notes that the hunting motif might have also had an association with the mortuary realm (Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 147–149). Nevertheless, she remarks that "the texts connected with the mortuary aspects of hunting are very old relative to the d'Orbiney. Thus, it may not be too much to say that the royal side of the solitary hunter was probably of higher import to the New Kingdom listeners/readers of the tale than the mortuary aspect" (Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 148).

379 Bata is addressed by one of the gods as "Bull of the Ennead" (*k3 n t3 psḏ.t*). Barta notes that such an epithet was used in funerary texts to refer to the deceased addressed by the Ennead as being born from them (Winfried Barta, *Untersuchungen zum Götterkreis der Neunheit*, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien [MÄS] 28, München, Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1973, p. 36–37). Barta then links this epithet to the Kamutef, or the "Bull of his mother" motif (*k3-mw.t=f*) – the Ennead playing the role of the female deity/queen and thus emphasizing the idea of the deceased's rebirth. Later in our story both the bull and the Kamutef motifs return (Episode G) once Bata, after several bodily transformations, engenders himself in the body of his wife-mother (Episode M, see below, p. 154–155). Hollis elaborates on the connection of the epithet "Bull of the Ennead" to the mortuary realm. She understands the epithet as emphasizing Bata's current state of a person living outside order (foreign lands) and virtually dead to human (Egyptian) society (Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 149–150).

she becomes Bata's wife. Her link to order (Egypt) is in fact so obvious and so strong [380] that through this character the story gains a new impetus. A representative of order (the wife as a creation of the Egyptian Ennead) is sent outside and wed to a representative of an ontologically different sphere (Bata). As a result we see that these two areas are not in fact as isolated as they might have appeared (indicated by the dotted line).

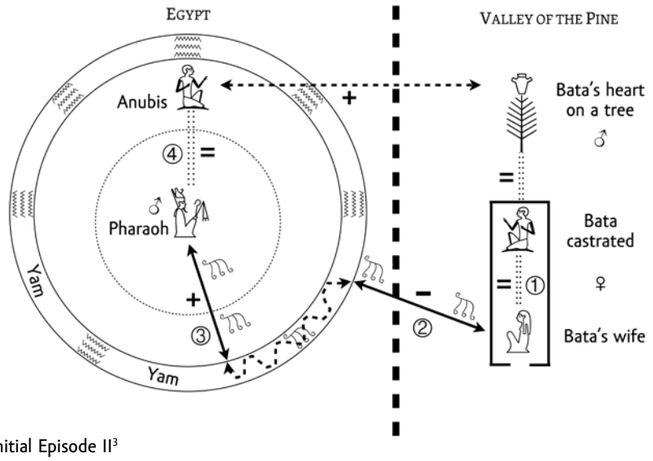


fig. 9: Initial Episode II[3]

①

In order to understand fully the relationship between Bata and his wife we must bear in mind that even though, socially, they are husband (male) and wife (female), biologically, Bata is not a proper man ("[...] I am a woman like you [...]", see above) and his wife is not a proper married woman (she remains a virgin). She is more of a sister to Bata than a wife (in a similar fashion as Anubis' wife was Bata's sister and a mother at the same time). It is, therefore, obvious that in this case, the act of marriage does not represent a standard social institution, as it fails to fulfil its basic biological role (procreation of children). In a certain way, it is a functionally redundant union and can be considered a sort of parody of a husband and wife. Bata's relationship to his wife must, therefore, be read in a different way. I would argue that she represents a materialisation of his acquired femininity (castration) through the principle of character bifurcation (see above, p. 122–123). As such she is also able to mediate between Bata

380 In this context it is important to notice Bata's treatment of his wife. He "spent the day hunting desert game and bringing (it) <to> lay (*w3ḥ*) before her". The word *w3ḥ* used in this text may as well be translated "to offer" in a ritual context (see Erman und Hermann, *Wörterbuch* I, 253–254). Bata therefore treats his wife as a goddess of her own kind which is quite understandable with regards to the manner of her birth. Hollis remarks that "this ritual activity was the sole prerogative of the king, the *one* priest [...], though in fact he delegated it to appointed priests" (Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 149). We may interpret this as yet another allusion to Bata's royal/divine nature. By providing for his wife Bata also respects the basic responsibility of a husband towards his family, just as the pharaoh provides for the Gods and the Egyptians (his flock), which is in accordance with the order (*maat*).

and the order (see ② and ③) because only she and she alone is able to arouse the attention of the pharaoh – the representative of order *par excellence*.

②

At this point we come to the part which narrates the attempt of the lecherous *ym* to get hold of Bata's sensuous wife by snatching her away. *ym* doesn't manage to get hold of her directly but must ask the pine tree for help. As a result, *ym* acquires a lock of her hair (as we have seen earlier in the case of Anubis' wife, hair is an overtly feminine sexual symbol). This is indeed a very interesting motif which we must look at in more detail. Firstly, I would like to remark that *ym* has two main functions – it represents the border which divides the two ontologically different areas of Egypt and the Valley of the Pine. At the same time, it acts as a mediator between these two zones (*ym* brings the lock of hair to the pharaoh). As a mediator, *ym* is closely linked to Bata's wife, who is a mediating character herself. Even though their encounter is violent, they in fact supplement each other. Their association is necessary as neither of these mediators is able to establish a firm connection between the pharaoh and Bata on their own. This is stressed by the fact that Bata, in anticipation of the events, forbids his wife to go outside, i.e. to establish contact with the liminal – only by contact with each other can Bata's wife and *ym* open a channel between the two areas. But why would Bata want to prevent this? The reason is that by doing so Bata reasserts the equilibrium reached in Episode C which, so far, is the only stable situation in the story. Nevertheless, this equilibrium (he builds a household outside of Egypt), as stabilised as it looks, is not in fact satisfactory at all. Firstly, the equilibrium was established through a brutal act of castration which endowed Bata with a superfluous feminine aspect. Secondly, Egyptians are not supposed to live outside Egypt; and if they do, they strive to return.[381] The story solves the paradox in which Bata finds himself through the mechanism of character bifurcation (Bata's masculinity – his heart on top of the pine; Bata's femininity – his wife). By not allowing his feminine part to come into contact with the liminal but, at the same time, helping the liminal (as the pine tree) to reach his feminine part, he finds himself in a paradoxical and structurally opposing situation: he tries to defend his position of an outcast (which is presently the only balanced and stable situation) but, at the same time, he utilises his acquired femininity to establish contact with the liminal and thus with the orderly world (through the lock of hair – a female sexual symbol *par excellence*). These two opposing notions indicate that the equilibrium from Episode C is unsatisfactory and the story must continue.

③+④

The pharaoh enters the scene. Even though Anubis is also part of order, the pharaoh creates a more "orderly" zone within order (the dotted line encircling the pharaoh). All following actions of the characters of this narrative will be related to the centre of order represented by the pharaoh – the living god and materialisation of the order *maat* and an exemplary male principle. He associates himself with Bata via the female principle (mediated by the lock of hair belonging to Bata's wife). But why did not Anubis receive the lock of hair? Anubis could not be the recipient for several reasons. First of

381 As in the case of Sinuhe, whose wish is to be buried in Egypt: "Whichever god decreed this flight, have mercy, bring me home! Surely you will let me see the place in which my heart dwells. What is more important than that my corpse be buried in the land in which I was born! Come to my aid! What if the happy event should occur! May god pity me! May he act so as to make happy the end of one whom he punished! May his heart ache for one whom he forced to live abroad." (Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature,* Vol. I, p. 228).

all, at this phase of the story Anubis is still unable to contact Bata – he cannot cross the border materialised in the crocodile-infested channel. Bata himself conditions the restitution of the relationship by certain signs which have not yet appeared. The second reason is that if Anubis were to be the recipient of the lock of hair, this would imply that Anubis would be searching for his brother's wife, which would be an (unintentional) effort to establish an incestuous kin relationship. This, as we remember, was the causal agent of all the troubles in the first place. This suggests that the whole relationship constellation of the three main male characters (Bata, Anubis, the pharaoh) is still more complex. To understand, we have to skip all the way to the end of the Tale of Two Brothers. There we learn that all three male characters actually ascend the throne of Egypt. From this point of view, their identities "melt" the very moment they take up the royal office (see below for more on the mechanisms of "positional kingship/succession", p. 155). I will argue that the main idea of the whole text is to express the multi-functional aspect of the office of the Pharaoh which has the ability to pervade and mediate between various ontological levels inaccessible to other human beings. Thanks to his divine aspect, the Pharaoh is an ideal mediator between humankind and the gods. He is thus depicted as the model sacrificer on Egyptian temple reliefs.[382] In order to express the unique position of the Pharaoh in a comprehensible way, the myth uses a mechanism which is quite typical. It personalises the individual aspects which are traditionally ascribed to the Pharaoh understood not merely as an office but also as a cosmological principle. The myth then demonstrates the abstract concepts in question using the relationship of these personifications. In the following episodes, the actions of the character of "the pharaoh" in our text will be defined by a very hostile relationship towards the "outside" (represented by Bata). This is a very important quality which a true Pharaoh should exhibit – the ability to hold the "other" at bay, militarily protect order (send out troops) and possibly take by force from the "outside" to the "inside" whatever is necessary or whatever he desires (Bata's wife). However, hostility is only one of the modes of relationship towards the category of the "other". Anubis personifies a more nuanced type which one may detect, for example, in the ancient Egyptians' relation to gods or the dead. They contain a certain negative or frightening aspect, however, the relationship is essentially positive (gods as well as the vindicated dead may help the living). Albeit we can sense a negative undertone between Bata and Anubis (Anubis tried to kill Bata), if Bata should call for help, the positive potential would be activated (Anubis would learn about Bata's despair and come to his aid). This paradoxical quality which the "other/outside" represented for the ancient Egyptians (the "opposite" threatening the established order; the sphere containing everything that the order lacks) is therefore personified in the two characters of "the pharaoh" and "Anubis". They are distinguished only to be fused at the end of the story together with Bata thus illustrating the ability of the office of the Pharaoh to include opposing or diverging principles.[383] In this sense the myth represents an example of circular reasoning: the knowledge of the conclusion (all three male characters are identical once they become the Pharaoh) founds our understanding of its premises (the character of "the pharaoh" and "Anubis" are personifications of the individual aspects united in the office of the Pharaoh).[384]

382 An offering is in many religious traditions one of the main mediums by which various ontological spheres may be connected (gods with people, the living with the dead, etc.) See, for example, Jeffrey Carter (ed.), *Understanding Religious Sacrifice: A Reader*, London, New York: Continuum, 2003.

383 In a very similar manner, Michèle Broze discusses the Contendings of Horus and Seth. She identifies several referential levels on which the narrative operates. Throughout the text a certain tension is maintained between these levels only to show in the end that it is their unification which gives meaning to their initial separation (Broze, *Mythe et Roman en Égypte ancienne*, p. 221–284).

Episode D (Rubrum 12)

Now many days **11,8** after this the people who went to the foreign land (*ḫ3s.t*) came to tell report(s) to His Majesty, l.p.h., while the ones who went to the Valley of the Pine did not come **11,9** because Bata killed them. And he left one of them to report to His Majesty, l.p.h. (see p. 129, fig. 10)

Commentary

Whereas in the previous episode the representative of order (the pharaoh) was the one being contacted by the "outside" (the lock of hair described as a gift from a foreign land), now it is the other way around. The pharaoh takes the initiative and actively strives to reach out. He does so by dispatching his military envoys. The military party represents the pharaoh's extension of his masculine strength (aggression). An attempt at establishing a relationship with the "outside" in this way can only obviously end in direct confrontation. Bata's overt masculinity and strength was the reason behind his segregation and it therefore cannot be the means of his reintegration. On the other hand, the pharaoh has already developed a positive relationship with Bata's feminine part, his wife, through the lock of hair which aroused his desire. Even though the act of killing the envoys seems to be a rather manly act of valour, the text does not stress this aspect. It is not hailed in any way as such but rather stated as a fact. What seems to be more important is the fact that Bata, by killing the whole party, confirms the negative relationship between himself and the pharaoh. Moreover, by leaving one of the members of the party alive, Bata made sure that the king also learned about the negative relationship directly.

384 In fact, there are more examples of circular reasoning in the Tale of Two Brothers (as we shall see further on) and Egyptian mythology in general. The Kamutef (Bull of his Mother) motif is a good example: the ruling pharaoh is divine because he was begotten by his divine father who, in fact, is the ruling pharaoh (see also below, p. 154–155). An interesting view on this issue has also been provided by Michèle Broze (*Mythe et Roman en Égypte ancienne*, especially p. 136–137, 231–255, 280–284). Even before we actually learn about Horus's ascension to the throne, we are graphically informed about it by the determinative of a child with the royal uraeus following the words *wꜥ n ms* (a child) and *ḏd* (a boy/youth), both referring to Horus (pChester Beatty I 1,1; 3,8. See Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 37, 40). See also Broze, "Discours rapporté": 28–36.

Graphical summary

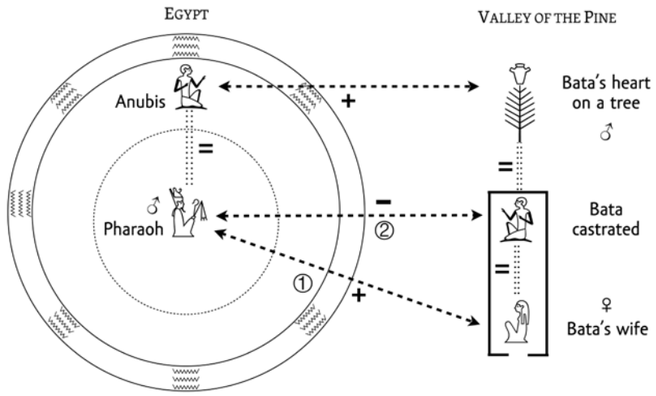


fig. 10: Episode D

①
An indirect positive relationship is established between Bata's wife and the pharaoh, who wishes to make her his wife. Although it is not explicitly stated, from the actions of the wife later on it is obvious that her goal is to become the pharaoh's wife.

②
An indirect negative relationship is established between Bata and the pharaoh. The relationship is mediated by the pharaoh's male envoys who are slaughtered by Bata, who only leaves one alive to report the event.

Episode E (Rubrum 12)

11,10 And then His Majesty, l.p.h., sent people, many bowmen, likewise chariotry, to bring her back, and **12,1** a woman (*z.t-ḥm.t*) was with them, and every beautiful ornament was put in her hand. And then the woman (*z.t-ḥm.t*) came to **12,2** Egypt with her, and there was shouting for her in the whole land (*t3 ḏr=f*). And then His Majesty, l.p.h., loved her very much **12,3** and one [i.e. the pharaoh] appointed her to (the position of) Great Noble Lady (*šps.t*).[385] (see p. 131, fig. 11)

And then he spoke with her to make her tell the manner of **12,4** her husband, and she spoke to His Majesty, l.p.h.: "Have the pine cut and have it destroyed." (see p. 132, fig. 12)

385 For an attempt at identifying a specific historical person behind this character, see Lise Manniche, "The Wife of Bata", *Göttinger Miszellen* [GM] 18 (1975): 33–35.

Commentary

This time the pharaoh's envoys are successful in bringing Bata's wife back to Egypt with them. The key difference is the inclusion of a lady of the court as one of the envoys, i.e. a female element. Episode E shows that the zone between the two ontological spheres is only penetrable at this stage of the narrative by female elements.

Bata also abstains from harming the second party, this time composed of several types of military units. This is another part of the narrative which supports the idea stressed above that Bata in fact wishes for his feminine part (his wife) to be taken away from him. He thus disposes of his inappropriate femininity which leaves him just with his masculine aspect (his heart on the tree). Once Bata's wife crosses the liminal zone, she undergoes a transformation, becoming a woman and a wife of a true man – the pharaoh.

Graphical summary

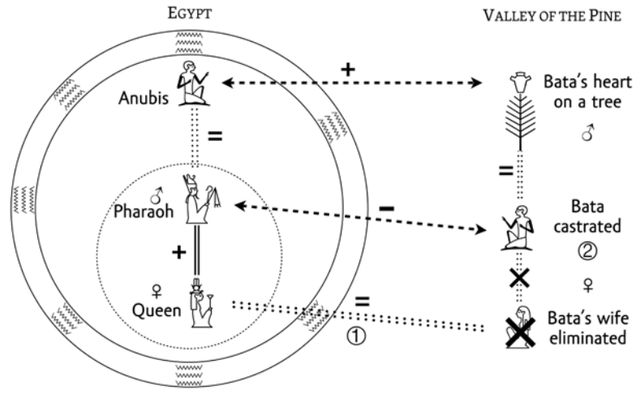


fig. 11: Episode E[1]

①
Bata gets rid of his feminine aspect by giving up his wife to the pharaoh's female envoy. What was feminine in him leaves with her. The wife undergoes a transformation and becomes the pharaoh's wife. Nevertheless, we must bear in mind that she is still the same character.

②
By taking Bata's wife for himself, the pharaoh enables Bata to eliminate the feminine part of his personality. Bata's wife (improper femininity) is in fact treated in the same way as Bata's phallus (improper masculinity) at the beginning of the story – they are both physically separated from Bata, yet they remain in the story and have a function of their own.

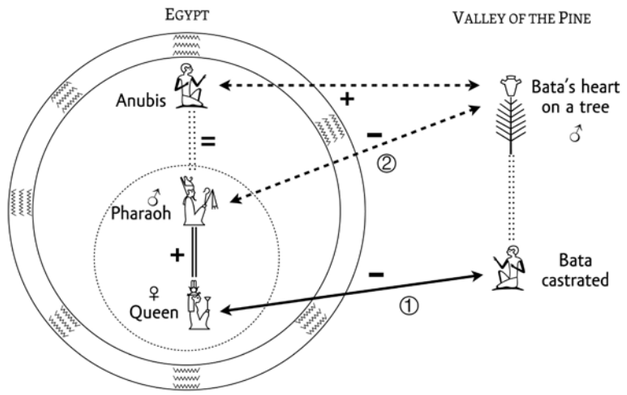


fig. 12: Episode E[2]

①
By divulging Bata's secret concerning his heart, the woman creates a direct negative relationship towards Bata. This situation stems from the fact that by becoming the pharaoh's wife, she finds herself in a structurally inverted position. She had a positive relationship with Bata as the wife of a castrate in a non-consummated marriage outside order. Her current position, wife of the most virile male in the midst of order, compels this character to invert the relationship she originally had with Bata to a negative one.

②
The previous part of our story showed that once the pharaoh confronts Bata directly, he is unsuccessful (envoys slaughtered). Nevertheless, it is possible for the pharaoh to confront Bata's bifurcations – he managed to lure Bata's feminine part to Egypt. After having learned about Bata's masculine bifurcation (heart on the pine), the pharaoh may also develop a negative relationship to this aspect.

Episode F (Rubrum 12)

And **12,5** people and soldiers (*rmṯ.w mšʿ.w*) were made to go, carrying their weapons, to cut the tree, and they reached **12,6** the pine, and they cut the blossom upon which was the heart (*ḥ3.ty*) of Bata. **12,7** And he fell dead in that very instant (*jw=f ḥ3y.t mwt m t3 wnw.t šrj.t*). (see p. 134, fig. 13)

Commentary

This episode resolves many problems which needed to be dealt with before the story could continue. Once unchained of his feminine part, Bata must now become whole and complete again (he is still castrated). In order to complete his transition, he must take on a new physical form.[386] His mutilated form must be eliminated, which happens

386 Also Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 165–166.

at the hands of the pharaoh's envoys who fell the pine. Not only Bata's mutilated body, but also all of the negative relationships existing between him and the other characters are eliminated by this act. The stalemate situation is thus resolved, even though unsatisfactorily – Bata is dead.

It is also important to notice the inner structure of the narrative. Not only do the episodes form units (triads), but these units are interconnected. The triad of episodes D, E and F thus presents a structural inversion of the triad of episodes A, B and C:

Episode A: Bata is sexually assaulted by a woman (Anubis' wife).
Episode D: Bata is physically assaulted by a man (the pharaoh's envoys).

Episode B: Bata is unsuccessfully assaulted by a man through the doings of a woman (Anubis' wife persuades her husband to kill Bata, which he fails to do).
Episode E: Bata is successfully assaulted by a man through the doings of a woman (Bata's former wife persuades her husband pharaoh to kill Bata, which he manages to do).

Episode C: The aftermath of Episode A and B is Bata's castration and displacement of his heart (elimination of Bata's virility); feminine principle (Anubis' wife) destroyed.
Episode F: The aftermath of Episode D and E is Bata's death (pine felled); feminine principle (the pharaoh's wife) lives.

As we can see, the relationship between the individual episodes resembles an inversion. The second triad neutralises the unbalanced state of the first triad. At this moment, the only possible way of doing this is by tipping the balance to the other side, i.e. to the other extreme. This prepares the ground for a search for a true balance and synthesis (for more on the topic see below, p. 163–177).

Graphical summary

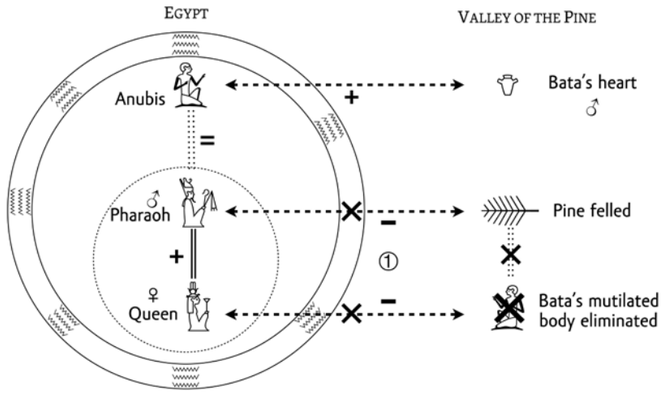


fig. 13: Episode F

①

The negative relationship between the pharaoh and the pharaoh's wife on one side and Bata on the other is cancelled by the physical elimination of Bata/the pine tree. This episode thus represents a synthesis of episodes D and E and the story once again reaches a certain equilibrium (just as in Episode C). Yet again, this equilibrium is unsatisfactory because our hero is dead. This episode also enables the disposal of Bata's imperfect and mutilated body and sets the scene for the creation of his renewed bodily form.

INITIAL EPISODE III (RUBRUM 13–15)

Now after the land was light and a second day began, when the pine **12,8** was cut, Anubis, the older brother of Bata, entered his house, and he **12,9** sat to wash his hands. And he was given a jug of beer, and it fermented (*stf*). **12,10** And he was given another of wine, and it made an offensive smell (*ḥwꜣ*). And then he took his **13,1** staff and his sandals, likewise his clothes and his weapons of combat, and he rose up to make an expedition **13,2** to the Valley of the Pine. He entered the country villa (*bḫn*) of his young brother. And he found his young brother **13,3** lying dead upon his bed. And he wept when he saw <his> young brother lying in death. And he went **13,4** to seek the heart (*ḥꜣ.ty*) of his young brother under the pine under which his young brother lay in the evening. **13,5** And he spent three years seeking it without finding it. When he began the fourth year, his heart (*ḥꜣ.ty*) wished to go to Egypt, **13,6** and he said: "I go tomorrow." So he said in his heart (*ḥꜣ.ty*). (see p. 142, fig. 14)

Now after the land was bright and another day began, he began and **13,7** went under the pine. And he spent the day seeking it again, and he returned in the evening, and he spent time to seek it again. **13,8** And he found a bunch of grapes, and he returned carrying it, and there was the heart (*ḥꜣ.ty*) of his young brother. And he brought a **13,9** bowl of cool water and he put it in it, and he sat as was his daily <custom>. (see p. 143, fig. 15)

Now when evening came, **14,1** his heart (*ḥꜣ.ty*) swallowed the water, and Bata trembled in every limb. And he began to look at his older brother **14,2** his heart (*ḥꜣ.ty*) being in the bowl. And Anubis, his older brother, took the bowl of cool water with the heart (*ḥꜣ.ty*) **14,3** of his young brother in it, and he caused him to drink it. And his heart (*ḥꜣ.ty*) stood in its place, and he became like he had been. And then one embraced **14,4** the other, and one spoke with his companion. And then Bata spoke to his **14,5** elder brother, "Look, I shall become a great bull with every beautiful colour whose nature (*sḫr*) none shall know. **14,6** And you will sit on <my> back until Shu will rise.[387] And we will be in the place where my wife (*ḥm.t*) is in order that **14,7** <I> avenge myself. And you will take me to where one [i.e. the king] is because he will do for you every good thing. Then you shall be rewarded with **14,8** silver and gold for you brought me to the Pharaoh, l.p.h., because I shall be a great marvel and I will **14,9** be praised in the whole land and you will go to your town (*dmj*). (see p. 143, fig. 16)

Commentary

The key part of this passage comprises two constitutive moments – Bata's death and his subsequent revivification (and transformation into a bull) thanks to acts performed by Anubis. The key motifs are:

1) putrid liquids (beer and wine) which indicate Bata's death;
2) Bata's (and Anubis') heart;
3) the act of letting Bata drink his own heart.

Hollis remarked that the image of beer and wine becoming bad recalls the foul-smelling liquids which are issued by a dead body. Nevertheless, she did not investigate the matter in more detail.[388] Wettengel also glosses over the motif mentioning only a few connotations relating Osiris to wine and beer.[389] However, the motif seems to be very

387 i.e. sunrise; see also below, d'Orb. 15,2.
388 Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 166, n. 29.
389 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 145–146.

important. In the Pyramid Texts there are several mentions of a special type of (fermenting?) liquid (*ḥnḳ*)[390] issuing from Osiris (PT 55 [Pyr 53–53a]):[391]

(*Wnj*) *mn n=k ḥnḳ pr<w> m Wsjr*	Unis, accept the (fermenting) liquid which comes from Osiris.
ḥnḳ.t <m> mnw km ḥn.t 1	(ritual note): *1 black quartzite bowl of beer*.

PT 148–151 (Pyr 142–145a):[392]

Wsjr (*Wnj*) *ḥȝ ṯw m ḥnḳ pr<w> r=k ḥnḳ.t 2*	Osiris Unis, provide yourself with the (fermenting) liquid which comes from you. (ritual note): *2 bowls of beer.*
Wsjr (*Wnj*) *ḥȝ ṯw m ḥnḳ pr<w> r=k sḫp.t 2*	Osiris Unis, provide yourself with the (fermenting) liquid which comes from you. (ritual note): *2 bowls of sḫp.t (date?) beer.*
Wsjr (*Wnj*) *ḥȝ ṯw m ḥnḳ pr<w> r=k pḏȝ 2*	Osiris Unis, provide yourself with the (fermenting) liquid which comes from you. (ritual note): *2 bowls of pḏȝ beer.*
Wsjr (*Wnj*) *ḥȝ ṯw m ḥnḳ pr<w> r=k stj 2*	Osiris Unis, provide yourself with the (fermenting) liquid which comes from you. (ritual note): *2 bowls of stj (Nubian? red ochre?) beer.*

Needless to say, the word *ḥnḳ* describing the liquid issuing from Osiris is used in a very specific context precisely because it concerns the offering of beer (and thus creating an obvious pun *ḥnḳ* – *ḥnḳ.t*). In other instances in the Pyramid Texts, especially in the Coffin Texts and later documents, a different term (*rḏw.w*) is used when talking about fluids coming from Osiris' body. Andreas Winkler presented an intriguing analysis on the topic with special regard to the Pyramid Texts (and especially the passages in the pyramid of Unis).[393] He argued that the term *rḏw.w* in the Pyramid Texts basically has two antithetical meanings.[394] Within the context of spells concerning

390 Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* III, 117.3.

391 Kurt Sethe, *Die altägyptische Pyramidentexte nach den Papierabdrücken un Photographien des Berliner Museums*, Bd. I, Leipzig: Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1908, p 25.

392 Sethe, *Die altägyptische Pyramidentexte*, Bd. I, p. 52–53.

393 Andreas Winkler, "The Efflux That Issued From Osiris", *Göttinger Miszellen* [GM] 211 (2006): 125–139. Material from the Late Period was to some extent covered by Jeannot Kettel, "Canopes, *rḏw.w* d'Osiris et Osiris-Canope", *Hommages à Jean Leclant*, Institut Français d'Archeologie Orientale [IFAO], Bibliothèque d'Étude [BdÉ] 106/3 (1994): 315–330.

394 Winkler, "The Efflux": esp. 127–131. This dual meaning was also recorded by Cathie Spieser in the case of water ("L'eau et la regénération des morts d'apres les représentations des tombes thébaines du Nouvel Empire", *Chronique d'Égypte* [CdÉ] 144 [1997]: 211–228) and by Alexandra von Lieven in her analysis of texts which concern faeces ("'Where there is dirt there is system.' Zur Ambiguität der Bewertung von körperlichen Ausscheidungen in der ägyptischen Kultur", *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* [SAK] 40 [2011]: 287–300). I quote from the summary (p. 287): "The Ancient Egyptian attitude to bodily excretions was rather ambiguous. It depended not only on context, but also on the status of the producer as a human or divine being. While for some excretions this has already been studied in depth, for others this has not yet been seen. The present paper surveys the evidence with a particular focus on faeces, which up to now were thought to have been invariably rejected as dirt by the Egyptians. However, certain texts and even some archaeological finds attest to a more differentiated picture also in these matters."

the reconstitution of the deceased (i.e. the ritual phase during which the deceased is transformed from a decaying corps into an Osiris-being) they have a strongly positive meaning. But once the deceased undergoes the transformation into a being of light similar to that of the sun (*ȝḫ*), "to have Osirian attributes, such as *rḏw*, in the horizon, connects the deceased with the realm where he was incomplete at a time, when he needs to be a fully sound being."[395] If we look into the corpus of the Coffin Texts, we see that the dual meaning is maintained even in this case.[396] The first group of texts connects Osiris'/the deceased's fluids (*rḏw* or also *ḏw*)[397] with putrefaction and decay, as, for example, in CT I 295a–c:[398]

nj sḳ=k nj ḥtm=k	You shall not fall, you shall not perish!
nn rḏw=k nn ḥwȝȝ.t=k	There is no fluid (of) yours (because) your putrefaction does not exist.
jȝṯ<w>=s jm=k mḥ<w> m Wsjr	That which was lost in you was replenished in Osiris.

In CT VII 132j[399] we hear explicitly of the "impurity of fluids" (*ʿb rḏw.w*).

The second group of texts connects the liquids issuing from Osiris' body with liquids (or other foodstuffs) which have the ability to quench thirst or generally nourish the deceased, for example, CT I 291g–h:[400]

t=k bj<ʿ>ḥ ḥnḳ.t=k bjʿḥ rḏw.w pr<=w> m Wsjr	Your bread is in abundance, your beer is in abundance, they are the liquids which come from Osiris.

395 Winkler, "The Efflux": 139.

396 Jan Zandee, in his *Death as an Enemy According to Ancient Egyptian Conceptions*, New York: Arno Press, 1977, especially p. 56–60, focused mainly on the negative aspects of *rḏw* and other associated terms such as sweat (*ỉḏ.t*). The dual nature of *rḏw* in the Coffin Texts was first noticed by Étienne Drioton in his "Review of De Buck's The Egyptian Coffin Texts III", *Bibliotheca Orientalis* [BiOr] VI/5 (1949): 141. Jan Zandee admitted there was a dual meaning connected with water ("Sargtexte um über Wasser zu verfügen", *Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-egyptisch Genootschap – Ex Oriente Lux* [JEOL] 24 [1976]: 17), but he did not elaborate on the idea any further (after Winkler, "The Efflux", p. 127, n. 22; p. 128, n. 21–22).

397 For more references, see Rami van der Molen, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, Probleme der Ägyptologie 15, Leiden, Boston, Köln: E. J. Brill, 2000: "*rḏw*" p. 292–293; and "*ḏw*" p. 823–824.

398 de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, Vol. I, 295a–c.

399 de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, Vol. VII, 132j.

400 de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, Vol. I, 291g–h.

and CT V 19a–d[401] (similarly CT V 22c–e):[402]

n jb<w> N pn	The one who is not thirsty is this N,
n wšr<w> sp.ty N pn	the one whose lips are not dry is this N
jw ḥtm.n N pn jb.t=f	(because) this N quenched his thirst
m rḏw.w wr<.w> n jt<=f> Wsjr	with the abundant liquids of his father Osiris.

The word which describes the bad smell of the wine which is handed to Anubis is *ḥwȝȝ.t* (12,10). This is the same word as in CT I 295b (see above), which directly connects the fluids (*rḏw.w*) with putrefaction (or, more precisely, the absence of fluid with the absence of putrefaction). Therefore, it seems that the episode with Anubis being handed putrid drinks seems to be connected to the symbolic language surrounding the "fluids" of Osiris' body. This would strengthen the claim advocated especially by Susan Hollis,[403] that at the moment of his "death", Bata seems to take on many characteristics of an Osirian deity (for a discussion on this topic, see below, p. 186). Anubis' arrival at Bata's house, where Bata lies dead on a bed, immediately calls to mind the image of the god Anubis performing mortuary rituals in the Divine Hall of Anubis (*zḥ nṯr n Jnpw*).[404] At the same time, this motif also endorses the idea that the Papyrus d'Orbiney represents a structural variant of the Osirian Cycle with Bata playing the role of Osiris and Anubis that of Horus – without him Bata would remain in his passive state of death. As we saw at the beginning of the Papyrus d'Orbiney, the relationship between Bata and Anubis has been that of a younger brother/son towards his older brother/father. In the case of the Papyrus d'Orbiney, we witness a very interesting reversal of the traditional motif of the son providing for his deceased father (based on the model of Horus giving his eye to his father Osiris) – in this case, it is not Bata as son but Anubis (i.e. the father/older brother) who provides for his younger brother/son. This very fittingly shows that the relationship between a father and son is reciprocal (after all, at the end of the narrative, Anubis becomes Bata's son) and also hints at an interesting play on the identity of the various characters.

In order for the story to continue, the issue of Bata's mutilated body must now be resolved. He must be re-made into a complete person again, which Anubis does by

401 de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, Vol. V, 19a–d.
402 de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, Vol. V, 22c–e.
403 Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*.
404 Hartwig Altenmüller, "Balsamierungsritual", in Helck und Otto (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. I, col. 615. Also see Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 167–168; Erik Hornung, *Tal der Könige. Die Ruhestätte der Pharaonen*, Zürich, München: Artemis, 1990[5] (1982[1]; erweiterte Auflage 1985), pls. 30, 67, fig. p. 87.

letting Bata drink the water in which Bata's heart had been placed.[405] We may now turn again to Winkler's analysis in which he also stresses the crucial importance of libation as part of the mortuary re-figuration rituals. The key text on which he illustrates its importance and which forms a pleasing parallel to the Tale of Two Brothers is PT 32 (Pyr. 22a–23b):[406]

ḳbḥ.w=k jpn Wsjr	This your cool water, Osiris,
ḳbḥ.w=k jpn hȝ N	this your cool water, oh N,
pr.w ḥr sȝ=k	has come forth with your son
pr.w ḥr ḥr	has come forth with Horus.
jw.n<=j> jn.n<=j> n=k jr.t ḥr	I have come bringing the Eye of Horus
ḳb jb=k ḥr=s	so your heart might be cool because of it.
jn.n<=j> n=k sy	I have brought it for you,
ḥr=k ṯbw.ty=k	(it is) under you, (under) your sandals.
m n=k rḏw pr jm=k	Take the efflux, which came forth from you!
n wrḏ jb=k ḥr=s	Your heart will not be weary because of it.

We may imagine that these might have been the words which Anubis-Horus-son spoke when providing the heart-infusion to Bata-Osiris-father. It is interesting that the PT 32 mentions all of the three key motifs crucial for Initial Episode III of the Tale of Two Brothers (see above):

1) "the efflux, which came forth from you", i.e. the putrid liquids by which Anubis was notified about Bata's death (beer and wine);[407]
2) (Bata-)Osiris' heart in connection with the Eye of Horus (which in ritual tends to represent everything which the deceased lacks, misses or has been deprived of);[408]
3) the act of providing Osiris with a libation offering by which this lack is eliminated.

405 The idea that drinking a liquid with special qualities (such as water poured over a stela with an incantation to a specific god) had magical efficacy was widespread in ancient Egypt. This could be illustrated by the statue of Djedhor inscribed with magical spells which was designed as a basin for drawing water which had been made magically efficacious. See Elizabeth J. Sherman, "Djedhor the Saviour Statue Base OI 10589", *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 67 (1981): 82–102; Eva Jelínková-Reymond, *Les inscriptions de la statue guérisseuse de Djed-Her-le-Sauveur*, Bibliothéque d'Étude [BdÉ] 33, Le Caire: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français d'archeologie orientale, 1956.
406 Transliteration and translation by Winkler, "The Efflux": 128.
407 In the context of the Tale of Two Brothers, Winkler's suggestion that the PT 32 might also contain an allusion to the negative aspect of *rḏw* makes perfect sense (Winkler, "The Efflux": 128, n. 28).
408 See, for example, Goebs, "A Functional Approach": 45ff.

Winkler neatly summarises the whole process:

> Spell 32 compares the water offered to Osiris, first to the fluid that came forth from Horus, secondly to the Eye of Horus, and then to the efflux that exuded from Osiris. It is defined as the fluids that were lost at the moment of death and then returned to the body of Osiris in the act of offering. [...] Restoration occurs in a double sense because the dehydration of the deceased takes place in two stages; it first appears as bodily efflux, the water that is released from the cells as they cease to function and then seeps out from the body. Secondly, mummification completes the process. Accordingly, the dehydration of the dead body has a double meaning in ancient Egypt. The dual implication of dehydration relate to its necessity for the preservation of the body, and its function as a sign of the body's death and disorder. The reverse of imperfection is achieved through libation; the water lost due to both processes, decomposition and mummification, is returned to the deceased, in order to bring him back to life.[409]

Another important motif is the embrace of Bata and Anubis. Through an embrace, Atum, the creator god, gave life to his children Shu and Tefnut. In fact, he gave them his *kꜣ*, i.e. life energy which circulates in the created world. In the PT 600 (1652a–1653a) we read:[410]

ḏd mdw	To recite:
tm ḥprr ḳꜣ.n=k m ḳꜣꜣ	Atum-Khepri! When you became high, as the high ground,
wbn.n=k m Bn<w> n bn<bn>	when you rose as the Benu of the benben
m ḥw.t-bn m Jwnw	in the Phoenix Enclosure in Helioplis,
jšš.n=k m šw tf.n=k m tfn.t	you sneezed Shu, you spat Tefnut
dj.n=k ꜥ.wy=k ḥꜣ=sn m ꜥ<.wy> kꜣ	and you put your arms about them, as the arms of *kꜣ*,
wn<w> kꜣ=k jm=sn	so that your *kꜣ* be in them.

It is through the *kꜣ* that cosmological and social ties between generations and individuals are founded and maintained.[411] The *kꜣ* itself has the form of outstretched arms. It is the *kꜣ.w*, the food offerings, which enable communication between the living and the dead. According to the Ramesseum Dramatic Papyrus, the embrace was also the way the royal successor bonded with his predecessor, the former having the role of Horus and the latter of Osiris (scene 13, cols. 101–104).[412]

409 Winkler, "The Efflux": 129–130.

410 Sethe, *Die altägyptische Pyramidentexte*, Bd. 2, p. 372–373.

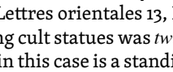
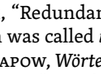
411 See, for example, Peter Kaplony, "Ka", in Helck und Otto (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. I, cols. 275–282.

412 Kurt Sethe, *Dramatische Texte zu altägyptischen Mysterienspielen*, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ägyptens 10, Leipzig-Berlin, 1928, pl. 3–5, 14–16; Alan H. Gardiner, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955, p. 17–18, fig. 2; David Lorand, *Le papyrus dramatique du Ramesseum*, Lettres orientales 13, Leuven: Peeters 2009, especially p. 83–84, 115, 172.

Once able to talk again, Bata reveals his plan to transform into a bull to his brother. This motif also has a wide variety of connotations. The ability to transform according to one's will is acquired only after death once the deceased has been transformed into an *ꜣḫ*, the blessed dead. This transformation comprises the whole being and is possible to achieve provided that certain acts are performed. The most important is the mummification of the body. During this process the decaying corpse becomes an artefact – a mummy.[413] The burial ceremony also included the Opening of the Mouth Ritual[414] – an act which was performed when consecrating images (statues) in human form and during which the transmission of *kꜣ* through an embrace was enacted. Bata also undergoes a physical transformation (his brother provides him with his heart) and acquires special powers which enable him to transfigure several times later on in the story.

All these events happen during the night – a period explicitly opposed to the day. During the night, the sun has to face its enemies in the netherworld and also undergoes bodily transformations. The most mysterious of them all is the merging of Re and Osiris.[415]

At dawn, Bata is ready in full bodily form and tells his brother of a rather cunning plan. He will transform himself into a bull "whose sort is unparalleled" and commissions his brother with the task of presenting him to the pharaoh.[416] Since Bata

413 One of the terms designating cult statues was *twt*  (Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* V, 255.8–256.20). The determinative in this case is a standing mummiform figure. Interestingly enough, the same determinative was used to specify the word *sꜥḥ*  meaning both "mummy" and "statue/figure" (Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* IV, 51.7–52.15). The mummification process not only saved the body from physical decay, but it enabled it to attain an ontologically different status. Through mummification, a once living person acquired a similar status as that of a statue (of a god), i.e. a hieroglyphic sign. The fact that mummies (in their aspect which they shared with statues) could be regarded on a par with signs is attested by many examples from ancient Egyptian tombs where statues or mural representations of the deceased owners actually act as determinatives to their own names (Fischer, "Redundant Determinatives": 7–25). It is also interesting to note that an individual hieroglyph was called *tjt*  ("sign, image, icon") which also means "the image of a God" (Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* V, 239–240.1–8.). Hieroglyphs were "images of the divine" in the same way as a transformed (mummified) individual.

414 For a synoptic edition of the seven major sources for the Opening of the Mouth Ritual and a commentary, see Eberhard Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual I–II*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1960. A new interpretation of episodes 9–12 (conceiving and sculpting the image) was offered by Hans-Werner Fischer-Elfert, *Die Vision der Statue im Stein: Studien zum altägyptischen Mundöffnungsritual*, Schriften der Philosophisch-historischen Klasse der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Heidelberg: Winter, 1998, and many more.

415 For a discussion on this topic, see below, p. 186; 193. See also Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*.

416 This must be an allusion to the way in which sacred bulls used to be sought out in ancient Egypt. A cult bull of a certain god such as the Apis with Osiris, Buchis with Montu, Mnevis with Re, etc. had to show certain special signs on his of fur, hooves, tail, tongue, etc. Such animals were looked

has no connection with the pharaoh or his wife (this was severed by his death), Anubis must yet again act as Bata's mediator. It is interesting that at the beginning of our story it was Bata who performed tasks on behalf of his elder brother Anubis and received remuneration for it ("[...] and he [Bata] was the one who made clothes for him [...]") but at this moment the situation is inverted and it is Bata giving tasks to his brother and promising him a reward for performing them ("[...] every sort of good thing shall be done for you and you shall be rewarded with silver and gold [...]").

The whole Initial Episode III therefore comprises a series of motifs which all point to the same general idea – Bata undergoes processes during whose progress he acquires new abilities and his being is transformed into one of higher quality. The biggest difference is that before this moment an intermediary was always needed to propel Bata further in the story. But from now on Bata takes on this role himself and starts acting actively.

Graphical summary

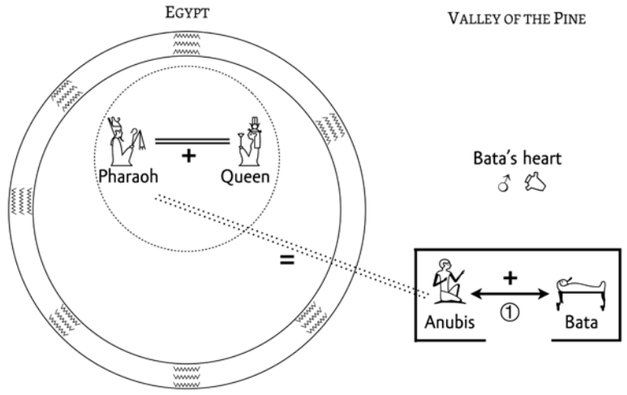


fig. 14: Initial Episode III[1]

①
In Episode F, negative relations between the pharaoh and his wife and Bata have been severed by the pharaoh's assault on Bata. This action opens up a channel between Anubis and Bata which has been present the entire time, although only potentially (conditioned by Bata's death). Anubis is thus able to cross the liminal zone (which he could not in Episode C) and reach the destination where Bata lies in a state of death.

for by temple agents throughout Egypt and received great veneration. For a discussion and more references, see Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 168–171.

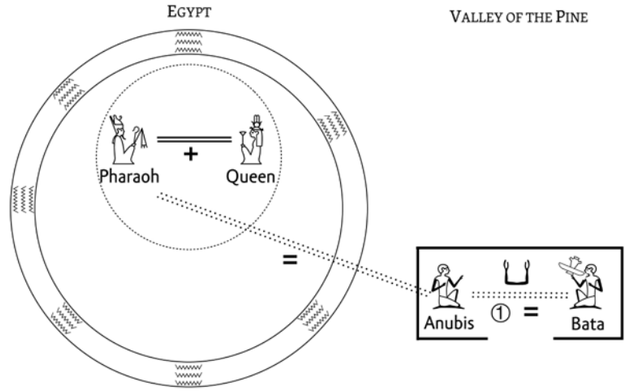


fig. 15: Initial Episode III[2]

①
In this part we can see how the story uses the bifurcated character of Anubis-pharaoh. At this moment it is necessary to re-establish contact with Bata. The ideal character for this is Anubis as he has specific ties to Bata, unlike the pharaoh. Anubis may, therefore, cross the liminal zone but, at the same time, he has a firm connection with order as he is a split image of the pharaoh. Through Anubis, Bata may become integrated into order again because he provides Bata with the element which he lacks (his heart, i.e. his life force). This is indicated by the *kꜣ* sign in between the two characters. The two also embrace at the end of Bata's revivification thus transmitting life force. In return, the son becomes the legitimate heir to the position of his father (embracing during the Opening of the Mouth ritual, Anubis later becomes Bata's heir). In fact, by this act of embracing, Bata and Anubis actually become one – their *bꜣ*s connect.

Final outcome of Initial Episode III – graphical summary

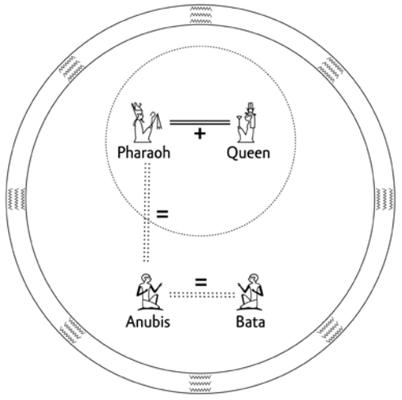


fig. 16: Initial Episode III[3]

As we can see in our last figure, the story has shifted again into a different frame. Even though the text in Initial Episode III does not explicitly state that Anubis and Bata have returned to Egypt, at the beginning of Episode G they meet the pharaoh. This implicitly suggests that they are in Egypt by this time. Initial Episode III shifts the focus of the narrative from the opposition order × disorder, Egyptian (inside) × foreign (outside) and starts focusing on kin-relations within order and also on the advance of Bata (and Anubis) through different levels of order. I am persuaded that because of this shift in focus, the exact moment of their return into the realm of order is unimportant and therefore not included. We can also see that a relationship of identity has been established between Anubis and the pharaoh and Anubis and Bata. In the commentary to the graph illustrating Initial Episode II[3] (see above, p. 126, fig. 9), I have tried to explain in what way the characters of "the pharaoh" and "Anubis" represent personifications of the two basic types of relationship of the "inside" to the "outside" (viewed as a threat and at the same time as a sphere where empowering transformations may take place). I have argued that these two basic modes were within the royal ideology subsumed under the office of the Pharaoh, which is also understood as an ontological category which has the ability to unite these antithetical principles. The identity of Anubis and Bata is then established during Bata's revivification process, mirroring the ritual during which *kꜣ* was transmitted between the deceased and his successor (see above, p. 140). What has not yet been established is the identity between Bata and the pharaoh. And because at the end of the story the identity of all three characters is explicitly mentioned (all three will have been the pharaoh), the development of a relationship of identity between Bata and the pharaoh is going to be the main focus of the following passages. This shall also be the most complicated relationship as they have been adversaries for a considerable part of the text.

Because the narrative has left the Valley of the Pine once and for all, it is appropriate to summarise the various references to this toponym throughout the text (see also above, p. 107–108). Interestingly, these references are in fact contradictory. In one case the Valley of the Pine seems to be part of Egypt itself:

> Now many **9,1** days after this, he built himself a country villa (*bḫn*) with his hand <in> the Valley of the Pine, **9,2** and he filled <it> with every good thing with the intention of establishing for himself a household. He went out from his country villa and he met the Ennead **9,3** as they were going out to administer the whole land (*tꜣ ḏr=f*).

The designation *tꜣ ḏr=f* has a clear geopolitical meaning representing Egypt, which is administered by the Ennead functioning as the group designation of all of the gods

of Egypt.[417] The text does not exclude the Valley of the Pine in any way. It seems to be an integral part of the Ennead's sphere of influence. In other instances, however, it is clearly stated that the Valley of the Pine is outside Egypt:

> **11,4** And then the learned scribes of the king were brought. And then they said to the pharaoh, "As for the plait of hair, **11,5** it belongs to a daughter of Pre-Harakhty with the fluid of all the gods in her. Now it is a tribute (*nḏ-ḥr*) <from> a foreign land (*ḫꜣs.t*). Cause messengers to go **11,6** to every foreign land (*ḫꜣs.t*) to seek her. As for the messenger who is for the Valley of the Pine, have many people **11,7** go with him to bring her."
>
> **11,10** And then His Majesty, l.p.h., sent people, many bowmen, likewise chariotry, to bring her back, and **12,1** a woman was with them, and every beautiful ornament was put in her hand. And then the woman came to **12,2** Egypt (*Km.t*) with her, and there was shouting for her in the whole land (*tꜣ ḏr=f*).
>
> And then he took his **13,1** staff and his sandals, likewise his clothes and his weapons of combat, and he rose up to make an expedition **13,2** to the Valley of the Pine. He entered the country villa (*bḫn*) of his young brother. […] And he went **13,4** to seek the heart (*ḥꜣ.ty*) of his young brother under the pine under which his young brother lay in the evening. **13,5** And he spent three years seeking it without finding it. When he began the fourth year, his heart (*ḥꜣ.ty*) wished to go to Egypt (*Km.t*).

However, Valley of the Pine seems to be somehow excluded from the category of "foreign land" (*ḫꜣs.t*):

> Now many days **11,8** after this the people who went to the foreign land (*ḫꜣs.t*) came to tell report(s) to His Majesty, l.p.h., while the ones who went to the Valley of the Pine did not come **11,9** because Bata killed them. And he left one of them to report to His Majesty, l.p.h.

The Valley of the Pine is also the setting where the fragmentisation, death, and subsequent revivification of Bata takes place. It therefore also exhibits certain nether worldly characteristics.[418]

[417] Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* V, 215.2–216.5. The Tale of Two Brothers explicitly mentions *tꜣ ḏr=f* as an equivalent of *Km.t* (Egypt) in d'Orb. 12,2:

wn jn tꜣ z.t-ḥm.t ḥr jy.t r 12,2 *Km.t jrm=s*	And then the woman came to **12,2** Egypt with her,
jw=tw nhm n=s m pꜣ tꜣ <r> ḏr=f	and there was shouting for her in the whole land.

[418] See also Teysseire, *The Portrayal of Women*, p. 139–142.

What are we to make of all this? The Valley of the Pine seems to be, to a certain extent, in Egypt. At the same time it is described as being located outside Egypt, but not so outside as other foreign lands. And we also hear of events taking place there which are traditionally associated with the Netherworld. We now have two possibilities. We can either call these discrepancies a mistake and try and find out why these opposing views came together, or we can try and understand what the simultaneous occurrence of these opposing descriptions actually means. As the reader might have guessed based on the discussion in Part I of this book, I find the former approach pointless. It seems that by offering these contradictory descriptions, the myth brings the structural opposition "Egyptian × foreign" or "inside × outside" into play. However, it does so not because this distinction is obvious (it would be rather fruitless to point out something which nobody finds problematic) but precisely because this distinction must have been unclear to some extent and also somehow disquieting. The archetypal bipolar division of the world into "Egyptian" and "foreign" was simply untenable, especially during the time of the imperialistic tendencies of New Kingdom Egypt which, by the end of the nineteenth dynasty, when the text of the Tale of Two Brothers was written down, had already occupied Syria-Palestine for several hundred years. Where exactly was the dividing line between "Egyptian" and "foreign" to be drawn? Syria-Palestine was a foreign country, but it obviously recognised Egyptian rule. Baal was a foreign deity, but what about Seth-Baal? The myth does not give a straightforward answer. Instead, it plays with the various categories creating a geographical/ontological zone which is and at the same time is not part of Egypt – the Valley of the Pine.

The nether worldly character of this region is also noteworthy. The world of the dead shared exactly the same ambivalence with the Valley of the Pine. It formed an integral part of the ancient Egyptian cosmos. However, one could hardly say that it was Egypt. To summarise, it seems that the unclear characterisation of the Valley of the Pine was in fact intentional, providing a framework for the conceptualisation of cultural paradoxes which were inherent to Egyptian society (for more on this topic, see p. 78–85).

EPISODE G (RUBRUM 16)

Now when the land was light and **15,1** another day began, and Bata transformed in the form of which he told his elder brother. And then Anubis, **15,2** his elder brother, sat on his back until the land was light. He reached the place where one [i.e. the pharaoh] was. And His Majesty, l.p.h., **15,3** was made to know of him, and he saw him and he became very joyful because of him. And he made for him **15,4** great offerings, saying: "A great miracle has happened." And there was rejoicing because of him in the whole land. And then **15,5** his weight was made with silver and gold for his elder brother, who settled in his town. And he was **15,6** given many people and many things. And the pharaoh loved him very much, more than other people in the whole land.

Commentary

In this episode Bata "transformed in the form of which he told his elder brother"; i.e. he became a bull. The symbolic connotations of the bull and cattle in general have been dealt with extensively elsewhere.[419] What is important for my argument is that the bull form, which Bata takes on, connects this part of the story with Initial Episode II and Episode M (for a further discussion, see p. 125, n. 379). Furthermore, we can see an evolution of these forms throughout the text. In Initial Episode II, the title "Bull of the Ennead" stressed the mortuary context. By then, Bata was living outside order, in the Valley of the Pine, virtually dead to the orderly Egyptian world. In this episode, Bata takes on the form of a sacred bull, revered by Egyptians as an emanation (*bꜣ*) of a god.

Graphical summary

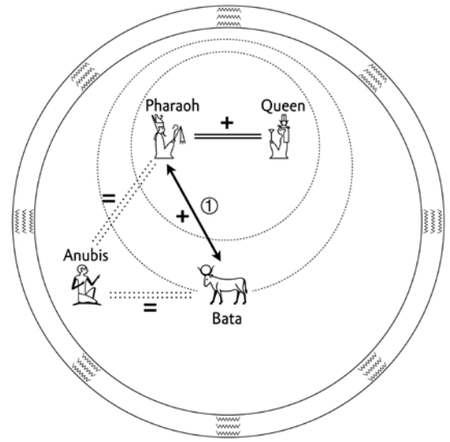


fig. 17: Episode G

①

Bata manages to connect himself in a very personal and positive manner with the pharaoh himself. In Episodes D–F he was the target of the pharaoh's aggression, whereas now he bathes in his favour.

419 For the role of cattle in Africa in general, see Bruce Lincoln, *Priests, Warriors, and Cattle: A Study in the Ecology of Religions*, Hermeneutics: studies in the history of religions 10, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981; Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, p. 162–180. For an analysis of this motif in the story, see Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 168–173.

EPISODE H (RUBRUM 17)

15,7 Now many days after this, he [i.e. the Bata-bull] entered the *wꜥb.t*-room,[420] and he stood **15,8** where the Noble Lady (*šps.t*) was and he began to speak with her, saying: "See, I am alive again." And she **15,9** said to him, "Who then are you?" And he said to her, "I am Bata. I realized that when **15,10** you caused the pine to be chopped for the Pharaoh, l.p.h., it was on account of me that I not live. See, **16,1** I am still alive! I am a bull." And then the Noble Lady was very afraid of the word her husband **16,2** told to her. And then he went out from the *wꜥb.t*-room. And His Majesty, l.p.h., sat and made a feast day with her and she **16,3** poured for His Majesty, l.p.h., and one [i.e. the pharaoh] was very happy with her. And then she said to His Majesty, l.p.h.: "Come, swear an oath by the god, saying, As for **16,4** what <she will> say, I shall grant it to her." And he heard all which she said. "Allow me to eat from the liver of the bull **16,5** because he will not amount to anything." So she said to him. And he suffered very much because of what she said, and the heart (*ḥ3.ty*) **16,6** of the Pharaoh, l.p.h., was very, very ill.

Commentary

The events in this episode are in stark contrast with those in Episodes E and F, where the king is very easily persuaded to fell the pine on which Bata's heart is placed. Even though the pharaoh in the end does according to his wife's bidding, he is nevertheless troubled by the act as he loves the bull-Bata very much.

420 There are several possible translations of this term. In the New Kingdom the *wꜥb.t* either designates a room in a house used for day-to-day household logistics such as, for example, a kitchen, bakery, etc. (Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* I, 284,2–3). The term, however, has many other connotations (including grave, sacred room within the palace, etc.) all of which might be taken into play (Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* I, 284,4–7) and later culminating with the introduction of the wabet (open court in the temple building with a small adjacent room for the New Year's ritual) as an integral part of the Late Period temples (Christiane Zivie-Coche, "Late Period Temples", in W. Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology,* Los Angeles, 2008, http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz000s3mkp, p. 8–9, accessed 5.3.2013; see also Filip Coppens, *The Wabet: Tradition and innovation in temples of the Ptolemaic and Roman Period,* Prague: Czech Institute of Egyptology, 2007). It is therefore difficult to decide on a precise translation.

Graphical summary

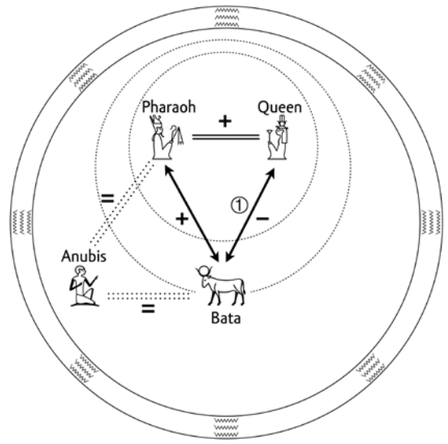


fig. 18: Episode H

①
Bata also tries to establish a direct and positive relationship with the pharaoh's wife. Unfortunately she is scared and strives to destroy Bata physically.

EPISODE I (RUBRUM 18)

Now when the land was light and a second day became, a great offering of the bull **16,7** was invoked. One of the head royal butlers of His Majesty, l.p.h., was made to go and prepare the bull. And **16,8** then he was killed!

Commentary

Episode I is a synthesis of Episodes G and H and is structurally similar to the triad of Episodes D, E, and F:

Episode D: Negative relationship is established with a man (pharaoh)
Episode G: Positive relationship is established with a man (pharaoh)

Episode E: Negative relationship is established with a woman (wife)
Episode H: Negative relationship is established with a woman (wife), who changes the positive relationship between Bata and the pharaoh to a negative relationship.

Episode F: Negative relationships are eliminated by murdering Bata (cutting down the pine tree); Bata is outside order.
Episode I: Negative relationships are eliminated by murdering Bata (sacrifice of the bull); Bata is inside the realm of order.

The main difference is that whereas in Episode F Bata was located outside the realm of order, in Episode I he is already integrated into order and quite close to its source – the pharaoh himself.

Graphical summary

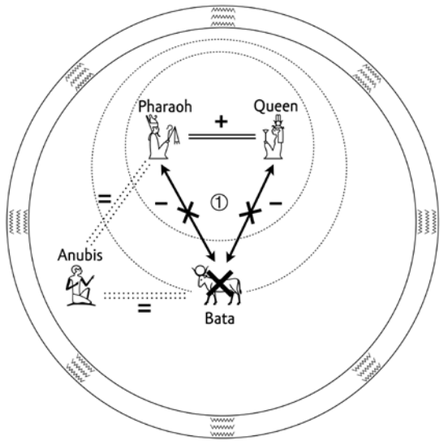


fig. 19: Episode I

①
A negative relationship is established with the king and Bata is subsequently killed. Both negative relationships are eliminated by this act. Just as in Episode F, we witness a "negation of negation" = affirmation, that is, a re-separation of improperly combined or "synthesised" relationships (see above, p. 90).

EPISODE J (RUBRUM 18)

When he was upon the shoulder of the people, he quivered in his neck and he let **16,9** fall two drops of blood beside the two door posts of His Majesty, l.p.h. One fell on one side of the Great Portal (*trj ꜥ3*) of the Pharaoh, l.p.h., and the other upon the other side. And they grew into **17,1** two great persea (*šwb*) trees, each one being outstanding. And then it was reported to His Majesty, l.p.h.: "Two great perseas **17,2** grew as a great marvel for His Majesty, l.p.h., in the night beside the Great Portal (*trj ꜥ3*) of His

Majesty, l.p.h." And there was shouting **17,3** because of them in the whole land. And offerings were made to them.

Commentary
In this episode, Bata once again proves that he is now a most fertile being, as opposed to his previous state of impotence and non-productivity. From just two drops of his blood, he lets two persea trees grow. There are again many possible connotations with regard to this motif.[421] The most important are those which connect Bata to one of the transformations of Re.

Graphical summary

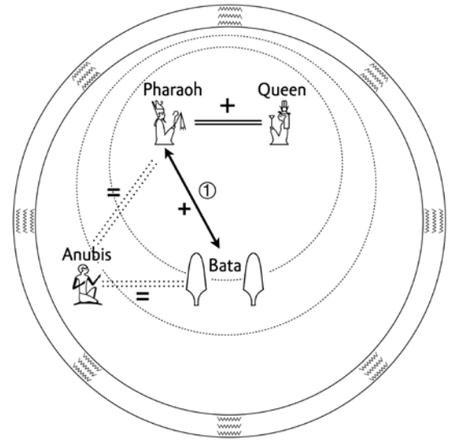


fig. 20: Episode J

①
Through a metamorphosis, Bata has again managed to create a positive relationship with the pharaoh. He is now even closer to him then before, for the Persea trees are next to the entrance to where the pharaoh lives – Bata is on the threshold (*limen*) of the pharaoh's residence and therefore of the source of order.

421 For a summary of these, see, for example, Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 172–175; Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 166–170. According to Philippe Derchain ("Symbols and Metaphors": 8; "Le lotus, la mandragore, et le persea", in *Chronique d'Égypte* [CdÉ] 50 [1975]: 85) there existed a close connection between the *šwb* tree and the inundation. The fruits of the tree used to ripen and fall at the beginning of the annual floods, which symbolised fertility and plentitude and also, in a way, rebirth after a period of hot weather and drought.

Episode K (Rubrum 19)

Now many days after this, His Majesty, l.p.h., **17,4** appeared in the window of lapis lazuli, a wreath of every fragrant flower (*m3ḥ ḥḏw ḥrr.t nb.t*) at <his> neck (*ḫḫ*), being upon a chariot of fine gold, **17,5** and he went forth from the royal palace to see the perseas. And then the Noble Lady (*šps.t*) went forth upon a team after the Pharaoh, l.p.h. **17,6** And then His Majesty, l.p.h., sat under one of the perseas <and the Noble Lady under the other persea. And then Bata> spoke with his wife, "Ha, lier, (*grg<.t>*) I **17,7** am Bata. I am living despite you. I realised that <when> you had <the pine> cut for the pharaoh, **17,8** <it was> because of me. I became a bull and you caused me to be killed."

Graphical summary

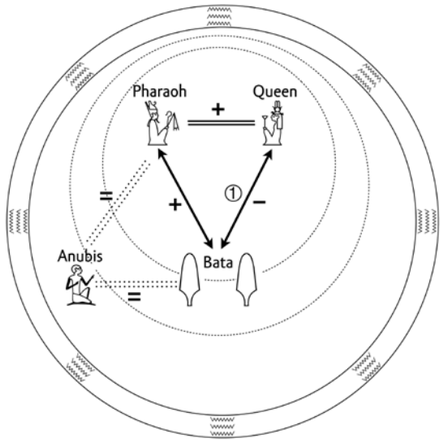


fig. 21: Episode K

①
Bata contacts the pharaoh's wife and accuses her of all the deeds she has committed against him. She is scared and attempts to destroy Bata physically. A negative relationship is established between them.

Episode L (Rubrum 20)

Now many days after **17,9** this, the Noble Lady (*šps.t*) stood to pour for His Majesty, l.p.h., being happy with her, and she said to His Majesty, l.p.h.: **17,10** "Make an oath to me by the god, saying: 'As for what the Noble Lady (*šps.t*) says to me, I shall grant it to her'! So you shall say." And he heard **18,1** all which she said. And she said: "Have the two perseas cut and have them made into beautiful furniture." **18,2** And then all that she said was heard.

Commentary

This episode is a synthesis of Episodes J and K and these three episodes together are structurally similar to the triad of Episodes G–I:

Episode G: Positive relationship is established with a man (pharaoh and the bull).

Episode J: Positive relationship is established with a man (pharaoh and the Persea trees).

Episode H: Negative relationship is established with a woman (wife), who changes the positive relationship between Bata and the pharaoh to a negative relationship.

Episode K: Negative relationship is established with a woman (wife), who changes the positive relationship between Bata and the pharaoh to a negative relationship.

Episode I: Negative relationships are eliminated by murdering Bata (sacrifice of the bull); Bata is inside the realm of order.

Episode L: Negative relationships are eliminated by murdering Bata (cutting down the Persea trees); Bata is on the threshold of the source of order.

The main difference between these two triads is that whereas in Episode I Bata was in the realm of order, in Episode L he is even closer to the source of order.

Graphical summary

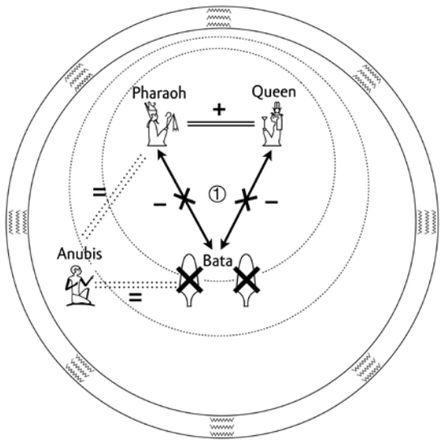


fig. 22: Episode L

①
Just as in Episodes F and I, we again witness a "negation of negation" = affirmation, that is, a re-separation of improperly combined or "synthesised" relationships.

Episode M (Rubrum 21)

And now after a [small] moment, His Majesty, l.p.h., **18,3** had skilled craftsmen go and the perseas of the Pharaoh, l.p.h., were cut <while> the royal wife, the Noble Lady (*ḥm.t njsw.t t3 šps.t*), watched it. And then a splinter flew and it entered the mouth of the Noble Lady (*šps.t*). And [then] **18,5** she swallowed it, and she became pregnant instantly.[422] All that she desired **18,6** was carried out (*jw=tw ḥr jr<.t> p3 ntj nb m jb=s jm=sn*).

Commentary

This episode takes advantage of the Kamutef (Bull of his Mother) motif.[423] It narrates the idea that every future king was conceived by his predecessor united with a god (Amun, Re, Min, etc.). After becoming king and taking on his father's office, the new

[422] Literally: "in completion of a short moment" (*jw=s ḥr šsp jwr m km m 3.t šrj.t*).
[423] Helmut Jacobsohn, "Kamutef", in *LÄ* III, col. 308–309. See also Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 175–179; Assmann, *Stein und Zeit*, p. 115–137, esp. p. 134–137.

king, too, was united with a god thus closing the circle and becoming the one who begot himself and therefore the "Bull of his Mother". On the cosmological level, this idea was expressed in the daily cycle of the sun by Re impregnating the goddess Nut, forming a sky vault, only to travel inside her body to be born from her the following morning. Jan Assmann understands the Kamutef motif as being structurally similar to the myths concerning Osiris. The relationship between Horus and Osiris functions as a tool for the Egyptians which they used to conceptualise issues pertaining to the shift of power and legitimacy between generations and to various levels of kin proximity (i.e. on the level of culture). According to Assmann, the Kamutef motif does something similar, the sole difference being that it conceptualises the relationship between the sexes (on the level of nature).[424] The Kamutef motif, however, does not simply state that a king fathers a son just as his father did. This is a biological fact observable in nature. No myth is necessary. The whole father-son relationship is problematised once the idea of "positional succession/kingship" comes into play. This term, standardly used in anthropological works, concerns the practice spread worldwide of an individual, upon succession, adopting the name, role and status of his predecessor; very often he is also addressed in the kinship terms which defined the social position of his predecessor.[425] In Egyptian reality this meant that the individual kings merged in their function of the pharaoh – the king therefore begets himself. The myths connected with both Osiris and Kamutef are merely different renderings of this basic idea (for further discussion on this topic, see below, p. 206–207).

In the context of the Tale of Two Brothers, the "Bull of his Mother" motif also connects this episode to the previous parts, Initial Episode II and Episode G, and serves as a kind of abbreviation to Bata's story. In Initial Episode II, Bata's title of the "Bull of the Ennead" was connected with the mortuary context (see above, p. 125, n. 379) when Bata was excluded from the orderly sphere and living in the Valley of the Pine.[426] In Episode G, his bull form was connected to Bata's form as representative of an image of god, a sacred bull. In this episode we see that Bata actually becomes a god himself, having procreated himself in his wife-mother. We therefore see a gradual development of the Bata character throughout the text: 1) "outside", 2) "inside" as a ba of a god, 3) a god procreating himself.

[424] Assmann, *Stein und Zeit*, generally p. 115–137.
[425] See, for example, Ian Cunnison, *The Luapula Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, Northern Rhodesia: Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, Manchester University Press, 1959, p. 32. See also Leach, "The Mother's Brother".
[426] The connection between these two episodes is also stressed by another fact, neatly summarised by Helmuth Jacobsohn ("Kamutef", in Helck und Otto (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. III, col. 308). According to him, the moon is also a representation of Kamutef, renewing itself on a monthly basis and bearing the title of the "Bull of the Ennead" – the very same title by which Bata was addressed in Initial Episode II.

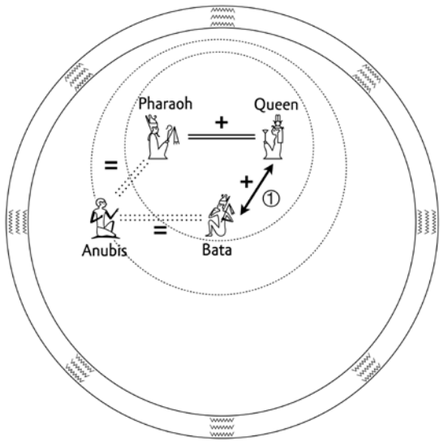


fig. 23: Episode M

①
Since all the previous episodes have shown that first establishing a positive relationship with the pharaoh leads to Bata's repeated destruction, Bata first establishes a positive relationship with the pharaoh's wife. The safest way to secure this is by becoming her child, flesh of her flesh.

EPISODE N (RUBRUM 22–23)

Now many days after this, she **18,7** gave birth to a son, and one was sent to say to His Majesty, l.p.h.: "A son **18,8** has been born to you." And he (i.e. the son) was brought and he was given a *mnᶜ.t*-nurse and *ḫnm.wt*-nurses. And there **18,9** was rejoicing for him in the whole land. And one (i.e. the king) sat and made a feast, and he (i.e. the son) **18,10** began to be brought up (*jw=tw ḥr ḫpr m rnn=f*). And His Majesty, l.p.h., loved him very, very much from the hour. And he was appointed **19,1** Royal son of Kush (*z3-njsw.t n Kš*). Now many days after this, His Majesty, l.p.h., made him **19,2** a Prince (*jry-pᶜt*) of the whole land.

Commentary

Just as Bata was coming closer to his ultimate fate through levels of order, he now assumes the title of the *jry-pᶜt*, crown prince.[427] This is yet another step towards Bata's progression into the very heart of order.

427 For an extensive commentary on the motifs contained in this passage (the *mnᶜ.t*-nurse and *ḫnm.wt*-nurses, the phrase *ḫpr m rnn=f*, and the *s3 nsw n ḳ3š*), which all, save the title Royal Son of Kush, link Bata to the king as his heir, see Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 179–185. See also Graves-Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, p. 83, n. 57–65.

Graphical summary

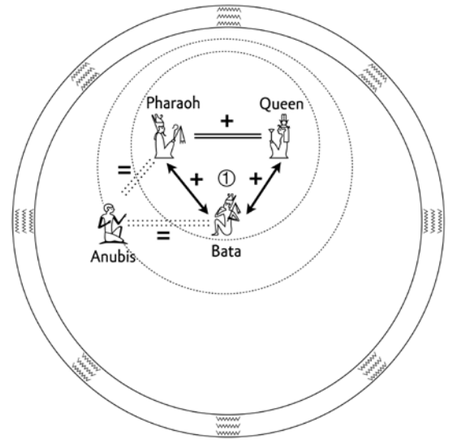


fig. 24: Episode N

①
Bata establishes a positive relation with the pharaoh, just as he did in the previous episodes.

EPISODE O (RUBRUM 24)

Now many days after this, when he completed **19,3** [many years] as Prince (*jry-pᶜt*) in the whole land, then His Majesty, l.p.h., flew to heaven. And then **19,4** one (i.e. the Pharaoh Bata) said: "Have brought to me the great officers of His Majesty, l.p.h., so I can make known all **19,5** the past affairs with me." [And then] his wife (*ḥm.t*) was brought and he contended with her before them (*jw=f ḥr wp.t ḥnᶜ=s m-b3ḥ=sn*).[428] And an affirmative (decision) was reached by them.[429]

428 The same expression (*jw=j ḥr wp.t ḥnᶜ=k m-b3ḥ=f*) is used, as in the case of d'Orb. 6,9–7,1 when describing the judicial process between Bata and Anubis which was presided by Pre-Harakty (*m-b3ḥ=f*). Bata and his wife seem to be presented here as contenders whose case is resolved by the officers of His Majesty.

429 The "affirmative (decision)" concerns a verdict which found the royal wife guilty of transgressions leading to her execution just as Anubis' wife was found guilty and punished by her husband in Episode C. After all, this fate was predicted by the seven Hathors at the moment of her "birth" (d'Orb. 9,8–9,9): And then the Seven Hathors came <to> see her, and they spoke as one, "She will die of a knife."

Commentary

Episode O forms part of the last triad which is directly related to both (1) the preceding triad, J, K, and L, as well as to (2) the very first triad, A, B, and C (in fact, following the last triad of episodes, we can imagine the Episode clusters organised in a circle; for a further explanation, see below, p. 163–177):

(1)

Episode J: A positive relationship between Bata and the pharaoh is established through the act of Bata becoming a divine emanation (pharaoh and the Persea trees).

Episode M: A positive relationship between Bata and his wife/mother is established through the act of Bata becoming her child (emanation of the pharaoh himself).

Episode K: A negative relationship between Bata and a woman (pharaoh's wife) is established. Her hatred then causes the relationship between Bata and the pharaoh to become negative.

Episode N: The love of Bata's mother/wife enables the relationship between Bata and the pharaoh to become positive.

Episode L: Negative relationships are eliminated by murdering Bata (cutting down the Persea trees); Bata is on the threshold of the source of order. Bata's mother/wife lives.

Episode O: Negative relationships are eliminated by Bata becoming the pharaoh; Bata is lifted to the role of the warrantor of order; Bata's mother/wife is found guilty (eliminated?).

(2)

Episode A: Bata creates a negative relationship with his mother because of an (offer of?) abnormal sexual relationship. (If he had accepted her offer of incest, he would have occupied the position of his father/brother but in a socially inappropriate way.)

Episode M: Bata creates a positive relationship with his wife/mother by becoming her child after inseminating her. (He occupies the position of his father/brother but in a socially appropriate way.)

Episode B: Anubis creates a negative relationship with Bata through the hatred of Bata's mother/sister.

Episode N: Pharaoh(-Anubis) creates a positive relationship with Bata through the love of Bata's mother/wife.

Episode C: Bata becomes a woman (castration) and is expelled outside the orderly sphere; Bata's mother/sister-in-law is eliminated.

Episode O: Bata becomes a true man (pharaoh) and is lifted to the role of the champion of order; Bata's mother/wife is eliminated.

Graphical summary

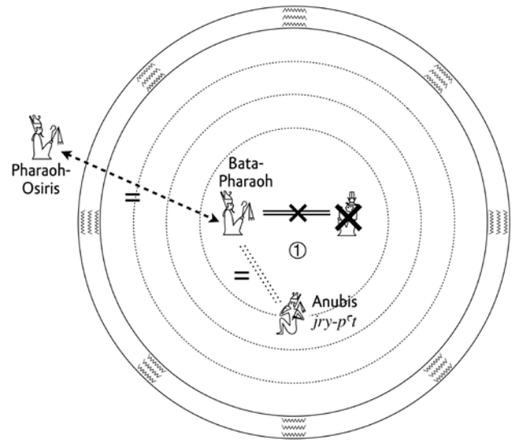


fig. 25: Episode O

①
Bata finally reaches the heart of order (*maat*) itself – he becomes the mediator of *maat* by becoming the pharaoh. He eliminates his ambiguous relationship with his former wife, then mother, and by his succession to the throne – wife again, through a trial (he exerts order). His older brother/father becomes his younger brother/son.

TERMINAL EPISODE (RUBRUM 24)

19,6 His [Bata's] older brother was brought to him and he [Bata] made him Prince (*jry-pʿt*) in the whole land. And he [Bata] was thirty years as king (*njsw.t*) of Egypt, **19,7** until he went out to life. His [Bata's] older brother stood in his place the day of his [Bata's] death.

Graphical summary

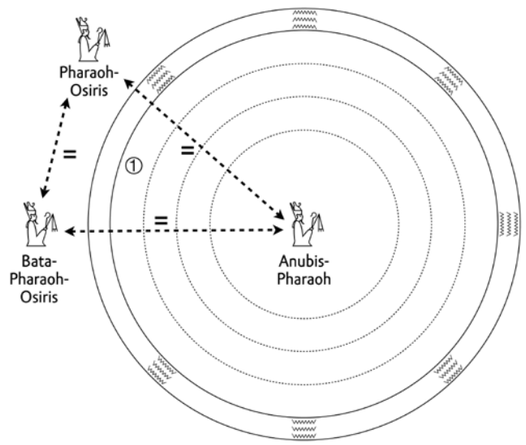


fig. 26: Terminal Episode

Commentary

Even though the last Episode may look unimportant (Bata, the hero of the story, has already become king), it is in fact crucial. This passage shows not only that all of the main male characters are in fact one (the pharaoh), but also that the narrative of the Papyrus d'Orbiney is closely linked with other myths and mythological motifs connected with the Osirian Cycle. Even though it was Bata whom we followed throughout the story (his expulsion from order, his problematic return, progress through the levels of the orderly world all the way to the top – the pharaoh), the terminal episode reveals that Anubis has also undergone a parallel evolution similar to that of Bata. Let us summarise Anubis' situation. At the beginning, we meet him as part of order but on its fringes – somewhere in Egypt (in Episode G, when Bata comes before the pharaoh – whom we expect to be in the residence – and is given gold in reward, he "leaves for his city"). Then through a series of structural permutations (during which Anubis helps Bata to be reintegrated into the structures of order) and through his brother Bata, Anubis is elevated into the inner-most sphere of order/power (crown prince) and then into the most cherished position itself. In our story, we therefore witness two parallel integration processes – Bata is split/changes into several characters and objects throughout the story. Anubis undergoes a similar process (his split image is the character of the pharaoh) but gradually works his way through the layers of order to merge, in the end, with his own emanation – the pharaoh (and therefore with his brother Bata). Bata needs Anubis to be able to leave and be re-integrated in

a different position, but Anubis also needs Bata because only through him and through his contact with forces on the outside can he (a) gain wealth (by bringing Bata in the form of a bull to the pharaoh), (b) become the heir to the throne (after Bata becomes the pharaoh), c) become pharaoh himself. Anubis uses the power which is channelled by his brother Bata through his contact with the outside for his own profit (even Anubis enters the "outside" in Initial Episode III when trying to retrieve Bata's heart).

CHAPTER V

The Inner Structure of the Tale of Two Brothers (pD'Orbiney)

In my analysis I have divided the text of the Papyrus d'Orbiney into episodes (A–O). This division is based on my understanding of the dynamics of the narrative. However, as is the case with many ancient Egyptian writings, the narrative of the Papyrus d'Orbiney contains marks dividing the text which were made by the Egyptian scribe himself – passages in red ink (*rubra*). The system which the Egyptians followed with regard to this custom is not always coherent, but generally it was used for emphasising, subdividing, marking, or generally distinguishing certain parts of the text from the rest, written in black ink.[430] Most of the cases of the usage of red ink in the Papyrus d'Orbiney comprise two (verbal) constructions. The first is a group of phrases beginning with *ḫr jr(=f ḫr sḏm)*, the second are sentences beginning with *wn jn(=f ḫr sḏm)*.[431] According to Friedrich Junge, the main function of the *(ḫr) jr* construction is to stress the topic of a sentence by placing it at the beginning (the so-called "topicalisation").[432] According to Jan Assmann, the scribe of the Papyrus d'Orbiney used this construction

430 For a short overview of the topic, see Manfred Weber, "Rubrum", in Helck und Otto (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. V, cols. 313–14; Georges Posener, "Sur l'emploi de l'encre rouge dans les manuscrits égyptiens", *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 37 (1951): 75–80; *idem*, "Les signes noirs dans les rubriques", *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 35 (1949): 77–81; Gary Rendsburg has drawn a parallel between this Egyptian scribal technique and that of *setuma* and *petuḥa* paragraphing in biblical manuscripts, see Gary A. Rendsburg, "Literary Devices in the Story of the Shipwrecked Sailor", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* [JAOS] 120 (2000): 16.

431 This was first stressed by Assmann, "Das ägyptische Zweibrudermärchen": 3. See also Assmann, "Textanalyse", p. 2.

432 Friedrich Junge, *Neuägyptisch: Einführung in die Grammatik*, Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1996, §6.1, p. 266–283. The *wn-jn* construction is used in New Egyptian for co-ordinating tenses in narratives (see Junge, *Neuägyptisch*, §6.3, p. 294–297) and does not have the topicalising function of the *(ḫr)-jr* construction.

to indicate "chapters",[433] totalling twenty four. Let us compare the division of the ancient Egyptian scribe and the division into Episodes applied in this monograph:

RUBRUM	EPISODE	RUBRUM	EPISODE
1–5	Initial Episode I	16	Episode G
6	Episode A	17	Episode H
7	Episode B	18	Episode I
8	Episode C	19	Episode J
9–11	Initial Episode II		Episode K
12	Episode D	20	Episode L
13–15	Episode E	21	Episode M
	Episode F	22–23	Episode N
	Initial Episode III	24	Episode O
			Terminal Episode

tab. 1: Table comparing the original division into *rubra* with the Episode system used in this work

As I have mentioned above, the division into Episodes follows the inner dynamics of the story. There is no clear rule to distinguish an Episode. It is more a question of one's own feeling and an ability to perceive shifts in the focus of the narrative, repetition of motifs, and other important markers.[434] By contrasting the contents of the Episodes

433 Assmann, "Das ägyptische Zweibrudermärchen": 3–4; Assmann, "Textanalyse": 2. See also Wolfgang Wettengel, "Zur Rubrengliederung der Erzählung von den zwei Brüdern", *Göttinger Miszellen* [GM] 126 (1992): 97–106.

434 It is now appropriate to explain the separation of rubrum 12 and 18 into more episodes and the inclusion of rubrum 22 and 23 into one episode. Rubrum 12 is of special importance to the story – it forms the middle of the story, its centre and as such it contains the core message. It is a crucial time for Bata – his re-established contact with order (the pharaoh) robs him of his wife and leaves him dead. It is a transitional phase from which Bata's re-integration begins. As such, the motifs (and three episodes D–F, see analysis above, p. 129–134) grouped in this rubrum present a coherent whole. Rubrum 18 is split into Episodes I and J for very similar reasons. It includes the account of Bata's death in the form of the bull and his subsequent rebirth in the two *šwb* trees. The structure of the two events is so similar that they were included in one rubrum. Nevertheless, from the point of view of the dynamics of the story, Bata's rebirth as the *šwb* trees forms an integral part of the following triad of Episodes J–L. The last instance are rubra 22 and 23. The narrative in these rubra concerns Bata's progress within the highest echelons of ancient Egyptian society – he gains various benefits, titles, and is socially elevated to the position of the crown prince (*jry-pʿt*). As such, these events form a whole (one Episode). Nevertheless, Bata's appointing as *jry-pʿt* was probably so significant that the author decided to stress its importance by including the event in a separate rubrum. Finally, part of the last Episode O is divided and forms the Terminal Episode. It concerns the enthronisation of Anubis after his (older) brother Bata dies. As I have tried to show (see above, p. 159–161), the Terminal Episode is of primary importance for our analysis. Anthony Spalinger (Spalinger: "Transformations": 138–147) also talks of the "triumphant rise of Anubis, the elder son, to the throne of Egypt [...]" (Spalinger: "Transformations": 140).

we can then group them into "Clusters" (each composed of three Episodes).[435] In table 1 these Clusters are indicated by different shades of grey. The basic relationship between Episodes in one Cluster is the classic Hegelian triad of thesis–antithesis–synthesis.[436] We can see that every Cluster, therefore, has an inner dynamic of its own. At the same time, these Clusters represent structural permutations of each other. The inner narrative dynamics of the Clusters are then combined with the other Clusters and the story becomes connected on more levels than just on the level of the apparent narrative. To illustrate this, it might first be helpful to summarise the structural relationships between all of the Episode Clusters (1–3c):

Relationships between Cluster 1 and Cluster 2:

thesis

Episode A: Bata is sexually assaulted by a woman (Anubis' wife).

Episode D: Bata is physically assaulted by a man (the pharaoh's envoys).

anti-thesis

Episode B: Bata is unsuccessfully assaulted by a man through the doings of a woman (Anubis' wife persuades her husband to kill Bata, which he fails to do).

Episode E: Bata is successfully assaulted by a man through the doings of a woman (Bata's former wife/sister persuades her husband the pharaoh to kill Bata, which he manages to do).

435 **Cluster 1**: Episodes A–C; **Cluster 2**: Episodes D–F; **Cluster 3a**: Episodes G–I; **Cluster 3b**: Episodes J–L; **Cluster 3c**: Episodes M–O.

436 The importance of triadic patterns in the text of the Papyrus d'Orbiney and in Egyptian texts in general is also commented upon by Assmann ("Das ägyptische Zweibrudermärchen"), followed and further developed by Wettengel (*Die Erzählung*, p. 216–222). Assmann and Wettengel divide the chapters of the Papyrus d'Orbiney into three units of eight chapters (see also Assmann's later alternation of the scheme [Assmann, "Textanalyse": especially 1–6] which, however, did not change this basic triadic division). If the 24 chapters represent the full diurnal and nocturnal cycle of the sun, then these three units represent the Egyptian seasons of *ꜣḫ.t* (floods), *pr.t* (sprouting of seed), *šm.w* (harvest) as a reflection of the cycle of the sun on a higher diachronic level. Jan Assmann also argued that the king joined the cycle of the sun in three phases (Jan Assmann, *Der König als Sonnenpriester*, 1970, Glückstadt: Verlag J. J. Augustin, p. 69).

synthesis

Episode C: The aftermath of Episode A and B is Bata's castration and displacement of his heart (elimination of Bata's virility); feminine principle (Anubis' wife) destroyed.

Episode F: The aftermath of Episode D and E is Bata's death (pine felled); feminine principle (the pharaoh's wife) lives.

Relationships between Cluster 2 and Cluster 3a:

thesis

Episode D: Negative relationship is established with a man (pharaoh).

Episode G: Positive relationship is established with a man (pharaoh and the bull).

anti-thesis

Episode E: Negative relationship is established with a woman (wife) and the pharaoh.

Episode H: Negative relationship is established with a woman (wife) who changes the positive relationship between Bata and the pharaoh to a negative relationship.

synthesis

Episode F: Negative relationships are eliminated by murdering Bata (cutting down the pine tree); Bata is outside order.

Episode I: Negative relationships are eliminated by murdering Bata (sacrifice of the bull); Bata is inside the realm of order.

Relationships between Cluster 3a and Cluster 3b:

thesis

Episode G: Positive relationship is established with a man (pharaoh and the bull).

Episode J: Positive relationship is established with a man (pharaoh and the *šwb* trees).

anti-thesis

Episode H: Negative relationship is established with a woman (wife) who changes the positive relationship between Bata and the pharaoh to a negative relationship.

Episode K: Negative relationship is established with a woman (wife) who changes the positive relationship between Bata and the pharaoh to a negative relationship.

synthesis

Episode I: Negative relationships are eliminated by murdering Bata (sacrifice of the bull); Bata is inside the realm of order.

Episode L: Negative relationships are eliminated by murdering Bata (cutting down the Persea trees); Bata is literally on the threshold of the source of order.

Relationships between Cluster 3b and Cluster 3c:

thesis

Episode J: A positive relationship between Bata and the pharaoh is established through the act of Bata becoming a divine emanation (pharaoh and the *šwb* trees).

Episode M: A positive relationship between Bata and his wife/mother is established through the act of Bata becoming her child (emanation of the pharaoh himself).

anti-thesis

Episode K: A negative relationship between Bata and a woman (pharaoh's wife) is established. Her hatred causes the relationship between Bata and the pharaoh to become negative.

Episode N: A positive relationship between Bata and the pharaoh is established. The love of Bata's mother/wife enables the relationship between Bata and the pharaoh to become positive.

synthesis

Episode L: Negative relationships are eliminated by murdering Bata (cutting down the Persea trees); Bata is on the threshold of the source of order. Bata's mother/wife lives.

Episode O: Positive relationships are sealed by Bata becoming the pharaoh; Bata is lifted to the role of the warrantor of order; Bata's mother/wife is eliminated.

Relationships between Cluster 3c and Cluster 1:

thesis

Episode A: Bata creates a negative relationship with his mother because of an (offer of?) abnormal sexual relationship. (If he had accepted her offer of incest, he would have occupied the position of his father/brother but in a socially inappropriate way.)

Episode M: Bata creates a positive relationship with his wife/mother by becoming her child after inseminating her. (He occupied the position of his father/brother but in a socially appropriate way.)

anti-thesis

Episode B: Anubis creates a negative relationship with Bata through the hatred of Bata's mother/sister.

Episode N: The pharaoh creates a positive relationship with Bata through the love of Bata's mother/wife.

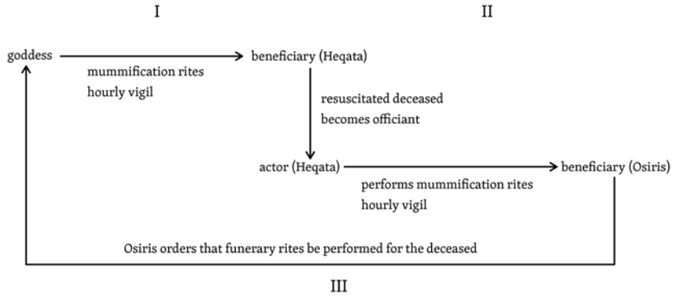
synthesis

Episode C: Bata becomes a woman (castration) and is expelled; Bata's mother/sister is eliminated.

Episode O: Bata becomes a true man (pharaoh) and is lifted to the role of the mediator of order; Bata's mother/wife is eliminated.

From the above stated summary, it is obvious that every Cluster is defined by its relationship to (a) the previous Cluster, (b) the following Cluster. What we see in the case of Clusters 3a–3c is a certain gradation of the same motif – Bata progresses through different levels of order through repeated death and bodily transformations. From this point of view, Clusters 3a–3c form a unit of a certain type. At the same time, Cluster 3c is in direct relationship to Cluster 1 – the narrative thus creates a kind of structural circle contrasting the units from the beginning of the story with those at the end.[437] This is also pleasingly mirrored in the original division of the narrative into rubra: the very beginning (Rubrum 1 – part of Initial Episode I) and the very end

437 A similar circular concept was also identified by Harco Willems in his analysis of the coffin of Heqata (Willems, *The Coffin of Heqata*, p. 377): "The deceased's primary aim is thus to be embalmed just like Osiris. As a result of his ensuing resuscitation, he is able, however, to become an embalmer himself. After being initiated, he enters the Place of Embalming and assists in the mummification of Osiris. Considering that it was Osiris who ordained that the mummification of the deceased should take place, the whole process might be termed a cycle of resuscitation." Willems visualised the whole process in the following way:



(by Willems, *The Coffin of Heqata*, p. 377).

of the narrative (Rumbrum 24 – Episode O and Terminal Episode) show the structural coherence of the whole narrative:

> Rubrum 1: Anubis is like a father (owner of an estate) to Bata, the son (successor?).
> Rubrum 24: Bata is like a father (pharaoh) to Anubis, the son (crown prince).

The initial situation was inverted through the inner mechanism of the myth into its own opposite.[438] Even though we might say that this is the basic or elementary opposition which the Tale of Two Brothers mediates (i.e. the enigmatic unity of father and son), only by going through the narrative (and only by accepting the rules followed by the narrative) do we understand how such an inversion may be achieved. If the two statements were contrasted directly, they would be illogical and paradoxical and they would remain obscure. To make the relationships between Clusters more evident, we may visualise them in the following manner (see fig. 27).

The diagram is to be read from left to right and from top to bottom. The letters represent the Episodes, as analysed above, which are grouped into triads (Clusters 1–3c). The full arrows represent the narrative which forms the obvious line of coherence of the whole composition (Initial Episodes are also to be encompassed in the narrative, but for the sake of clarity I have not added full arrows next to them, they are, so to say, "sandwiched" in between the Episode Clusters). In the first column we find Episodes which function as theses (•), the second column comprises antitheses (◦), and the third column includes syntheses (◦). The dotted arrows which connect the individual Episodes show structural relationships between them. These relationships are directly dependent on the narrative sequence, but do not follow the narrative in strictly sequential order.[439] The individual Episode Clusters are interspersed with

438 If we expand the comparison we may say that in the initial part of the story the (proposed) sexual contact with Anubis's wife is considered a deviation of the established social contract (adultery and incest). On the other hand, even though not mentioned explicitly, at the end of the story Anubis's implicit sexual contact with Bata's wife (i.e. former queen) is considered to be within the limits of social conduct. This transformative function invested in the office of the king seems to be one of the main foci of the whole text.

439 To describe these types of relationships I have used two basic terms: "similarity" and "inversion". I am aware that these terms are unsatisfactorily narrow. The whole relational structure between Episodes seems to be more complicated. For example, Episodes G and D were described as "inverted" with regard to one another because they had the following structure:

1) **negative** relationship established with a man;
   positive relationship established with a man.

However, the inversion might instead have focused on the sex of the characters (as in Episodes A+D, J+M, see above, p. 165; 167):

2) negative relationship established with a **man;**
   negative relationship established with a **woman.**

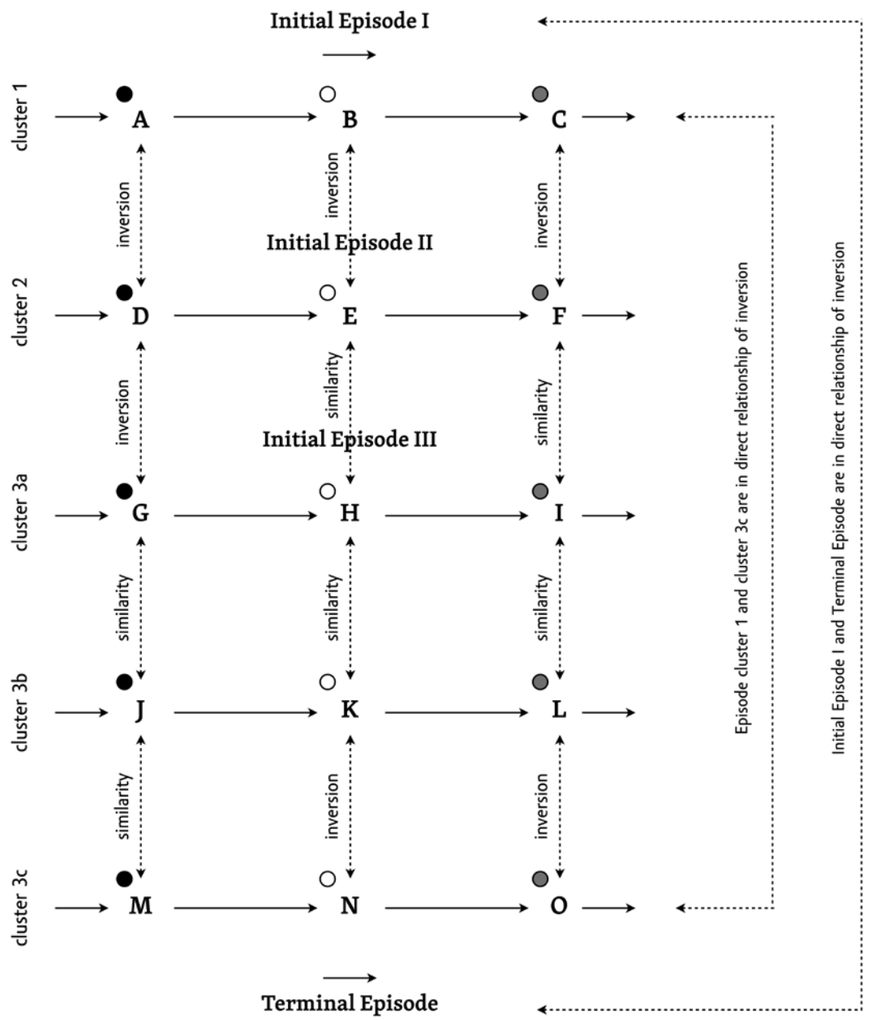


fig. 27: Diagram showing the structural relationships between individual Episodes and Episode Clusters

Initial Episodes I–III. These have a different function than the Episode Clusters. Initial Episodes may or may not have a triadic pattern. If we look again at table 1, we can see that in most cases the division into Episodes – followed in this book – more or less corresponds to the division indicated in the original text by the rubra (Episodes A–C, G–H, K–M, O). The Initial Episodes comprise several rubra. The inclusion of several rubra within the Initial Episodes is quite understandable with regard to their function. The Initial Episodes can be likened to establishing the scene in a theatre and the triads of Episodes then perform the play. The Initial Episodes move the story on; they change the "frames" of the story, that is, they change the syntactic structure of the plot; we could also say that they shift the ontological focus of the listener/reader from one level to another. In each "frame" a different set of paradoxes is therefore being dealt with:[440]

Or it could have developed the inversion on both sides (as in Episodes K+N, C+O, see above, p. 167; 168):
3) **negative** relationship established with a **man;**
   positive relationship established with a **woman.**
We could think of several more permutations of these basic relationships. All of these cases are examples of an "inversion", even though they are not the same, oscillating between the sex of the characters (man/woman) and the nature of their relationship (positive/negative). We could turn to logic and adapt its terminology (the inversion of the sex could be called a "duality" rather than "inversion"). It also seems that certain progress could be made by utilizing the mathematical theory of groups. A group is an algebraic structure that is associative and that has an identity element and inverses for all elements of the set. At the same time, it combines any two of the elements to form a third element (the famous Rubik's cube puzzle is an example where the idea of groups found a practical use). In human sciences, the group theory inspired, even though on a very limited scale, Jean Piaget and Bärbel Inhelder in their work on child psychology (*The Psychology of the Child*, trans. by Helen Weaver, New York: Basic Books, 1962). At the same time, it seems that even though the myth does operate with algebraic structures, at certain moments the structure defies the algebraic rules (based on the diagram above and according to rules which govern the composition of logical relations, the relationship between the last and the first Episode Cluster should be that of similarity and not of inversion). Therefore, it seems instead that the myth uses a certain quasi-algebraic way of ordering motifs but in fact has a different agenda than one of complying with the rules of algebra. In all cases, developing a detailed logical terminological framework and trying to uncover further possible ramifications is not the primary focus of this work. This would require not only a much more algebraically oriented research but also an analysis of a much larger corpus of texts, and not only narrative ones, on which the conclusions could be tested. At this moment I am striving for a lesser goal – I would like to make visible the fact that the language of (narrative) myth operates in a system which contrasts its individual constituent parts on several levels at the same time and that by doing so it enables the connection of information pertaining to several levels of human ontological experience. This, I believe, is sufficiently shown by the analysis which I am presenting regardless of the narrowness of the analytical terminology applied. (I would like to thank my colleague, Vít Punčochář, for several crucial ideas and comments on the topic and for informing me about Piaget and Inhelder's work; personal and e-mail communication, Prague, 31.1.–11.2.2012).

440 The reason why the story has this particular structure lies mainly with the decision of the compiler. The structure of myths is flexible – the author could have added an infinite number of episodes to any part of the plot or he could have limited it significantly. Even if it were true that the narrative is an amalgam of various different stories which were put together by the author, as Jan Assmann argued (Assmann, "Das altägyptische Zweibrüdermärchen": 1–2; Assmann, "Textanalyse": 10–11), this analysis shows that it does have an organic structure which forms a frame. Assmann's stance is in fact quite perplexing because he actually did uncover a very interesting element hinting

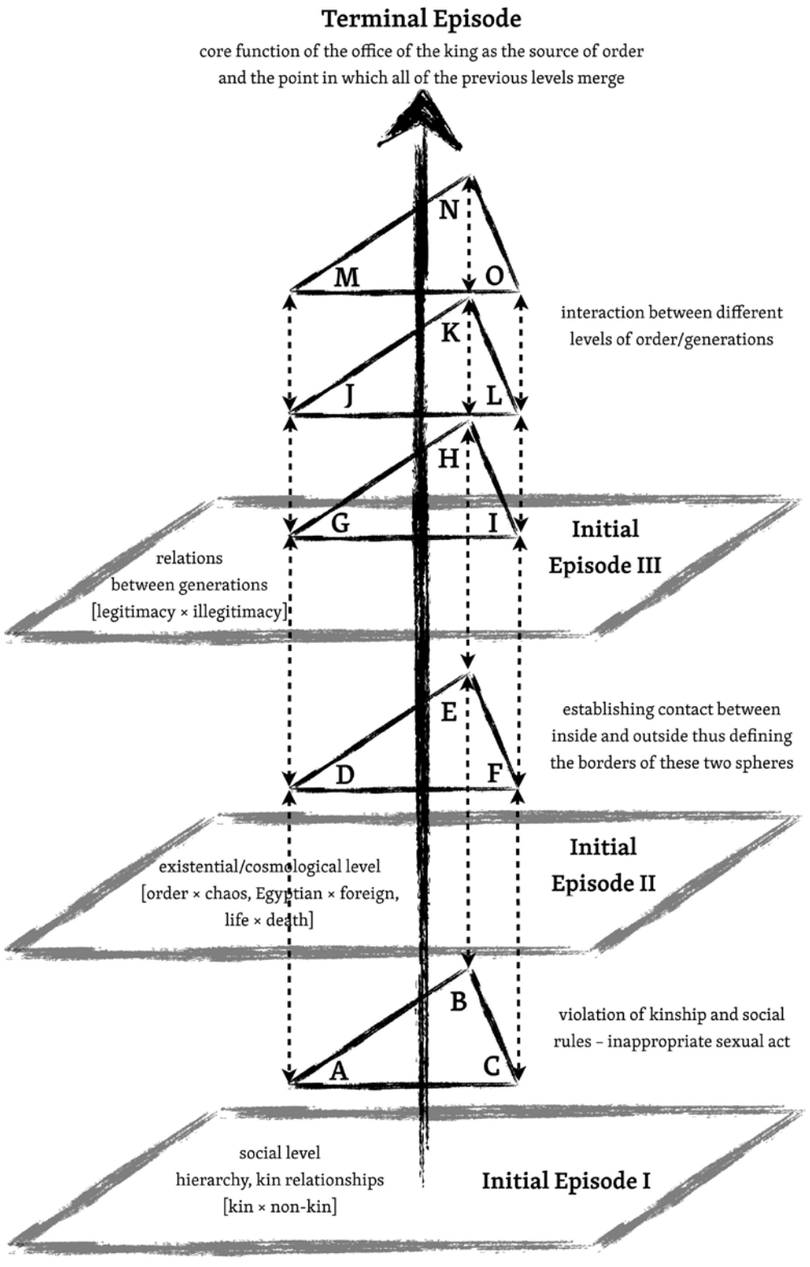
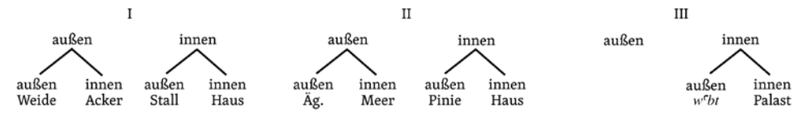


fig. 28: Diagram illustrating the ability of the myth to converge various levels of personal experience and cultural categories through the plot of the narrativ

At the same time, because all of these levels describing various and in many aspects absolutely differing levels of human experience with the outside world form part of one narrative, the story actually creates a medium in which these levels may be brought in the mind of the listener into direct contact. Further, meaningful relationships between them may be illustrated (more on the function of myths below, p. 252–254).[441] At this moment we may, therefore, briefly return to the discussion from the beginning of this book (see p. 35–40), where I contrasted "narrative coherence" (i.e. sequential ordering of units which is the preferred way

at the structural coherence of the whole work. He very correctly described the way in which the opposition inside × outside is handled within the story, thus actually connecting the various ontological levels which are expressed in the narrative: "In Part I the story describes the movement of the heroes from 'total outside' to 'total inside' (where the encounter with the woman takes place and where the conflict arises). Part II describes the movement of the Girl [*i.e. Bata's wife, author's note*] from 'total inside' to 'total outside'. And in Part III the movement of the heroes from 'total outside' represented by the 'Valley of the Cedar' [*i.e. Valley of the Pine, author's note*] to 'total inside' […]. The story therefore covers the whole scale of movements of the heroes from a relative 'outside' to an absolute Outside and from there back to an absolute Inside, the Egyptian royal Palace." (Assmann, "Das altägyptische Zweibrüdermärchen": p. 22, n. 33. Trans. by M. Pehal.)



(after Assmann, "Das altägyptische Zweibrüdermärchen": p. 22, n. 33). A very similar structure has been identified by José-Ramón Pérez-Accino ("Text as Territory: Mapping Sinuhe's Shifting Loyalties", Hagen, Johnston, Monkhouse, Piquette, Tait, and Worthington (eds.), *Narratives of Egypt and the Ancient Near East*, p. 177–194) in the Middle Egyptian composition called the Tale of Sinuhe. The well-known ancient Egyptian story describes Sinuhe's flight from Egypt, his life in Syria-Palestine, and his subsequent return to Egypt. In Pérez-Accino's interpretation, Sinuhe's physical movement from the "inside" (Egypt) to the "outside" (Syria-Palestine) is directly linked to his moral development, i.e. categories of different orders are brought together through the narrative in the mind of the listener and shown as interconnected.

441 Something similar was hinted at by Assmann ("Das ägyptische Zweibrudermärchen": 20–21; "Textanalyse": 6–10). Within the narrative of the Tale of Two Brothers he identified certain topics, their antithetical counterparts, and subsequently mediating relationships representing certain transformative crises crucial to the development of the story. What is interesting is that these three triads of motifs each deal with different levels of ontological experience ([a] manner of obtaining food, [b] kin-relationships, [c] ability to procreate) in a similar way to the Initial Episodes in my analysis. Assmann then shows that these three topics were presented as interconnected through the usage of the polyvalent term "seed" with all its possible connotations. Unfortunately, he did not realize that this principle may be generalized as a typical characteristic of myth. Michèle Broze and Aviva Cywiè, for example, identified this principle in case of the Pyramid Text 219. Firstly, they argued that the list itself implied an underlying narrative. Secondly, they distinguished a "genealogical" and a "topological" part of the list composing this spell remarking that: "This list as a whole provides the deceased with the elements necessary for his survival situating him both in a certain time frame and in a certain space; further, it puts stress on the reciprocal role of generations with regard to both the ancestors and the descendants." (Broze, Cywiè "Généalogie et topologie", p. 72, trans. by M. Pehal.)

of injecting meaning into the world within the "Western" cultural complex) with "configurational coherence" (i.e. the ability to see meaningful connections between units outside a strictly sequential pattern; the polyvalence of symbolical language is often employed). The diagrams presented above seem to show that even within a clearly narrative composition such as the Tale of Two Brothers, we have to take into account the strong "configurational" tendencies which exist between the sequentially ordered units. In fact, it seems that the most important statement is revealed once we contrast the very beginning and the end of the composition paraphrased in the following manner: " A father is to a son in the same manner as a son is to a father." The narrative guides us through the plot and orders the units into a specific sequence. However, the meaning is fully revealed once we start perceiving the composition simultaneously through both a "narrative" and a "configurational" lense.

However, the idea that the story forms a coherent whole was rejected in the past by Jan Assman.[442] Even though he was the first to have formulated the idea that the division of the story into twenty-four parts corresponds to the cycle of the sun (and therefore implies some consistency of the composition), it was the varying size of each rubrum that bewildered him.[443] Based on this observation, he concluded that the rubra do not play an important function in the structure of the text.[444] Nevertheless, as I hope this analysis has managed to show, it is not the length of the units which matters, but how they are ordered and the relationships between them.[445] Assman's argument concerning the division of the text of the Tale of Two Brothers into 24 "solar" episodes was later picked up by Wolfgang Wettengel, who made it one of the key arguments of his own interpretation.[446] He showed that the understanding of various motifs in the story must be interpreted with regard to the solar

442 Assmann, "Das ägyptische Zweibrudermärchen".

443 "The longest chapter (No. 7) consists of 27 rows of hieratic script, the shortest (No. 23) of only one single line. Only 9 of the 24 chapters have approximately the same length from 7 1/2 to about 2 1/2 rows, the rest varying substantially in length." (Assmann, "Das ägyptische Zweibrudermärchen": 4; Assmann, "Textanalyse": 2–4, trans. by M. Pehal).

444 Assmann, "Das ägyptische Zweibrudermärchen": 4.

445 Wettengel proposes that the length of the various episodes is dependent on how well the potential listeners of the story were acquainted with the background of the story. According to Wettengel, the longest parts of the text (rubra 6 to 8), actually contained various foreign mythological motifs which needed to be explained in a more detailed manner to the native Egyptian listener/reader than other parts of the narrative (Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 62–88, 192–193).

446 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*.

mythology of the New Kingdom.[447] This also strengthens the cyclical nature of the composition. Based on Wettengel's analysis,[448] we may enlarge our table and include the various stages of the sun's journey as it parallels the Tale of Two Brothers:[449]

HOUR OF THE DAY	RUBRUM	EPISODE	CYCLE OF THE SUN	EVENTS IN THE TALE OF TWO BROTHERS	NOTES
7	1–5	Initial Episode I	morning, before noon (sun ascends)	Relationships between characters are described, they are positive and ideal.	*rubra 1–3:* In the morning, the creative force of the sun is the strongest, the sun is young. The world is in harmony.
8					
9					
10					*rubra 4–5:* The time of sowing brings dynamism into the story. Sowing = new phase in the order of things.
11					
12	6	Episode A	noon	First transgression, attempt at incest because of Bata's overt virility.	*rubrum 6:* The sun is at its strongest manifesting its beauty and strength.
13	7	Episode B	afternoon, (sun begins its descent)	Anubis strives to kill Bata.	*rubra 7–8:* The sun loses its force as it begins its descent into foreign parts of the universe (culminating by its later disappearance from the visible world altogether). Bata's strength shifts from active to passive, he becomes "weak" and "feeble".
14	8	Episode C		Bata castrates himself, becoming weak; by this act he solves his quarrel with Anubis.	
15	9–11	Initial Episode II		Bata lives as a hunter, sleeps outside, his heart is placed on a tree.	*rubra 9–11:* Bata's strength is exteriorized (heart on a tree) and he becomes even weaker, just as the sun's force decreases. He lives in a state of potentiality (he will recover his strength later). His way of life represents an inverted version of "standard" customs (he is a hunter instead of a farmer, he has a wife but lacks his male member, etc.).
16				Bata lives as a hunter, builds a house.	
17				Bata lives as a hunter, obtains a wife, establishes a household.	

447 A key concept which is also at play in the story concerns the identity of Re and Osiris (see below, p. 186, n. 483; 193), or, more generally, of the father-god and his ba. See, for example, John Coleman Darnell, *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books of the Solar-Osirian Unity: Cryptographic Compositions in the Tombs of Tutankhamun, Ramesses VI and Ramesses IX*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis [OBO] 198, Fribourg: Academic Press, 2004.

448 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, especially p. 191–222.

449 Compare with the table in Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 202–203 and with his book in general in which he deals with the idea of the text being composed in order to reflect the cycle of the sun in greater detail. The "Notes" in my table strongly draw from Wettengel's commentary, *Die Erzählung*, p. 194–222 even though I have altered them at certain points.

HOUR OF THE DAY	RUBRUM	EPISODE	CYCLE OF THE SUN	EVENTS IN THE TALE OF TWO BROTHERS	NOTES
18	12	Episode D	sunset	The order of things is disturbed; Bata's wife is taken from him; Bata is killed.	*rubrum 12:* This is a liminal period *par excellence*. The sun "dies" in the visible realm only to be reborn in the Netherworld. The sun's journey full of transformations begins.
19	13–15	Episode E Episode F	first half of the night (sun descends)	Anubis searches for Bata's heart.	*rubra 13–15:* Anubis' role towards Bata is crucial. In a certain way Anubis acts for Bata as Horus did for Osiris, eliminating lack by providing that which is missing (i.e. heart, life force, ability to act, etc.).
20		Initial Episode III		Anubis finds Bata's heart and starts the revivification process.	
21				Bata is revived and assumes the form of a bull.	
22	16	Episode G		Bata establishes a positive relationship with the pharaoh.	*rubra 16–17:* According to the Book of the Dead, chapter 109, the bull (and also the *šwb* trees which appear later on) are standard transformations which the sun undergoes during its journey in the Netherworld. Anubis is no longer needed, all the following transformations are mediated/facilitated by the pharaoh's wife. The same stands for the sun, which undergoes its transformations in the body of the goddess Nut.
23	17	Episode H		Bata establishes a negative relationship with the pharaoh's wife.	
24	18	Episode I	midnight	Bata is killed and revivified in a new form of two *šwb* a trees; positive relationship with the pharaoh is established.	*rubrum 18–20:* Midnight is a critical point during the netherworld journey of the sun. Bata undergoes the second of the total of three transformations. At the same time it is the last transformation which is characterised by the negative relationship with his/pharaoh's wife.
1	19	Episode J			
		Episode K	second half of the night (sun begins its ascent)	Bata establishes a negative relationship with the pharaoh's wife.	
2	20	Episode L		Bata is killed.	
3	21	Episode M		Bata is revivified in the form of the queen's son, positive relationship with the queen is established.	*rubrum 21:* Bata transforms for the third time, engendering himself through the body of his wife/mother, becoming part of the royal family.
4	22–23	Episode N		Bata progresses through the inner spheres of order.	*rubrum 22:* Bata's rise within the royal court later culminates with his ascent to the throne.
5					
6	24	Episode O	sunrise	Bata becomes pharaoh.	*rubrum 23:* Bata replaces his father thus becoming his father. The older brother (Anubis) is adopted as his younger brother's heir.
		Terminal Episode		Anubis becomes pharaoh.	*rubrum 24:* Anubis replaces his father/younger brother.

tab. 2 Parallelism between the events in the Tale of Two Brothers and the stages of the cycle of the sun

The question which now must be answered is the compatibility of Assmann's and Wettengel's division according to the cycle of the sun with the Episode system of this publication. The main problem is that solar cycle division is not applicable to other narratives and even less so to other types of texts. Not only is a neat division into twenty four parts rather an exception in ancient Egyptian sources, most other sources are often too fragmentary for us to tell. In this sense I also believe that Assmann's and Wettengel's interpretation covers only part of the symbolism which the narrative holds. The Episode system as applied in the present work, on the other hand, can be adopted to other compositions as well. One of the most distinctive features which the Episode system highlights is the mechanism of character transformations.

Character Transformations

Most interpreters of the Tale of Two Brothers feel that throughout the story they repeatedly encounter mythical schemes which they recognise from other, not only Egyptian, but also very often foreign contexts. The same goes for individual characters. For Hollis, Bata seems especially strongly to manifest Osirian characteristics.[450] Wettengel later tried to show the strong similarities between the character traits of Bata and Seth-Baal and, as we have seen in the previous chapter, also with the solar god Re.[451] Hollis remarked that: "[...] attempting to relate Bata, an obscure deity after his Old Kingdom appearances in the 'Shepherd's Song' from Fifth and Sixth Dynasty tombs, not only to Re, Osiris, and Seth, but to Baal as well, begs the question of just what Bata represents. He cannot be all things to all people, even in the world of Egyptian gods. His associations, particularly those which appear oppositional, such as his Osirian role and his simultaneous relation to Seth, need attention."[452] The problem which must now be scrutinised is how the mechanics of Bata's transformations reflect the characteristics of these various deities. Before we dive into an analysis, we have to realise several things. First of all, the identity/similarity of a certain character to a certain god is not given by a simple description of his/her traits but primarily by his/

450 Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*.
451 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*.
452 Susan T. Hollis, "Review" (Wettengel, *Die Erzählung von den beiden Brüdern*), *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 92 (2006): 292–293.

her relationship to other characters within a given context. It is therefore misleading to ask whether Bata is an Osirian-type or Sethian-type *per se*, but rather ask *with regard to whom or to what is his personality defined?* Since these relationships change as the story progresses (characters enter and leave the scene), then probably even Bata's personality traits will change. As we have seen above in the structural analysis of the individual chapters, the relationships between characters may alter based on the type of structural opposites which the story is dealing with at each precise moment. In the Tale of Two Brothers I have, therefore, been able to identify the following relationship schemes:

INITIAL EPISODE I–EPISODE A

The balanced situation at the beginning of the narrative contrasts the biological status of the two main characters (brothers) with the socio-economically defined relationship of a father (Anubis) towards a son (Bata). The archetype, which immediately springs to mind, is that of the Osiris-Horus relationship. Even though the story, like the archetype itself, remains unclear on the distribution of the provider-receiver roles,[453] the image of Anubis being seated and having food presented to him does recall Egyptian tomb paintings of the deceased (father-Osiris) being depicted with food offerings presented to him by his living progeny (son-Horus) within the funerary cult.

On the textual level, Bata is at one moment described as a "young man" (*šrj*),[454] i.e. "small" [455] and in a filial role. Nevertheless, even in this moment of "ideal" balance, the seed of future problems is slowly growing. Bata, even though a loyal son, has ambivalent characteristics. He does the work of both a man (taking care of the flocks) and of a woman (preparing food). At the same time, even though he is biologically a brother to Anubis (an equal), his social position is that of a dependent individual (a son). It is as if categories which are normally separated are somehow inappropriately combined in Bata. Inappropriate combination or transgressing set limits is a trait typical for Seth, the god of confusion,[456] a trickster[457] who enables the articulation of the limits of order by transgressing them. In this initial part, we may already sense certain Sethian characteristics which are going to prevail in Bata's character later on in the story.

453 As Jan Assmann showed, the provider-receiver roles between a father and son are reciprocal. The father provides for the son during his infancy, and the son returns these favours after the father's death (Assmann, *Stein und Zeit,* especially p. 115–137).

454 d'Orb. 1,4 (Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 10).

455 Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* IV, 524–525.

456 See especially te Velde, *Seth.*

457 Herman te Velde, "The Egyptian God Seth as a Trickster", *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* [JARCE] 7 (1968): 37–40.

In this part of the narrative, Bata seems to be depicted as a Horus-type deity defined by his relationship to his brother/father Osiris-Anubis.

EPISODE B

Even though the conflict between Bata and Anubis over an alleged attempt at a forceful, incestuously adulterous connection is put by most authors in relationship with non-Egyptian motifs (see above, p. 103, n. 330), we do have an autochthonous Egyptian model available. It seems that an alternative rendering of the events leading to Osiris' death did exist.[458] According to this version, the whole event was instead presented as fair retribution from Seth for the adulterous relationship between Osiris and Seth's consort and their sister in one person, Nephthys.[459] It does not matter whether the author of the Papyrus d'Orbiney is hinting at this alternative mythical tradition or whether this episode is an unconscious permutation of the traditionally dominating motif of Osiris' demise following the act of his malicious brother Seth. What is important is that the father-son relationship (socio-economic level), which was accentuated in the previous parts of the Papyrus d'Orbiney, seems to be pushed into the background in Episode B and the motif of the transgression of established patterns of sexual behaviour is pronounced.

In this part of the narrative Bata therefore seems to be depicted as an Osirian-type deity defined by his relationship towards his brother (Seth-)Anubis and an attempt at an incestuous and non-legitimate sexual relationship.[460]

458 Alexandra von Lieven, "Seth ist im Recht, Osiris ist im Unrecht: Sethkultorte und ihre Version des Osiris-Mythos", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* [ZÄS] 133 (2006): 141–150. I am very thankful to Harco Willems for drawing my attention to this article. See also Frank Feder, "Nephthys – Die Gefährtin im Unrecht. Die spät(zeitlich)e Enthüllung einer göttlichen Sünde, *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* [SAK] 37 (2008): 69–83; and Jan Quaegebeur, "Le théonyme Senephthys", *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* [OLP] 22 (1991): 111–122.

459 In the Late Period tradition (7th century BC) we also hear of a female deity called Horit (pBrooklyn 47.218.84: II, 7; III, 8; IV, 2; IX, 2. 5. 7. 9.; X, 2. 9.; XII, 11; XIII, 4; XV, 7), a female variant of Horus, whose father is Osiris (IX, 9). Even though it is not explicitly stated that her birth is the outcome of the adulterous relationship between Nephthys and Osiris, it is another hint that an alternative mythical tradition existed. For details see Dimitri Meeks, *Mythes et légendes du Delta d'après le papyrus Brooklyn 47.218.84*, Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire 125, Publications de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire 952, Le Caire: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2006, especially p. 49–50, n. 31; p. 126, n. 417.

460 The reader might remark that it was not Bata who transgressed the boundaries of sexual behaviour but Anubis' wife. Nevertheless, the text itself hints at the fact that Bata's involvement in the whole affair might have been more active than is explicitly described by the author of the papyrus. Afterall, later on he does cut off his phallus for no good reason. Even though the act is often interpreted as a way of proving his innocence (see above, p. 109, n. 344), one could also understand it as proof of Bata's crime and a sort of punishment (just as in the case of the inverted Osiris myth). Alan Dundes ("Projective Inversion": 378–394) offers a very interesting interpretation of this passage. He claims

Episode C

We may find several possible parallels in Egyptian mythology for Bata's castration and for the ensuing "weakness/weariness". The first one which springs to mind is Osiris. This parallel is strengthened by the mention of the *nᶜr* fish swallowing Bata's member, which is also described by Plutarch as once having befallen Osiris. Later on in the story Bata does indeed demonstrate strong Osirian aspects (see below). This line of thought is repeatedly accentuated in Hollis' work. In fact, she bases her interpretation on the Osirian character of Bata.[461]

Wettengel, however, correctly remarks that it is not only Osiris who was afflicted by an act of castration and reminds the reader of Seth and Re.[462] In the Book of the Dead, Spell 17, Re actually emasculates himself within the context of the creational process.[463] From two drops of blood the gods Hu (Utterance) and Sia (Knowledge) are born. However, Re's act was in itself a creative one – he managed to create two principles which were basic to the king's (Re's) conduct and therefore crucial to the correct functioning of the cosmos as such. Bata's act, on the other hand, was anything but creative – he rather disposed of something which seemed to be the cause of all the trouble (his overt/uncontrolled masculinity).

I would therefore like to present a different argument. At this particular point of the narrative I understand Bata's act primarily as a means of balancing and neutralizing the events of the previous chapters (see above, p. 109–112). It seems to me that the point which the narrative wants to stress is not the castration itself (even though it establishes Bata's state, which is going to be crucial for the structure of the following passages) but the moment of reconciliation between the two brothers which is achieved by this act. An archetypical constellation which describes the reconciliation of two opponents in the Egyptian context is of course the reconciliation of Seth and Horus. At this point I agree with Wettengel that Bata's conduct in the following episodes describing his stay in the Valley of the Pine does in fact stress his resemblance to a Seth-Baalian deity.[464] And as Wettengel argues at length, the parallel between Bata's and Seth-Baal's physiognomy is striking and in a way sealed by the Egyptians themselves

that charging the female character with the adulterous longing may just be a classic example of a projection of one's own sexual desire onto its object (i.e. the woman/mother).

461 Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, especially p. 113–146.

462 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, especially p. 98–112. See also Edmund S. Meltzer, "Egyptian Parallels for an Incident in Hesiod's Theogony and an Episode in the Kumarbi Myth", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* [JNES] 33 (1974): 154–157.

463 See, for example, the text of the Papyrus of Ani (E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Papyrus of Ani*, Vol. I, London: Medici Society, 1913, p. 35–36, pl. 8).

464 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, most explicitly on p. 122–123,

in the sentence "As for Bata, it is Seth" in the later Papyrus Jumilhac.[465] Furthermore, Osiris and Re were not the only deities mentioned in connection with the loss of male strength/castration. A similar plight befell Seth himself.[466] In this way both Bata's and Seth's castration seem to be structurally similar in that they balance a previously committed transgression. Neither Osiris' nor Re's castration follows this structure, the former putting stress on the lack which was thus created (and later supplemented by Horus) and the latter having a highly creative effect (creation of Hu and Sia).

Bata's castration resembles that of Seth in one more aspect. In both cases it seems that, before the castration, the force which these two characters possessed was somehow destructive and non-functional.[467] As already noted by Herman te Velde, this aspect of "taming" Seth's force is repeatedly stressed in ancient Egyptian material:

> The testicles of Seth represent the savage, elementary, yet undifferentiated urges which require to be shaped and integrated before they can be truly fruitful. […] The testicle symbol is counterpart of the *wḏȝt*-eye, that symbol of all good and holy things in sound and unimpared condition. […] Horus is appeased with his eye, but Seth must also be appeased with his testicles.[468]

Only by remolding the raging aspect can order profit from Seth's strength. Bata's character also fittingly illustrates this double side which his force possesses. On the one hand he is able to use his powers to rear the flock which is ascribed into his care (it is specifically pointed out that the herd has multiplied exceedingly under his care). He

465 Jacques Vandier, *Le papyrus Jumilhac*, Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1965. The papyrus contains two passages in which the identity of Seth and Bata is expressed quite explicitly: *ḏd.tw n=f* (i.e. Seth) *bṯ m sȝkȝ ḥr=s* (He [Seth] is called Bata in Saka because of it) (III, 21–22); *jr bṯ stš pw* (Concerning Bata, he is Seth) (XX,18).

466 For an analysis of this motif, see te Velde, *Seth*, p. 53–59 (esp. p. 58, n. 7). Te Velde stresses that the early sources do not speak explicitly of Seth's castration. The passages which te Velde quotes and analyses instead show that Seth was described in terms of sexual potency (and impotence) which, in earlier sources, was mediated by mentioning Seth's homosexual longing for Horus (te Velde, *Seth*, esp. p. 32–46). Only later (after the New Kingdom) did the motif of Seth's castration become explicit (see te Velde, *Seth*, p. 58–59).

467 Alphonse A. Barb, in his discussion with J. Gwyn Griffiths ("Seth or Anubis?", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* [JWCI] 22/3-4 (1959): 367–371), quotes a passage from the Harris magical papyrus (Hans O. Lange, *Der magische Papyrus Harris*, Köbenhavn: Höst, 1927, p. 28–30) which connects Seth to an "opening" of the menses with a pregnant woman thus causing a miscarriage of her pregnancy. This is likened to the situation of Astarte and Anat, traditionally connected with Seth, who have both begotten but never given birth. The terms "opening" and "closing" of the womb are analysed by Alphonse A. Barb in "Diva Matrix", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* [JWCI] 16/3-4 (1953): 193–238). It was also Seth's wife/sister, Nephthys, who was sometimes called the "Substitute who has no vulva" (*jdn.t-n-k3.t=s*) PT 534 Pyr. 1273b (Sethe, *Die altägyptische Pyramidentexte*, Bd. II, p. 217). On the other hand, Horus was considered as the one who "closes" the womb thus allowing the pregnancy to proceed unhindered (see also te Velde, *Seth*, p. 27–29).

468 te Velde, *Seth*, p. 56.

performs deeds of great strength (carries five sacks of emmer and corn). Nevertheless, at the same time, Bata's masculinity is in fact the primary cause of the attempt of Bata's wife to violate the standardized sexual relationships as prescribed by Egyptian social custom (attempt at adultery). His sexuality is culturally undeveloped (raw) and needs to be ordered to bear fruit (for more, see the following chapter).

In this context it is also interesting to look at the terms which describe Bata's state following his self-castration (7,9–8,1):

jw=f ḥr gnn	And he grew weak,
jw=f ḥr ḫpr ḥzj sw	and he became feeble.

Again, one may recall the state of "weariness" or "inertness" of Osiris/Atum/deceased from which (s)he is in various sources subsequently rescued by a son-character. The most common phrase used to describe this state is *wrḏ(-jb)* (or sometimes *gꜣḥ*) either as a verb ("to be weary [of heart]") or as an epithet ("[Great] Weary[-hearted] One") which is used from the Middle Kingdom to the Graeco-Roman Period.[469] Even though *gnn(.w.t)* is attested in the Coffin Texts much less frequently (five times),[470] in four cases it also describes a state of "weakness"[471] which the deceased/Atum avoids.[472] *ḥz*,[473] on the other hand, is only attested in the Coffin Texts once (CT V, 289b)[474], meaning "wretched" in a spell labelled "Repelling the Rerek serpent, destroying his venom". From the New Kingdom on, *ḥz.ty* is also used as an epithet of Seth when referring to his anti-social character as a "coward/vile person/rebel".[475] Even though the omission of

469 Leitz (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter,* Bd. II, p. 511–513. For the numerous attestations in the Coffin Texts corpus, see Dirk van der Plas and J. F. Borghouts, "*wrḏ*/*wrḏ-ib*/*wrḏ-wr*", *Coffin Texts Word Index*, Paris, Utrecht: Publications interuniversitaires de recherches égyptologiques informatisées, 1998, p. 73–74; van der Molen, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, p. 99. In many of these spells we hear of the "weariness" of Atum. As Willems remarks, however, here Atum is in a position of a father deity who interacts with his son Shu, who brings Atum to life. In his analysis of CT VI, 267d–e [Spell 647], Willems writes: "Although the father god in spell 647 is generally Atum, he is dead, and thus in many respects comparable to Osiris" (Willems, *The Coffin of Heqata*, p. 180). The possible alternation of these two deities is also shown by Willems in another passage: "It is obvious that 'Osiris' here [*CT I, 350/1b–352/3a–c, author's note*] stands for Atum, the creator and sun god." (Willems, *The Coffin of Heqata*, p. 303–304). An explicit mention of "weary/inert" (*wrḏ*) Osiris is made, for example, in CT IV, 163d [*wrḏ(w) tj Wsjr*].

470 van der Plas and Borghouts, *Coffin Texts Word Index*, p. 298; van der Molen, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, p. 688.

471 Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* V, 174–175.

472 de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, Vol. II, 109f; IV, 20b; VI, 372q; VII, 202f. The last example (VII, 421b) describes "still water" (*mw gnn*).

473 Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* III, 398–399.

474 van der Plas and Borghouts, *Coffin Texts Word Index*, p. 238.

475 Leitz (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter,* Bd. VI, p. 54; Bd. VIII, p. 669. In the Osirian chapels of Dendara, eleven attestations (of which two are unclear) refer to Seth as *ḥz-kd*, i.e. "The one of vile character" (Sylvie Cauville, *Dendara : les chapelles osiriennes, T. 3., Index,* Bibliothéque d'Étude [BdÉ] 119, Le Caire : Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1997, p. 448; Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* III, 399.19; Leitz [Hrsg.], *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter,* Bd. VI, 54). The term *ḥz.ty* ("Weak-One") is used once in the same context as an epithet of Osiris (Sylvie Cauville, *Dendara : les chapelles osiriennes, T. 1., Transcription et Traduction,* Bibliothéque d'Étude [BdÉ] 117, Le Caire : Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1997, p. 152; Cauville, *Dendara, Index*, p. 448; Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* III, 400.14). However, the context immediately refutes Osiris' "weakness": *j ḥz.ty, n ḥzj.n jb=k* (O Weak-One [i.e. Osiris], your heart is not feeble!).

476 However, I ask the reader to take this observation as a mere suggestion. A thorough diachronic lexical analysis would have to be carried out.

477 te Velde, *Seth*, p. 59–60

478 te Velde, *Seth*, p. 60. In this context it is most interesting to note how te Velde continues: "The separation also means a dividing of the world. In the Pyramid texts there are mentioned the places (*iꜣwt*) of Horus and the places (*iꜣwt*) of Seth. This horizontal division is traversed by a vertical one, that of above and below. In the name Horus (*ḥr*) the word above (*ḥr*) was read. Thus there was no difficulty in interpreting the *iꜣwt ḥryt* as not only the places of Horus, but also the places above. There are indeed a few instances where the places of Seth are contrasted with the *iꜣwt kꜣyt*: the high

the term *wrḏ* in the Tale of Two Brothers might have been conditioned by the origin of the author of the papyrus or could simply reflect a lexical shift in the New Kingdom, the instances mentioned might also indicate that the word *ḥz* had Sethian rather than Osirian connotations. In fact, the author of the papyrus might even be playing a very sophisticated word game alluding simultaneously to both Osiris and Seth whose identities, as we shall see below (see p. 193–196), seem to merge in the character of Bata.[476]

One more aspect seems to stress the structural similarity between the Horus/Anubis-Seth/Bata pair – the moment of separation. Te Velde remarks:

> Seth does not respect existing boundaries. The frontier between the sexes, which was created by Atum, is ignored by Seth. The homosexual relations between Seth and Horus ended in a quarrel. Before a solution is found and reconciliation brought about, a separation is made between the two gods, thus ending open conflict. The separation is not an ideal solution, but a necessity. [...].[477]

If te Velde were not talking of the conflict of Horus and Seth, we could apply this description with minor alternations to the moment of Bata and Anubis' separation in the Tale of Two Brothers. Just as in the case of Horus and Seth, Anubis and Bata's conflict is postponed and finds a temporary solution. Even though Thoth usually plays the main role in dividing the opponents, his role may be taken over by other major gods such as Re as is the case in the Tale of Two Brothers. At the same time, the separation is a crucial moment defining the relationship of both the Horus–Seth and the Anubis–Bata pair (see above, p. 117). Te Velde remarks: "The separating of Horus and Seth is equalled to setting a boundary between the cosmos and the chaos surrounding it like a flood. The separation, indeed, has creative significance, for it is a decisive mythical event."[478] These structural similarities strengthen the idea that the episode in the Tale

of Two Brothers is a permutation of the Horus-Seth motif and that Anubis and Bata play structurally similar roles thus enabling (in this specific context) the identification of Horus with Anubis and Seth with Bata.
In this part of the narrative (Episode C) Bata seems to be depicted as a Sethian-type deity defined by his relationship towards his brother (Horus-)Anubis through the temporary reconciliation of their strife. However, at the same time Bata exhibits strong Osirian aspects which shall be pronounced later in the story.

Initial Episode II–Episodes D–F

The content of these passages includes several parallel notions. On the one hand, we witness a gradual fragmentisation of the Bata character. Through the mechanism of character bifurcation, Bata's complex character is decomposed into individual constituents (his heart, his wife, his body). He exists in a transitional state and outside orderly categories. As we have seen, the oppositions which are dealt with here concern the notion of order × disorder, Egyptian × foreign, and possibly others.

We have seen that at the beginning of the story Bata seemed to combine improperly mixed traits. He was an exceedingly virile man, yet, at the same time, he did work which belonged to the dominion of women (cooked food). In the first part of the narrative, Bata was an overtly active character. This almost manic activity (it seemed as if he were taking care of the whole household on his own) is in this part of the text balanced by an equally intensive passivity (he is unable to protect his wife and household). Nevertheless, throughout the contendings and the conflict with the character of the pharaoh, Bata manages to separate the improperly combined parts (he gets rid of his femininity in the form of his wife). More importantly, in the later portions of the text, his overt virility (the cause of Anubis' wife's lust) is given a constructive form (and the shape of a bull) enabling him to take on various forms according to his will.

As in the case of Episode C, throughout his stay in the Valley of the Pine, Bata manifests the qualities of both a Sethian and an Osirian deity. Hollis analyses the characteristics which Bata shares with Osiris. With reference to the work

places. Sometimes to this divided world there is added the field of rushes (*sḫt i3rw*) as the place where Osiris and the dead reside." (te Velde, *Seth*, p. 60, n. 9–10). After Bata parts for the Valley of the Pine, we sense that two distinctly geographical/cosmological locations have been created within the narrative. These cosmological zones then interact with each other through the dealings of the individual characters. The mention of the Field of Rushes (*sḫt j3r.w*) where Osiris and the dead reside is also very interesting in connection with Bata's strong Osirian character during his stay in the Valley of the Pine.

of Alexandre Moret,[479] she writes that Bata, just as Osiris, has a clear connection with the mortuary realm (Valley of the Pine) as well as with agriculture, planting and herding, which Bata was involved in at the beginning of the story.[480] This is all true, but at this point in the story Bata has obviously lost all these abilities. His way of obtaining food is exactly the opposite to what Hollis describes – he only hunts. What is more, Osiris gained back all these abilities after being re-composed (first through the wit of his wife/sister, and later thanks to his son's intervention). In the case of Bata and in this part of the Papyrus d'Orbiney, we witness the opposite process – a gradual decomposition of Bata's individual parts (his masculine force on the top of a tree and his feminine side personalized in his wife). This is reflected in the case of Seth, who also undergoes such a process. On the mythological level, he is deprived of his testicles/destructive force. On the ritual level, a bull representing Seth is cut up during the Opening of the Mouth Ritual.[481] Whereas Osiris is a typical god in need (having too little), Seth is a god of over-abundance (having too much). In order to become effective and active, Osiris's power must be supplemented, and Seth's power must be divided and transformed in order to cease being destructive. And this is exactly what happens to the Bata character in the Valley of the Pine. Supplemented by the strong aspects which Bata shares with various Baal-type deities, Bata's existence in this part of the narrative does resemble a Sethian rather than an Osirian deity. Also, the contendings in which he engages with the pharaoh are reminiscent of the Horus-Seth conflict (see below, p. 199–210).

Nevertheless, the situation radically changes once Bata is deprived of his life by the pharaoh's men at the end of Episode F. The division of his character seems to reach a breaking point at this moment and he instantly becomes a prototypical Osirian character-in-need, wholly dependent on the help of Anubis. This moment in the narrative demonstrates the close connection/identity of Seth and Osiris. Once the mythological discourse starts "domesticating" Seth's overabundant force, there comes a point in which the constant division turns into its opposite, i.e. Osiris (the god who lacks). Seth and Osiris are traditional antipodes of each other. This, however, is exactly the reason why we must consider them as structurally identical and representing two extreme sides (this identity of character is also reflected in the case of their partners – Isis and Nephthys, one being the opposite of the other but at the same time forming an inextricably interconnected pair, see also p. 227). The text of the Tale of Two Brothers shows this "switch" from one character to the other in a very elegant (and narrative)

479 Alexandre Moret, *La Mise à mort du dieu en Égypte*, Paris: Geuthner, 1927, p. 35.
480 Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 65–66 and other places.
481 See, for example, Eberhard Otto, "An Ancient Egyptian Hunting Ritual", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* [JNES] 9/3 (1950): 164–177.

manner. We may therefore say that Bata is Seth as much as he is Osiris (for further arguments, see below, p. 193–198).[482]
In this part of the narrative Bata therefore seems to be depicted as 1) a Sethian-type deity defined by his relationship towards order represented by the pharaoh (a bifurcation of Anubis, see above, p. 127–129) and 2) an Osirian-type deity with a relationship towards his brother(son) Anubis (i.e. Horus). At the end of Episode F and through the experience of his own death (i.e. total decomposition of various parts), Bata's closeness to an Osirian-type deity becomes dominant.

INITIAL EPISODE III

With Bata's death, a communication channel between him and his brother Anubis reopens. This is a clear indication of a major transformation of Bata's personality. From this moment on he is in a position of an Osirian deity passively waiting for his brother Anubis (who later in the story openly becomes his son) to arrive. The similarity between Bata and Osiris in this phase is also indicated by the manner in which Anubis is informed about his brother's fate – the beer and wine handed to him one day ferments and becomes putrid (see above, p. 135–140). Bata waits for his brother, lacking the ability to live an active life and being in a state of deprivation. Bata's revivification takes place in the middle of the night and the whole event also seems to allude to the key topic of many New Kingdom royal tombs – the mysterious unification of Re and Osiris.[483] Further in the story Bata shares strong character traits with Re.
In this part of the narrative Bata therefore seems to be depicted as an Osirian-type deity defined by his relationship towards his brother-son (Horus-)Anubis. During the revivification process, Bata's solar aspect is alluded to and later develops during his transformations.[484]

482 In this context it is interesting to note one more detail which might be of importance – the symbolic function of Bata's heart. On one level the organ represents Bata's masculinity which he deprived himself of at the end of Episode C. However, another level stresses the Osirian, otherworldly aspect of Bata's existence in the foreign lands. With reference to Sethi I's dedicatory inscriptions in the temple of his father Ramesses I (see Siegfried Schott, *Der Denkstein Sethos' I. für die Kapelle Ramses I in Abydos*, Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen [NAWG], Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964, p. 24 §13; 26 §17; 28 §21; 29 §22; 30 §24), Jan Assmann notes the importance of the heart in maintaining the ontological connection between the living son and the deceased father (Assmann, *Stein und Zeit*, p. 121–122, n. 84–89). This parallel therefore strengthens the association of Bata with Osiris (the deceased father) and Anubis with Horus (the living son) and is a first hint of the inversion of roles which will be evident at the end of the whole text (Bata appoints Anubis as his heir to the throne of Egypt).

483 For a most illuminating analysis of ancient Egyptian sources which describe this fusion, see Darnell, *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books*; see also Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, 204–210.

484 A very interesting interpretation, which strengthens the Solar-Osirian character of Bata, is presented by Wettengel. He brings together textual and archaeological evidence which connects Bata's Valley-of-the-Pine episode with the cult place of Baal from Beka (Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 245–249). This deity accentuates strong Osirian and solar aspects in the person of Baal: the city of Baalbek was called Heliopolis, thus suggesting that the city cult there did relate to the sun god (Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 245). Wettengel wants to adduce as much evidence as possible to show that Bata's character has clear solar connotations. Wettengel even ventures into a historicising interpretation of both the Papyrus d'Orbiney text and the Papyrus Chester Beatty I containing the famous story of the Contendings of Horus and Seth. He boils down the possible interpretations to a mainly historical one. Again, the antithesis of the "South" and "North" is brought into play. According to him, the Ramesside kings introduced a new dynastic deity who had all the features of a composite Seth-Baal deity. This was, according to Wettengel, mainly because the founders of the dynasty identified themselves with the status of Seth as Osiris' brother with his claim to the throne of Egypt. Wettengel sees the text of the Papyrus Chester Beatty I as the intellectual product of a group of "conservative priests from the South" who held the traditional view that it was Horus who had rightful claims to the throne (Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 255–258). This "Southern" tradition would also be in opposition to the "Northern Seth-Baal" tradition as something foreign and therefore unwanted. Even though I must agree with Wettengel that works may be motivated by political claims, reducing the content of these texts and subsequently reconstructing hypothetical historical events is deterministic, often impossible to prove and, even more importantly, does not help us to understand the texts in any way better (see the discussion above, p. 25–34).

485 See also Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 156–162.

EPISODES G–O

Bata undergoes several transformations which all have strong solar connotations.[485] He becomes the pharaoh's heir and after his death takes his place.
In this part of the narrative Bata therefore seems to be depicted as a Re-Horian-type deity defined by his relationship towards (Anubis-)pharaoh/his father.

TERMINAL EPISODE

After his ascension, Bata "adopts" his older brother Anubis, who thus becomes his heir. What is fascinating is that the roles at the end are inverted as compared with the beginning of the story (Bata is in the position of a father to Anubis).
In this part of the narrative Bata therefore seems to be depicted as an Osirian type deity defined by his relationship towards Anubis, his heir to the throne.

BATA AND THE SEMIOTIC SQUARE

As we can see from the above mentioned summary, both Bata and Anubis undergo several transformations taking on the characteristics of Horus, Seth, Osiris, and Re. Nevertheless, one question is still lurking in the background. What would be the goal behind such a wild set of transformations? We could, of course, use the obligatory Lévi-Straussian argument that it is because of the beauty of such transformations themselves, but that does not seem to be satisfying enough. If we should try graphically

to describe the relationships between the four major deities to which the Tale of Two Brothers relates (Horus, Seth, Osiris, Re), we could do so in the following manner:

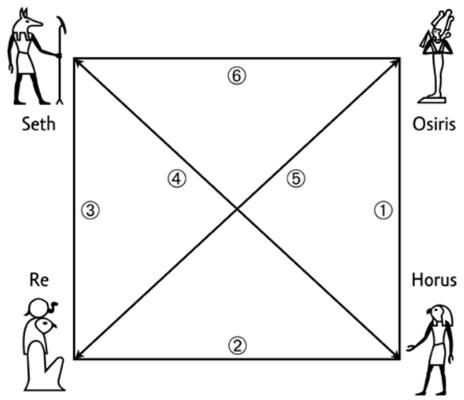


fig. 29: Seth, Osiris, Horus, and Re forming four corners of a semiotic square

In order to understand the nature of the relationships between these four characters, I have decided to use the so-called "semiotic square" as developed by Algirdas Julian Greimas and François Rastier.[486] The basic structure of any such square is formed by two contrary terms (Seth × Osiris),[487] which stand in direct opposition. Horus then function's as Seth's negation (many examples of their conflict are often alluded to in Egyptian sources) and Re as Osiris' negation (Re ruling the world of the living, Osiris the world of the dead). Horus implies the existence of his father Osiris. Similarly, Re implies the existence of Seth as a representative of Re's ability to conquer the forces of chaos (Seth on the prow of the solar bark). These four deities represent the main character transformations which Bata (and Anubis) undergo and therefore the semiotic totality of the narrative. At the same time, these four gods, their relations, and the characteristics which they exhibit represent the symbolic sum of the abilities and responsibilities invested in the office of the pharaoh, at least

486 Greimas, *Structural Semantics*; Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language*; Algirdas Julian Greimas and François Rastier, "The Interaction of Semiotic Constraints", *Yale French Studies* 41 (1968): 86–105. For a very good summary and further examples of the application of the semiotic square, see Louis Hébert (with the collaboration of Nicole Everaert-Desmedt), *Tools for Text and Image Analysis. An Introduction to Applied Semiotics*, trans. by Julie Tabler, electronic book (version 3, dated to 13.10.2011), p. 41–50 (to be downloaded from http://www.signosemio.com/documents/Louis-Hebert-Tools-for-Texts-and-Images.pdf, accessed 5.3.2013).

487 We could also substitute each of these two gods for a principle on which the contrast would be more visible (for example, active × passive).

from the New Kingdom on. An example may be given from the dedicatory inscription of Queen Hatshepsut on the occasion of erecting two obelisks in Karnak in memory of her father Thutmosis I:[488]

> (8) I have done this with a loving heart for my father Amun;
> Initiated in his secret of the beginning,
> Acquainted with his beneficent might,
> I did not forget whatever he had ordained.
> (9) My majesty knows his divinity,
> I acted under his command;
> It was he who led me;
> I did not plan a work without his doing.
> [...]
> (18) I swear, as I am beloved of Re,
> As Amun, (19) my father, favors me,
> As my nostrils are refreshed with life and dominion,
> As I wear the white crown,
> As I wear the red crown,
> As the Two Lords have joined (20) their portions for me,
> As I rule this land like the son of Isis (i.e. Horus),
> As I am mighty like the son of Nut (i.e. Seth),
> As Re rests in his evening bark,
> As he prevails in (21) the morning bark,
> As he joins his two mothers in the god's ship,
> As sky endures, as his creation lasts,
> As I shall be eternal like an undying star,
> As I shall rest (22) in life like Atum –
> So as regards these two great obelisks,
> Wrought with electrum by my majesty for my father Amun,
> In order that my name (23) may endure in this temple,
> For eternity and everlastingness,
> They are each of one block of hard granite,
> Without seam, without (24) joining together.

488 Published by Richard Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien: Denkmäler des Neuen Reichs*, Abt. III, Bd. V, Bl. 22–24, Berlin: Nicolaische Buchhandlung, 1904; also Sethe, *Urkunden*, Vol. IV, p. 363, 365–367. Translation (with slight alternations) by Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 27–28.

What this inscription stresses are exactly the motifs which are included in the Tale of Two Brothers – the strong bond between the king (or queen) and the predecessor (i.e. father-son relationship) which legitimizes the rule of the current monarch; the ability of the pharaoh to hold the country together (illustrated by the numerous depictions on pharaohs' thrones and statues of Horus and Seth joining the emblematic symbols of both Upper and Lower Egypt); and the strong relationship with Re as the supreme ruler and the one safeguarding order. The Tale of Two Brothers therefore seems to be concerned with the elementary ideas surrounding the office of the pharaoh. The characters of the story seem to have provided the necessary conceptual frame to express these quite abstract ideas in an understandable manner and to show in what way they are related by actually demonstrating this through the relationships between the characters themselves. However, the ancient Egyptians were even able to personify these relationships, as indicated again in the semiotic square:

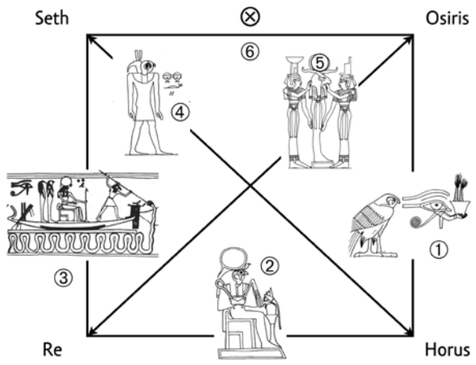


fig. 30: Personified relationships between Seth, Osiris, Horus, and Re

① The **Osiris-Horus** (or, more generally, father-son) relationship is that of mutual dependance, mediated by the Eye (of Horus) as the personification of power, vitality, and mutual responsibility. In the dedicatory inscription of Ramesses II in Abydos, this relationship is conceptualized within the context of the Solar-Osirian unity.[489]
② The **Re-Horus** relationship found its expression in many forms, for example Re-Harakhty(-Atum-Khepri).[490]

489 See Anthony Spalinger, *The Great Dedicatory Inscription of Ramesses II: A Solar-Osirian Tractate at Abydos*, Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 33, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2009, esp. p. 100–102.
490 See, for example, the entries in Leitz (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter*, Bd. IV, OLA 113, p. 630–635.

③ The **Re-Seth** connection is stressed repeatedly in ancient Egyptian sources. Seth, as the champion of the gods, was the one best fit to protect Re on the prow of his bark from his archenemy, Apophis.[491] Herman te Velde investigated the connection between Re and Seth.[492] He mentions the existence of the name of a syncretic deity, Seth-Re, located on the outer walls of the mortuary temple of Ramesses III in Medinet Habu.[493] Te Velde also showed that the connection was very close based on epithets which were assigned to Seth ("chosen of Re", "son of Re").
④ The **Seth-Horus** connection has been conceptualised explicitly in the mytheme of the contending brothers and their subsequent unification.[494] The whole issue of their contendings is essentially about the manner in which these gods may interact utilising the imagery of sexual intercourse and confrontation of force (see also below, p. 199–210). The *zmꜣ-tꜣ.wy* (uniting both lands)[495] motif understands their unity through the office of the king – he reunites Horus and Seth once he is enthroned. Herman te Velde stresses the importance of the integration of Seth in Horus and vice versa: "Horus and Seth are the two gods who contend and are reconciled or who are separated and reunited. The annual inundation of the Nile can be compared with the great mythical renovation, the integration of Horus and Seth."[496] In the Coffin Texts we may therefore read (CT IV, 140 b–c [S1Chass.]):

jnk [*ḥꜥpj*] *msw dwꜣ.t*	I (Hapy) am the one born in the Duat
smn.tj tp ḥr m stš ṯs-sp	who establishes the head of Horus on Seth and vice versa.

491 In a litany to Re-Horakhty from the Papyrus Greenfield (21st–24th dyn.), Seth bears the title *stḫ-m-ḥꜣt-wjꜣ* "Seth at the prow of the bark" (E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Greenfield Papyrus in the British Museum*, London: Oxford University Press, 1912, plate 79, line 1, 1; after Leitz (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter*, Bd. VI, OLA 115, "*stḫ-m-ḥꜣt-wiꜣ*", p. 696). For a depiction, see the vignette from the Papyrus of Herubes (21st dyn.), Egyptian Museum, Cairo). Winfried Barta notes that Seth's strength does not only help Re in his voyage but is also channelled to the King (*Untersuchungen zum Götterkreis der Neunheit*, p. 130–131). The New Kingdom kings openly identified themselves with Seth, such as Sethi I, who also calls himself "strong of heart as Baal" (Helck, *Die Beziehungen*, p. 448 [for more references, see p. 447–450]; also Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 234–263.).
492 te Velde, *Seth*, p. 99–109.
493 te Velde, *Seth*, p. 107, n. 3; Charles F. Nims, "Another Geographical List From Medinet Habu", *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 38 (1952): 34–45, especially 44 (E124), fig. 2; see also Leitz, *Lexikon* (115), "[*stḫ*]-*Rꜥ*", p. 696: "Die erste Hieroglyph ist ausgehackt, es ist aber eher *stḫ* als *sbk* wegen der Bezeichnung *ꜥꜣ-pḥty* und der geographischen Reihenfolge (*spr-mrw?*) zu lesen."
494 See, for example, te Velde, *Seth*, p. 63–80.
495 The scene often depicts the gods Seth and Horus each holding the emblematic plant of Upper (sedge-reed or lotus) and Lower Egypt (papyrus) respectively. The axial symbol represents the trachea artery and lungs around which a knot is being tied. For further references, see, for example, Maria-Theresia Derchain-Urtel, "Vereinigung beider Länder", in Helck und Otto (Hrsg.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. VI, cols. 974–976.
496 te Velde, *Seth*, p. 70–71.

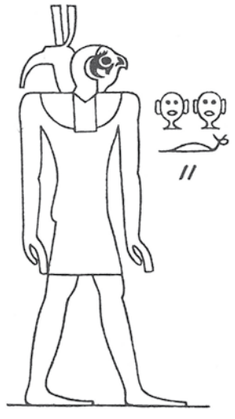


fig. 31: "He with the two faces" (*ḥr.wy.fy*)
[te Velde, Seth, p. 69, fig. 10]

The Egyptians themselves also formulated this idea graphically in the form of the god *Ḥrwy=fy* "He with the two faces" (see fig. 31) depicted in the Amduat (second hour)[497] and in the Book of Gates (tenth hour).[498] According to Hermann Kees, Horus and Seth were worshipped together in daily ritual practice,[499] which seems to be indicated by the statue of a certain Seshathotep bearing the priestly title *ḥm-nṯr* of both Horus and Seth.[500] In a geographical list from the time of Sesostris I, both Seth and Horus are named as protector gods of the 11th Upper-Egyptian nome.[501] We could also mention the famous stela of Hor and Suty (BM 826), two architects active under the reign of Amenophis III.[502] Even though Egyptologists do not definitely agree on whether these two represent twins,[503] their relationship as described on this monument is indeed one of two very close individuals. It therefore seems quite significative that such a close pair (be they twins or close friends) actually carried the names of the two divine "brothers".

497 In the Amduat, the deity is one of the inhabitants of the fertile Underworld lands of Wernes through which the sun bark proceeds in hours two and three of its night journey. See, for example, David Warburton, *The Egyptian Amduat. The Book of the Hidden Chamber*, revised and edited by Erik Hornung and Theodor Abt, Zurich: Living Human Heritage Publications, 2007, p. 46, 54 (No. 138).

498 Erik Hornung, *Das Buch von den Pforten des Jenseits*, Aegyptiaca Helvetica [AH] 7–8, Geneva, 1979–1980, especially Vol. I, p. 331; Vol. II, p. 226–229. For more references, see Erik Hornung, *The Ancient Egyptian Books of the Afterlife*, trans. by David Lorton, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999, p. 173–175.

499 Hermann Kees, *Horus und Seth als Götterpaar*, Teil 1–2, Leipzig: Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1924, Teil 2, p. 44.

500 Hermann Junker, *Giza: Bericht über die von der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien auf gemeinsame Kosten mit Dr. Wilhelm Pelizaeus unternommenen Grabungen auf dem Friedhof des Alten Reiches bei den Pyramiden von Giza*, Wien: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, Bd. II, 1934, p. 189; after Leitz, *Lexikon* (115), p. 693, §O, a).

501 Pierre Lacau et Henri Chevrier, *Une chapelle de Sésostris Ier à Karnak*, Vol. I Text, Caire: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1956; Vol. II Planches, Caire: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1959, Pl. 3, first inscription under the second window opening on the southern side of the chapel; after Leitz, *Lexikon* (115), p. 692, §H, a).

502 See, for example, Alexandre Varille, "L'hymne au soleil des architects d'Aménophis III Souti et Hor", *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archeologie orientale* [BIFAO] 41 (1942): 25–30.

503 The various arguments are summarised in Landgráfová and Navrátilová, *Sex and the Golden Goddess I*, p. 83–84.

⑤ **Re and Osiris** to a certain extent negate each other. One is the lord over the dead, the other over the living. But the ancient Egyptians repeatedly stressed that only through their fusion can the totality of existence and its perpetual regeneration somehow be grasped.[504] As Anthony Spalinger put it: "The intersecting of Re with Osiris or vice versa is [...] a result of the age-old human condition of questioning death. The sun revives, yet it was dead. The king (or even us non royals) must die. What happens thenceforth? Does he, do we, rise again?"[505]

⑥ **Seth and Osiris** are generally depicted as direct (and irreconcilable) opposites. As opposed to the relations of the other deities within the semiotic square, which all have some syncretic forms, up to this date there is not a single attestation of a syncretic deity combining Osiris and Seth. However, these two gods are so antithetical and repeatedly contrasted that they may, in fact, be viewed as a split image of one (fatherly) figure.[506] There are several remarkable facts which strengthen this idea of their implicit identity (and in this sense also that of the goddesses Isis and Nephthys, their partners, see below, p. 227). Based on the Heliopolitan cosmological account, Seth and Nephthys could be considered as forming an opposing and antithetical pair to Osiris and Isis. Whereas Osiris was born in the regular way, Seth "with a blow broke through his mother's side and leapt forth".[507] In the traditional account, it was Seth who murdered Osiris, his own brother. In this regard Osiris was called  (*tšts*)

504 For references, see, p. 186, n. 483. See also Silvia Wiebach-Koepke, *Sonnenlauf und kosmische Regeneration: Zur Systematik der Lebensprozesse in den Unterweltsbüchern,* Ägypten und Altes Testaments: Studien zur Geschichte, Kultur und Religion Ägyptens und des Alten Testaments [ÄUAT] 71, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007; Terrence DuQuesne, "Osiris with the Solar Disk", *Discussions in Egyptology* [DE] 60 (2004): 21–25; Anthony Spalinger, "Osiris, Re and Cheops", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* [ZÄS] 134 (2007): 173–184. The theme seems already to have been present in the Middle Kingdom, see, for example, Harco Willems, *Chests of Life: A Study of the Typology and Conceptual Development of Middle Kingdom Standard Class Coffins*, Leiden: Ex Oriente Lux, 1988, p. 152–154.

505 Spalinger, "Osiris, Re and Cheops": 177.

506 Following Eugene Antoine D.E. Carp, a leading figure in Dutch psychiatry from 1930s to mid 60s, Herman te Velde also ventured in this psychoanalytic direction: "I believe a better understanding of Seth's role in the Osiris myth may be gained by looking upon this fratricide as a suicide [...]. If Osiris is the god of absolute life, whose essence includes death, then the duality of Osiris and Seth is that of death and life. Osiris is death from which life arises, and Seth is life which produces death. Owing to the duality of Osiris and Seth which now came into being, death, which before had formed a unity with life, became visible separately in the strange brother. Seth attempts to get rid of death, i.e. Osiris who must die, by murdering his brother. This is the behaviour of the self-murderer, in whose life death does not remain hidden until he is completed or overtaken by it, but to whom death appears as his double or alter ego and who feels the need to murder death, so taking his own life." (te Velde, *Seth,* p. 95, n. 5).

507 Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride,* p. 12. Even though this is a late source, Herman te Velde (*Seth,* p. 27) remarks that the Pyramid Texts tend to avoid describing Seth's birth with the standard word *msj* (see, for example, Sethe, *Die altägyptische Pyramidentexte,* Bd. I, p. 84, PT 216, Pyr. 144b; p. 122, PT 293, Pyr. 211b).

"the Dismembered-one".[508] As te Velde remarks, Seth's name was very often substituted by the sign (Aa21) or (Aa21A), both having the basic meaning "to separate" (*wḏ*).[509] In these contexts it seems logical to say that Seth is "the Separator/Dismemberer" (even though the texts themselves do not speak of Seth directly but only of an "adversary" or "enemy"). It is crucial to realise that these character traits (i.e. "the Dismembered one" and "the Dismemberer") of either god are understandable *only when related to each other – one founds the identity of the other.* In this way they form an inextricable pair and function as a mirror image of each other. Wettengel draws attention to the representations in the royal names of Sethi I.[510] In several cases Sethi's *z3-Rᶜ* (throne) name[511] "Sethi, beloved of Ptah" (*stḫy mrj n ptḥ*) was written with the sign of Seth, as one would expect.[512] However, in his tomb in the Valley of the Kings it was written with the sign representing Osiris.[513]

"Sethi, beloved of Ptah"
stḫy mrj n ptḥ

508 Even though Erman and Grapow (*Wörterbuch* V, 330.11) do not explicitly relate this epithet to Osiris ("ein göttliches Wesen"), it is obvious that it concerns Osiris from the context in which the word is attested from the New Kingdom on. We may find it in several versions of the Book of the Dead, for example pKairo CG 51189 (pJuja) from the time of Amenophis III. (Irmtraut Munro, *Die Totenbuch-Handschriften der 18. Dynastie im Museum Cairo*, Ägyptologische Abhandlungen [ÄA] 54, Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1994, Tafelband, Tf. 46, and commentary in Textband p. 53 q–u):

wnn=j [8] *ḫnᶜ ḫ3.yt wsjr j(3)kb.yt wsjr sm3ᶜ-ḥrw wsjr r ḥftj.w=f* [9] *ḥrw-fj sw dḏw.tj wnn=j ḫnᶜ ḥr.w ḥrw n ḥbs tštš wn ṯpḥ.w<.t>* [10] *n jᶜ.w wrḏw-jb sšt(3) r3 n sšt3.yw m r3-sṯ3w*

I was [8] with those who mourned Osiris, the mourners (of) Osiris. "Osiris is vindicated against his enemies", [9] so said Thovt. I was with Horus on the Day of Clothing the Dismembered One who opens the chapels, [10] of Washing the "Weary-Hearted" (i.e. Osiris) who makes inaccessible the mouth of the hidden ones in Rosetau.

According to the online *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* (version from 27.12.2011) another example from the New Kingdom (Amenophis II.) is to be found in pKairo CG 25095 (pMaiherperi), line 17; from the Third Intermediate Period (Siamun) pLondon BM 10793, line 1,9; the database also includes a few other examples from the Graeco-Roman periods.

509 Erman und Grapow, *Wörterbuch* I, 404.3–406.12.

510 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 242.

511 Jürgen von Beckerath, *Handbuch der ägyptischen Königsnamen*, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien [MÄS] 49, Mainz: Philipp von Zabern Verlag, 1999, p. 21–25.

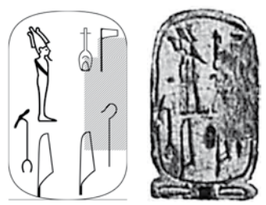
512 von Beckerath, *Handbuch*, p. 151–153 (E1°–E6).

513 Erik Hornung, *The Tomb of the Pharaoh Seti I./Das Grab Setho's I.*, photographed by H. Burton, Zürich und München: Artemis & Winkler Verlag, 1991, p. 156/7, fig. 92/93 et al. For some reason von Beckerath did not include this writing in his *Handbuch*. For a discussion on this topic, see also Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 242–243.

One could explain this away by the fact that in the context of the tomb decoration it was more important to stress the Osirian aspect of the king rather than his Sethian character and that this does not establish an identity between Seth and Osiris. However, more evidence with regard to this issue was published by Alexandre Piankoff.[514] He mentions a small plaquette bearing on each side the name of Sethi I/II:

on the left:
"Sethi, beloved of Ptah"
swty mrj (n) ptḥ

on the right:
"The perfect god, Sethi, Lord of Thebes"
nṯr nfr stḫy ḥḳ3 w3s.t



Here, again, we see the simultaneous usage of the hieroglyph depicting Osiris to be read Sethi; at the same time and on the same artefact a mention of *swty* (i.e. Seth) is also made. Étienne Drioton noted another interesting orthography of Seth's name.[515] In the temple of Sethi I in Abydos, built by Ramesses II, Seth's name is not written with the Seth-animal hieroglyph. Instead, the sign for Osiris is used, sometimes supplemented by the symbol for Isis ( ). Drioton understands this as an example of cryptic writing.[516] The sign depicting Osiris holds the value "s" and the Isis symbol (knot) "t". Together with the two reeds (*y*), this spells out *s(w)ty* – Seth. Piankoff adds that on the sarcophagus of Ramesses VI we may find a mummy-form figure of Osiris with the name *s(w)ty* written below it;[517] and similarly also in the so-called Book of Caverns, where a figure of Osiris named *swt(y)* is shown.[518] If we return to the Tale of Two Brothers, Bata's switch from a Sethian to an Osirian character during the narrative (once the pine is felled, see above, p. 184–186) implicitly illustrates the antithetical identity of these two deities in a narrative sequence.[519]

514 Alexandre Piankoff, "Le nom du roi Sethos en égyptien", *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* [BIFAO] 47 (1948): 175–177.

515 Étienne Drioton, "Les protocoles ornamentaux d'Abydos", *Revue d'Égyptologie* [RdÉ] 2 (1936): 1–20 (especially fig. 1, p. 3–4).

516 For a very interesting introduction with references on New Kingdom cryptography, see Darnell, *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books*, p. 14–34.

517 Piankoff, "Le nom du roi Sethos": 176, n. 4.

518 Alexandre Piankoff, "Le Livre des Quererts, seconde division, troisième division, quatrième division, cinquième division", *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* [BIFAO] 42 (1944): 21, pl. 30, III. Piankoff explains the presence of the S28 (cloth with fringe) determinative as designating Osiris as the "Enveloped One" (Piankoff, "Le nom du roi Sethos": 177, n. 1).

519 Wolfgang Wettengel also defends the idea that the New Kingdom ideologists and theologians wanted to stress the identity of Osiris and the dynasty god Seth (Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 235–244). However, Wettengel seems to feel the need somehow to explain how two antithetical deities

The very close relationship between Seth and Osiris is also hinted at by the special connection of their female partners, Isis and Nephthys. These two goddesses could be considered as forming a certain "bridge" between these two antithetical male divinities, merging in the Late Period into one composite deity called Senephthys (for a more detailed argumentation, see below, p. 227).

Conclusion

To conclude the previous chapter, I wanted to show that one of the most fascinating features of the Tale of Two Brothers is that Bata actually takes on the characteristics of not only the four gods (i.e. Horus, Osiris, Seth, and Re) but also personifies relationships between these four deities (see above, ①–⑥). The crucial question which is left to be answered is why does this happen? Or rather, *in relation to what does Bata personify all*

could have been considered one. Wettengel therefore identifies a "different", "new" version of Seth, i.e. Seth-Baal (explicitly Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 252). This Seth is not the murderous enemy of Osiris but a virile dynasty god; a "good" Seth, we could say. Wettengel "bifurcates" the character of Seth, creates an alternative character (Seth-Baal), and by stressing the similarities between this deity and Osiris explains the mechanism of their identification. An important document on which Wettengel bases his argument is the 400 Year Stela (see, for example, Rainer Stadelmann, "Die 400-Jahr-Stele", *Chronique d'Égypte* [CdÉ] 40 (1965): 46–60) on which Seth is depicted in a clear Near Eastern style closely resembling Baal. At the same time Wettengel notes that in the Near Eastern tradition Baal was a murdered and revivified god, just like Osiris (p. 243). Wettengel thus concludes that these are clear examples of an infiltration of foreign motifs into the ancient Egyptian framework motivated by various political reasons (Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 249–255). Even though I agree with Wettengel that the stress put by certain New Kingdom pharaohs on the character of Seth is noteworthy and that there must have been a pragmatically political reason for this, his interpretation which understands the Tale of Two Brothers as attempting to introduce foreign concepts into Egyptian thought is problematic. In the New Kingdom we do indeed witness a great shift in political focus to the Near Eastern area, especially during the reign of the kings of the 19th dynasty (the relocation of the capital to the Delta, etc.). Hand in hand with the military campaigns, an attempt at the ideological expansion of Egyptian concepts and the domestication of the autochtonous Near Eastern mythological traditions (*interpretatio aegyptiaca*) seems to have been a logical move. I therefore prefer to interpret these Near Eastern motifs instead as attempts by Egyptians to incorporate the ideological framework of their neighbours and thus strengthen their political claim over the region. Such an effort always follows the principle of overwriting the ideological framework of the victor over the mythological matrix of the conquered nation/political foe (of course this process is always more complicated – by any contact both cultural traditions are influenced). It looks as if the idea of the identity of Osiris and Seth was somehow latently present in ancient Egyptian thinking and only explicitly pronounced once the time was ripe. Seth in a Near Eastern outfit seems to be an ideal character to identify with Baal in order to introduce him into the Seth-Osiris relationship. This seems to me to be more probable, rather than arguing that it was Baal through whom Egyptians equated Seth and Osiris, as Wettengel interprets the material. From this point of view, the motifs in the Tale of Two Brothers must not be viewed as a foreign import but as an explicit expression of the implicitly present idea of the essential identity of Osiris and Seth, which, because of specific historico-political reasons, the royal ideologists of the 19th dynasty chose to pronounce (more on the topic below, p. 247–251).

of these relationships? The answer is revealed to us at the end of the story once Bata and subsequently Anubis become the king. It is not illogical to say that Bata unites the characteristics of Seth, Osiris, Horus, Re and possibly other gods within one story once we realize that this is in fact a message about the character of divine kingship. Only once related to the office of the king can every one of these gods be said to be a transformation of the others.[520] An interesting fact was pointed out by Wettengel,[521] who stressed the importance of the threat formula included in the colophon of the Tale of Two Brothers:

> It has come well **19,8** to a conclusion for the spirit of the treasury scribe Kageb from the treasury of the pharaoh, may he live, prosper and be in health; for the scribe Hori and the scribe Meriemipet. **19,9** Composed by the scribe Inena, the owner of this papyrus scroll. Concerning the one who should speak (ill) of this papyrus scroll, **19,10** Thoth shall become his enemy!

Such threat formulas, as Wettengel remarks, were often used in connection with texts or documents which somehow directly concerned safeguarding the status of the king himself.[522] The contents of the Tale of Two Brothers therefore seem to mediate an important message about the pharaoh's office. The pivotal role of the office of the king could be depicted in the following way:

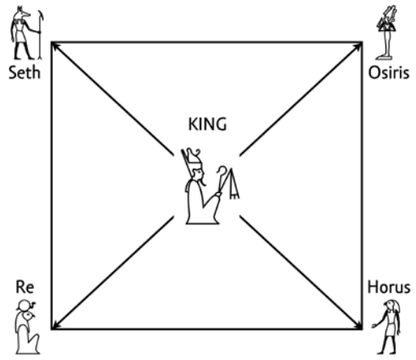


fig. 32: The king in the central position enabling the identification of the various male deities

520 See also Loprieno, *Topos und Mimesis*, § 22, p. 73–78. Loprieno outlines the tripartite "Konstellation" of Osiris as the "absolute father" (*jtj*), Horus as the "absolute son" (*z3*), and Seth as the "absolute brother" (*sn*): "Osiris repräsentiert das *k3*-Moment () dieser einheitlichen Tiefenstruktur, Horus deren lebende Verwirklichung (vgl. den *k3*-Stier ), Seth die 'Trenungslinie' () zwischen beiden Aspekten, derjenige Faktor, welcher die Horus-Figur eine andere als die seines Vaters hat werden lassen, der ein an sich statisches Modell 'dynamisiert' hat" (p. 76–77).

521 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 21–28.

522 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 27–28, 249–255.

From the point of view of the narrative sequence, the pharaoh cannot represent all of the above mentioned deities or their relationships at once. Instead, the story shows us the various contexts which stress the different characteristics of the individual gods, their syncretic forms, and at the end hints at the fact that all this might be said of the king and that in the person of the king all of the features are united.[523] That is why Bata and Anubis undergo their character transformations and that is also why the narrative features the two brothers. The plurality of the characters is needed so that various relationships can be shown in the background of their interaction. In fact, I dare claim that the whole story may be boiled down to a very simple scheme featuring just Bata and Anubis-pharaoh[524] as two opposing male characters with the female principle (regardless of the number of characters) entering into the narrative at appropriate places and with the very specific function of propelling the story further (for a further discussion, see below, p. 218–232).

523 In a similar way, Wolfhart Westendorf ("Zu Frühformen von Osiris und Isis", *Göttinger Miszellen* [GM] 25 [1977]: 98) distinguishes three aspects of Osiris: 1) Osiris – the cosmic deity (connected with the *ḏ.t* aspect of existence); 2) Osiris – the dying and resurrected king (connected with the *nḥḥ* aspect of existence); 3) Osiris – a combination of the previous two emanations (the deceased king transformed into the deity himself) and he treats them as interconnected but to a certain extent self-substantiated entities.

524 As I have tried to show earlier, the character of "the pharaoh" and "Anubis" are personifications of the individual aspects united in the office of Pharaoh (see above, p. 127–129).

CHAPTER VI

The Tale of Two Brothers As a Version of The Osirian Cycle[525]

Above, I have tried to show that the character of Bata is quite complex and eludes simple identification with one specific deity. It is more important to analyse what relationships Bata has towards other characters as these have a defining function (and vice versa, Bata defines the other characters). Throughout the narrative, the various aspects of Bata's character which link him to the four major gods (i.e. Horus, Seth, Osiris, and Re) are stressed. The crucial motif in the whole narrative is the conflict between the pharaoh and Bata. This part of the story closely resembles the strife between Horus and Seth, as recounted throughout Egyptian history in many sources. The contendings for the throne which ensue between Horus and Seth are the result of an event which founds the basic situation – the death of Osiris caused by his brother Seth. Before the appearance of the most extensive narrative version of events from the pen of a Greek, Plutarch,[526] we may find many mentions alluding to various episodes or events of the myth in older and genuinely Egyptian sources.[527] The basic relations between the main

525 The term Osirian Cycle includes two basic mythological traditions: 1) the myth of the murder of Osiris by Seth (Osiris Myth; see, for example: J. Gwyn Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris*, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien [MÄS 9], Berlin: Verlag Bruno Hessling, 1966); 2) the contendings between Horus and Seth to which the death/dethronement of Osiris was a prerequisite (Contendings; see, for example: Griffiths, *The Conflict of Horus and Seth*). Even though the concept of the Osirian Cycle is in fact only an analytical category (we know of no such composition which would include all of the motifs), we may find references and allusions to these events throughout ancient Egyptian history. I therefore consider the knowledge of these mythical events as a commonly shared basis which was evoked (more or less openly) in appropriate contexts.

526 Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*.

527 Some aspects have been alluded to in all major ancient Egyptian corpora such as the Pyramid Texts, Coffin Texts, Book of the Dead, etc. (for references, see, for example, Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*). The most extensive Egyptian narrative account is to be found on the stela of Amenmose (Louvre C 286) dating to the 18th Dynasty (published by Alexandre Moret, "La légende d'Osiris à l'époque thébaine d'après l'hymne à Osiris du Louvre [avec 3 planches]", *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* [BIFAO] 30 (1931): 725–750 and 3 plates). For a translation, see, for example, Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature,* Vol. II, p. 81–86.

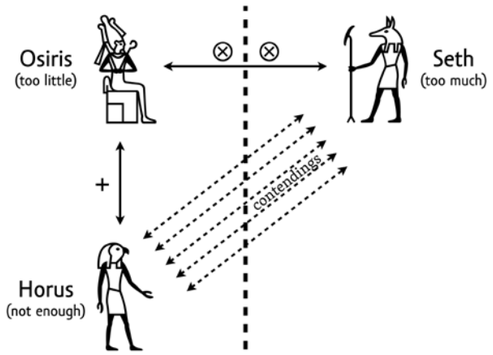


fig. 33: Relationships between the main parties of the Osirian Cycle

actors may be depicted in the following way (see fig. 33): Osiris is a god who has "too little". He is passive, weary (*wrḏ*), dependent on others (Isis, Horus, etc.) to provide for him. This situation was essentially caused by Seth, who deprived Osiris of his ability to act (sexually), killed him and cut him up (we could call this the Osiris Myth which would also include the motif of Isis restoring Osiris' creative strength and begetting Horus). The strife between Osiris and Seth found its continuation in the conflict between Horus and Seth (without Osiris being dead, no contendings for the throne could ever have arisen). Horus as Osiris' son (we could also say reincarnation) claims the office of ruler. But so does Seth as Osiris' older brother. The conflict between Horus and Seth therefore seems to form part of the Osirian Cycle (i.e. the Osiris Myth + the Horus-Seth conflict) as the aftermath of Seth's murderous act. As Osiris' direct opposite, Seth is a god who has "too much". He is "great of strength" (*ꜥ3 pḥtj*), the champion of the gods. However, his strength, or his personality in general, is somehow inappropriate, too intensive, bordering on the destructive, and at times he acts straightforwardly stupid (in the Contendings of Horus and Seth he is repeatedly laughed at by the other gods). Horus is then a god who does "not have enough". He is a child (*ḫrd*), a youth (*ꜥḏd*) who cannot take up his father's position because of his own inexperience.[528] Out of the

528 "Then the Universal Lord became furious at Horus and told him: You are feeble in your body, and this office is too much for you, you lad, the flavour of whose mouth is (still) bad." (pChester Beatty I, 3,5–3,10). The last insult is traditionally explained by Egyptologists as a reference to the smell of mother's milk from Horus' mouth, therefore to his youth. Another example can be found on the already mentioned stela of Amenmose (Moret, "La légende d'Osiris": 744–745). The text of the stela informs us that only once Horus obtained his full strength was he presented to the gods: "(Isis) brought him (Horus) when his arm was strong into the broad Hall of Geb. The Ennead was jubilant: 'Welcome, Son of Osiris, Horus, firm-hearted, justified, Son of Isis, heir of Osiris!'" (translation by Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature,* Vol. II, p. 84).

three gods, Osiris and Horus are seemingly closer to each other, which is expressed by Horus' filial relationship to Osiris. One has lost (or has been deprived of) his ability to act as an autonomous ruler; the other has not yet gained it. As Katja Goebs has shown, these gods may occupy the position of a "god in need"[529] for whom something is missing (an eye in the case of Horus after having lost it in one of his encounters with Seth; vital force in the case of Osiris after being killed by Seth) and they are thus interchangeable.[530] However, it is important to note that *with the given state of affairs, none of these three gods is fit to occupy the throne*. Only after they interact in a certain way and re-define their mutual relationships is Horus capacitated to take on his father's office. It seems that both the Tale of Two Brothers and the Contendings of Horus and Seth actually describe variant mechanisms of this re-definition process.

The structure common to the Contendings of Horus and Seth[531] and the Tale of Two Brothers[532] may, therefore, be depicted in the following way:

529 Goebs, "A Functional Approach".

530 Goebs, "A Functional Approach": 42–59, specifically p. 47–48. In n. 80 she refers to PT 26 (Pyr. 19a): "Horus (who is) in Osiris N – take for yourself the Eye of Horus to yourself!"

531 I have excluded Osiris from the diagram, as he does not directly enter into the contendings (although he writes several letters addressed to the Ennead).

532 The diagram summarises the events in Initial Episode II–Episode F. The identification of Bata with Seth and Anubis with Horus in this part of the narrative can be supplemented by Thomas Schneider's observation (Schneider, "Texte"). He compares Egyptian texts which all somehow integrate the Near Eastern motif of the weather-god (among which is the Astarte Papyrus and the Tale of Two Brothers) and comes to the conclusion that the names of the gods involved function as code-names: "(Semit.) *Bt* = (Ba'al) *Bēti* = '(The Lord of) the Dynasty' and (Egypt.) *Jnpw* = *Anpaw* 'Heir to the throne'." (Schneider, "Texte": 626–627) Bata-Seth is the "Lord of the Dynasty" both in the Tale of Two Brothers and in the reality of the New Kingdom when Seth played a very important cultic role and several kings took his name as part of theirs. Anubis would then be the "Heir to the throne", who is traditionally equated with Horus. The pJumilhac also contains a rich source of parallels (*Editio princeps* by Vandier, *Le papyrus Jumilhac*; see also Philippe Derchain, "L'Auteur du Papyrus Jumilhac", *Revue d'Égyptologie* [RdÉ] 41 [1990]: 9–30; Ursula Rössler-Köhler, "Die formale Aufteilung des Papyrus Jumilhac [Louvre E. 17110]", *Chronique d'Égypte* [CdÉ] 65 [1990]: 21–40; Hartwig Altenmüller, "Bemerkungen zum Hirtenlied des Alten Reichs", *Chronique d'Égypte* [CdÉ] 48 (1973): 211–231; Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 44–45, 67–70, 195–199). In fact, the papyrus contains two passages in which the identity of Seth and Bata is expressed quite explicitly: *ḏd.tw n=f* (i.e. Seth) *bṯ m sꜣkꜣ ḥr=s* (He [Seth] is called Bata in Saka because of it) (III,21–22); *jr bṯ stš pw* (Concerning Bata, he is Seth) (XX,18). Both papyri (i.e. pJumilhac and pD'Orbiney) often represent either direct or partial inversions, and/or permutations of each other. This especially concerns passages in pJumilhac III, 12–25, and XX, 1–22. Hartwig Altenmüller ("Bemerkungen": 219–220), for example, states that the Tale of Two Brothers and pJumilhac represent the most important source of the "Bata-Mythos". Some scholars, however, dispute any direct similarity between the two texts (Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers"*, p. 68ff.; Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 259–263). As I have tried to show in the case of Osiris, Horus, and Seth, motifs or characters which seem to stand in direct opposition to each other may, in fact, found and define each other. In this sense, the pJumilhac could represent a very interesting source of alternative renderings of the motifs included in the Tale of Two Brothers (and therefore also the Contendings of Horus and Seth). A thorough analysis would, nevertheless, require a special study dedicated solely to this topic.

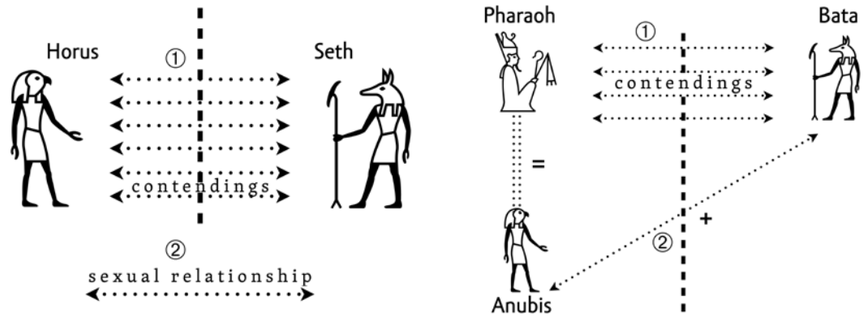


fig. 34: Structural similarities between the relationships of the main characters in the Contendings of Horus and Seth and the Tale of Two Brothers

In both cases the opposing characters (Horus–Seth; pharaoh–Bata) seem to interact on two levels. The first ① and dominant one is of course the level of conflict (either direct or through mediators). However, a more subtle and intimate relationship seems to exist between the two parties. It ② is defined in terms of (sexual) passivity–activity and concerns predominantly the relationship of power (see below).

In the Tale of Two Brothers the relationship is developed at the moment of the simultaneous adjudication, reconciliation, and separation of the two brothers in Episode C. It is positive and latently present during the rest of the narrative and becomes active once Bata is killed (Initial Episode II). The relationship is at that moment defined in terms of the father-son constellation (Anubis representing the role of an active Horus revivifying Bata, who is in the position of a passive Osiris) and finds its conclusion at the end of the story when Anubis and Bata merge through obtaining the position of pharaoh.

In the Contendings of Horus and Seth this passivity–activity relationship is described in terms of sexual symbolism. At one point in the narrative, Horus and Seth are urged by the Lord-of-All to settle their never-ending quarrel by reasoning with each other (10,12–11,1): "The Lord-of-All spoke before the great Ennead to Horus and Seth: 'Go and obey what I tell you: Eat, drink, and give us peace! Stop quarrelling here every day!'"[533] Seth therefore throws a private party and invites Horus, who agrees to come. He spends the evening with Seth and even willingly joins him in bed. The problem arises once Seth attempts to have intercourse with Horus in order to "do the job of a man on him", as he later informs the Ennead (not knowing that he had already been tricked by Isis), i.e. with the intent of humiliating Horus and showing his weakness:

533 Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 51.

> Then Seth said to Horus: "Come, let's spend a nice moment at my house." And Horus said: "Sure, let's do it!". Now when the evening came, a bed was prepared for them and they lay down together. At night, Seth caused his penis to become erect and he inserted it between Horus' thighs. And Horus put his hands between his thighs and caught Seth's semen. Then Horus went to tell his mother Isis: "Come, Isis my mother, come and see what Seth did to me!" (11,1–11,5)[534]

Later on in the text, once Seth and Horus stand before the tribunal, what is condemned is not the fact that Seth and Horus had sexual intercourse, but the accusation that Horus acted as the passive male:

> Then they (Horus and Seth) stood before the great Ennead. It was said to them: "Speak!" So Seth said: "Let the office of ruler be given to me for as regards Horus, who stands (here), I have done the act of a man on him." Then the great Ennead cried out loud, and they spat out before Horus." (12,2–12,4)[535]

Even though shrouded in sexual language, the issue seems to concern the passivity/activity of the actors leading to the ridicule of the passive party in the sexual relationship.[536] It thus serves as yet another means of expressing the struggle between Horus and Seth and does not have a positive undertone as in the case of the relationship between Anubis-pharaoh and Bata.

Both constellations, the father-son relationship[537] and the sexual episode of Horus and Seth,[538] seem to have been important *topoi* in ancient Egyptian literature. By utilising the easily experienceable (and therefore understandable) notion of passivity × activity, these basic constellations could give comprehensible forms to issues which would otherwise be difficult to conceptualise. At the same time, these constellations are so general that they may take on various forms according to the context in which they are applied. This also explains the diverging symbolic language in

534 Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 51–52.

535 Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 53. Translation (with minor alternations) by Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*. Vol. II, p. 220.

536 See also Richard B. Parkinson, "'Homosexual' Desire and Middle Kingdom Literature", *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 81 (1995): 57–76 (especially p. 64, 65, 67, 69, 74, and 76).

537 See, for example, Assmann, *Stein und Zeit*, p. 96–137.

538 The importance of the sexual relationship between Horus and Seth is indicated by both explicit and implicit references in other texts. For an overview of primary and secondary sources, see Frank Röpke, "Überlegungen zum 'Sitz im Leben' der Kahuner Homosexuellen Episode zwischen Horus und Seth (pKahun VI.12 = pUniversity College London 32158, rto.)", in H. Röder (Hrsg.), *Das Erzählen in frühen Hochkulturen. Der Fall Ägypten*; Ägyptologie und Kulturwisschenschaft 1, München 2009, p. 239–290, esp. p. 239–240, n. 7–10.

which the passive × active notion was expressed in both compositions. The father-son imagery was used in the Tale of Two Brothers to address the insider-outsider problem (Egyptian × foreign; this world [living] × that world [dead]). On the other hand, describing the notion of passivity × activity through sexual symbolism is very useful for conceptualising the questions of kin relationships (Kamutef motif), power distribution (the question of the ideal character traits of the wielder of power – a temperate man), and social legitimacy (legitimate × illegitimate).[539]

The last similarity between the Tale of Two Brothers and the Contendings of Horus and Seth is the ending. In both cases the part which describes the contendings draws attention to the antithetical character of the two parties. However, at the same time, the narratives work with the idea of their close relationship (sexual, kinship). This paradoxical statement becomes comprehensible once we compare the endings of both narratives. In the case of the Tale of Two Brothers, we learn that even though Bata, Anubis and the pharaoh are presented as three different characters, they merge in the end through the office of the Pharaoh. It therefore seems best to summarise the whole story as a statement about the character of the divine king who in his office combines the antithetical forces and harmonises them.

In the Contendings we witness a very similar process. Even though it is Horus who becomes king, it is surprisingly Seth who claims that he does not object to the judgment (15,12–16,1):

> Then Atum, Lord of the Two Lands, the Heliopolitan, sent to Isis, saying: "Bring Seth bound in fetters." So Isis brought Seth bound in fetters as a prisoner. Atum said to him: "Why have you resisted being judged and have taken for yourself the office of Horus?" Seth said to him: "Not so, my good lord. Let Horus, son of Isis, be summoned, and let him be given the office of his father Osiris!"[540]

After Horus's coronation, we are informed that the Ennead wanted to compensate Seth for the fact that he did not obtain the office of ruler (16,3–16,4):

> Then said Ptah the Great, South-of-his-Wall, Lord of Memphis: "What shall we do for Seth, now that Horus has been placed on the seat of his father?"

539 See also Michèle Broze, "Violence sexuelle et pouvoir en Egypte ancienne", in A. Dierkens (ed.), *Le penseur, la violence, la religion*, Bruxelles: Université de Bruxelles, 1996, p. 25–32.

540 Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 59. Translation by Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 222.

> The Pre-Harakhty said: "Let Seth, son of Nut, be given to me to dwell with me and be my son. And he shall thunder in the sky and be feared."[541]

Even though Seth and Horus are not identified, they each get a fair share in the established order of things. Horus gains his position only once Seth is put under absolute control (he is tied up). However, at the very same moment, Seth is also elevated to the highest rank. In the case of both the Tale of Two Brothers and the Contendings of Horus and Seth, the close relationship between Horus and Seth is hinted at during the story only to be fully revealed in the end.[542] What we witness in the case of both narratives is that through a series of interactions one party empowers/transforms the second thus defining each other. Horus gains abilities which he lacked and which are a prerogative for the ruler: the ability to come (in regular intervals) into contact with the "outside" and the ability to channel the creative potential of the disorderly zone for the benefit of order. Seth, on the other hand, also undergoes a transformative process. He is "structured" (decomposed into individual parts and then put back together in a functional manner) or he is "bound" and his force is tamed. Only once this process is completed with both deities can the story come to a conclusion. This message is quite clearly discernible in both the Tale of Two Brothers and the Contendings of Horus and Seth. Both stories, therefore, represent variants of each other[543] and as such are firmly rooted in the ancient Egyptian symbolic system.

This claim is to a certain extent contradicted by Wolfgang Wettengel.[544] He considers the two narratives as products of two distinct political traditions.[545] According to him, one originated in the south of Egypt in Thebes stressing the legitimacy of the son of the deceased king as his heir (the Contendings of Horus and Seth) and being

541 Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 59–60. Translation by Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 222.

542 It is important to realise that both of these two narratives probably took full advantage of the pre-awareness of the listener/reader about the ending of the story and contrasted it with the description of the contendings. In this way, a paradoxical message is maintained throughout a substantial part of both narratives: the realisation that there is an ongoing armistice and conflict between the same parties at the same time. This inner tension of unified paradoxes, which the narrative is able to mediate in a unique, dynamic and understandable way, is the essential message of the relationship between Horus and Seth and founds the identity of both these gods in relation to each other. Without the ability of the narrative to contrast its individual passages with each other and to "imprint" the expected ending into its preceding passages, such a message would be very difficult to mediate, because it is antithetical in essence: Horus and Seth are opposites, yet one founds the existence of the other.

543 I want to stress that I do not draw any conclusions about the mutual relationship between these two specific stories. I only state that both stories relate to the same intellectual matrix and through this channel they represent two variations of one theme.

544 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, p. 255–258.

545 Wettengel, *Die Erzählung*, especially p. 256–257.

strongly sceptical towards any foreign motifs infiltrating Egyptian cultural heritage. The other tradition, originating in the north, was in close contact with the Near Eastern regions and connected with the Ramesside ruling house. It therefore stressed the legitimacy of the brother of the late monarch, i.e. Seth (the Tale of Two Brothers).

Even though I do not intend to argue with the content of Wettengel's argumentation (for all we know the texts could have been written by somebody with a specific political agenda), I want to point out that this approach reduces the material (once again) to a mere mirror of historical events and obscures other possible viewpoints from which the text could be approached.

It is crucial to realise that all myths which somehow concern the question of royal ascension and legitimacy operate on at least two basic relationship levels. One is biological, the other social. As I have tried to show, both papyri stress the transformative and unifying ability of the office of the king. What is even more important is that this was true *regardless of the individual who ascends the throne*. Once a new king is enthroned, the relationships which were valid before the ascension are radically rearranged to work in harmony with the newly acquired social position of the ruler. In other words, the biological kinship matrix (or its lack in the case of pharaohs of non-royal or foreign origin) is overlaid by the positional kinship matrix conditioned by the newly acquired status of the ruler. The individual on the throne is identified with the preceding pharaoh/his own father. He becomes the one who begot himself (Kamutef, Bull-of-his-mother). His brothers (older or younger) socially become his sons, etc. In this way a latently strong tension was created between the biological and the social order. This seems to have been bearable as long as the ruling pharaoh functioned as the defining axis of the relationship net of his family members and entourage. However, the death of the pharaoh disrupted the unity of the system. Theoretically, at least two contenders for the throne arose and the biological and social levels clashed. The pharaoh's oldest son was the legitimate ruler from the biological point of view. From the social point of view, the pharaoh's oldest son was his oldest brother.[546] For the Egyptians it was impossible to say that the biological kinship system had prevalence over the positional and discard it. This claim would threaten the idea of positional kingship as such and therefore the very foundation and stability of the created order. Without the validity of positional succession, the ruling king would be deprived of his ability

546 In pChester Beatty I, Seth is at one moment described as Horus' uncle (4,7) and a line later as his older brother (4,8). This is used as an argument by diverging parties taking sides with either contender (4,6–4,8): "Then Onuris and Thoth cried aloud, saying: 'Shall one give the office to the uncle while the bodily son is there?' Then Banebdjede, the great living god, said: 'Shall one give the office to the youngster (*ʿḏd*) while Seth, his elder brother, is there?'" (translation by Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 216).

to channel *maat* as the incarnation of his forefathers reaching back to the gods and the primeval time. The king's oldest brother, therefore, socially *is* his son and thus also holds a legitimate claim to the throne just as the king's oldest biological son. We could hyperbolically say that the contendings which are expressed in ancient Egyptian texts do not concern two figures or parties battling for the throne, but rather the intrinsic conflict caused by the existence of the biological and positional kinship systems. This has also been observed by Edmund Leach who remarks that the "theme of ambiguity of obligation and especially of the ambiguity of kinship obligation is recurrent throughout the whole story".[547] The fact that Horus is too young to rule and that Seth is his older relative (brother/uncle) is repeatedly stressed in the text. It is also true that Egyptian society strongly stressed the moral rule of respecting elders and their demands.[548] Leach also remarks that this ambiguity of obligation does not only pertain to the characters of Horus and Seth but concerns other characters as well: "Most [...] characters keep changing sides. Even Isis who, as mother/wife of Horus/Osiris, is usually on the side of Horus, is persuaded at one critical point that her sister duty to her brother Seth is greater than her duty to a 'stranger' [i.e. to Osiris/Horus considered as affines]." [549] Leach suggests that this paradoxical situation between Seth and Horus was conceptualised through a very specific type of relationship standardly defined in anthropology as a "joking relationship":

> In the technical jargon of social anthropology a "joking relationship" is one in which the structurally implied obligations existing between two members of a system are self-contradictory. For example it may be that because two individuals A and B are members of opposed groups there is structural expectation that they will show hostility towards one another. Or again because A and B are of different generations, B being senior to A, A should show *respect* for B, but because B must be contrasted with some other senior individual C, the convention becomes inverted and A is expected to show exaggerated *disrespect* for B. The outcome of such contradictions is that violent aggressive behaviour towards equals or extreme insulting behaviour

547 Leach, "The Mother's Brother": 21.

548 This worldview has been expressed by the Egyptians in the literary genre of the so-called "teachings" (*sbȝjt*). Even though the contents of these texts varies, the common feature is that they are structured as a set of practical and moral advice and directions given by an elder (father, official) to his son or (royal) successor. One of the important pieces of advice given by the scribe Any to his son scribe Khonshotep is as follows: "Do not sit when another is standing/One who is older than you,/Or greater than you in his rank." (Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 139). Or the scribe and dignitary Amenemope says: "Do not revile one older than you,/He has seen Re before;/Let ⟨him⟩ not report you to the Aten at his rising,/Saying: 'A mouth has reviled an old man.'" (Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 161).

549 Leach, "The Mother's Brother": 21.

> towards seniors is interpreted as a demonstration of friendship and social solidarity! The anthropological literature on "joking relationships" is very large[550], and relationships of this kind are not confined to any one type of society or to any one type of relationship; but many of the textbook examples relate to societies in which the "joking" is between brothers-in-law or between mother's brother and sister's son and the enveloping society is one in which rules of patrilineal succession apply.[551]

In the case of the Tale of Two Brothers we may see that the paradoxical situation which arises from the clash of the biological and social reality was solved by a certain trick. This skilfully manipulates the system of kinship relationships on both the biological and social level in such a way that in the end both Bata, the biological son of the pharaoh, and Anubis, Bata's biological older brother who, however, is not the biological son of the pharaoh, become kings. At the same time, the tradition of the oldest son ascending the throne is not broken (biologically, Anubis is Bata's older brother, but positionally, he is his son and heir). As opposed to Wettengel and others, I therefore do not dare to say that this structure stresses the claim of either of the two brothers (or any other parties) to the throne. What is more, it seems that the myth could have been used by various rivalling political parties to legitimise their claim to power:

A: "See, the son becomes the pharaoh, it's in the text."

B: "See, the older brother becomes the pharaoh, it's in the text."

The myth could, therefore, serve either political argument if "correctly" interpreted. However, once one of the parties involved became the pharaoh, the socially ascribed matrix of relationships took precedence over the biological matrix and strife became irrelevant.[552] The contenders were pacified through the office of positional kingship.

550 See, for example, Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown, "On Joking Relationships" *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 13/3 (1940): 195–210.

551 Leach, "The Mother's Brother": 21. Arno Egberts dismisses "any speculations regarding some sort of special relationship between a person and his maternal uncle […] since they are only based on a faulty interpretation of the term *sn n mwt* employed in the Contendings" (Arno Egberts, "The Kinship Term *sn n mwt*", *The Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* [JSSEA] 14/3 [1984]: 57–59). As interesting as Egberts' article is with regard to kinship terminology, Leach takes into consideration more arguments and his interpretation does not stand and fall with this one issue.

552 An existence of two parallel but opposing ascension principles was proposed by Ursula Verhoeven, "Ein historischer 'Sitz im Leben' für die Erzählung von Horus und Seth des Papyrus Chester Beatty I", in M. Schade-Busch (ed.), *Wege Öffnen, Festschrift für Rolf Gundlach zum 65. Geburtstag*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1996, p. 361–363. A similar idea was later developed by Marcelo Campagno ("Judicial Practices, Kinship and the State in 'The Contendings of Horus and Seth' ", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* [ZÄS] 133 [2006]: 20–33) who speaks of "two logics of social organization" as reflected in the Contendings of Horus and Seth: "On the one hand, in the interior of the village communities and among the elite, kinship provided the dominant principles of social organization. On the other hand, the connection between communities and the state, and the actions carried out by the elite towards the exterior, were preferentially expressed through the state logic" (p. 31). By "state logic/order" Campagno means all relations between individuals and/or communities organised according to principles other than the kinship system: "After all, the specificity of the state order did not consist in the presence or absence of kinship links organizing some segments of society but in the complete absence of kinship links within the space between […] communities and […the] elite: that was the exclusive sphere of state practice" (p. 21). These two types of social interaction in fact correspond to the elementary structuralist opposition nature × culture and their simultaneous existence presents society with an insolvable paradox with which the myth works. For further discussion, see below, p. 252–254.

The situation with the Contendings of Horus and Seth is a bit more complicated. The text is more explicit and openly states that it is Horus who claims the throne of ruler. However, I would still be careful with interpreting this as a political statement of some sort. What this papyrus shares with the Tale of Two Brothers is the stress on the necessity of transformation of both contending parties and the fact that at the moment of the ascension of one of them to the throne the other automatically becomes part of the same order of things at an elevated position. We can hardly speak of a victorious Horus defeating Seth. One of Wettengel's arguments supporting his claim that the Contendings of Horus and Seth is a product of a southern conservative Theban political milieu, is the obviously humorist depiction of Seth in the Contendings of Horus and Seth stressing his stupidity and ignorance.[553] However, there might be other reasons for this than solely the motivation of degrading political opponents (just as the conflict between Horus and Seth does not necessarily imply a historical and political battle between Upper and Lower Egypt). Seth seems to have been primarily viewed as the god of "too-much". He is too powerful, too sexually active, etc. Humour may be a means of showing that this overwhelming and mighty Seth, outside the frame of order, is stupid, brutish, and comical. After all, humour is standardly applied in mythology and religion because it serves as an ideal way to show the borders of order, delineate its problematic parts and outline possible alternatives.[554] And again, I may refer the reader to Leach's suggestion that it was a "joking relationship" which was in play between Horus and Seth. The myth then performs a certain kind of trick. It shows that with the ascension of one of the contending parties to the throne itself, the positional kinship system is once again installed and the whole problem, which arose on the biological level, is therefore "blurred". The stress seems to be, yet again, on the transformative function of the positional role of the king rather than a political statement of some sort. In essence, both the Tale of Two Brothers and the Contendings actually contain a structurally similar message: the pharaoh is the axis around which everything revolves. He

553 Needless to say, Horus is not depicted in a much more favourable light. He is a youth whose abilities are doubted by many of the gods and who could not win without the help of his mother Isis and her cunning.

554 Douglas, "The Social Control of Cognition": 361–376, see also above, p. 94–95.

is the point of contact between the ontologically different, yet interdependent spheres of the human and the divine. He has a transformative function changing the social reality of those who come into contact with him. If we realise that power is relational in essence (one can have power only over something/somebody), the ability to transform these relationships and rearrange the biologically given order is then the true source of the Pharaoh's power.

The Anat Myth

In the previous chapter I tried to show the structural similarities between the Tale of Two Brothers and the Contendings of Horus and Seth. It is also my view that this conflict may be considered to be the aftermath of the murder of Osiris by Seth (the so-called Osiris Myth) together forming a certain thematic whole which I have labelled the Osirian Cycle. In order to show the connection between the Tale of Two Brothers and the Osiris Myth, we must make a detour. This will include two steps: 1) the analysis of a series of (magical) texts which are sometimes labelled as the Anat Myth or, alternatively, the Myth of Anat (and Seth); 2) the analysis of the role of female characters who have thus far been mainly excluded from the interpretation. The role of the feminine principle in ancient Egyptian mythology is so crucial that it requires a comparative analysis based on several sources. This will also serve as a basis for a broader structural comparison of all the previously analysed mythological narratives (i.e. the Tale of Two Brothers, the Osirian Cycle, and the Anat Myth).

The most extensive analysis of the various fragments[555] of the Anat Myth has so far been presented by Jacobus van Dijk in 1986.[556] He used "the version given in the *pChester Beatty VII*. The missing parts have been supplied from *pTurin* and put

555 Papyrus Chester Beatty VII verso 1,5–6,7 (Alan H. Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum, Third Series, Chester Beatty Gift*, London 1935, Vol. I, p. 61–65; Vol. II, pls. 36–37); Papyrus Turin, without number (Alessandro Rocatti, "Une légende égyptienne d'Anat", *Revue d'Égyptologie* [RdÉ] 24 [1972]: 154–159, pl. 14); ostracon UC 31942 (Wilhelm Spiegelberg, *Hieratic Ostraca and Papyri found by J.E. Quibell in the Ramesseum, 1895–6*, London 1898, pls. I–I^{A}, 1–2); ostracon DM 1591 (Georges Posener, *Catalogue des ostraca hieratique littéraires de Deir el Médineh,* Vol. III/2, Cairo, 1978, p. 76, pl. 44–45^{A}); ostracon DM 1592 (Posener, *Catalogue des ostraca*, p. 76, pl. 45–45^{A}). References by van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 32–33, see also for further commentary on the sources.

556 van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 31–51.

between brackets. In addition to this, phrases absent from both sources have been printed in italics:"[557]

> [The Seed took a bath] on the shore in order to purify herself in the *ḥmkt*. Then the Great God went out for a walk and he [perceived her (and saw) her beauty because of (?) the girdle] of her buttocks. Then he mounted her like a ram mounts, he covered her like a [bull] covers. [*Therepon the Seed* fl]ew up to his forehead, to the region of his eyebrows, and he lay down upon his bed in his house [*and was ill*. Hur]ried Anat, the Victorious Goddess, the woman who acts like a warrior, who wears a skirt like men and a sash (?) like women, to Pre, her father. He said to her: "What is the matter with you, Anat, Victorious Goddess, who acts as a warrior, who wears a skirt like men and a sash (?) like women? I have ended (my course) in the evening and I know that you have come to ask that Seth be delivered from the Seed. [*Look*], let (his) stupidity be a lesson (to him). The Seed had been given as a wife to the God Above, that he should copulate with her with fire after deflowering her with a chisel." Said the divine Isis: "I am a Nubian woman. I have descended from heaven and I have come to uncover the Seed which is in the body [*of X son of Y*], and to make him go in health to his mother like Horus went in health to his mother Isis. X born of Y shall be (well), for as Horus lives so shall live X son of Y (...).

In his subsequent commentary van Dijk mentions that previous interpreters tended to identify the actor (the Seed) from the first line with Anat. "[...] it was suggested by a comparison with an episode from the Ugaritic myth of Baal which relates how Baal and Anat mate as bull and cow."[558] However, van Dijk wants to show that even though the text itself does resemble motifs which we encounter outside Egypt, it is not enough to "interpret" the myth by a simple reference to foreign mythological material. In fact, he is persuaded that the Anat Myth is a very original version of the Osiris Myth. Before we have a look at his argumentation,[559] let us first summarise who the main characters in the text are and what their actions are in relation to each other:[560]

557 van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 33, see also notes a–m on p. 34–38.

558 van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 38.

559 I shall not retain van Dijk's ordering of the evidence but re-order it, (exclude) and include information which seems to be relevant for the fluent flow of the argument.

560 In the following analysis I am going to be using the framework of an interpretative method defined by Harco Willems in his yet unpublished article called "The Method of 'Sequencing' in Analyzing Egyptian Funerary Texts. The Example of Coffin Texts spells 283 and 296", in S. Bickel (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian Funerary Literature. Tackling the Complexity of Texts. Basel December 9–11, 2010*, submitted (I would like to thank Harco Willems for letting me work with his text in advance of its publication). Willems' basic idea is that "the 'users' of Egyptian religious texts often had in their heads a narrative sequence, which (because it was known) did not have to be made explicit in writing. [...] The method I propose takes as its point of departure an already finished, good translation. Based on this,

CHARACTER	ACTIONS
SEED-GODDESS (*tȝ mtw.t*) – described by Pre as given to the God Above as wife so that he may copulate with her with fire after deflowering her with a chisel	– takes a bath on the shore to purify (*wʿb*) herself in the *ḥmk.t* (?) – has a girdle on her buttocks – flies up to the brow of Seth causing his illness
GREAT GOD (SETH) – described as stupid (in pTurin a variant reading gives the name Seth instead of the Great God)	– goes out for a walk and sees the Seed – is aroused by the Seed-goddess and has intercourse with her – after having intercourse with the Seed-goddess and after she settles on his forehead Seth becomes ill
ANAT – the Victorious Goddess – the woman who acts like a warrior – she wears a skirt like men and a sash (?) like women – daughter of Pre	– hurries to Pre – wants to persuade Pre to deliver Seth from the Seed
PRE – Anat's father	– addresses Anat, discloses her motivation and describes Seth as "stupid" (*swg*)
GOD ABOVE (*pȝ nṯr ḥry*) – the husband of the Seed-goddess with whom he ought to copulate with fire after having deflowered her with a chisel	–
ISIS	– describes herself as a "Nubian woman" – descends from heaven in order to uncover the Seed, which is in the body of the patient, to cure him
THE PATIENT – his body contains the Seed/poison – likened to Horus (through a description of his coming to Isis like Horus)	–
HORUS – the patient is likened to him (both come to Isis as their mother)	–

tab. 3: Overview of the main characters and their actions in the Anat Myth

the analyst should ask the questions 'who?', 'where?' and 'when?'." (Willems, "The Method of 'Sequencing'": 4). Even though these questions seem to be trivial at first glance, it is often very difficult to answer them clearly. Because of their symbolic nature, characters can merge, or be addressed, only through epithets without clearly referring to one single character. As Willems explains, his method is principally created for "disclosing" the underlying narrative in non-narrative compositions by "close reading" which, subsequently, leads to a more profound understanding of their structure (for example, the Coffin Texts, Willems, "The Method of 'Sequencing'": 4). Above (see p. 33–40), I claimed that narrative coherence is only one of the many ways of injecting meaning into a certain data set. It therefore seems logical that the method, as described by Willems, should not only be limited to non-narrative compositions. Even when creating a narrative composition, the ancient Egyptian author most probably had in mind a series of parallel narratives or episodic events to which his own narrative alluded. These unmentioned parallels would then form an alternative motivic framework which could be used for the interpretation of the work in question. This is the way in which I understand van Dijk's interpretation of the Anat Myth and approach my own interpretation.

As van Dijk correctly points out,[561] it is necessary to view the context of this short narrative sequence as a mythological framework evoked for a very specific reason – curing a patient from the maleficent influence of poison (*mtw.t*). In order to establish a direct parallel between the macrocosmic mythological structure and the microcosmic situation of the patient, the double meaning of *mtw.t* as both "poison" and "seed" is obviously evoked.[562] However, van Dijk is primarily interested in the divine character of the Seed, who is treated throughout the text as a female deity. The Seed-goddess does not seem to be identical to Anat because both characters have widely diverging characteristics. The Seed-goddess is described as a strongly sensual being who arouses Seth, which leads to their sexual intercourse and Seth's illness (poisoning in the case of the patient). On the other hand, Anat is described as a very non-feminine (almost masculine) being, having the manners of a warrior and even being dressed as a man. It therefore seems that we must find a different identity for the Seed-goddess. According to van Dijk, the ideal candidate seems to be Hathor. Both the Seed and Hathor play the role of the divine seductresses.[563] "She is also the divine prostitute, the 'woman who is a stranger', so often condemned in the wisdom texts."[564] According to van Dijk, Hathor also represents the libido or sexual/creative power of the Creator God or Re.[565] This may be demonstrated through the role of the Eye (*jr.t*) of Re, which is most often identified with Hathor. The Eye may be viewed as a personification of his ability both to procreate and destroy (as described, for example, in the Book of the Heavenly Cow, where Hathor-Sakhmet-Eye is sent to destroy the rebellious humankind which was born from its tears).[566]

561 van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 40.

562 See, for example, a very fitting description of such a method in Jacobus van Dijk, "The Birth of Horus According to the Ebers Papyrus", *Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-egyptisch Genootschap Ex Oriente Lux* [JEOL] 26 (1979–1980): 10–25, especially 23–25.

563 "In Egyptian love songs the girl is often called 'the Golden One', i.e. Hathor. In one of these songs the girl behaves in much the same way as the Seed-goddess in our text. After having addressed her lover as 'my god' and 'my lotus' she says to him: 'It is my desire to descend (to the water) and bathe myself before your eyes. I will let you see my beauty [...] through my robe of first class royal linen (...)'." (van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 40). For the latest study on ancient Egyptian love songs, see Landgráfová and Navrátilová, *Sex and the Golden Goddess I*.

564 van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 41.

565 In this context, van Dijk reminds us of the following episode from the pChester Beatty I (3,12–4,3, Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 41): "The god Baba got up and said to Pre-Harakhty: 'Your shrine is empty!' Then Pre-Harakhty felt offended by the answer given him, and he lay down on his back, his heart very sore. [...] The great god spent a day lying on his back in his pavilion, his heart very sore and he was alone. After a long while, Hathor, Lady of the southern sycamore, came and stood before her father, the Lord-of-All. She showed him her vulva (*kȝ.t*). Thereupon the great god laughed at her. He got up and sat with the great Ennead; and he said to Horus and Seth: 'Speak for yourselves!'" (translation [with slight alternations] by Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 216). See also Broze, *Mythe et roman*, p. 42–44.

566 See, for example, Hornung, *Der Ägyptische Mythos von der Himmelskuh*.

In the Anat Myth, there also seems to be a very close connection between the Seed-goddess and Re. This is strengthened by the fact that Anat addresses Re with her request of delivering Seth from the maleficient effect of the Seed/poison. It seems that it is Re who is expected to have power over the Seed-goddess' force, but who, however, declines his help ("[*Look*], let (his, i.e Seth's) stupidity be a lesson (to him)").[567] The reason, which Re subsequently gives, is that "the Seed had been given as a wife to the God Above, that he should copulate with her with fire after deflowering her with a chisel." The God Above seems to be a different character to Re.[568] However, it must be a character closely connected with him (he is wed to the female-creative emanation of Re). Van Dijk comes to the conclusion that the God Above is "Osiris Lunus, as a nocturnal incarnation of the Sun-god; in other words, the Seed-goddess is Pre's own wife, to be impregnated by his nightly 'body' Osiris in order to give birth to him as the rejuvenated Re-Harakhty."[569] In his re-interpretation of part of the Ebers Papyrus (Eb. 1,12–2,1),[570] van Dijk showed that it is the nocturnal Sun-god who begets himself with fire (in the Island of Fire) in the darkness of the Netherworld.[571] The motif of the merging of the Sun-god and Osiris during the night represents a key theological and political idea, especially in the Ramesside period. Based on the mediating role of female characters in general (see below, p. 218–232), it is also very understandable that the connection between Re and Osiris may be conceptualised in the form of a goddess with whom both gods are in a very close relationship. If the God Above is truly Osiris, then his traditional partner is Isis. The text therefore suggests a relation of identity between Osiris and Re through one common female character – Isis-Hathor/Seed-goddess.[572] Further

567 In this case, Seth's spontaneous and lascivious act of copulation with the Seed-goddess is described as "stupid". As I have tried to show above in the case of both the Tale of Two Brothers and the Osirian Cycle (p. 184–186; 199–201), it is precisely Seth's overabundant and uncontrolled masculinity which is the source of his inappropriateness and problems.

568 For example, Jessica Lévai ("Anat for Nephthys: A Possible Substitution in the Documents of the Ramesside Period", in M. Ross [ed.], *From the Banks of the Euphrates. Studies in Honor of Alice Louise Slotsky*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008, p. 135–143, esp. p. 138–140) is persuaded that the God Above is identical to Pre, i.e. that Pre speaks about himself. However, she does not supply any arguments.

569 The connection between Osiris and the moon (*Wsjr-ỉ'ḥ*) is attested quite clearly from the Late Period (J. Gwyn Griffiths, "Osiris and the Moon in Iconography", *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* [JEA] 62 [1976]: 153–159). See also van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 40, n. 69.

570 van Dijk, "The Birth of Horus": 10–25.

571 As we have seen in the case of other bodily liquids and secretions (issuing from the body of Osiris) (see above, p. 135–140), even seed was considered as having a bivalent character. Seed is both the vehicle of the Sun-god's transformation and rebirth (seed-fire as life force) and, at the same time, it is highly destructive (poison-destructive fire). This is also reflected in the Anat Myth – the Seed causes Seth's illness.

572 In this context it does seem to be significant that in the New Kingdom tradition the unification of Osiris and Re is assisted by Isis and Nephthys. The most famous depiction of this event can be found in the tomb of Nefertari and a few other non-royal Ramesside tombs (see, for example, Hornung, *Conceptions of God*, p. 93–96, pl. 1; Jan Assmann, *Liturgische Lieder an den Sonnengott*, Berlin: Hessling, 1969, p. 101–105).

in the Anat Myth it is indeed Isis who takes an active part in the plot: "Said the divine Isis: 'I am a Nubian woman. I have descended from heaven and I have come to uncover the Seed which is in the body [of X son of Y] [...]'." Van Dijk very correctly pointed out that the epithet "Nubian" (*Nḥsy.t*) reflects the double aspect which is contained in the composite deity Isis-Hathor: "As Re's daughter (i.e. Hathor), she is a fearful goddess who withdraws to Nubia and destroys his enemies, but after having been pacified by Shu or Thoth, she returns from Nubia in order to become Re's wife and mother who gives birth to him in his temple."[573] The epithet "Nubian" also refers to Isis' power as a sorceress.[574]

As opposed to both Isis (described as a caring mother) and the Seed-goddess/Hathor (described as a sensuous and loose woman), Anat is neither. As a "Victorious Goddess", she has something in her of the raging aspect of the Eye (of Re)/Hathor. This is also corroborated by the description that she "acts like a warrior". However, she does not share the sensuousness of a Hathorian-type deity. In fact, she is not exactly a woman either, for she "wears a skirt like men and a sash (?) like women". Described as such, she is even less likely to be considered a mother than Isis. However, by being depicted in such stark contrast to the other female deities in the Anat Myth, she forms an inextricable unit with them. Van Dijk remarks:

> Our text shows in a narrative form how one aspect [...], the divine prostitute, is transformed into its opposite, the divine mother. Between them

573 van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 38, 9. On the same page, van Dijk also mentions that "this rare designation of Isis is sometimes applied to Hathor in Ptolemaic texts [...]. In any case it is significant that she replaces the goddess Mut as wife and mother of Amun-Re-Kamutef in the temples of Ramesses II in ed-Derr, Abu Simbel and Wadi es-Sebua." A very interesting parallel to this text and specifically to the character of the Seed-goddess seems to be engraved on a stela in the Field Museum in Chicago (No. 31737). I quote from the provisional translation provided by Robert. K. Ritner: "The poison is purified in its moment of its burning!/The Goddess is purified in her moment of her burning,/all her limbs overlaid with flame like molten copper [...]/If she is at peace, then she is like Nubia./If she rages, then she is like Asia./It is the poison which she made upon the river for her putting to rest the desire of her father Nun, when she stripped off her/pure garments to the ground and (he) saw that she was beautiful in her whole form and in all her limbs [...]" (Ritner, "Horus on the Crocodiles": 112). The badly damaged text continues and describes how the raging goddess evaded Nun's plans whose "[heart] went forth after this goddess to mount her body through desire of her" (Ritner, "Horus on the Crocodiles": 112). I realised the close motivic connection between this text and the Anat Myth only during the final revision of the manuscript. As the pertinent text on the stela 31737 has not been critically published, I did not dare formulate any further conclusions.

574 On the role of Nubia in ancient Egyptian magical texts, see, for example: Yvan Koenig, "La Nubie dans les textes magiques « l'inquiétante étrangeté »," *Revue d'Égyptologie* [RdE] 41 (1987): 105–110; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, p. 140, n. 623; p. 217, n. 1010; Teysseire, *The Portrayal of Women*, p. 186–202 (esp. p. 196–202).

> stands Anat, who is a true mediator in the Lévi-Straussian sense of the term. She bridges the gap between the two opposites, sharing aspects of both. Re's primaeval wife (his hand, his penis, his seed) is an androgynous goddess who acts as a "strange woman" by committing adultery, is transformed into Anat, who is a foreign goddess in the literal sense of the word and who is also characterized by a certain amount of androgyny, at least in outward appearance. On the other hand, Anat is the Eye of Re who protects her father against his enemies, and as such she becomes Isis, the Eye of Re, who returns from Nubia in order to become Re's divine queen, his spouse and mother. Thus Anat bridges the gap between Hathor, the divine prostitute and Isis, the divine wife and mother, between undifferentiated unity and the structured duality of man and wife, between irregularity and chaos represented by Seth and order and regularity established by Re.[575]

I believe van Dijk's interpretation needs a little more explication to prove that it is essentially a very precise description of what is going on in the text. Anat's crucial role in the narrative is her firm connection to Seth.[576] She is the only character who addresses Re on behalf of Seth with the request that he cure him. At the same time, just like the Seed-goddess, Anat has a very close relationship to Re (she is his daughter). Her role is that of an ideal mediator integrating Seth into the framework of the myth through a close relationship with the other male deities and through her mediating role in relation to the other female deities.[577] The exact nature of the relationship between Seth and the other characters can be deduced once we interpret the actions of the parties involved. If the Seed-goddess is crucial to the integrity of the God Above/Osiris (she is his wife and it should have been him copulating with her), then the Great God/Seth has taken something (personified in the Seed-goddess) away from Osiris

575 van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 42.

576 It is very tempting to quote from various texts in which Anat (and Astarte) is described as Seth's partner. See, for example, the Contendings of Horus and Seth (3,2–3,5; Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 39–40), where Neith encourages the Ennead as follows: "Give the office of Osiris to his son Horus [...] And let it be said to the All-Lord, the Bull of On: Double Seth's possessions. Give him Anat and Astarte, your two daughters. And place Horus on the seat of his father!" (translation by Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 215). Even though not explicitly mentioned in the Anat Myth itself, van Dijk understands the connection between Anat and Seth to be of a matrimonial nature (van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 41–42). He also notices the strong similarities between Anat and Nephthys, the traditional partner of Seth (both are childless playing the roles of wet-nurses). The relationship between Anat and Nephthys has been analysed, for example, by Jessica Lévai ("Anat for Nephthys"). Even though she comes to the conclusion that it was not standard practice to identify the two deities explicitly, in the case of the Anat Myth she admits that Anat seems to have replaced Nephthys (Lévai, "Anat for Nephthys", p. 140).

577 Van Dijk even identifies the three goddesses (van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 42).

who becomes the "god who lacks" (the possibility to copulate, i.e. be active). Seth, therefore, not only threatens the active existence of Osiris, but also endangers the possibility of Osiris and Re's unification in the Netherworld (and thus the restoration and continuation of life). However, the action also has an adverse effect on Seth – he becomes ill. By claiming "something" (the Seed-goddess) because of his excessive (sexual) appetite, he confirms his identity as the god who has "too much" (see above, p. 184–186; 199–201). The only solution is to ask Re (mediated by Anat) to rid Seth of this burden. What happens in the end is that Isis intervenes and "uncovers" the Seed. This action is then likened to the recovery of Horus, i.e. the patient, who thus shares Horus' lucky fate. At this moment we can see that the very short text of the Anat Myth implicitly does something very similar to that which the Tale of Two Brothers mentions explicitly: all of the main male parties are actually identical. The patient is explicitly identified with Horus through the implicit parallel situation of being threatened by *mtw.t* (poison/seed). Implicitly, however, the patient is also Seth; both have *mtw.t* (seed/poison) in their bodies.[578] In this context it is also interesting to recall the motif of the sexual relationship between Horus and Seth analysed in the previous chapter, where *mtw.t* plays a crucial role. I have argued above (see p. 193–196) that this actually hints at the dependence/identity of the two opposing deities. The situation of the patient in the Anat Myth seems to me to build indirectly upon its imagery. However, the patient is also the God Above/Osiris. As opposed to other actors in the Anat Myth, both the patient and Osiris share a passive stance in the story. They are, in fact, defined by their passivity (if the patient were able to act and was not paralysed by the illness, there would be no need to create a magic spell in the first place). And the situation which obstructs Osiris-Re's unification and rebirth is also likened to the situation of the patient, whose recovery is prevented by the presence/absence of *mtw.t* (poison/seed). The efficacy of the spell is fuelled by the parallelism of the mythical and the actual situation in which the patient plays the crucial role: only through him/her can the mythical precedent finds its solution.

578 It is important to note that the patient would not be identified with Seth explicitly as he is the one who causes the whole troublesome situation. However, Seth is affected by his act in the same way as the patient by the illness which is expressed through the double meaning of the word *mtw.t*, and in this sense they share the same fate.

The Feminine Principle as Mediator

As we have seen in the case of the Anat Myth, in order to try and grasp the condensed symbolic language of this text, we had to focus on the female characters. Only by discovering the identity of the goddess involved could we conclude that the aim was to harmonise the initially opposed male deities in relation to the patient. There is, however, one interesting fact – the patient was not identified with the female characters but with the male characters. The female characters only facilitated the connection between the various male parties which, initially, seemed totally disconnected. This role of goddesses as facilitators and mediators, which is quite clearly discernible in the Anat Myth, is in fact very typical. Without the intervention of feminine characters, none of the stories which we have analysed so far would have progressed. Feminine characters and the feminine principle in general, therefore, seem to have been regarded by ancient Egyptian men in a most ambiguous way.

From the sources available to us, ancient Egyptian society presented itself as strongly androcentric. Whereas men had the possibility of gaining social status by ascending the career ladder, women were generally confined to the rank of their husband.[579] Ancient Egyptian art is very illustrative in this respect. Many have remarked that if depicted in the company of men, women always tend to occupy a secondary and subservient position.[580] We can also suppose that ancient Egyptian literature in all its forms was most probably the product of men intended for other men. Even though there are records of women who had the status of a scribe or knew how to read and write, documented examples are very rare.[581] This is in sharp contrast to the overwhelming number of scribal titles attributed to ancient Egyptian men. Regardless of whether ancient Egyptian women could in reality read and write, the

579 Graves-Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, p. 47. In his analysis of the various roles of the father in ancient Egyptian society, Jan Assmann used the designation "Vater-Kultur" and "Vater-Religion" (*Stein und Zeit*, p. 115).

580 Henry G. Fischer, *Egyptian Women of the Old Kingdom and of the Heracleopolitan Period*, Second Edition revised and augmented, New York, 2000[2] [1989[1]], pdf online at http://www.gizapyramids.org/pdf%20library/fischer_eg_women.pdf (accessed 5.3.2013); Gay Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, London: British Museum Press, 1993, p. 164–169; Gay Robins, "Some Principals of Compositional Dominance and Gender Hierarchy in Egyptian Art", *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* [JARCE] 31 (1994): 33–40.

581 For example, Stephen Quirke mentions a female pupil at school in the workmen's village of Deir el-Medina (Stephen Quirke, "Women of Lahun [Egypt 1800 bc]", in S. Hamilton, R. D. Whitehouse, and K. I. Wright [eds.], *Archaeology and Women. Ancient and Modern Issues*, Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2007, p. 246–62). See also Graves-Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, p. 52–53.

social convention was not to connect literacy with women. At the same time, knowledge of writing secured access to influential social positions. The scribe Duakhety, for example, instructs his son Pepy in The Satire on the Trades in the following way:

> "Since I have seen those who have been beaten, it is to writings that you must set your mind. See for yourself, it saves one from work. Behold, there is nothing that surpasses writings! They are like [a boat] upon the water. Read then at the end of the Book of Kemyet and you will find this statement in it saying: As for a scribe in any office in the Residence, he will not suffer want in it."[582]

It was men who occupied the most prominent and influential positions within ancient Egyptian society, passing their knowledge on to their male progeny. This also gave men more opportunities to present and accentuate their worldview. Nevertheless, power and influence stems solely from a certain social structure or a situation involving several parties. Power does not exist by itself. It is always dependent on a system of roles and relationships within which power may be demonstrated, offered or denied. This shows that the concept of power is relational in essence (power over somebody/with regard to something).[583] In order to safeguard power, the individual in question must to a certain extent adjust to the rules and structures which provide power. As a result (s)he becomes bound by these rules. The most evident example of this are the limitations on physical expression (talking, body posture, eating, etc.) which are a requirement for the holder of a position of power, as described, for example, by Ptahhotep in his teachings (8,1–8,5):

> If you are in the audience chamber,
> Stand and sit in accordance with your position
> Which was given to you on the first day.
> Do not exceed (your duty), for it will result in your being turned back.

582 Simpson, "The Satire on the Trades", p. 432.

583 The mechanism of power as a relational category was very thoroughly studied, for example, by Edmund Leach, who was fascinated by this topic. "*Society, however we conceive it, is a network of persons held together by links of power*. The individual who apprehends society in this way has to proceed by logical steps. He must first be able to see how one person differs from another person and he must then be able to appreciate that two persons, though different, may yet be linked together. Viewed in this way power does not lie in person or in things but in the interstices between persons and between things, that is to say *in relation*." (Edmund Leach, "The Nature of War", in Stephen Hugh-Jones and James Laidlaw (eds.), *The Essential Edmund Leach, Vol. I, Anthropology and Society,* New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2000, p. 343–357, especially p. 343, (originally published in *Disarmament and Arms Control* 3/2 [1965]: 165–183).

Be attentive to him who enters bearing a report,
For he who has been summoned has complete freedom.
The audience chamber tends toward strict etiquette,
And all its affairs follow (specific) rules of conduct.
It is God who promotes one's position,
And that men should force their way is not done.[584]

From the point of view of the ancient Egyptian man, the role and position of women within society had a paradoxical quality. Women, who had very limited access to social positions of power, gained a different type of power which could never have been acquired by men – a certain independence from the power structures and the limitations which they imposed on those who wished to gain access to socially powerful positions. The roles which are often assigned to female characters and principles in ancient Egyptian mythology suggest that they were viewed by men as having abilities which their male counterparts either lacked or which were out of their bounds or uncontrollable.

Death as transformation according to the divine male archetype

The most prominent archetype of the fate of the deceased after death was modeled on that of Osiris. Death was regarded as a brutal and inimical act, disintegrative in essence.[585] Burial rituals therefore also presented a way in which reality could be reintegrated and the deceased transfigured (a passive decaying corps becomes a mummy, the deceased an active and powerful *akh*). The situation was nevertheless made difficult if the deceased was a female, as the re-figuration process was based on the principle of the loss and recovery of male creative strength.[586] Funerary texts and equipment were readily available for the male deceased. It also seems that women

584 Translation by Vincent A. Tobin, "The Maxims of Ptahhotep", in Simpson (ed.), *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, p. 136; for references, see Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. I, p. 61–62.

585 Jan Zandee, *Death as an Enemy According to Ancient Egyptian Conceptions*, Studies in the History of Religions: Supplements to Numen 5, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960.

586 The Osiris archetype was not the only one which could be evoked in the burial context. Deities connected with the primeval period such as Atum and Nun were often evoked, just as Re and a periodical rejuvenation of the creation within the sun cycle. All these motifs, nevertheless, stress the male creative power and leave females in the position of helpers who either facilitate or accelerate this process (Isis in the case of Osiris, the goddess Djeret in the case of Atum; Nut, who becomes pregnant with Re at the end of the day only to give birth to him the next day). The topic is interestingly discussed by Kathlyn M. Cooney, "The Problem of Female Rebirth in New Kingdom Egypt", in Graves-Brown (ed.), *Sex and Gender in Ancient Egypt*, p. 1–25.

mostly adapted these male templates.[587] Nevertheless, sometimes they made changes in order to incorporate the individual feminine aspect into the androcentric template. Kathlyn M. Cooney analyses the funerary objects of women from the New Kingdom to the Third Intermediate Period.[588] If ancient Egyptians of this period had the means, they had several coffins made for themselves which were then fitted into each other. Cooney shows that each coffin could have a different form reflecting the various stages of the deceased's re-figuration process.[589] In the case of female burials the reference to their sex was, according to Cooney, employed in a very innovative manner. As the evidence stands, several women had their outer coffins carved in a way which obstructed the viewer from identifying the sex of the deceased. The coffin had neither distinctive male nor female characteristics. Nevertheless, the inner coffin had obvious female characteristics (breasts, wig, female garment etc.). Cooney understands these coffins as examples of the way in which women managed to incorporate their identity into a male paradigm of the funerary customs.[590]

An extreme example of such an innovative approach is the decoration in the tomb of the New Kingdom Queen Tawosret (KV 14), located in the Valley of the Kings.[591] Even though later usurped by her successor Sethnakht, the decoration of the tomb in many places very interestingly adapts the contents of funerary compositions and scenes originally intended for male monarchs.[592] These examples show that when women wanted to utilize the given male templates in a way which would reflect their female personality, they (or rather the male artists commissioned with their creation) had to bend and change these original patterns. This is yet another example where men were

587 Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, London, p. 175. A very clear example is provided again by the Pyramid Texts, PT 493 in which we are told about the phallus of queen Neith: (Pyr. 1061e) *[ỉ3].w n šr.t n.t N(j)t wzš.t n ḥnn=f* (Pyr. 1061f) *mj sfg-jr.w ḥr(j)-jb j3<ḥ>.w* "The nose of Neith has air, his penis has semen, like the One-mysterious-of-form in the midst of sunlight." (Gustave Jéquier, *Les pyramides des reines Neit et Apouit*, Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, Fouilles à Saqqarah, Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1933, p. 16 fig. 7, pl. 27 line 705; located in Neith's funerary chamber, eastern wall, upper left corner). To this, Orriols I Llonch remarks: "Although Faulkner considers it an error in transcription, I think that the fact of associating a masculine sexual member with Neith is completely conscious, since the queen in these texts is considered as Osiris, following the royal masculine archetype. Once more, we find a masculinization of the feminine sexuality." (Marc Orriols I Llonch, "Divine Copulation in the Pyramid Texts. A Lexical and Cultural Approach", in J.-C. Goyon and C. Cardin (eds.), *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Egyptologists. Grenoble, 6–12 septembre 2004*, Vol. II, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta [OLA] 150, Leuven: Peeters, p. 1424.)

588 Cooney, "The Problem of Female Rebirth", p. 1–25.

589 Cooney, "The Problem of Female Rebirth", p. 17–18.

590 Cooney, "The Problem of Female Rebirth", p. 9–20.

591 Hartwig Altenmüller (University of Hamburg) was the last to conduct archaeological work in the tomb (1983–1987). For basic information and a tour of the tomb, see the webpages of the Theban Mapping Project (http://www.thebanmappingproject.com/sites/browse_tomb_828.html, accessed 24.3.2012)

592 Heather MacCarthy, "Rules of Decorum and Expression of Gender Fluidity in Tawosret's Tomb", in Graves-Brown (ed.), *Sex and Gender in Ancient Egypt*, p. 83–113.

confronted with the fact that when it comes to (some) women, the patterns established for men had to be altered. The fact that women were socially forced to go around the readily available androcentric imagery presented them with a type of power which was principally unavailable to men – the ability to bend and go around established patterns. The females and female characters were thus viewed in a paradoxical way – as the powerful (cause of change to established patterns) powerless (secondary characters whose main function was to entice male powers).[593]

This can be very fittingly shown with the characters of major (if not all) ancient Egyptian goddesses. In the myths and mythical episodes connected with Osiris, Isis has the role of a helper who entices Osiris' procreative and sexual powers. Nevertheless, she is also repeatedly described as a sorceress whose cunning enables her to manipulate her powerful male counterparts. It was only thanks to Isis' knowledge of magic that the "weak" and "weary" Osiris became erect to procreate a son and heir. In the Contendings of Horus and Seth (6,2–7,12) Isis uses her cunning and magic to trick Seth into a condemnation of his own acts.[594]

Another female figure which may exemplify the bivalent nature of female characters is the Eye (of Atum, Re, Horus?).[595] In its raging aspect it can be identified

593 In formulating this idea I was, to a limited extent, inspired by an essay called "The Power of the Powerless" written in 1978 (following the foundation of the Charter 77 movement) by the late Václav Havel (1936–2011), former Czech(oslovakian) president, playwright, and leader of the opposition movement which hastened the fall of the communist regime in former Czechoslovakia in 1989. Translated by Paul Wilson, the essay has appeared several times in English, foremost in *The Power of the Powerless: Citizens Against the State in Central-Eastern Europe*, John Keane (ed.), with an Introduction by Steven Lukes, London: Hutchinson, 1985. The English translation of the text may be downloaded from http://s3.amazonaws.com/Random_Public_Files/powerless.pdf (accessed 9.3.2012). The Czech original is available on the official website of Václav Havel's library (http://archive.vaclavhavel-library.org/kvh_search/itemDetail.jsp?id=660, accessed 9.3.2012). In this essay, Havel defines the position and role of political opposition (or "dissent", "dissidents") within a dictatorial regime. He analyses the structure and mechanisms of "power" and comes to the conclusion (formulated rather as a moral appeal) that socially "powerless" individuals are empowered to a certain extent by following different rules than those which govern the establishment of social relations in a (post-)totalitarian society. Even though comparing the situation of Czech political opposition in the 1970s and the position attributed to the female principle in ancient Egypt several thousand years ago is, of course, absurd, the basic question of the relationship between constituent parts of a system of power and other more marginalized or under-represented aspects within it is a topic which may be examined (with attention paid to the specific cultural and historical context) in relation to any human social organization.

594 Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 44–46 (for a translation, see, for example, Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 217–218).

595 I am well aware that the issue of the motif of the Eye in ancient Egypt is one of great symbolic polyvalence. By stressing its mediating role I am only touching upon one of its roles without claiming that this is its sole symbolic level. The complexity of the whole issue is obvious from the non-existence of a synthetic study on the role of the Eye(s) in ancient Egyptian mythology. For separate studies, see, for example, Otto, "Augensagen"; Susanne Bickel, *La cosmogonie égyptienne avant le Nouvel Empire*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis [OBO] 134, Fribourg: Éditions universitaires Fribourg, 1994, especially p. 91–209; John Coleman Darnell, "The Apotropaic Goddess in the Eye", in *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* [SAK] 24 (1997): 35–48; and many others.

with the bloodthirsty goddess Sakhmet. In its docile aspect it is often identical with the goddess Hathor, etc. It is also true that the Eye can actually become a representative of female deities in general as most Egyptian goddesses are on occasion equated with it. I therefore dare say that the antithetical qualities evident in the character of the Eye were latently attributed to female mythological characters in general.[596]

Now it is important to note that this paradoxical quality (the docile wife on the one hand and the ravaging temptress/cunning sorceress on the other) was only attributed to women on the level of mythology. As Stephan J. Seidlmayer has shown in his article, we can see that in the case of funerary objects originating from the cemetery of the Old and Middle Kingdoms (Dynasties 6–11) at Elephantine (Qubbet el-Hawa), standard gender stereotypes were actually maintained.[597] In these cases the established gender roles do not seem to be problematized in any way. Men were mostly depicted with weapons and women with cosmetic utensils.[598] Nevertheless, I see a difference between the design of individual objects used for a specific individual and mythological texts. Individual votive and funerary objects may bear the influence of a person and thus affirm the gender roles which framed an individual's life. We can imagine that a depiction of a woman with bracelets on a dish could reflect the personal wish of the deceased to be rich and beautiful in the afterlife. On the other hand, the composition of funerary texts requires not only a knowledge of reading and writing, but also a certain ability to think and conceptualize on a higher abstract level. Ancient Egyptian women would definitely be able to master this type of discourse. Nevertheless, from the evidence available to us so far it seems that ancient Egyptian society itself did not allow them to do so or did not train them in such a way. This remained the prerogative of men. It was men who composed and copied the funerary compositions for individuals and it was men who had to change the created templates when necessary. My point is that female characters were gifted with a different type of power unavailable to men only in the minds of (these very same) men. What I would like to stress at this moment is that I am not attempting to reconstruct the position played by women in ancient Egyptian society. I am trying to show

596 See also for example Michèle Broze, "Père des pères et mère des mères: la déesse Neith et la création du dieu-roi", in J. Gayon et J.-J. Wunenburger (ed.), *Le paradigme de la filiation*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1995, p. 349–360.

597 Stephan Johannes Seidlmayer, "Die ikonographie des Todes", in H. Willems (ed.), *Social Aspects of Funerary Culture in the Egyptian Old and Middle Kingdoms. Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at Leiden University 6–7 June, 1996*, Leuven: Peeters, 2001, p. 205–252. I am thankful to Harco Willems for drawing my attention to this article (personal communication, Leuven, 20.7.2011).

598 Seidlemeyer, "Die ikonographie des Todes", p. 235, 238 (Abb. 16).

that the paradoxical quality attributed to female characters in ancient Egyptian mythology stems from within the system of gender roles through which the ancient Egyptian literate men decided to conceptualize the world and which are detectable in the writings left to us from the past. If the social power structure is presented as occupied by a certain group (men) at the expense of another (women) and if this under-represented group formed an integral and important part of society (as women no doubt did), then the social rules which restricted the personal conduct of men (as documented, for example, by various teachings) with regard to these power positions did not apply in such an extent to the other group (women). This is what empowers women in the minds of men and creates the bivalent mythological female character.[599] The question now is what function do the female characters play in the complex of ancient Egyptian mythology.

The paradoxical double quality which was assigned to female characters within ancient Egyptian mythological discourse puts them in an ideal position to assume the role of mediating figures (which does not mean that every female character is necessarily a mediating figure). A mediator in general has several functions and displays several characteristics (see also above, p. 83–84).[600] First of all, a mediator is in some way closely connected to the various groups or principles between which (s)he/it mediates. The fact that they move in between categories requires that they often change physical shape according to the needs of the moment. Their deeds may often be viewed as "trickery" because they display acts of very high cunning – hence their alternative designation "tricksters". They bend or defy the limits and categories normally in play either according to their will or because of their nature.[601]

599 See also Lana Troy, "Good and Bad Women. Maxim 18/284–288 of the Instructions of Ptahhotep", *Göttineger Miszellen* [GM] 80 [1984]: 79: "The division of the feminine nature into 'good' and 'bad' women is equated [...] with the duality formed by Mut and Hathor. The double nature of Hathor is manifested by her relationship to the goddess Mut as a complimentary pair. This in turn becomes an adequate imagery for the two sides of the female character, seen in social terms as the prostitute and the wife, in mythological terms as the lioness and mild tempered cat [...]."

600 The concept of mediators is crucial for the structuralist anthropological tradition starting with Claude Lévi-Strauss (for example Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 224). It is nevertheless true that Lévi-Strauss underestimated the role of mediators in mythology in general. It was Edmund Leach who realised the full potential and the importance of these mediating figures. He was especially fascinated by the ability of female mediators to convert certain principles into their direct opposites (endogamy into exogamy, etc.). See, for example, Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon", p. 40–79.

601 We might think of even more characteristics typical of mediators but these are the most prominent ones. At the same time, not all of these features have to be accentuated at once by a mediating character at one specific moment, nor are they exclusive to the category of mediators (for example, shape-shifting is an ability shared by many characters). The context in which a certain character appears must always be taken into consideration in order to assess that character's role correctly.

If we look at the roles played by female characters in the above analysed narratives and especially in the Tale of Two Brothers, we can see that they are depicted exactly as the powerful powerless, mediators who are somehow dangerous, yet crucial for the development of the whole plot:

EPISODE	FEMALE PRINCIPLE	EVENT IN THE STORY	RESULT FOR THE STRUCTURE OF THE NARRATIVE	OUTCOME FOR FEMALE PRINCIPLE
EPISODE B AND C	Anubis' wife	Tries to seduce Bata (incest) and by a lie cajoles Anubis to protect her honour and kill Bata (attempt at fratricide).	The whole story is set into motion.	She is brutally killed and her corpse fed to the dogs.
INITIAL EPISODE II	Bata's wife, female sexuality (lock of hair)	Is created by the gods of Egypt for Bata as his wife in the Valley of the Pine. Her lock of hair is brought by *ym* to the pharaoh.	Represents a materialisation of Bata's femininity (he is castrated). Through her sexuality she (a) establishes contact with the liminal zone (attack of the lecherous *ym*) and (b) establishes contact with the order-pharaoh via her lock of hair (sexuality).	–
EPISODE E	1) Pharaoh's envoy, lady of the court	1) Persuades Bata's wife to join her and come with her to the court.	1) She acts as the female mediator between the pharaoh and Bata for whom it is impossible to develop contact with order through the male principle (soldiers killed).	–
	2) Bata's wife alias pharaoh's wife	2) After the failure of the pharaoh's first war party, she leaves Bata, persuaded(?) by a woman envoy sent by the pharaoh with jewellery.	Bata gets rid of his overt femininity; part of Bata is associated with the source of order (pharaoh) – his way back into order commences. Bata's secret is revealed by the woman once closest to him.	

EPISODE F	Bata's wife alias the pharaoh's wife	Reveals Bata's secret which causes his death (pine tree chopped down).	By destroying Bata's imperfect bodily form, she starts the restructuring process of the Bata character. Once completed, Bata will be empowered to cross the liminal zone and become reintegrated into order.	–
EPISODE H AND I	Bata's wife alias the pharaoh's wife	Persuades the king to kill Bata (in the form of a sacred bull).	By destroying Bata's non-human bodily form, she enables him to ascend a step closer to the source of order.	–
EPISODE K AND L	Bata's wife alias the pharaoh's wife	Persuades the king to kill Bata (in the form of two *šwb* trees).	By destroying Bata's non-human bodily form, she enables him to ascend a step closer to the source of order.	–
EPISODE M–O	Bata's wife alias the pharaoh's wife alias Bata's mother	Becomes pregnant with Bata; promotes Bata to become the pharaoh's favourite son and heir to the throne.	By giving human form to Bata (through her own body), she enables him to enter the innermost zone closest to the source of order – the pharaoh's family.	She is judged by her son/husband, found guilty and executed(?).

tab. 4: Overview of the female characters and their actions in the Tale of Two Brothers

From the table we may see that the female characters were actually behind all the turning points of the narrative. Without them there would be no progress, the various situations would "freeze", so to say, in the power constellations set up between the various male characters. Nevertheless, both of the main female characters have been, in the end, judged by their male counterparts and found guilty of treachery and deceit (save the Lady of the Court, who plays an episodic role). From the events of the Tale of Two Brothers we can see the ambiguous position assigned to female characters in general and also the crucial position which they occupy with regard to the narrative.[602]

602 See also Teysseire, *The Portrayal of Women*, p. 63–78 (esp. p. 67–71).

The Osiris Myth

Similarly, Isis and Nephthys also play a crucial role in the events surrounding Osiris' death. Even though wed to Osiris and Seth, symbolising the antipodes, these two goddesses are in most cases depicted as the ideal sister pair. In magical practice[603] the ancient Egyptians even conflated these two goddesses into one bearing the name Senepthtys.[604] Jan Quaegebeur also names several instances (the temple at Philae, Deir el Shelouit) in which Nephthys is directly described as the mother of Horus.[605] In Papyrus Berlin 3008 (V, 5) we are informed that the son of Osiris was "born from the two sisters"[606] which prompted J. Gwyn Griffiths to note that: "Curious as it may seem, the idea is undoubtedly one which sees Isis and Nephthys a two-in-one mother-figure."[607] According to Barbara Lesko, it does not seem that Nephthys had a cult centre of her own[608] and she does not play an independent and/or prominent role in mythology.[609] Nephthys, in fact, seems to be defined primarily through her relationship with Isis. This close relationship bordering on identity between these two female deities also tells us something about the relationship between their partners. The goddesses, as their wives, have a firm connection with both parties. However, at the same time, the goddesses are so close to each other that they represent an indirect and alternative level on which the two opposing (male) parties connect. This is still true even in cases when Nephthys is left out of the equation. The connection between Osiris and Seth is mediated by their direct kin-relationship to Isis.

603 Hans D. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992[2] [1986[1]].
604 Quaegebeur, "Le théonyme Senephthys": 111–122.
605 Quaegebeur, "Le théonyme Senephthys": 120, n. 60–64.
606 Raymond O. Faulkner, "The Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys", Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale [MIFAO] 66 = Mélanges Maspero I, Le Caire, 1934, p. 340.
607 Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, p. 316, n. 1.
608 Erhart Graefe ("Nephthys", in Helck und Otto [Hrsg.], *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Bd. IV, cols. 458–459) mentions several localities which are either reported to have had a temple structure dedicated to Nephthys or where she seems to have played an important role. Nevertheless, from the surviving material it seems that these temple structures would have been affiliated to temple complexes of other gods, namely Seth.
609 Barbara Lesko, *The Great Goddesses of Egypt*, Norman (Oklahoma): University of Oklahoma Press, 1999, p. 271.

Structural similarities between the roles of female characters

At this moment I would like to summarise the conclusions arrived at with regard to the various female characters encountered in the previously analysed mythical compositions. It seems possible to define a certain "basic set" of personality traits which these female characters share:

ANAT MYTH	TALE OF TWO BROTHERS
SEED GODDESS (LASCIVIOUS SEDUCTRESS) – very sensuous (provokes Seth's lust which is then labelled as "stupid") ANAT (FOREIGNER) (EXHIBITS STRONG MARTIAL ASPECTS) – Re's daughter (in other contexts Seth's wife) and foreigner at the same time – maintains a connection between the opposing parties (Osiris-Re and Seth) ISIS (MOTHER) (PROTECTOR OF HER FAMILY/ CHILD HORUS) – finds the Seed thus solving a troublesome and dangerous situation on behalf of her son Horus/the patient	ANUBIS' WIFE (LASCIVIOUS SEDUCTRESS) – sensuous – strives to seduce Bata BATA'S WIFE (FOREIGNER) – daughter of all Egyptian gods ("the water [*mw*]/seed of every god was in her") however living outside Egypt proper – very sensuous (provokes Yam's lust and the pharaoh's longing) – creates a communication channel between order (pharaoh) and the evicted Bata LADY OF THE COURT – assists Bata's wife in her transition from "the outside" to "the inside" (the pharaoh's wife) – mediates a connection between "the inside" (the pharaoh's court) and "the outside" (foreign land) PHARAOH'S WIFE (RAGING CHARACTER) (MOTHER) (PROTECTOR OF THE PHARAOH/ HER CHILD) – represents the aggressive aspect of the pharaoh's character – after Bata becomes her child she starts protecting him

CONTENDINGS OF HORUS AND SETH	OSIRIS MYTH
ISIS (CUNNING SEDUCTRESS) (MOTHER) (PROTECTOR OF HER FAMILY/ CHILD HORUS) – in the form of a beautiful woman she seduces Seth so that he judges his own actions (he is then described as stupid) – during the fight of Horus and Seth in the Nile as hippos, Isis spears both of them. In both cases she withdraws the spear once she is informed that she has hit a member of her direct family (brother Seth, son Horus) HATHOR (LASCIVIOUS SEDUCTRESS) – "seduces" (empowers) the All-Lord by showing him her vulva	ISIS (CUNNING SEDUCTRESS) (MOTHER) (PROTECTOR OF HER FAMILY/ CHILD HORUS) – by using her knowledge of magic, Isis entices Osiris' male powers and posthumously begets Horus – she protects Horus from the wrath of Seth NEPHTHYS – assists her sister Isis – as Seth's wife she mediates between the two opposing parties

tab. 5: Structural similarities between roles of female characters in selected Egyptian mythological compositions

We may conclude that the distribution of the specific personality traits between the female characters in the individual mythical compositions is not identical. However, the scope of their functions is quite clearly limited to a certain basic set: seductress, foreigner, vengeful/aggressive, protector of her husband/child. It seems that each myth assigned a different "mix" of these basic personality traits to various characters. Therefore, it is difficult to say that a character from one myth displays the same characteristics as another and that they are, in that case, identical. Instead, it is as if we had the feeling that a certain character (for example Bata's wife) shares several personality traits with Anat and the Seed-goddess in the Anat Myth. In the Tale of Two Brothers we actually witness the transformation of one character into another (Bata's wife – the pharaoh's wife), thus strengthening the idea that regardless of the number of female characters and the roles which they are assigned in a certain context, each of them could latently exhibit all of the other personality traits (i.e. any female character is interchangeable with the others and therefore essentially identical to the others). In the case of the Osirian Cycle, the scene is dominated by Isis, Nephthys having only a secondary role. In the Contendings of Horus and Seth, motherly Isis and lascivious Hathor are strictly separated. The differences can be understood as being conditioned by the diverging issues which the individual myths deal with. To understand them better, a detailed analysis, as presented in the case of the Tale of Two Brothers above, would have to be conducted for the other myths as well. In all cases, however,

the female characters either personify the relationship of the identity between various male characters or bridge the various opposing male parties and enable their interaction (and possible gradual identification). To make this more imaginable, we could visualise the patterns in the following way:

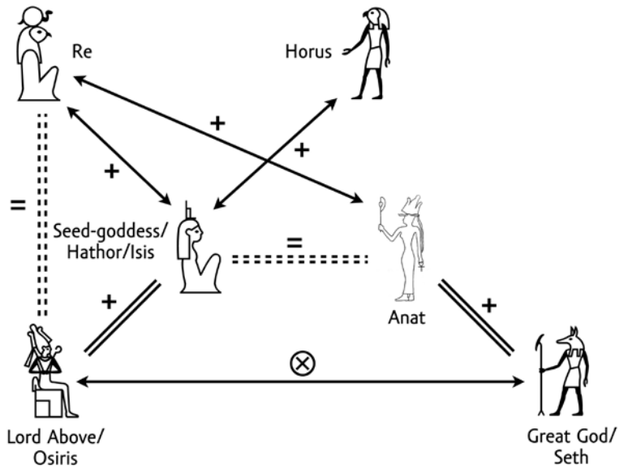


fig. 35: Mediating role of female characters in the Anat Myth

1) Anat Myth: the conflict which constitutes the whole situation lies between Seth and Osiris. Seth withholds the Seed-goddess; he copulates with her, i.e. he usurps her (she goes to his brow). The character of the Seed-goddess seems to represent the female sexual creative potency of the sun god as personified, for example, by Hathor (i.e. she has a close relationship with Re). At the same time, the Seed-goddess is explicitly identified as the wife of the Lord Above (Osiris), traditionally Isis. Through this female character, the identity of Osiris and Re is implied. Anat, on the other hand, seems to have a close connection with Seth. She intervenes on his behalf and in other texts she is generally ascribed to Seth as his consort. Structurally, she seems to be in a very similar position to Nephthys in other contexts; in a close relationship with Seth but also as a mirror image of Isis and her inextricable partner. An implicit identity between the Seed-goddess and Anat is therefore marked in the diagram. At the same time, however, Anat is closely connected to Re – she is explicitly mentioned as his daughter. The last party entering into the schematics is Horus, the son of Isis, who recovers the Seed-goddess and fixes the situation. The whole situation is then related to the context of

the text. The opposing male parties (Lord Above/Osiris-Re × Seth) and the situation of lack and the inability to revive life (Osiris-Re identification) finds a contextual solution in the character of the patient who enables the appeasement and connection of these opposites and thus the restoration of cosmic order and his individual health. This is done through the double meaning of the word *mtw.t* as "seed" and "poison". However, this would not have been possible without the female deities. They have positive relationships towards all the male parties involved and at the same time they are, in fact, identical. This means that the female characters are capable of mediating between the various (often opposing) male parties.

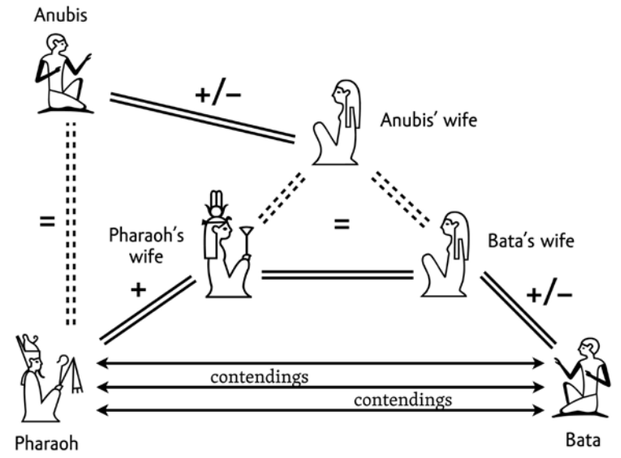


fig. 36: Mediating role of female characters in the Tale of Two Brothers

2) Tale of Two Brothers: the conflict which constitutes the whole situation is between Bata and the pharaoh (on a certain level predefined by the conflict between Bata and Anubis). Whereas the identity between the various female characters in the Anat Myth was only implied, the identity of Bata's wife and the pharaoh's wife is quite explicitly described in the Tale of Two Brothers. They are one and the same character who acts in totally contrasting ways and is guided by contrasting motives. The identity with Anubis' wife is only implicitly implied through the explicit identity of all the male characters, which is achieved by each in their turn becoming the pharaoh. However, for the reasons mentioned above, the identity of the pharaoh character and Anubis also seems to play an important part in the story. Even though the role of the

female characters in this narrative does not seem to be as crucial to the final identification of the male deities (they were identified through the office of the pharaoh and the females were judged and disposed of), without their input and mediation none of the events which led to this end would have taken place. They were crucial to the whole process but their role was subsequently diminished.

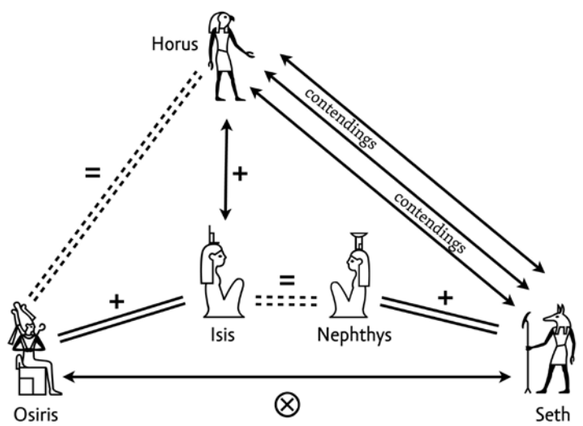


fig. 37: Mediating role of female characters in the Osirian Cycle

3) Osirian Cycle: the conflict which constitutes the whole situation is between Seth and Osiris/Horus. The main female character who mediates the events is Isis. She is the one who revives Osiris after his death and begets Horus. She is the one who lures Seth into condemning his own acts, protects Horus from Seth's sexual harassment and attempts to show that he is the passive element in the constellation. However, once directly confronted with the fact that she has blood ties to both of them (harpooning episode in which Horus and Seth contend under water as hippos), she confirms that her relationship is from a certain point equally close to both of them. Regardless of whether Nephthys enters into the constellation or not, in the Osirian Cycle Isis seems to represent the focal character enabling contact between the opposing male parties.

Structural Map of Selected Ancient Egyptian Narratives

In the previous chapters I analysed those myths which describe a conflict between opposing parties of some kind. I also tried to show the structural similarities of the various compositions from several aspects. Some compositions are structurally similar because they relate the mythological content to a certain social institution (to the office of pharaoh as in the Tale of Two Brothers) or an existential situation (to the patient as in the Anat Myth). This cultural or existential reality enters into the mythological scheme. It serves as a certain overlaying matrix to which the individual motifs must be related in order to decipher the symbolic language of the myth. At the same time, the conclusion (either explicitly stated in the myth or obvious from the context in which it was used) actually founds the premises of the composition; the knowledge that the pharaoh is the point in which opposites unite (thus creating a functional whole) is a prerequisite to understanding the relationship of identity between the various characters even before we are actually informed that they are identical.

Another level of structural similarity is mediated by the paradoxical relationship between two antithetical parties which contend with each other (Seth and Horus in the Contendings; Bata and the pharaoh in the Tale of Two Brothers). Even in this case, the essential problem to which this type of relationship refers is the paradoxical notion of identity in diversity. Order may only be maintained through the never ending balancing of the fixed structure of the current state of affairs contrasted with the disintegrative potential of the chaos outside it. One cannot be without the other because each is defined by the other through contrast. This notion is difficult to grasp or conceptualise precisely because it is paradoxical. A narrative context enables the decomposition of this paradoxical statement into a series of events. The logics of mythological semiosis (merging and splitting of figures, for example) show in which way we can conceptualise the notion of a relationship which is simultaneously antithetical and identical (the relationship between Horus and Seth described, for example, in terms of passivity and activity, see above, p. 202–204).

The last level of similar structural patterns was shown in relation to female characters in ancient Egyptian mythology in general. Female characters seem to have the ability to modify certain seemingly fixed and inimical relationships between the male gods, gradually transforming them and enabling their consolidation/identification. The female characters have this ability because they seem to have been regarded as somehow standing "outside" the power grid.

In all of the above analysed mythical narratives, a certain basic structure may be detected:[610]

Structural map of selected ancient Egyptian narratives

Osirian Cycle	Anat Myth	Tale of Two Brothers
Osiris Myth		
① Seth kills/castrates Osiris thus depriving him of his ability to act (sexually). Osiris is "weak" and unable to partake in the cycle of life (become renewed through progeny).	① Seed-goddess seduces Seth. Seth copulates (as a bull, aggressively, overtly masculine) thus preventing Osiris-Re's resurrection by depriving him of his ability to act (sexually). Re "ended his course in the evening" (i.e. is old).	① Anubis' wife attempts to seduce Bata (overtly masculine). According to her subsequent version, it was Bata who behaved aggressively.
② ——	② Seth becomes ill. Acquiring the Seed-goddess for himself proved to be too much. She (overt femininity) is inappropriate for him (goes to his brow).	② Bata is evicted "outside", is considered "dead". Bata is married to a woman whose overt femininity is inappropriate for him (he is unable to protect her).
③ ——	③ ——	① By being married to an overtly feminine character, Bata is keeping this female away from the pharaoh (solely who seems fit to be her legitimate partner) thus preventing the pharaoh from producing an heir (his reincarnation).
④ Isis (and Nephthys) recovers the pieces including the penis (or fashions a new one). Both goddesses seem to be the female link between the opposing male parties.	④ Isis (and Anat) recover the Seed-goddess. Both goddesses seem to be the female link between the opposing male parties.	③ Contendings between the pharaoh and Bata.
⑤ ——	⑤ ——	④ The Lady of the Court and Bata's wife recover the missing part crucial for the pharaoh's resurrection (i.e. Bata's wife becomes the pharaoh's wife). Both female characters seem to be the link between the opposing male parties.
⑥ By copulating with Osiris, Isis gives birth to his reincarnation Horus.	⑥ Isis, becoming Re's mother and wife, enables Re to be born in the morning (as Re-Harakhty)	⑤ Bata's character is disintegrated (he dies). This opens a channel between him and Anubis, who revivifies him and merges with him through an embrace (both Bata and Anubis are subsequently empowered to become the pharaoh).
Contendings of Horus and Seth		⑥ Bata's wife becomes his mother thus giving birth to his own reincarnation. Bata's older brother becomes Bata's heir and son thus repeating the imagery once more.
① ——		
② ——		
③ Contendings between Horus and Seth.		
④ ——		
⑤ Seth is conquered and made passive (bound). Horus is empowered (through direct contact with Seth) to succeed in the office of his father. Seth occupies an elevated position within the order of things side by side with Horus.		
⑥ ——		

tab. 6: Structural map of selected ancient Egyptian narratives

610 As van Dijk first noticed, the relationships between the characters of the Anat Myth remarkably resemble those of the Osiris Myth (van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 42–44). My table is to a certain extent inspired by van Dijk's article.

As we can see, the focal points of such a general structure comprise approximately six basic themes:

① A male character (afflicted party) is made passive (by a male opponent) and is unable to act (sexually). This act is often described as depriving of/appropriating someone/something (sexual ability) which rightfully belongs to the afflicted party by an aggressive act (of copulation/murder/castration). This means impairing the ability of the afflicted party to produce progeny and thus be reborn (described as weak, old, etc.).[611]

② The opponent is himself troubled by the newly gained (creative/sexual/libidinal/life-giving) force which he took from the afflicted party. It is inappropriate for the opponent and causes his illness or a state similar to death.

③ A series of clashes between the opponent and the afflicted party (or his character bifurcation).

④ A stalemate situation is facilitated by a female character(s) to whom all the male parties involved have some sort of close or positive relationship (most often described in kinship terms).

⑤ The opponent is gradually disintegrated (bound, killed) and thus deprived of the redundant force/ability. The afflicted party gains it back in some form. Through contact with each other, both male parties are restructured and their reintegration into order/identification is enabled.

⑥ The mediating female character facilitates the rebirth of the afflicted male party in the form of her own son (the Kamutef motif).

Just as we have seen in the case of the female characters in ancient Egyptian myth, the various points are not always present in every myth or they may take on various forms. At the same time, each composition involves either different characters or represents an original ordering of the individual motifs. These differences were conditioned by the context in which the specific compositions appeared (for example, the socio-cultural realities with which they were bound, i.e. ritual, political, funereal, etc.). The individual motifs can even be reordered or split into more parts. This is shown in the case of motif ① in the Tale of Two Brothers. This motif was actually divided into two

611 Van Dijk understands Seth's role as depriving Re of the ability of rebirth by attacking the Seed, i.e. the female part of the Creator God (i.e. the "hand" personified, for example, by the goddesses Iusaa or Nebethetepet) with whom/through whom he created plurality from unity by masturbating (van Dijk, "Anat, Seth and the Seed of Pre", p. 41). Even though I agree with van Dijk that Seth threatens divine rebirth and the continuation of life, I consider it important to add that Seth also endangers Osiris (i.e. the God Above), who is the archetypical "god in need" missing his ability to act (sexually). However, as both Re and Osiris merge during the sun's journey in the Netherworld, in the end, the endangering of the ability of rebirth of either one effects both. I have, therefore, changed van Dijk's table and stressed the similarity between the Anat Myth and the Osirian Cycle through the character of Osiris rather than Re.

parts and "sandwiched", so to say, around motif ②. The reason for this is the complex and multilayer transformation process which the various characters in the narrative undergo. Another reason is the crucial and quite original role ascribed to the Bata-Sethian character. In the Osirian Cycle, Seth plays the quite clearly defined role of the one who deprives Osiris of his life force/ability to act. This position is also recognisable in the Anat Myth with regard to Osiris-Re. The situation in the Tale of Two Brothers is, however, a little bit different. Even though no mention is explicitly made of Seth as such, following Wettengel I have argued (see above, p. 180–186) that Bata, for an important part of the narrative, does show strong Sethian characteristics. Whatever the actual reasons (political? genealogical?), the Ramesside kings systematically stressed Seth's integral part in the order of things, some of them even identified with him as indicated by their names. The case of the Tale of Two Brothers therefore seems to be a very special example of how the common structure of the "conflict constellation" (regardless of the parties involved) stresses the integrative function of the conflict as a relationship structure. It seems that the Ramesside royal ideology took advantage of the masculine character and force which was typical of Seth to stress this aspect of the royal office. However, this could not have been the "primitive" and "stupid" form of Seth's character but its transformed and "domesticated" version. In this form, Seth can and does represent the ability of order to confront enemies outside its realm. In fact, he is an ideal symbol for the conceptualisation of this idea as he himself is considered a god of the "outside" (desert, foreign lands, etc.). In order to take advantage of Seth's potential, it seems that the New Kingdom narratives in general stressed the gradual decomposition/submission of Seth's character and his subsequent reformation into a god whose abilities strengthen order rather than disintegrate it. However, the New Kingdom narratives stress it not by introducing new motifs (i.e. some "new" and "positive" version of Seth in the form of Seth-Baal for example), but by simply actualising or re-interpreting concepts which were traditionally present but not as pronounced in other contexts.

Stressing Seth's positive role also requires showing in what way he may be identified with other typical representatives of the royal office – i.e. Horus, Osiris, and even Re. It seems that this is exactly what we can see in a very condensed way in the Anat Myth and quite explicitly in the Tale of Two Brothers. This narrative, on the one hand, maintains the traditional position of Seth as the god "outside" through the character of Bata exhibiting character traits which are typical of Seth. He is a character of "too much" in whom individual personality traits are "improperly mixed". He is a virile man (able to carry heavy loads, his cattle are very fertile), yet he also does the work of women (cooks food, takes care of the house). His overt virility causes his brother's wife to attempt an incestuous and socially unacceptable relationship with him and causes

strife and the violation of socially prescribed kinship relations. He castrates himself thus getting rid of this overt masculinity. At that moment, his overt femininity is pronounced. It takes on the form of a very beautiful woman begotten by the seed of every Egyptian god. Just as Bata's masculinity was improperly strong, so is his femininity. As Bata himself admits, he cannot protect her as a man because he is a woman just like she is. The ideal partner for such a woman seems to be the pharaoh – the representative of order and its maintainer. What is more, his attempts at claiming Bata's wife for himself are not expressed in the story as something inappropriate. It is also noteworthy that the pharaoh is successful only once he contacts Bata's wife through the help of another woman – all previous attempts which were mediated by male envoys had failed. In this sense we can see the crucial role of female mediators. Once Bata's wife crosses the border which separates the two parties, she becomes a vicious and dangerous character who entices the pharaoh to eliminate Bata. She demonstrates the destructive ability of the "outside" once re-integrated into order. Once Bata is deprived of his feminine part, his disintegration is completed and he dies. At that moment the channel between Bata and Anubis is activated. Anubis revivifies Bata and reintegrates his personality (gives him his heart and embraces him). Once Bata's personality is restructured in this way, he is immediately transported into Egypt and he begins his gradual progress within order itself. This process closely resembles the disintegration/"bonding" of Seth in the Contendings of Horus and Seth and the paradoxical situation which we witness there – at the moment of his loss and absolute humiliation (he is brought in shackles), Seth is elevated to the highest echelons of order (into the bark of Re).

At the same time, however, we can see that the events which are happening to Bata, and which I consider to be a narrative rendition of the transformation of a Sethian-like character, are described and conceptualised with strong references to the events surrounding Osiris. Bata is deprived of his ability to act (sexually) by losing his penis. However, it is Bata himself who performs the act and in the logic of the composition this even has a positive and reconstituting effect on the relationship between the two brothers. It seems as if the events are familiar and remind us of Osiris but are not exactly identical. Once deprived of his penis/virility, Bata attains a death-like existence (Anubis returns home as a person in mourning). However, this is conceptualised by stressing the fact that he lives "outside" of Egypt (Valley of the Pine). Again, this is "like" Osiris, but the desert and foreign lands are traditionally connected with the domain of Seth. Once the pine on which Bata's heart was placed is felled and Bata is actually killed, he immediately transforms into an Osirian-type character awaiting his older brother/heir-to-be to revivify him, just as Horus revivifies his father Osiris. Once Bata is transported into Egypt, his Osirian character is enriched by the aspect of Re. This is clearly marked by the physical transformations which Bata undergoes in his

progress to the office of the pharaoh. In the end, Bata becomes his own re-incarnation by impregnating his own mother/wife and attains the position of heir to the throne and then the king himself.

We can therefore see that throughout the story, Bata is balanced between the personality characteristics of both Osiris and Seth. He seems to be a personalisation of this duality and this fact is repeatedly hinted at throughout the story only to be revealed at the end when the identity of all male characters involved is explicitly pronounced. None of the above mentioned motifs are original in any way. In fact they are typically Egyptian. However, the Tale of Two Brothers seems to be a very specific re-interpretation of these traditional motifs or, rather, their very original reorganisation.

CHAPTER VII

The Astarte Papyrus (pBN 202+pAmherst IX)

We have finally arrived at the analysis of the composition which was at the beginning of this work. As I explained above, due to its fragmentary state, in order to understand the significance and position of the Astarte Papyrus within ancient Egyptian tradition correctly, I first had to establish a general matrix of a certain type of ancient Egyptian myths.

Just as in the case of the Anat Myth, many scholars have also noticed certain affinities between the Astarte Papyrus and the mythographic traditions of the Near East, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia (see above p. 49–58). The historical context in which the story was written, which has been neatly and comprehensively shown by Collombert and Coulon and Schneider, also seems to support the point that the story represents an import into Egypt facilitated by the foreign communities living in Egypt during the reign of Amenophis II. The many loan-words which appear within the story, the foreign deities of Yam, Astarte and also Baal (who is not mentioned but whose attributes correspond directly with those of the hero of our story), all support this theory. Other scholars have settled with showing parallels of this story in other cultures. All of this work is very important, but, unfortunately, nobody has shown how the text of the Astarte Papyrus fits in with the whole of ancient Egyptian society and its religious and political tradition. The text is written in a very neat hieratic and its estimated length, as I noted earlier, would have been about twice as long as the longest story preserved from the time of the New Kingdom, the Contendings of Horus and Seth. The Astarte Papyrus must have been a substantial and important story for the Egyptians themselves. But how does this correspond with the motifs which must have sounded foreign to the native Egyptian? I believe that we must follow van Dijk's approach and try and define the position of the Astarte Papyrus with regard to established Egyptian mythological patterns before we conclude that it is simply a non-Egyptian infiltration. I also consider this approach to be legitimate because the motif of the lecherous Yam is included in the

Tale of Two Brothers, i.e. in a story whose integral place in genuinely ancient Egyptian mythographical tradition can hardly be doubted.

In the following structural analysis we cannot, unfortunately, proceed as in the case of the Tale of Two Brothers because the text of the Astarte Papyrus is too fragmentary to allow for a coherent and neat division into episodes. I will, therefore, compare the few basic episodic events which the fragments allow us to reconstruct with the above analysis of other Egyptian stories.

Structural interpretation of the Astarte Papyrus

At the beginning, it is necessary to visualise the main parties involved in our story and the relations which they have with each other graphically (for a translation and synopsis of the papyrus, see above, p. 63–71)

1,1 – 1,x+4
The hero is introduced, he is the pharaoh with all the attributes of the mighty Baal-Seth. Something has been done for him to enable him to fight on the side of the Ennead against Yam (fig. 38).

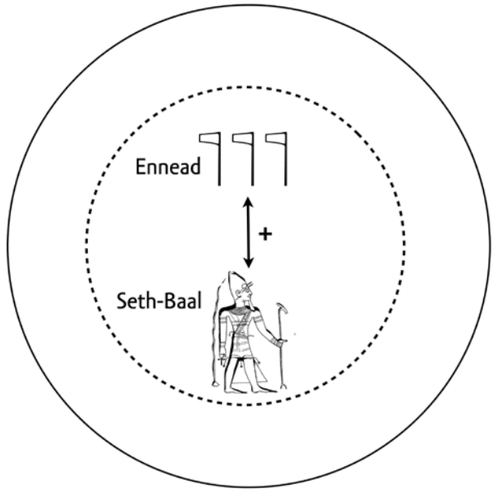


fig. 38

1,x+5 – 2,x+3
In a cosmological setting, Yam is mentioned together with an epithet Ruler and mention is made of a throne. The Ennead is first threatened by Yam who demands tribute. The whole situation is described as "evil" and "frightening" (fig. 39).

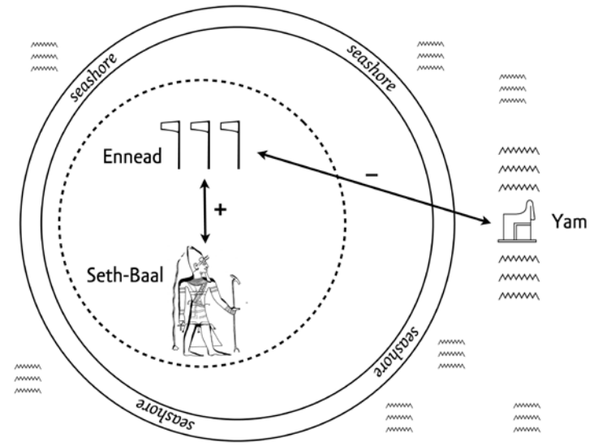


fig. 39

2,x+3 – 5,y
The Ennead (represented by Renut) finds an intermediary in the form of the goddess Astarte who is able to contact Yam by descending naked to the sea-shore. Astarte is introduced into the midst of the Ennead and awarded a place of honour. A series of interactions between the Ennead and Yam takes place, with Yam always strengthening his demands for tribute (fig. 40).

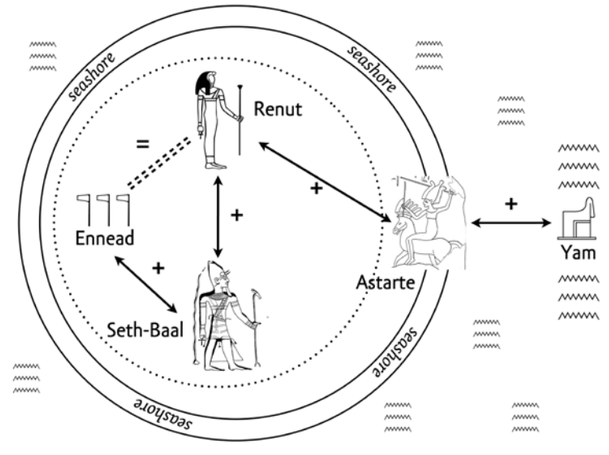


fig. 40

15,y-1[612]

The god Seth stands up and claims that Yam shall not dare to fight the Ennead, represented by him (fig. 41).

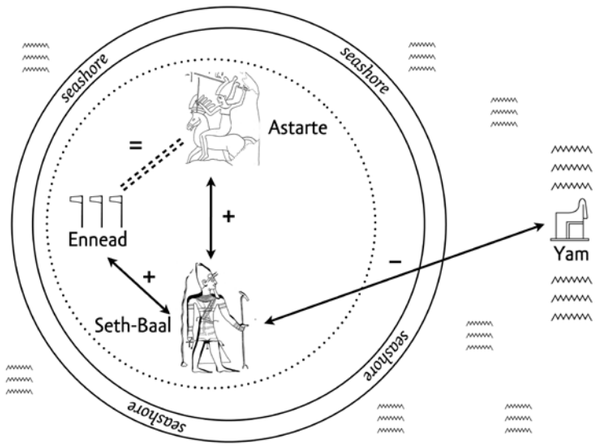


fig. 41

What is interesting about the fragmentary structure of the Astarte Papyrus is that in several details it very closely resembles the structure of the previously analysed mythological compositions. Again, we can see that a crucial role in the conflict situation is played by female characters. The two opposing male parties are Seth and Yam. Even before any direct clash takes place, two goddesses function as intermediaries. Renut is closer to Seth. She is an Egyptian goddess. On the other hand we have Astarte. A female deity who traditionally is very closely associated with Yam in Near Eastern mythology, but also with Seth-Baal. At the same time, Astarte seems to have a closer relationship with Yam than with Renut. Astarte shares a foreign origin with him and she even descends to the limits of his dominion (the seashore). Being opposed to the male opponents, both goddesses seem to be actually able to communicate with each other and attempt to broker a deal of some sort. The relationships may be visualised in the following way (compare with diagrams on p. 230–232):

612 Pages 6,y – 14,y as well as 15,y – 19,y are too fragmentary to allow for any concise summary and are therefore left out of the summary.

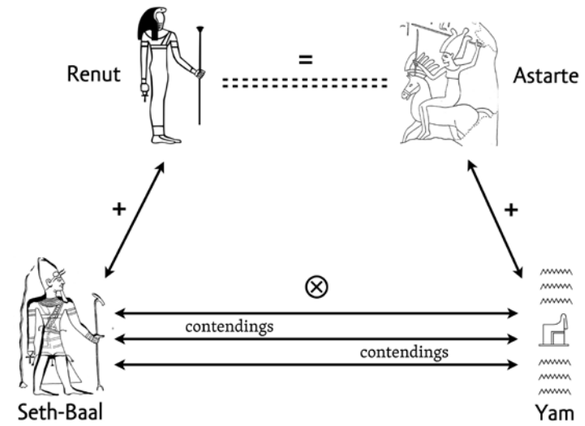


fig. 42: Mediating role of female characters in the Astarte Papyrus

What is intriguing is the similarity between the functions and characteristics of Bata's wife with those of Astarte. Astarte's physiognomy (not only in Egypt) puts her in an ideal position to fulfil this task – she is a marginal figure *par excellence*. Astarte is, in general, a goddess representing passion and states of strong emotions – she is a bloodthirsty goddess (Yam addresses her on the seashore [2, x+18]: "You angry goddess") and at the same time she represents sexual passion in its raw form (she comes to Yam naked) – the sort of passion that borders on aggression. In her aggressive aspect she is connected to both Seth and Yam. She shares elements of both a ferocious warrior[613] and a sexually attractive woman, yet she is "untamed" by the social bond of marriage (or she is outside the bond of marriage, just as was the case with prostitutes).[614] This is how she can mediate between the two sides. She is neither within order (the mention of her being awarded a throne at the gathering of Egyptian gods seems to indicate that she did not previously occupy any position) nor outside it altogether (she has been awarded a throne). She is in between categories. In both the Astarte Papyrus and the Tale of Two Brothers the mediating figure of Astarte/Bata's wife cannot be contacted by the order directly but by the services of another mediator. In the Tale of Two Brothers,

613 When depicted in her war-like aspect she shares many similar aspects with male deities. See, for example: Harry S. Smith, *Fortress of Buhen*, London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1976, p.110, fig. xx [1112]; Leclant, "Astarte à cheval": 31–35, doc. 1, fig. 11.

614 On the connection between Innana-Ishtar and prostitutes, see: Jean Bottéro, "La femme, l'amour et la guerre en Mesopotamie ancienne", *Poikilia Etudes offertes à Jean-Pierre Vernant*, Paris: EHESS, 1987, p. 165–83; Rivkah Harris, "Inanna-Ishtar as Paradox and a Coincidence of Opposites", *History of Religions* 30/3 (1991): 262.

this role is played by the lady of the royal court and in the Astarte Papyrus it is played by Renut. In both cases, the female (deity) coming from "outside" is greeted with great joy and shown very strong respect. Bata's wife becomes the pharaoh's wife, Astarte is given the place of honour within the gathering of Egyptian gods. Astarte (or her foreign counterparts Ishtar, Innana and Shaushka) played the role of a marginal/liminal character in mythologies of other ancient civilisations (especially of the Sumero-Akkadian complex)[615] and it is this function that is also stressed in the Astarte Papyrus.

Based on the analysis of female characters in the previous compositions I dare assume that the open channel between Renut and Astarte is enabled thanks to a certain level of identity between both characters. The way in which this identity might have been conceptualised in the composition is unclear due to the absence of most of the text.

As Collombert and Coulon have shown, the crucial part of the Astarte Papyrus is the praise of the ruling King Amenophis II.[616] At the same time, he is identified with Seth-Baal who, by his attributes, may be seen to be the "hero" of our story. In this aspect, the Astarte Papyrus seems to represent a unique example in which the identification of the ruling king with Seth is made quite openly. It is even more interesting that of all of the analysed compositions, the Astarte Papyrus seems to be the oldest.[617] In the Tale of Two Brothers, the ruling king was ascribed the characteristic traits of a Sethian deity. However, this was done very subtly so that the Sethian character (i.e. Bata) could, in fact, play the traditional role of the "foreigner", or the ruling pharaoh's/Horus' opponent. From this point of view, the character distribution in the Astarte Papyrus seems quite unconventional. Even though it is impossible to rule out that the mythological composition was written for a community of foreigners, it still seems worthwhile to try and define how this unusual composition may have actually fitted into the ancient Egyptian mythological framework. If it was not also intended for an Egyptian audience, why write it in Egyptian?

Praising Seth for his valour and masculinity and ascribing these qualities to the pharaoh seems to have been an obvious tendency in New Kingdom Egypt in general. However, once the main character becomes Seth-Baal-Pharaoh, we are suddenly missing the ideal representative of the opposing party. This can hardly be Horus, for that would not make much sense (the pharaoh is also Horus). I have already

615 See especially Harris, "Inanna-Ishtar as Paradox": 261–278 and also Caitlín E. Barrett, "Was Dust Their Food and Clay Their Bread? Grave Goods, The Mesopotamian Afterlife, and the Liminal Role of Innana/Ishtar", *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* [JANER] 7/1 (2007): 7–65.

616 Collombert et Coulon, "Les dieux contre la mer": 206–209.

617 Astarte Papyrus: Dynasty 18, Amenophis II (approx. 1424–1398 BC); Anat Myth: Dynasty 19, Ramesses II (approx. 1279–1212 BC); Tale of Two Brothers: Dynasty 19, Sethi II (approx. 1201–1196 BC); Contendings of Horus and Seth: Dynasty 20, Ramesses V (approx. 1146–1143 BC).

mentioned the alternative traditions which depict Osiris as a perpetrator who in some way wronged Seth (see above, p. 179).[618] From this point of view, Seth-Baal-Pharaoh's opponent could have been Osiris. But, yet again, this tradition does not seem to have been prevalent. Putting Yam in the position of Seth's opponent seems to have been an ingenious solution. I have tried to show that Seth and Osiris represent mirror images of one another and as such they define each other (see above, p. 193–196). Seth is the voracious brother-slayer, the god of confusion who has "too much" of everything (strength, sexual appetite, etc.). However, once "restructured", tamed and integrated into order, he utilises these very same abilities to protect order and stands out as the champion of the gods (very much like in the Astarte Papyrus). Both aspects were present in the image of Seth, even though the chaotic aspect might have traditionally been given more prominence.

Something very similar can also be said of Osiris. Even though he was an ideal representative of order, a father whose son was the legitimate heir to the throne, he was (sexually) inactive and a "god in need", completely dependent on others. However, once "restructured", enabled to act again first by Isis and subsequently by his son Horus, Osiris became the absolute ruler of the Netherworld. Just as Seth's chaotic side was balanced by an orderly side, Osiris' orderly side also had a shadowy, chaotic and aggressive quality.[619]

Especially in connection with Osiris as the lord of the Netherworld, we sometimes hear of his terrifying and aggressive nature, as in a letter addressed to Re-Harakhty in the Contendings of Horus and Seth: "Concerning the land in which I am, it is filled with savage looking messengers who do not fear any god or goddess.

618 In PT 477 Pyr. 957a–959e (Sethe, *Die altägyptische Pyramidentexte*, Bd. II, p. 33–36) Seth is depicted more as a victim of Osiris' acts:

sḫ3 stš dj r jb=k (957a)
mdw pw ḏd<w>.n gb f3w pw jr<w>.n nṯr.w jr=k (957b)
m ḥw.t ḥr m jwnw ḥr ndj=k wsjr r t3 (957c)
m ḏd=k stš n jr.n<=j> js nw jr=f (958a)
sḫm=k jm nḥm=tj sḫm=k n ḥr (958b)
m ḏd=k stš jw=f wnnt jk.n=f w<j> (959a)
ḫpr<w> rn=f pw n<y> jkw-t3 (959b)
m ḏd=k stš jw=f wnnt s3ḥ.n=f w<j> (959c)
ḫpr<w> rn=f pw n s3ḥ (959d)

[...] Remember, Seth, and put in your heart (957a) this speech that Geb has said, this curse that the gods have made against you (957b) in the Official's Enclosure in Heliopolis, because you threw Osiris to the ground, (957c) when you said, Seth: "It was not against him that I did this," (958a) so that you might take control thereby when your control was taken away for Horus; (958b) when you said, Seth: "In fact, he has been attacking me," (959a) and his identity of Earth-attacker came into being; (959b) when you said, Seth: "In fact, he has been hurting me," (959c) and his identity of Orion came into being, (959d) [...]
(translation [with slight alternations] by James P. Allen, *Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005, p. 129)

619 See, for example, Zandee, *Death as an Enemy*, p. 210–212.

If I let them go, they will bring me the heart of any wrongdoer and they will be here with me. […] Who of you is mightier than I?" (pChester Beatty I, 15,4–15,6).[620] In the Pyramid Texts (PT 215 Pyr. 145b) we hear of the danger which Osiris poses for the deceased: "Re-Atum has not given you to Osiris. He (Osiris) has not counted your heart. He has not taken possession of your heart."[621] In the Coffin Texts, Osiris is sometimes depicted in a truly demoniacal manner: "[…] Osiris, lord of terror, great of fright, to whom everything is brought, for whom everything is seized."[622] All these characteristics seem to be integral to Osiris' character. Yam, who is in fact Seth's opponent in the Astarte Papyrus, has no tradition in Ancient Egyptian religion, but his physiognomy of an aggressive deity corresponds well to the aggressive aspect attributed to Osiris in certain contexts. Osiris may act aggressively (carries off his opponents), he threatens the Ennead, and he has scores of demons awaiting his command. I would, therefore, argue that Yam depicted as a lecherous and threatening deity who stands in opposition to Seth did have a direct Egyptian model in Osiris. Maybe this was not part of the mainstream tradition, but from the evidence which we have it seems that such a view of Osiris was sometimes applied. Substituting Yam for Osiris might also have been a very clever way of alleviating the possibly objectionable depiction of Osiris as the "bad guy". At the same time, the whole structure is very reminiscent of the Baal Cycle. The other effect the text might have had was that the author actually "appropriated" a traditionally Near Eastern mythological constellation translating it into a fully Egyptian context. I shall try to explain the mechanism of appropriation in the following section.

620 Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, p. 58.
621 Sethe, *Die altägyptische Pyramidentexte,* Bd. II, p. 84. Similarly, for example, in PT 264 Pyr. 350a (Sethe, *Die altägyptische Pyramidentexte,* Bd. I, p. 185).
622 de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, Vol. II, p. 116v–w.

An Infiltration or Appropriation of a West Semitic Myth?

From what has been said so far it is obvious that the narrative contained in the Astarte Papyrus was strongly influenced in many details by foreign models. The main theme, which is the possible battle between Baal-Seth-Pharaoh and Yam, seems to be a direct adoption of a typically West Semitic mythical motif known also as the Baal Cycle. Thomas Schneider sees the text of the Astarte Papyrus as "[…] evidence of innovation from abroad [which is] striking because traditional Egyptology assumed that the core of Egyptian civilisation, the cultural frame formed by such domains as religion and kingship, was immune to innovation and not affected by change. We now see that it was the very representative of Egyptian kingship, Amenophis II, who *changed its cultural code, and he redefined it on a non-egyptian model*."[623] I agree with Schneider in that ancient Egyptian culture was by no means a static one. What I disagree with is the claim that the Astarte Papyrus is direct evidence of a redefinition of the Egyptian cultural code.

Although introducing West Semitic mythological characters and being strongly reminiscent of the Baal Cycle, the fragments of the Astarte Papyrus do not seem to contain any thought or mythological structure which we cannot find in other ancient Egyptian sources (for example, the topic of conflict as conceptualised in the Osirian Cycle). The roles ascribed to female characters (Renut, Astarte) also seem to copy the typically Egyptian view that their main function is that of mediators. One might argue that all of the above mentioned constellations (the topic of conflict, female characters as mediators) are so general and universal that this hardly proves that they are genuinely Egyptian. As much as this argument is valid, it may be turned around: they are so general that they do not show that the myth itself is genuinely foreign and not Egyptian. And because the text was written in Egyptian by a neat hieratic hand, I conclude that assuming that it is essentially Egyptian means playing safe. The sheer presence of foreign characters does not seem to be a decisive argument for claiming that the structure of the myth is an intellectual import. This may be clearly illustrated in the case of the Anat Myth. Following van Dijk, I tried to argue (see above, p. 210–217) that regardless of the presence of Anat, the text itself is a variation of the more traditional topic of conflict between Seth and Osiris.

623 Schneider, "Foreign Egypt": 161 (italics mine).

However, if the author wanted to describe a typically Egyptian motif, why bother with West Semitic deities in the first place? Their inclusion must have had a specific reason. At this moment I believe it useful to look at the reason behind the composition of the text. Taking into consideration the strongly laudatory character of the introductory part, the composition of the Astarte Papyrus seems to have been politically motivated. If we recall the context of Amenophis II's rule,[624] its prominent feature is an attempt at consolidating Egypt's dominance in the Near Eastern region in the face of its chief rival Mitanni.[625] As I have already argued above (see p. 195–196, n. 519), hand in hand with the military campaigns, an attempt at an ideological expansion of Egyptian concepts and domesticating the autochthonous Near Eastern mythological traditions (*interpretatio aegyptiaca*) would appear to have been a logical move. The whole situation must have also effected the traditional Egyptian ontological categories. The capital had moved to the Nile delta to Avaris/Per-Ramsses, i.e. to the very border of Egypt. There were foreign deities being revered in the heart of ancient Egypt (Seth-Baal, Astarte, and others). All this must have relativised the traditional division of "us" and "them", "Egypt" and "foreign lands", "inside" and "outside". The Astarte Papyrus and the Tale of Two Brothers a few hundred years later seem to represent a way in which the Egyptians expressed this change in paradigm. Seth is an Egyptian deity, Baal is a foreign deity. Seth-Baal is neither and both at the same time. He is something in between. The Valley of the Pine is definitely not in Egypt, however, it is also not easily classified as a "foreign land" either (see above, p. 144–146). On the level of ideology, I therefore prefer to interpret these Near Eastern motifs as attempts by Egyptians to incorporate the ideological framework of their neighbours and thus strengthen their political claim over the region. We could therefore understand the foreign motifs in the Astarte Papyrus as an attempt at "miming" the contents of the Baal Cycle or a similar mythological work in as many details as possible. However, within this process the established Egyptian categories were, in turn, also put into question. At the same time, this interpretation does not exclude the theory that the text might have been intended for foreigners living in Egypt. However, it is the clever integration of Near Eastern motifs into the Egyptian mythological framework that seems to be the main focus of the composition. Herman te Velde noticed a similar tendency in the case of the 400 Year Stela which bears the familiar depiction of Seth dressed as a Near Eastern deity (see above, p. 73, fig. 2):

624 Peter Der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II*, Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge 26, Hildesheim: Gerstenbeg, 1987.

625 Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*, Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 1992, especially p. 160–169.

> The inscription shows that Ramses II had this stela erected in commemoration of his ancestors and the father of his forefathers, i.e. Seth. Not Ramses the Second's father king Sethos I., but his great-grandfather Sethos, governor of the border town Sile, had celebrated a festival in honour of Seth. He had celebrated this on the fourth day of the fourth month of the summer season of the year 400 of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Seth, great of strength, son of Re, the Ombite, the chosen of Re-Harakhty. These terms show that in spite of his exotic appearance Seth is not a suspect foreigner, but a real Egyptian. He is king! [...] It might be that Sethos did not celebrate the beginning of the reign of Seth and the domination of the Hyksos, but was celebrating the fact that Seth already ruled before the Hyksos. [...] If the worship of Seth in his Baalistic form is already at least 400 years old, then it is not a piece of reprehensible modernism. The cult of Seth is not a work of the Hyksos, but goes back to ancient Egyptian traditions. Every Egyptian of proper national thought and feeling can therefore worship Seth in his foreign manifestation without any objection. [...] How little the traditional Egyptian state cult was open to foreign influence, is evident from the paradoxical necessity to demonstrate that the divine foreigner had already been known and adored in this form for more than 400 years. The stranger had to be a foreigner but also an Egyptian.[626]

This is easily applicable to the Astarte Papyrus: the text had to seem foreign but also Egyptian.

This conclusion has grave implications for the reconstruction of the contents of the destroyed parts of the Astarte Papyrus. As mentioned, Schneider considers the story to be a copy of its Near Eastern counterpart – the Baal Cycle.[627] This would mean that in the end, Seth-Baal-Pharaoh would slaughter Yam and be victorious just as in the Ugaritic version (CAT 1.2, second tablet, col. 4, lines 23–28): "The weapon leaps from Baal's hand,/[like] a raptor from his fingers,/it strikes the head of Prince [Yamm,]/between the eyes of Judge River./Yamm collapses and falls to the earth,/his joints shake, and his form collapses./Baal drags and dismembers (?) Yamm,/Destroys Judge River."[628] Nevertheless, as we have seen in the case of the previously analysed compositions, the annihilation of the rivalling character would be a most non-Egyptian way of treating the basic motif of the conflict. It would appear that the Egyptians put more attention on the integration of antithetical parties through their transformation(s). They were well aware that even though disorder threatens order, it is disorder from which order

626 te Velde, *Seth*, p. 124–126.

627 Schneider, "Foreign Egypt": 161.

628 Smith, "The Baal Cycle", p. 104.

draws its potency. This is the grease which enables the machinery of order to function and not become jammed. Order is defined by that which surrounds it; both principles are dependant on each other.[629] From this point of view it is obvious that even though the Astarte Papyrus represents, at first glance, a copy of the Baal Cycle, it is completely adapted to fit traditional Egyptian mental structures. I would, therefore, expect that in the lost and destroyed parts of the Astarte Papyrus, through a series of interactions between the Ennead and Seth-Baal-Pharaoh (mediated by Astarte), there would be a gradual integration of the disorderly aspect (Yam) into the realm of order. This is how the text would radically differ from its Near Eastern model. Unfortunately, these are precisely the parts of the text that we are missing. I can only hope that one day these portions will be discovered to either prove or disprove this theory.

The mechanism of appropriation or "myth migration"

What is left to be answered is the issue of the appropriation of foreign mythological material into the Egyptian tradition. I have attempted above to show that even though the narrative of the Astarte Papyrus seems to be a mechanical copy of a Near Eastern myth, it fits very neatly into the grid of ancient Egyptian thought. How is this possible? Different societies have diverging values, social organisations, kinship relations, etc. which are all in one way or another reflected in their mythology. How can myths be translated from one society to another and still retain the urgency of the message for the native listener? As I have been trying to show above, the core of myths is their synchronic structure which exhibits itself through infinite structural permutations and transformations. As such, the structure is morally neutral. It does not imply any social values. Since the human mind in general, regardless of whether "primitive" or "civilised", ancient or modern, functions within these basic structures, the myth in this form is very easily transferable. "But as soon as moral judgements are injected into any part of the system – as soon as it is postulated that '*A* is a good man and *B* is a bad man'

629 As Mary Douglas writes in her famous book *Purity and Danger*: "Granted that disorder spoils pattern, it also provides the material of pattern. Order implies restriction; from all possible materials, a limited selection has been made and from all possible relations a limited set has been used. So disorder by implication is unlimited, no pattern has been realised in it, but its potential for patterning is indefinite. This is why, though we seek to condemn disorder, we do not simply condemn disorder. We recognise that it is destructive to existing patterns; also that it has potentiality. It symbolises both danger and power." (Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London, New York: Routledge, 2002, [1966¹]).

then, automatically, the logical ordering of the system causes the whole story to be permeated through and through with moral implications [...]"[630] and thus it becomes culturally specific. Myths do not transfer any meaning or inherent message. Myths do not "tell" us anything. Their force is that they have the ability to structure the disorderly experience of their listeners. In this manner they are cross-cultural. At the same time, the creation of myths is very often motivated by very specific political or other particular reasons. Myths may serve royal/religious propaganda (the Astarte Papyrus, the Tale of Two Brothers), or may be intended to be recited in specific circumstances (as a magical spell: the Anat Myth). However, we must bear in mind that the intention is to do so in a holistic way through the language of symbols. Thanks to the polyvalence of symbols, myths actually become meta-structures which enable the transcendence of any such direct intentions by integrating them into a broader network of both ontic and phenomenal categories of the author/listener/reader. And thanks to this very polyvalence, the symbolic framework may be adapted according to the requirements of individual cultures.[631]

630 Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon" p. 77.

631 A very similar conclusion was also arrived at by Keiko Tazawa, who tries to show how "each Syro-Palestinian deity has been assimilated into the Egyptian pantheon by translation from 'Syro-Palestinian' into 'Egyptian' [...]. [...] it seems that this translation process could be operated rather selectively. [...] It is hypothesised therefore that the six Syro-Palestinian deities in question [*i.e. Baal, Reshef, Hauron, Anat, Astarte, Qadesh, author's note*] may have been singled out for theoretical accordance with the Egyptian cosmos, presumably in an attempt to achieve religious and, by extension, social consistency and stability: that is the adaptation to Heliopolitan theology and the Osirian myth. [...] It must be admitted that however that the Syro-Palestinian deities may not fully cover these Egyptian theological spheres, thus leadings [sic] us to the assumption that the Egyptians may have imported not individual deities respectively, but a certain mythological circle *en bloc* from Syria-Palestine into Egypt, such as the Baal myth and the love story of Baal and Anat etc. in order to amalgamate them into the Egyptian religious framework with some removal of foreign references so as to 'absorb' it properly into the Egyptians' own theological/mythological circle." (Tazawa, *Syro-Palestinian Deities*, p. 169). As much as I agree with the overall idea, there are two main issues. First, the process of cultural appropriation (or "translative adaptation", as Tazawa following K. Maegawa calls it) of non-Egyptian deities does not seem to be necessarily motivated solely by their accordance with Egyptian ideas. Rather, as we have seen, they might have been used to highlight certain paradoxes inherent to the Egyptian system (for example the "ideal" categories of "Egyptian" and "foreign" which were untenable in confrontation with real life and its various inter-categories existing within these two extremes, etc.). Second, some of Tazawa's conclusions are rather based on speculations than any sound textual or material evidence (for example the whole idea of the integration of Baal and Hauron into the Osirian circle, p. 161–162).

What is all this good for?

Even though in the previous chapters I have only applied my structural analysis to a very limited corpus of ancient Egyptian mythological material, it is obvious that any further analysis would continue in the same manner – it would proceed to discover an infinite series of transformations and permutations of mythemes all connected together in a great mythematic structure. An example of such an analysis is given in Lévi-Strauss' *Opus magnum – Mythologiques*. Here he starts with a single myth, gradually identifies more and more transformations of this myth within a given society, then within the traditions of the surrounding societies and beyond until he covers the area of both the South and the North Americas. At first, the solitary narrative he chooses to analyse resembles a nebula, indistinct and floating in space, because it cannot be placed in the broader framework of a native's thought. However, by recognising more and more of its transformations, "the nebula gradually spreads, its nucleus condenses and becomes more organised. Loose threads join up with one another, gaps are closed, connections are established, and something resembling order is to be seen emerging from chaos."[632] This work of Lévi-Strauss comprises four volumes and the wealth of material he has been able to incorporate into his analysis and the connections he is able to trace are astonishing. However, once confronted with this abundance of structural mythical transformations, the question which inevitably comes to mind is What is all this good for? And, furthermore, if myths do not technically "tell" us anything, what are *they* good for?

Myths deal with cultural paradoxes but they do not "solve" them, they either pair them with different paradoxes or create their transformations. Myths do not give us any answers, they only confront us with many issues which they turn from all sides and look at from different angles. The structuralist analysis does not uncover any "meaning" behind myths. Instead, it uncovers the structure in which they are set and the symbolic activity of the human mind. Lévi-Strauss sometimes confuses his readers when he says that myths are certain "codes" – logically, then, there should be some sort of message "encoded" in them. In reality, the only message encoded in myths is their own symbolic structure. "Symbolism [...] is not a means of encoding information, but a means of organising it."[633] The myth functions as a sort of relation-matrix which has the ability to connect different levels of human experience and

632 Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, p. 3. Such was the case after I analysed the structure of the Tale of Two Brothers. Only after being connected with other narratives do the oppositions start making sense.

633 Dan Sperber, *Rethinking Symbolism*, tr. by Alice L. Morton, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975 (French original, Paris: Hermann, 1974), p. 70.

to convert them into one another.[634] Thus, for example, a mythological utterance may be perceived, at the same time, as a description of ritual acts, as a cosmological concept and also as a description of the physical state of a sick person. The only limitations a mythological matrix has stem from the way in which it is constructed (binary opposites, transformations of mythemes, etc.). The myth matrix does not give meaning to myths themselves but organises the disorderly experience of individuals which they have with society, its institutions and demands which often contradict their individual longings.

> This experience is typically laden with anxiety, especially at times of life crisis. Society, for its part, can of course only sustain itself by ensuring that the individual's efforts at reintegration (together with the integration of new individuals) will be successful. Time, in other words, is also the mode in which society continually resynthesizes itself. The temporal forms of social organization (ritual, judicial process, domestic group cycle, etc.) are cultural devices for the mediation of this process.[635]

We can also add myth to the list. Using the plot, the myth guides people through the whole framework of the narrative. A person identifies with a certain character – accepts the rules (logic) of the story and through the process of listening to the story incorporates his/her individual ideas into the model structures of the myth. This model structure is expressed in paradoxes, binary oppositions and their fusions and concerns ethics and problems of existence pervading a certain culture. That is not to say that myths should be copied. Characters, acting in myths, are not representatives of normal individuals and the stories are not images of historical events; rather *they show the limits of the social structure*. The incorporation of individual cravings into the model structure of the myth and also the "knowledge" of the limits a certain culture has helps to strengthen the connection of the individual to the system. This seems to be the reason why, for example, children want to hear fairy-tales again and again. It is this longing for the *process* of the narrative which makes myths so vivid and important.

Nevertheless, even though the narrative is important, it may be completely avoided if desired. I have tried to show that narrative coherence is only one of the many ways in which a certain composition is held together. I have subsumed all the other

634 For example, Valérie Nagenot speaks in a very similar way about ancient Egyptian art. She shows that the various levels of meaning are melted into one within the picture (Valérie Nagenot, "A Method for Ancient Egyptian Hermeneutics [with Application to the Small Golden Shrine of Tutankhamun]", in Verbovsek, Backes, Jones (Hrsg.), *Methodik und Didaktik*, p. 256–286).

635 Turner, "Oedipus: Time and Structure", p. 35.

possible modes under the category of "configurational coherence". Even though they are not narratives, the relationship between various parts of a painting, the spatial distribution of objects within a defined space, or even a symbolic re-interpretation of naturally distributed landmarks all form a certain system of relationships which, essentially, does not differ that much from a sequence of signs forming a narrative text. The only crucial difference is that a configurational disposition of individual elements at first requires the discovery of the system of their distribution. Once we crack this code, we may start "reading" images or architectural elements. In Egypt this is even more important as the script itself never actually fully departed from its pictorial models. If this is true, then a clearly narrative text may also be "read" in a configurational mode in a similar way as a painting is "read". I have tried to show this above in my analysis of several narratives. At the same time, the basic relationship net is based on a system of paradoxical statements, their negations and permutations. These paradoxes concern the basic questions which trouble the (ancient) mind. This uncovers the model structure underlying anything a human being (for example, an ancient Egyptian) may create. We think the way we move, move the way we eat, eat the way we build, build the way we create myths, create myths the way we kill, kill the way we give life, etc. Connecting different levels of experience, seemingly unconnected with each other, proves to be a very effective tool in our effort at understanding the ancient Egyptian mind and reflecting on the workings of our own mind as well.

CONCLUSION

The initial motivation with which I set out to write this study was to try and understand the role and position of texts containing non-Egyptian characters and motifs in the ancient Egyptian cultural system. It seemed too easy or too trivial to consider them as simply borrowed or as infiltrations from other cultures. Of course, cultures do come into contact with each other and influence each other on many levels. But can a certain text or motif which is grounded in a specific cultural tradition be simply taken and re-planted in a different one? Is it that simple? At the same time, however, there are clearly non-Egyptian gods and goddesses interacting with Egyptian gods and goddesses.

In order to understand the mechanics of such "migration" of cultural motifs, my analysis had to proceed in several phases. First, I decided to look at the interpretations which are standardly offered to explain such phenomena in Egyptology. There are basically two governing approaches to the issue. The first group of scholars proceeds by enumerating the motivic parallels which we know about from other cultural contexts. This is, indeed, a very important undertaking. It is very interesting to establish comparative material to see, for example, what had been left out or added during the process. However, scholars often stop at this point as if they thought that this is the interpretation itself. The second group of scholars offers various historical explanations as to why and who might have wanted a certain myth to be established within the Egyptian tradition. This is also a valid approach, as myth certainly has a relationship to social and historical reality. There is, however, a great danger which many scholars could not avoid; the danger of simplifying this relationship and claiming that myth is a simple mirror image of historical reality. The interrelation seems to be of a rather more subtle character and a myth is often in direct contradiction to the documented reality. Furthermore, the historical approach does not address the mechanics of the myth migration process.

It therefore became obvious that in order to understand the position of narratives containing non-Egyptian motifs I first had to analyse the character of Egyptian

myths in general with the prospect that after establishing the governing principles of its language, the attempts at "translating" foreign motifs might become clearer.

The situation of egyptological studies with regard to the issue of myth interpretation is also quite specific. Egyptology seems to be a very self-contained and conservative discipline standing to a certain extent outside methodological discussion or development in other disciplines (such as ancient Greek studies, anthropology, sociology, psychology, etc.). At the same time, it is characterised by a strong inclination towards classic(al) interpretation methods focusing on linguistics and historical analysis. Both methods are very valuable as they provide very effective tools in analysing primary material. However, they are not sufficient and maybe even ill-suited for understanding the symbolic nature of religious and mythological language. The linguistic and historical approach tends to order material into discrete units in a diachronic manner dissecting the primary material into individual parts and showing their relative position within sets of secondarily established criteria (historical time, language levels, etc). On the other hand, the language of myth seems instead to be symbolic, having the ability to connect various ontological levels of human experience with the surrounding world into complex motivic clusters, taking advantage at the same time of the multivalence of its symbols. Part I is therefore devoted to a discussion on this topic, the most important argument being that the ancient Egyptians used a rather "configurational" way of injecting meaning into the world around them as opposed to the "narrative" based Western approach.

Part II concentrates on an analysis of specific ancient Egyptian narrative compositions. As the focus of the work was originally supposed to be the Astarte Papyrus, Part II commences with a summary of the major works devoted to its interpretation so far (Chapter 1) followed by a translation of the whole text (Chapter 2). Afterwards I make a very long detour (Chapters 3–6) comprising approximately two thirds of the whole book only to return to the text of the Astarte Papyrus in Chapter 7. This approach was conditioned by the fragmentary character of the Astarte Papyrus. In order to be able to analyse its position within the system of ancient Egyptian narrative myths, I first had to try and actually understand the character of the system. In order to establish this framework, I decided to choose one specific composition (the Tale of Two Brothers) and also a specific interpretation method (structuralism). The choice of the Tale of Two Brothers was motivated by the fact that it has survived almost in its entirety. One of the main topics of the composition is clearly the interaction between Egypt and foreign lands – a crucial topic if one wants to analyse the mechanisms of myth migration. The choice of structuralism as the interpretation method was intended more for the sake of convenience. As I have already noted in the Foreword, I try to avoid any methodological dogmatism. Using the label "structuralism" (and its

Lévi-Straussian branch, to be even more specific) offers a very convenient way of informing the reader immediately about the elementary ideas and approaches which inspire my understanding of the Egyptian material. It is a certain "code name" by which I try to present clearly to the reader the background from which my approach stems. The label "structuralism" is, therefore, supposed to serve only as a general framework, because Lévi-Strauss' approach has proved to be erroneous in many ways, for example, he disregards the narrative aspect of myths in general. Even though I have criticised the narrative-oriented approach of Western scholarship, there must be a reason why a certain myth was chosen to be passed on in a narrative form whereas others were not. At the same time, there are episodes in non-narrative sources which we meet in narrative contexts. Narrativity thus seems to be somehow crucial for the overall function of the text. In Chapter 3 I therefore not only summarise the basic ideas of the Lévi-Straussian structuralist interpretation method, but also point out its flaws and suggest in what way they may be overcome. In relation to the crucial topic of narrativity, I follow the suggestion of Terence Turner and consider narrativity not as a diachronic aspect of the composition, but as yet another synchronic structure which organises the motifs contained within the composition. I claim that myth should be treated not only as a musical score in which various instruments play simultaneously (synchronically) and together form a symphony (Lévi-Strauss), but that the order in which the various parts of the composition follow one another is crucial (Terence Turner). Later on in the overall analysis of the Tale of Two Brothers I take advantage of the conclusions arrived at by the semioticians (A. J. Greimas, for example) who analyse the narrative as exactly such a structure. The diachronic aspect which Lévi-Strauss attributed to the narrative itself then seems to have been mediated by the personal experience of both the author of the composition and the listener/reader. I also take my inspiration from depth psychology in that mythological symbolism often very closely resembles the functioning of symbols as analysed in dreams. Still, I try to avoid the culturally biased views of both the Freudian line of psychology and also the fallacy of the universally shared meanings of the Jungian archetype (a certain meaning is not given by the individual units of the symbolical language themselves but is always rearranged through the specific relationships which these units have with each other).

Chapter 4 includes a structural analysis of the Tale of Two Brothers. I have divided the composition into so-called Initial Episodes (I–III) and one Terminal Episode. Between these units there are five triads of Episodes (A–O). My division more or less follows the division of the original text as indicated by its rubra, however, it is not identical. The analysis proceeds in the following way. First I present a translation of the relevant part of the composition. A commentary follows in which I explain not only various important motifs of the text (cross-referencing other authors, if useful)

but I also explain the basic semiotic tactics which the narrative applies thus gradually "decoding" the symbolic language of this specific myth. As the reader progresses through the story, the principles on which I based my division of the composition become transparent as well as the synchronic relations between the various Episodes. At the end of every analysis I have also included a diagram graphically summarising the relationships between the various parties involved. This proves crucial as the spatial relationships help to visualise and exemplify the textual analysis.

Whereas Chapter 4 focused on specific details, in Chapter 5 I proceed to a more holistic analysis of the structure of the Tale of Two Brothers. I follow Jan Assmann's observation that the text is divided into rubra which indicate a certain shift of focus, thus defining individual chapters. Assmann (followed by Wolfgang Wettengel) was persuaded that the twenty four chapters stood for the daily cycle of the sun, thus strengthening the ideological content of the whole composition and stressing the close connection of Bata to the sun god Re. As ingenious as this observation is, it unfortunately fails to come to more general conclusions about the connection of the Tale of Two Brothers to other compositions within ancient Egyptian mythography. It is difficult to take anything from this type of interpretation in the case of compositions which do not follow this division or which are too fragmentary for us to tell. At the same time, however, the Tale of Two Brothers does include motifs which we meet in other contexts and compositions. This means that the 24-part division must be an additional aspect to the mythical structure which follows certain, more general principles also detectable in other compositions. By contrasting the contents of the individual Episodes, I came to the conclusion that we may group them into certain "Clusters" (each composed of three Episodes).[636] The basic relationship between Episodes in one Cluster is the classic Hegelian triad of thesis–antithesis–synthesis. We can see that every Cluster, therefore, has an inner dynamic of its own. At the same time, every Cluster is defined by its relationship to (a) the previous Cluster, (b) the following Cluster, representing motivic combinations of each other. The inner narrative dynamics of the Clusters are then combined with the other Clusters and the story becomes connected on more levels than just that of the apparent narrative. At the same time, Cluster 3c is in direct relationship to Cluster 1 – the narrative thus creates a kind of a structural circle contrasting the units from the beginning of the story with those at the end. This is also mirrored in the original division of the narrative into rubra: the very beginning (Rubrum 1 – part of Initial Episode I) and the very end of the narrative (Rumbrum 24 – Episode O and Terminal Episode) show the structural coherence of the whole narrative:

[636] **Cluster 1**: Episodes A–C; **Cluster 2**: Episodes D–F; **Cluster 3a**: Episodes G–I; **Cluster 3b**: Episodes J–L; **Cluster 3c**: Episodes M–O.

Rubrum 1:	Anubis is like a father (owner of an estate) to Bata, the son (successor?).
Rubrum 24:	Bata is like a father (pharaoh) to Anubis, the son (crown prince).

The initial situation was inverted through the inner mechanism of the myth into its own opposite. The individual Episode Clusters are interspersed with Initial Episodes I–III. These have a different function to the Episode Clusters. The Initial Episodes can be likened to establishing the scene in a theatre and the triads of Episodes then perform the play. The Initial Episodes move the story further; they change the "frames" of the story, that is, they change the syntactic structure of the plot; we could also say that they shift the ontological focus of the listener/reader from one level to another. In each "frame" a different set of paradoxes is therefore being dealt with. At the same time, because all of these levels describing various and, in many aspects, completely differing levels of human experience with the outside world form part of one narrative, the story actually creates a medium in which these levels may be brought in the mind of the listener into direct contact and meaningful relationships between them may be illustrated.

Once having described the configurational relationships of the individual parts of the Tale of Two Brothers, I proceed to an analysis of the transformations of the individual characters. As each Episode is defined by its relationships to other units of the whole composition, the individual characters are defined by the structure of the story. Bata thus comprises the characteristics of Horus, Seth, Osiris, and Re. I explain the mechanism using the approach developed, for example, by semiotics (A. J. Greimas). I touch upon the fact that this process is also applied to other (male) characters within the story. The main focus of the whole text then seems to be an explicit identification of the main male characters through the function of positional kingship. The whole story therefore seems to be a statement about the transformative and mediating function of the office of the Pharaoh.

Once having established the "vocabulary" and "syntax" of myth, in Chapter 6 I look at other Egyptian compositions which seem to contain clear variations on the themes contained in the Tale of Two Brothers and I try to show that there are structural similarities with other compositions even though the outward content of the stories seems to be quite different. The idea which lies behind my approach is quite a simple one. The elementary building block of mythological language is the symbol. By conducting a detailed analysis of one composition (in this case, the Tale of Two Brothers) I tried to discover the basic principles which govern symbolic language (choosing a narrative was the easiest way because the relationships between the various symbols have the

form of a sequence, which is a type of ordering to which we are accustomed). Because individual mythological compositions may be considered smaller or bigger aggregates of symbols, the relationships between individuals myths should also be governed by the very same principles as those detected within single compositions.

By analysing the structure of the Osirian Cycle (which I understand to include the Osiris Myth and the Contendings of Horus and Seth) and a set of magical texts called the Anat Myth, I create a certain "structural net" of several basic constellations or mythemes which are contained in the previously analysed compositions, but in varying combinations.

Part of Chapter 6 is also dedicated to the discussion of the paradoxical nature of female characters. I claim that the strongly androcentric Egyptian society, with its tendency to marginalise women in certain aspects, actually equipped the female principle with a special type of power which was essentially unavailable to the male counterparts – an independence from power structures. Power and influence stems solely from a certain social structure or a situation involving several parties. Power does not exist by itself. It is always dependent on a system of roles and relationships within which power may be demonstrated, offered or denied. This shows that the concept of power is relational in essence (power over somebody/with regard to something). In order to safeguard power, the individual in question must to a certain extent adjust his/her life to the rules and structures which provide power. As a result, (s)he becomes bound by these rules. From the point of view of the ancient Egyptian man, the role and position of women within society had a paradoxical quality. Women, who had very limited access to social power positions, gained a different type of power which could never have been acquired by men – a certain independence from the power structures and the limitations which they imposed on those who wished to gain access to socially powerful positions. The roles which are often assigned to female characters and principles in ancient Egyptian mythology suggest that they were viewed by men as having abilities which their male counterparts either lacked or which were out of their bounds or uncontrollable. At the same time, there is no denying that women were an integral and important part of Egyptian society. The combination of these circumstances put ancient Egyptian female characters into the ideal role of mediators who facilitate contact between various male parties. I then identify certain basic patterns with regard to the female principle in all of the previously analysed compositions. These patterns are also integrated into the "structural net" of ancient Egyptian mythological narratives.

Once having this "structural net" at my disposal, I finally return to the analysis of the fragmentary Astarte Papyrus (composed during the reign of Amenophis II) in Chapter 7. I carry out the analysis following the same principles as for the other

compositions and gradually come to the conclusion that rather than being an infiltration of foreign material into ancient Egyptian tradition the whole composition seems to have been a rather cunning appropriation of Near Eastern motifs by Egyptians. The author actually seems to have deliberately "mimed" the Near Eastern mythological structure of the Baal Cycle, integrating it into a clearly Egyptian symbolic system of mythical language. The reasons for this could be historical/political (an attempt at culturally appropriating the mythological tradition of the conquered Near Eastern cultures), or social (an attempt at integrating the mythological tradition of the possibly politically very influential West-semitic communities living in Egypt at that time). At the same time, however, the foreign motifs seem to have triggered the pronunciation of certain Egyptian motifs which were only latently present in older Egyptian compositions. Myth structures can therefore "migrate" from one culture to another. They do that, however, once emptied of the ethical and culturally-defined meanings which they carry in the original context only to be "re-contextualised" within the symbolic net of values of the other culture.

What I am hoping my work has been able to show is the fact that there is an inherent system in ancient Egyptian thought manifested in its writings. This is not merely a haphazard set of opposing ideologies represented by quarrelling priestly lobbies. Nor is it a mechanical reflection of historic events. It is a system with very specific rules, full to the brim with paradoxes which the ancient mind incorporated within its structure and, through constant transformations and permutations, accommodated these conflicting experiences within a system of thought. In this, I am persuaded, I have succeeded. It is, however, true that a structural analysis often comes to very trivial conclusions: (fe)male deities may be identified; opposites are inverted pictures of each other and therefore any individual motif can be converted into its opposite; basic structural oppositions are formed by pairs such as culture × nature, order × chaos, etc. The goal of any structural analysis must not be these trivial conclusions. What is fascinating is to analyse the permutational symbolic mechanisms which transform individual motifs into each other. Even though these processes follow certain basic principles, what is original is the combination and the choice of motifs which then undergo the variation process. Originality in such a context is not mediated by creating new categories (or introducing foreign ones) but through a clever (re)ordering of the existing categories showing the established patterns in a new light.

At the same time, I also claim the interpretative approach which I apply in my work to be applicable to texts which are non-narrative. I have tried to show in Part I that narrative coherence is only one of the many ways in which meaning may be infused into a certain data set and that Egyptians tended to organise their universe in a configurational rather than sequential manner. What must follow is an analysis of this

type applied to non-narrative material. Such work must also include a detailed study of the relations between the synchronic structures thus revealed, the basic paradoxes which they include, and the relation they have to different levels of ancient Egyptian society throughout the ages. This work would also have to include a meticulous assessment of primary archaeological material and sociological data. This is the only way in which we can attempt to understand the ancient Egyptian mind. Although very different from our own, in basic structures it demonstrates strong affinities with our own mind. And that is, I think, a most encouraging thought.

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Case of the Doomed Prince and His Dog

Structural Analysis of the *Tale of the Doomed Prince* and comparison with the *Tale of Two Brothers*

In order to analyse the plot dynamics of the *Tale of the Doomed Prince* (further as *Doomed Prince*), I applied the episode system (Episodes A–C, D–F, G–I, J–K) in a similar way as in case of the *Tale of Two Brothers* (further as *Two Brothers*). Specific motifs (indicated by a superscripted letter in the translation[A]) are discussed in the commentary to individual episodes. The episodes are then grouped by three into Episode Clusters (I–III) which enables to disclose both the overarching themes and plot dynamics foci of each such groups and thus the composition as a whole. Also included is a table comparing the mythemes in the *Doomed Prince* with the *Two Brothers*. The analysis is therefore composed in the following manner: translation[1] of the pertinent Episode followed by the description of the *Plot dynamics* and individual *Motifs*. A *Comparison of the* Two Brothers *and the* Doomed Prince with a *Commentary* is then included. At the end of every Episode Cluster a *Summary* is presented.

The similarities of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince* concern both formal criteria (such as the date of composition,[2] process of reception,[3] language[4]) and content criteria (common motifs, preoccupation with the question of kingship and royal succession,[5] dependance on foreign motifs[6], etc.). Being specially interested in the content and its structuring, I tried to compare the two compositions. First I had to set up a system that would enable me to convert both compositions into units that could be compared (the original *rubra* showed to be too crude). I therefore organized both narratives into units (1–40). Some units are relevant for both compositions, some are exclusive. Every unit further includes a summary of a certain part of each narrative. The reason for pairing certain parts of each narrative into one unit are then explained in the commentary section following the table. These summaries, specific for each narrative, are then transposed into more general statements, we could say mythemes, smallest units of the narrative

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[1] Translation by Di Biase-Dyson (*Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 365–381) making slight alternations where deemed appropriate.

[2] Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 178; Spalinger, "Transformations in Egyptian Folktales": 150; *LES*, p. ix.

[3] Manniche, "The Wife of Bata": 34–35. Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 178

[4] Hintze, *Zu Stil und Sprache*; Spalinger, *Dedicatory Inscription of Ramesses II*, p. 11, n. 45 remarks that the hieratic version of the *Doomed Prince* is rather poorly carried out, which is in stark contrast to the exquisite manuscript of the *Two Brothers*.

[5] See especially Helck, "Die Erzählung", p. 218–225; compare with Spalinger, "Transformations in Egyptian Folktales": 147–148.

[6] For possible Ugaritic similarities, see below, p. v–vii. For Akkadian parallels, see Liverani, "Leaving by Chariot for the Desert", p. 85–96. For Indian, Syriac, and even Spanish versions, see Spalinger, "Transformations in Egyptian Folktales": 148–149 and references therein.

that hold meaning.[7] A unit may include one or more mythemes or none, if completely absent from one of the compositions. Mythemes are numbered in order of appearance regardless in which of the two narratives they are identified first. Not every unit includes new mythemes, sometimes a unit is formed by a combination of already identified ones or represents their variation. In such a case, it is given an alphabetical index (for example *3b, 3c,* etc.). The table therefore preserves the narrative structure of each composition but at the same time maps the disposition of common mythemes across the compositions.

Episode A (Rubrum I)[8]

As for *him*, [it has been] said, (namely) a king, a son had not been born to him.[A] [Now, when His Majesty, l.p.h., requested] for himself a boy from the gods of his district, they commanded, causing that (one) be born to him, and he lay with his wife that night now /// conceiving, she ended the months of childbirth then a son was born. The Hathors came in order to determine fate[9] for him, and sa[id]: "He will die on account of the crocodile, or the snake, or even the dog." Then the people [[who were beside the child]] heard, then they reported them (the words) to His Majesty, l.p.h. Thereupon His Majesty, l.p.h. transformed, his heart being very much saddened. Then His Majesty, l.p.h., caused a house of stone to be made for him in the hills, which was equipped with personnel and with every good thing of the palace, l.p.h., since the child was not allowed to go outside.

Commentary

Plot dynamics

Episode A establishes a situation in which initial lack (of a son) is removed and positive relationship develops between the father (pharaoh) and son (Hero). However, the situation is not at all satisfactory. Even though the Hero is alive and in plentitude (he has no lack), he is very limited in his ability to move freely, almost as if "dead" to life, because living in a tomb like structure.[10] Furthermore, if we look at

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[7] Exceptions are Units 1 (*Doomed Prince*) and 40 (*Two Brothers*), which do not have parallels in the other composition, and which therefore combine a larger group of mythemes not written out in detail.

[8] P. Harris 500: 4,1–4,6; *LES*: 1,1–1,11. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 365–366.

[9] On fate, see the classic works by Morenz, *Rolle des Schicksals;* Quaegebeur, *Le dieu égyptien Shai;* also Baines, "Contexts of Fate"; Eyre, "Fate, Crocodiles and the Judgment of the Dead".

[10] As stone was typically used to build only temples and tombs (sacred buildings in general), Hubai ("Eine literarische Quelle", p. 297) suggested (followed by Galán, *Four Journeys*, p. 131 and Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians,* p. 185) that the "house of stone" is a very apt image of this restricted possibility to move freely/live because resembling a tomb. Also Spalinger, 'The Re-Use of Propp for Egyptian Folktales", p. 120, n. 20 and references therein.

the structure of this episode in more detail, we can see the tripartite pattern emerge quite clearly.[11]

Thesis: The pharaoh lacks a son;
Antithesis: A son is born and his fate is predicted;
Synthesis: The son is alive and in plentitude, but immobilised and "entombed".

Father ----(+)----Hero

Motifs
A) childless pharaoh
B) Hero's fate represented by the crocodile, snake and dog

A) The motif of a childless ruler seems awkwardly non-Egyptian and without relevant parallels in other texts. Furthermore, the motif of a childless (son-less) father, is the focus of many Near Eastern compositions. We may mention, for example, the *Story of Aqhat* (further on as *Aqhat*)[12] or the *Epic of Kirta/Keret* (further on as *Kirta*)[13] where the fact that the hero lacks a son is the *crux* determining the heroes' actions. *Aqhat* represents a very interesting parallel worth quoting. It begins with a description of a ritual performed by Daniel, man of Rapiu (i.e. Aqhat's father), the reason of which is gradually revealed:

4. CAT 1.17, First Tablet, col. I[14]

> **2–3** Girded, gives food to the gods,/[Girded, gives drink to] the deities **3–5** Throws down [his garment] and lies/Throws down [his cloak] for the night.

This Daniel repeats for six days (**5–15**).

> **15–16** Then on the seventh day/Baal draws near in compassion [...] **23–24** Bless him, Bull, El my father/Prosper him, Creator of Creatures. **25–26** Let him have a son in his house,/Offspring within his palace.

The story enumerates the beneficial activities a son performs for his father which include setting up of his mortuary cult (**26–27**)—thus protecting him from bad fate in the afterlife (**27–28**), from enemies during his lifetime (**28–29**), but also addresses more practical issues such as helping him when inebriated with wine, etc. (**30–33**)

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[11] It is interesting how the inner tripartite division follows the inner division of the original indicated by the various narrative forms. Thus the antithesis and the synthesis in this case are both marked by the *ʿḥṣ.n* forms.

[12] See conveniently Parker, "Aqhat", p. 49–79.

[13] See conveniently Greenstein, "Kirta", p. 9–48.

[14] Parker, "Aqhat", p. 51–57. On the edition of the Ugaritic texts, see p. 52, n. 128.

> **34** El takes [a cup] in his hand **34–36** He blesses [Dani]el, man of Rapiu/Prospers the hero, [man of the] Harnemite [...] **38–39** [ ] flourish/Let him mount his couch [ ] **39–40** In kissing his wife, [conception]/ In embracing her, pregnancy!

In the following *col. II* Daniel plays host for seven days to the Katharat, i.e. the goddesses of fate. After they depart, we read of the "joy of bed/the delights of the bed of childbirth" (**41–42**) and after all of the months have been counted (**43–46**), we may presume Aqhat is born (pertinent passage lost).[15]

In comparison the beginning of the *Doomed Prince* is rather brief. Nevertheless, save for some details, it can be used as a concise summary of the more lengthy and more detailed description in *Aqhat*:

> **1,1** As for *him*, [it has been] said, (namely) a king, a son had not been born to him. **1,2** [Now, when His Majesty, l.p.h., requested] for himself a boy from the gods of his district, **1,3** they commanded, causing that (one) be born to him, and he lay with his wife that night **1,4** Now /// conceiving, she ended the months of childbirth **1,5** then a son was born. The Hathors came **1,6** in order to determine fate for him.[16]

We are missing the dramatic details of the ritual performance of the pharaoh. We are not informed about the reaction of the "gods of his district" (*nṯr.w n ḥ3w=f*); we do not even know their names. The story does not enumerate the individual months of the pregnancy, nor are we informed about the circumstances of the Hathors' visit.

The Egyptian brevity is understandable as the motif of the childless pharaoh is virtually non-existent in ancient Egyptian literature and probably did not represent a motif worth developing for the Egyptian reader/listener.[17] Even the mention of the Hathors—having been adapted to the Egyptian taste—follows the birth of the hero as opposed to the Ugaritic story where the Katharat arrive before the conception itself. The "foreign" and "exotic" setting of the story plot was therefore clearly indicated already at the beginning but was limited to the bare minimum and altered where possible.

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[15] The plot of the story then diverges from Egyptian texts.

[16] Translation by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 365–366.

[17] Even though the issue of having a son was of major importance for the ancient Egyptians, his lack did not become a topical motif. One of the possible explanations could be that the sophisticated Egyptian system of mortuary rituals developed mechanisms how to ritually cope with such a situation – hence the substitution of the son by the mortuary priest. However, the son was crucial for the maintenance of his father's cult.

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

1	–––	Birth of Hero described. Destiny revealed to him by the Hathors
		1 hero's birth described *2 hero's destiny predicted*
2	Bata lives "as a son" of his older brother Anubis and his wife, who are "like a father and mother" to him	Hero is the pharaoh's only son
	3a hero's identity defined as a son/brother	*3b hero's identity defined as a son*
3	Bata lives with his brother and his wife/ parents in the country, i.e. outside the capital, not in any way affiliated to the pharaoh	Hero lives in isolation (outside the palace) in a stone building (similar to a tomb) as an attempt of his father to shield the hero from his fate
	4a hero outside the centre of power	*4a hero outside the centre of power*

Commentary

The *Two Brothers* introduce us directly to a specific kinship constellation (Unit 2) which includes Bata, whereas the *Doomed Prince* includes events of Unit 1 describing Hero's birth after divine intervention. This seems to indicate differing foci of both compositions. The events in the *Two Brothers* are fueled by dynamics within constantly shifting kinship constellations, whereas the *Doomed Prince* directly brings up the topic of (uncontested) legitimacy. The *Two Brothers* enabled the character of Bata to become a legitimate heir to the pharaoh through the workings of the Kamutef-motif, impregnating his own wife/mother thus becoming her child and therefore legitimising his position only at the end of the story. This then led to the role exchange from being a "son" of his older brother Anubis to being a "father" to him (see p. 157–161). Through the inner workings of the narrative, a very abstract, complex, and paradoxical (because mutual) issue of the father-son relationship could have been addressed and conceptualised (see p. 202–204). The kinship situation in the *Doomed Prince*, on the other hand, is much more straightforward so that the topic of (il)legitimacy can be highlighted. In both cases, however, the location of the main protagonists outside the source of power (pharaoh's office) seems significant as it implies the evolution of the plot as a series of steps by the main protagonists towards being associated with it. We are, of course, left in ignorance as to the ending of the *Doomed Prince*. However, based on other similarities, it seems reasonable that the filial role of the hero is mentioned for similar reasons, i.e. that the end of the story would include the Hero's return to Egypt and his ascension to the throne.

Episode B (Rubrum II)[18]

> **Now, after** the child was older, he went up to his roof and he caught sight of a greyhound, which was following an old man who was going down the road, and he asked his servant [[who was beside him]]: "What is that [[which is going behind the old man]] [[who is coming down the road?"]] And he replied to him: "It is a greyhound." And the child said to him: "Cause one like it to be brought to me." Then the servant went and reported them (the words) to His Majesty, l.p.h. Thereupon His Majesty, l.p.h. said: "Let a young 'springer' be taken to him /// [for? the re]bellion (in) his heart." Then (Some)one <caused> the greyhound to be brought to him.

Commentary

Plot dynamics

The reason for the Hero's isolation/imprisonment/entombment were his protection. Given these circumstances, the Hero's wish to obtain a dog (one of his fates) directly contradicts the decision of the pharaoh not to enable him contact with these animals. I believe that to this end the mention of a "[re]bellion in his heart" ([*b*]*gs.w ḥ3.ty=f*) is made. First the Hero changes their relationship from positive to negative by disregarding his orders, which the pharaoh reflects calling it a "rebellion" (however granting his wish).

Father <--- (–) <--- Hero
Father ---> (–) ---> Hero

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

4	Bata is sexually assaulted by his stepmother, refuses her and is falsely accused by her of a sexual assault	Hero sees a greyhound, personification of his fate, requires it and obtains it
	5a hero is offered and refuses something forbidden	*5b hero desires and acquires something forbidden*

Commentary:

Both cases represent a significant violation of the *status quo* (social-consensual in one case, pharaoh-issued in the other) considered inappropriate (adultery, transgression of the pharaoh's wish). The difference is that in once case (*Doomed*

[18] P. Harris 500: 4,6–4,10; *LES*: 2,1–2,9. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 366–367.

Prince) the hero actively desires and obtains it, in the other (*Two Brothers*) he is offered and refuses it.[19]

Episode C (Rubrum III)[20]

> **Now, after the days had elapsed concerning this,** and the child had matured in his whole body, he sent (a message) to his father, saying: "Why has (it) occurred that I stay here? Now look! I am committed to the fate. Let me be released so that I act do according to my will until the god does that [[which is in his heart."]][A] Thereupon (Some)one harnessed a chariot for him, equipped [with] all weapons of combat.[B] [And (Some)one caused a servant to accomp]any him as a retainer, and (Some)one ferried him to the eastern shore[C] and (Some)one said to him "May you go according to your will", [hi]s greyhound being with him.

Commentary

Plot dynamics

The negative relationship between the pharaoh and the Hero is dissolved by their separation and Hero's departure. The situation is stabilised (conflict does not continue) but for the price of the rightful and only heir to the throne leaving for the "outside". The actions of the Hero are sanctioned by a representative of the pharaoh/ Pharaoh himself(?).

Father –(+)–– | ––(+)– Hero

Motifs

A) Hero leaves to meet his fate / Hero is forced to flee because of his stepmother.
B) Hero leaves in a chariot.
C) Hero traverses an unspecified body of water (river?).

A) Even though the reason for the Hero's departure is presented here as his decision to meet his fate, we must now skip to later parts of the story because once in Syria, a different account is presented on three occasions: twice by the hero himself to the

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[19] I find it useful, however, to remind the reader of the "projective inversion" which Dundes ("Projective Inversion": 378–94) suggested for this case (see also p. 179–180, n. 460). Ventures into psychoanalysis are often met with skepticism, such as was the case with Dundes' suggestion from S. T. Hollis ("Continuing Dialogue with Alan Dundes": 212–216). Apart from noting this exchange, A. Spalinger ("Transformations in Egyptian Folktales": 139, n. 14) gives further references to psychoanalytical studies relating to ancient Egyptian material. As bizarre and farfetched as these theories might seem, the possible parallel between myths as a type of cultural (or "collective", to use C. G. Jung's term) unconsciousness enables to shed light on some basic mechanisms of mythomotorics and I consider it therefore worthwhile.

[20] P. Harris 500: 4,11–5,2; *LES*: 2,10–3,1. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 368–369.

Syrian Princes (Manuscript: 5,11–5,12) and the Chief of Naharin (MS: 7,3–7,4), and once by a messenger informing the Chief of Naharin about the identity of the hero, who reached the window of his daughter (MS: 6,9). Even though the accounts differ in details from one another, it will suffice to quote just one (MS: 5,11–5,12):

> "I am the son of a chariot-warrior from the land of Egypt, my mother died, and my father took for himself another wife, a stepmother, **5,12** and she began to hate me, and [I] took myself off, fleeing from her presence."[21]

Di Biase-Dyson assumes that this account is "misinformation" and a *cliché* and considers it a comical aspect which undermines the dominance of the Chief of Naharin during his encounter with the hero: "That the Mitannians wholeheartedly believe such a lie almost seems a joke at their expense: they fall for such a *cliché*!"[22] She further concludes that it is an "ironic comment on the gullibility of the foreign characters."[23] The comparison with the *Two Brothers* (see below) shows that it is a structurally important motive, regardless whether it was a *cliché* or not. It also seems necessary to view this motif in light of the later events when the Hero comes in contact with the Chief of Naharin. If, indeed, the Chief is a mirror image of the Hero's father, as shall be argued later on, then it would be unwise to define the identity of the Hero as a transgressor of his father's wishes. The stepmother motif would then provide a very useful solution.

However, I do not want to rule out the comical aspect of the stepmother motif. It might rather just be achieved by not providing full details of the reasons of the hero's falling into disfavour with his stepmother (as was done in the *Two Brothers*) being obvious to the reader/listener given the motif being a *cliché*. The effect would then function in a similar manner as inter/self-referencing in contemporary media,[24] for example, rather than by ridiculing the "foreign" characters. After all, as Eyre has shown, the stepmother-stepson relationship was fraught with conflictual situations and it was in fact a social reality.[25] The story might have just employed this unspecified reference so as to allow the reader/listener to project his/her own experience into the plot.

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[21] Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 370.

[22] Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 162.

[23] Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 176.

[24] Inter/self-referentiality is an especially actual issue in post-modern media. For an overview of the theoretical framework underlying this topic, see Nöth, "Self-Reference in the Media", p. 3–30; the close relationship between humour and paradox and various self-referential devices is analysed by Siebert, "Self-Reference in Animated Films", p. 155–161. Inter-referencing is also an important aspect in Indian cinema, which is a very interesting parallel as it commonly applies religious or mythological motifs in its plot; see for example Pauwels, "Conclusion", p. 243–245, where she writes about "film-within-a-film" references as an "inside joke for the connoisseurs" (p. 244).

[25] Eyre, "Evil Stepmother": 223–243.

B) In relation to the means of Hero's departure, it seems relevant to note that in the Ramesside period charioteers played an important role in diplomacy, holding the title *wpw.ty nsw r ḫ3s.wt nb* "Royal Envoy to Every Foreign Country",[26] that the chariot had clear solar and divine connotations,[27] and that the Hero's equipment, with which he leaves Egypt (chariot, weapons, dog, retainer/follower) resembles that of a pharaoh going into war: *the* chariot-warrior of Egypt.[28] In her analysis of of a literary composition conveniently called *The Hymn to the King in his Chariot*, C. Manassa very nicely shows that through paronomasia the ancient Egyptians transformed the foreign origin of this deadly weapon and its terminology into a "literary vehicle of imperialism".[29] In this sense, Hero's departure might have easily evoked also these associations.

C) Hero's departure is clearly demarcated by his traversing water with all the connotations a "crossing to the other side (of a river)" can carry. Here the motif is mentioned only in passing and does not seem to be thematised in any major way.

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

5	Bata flees because of being falsely accused by his stepmother of a sexual assault	i) Hero leaves to meet his fate ii) Hero is forced to flee because of his stepmother
	6a hero is accused of acquiring something forbidden and is forced to flee	*6b hero after having acquired something forbidden decides/is forced to flee*
6	Bata is judged together with his brother/ father and vindicated by (P)re-Harakhty	Hero is ferried to the "eastern shore" and his actions are legalised: "May you go according to your will"
	7 hero's quest is legitimized at a liminal moment (temporal: dawn; spatial: canal of water)	*7 hero's quest is legitimized at a liminal moment (spatial: [canal? of] water)*

Commentary:
Even though structurally the *Doomed Prince* replicates the events in the *Two Brothers*, the main difference between the two compositions is the intensity with which they occur. Bata's flight is described in great detail and includes strong emotions and grand gestures. We thus witness an attempt at murder (*Two Brothers*) as opposed to

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[26] Abbas, "Diplomatic Role of the Charioteers in the Ramesside Period".

[27] *Inter alia* Calvert, "Vehicle of the Sun".

[28] Already Galán, *Four Journeys*, p. 119; Stewart, "Characterisation and Legitimisation in the Doomed Prince", p. 146. *Contra* Helck, "Die Erzählung", p. 219, who does not connect this motif to the pharaoh at all considering it "völlig unägyptisch", further noting that (p. 220–221) that the special attention paid to the horse after the Hero has been taken in by the princes also attests to foreign (understand Hittite) influence where the horse played a central role.

[29] Manassa, "The Chariot That Plunders Foreign Lands".

the matter-of-fact response from the pharaoh at the Hero's request for departure. Bata is vindicated by Pre himself, whereas the Hero is just given a message from his father. The canal Bata crosses is infested with crocodiles, the Hero is simply ferried "to the other side", etc. We even learn of the stepmother issue much later into the story of the *Doomed Prince* and it seems to be used only as means of concealing his own identity. This is suggestive of a different focus of both compositions which they, nevertheless, express by similar means (see commentary to Unit A).

Summary of Episode Cluster I (A–C)

Main outcome of individual episodes:

Episode A: Positive relationship develops between father and Hero.
Episode B: Negative relationship develops between father and Hero.
Episode C: Both parties are separated, negative relationship resolved.

Recurring themes and plot dynamic focus:

Episode A	immobile ("tomb")	restricted	isolated "inside"	child
Episode B	immobile ("tomb")	restriction limited	isolated "inside"	child
Episode C	mobile but guided	not restricted	liminal/"outside"	child

Summary:

The dominating topic in this Episode Cluster is Hero's immobility with his isolation from the source of power (palace), which is sharp contrast with the fact that he is the pharaoh's only living son (granted by the gods) and therefore legitimate heir to the throne. Even though presented as a protection from his fates (death), it also has the effect of preventing him from his (implied) fate of becoming pharaoh. The plot dynamics focus is on the gradual steps through which the Hero limits the restrictions and becomes mobile (obtains dog, leaves), which, in effect, necessitates his departure for the "outside". Even though a conflict between the Hero and the pharaoh is mentioned ("rebellion in his heart"), it is not an intensive as between Bata and his brother/father.

Initial Episode I (Rubrum III)[30]

> So he went northward, following his dreams, over the desert, and he survived on all the animals of the desert.[A] Then he arrived at (the residence of) the Chief of Naharin. Now, (none) had been born to the Chief of Naharin except for one daughter, a female. Now, a house had been built for her, whose window was 70

[30] P. Harris 500: 5,2–5,5; *LES*: 3,1–3,8. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 369.

cubits distant from the ground.[31] And he caused all the sons of all the chiefs of the land of Syria to be brought, and he said to them: "As for the one [[who will reach the window of my daughter]], she will be a wife for him."

Commentary

Plot dynamics

Being an "Initial Episode", this section does not fuel the mythomotorics (see p. 163–177) but rather sets the scene for a different exchange within the following episode cluster. It includes a brief description of the Hero's travel through the desert and the intermission which explains the events in Syria prior to Hero's arrival.

Motifs

A) Hero survives on desert game.

A) Living off desert game seems to be further means of stressing the Hero's unusual and possibly ontologically very different situation diverging from the norm (see also p. 124–125, n. 378).[32] After all, he finds himself in a locale (the desert) which is considered to be very dangerous and inimical[33] clearly marking this as a liminal phase.

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[31] For this motif, see Simon, "Die Jungfrau im Turm".

[32] *Contra* Stewart, "Characterisation and Legitimisation in the Doomed Prince": "[...] the prince is also identified with the ideology of the successful hunter. [...] As part of royal dogma the successful hunter was interchangeable with the victorious warrior. Like the battlefield, the hunting ground was the ideal place for the demonstration of his abilities and the two are often linked in New Kingdom texts and representations" (p. 146). Even though this is definitely true, however depicting the king killing wild animals is one thing, saying that they are the only means of his subsistence—when the standard is growing crops—is another thing. It is true, however, that we could (following Stewart) view this passage as a sum of the kingly qualities of the Hero in spite of the fact that he is actually leaving Egypt, thus stressing his claim for legitimacy. However, this approach does not adequately consider other parts of the story in which the Hero obviously lacks initiative, is week, injured, unable to protect himself, etc.

[33] In ancient Egypt, the usual associations of the desert with forces of chaos in their various forms comes to mind. Of special interest, in this case, could be the *Leiden Magical Papyrus* (P. Leiden I 343 + I 345). For the *editio princeps*, see Massart, *The Leiden Magical Papyrus I 343 + I 345*. Originally a very large composition (for full description, see Massart, *The Leiden Magical Papyrus I 343 + I 345*, p. 1–10) contains a series of incantations against a specific decease written syllabically as *s3-m3-n3* and *ḥw*. As H.-W. Fischer-Elfert explains: "[...] generally there is a pattern to the distribution of the two terms over the manuscript: *s-m-n* is prevalent on the Recto, and *ḥw* on the Verso. Sixteen incantations [...] are duplicated on the recto and verso. The situation is thus suggestive of a "translation" from one language's idiom into another, or, to put it more precisely, it seem that a non-Egyptian source was reworked into an Egyptian adaptation." (Fischer-Elfert, "Sāmānu on the Nile" p. 189–190). The text is full of foreign deities clearly revealing its dependance on material from outside of Egypt. One passage is especially interesting in connection with the desert, which is designated as the final location to which the disease shall be expelled (III 6–8): "To whom shall I hand you over, (7) *ḥw*? To whom shall I hand you over, *s-m-n*? You belong to the wild donkeys (8) who are in the desert! (*dj=j tw n-m p3-ḥw/dj=j tw n-m p3-s-n-m/jw=k n jꜥ3.w šm3.w ntj ḥr ḫ3s.t*) (Fischer-Elfert, "Sāmānu on the Nile", p. 191, 193).

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

7	Bata cuts off his phallus thus loosing his strength, informs his brother that his heart will be placed at the top of the pine tree *8 hero is physically injured (penis) which makes him weak*	see unit 8
8	---	Hero travels in a chariot northwards through the desert, accompanied by a servant, living off desert game *8 hero is physically injured (feet) which (later) makes him weak/unable to perform certain feats* *9 hero travels to his destination "outside"* *10 hero obtains nourishment in a non-traditional way*
9	Bata reaches the Valley of the Pine, lives off desert game *9+11 hero travels/reaches his destination "outside"* *10 hero obtains nourishment in a non-traditional way*	Hero reaches Naharin (Mitanni) *11 hero reaches his destination "outside"*
10	Bata's force is externalised in his heart located on top of a pine *12 hero is physically disintegrated*	---
11	Bata establishes a household for himself in the Valley of the Pine *13 hero seeks to create an alternative existence "outside"*	see unit 24
12	Bata obtains an extraordinary wife created for him by the gods of Egypt from their own flesh; her fate is predicted (by the Seven Hathors) *14a hero obtains extraordinary wife* *14c hero's wife's fate predicted*	Chief of Naharin's extraordinary daughter is introduced. Her special status is thematised by being isolated in a 70-cubit-high tower to be married only to the one who passes the test: her fate is decided (by her father) *14b hero's extraordinary future wife introduced* *14d hero's wife's fate decided* see also unit 23

Commentary:

Units 7–9 contain a total of four mythemes (8–11), which are combined in various order in each of the compositions. They can be subsumed under three headings:

injury, *travel*, *means of nourishment*. In case of the *Two Brothers*, hero's injury is a crucial motif which returns several times in multiple variations (Bata's castration, exteriorisation of his heart, his repeated death, etc.) and concerns vital parts of Bata's body (penis, heart). In the *Doomed Prince*, the mytheme appears in a much weaker form as Hero's sore feet (even though no mention is made of these until Unit 13–14, it is obvious that the reason of the Hero's injury is the travel through the desert). Subsequently, these very same sore feet prevent him from engaging with the other princes in their attempts to reach the Princess's window. But what do the two types of injury have in common? The parallel between Bata's emasculation and Hero's sore feet is that the inability to engage in some type of activity (protection of his wife in case of Bata; competing for/gaining his wife in case of the Hero) is subsequently thematised in relation to the injury, which is, furthermore, related to their displacement from Egypt into the "outside". This movement is therefore defined in the terms of the characters losing their strength or ability to act on their own behalf. This naturally brings us to the motif of *travel*. The *Doomed Prince* includes a brief description of the Hero's journey, whereas the *Two Brothers* simply states that he has reached the Valley of the Pine, leaving out any details of the journey itself whatsoever, yet implying it by stating that Bata had arrived.[34] The difference is caused by the diverging landscape of the "outside". Hero's means of transportation are crucial for his integration into the hierarchical system "outside", and his self presentation as a "son of a chariot warrior" (to which his equipment is a testimony) then serves as the focalising element in the ensuing plot dynamics (see below). Bata, on the other hand, does not undergo any similar interaction "outside" (but only once he returns "inside"). Mytheme from Unit 10 is present only in the *Two Brothers* (generally, the variations of the mutilations/transformations of Bata's body are much more diverse in comparison with the *Doomed Prince*); Unit 11 occurs later in the *Doomed Prince*—which is conditioned by the fact that the whole passage describing Hero's interactions in Naharin are completely missing from the *Two Brothers* (the issue is however more complicated as the Chief of Naharin is, in fact, a mirror image of the pharaoh in the *Doomed Prince* – the events in Naharin will thus be matched to the events Bata endures in interaction with the pharaoh). Unit 12 describes the means of introduction of the main female character into the story. The difference between the two narratives is, once again, conditioned by the different issues which are being displayed. The Hero cannot simply obtain a wife, as Bata did, he has to win her so as to fuel the mythomotorics (see below).

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[34] It is interesting to note that in the *Two Brothers* even the journey of Anubis and Bata back to Egypt after Bata had transformed into a bull is also not thematised in any way. For the shortening of a hero's journey as a typical fairy-tale feature, see also Liverani, "Leaving by Chariot for the Desert", p. 92–93. Liverani's article is interesting in many more aspects. He essentially analyses the pattern of the hero "leaving by chariot for the desert" in the so-called *Idrimi's Inscription*, but also draws parallels to material from the Ugaritic *Epic of Kirta* (*Keret*), and—more importantly—ancient Egyptian sources.

Episode D (Rubrum IV + V)[35]

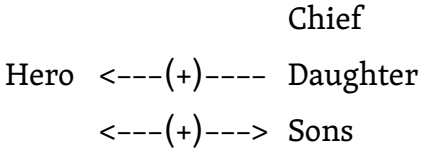
Now, after many days had elapsed <from> this, they being (engaged) in their everyday tasks, then the child passed by them. Thereupon they took the child to their house, and they cleaned him, they gave fodder to his team, and they did everything for the child, they anointed him, they bandaged his feet, and they gave bread to his retainer and they said to him as a practice of conversation: "*Where* do you come from, handsome boy?" And he said to them "I am the son of a chariot-warrior from the land of Egypt, my mother died, and my father took for himself another wife, a stepmother, and she began to hate me, and [I] took myself off, fleeing from her presence."[A] And they embraced him and they kissed him [all] over [his body].

[Now, after many days had elapsed from] this, he asked the boys: "What is this [[that you are doing, [boys?"]]] [And they replied to him]:["now, as for the 3 whole months] up to this (moment), we have been here, spending time, [leaping (up)], [and the one [[w]ho will reach the window of the daughter of the Chief of Naharin]], [he will] give her to him for [a wife]." [And he] said to them: "Would that i did [not] suffer (on account of) my feet! I would go along in order to leap up with you." And they went along in order to leap up in the manner of their everyday tasks, and the child stood at a distance, and watched, while the attention of the daughter of the Chief of Naharin was upon him.

Commentary

Plot dynamics

This Episode is formed by two rubra which, essentially, represent the same motif (developing positive relationships) but in a gradually increasing pattern. After his arrival to a foreign land, the hero begins his integration into its social and power structure establishing positive relationships from the bottom up with the representatives of the social structure: Syrian Princes, Daughter of the Chief of Naharin; Chief of Naharin. His immobility is stressed again (he is aided by the Syrian Princes), but regardless the daughter of the Chief develops a positive relationship towards him.



Motifs

A) Hero's self-presentation as the son of a chariot warrior and the stepmother motif.

[35] P. Harris 500: 5,6–6,4; *LES*: 3,9–4,12. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 369–372.

A) Some commentators are persuaded that by presenting himself in terms he does in Naharin the Hero demotes himself in rank.[36] Even though I agree that the issue of rank and therefore (il)legitimity is the crucial plot dynamics focus of this episode cluster (see below), at this moment I would like to claim otherwise. On his arrival, the Hero is immediately accepted by the Syrian Princes[37] – the local élite which has the right to strive for the hand of the Daughter of the Chief of Naharin, his only child.[38] As the emphatic form used in their question suggests: (5,10) "*Where* do you come from?" (*jy=k tnw pȝ šrj nfr*), the decisive element in their decision seems to be the country of Hero's origin (Egyptian) and also the equipment with which he arrived (based on the attention they payed to his horse and retainer). By having the Syrian Princes acknowledge Hero's status as their peer, the position of the Hero from the previous Episode Cluster is also acknowledged: just as the Hero was a potential successor to his father in Egypt in Episode A, so is he a potential successor to the Chief of Naharin in this episode. The situation is, however different: the Hero is *not the only* potential successor any more. The Syrian Princes represent a certain narrative gearing mechanism: they bring the Hero to a similar starting point but in a different context. Just as in Episode A, the Hero is immobile (but now the reason is not that he is imprisoned but that he has an injury, which gradually cures thus eliminating the reason of his immobility); he is on the outskirts of the power structure (Chief being its centre). From this point on, Hero's progression bottom-up in the hierarchical structure begins.

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

13	–––	Hero is welcomed, provided for and accepted by the Syrian Princes *15 hero finds support "outside" enabling him to exist*
14	Bata desires his wife, forbids her to go out, informs her that he is weak, unable to protect her, and not whole (his heart on a tree) *8 hero is physically injured and weak/unable to perform certain feats (protect wife)* *16a hero develops positive relationship to his wife*	Hero cannot jump together with the sons of the chiefs as his feet are injured; Chief of Naharin's daughter takes interest in hero *8 hero is physically injured and weak/unable to perform certain feats (gain his wife)* *16b wife-to-be develops positive relationship to hero*

[36] See Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 163: he is both a fugitive and a member of a lower military class.

[37] As Di Biase-Dyson (*Foreigners and Egyptians*) remarks: "The use, from both sides, of the vocative plus interrogative between the Syrian Princes and the Egyptian Prince perhaps suggests their equal rank [...]" (p. 160). To quote the text itself: "They embraced him, and they kissed him on [all] over [his body]" (MS: 5,13).

[38] It is however still perplexing why the nobility of Naharin is not involved instead.

Commentary:
See above commentary to Initial Episode I and Episode D.

Episode E (Rubrum VIa)[39]

Now, after <many days> had elapsed from this, then the child came in order to leap up with the boys of the chiefs, and he leapt up and he reached the window of the daughter of the Chief of Naharin, and she kissed him and she embraced him all over his body. Thereupon (Some)one went in order to tell good tidings to her father, and (Some)one said to him: "A person has reached the window of your daughter." Then the Chief inquired (about) him, saying "the son of which of chiefs?" And (Some)one said to him: "The son of a chariot-warrior. He has come, fleeing from the land of Egypt from the presence of his stepmother." Thereupon the Chief of Naharin became greatly angered, then he said: "So I shall give my daughter to the *fugitive* from Egypt? Make him take himself off again!" So (Some)one came in order to say to him: "May you go back to the place [[where you came from!"]] And the girl took hold of him and she swore (by) god, saying: "As Pre-Horakhty endures, should (Some)one take him away from me, I will not eat, I will not drink, and I will die at once!"[A] Thereupon the Messenger went and reported every <word> [[that she said]] to her father, and her <father> caused people to go in order to kill him. He was in his (usual) place, but the girl declared to <them>: "As Pre endures, should (Some)one slay him, the sun will set, I being (already) dead. I will not spend an hour more than him alive!" Thereup[on (Some)one went], in order that it be said to her father.

Commentary
Plot dynamics:
Rubrum VI includes Episodes E and F and has been split.

Episode E presents two consecutive events (conflict with the Chief and daughter's intercession) which replicate in structure but the second time are emphasized (warning, direct attempt at murder) thus creating a strong negative relationship between the Hero and the Chief. The plot dynamics in Episode D (and F) lend weight to the idea that the "foreign" landscape of Naharin is in fact a mirror-image of the Egyptian landscape and that the Chief of Naharin is a split version of

[39] P. Harris 500: 6,4–6,16; *LES*: 4,13–6,1. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 372–374.

the pharaoh.[40] This means that even though the story contains "foreign" characters, any interaction between them will always concern genuinely Egyptian issues.

The cause of the whole conflict with the Chief is in fact the very same information which—in the previous Episode—enabled Hero's association with the Syrian Princes: a servant informs the Chief about the identity of the Hero to which the Chief reacts by being appalled that he should give his daughter to a "fugitive", i.e. a person of a lower social standing.[41] This double interpretation of the Hero's identity is given by different position of the Syrian Princes and the Chief within the hierarchy – what is enough for the Princes is obviously not enough for the Chief. But if the "foreigners" are only a very convenient mechanism how to illustrate some type of paradox which is inherently present in the Egyptian system, what paradox are we dealing with here? As envisaged already in the commentary to Episode D, Hero's acceptance by the Syrian Princes creates a situation parallel to that in Episode A but in a different setting. In the same manner, the events in Episode E (and F) are an elaboration of the mythemes which were foreshadowed in Episode Cluster I but never developed into full form: Hero's wish for something inappropriate (from the point-view of the opponent); ensuing conflict with the pharaoh/opponent; solution. By establishing an unnaturally strong claim of the Hero to the throne at the beginning (only son) but simultaneously isolating him from the centre of power created an inherent paradox in the narrative structure. This paradox stems from the mechanism of positional kingship (see p. 98, 128, 155, 259) which leads to the ever looming possibility of illegitimacy of even those individuals who have been designated as future holders of the office of the pharaoh. In a system where the winner takes all and where there are institutionalised mechanisms which enable to legitimize virtually anyone as the successor, then even the crown prince is a potentially illegitimate "fugitive" (i.e. outside the right social network). The question of legitimacy of the Seth vs. Horus constellation concerns exactly this problem: who has more right to the throne? And how can they both be considered (il)legitimate? Similarly we see this with the *Two Brothers*: the story could have been used to legitimise the claim of either of the two brothers (see p. 208). In the case of the *Doomed Prince*, the setting of the "foreign" country has been used to illustrate this in a yet another manner.

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[40] See also Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, who also develops the idea that the foreign landscapes which are depicted in Egyptian texts are in fact "*metaphorical* creation[s] of the Egyptian court abroad" (p. 183). Parkinson (*Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt,* p. 157) remarks something very similar in relation to the depiction of the land of Retenu in the Middle Kingdom story of Sinuhe. He sees it as "a substitute for Egypt, just as the superficially Egyptianised Ammunenshi is for Senwosret: the place and its Chief are correlatives for Sinuhe's uncertain status".

[41] Contra Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians* (p. 176), who considers the Hero's self-presentation as a way of emphasising his control of the situation: "[the Hero] *deliberately* poses as someone of a lower social standing [...] the disparity between the Prince's actual situation and interpersonal power could also be considered as an authorial wink, showing the Prince as being in *control* of his loss of power [...]."

<---(-)---- Chief

Hero

<---(+)---> Daughter

Motifs

A) Daughter of the Chief of Naharin willing to die for her lover if separated from him.

A) It is tempting to speculate on a possible inter-referential aspect of the composition. The P. Harris 500, which contains the only copy of the *Doomed Prince*, is also inscribed with the *Taking of Joppa* and, more importantly in this case, with a series of love poems. As the recent studies in intertextuality[42] show, seemingly disparate texts in genre inscribed on one medium may, in fact, be used for gaining better understanding of the individual texts by their common relation to the target audience. When informed about the threat to her lover (first in the form of a warning, then a direct threat to his life), the daughter of the Chief of Naharin emotionally proclaims:

> **6,12** And the girl took hold of him and she swore (by) god, saying: "As Pre-Horakhty endures, should (Some)one take him away from me, **6,13** I will not eat, I will not drink, and I will die at once!"
>
> "As Pre endures, should (Some)one slay him, the sun will set, I being (already) dead. **6,16** I will not spend an hour more than him alive!"

Among the twenty two love songs included in the P. Harris 500[43] there are two which are thematically relevant:[44]

> *P. Harris 500, Collection I, 5*
> My heart is not yet satisfied with your love / My lustful jackal cub. / I [cannot] let go of the intoxication of being with you, / Until I am driven off and beaten /

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[42] The term was first coined by the poststructuralist Julia Kristeva in 1966. See for example most recently the splendid work by C. Manassa (*Imagining the Past*) where issues of intertextuality are raise and applied to Egyptian material and the references therein.

[43] For a description of the papyrus and basic references, see for example Landgráfová, Navrátilová, *Sex and the Golden Goddess I*, p. 223; also Fox, *Song of Songs*, p. 10–11.

[44] The only other instance of a papyrus containing both a collection of love songs and a narrative, specifically the so-called *Contendings of Horus and Seth* along with a hymn to Ramesses V, is the P. Chester Beatty I (pBM 10681). Even though the love songs are a later addition to the papyrus, U. Verhoeven suggests that all of the compositions are related to a festival context (even though the love songs to a different festival devoted to Hathor as opposed to the other compositions) see Verhoeven, "Ein Historischer 'Sitz Im Leben' Für Die Erzählung von Horus Und Seth" p. 363, n. 55.

To dwell in the marshes, / To the Levant (*ḫ3rw*) with staff and sticks, / To Nubia with a palm rod, / To the highlands with a stave, / to the lowlands with a cane. / I will not listen to their counsels / To give up my desires.[45]

P. Harris 500, Collection III, 2
[...] My body is excited, my heart is in joy / Over our walking together. / To hear your voice is like sweet wine / I live through hearing it! / When I see you with every glance, / It is more beautiful for me than to eat and drink![46]

In case of the song from *Coll. I, 5* the girl expresses her determination not to be separated from her lover even if it implies a threat of physical harm. Interestingly enough, the border areas of the Egyptian world are mentioned here. The song from *Coll. III, 2* clearly identifies her priorities.

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

15	Bata reveals his secret (destiny?) to her – his existence is dependent on his externalised power in the form of his heart on the tree	see unit 25
	17 hero reveals secret to his wife	
16	– – –	Hero reaches the window and is the object of affection of the Chief of Naharin's daughter
		18 hero overcomes his impediment and reaches his wife-to-be
17	Bata's wife is robbed by *Ym* of her plait of her which is brought to Egypt and presented to the pharaoh as tribute from foreign lands	Servants inform the Chief of Naharin about the feat of the hero
	19a hero's wife threatened by body of water (p3 ym) *20 opponent/father-to-be informed about (the wife of) hero*	*20 opponent/father-to-be informed about the hero*
18	Pharaoh orders the woman to be brought to him disregarding Bata's claim	Chief of Naharin does not want to give his daughter to a "fugitive from Egypt" disregarding his claim
	21a hero's wife desired by opponent/father-to-be, who strives to take her	*21b hero found unworthy of wife by opponent/father-to-be, who strives to keep her*

[45] Translation by Landgráfová, Navrátilová, *Sex and the Golden Goddess I*, p. 128–130.

[46] Translation by Landgráfová, Navrátilová, *Sex and the Golden Goddess I*, p. 133–135.

19	Bata's wife leaves him for the pharaoh	Daugther of the Chief of Naharin swears an oath to die if separated from the hero
	22a wife of hero separated from the hero of her own will	*22b wife-to-be not separated from the hero of her own will*
20	Pharaoh strives to kill Bata (through envoys)	Chief of Naharin strives to kill hero (through envoys)
	23 opponent/father-to-be strives to kill hero	*23 opponent/father-to-be strives to kill hero*
21	Bata's wife becomes pharaoh's wife and reveals Bata's secret	Daughter of the Chief of Naharin swears an oath to die if separated from the hero
	24a hero betrayed/killed by wife (hero unprotected)	*22b wife-to-be not separated from the hero of her own will* *24b hero saved by wife-to-be (hero protected)*

Commentary:
Unit 15 introduces Mytheme 17 in the *Two Brothers*. Exactly the same mytheme appears in the *Doomed Prince* later on in Unit 25. Both women characters are then defined by their inverted reaction to this knowledge in relation to the main protagonists (one destroys, other protects). Viewed from a structural point of view, both female characters react in the same manner: they are aggressive against elements which threaten the male counterparts with whom they are associated. This inverted structure is again visible in Units 19 and 21.

As explained earlier, both narratives work differently with the topic of the protagonists' physical injuries (mutilations). Unit 16, attested only in the *Doomed Prince*, therefore does not seem to have a structural parallel in the *Two Brothers*.

Unit 17 describes the means of mediation between the protagonists and their opponents. In the *Two Brothers* the setting is much grander – we hear of the personified Sea (*Ym*), who brings a plait of the women's hair to the pharaoh. This is conditioned by the fact that the communication proceeds in between two ontologically different zones (Egypt × "outside"). In case of the *Doomed Prince* the mediator is simply a person who witnessed Hero's successful attempt. The two parties (Chief and Hero) are located within the same ontological zone, they are both "outside", so the means of communication are more ordinary.

In Unit 17, both opponents/fathers-to-be of the protagonists express disregard for the heroes' claims either by wanting to take her (*Two Brothers*) or by wanting to keep her (*Doomed Prince*).

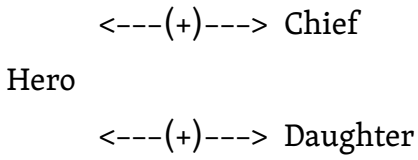
Episode F (Rubrum VIb)[47]

> Then her [father caused that] the [boy be brought before] him [with] his daughter. Then the boy came before him, and his worth impressed the Chief, and he embraced him and he kissed him all over his body, and he said to him: "Talk to me (about) yourself. Look, you are a son to me." And he said to him "I am the son of a chariot-warrior from the land of Egypt, my mother died, and my father took for himself another wife, and she began to hate me, and I came, fleeing from her presence." Then he gave him his daughter for a wife and he gave him a house and arable land and likewise cattle and every good thing.[A]

Commentary:

Plot dynamics:

This episode represents the closure and solution of this episodic cluster. With the Chief accepting him as his son, the Hero has achieved to create positive relationship to the whole social and power structure of the "outside" as presented through the characters of the Syrian Princes, Daughter, and the Chief. A state of seeming stability was achieved (Hero settles down) which, however, proves to be insufficient as the plot develops. This ending was inevitable based on the analysis of the plot dynamics. A conflict had to occur both to be able to show the paradox inherent to Episode Cluster I, and to enable the Hero to gradually associate himself with the mirror image of his own father, the Chief, thus overcoming his initial isolation outside the source of authority/power. As in Episodes D and E, Hero's identity is, yet again, mentioned. Only this time the Chief welcomes him as his son. Such a spin had to be substantiated by the narrative in a plausible way. Daughter's suicidal threats, which are in line with her role later on in the story as a *protectrice*, have exactly such a function as they seem to have had a correlate in Egyptian love poetry (see above).



Motifs:

A) Hero is given a wife and is thus able to found a household.

The act of founding a house, i.e. establishing one's own household, was in ancient Egypt *the* initiation act for a young man in the process of his emancipation from his

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[47] P. Harris 500: 6,16–6,9; *LES*: 6,1–6,9. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 375.

family.[48] Furthermore a woman had to "enter his house" for the process to have been concluded (cohabitation being a socially acceptable arrangement):[49]

> While in principle a man can remain in his father's house, and his mother may continue to look after him, this leaves him structurally and socially in the subordinate role of a son, and not the adult head of his own household.[50]

If this was the social expectation for Egyptians in general, any character of a crown prince, wanting to one day replace his father on the throne, would also have to conform to this idea. And again, please let us not be mistaken that this must necessarily copy any actual practice in case of royalty. This rather seems to be a reflection of socially accepted behaviour and norms projected onto the character of a crown prince in a story.[51]

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

22	see unit 39	Chief of Naharin accepts hero as son-in-law *25a hero knowingly accepted by opponent, becomes his son*
23	see unit 12	Hero obtains the daughter of the Chief of Naharin as his wife *14a hero obtains extraordinary wife*
24	see unit 11	Hero is given "house and arable land and likewise cattle and every good thing" by the Chief of Naharin *13 hero seeks to create an alternative existence "outside"*

Commentary:
The mythemes which we encounter in these units for the *Doomed Prince* have already come up in previous parts of the *Two Brothers*. The parallel in Unit 22 is interesting because of its inversion. Bata—after a series of deaths and corporal transformations—is finally reborn as the pharaoh's son and accepted by both his father and (even

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[48] Eyre, "Evil Stepmother": 224.

[49] Clère, "Un mot pour 'mariage' en égyptien de l'époque ramesside".

[50] Eyre, "Evil Stepmother": 224 and the references therein.

[51] As far as I know, there is no evidence of any such customs with regard to royalty, whereas this can be corroborated in relation to non-royal individuals. See, for example, Quack, *Die Lehren des Ani*, p. 102–105 and 168–170, where the advantage of building one's own house is discussed. For the continuous subordination of the son to his father if staying in his household, see *inter alia* Feucht, *Das Kind im alten Ägypten*, p. 259–266.

more importantly) by his wife/mother. The inversion of the motif is twofold: (a) the parents accept the hero unknowingly, unaware of his actual identity; (b) he becomes an actual son of the pharaoh, not an in-law.[52]

Summary of Episode Cluster II (D–F)

Main outcome of individual episodes:

Episode D: Positive relationship develops between Hero and Syrian Princes and Daughter.

Episode E: Negative relationship develops between the Chief of Naharin and Hero.

Episode F: Hero and Chief reconciled, negative relationship resolved.

Recurring themes and plot dynamic focus:

Episode D	immobile (injured)	–	"outside" edge	boy
Episode E	mobile	–	"outside" middle	boy
Episode F	mobile (guided)	–	"outside" centre	boy

Summary:

The plot dynamic focus of this cluster is the Hero's gradual progression through the hierarchical levels in order to associate himself with the Chief of Naharin as the source of authority, a mirror-image of the pharaoh. This Cluster enables to play out the mythemes which were foreshadowed in Episode Cluster I and express the inherent paradox: because of the mechanism of positional kingship, a pharaoh's successor can be considered simultaneously legitimate and illegitimate. This is shown on the mechanism of Hero's identity, which is mentioned in every Episode always with a different effect. At the same time, the Hero starts to be addressed as a boy (*šrj*) rather then a child (*ḥrd*), which might refer to his gradual evolution (see below, p. xlv).

Initial Episode II (Rubrum VIIa)[53]

Now, after <many days> had elapsed from this, then the boy said to his wife: "I am committed to 3 fates: the crocodile, the snake and the dog."

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[52] Needless to say, the situation in the context of the *Two Brothers* is even more complicated because of the Kamutef principle: even though being the pharaoh's son, Bata has begotten himself through his wife/mother/wife as described in the story. And because I argued that the issue of positional kingship is one of the main foci of the story, it is exactly these categories of family and ancestral relationships which are being tested and stretched to their limits.

[53] P. Harris 500: 7,5–7,6; *LES*: 6,10–6,11. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 375–376.

Commentary

Plot dynamics:

We could easily as well leave this with Episode G, as it simply describes a how the Hero informs his wife, but again, it creates background for the following dynamics of the story and as such can be considered an Initial Episode.

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

25	see unit 15	Hero reveals his destiny to his wife *17 hero reveals secret to his wife*

Commentary:

See above, Episode E.

Episode G (Rubrum VIIb)[54]

> Thereupon she said to him "Ensure that (Some) one causes to kill the dog [[that is in your following."]] And he said to her /// demand! I will not cause to kill my dog—I have reared him since he was a puppy." So she began to guard her husband very much, she not allowing that he go outside alone.

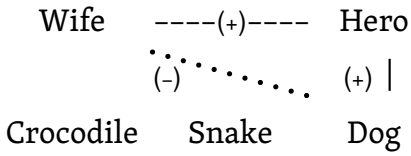
Commentary

Plot dynamics:

With this new Episode Cluster the plot dynamics turn to the last but most important aspect which has not been dealt with in the process of Hero's evolution – his continuing status of a child (see below, p. xlv). The fact that this is the pivotal aspect of the whole plot is shown by the anonymity of the Hero. It is most awkward that neither he or his wife have a name. This, I believe, enables the narrative to stress the fact that he is a child, subsequently a boy, every time he is mentioned in the text. Even this Episode Cluster (G–I), then, is preoccupied with the issue of legitimacy and the inherent paradox which is at its core. As was the case with the first Episodes in the two previous Episode Clusters (Episodes A and D), the legitimacy issue is introduce through the motif of immobilising the Hero. Only this time it is not caused by a man (father-pharaoh), or an injury (feet after travelling in the desert), but rather by his own wife. This happens in reaction to the fact that she fails in her attempt to dispose of the dog as one of Hero's fates. This raises several important questions: What is the mutual relation of the three animals? How do they relate to the issue of legitimacy? How do the relate to the Hero? and possibly others. In order to answer them, however, we must first see the dynamics of the interaction between all of the involved parties. With this having been said, we can conclude that the dog

[54] P. Harris 500: 7,6–7,8; *LES*: 6,12–6,16. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 376.

is somehow connected to the issue of legitimacy and that there is a reason why the wife fails in her attempt to kill it. We can also safely presume that the narrative signals that disposing of the dog—before interacting with the other animals—is not the order in which the issue ought to be approached.



Motifs:
For the dog as fate, see below, p. xxxvii.

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

26	compare with unit 34	Hero refuses to kill his dog after being urged to do so by his wife
		26a wife does not persuade husband to kill animal very dear to him
27	compare with unit 14	Hero's wife protects him from harm by not allowing him to go outside alone
	8 hero unable to protect wife	*27 hero protected by wife*

Commentary:
With this Episode Cluster we get entangled into a web of motivic inversions of animal transformations and individual characters either protecting on not protecting each other. As these are parts of the narratives which become increasingly complex because of these events, we shall limit the comparisons to the overview of these (in)versions.

Unit 26 introduces inversions of Mytheme 26a in the *Doomed Prince* and of Mytheme 26b in the *Two Brothers* are on several levels. Not only is the animal killed, not killed respectively, but in case of the *Doomed Prince* the animal is the dog, whereas in the *Two Brothers* the hero himself has transformed into the animal (a bull). In the *Two Brothers* the husband of the female character is not the hero, but his opponent (the pharaoh), in the other case it is the Hero himself who is the husband. In both cases, however, there is a strong positive relationship between the husband (pharaoh/Hero) and the animal in question.

Even though the Mythemes included in this Unit 27 are quite similar, I have decide to split them into two as the inversion is in this case on both sides of the Mytheme (i.e. not only the activity of the actor but also the object/receiver of the

activity). The *Doomed Prince* describes that the Hero was forbidden by his wife to go outside the house, she being unable to protect him, whereas in the *Two Brothers* it is Bata, who forbids his wife to leave the house, being unable to protect her.

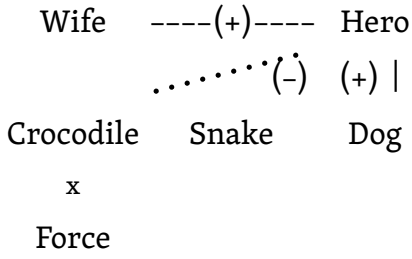
Episode H (Rubrum VIIc)[55]

> Now, since the d[ay] of arrival [[of the child from the land of Egypt]] in order to move away, now, the crocodile was his fate /// his /// there /// it appeared against him in the town [[in which the boy was with [his wife in the middle of] the lake (*p3 ym*).]] Now, a Force[56] (*nḫt.w*) was in it.[A] The demon did not allow the crocodile to emerge and the crocodile did not allow the demon to emerge in order to walk about. Now, whenever the sun rose /// /// began to fight /// the 2 men each and every day over a period of 2 whole months.

Commentary

Plot dynamics:

After the failed attempt at engaging with the dog by the Hero's wife, the crocodile threatens him. However—as was the case with the dog—a direct confrontation is prevented: the crocodile is distracted by the Force in the water (*p3 ym*) with whom it fights.



Motifs

A) Conflict between the crocodile and the Force in the water

Both opponents, i.e. the crocodile and the Force, are called simply "men". Both prevent each other from emerging and their fight takes place in the water (*p3 ym*). Even though anthropomorphised, the Force stays impersonal. It is very tempting to associate this Force in the water (*p3 ym*) with *Ym*, the equally impersonal menacing body of water as attested in other Egyptian texts (such as the *Astarte Papyrus*). One can argue that it is simply a very superficial comparison and that there are significant differences – for one it does not attack the Hero, as one would expect, but

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[55] P. Harris 500: 7,9–7,13; *LES*: 7,1–7,8. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 376–377.

[56] Translators and interpreters generally tend to refer to this entity as some type of a water demon. Following Spalinger, "The Re-Use of Propp", p 123, I translate impersonally as "Force".

the crocodile, himself an enemy. But once the nature and relation of the three fate-animals is analysed further on, I will argue that such an association is substantiated and that it has a specific function in the plot.

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

28	compare with 17	Crocodile, one of hero's fates, appears "against" him in the middle of a body of water
	19a hero's wife threatened by body of water (p3 ym)	*19b hero threatened by danger in water (p3 ym)*
29	---	The crocodile and the "Force" (in water)—also described as two men—compete/ fight with each other
		28 conflict between two male parties (water)

Commentary:
See commentary in *Motifs* above.

Episode I (Rubrum VIII)[57]

Now, after the days [had elapsed] from this, then the boy set about making holiday in his house. Now, after the end of the evening breeze, then the boy lay upon his bed, and sleep took possession of his body.[A] Then his wife filled a [bowl with wine] [and she filled] another bowl with beer. Then a [snake] came forth [from his] hole in order to bite the boy, but his wife was seated at his side —she could not sleep.[B] Then the [bowls] were [lef]t for the snake, and it drank and it became intoxicated. Then it went to sleep, having turned over. Thereupon his wife caused that it be made into pieces with her hand-axe. Then she woke her husband /// /// him, and she said to him "Look, your god has placed one of your fates in your hand. He will gua[rd you]" /// [then he] made offerings to P[re], and praised him and exalted his power in the course of every day.

Commentary
Plot dynamics
A) Sleep "takes possession" of Hero's body.
B) Wife protects her husband.

[57] P. Harris 500: 7,13–8,6; *LES*: 7,9–8,6. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 378–379.

A) The fact that the story actually mentions him falling asleep signals that it is significant. This is also indicated by the fact that his wife decides to stand guard by his side. Rather than a standard sleep, this Hero's state resembles some type of near-death condition[58] signaling a major existential threat to him, which is even reflected in the passive construction describing the event: "sleep overtook his body" (*t3 qd ḥr sḫm m hꜥ.t=f*). The archetypically passive/inactive being in Egyptian mythology is, of course, Osiris, to which such epithets as *Wrḏ-jb* (Weary of Heart), *Wrḏ-wr* (Great Weary One) provide direct evidence. Spell 74 of the *Coffin Texts* (T2C, CT I 306) is illustrative:

a	*nny Nny.tj*	Turn about, O Turner!
g	*sḏm mdw=k jn Gb*	Listen, so that you may speak. It is Geb,
h	*ḫw n=k sḏb(.w) jn Tm*	who will remove (all) obstacles for you; it is Atum,
i	*sm3ꜥ-ḫrw kw jn Rꜥ*	who will proclaim you true of voice; it is Re!
c	*mk jr gm.n(=j) ṯw ḥr gs=k Wrḏ-wr*	Look now, I have found you on your side, Great Weary One.
d	*sn.t=j j.jn 3s.t r Nb.t-ḥw.t*	"My sister", says Isis to Nephthys,
e	*sn(=n) pw nw*	"this here is (our) brother."

B) One is immediately stricken by the similarity of this scene with that of Isis protecting the helpless body of Osiris.[59] There are certain differences: Isis is usually accompanied by Nephthys; both goddesses guard Osiris behind his head and in his feet rather then being "by his side" (*r gs=f*); it would, however, be very surprising if this passage would not evoke to the Egyptian such a setting as its tradition was very

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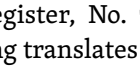
[58] *Inter alia* Assmann, *Death as Salvation*, p. 246–247.

[59] Already remarked for example by S. Vinson ("Through a Woman's Eyes", p. 333–334). *Contra* Helck, "Die Erzählung", p. 221–222, who writes that the character of the wife in Egyptian material is always a very negative one – disregarding Isis, whom he considers to be primarily a sister to Osiris and only secondarily as his wife. For a comprehensive overview on Isis from the Old to the New Kingdom, see Münster, *Untersuchungen Zur Göttin Isis*: for the *Coffin Texts*: p. 24–46; for the *Pyramid Texts*: p. 53–60. See for example CT IV 177a–178e. Isis's connection to snakes is also relevant. In the Amduat, for example, she is depicted as a cobra carrying the Lower Egyptian crown (Hornung, *Amduat I*, p. 187; eleventh hour, middle register, No. 798) with the written comment  *sšmw-3st* (Hornung, *Amduat II*, p. 180). Hornung translates as "Bild der Isis", based on later parallels I would rather opt for "Leader Isis" (see Wb 4, 289.5-8; LGG VI, 636 f.), which even makes sense in the context of the painting (together with Nepthys—bearing the Upper Egyptian crown—they lead a procession of deities holding a coiled snake in front of the sun bark). The knife in her name is quite revealing about her function. For an overview, see Münster, *Untersuchungen Zur Göttin Isis*, p. 106–113, 202.

strong. Isis and Nephthys thus: a) mourn the deceased;[60] b) guard/protect him from enemies or decay;[61] c) re-compose/clean/wake him up (see Unit 32).[62]

Mourning:
Spell 49 (B10C^{b}) CT I, 215a–d

a	*ḫr sdȝ m ȝḫ.t jȝb.t ḥr ḫrw jȝkb m wry.t*	Fall and tremble in the eastern horizon because of a sound of mourning in the Great Place,
b	*ȝs.t ḥr jm ꜥȝ*	Isis moaning greatly
c	*Nb.t-ḥw.t ḥr rmy.t*	and Nephthys weeping
d	[*ḥr*] *nṯr pn nb nṯr.w*	because of this god, Lord of the gods.

Protecting:
Spell 45 (B10C^{b}) CT I 194c–d

c	*N mȝꜥ-ḫrw=k m sȝ=k*	N, may you be vindicated through your protection
d	*ȝḫw ȝs.t m nḫt=k*	for the power of Isis is your strength.

Spell 227 (PGardII) CT III 260e–g

e	*jnk Wsjr sn n ȝs.t*	I am Osiris, brother of Isis
g	*jw nḏ.n wj sȝ=j ḥr ḥnꜥ mw.t=f ȝs.t m-ꜥ ḫft(y) pf jr(w) nn r=j*	My son Horus and his mother have protected me from that enemy who would harm me.

Re-composing, waking:
Spell 74 (T2C, CT I, 306f):
Isis speaking to Nephthys:

f	*m(j) ṯs(w)=n tp=f m(j) jn{n}(w)q=n qs.w=f m(j) ḥn(w)=n ꜥ.wt=f*	Come that we may raise his head, come that we may reassemble his bones, come that we may rearrange his members.

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[60] To illustrate the long tradition from the Old Kingdom to the Late Period, see for example: PT Pyr. PT 535 §1281a–1282a; PT 701A §2192b; CT I, 215a–c; 242f; CT II 211b; CT III 307a; 308a; 311h; probably 317d–e; CT IV, probably 178b; 336d. On the chapels of Tutankhamun: Piankoff, *Les Chapelles de Tout-Ankh-Amon*, p. 24; For Greco-Roman sources, see the *Song of Isis and Nephthys* (P. Bremner-Rhind I,1–XVII,12), edition: Faulkner, *Papyrus Bremner-Rhind*; translations: Faulkner, "The Songs of Isis and Nephthys"; Smith, *Traversing Eternity*, p. 96–119 (Text 2) with references therein.

[61] For example, PT 357 §584b; CT I, 74e–g; 194c–d; 303–305b; CT III, 260e–g; 308a; 309a In the *Coffin Texts*, Isis and Nephthys represent the divine embodiments of the coffin ends. See for example Münster, *Untersuchungen Zur Göttin Isis*, p. 24–53; Willems, *Chests of Life*, p. 134–135; Willems, *Heqata*, p. 55, 92–93. Since dyn. 18 Isis bears the title  or  *ȝs.t-nḏ.tj.t* "Isis-the-protectress", see: Wb 2, 376.12–16; LGG IV, 595, Hornung, *Amduat I*, p. 29 (second hour, upper register, No. 149), Hornung, *Amduat II*, p. 48, No. 149.

[62] For example PT 224 §2192b; CT I 228a–c; 282a–c; 306f; 307f–313c; CT III 309d–e. See for example Münster, *Untersuchungen Zur Göttin Isis*, p. 3–5, 60–70; for Isis specifically in her role of a *protectrice*, see p. 192–200.

(T2C, CT I, 307f–g):

f	*Wsjr ꜥnḫ r=k, Wsjr ꜥḥꜥ(w) rf Wrḏ-wr ḥr gs=f*	Osiris, live, Osiris! Great Weary One stands up from upon his side.
g	*jnk ꜣs.t jnk Nb.t-ḥw.t*	I am Isis, I am Nephthys.

Spell 229 (CT III, 294a–295) nicely summarizes all three functions of Isis:[63]

294

a	*jnḏ ḥr=ṯ jr(y).t tp Wr*	Greetings to you (i.e. Isis), you who are at the head of the Great One,
b	*ḥnw.t jbḥ.t wsr.t*	mistress of brow and neck
c	*ḥꜥꜥ(w).t Rꜥ mꜣꜣ=f s(y)*	(at) whom Re rejoices when he sees her
d	*ḥr wꜣ.wt jmy.t tꜣ ḏsr*	on the roads which are in the Sacred Land
e	*mstyw.t Wsjr m wꜥb.t*	relative of Osiris in the Place of Embalming
f	*jꜣkb.t kꜣ jmn.t*	who mourns the Bull of the West
g	*ꜣbḫ(w).t ꜥwy=s ḥr Wrḏ-jb m-ḫnw sštꜣ n(y) Wry.t*	and intertwines the arms over the Weary-Hearted inside the secrecy of the Place of Embalming

295

a	*ṯs(w).t bꜣ s.qd(w).t šw.t*	who assembles the ba, has the shade built
b	*rd(w).t ṯꜣw n Wrḏ-jb m rn=s pw n(y) ḫr(y).t tp nb=s*	and gives breath to the Weary-Hearted in this name of hers of "Her who is at her lord's head"
c	*d(w)=ṯ n=j tp=j ḥr wsr.t=j*	may you place for me my head on my neck
d	*sꜣq(w)=ṯ ꜥnḫ n ḥt.t=j s.ꜣḫ(w)=ṯ w(j)*	may you gather together the life of <my> throat, may you glorify me,
e	*ḥnm(w)=ṯ ꜥ.wt=j*	may you join together my members
f	*ṯs(w)=ṯ ḥr=j*	may you assemble my face
g	*s.qd(w)=ṯ bꜣ=j*	may you have my ba rebuilt
h	*nḥm(w)=ṯ wj m ꜥ wḥꜥ.w Wsjr*	may you save me from the catchers of Osiris

296

a	*ḥsq(w)=w tp.w, snn=w wsr.wt*	who cut off heads, who sever necks
b	*jṯtw bꜣ.w ꜣḫ.w r nm.t n(y)t qq wꜣḏw*	and take bas and spirits to the slaughterhouse of Him, who eats fresh (meat)

[63] For a detailed linguistic and content analysis of this spell, see Willems, *Heqata*, p. 92–102, 403–407 and references therein.

[...]

297[64]

g	*j.nḏ ḥr=ṯ nb.t nfrw*	Hail to you, mistress of the (coffin) end,
h	*sṯs(w).t tp n(y) Wsjr*	who lifts up the head of Osiris
i	*ḥ3(w).t r ḥr=f m-ḫnw wꜥb.t* […]	who mourns in face of him inside the Place of Embalming [...]

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

30	Pharaoh's envoys fell the pine on which Bata's heart rests thus causing Bata's "death/coma"	Hero falls asleep in his house
	29a hero inactivated/killed by opponent/father-to-be	*29b hero is inactive and passive*
31	Anubis is informed about Bata's death through signs (fermenting beer and putrid wine), sets out and reaches the Valley of the Pine and begins search for Bata's heart (in vain for three years)	Hero's wife guards her husband, intoxicates the snake—who came out to kill him— using wine and beer, and cuts up the snake
	30 beer and wine as means of saving the hero *31 hero saved by another*	*30 wine and beer as means of saving the hero* *31 hero saved by another*
32	Anubis finds Bata's heart and dissolves it in water. Bata drinks his heart and is revived	Wife wakes hero
	32 hero revived by another	*32 hero revived by another*
33	Brothers embrace each other. Bata reveals his plan to Anubis and both commence their return to Egypt	[…him] Wife informs hero about (P)re's protection and hero makes offerings to (P)re
	33a hero reveals his plan	*33b plan revealed to hero*

Commentary:

The Osirian (Isisian) associations which are connected with these Units have been mentioned and argued above. Similarly, I interpreted the beer and wine omen in the *Two Brothers* as having strong Osirian connotations (see p. 135–141). This is of course much more difficult to spot in the case of the *Doomed Prince* where they are used more straightforwardly as means of inebriating the snake. In Unit 32 the hero in both narratives is somehow brought back from his state by another. In the *Two Brothers*, the whole event is much more dramatic alluding to mortuary context and

[64] Translation with slight alternations after Willems, *Heqata*, p. 403–404.

the transmission of *ba* between the two brothers. In the *Doomed Prince*, the Hero is simply awaken. The significant aspects are the passivity and dependency on someone else's help. In Unit 33 Bata has already taken on initiative whereas the Hero is still in a passive state, being instructed by his wife.

Summary of Episode Cluster III (G–I)

Main outcome of individual episodes:

Episode G: Unsuccessful confrontation (of the wife) with the dog (dog too dear).
Episode H: Unsuccessful confrontation with the crocodile (threatened by the Force).
Episode I: Successful confrontation (of the wife) with the snake (killed).

Recurring themes and plot dynamic focus:

Episode G	immobile (home)	friend	–	boy
Episode H	immobile (home)?	enemy/friend	–	boy
Episode I	immobile (sleep)	enemy	–	boy

Summary:

The triad of episodes in this cluster describes the confrontations of the Hero and his wife with the individual animals. The first two confrontations are only attempted but never carried out: the wife is stopped by the Hero, who refuses to kill his beloved dog. The crocodile, who advanced against the Hero, is distracted by his fight with the Force in the water and caught up in a stalemate situation (even though this does not make him an enemy/friend, it becomes substantiated in Episode K). Finally, it is the snake which, having come secretly in the night to kill the Hero, is inebriated and hacked up by the wife. There is a reason why the narrative guides the actions of the protagonists in this order. It will become clear once we get to the end of the narrative and witness the exchange between the animals and the Hero in its whole extent.

The recurring theme of Hero's immobility returns again in Episode G. This time, the reason is not "protection/entombment" by his father or injury to his feet, but rather the will of his wife (protection). As was said before, whenever this theme occurs, it is a reference to the overarching topic of (il)legitimacy to which the animals are inextricably connected as well (see below).

The plot dynamics focus is related to the interaction with the animals. From these passages it is gradually becoming clear that the animals, even though representing the Hero's one fate, are not a homogenous group. The dog is virtually the closest living being of the Hero (even though very passive, the Hero found the strength to defy his wife on his account). The crocodile advanced against the Hero, but had to draw back because of his own problems with the Force in the water (*p3*

ym). The snake, on the other hand, was the one who came to kill. If we realise that the animals are only forms which the narrative uses to represent a general principle, we come to understand that it is precisely the spectrum which they represent that will have a connection to the issue of (il)legitimacy and also (im)maturity (see below).

Episode J (Rubrum IXa)[65]

> **Now, af[ter the days had elapsed from this]**, then the boy went out to stroll about [for] amusement on his property. [His wife] was not able to go [out with him] but his dog was behind him. Then his dog acquired speech, [saying] ["I am your fate."] [Th]en he ran from it.

Commentary

Plot dynamics

Just as the beginning of the previous Episode Cluster, even this Episode opens up with an attempt at confrontation of the hero with the dog as his fate. This time, there is no intermediary (woman), the Hero is addressed by the dog himself, to which the Hero reacts by running away thus postponing the clash until after the crocodile has been dealt with. This again shows that interaction must obviously proceed in a certain order – and that the dog must come as last.

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

34	Bata in the form of a bull is presented to the pharaoh, who grows very fond of him. Bata reveals himself to his wife, who urges and persuades the pharaoh to sacrifice Bata *34b hero as animal reveals himself* *26b wife persuades husband to kill hero in the form of an animal very dear to him*	---
35	---	Hero is alone without the protection of his wife, when the dog reveals itself as hero's fate *24a hero unprotected* *34a animal reveals itself to hero*

Commentary:

The structural similarities between the two compositions are from now on rather on the level of the dynamics of the narrative. In both cases the episodes which follow

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[65] P. Harris 500: 8,6–8,8; *LES*: 8,7–8,11. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 379.

are very similar in structure (see below) but intensify the content thus creating a hierarchy of the events with regard to each other. In case of the Two Brothers they describe Bata's gradual progression through order. In the *Doomed Prince* the animals mediate between two poles of the opposition friend × enemy.

Episode K (Rubrum IXb + X)[66]

> Then he arrived at the lake, and he descended into the [water], [he fleeing from the] dog.[A] Then /// the crocodile [seized? h]im, and he carried him to the place [[where the Force was ///]] and [the] crocodile [said] to the boy:[B] "I am your fate [[who has been made]] that (I) may come after you." No[w, 2 whole months] to now, I have fought with the Force. Now look, I will let you go. If my/ your /// /// will fight /// [y]ou will praise me <for> killing the Force(?). Now, when you see the /// [see] the crocodile."
>
> **Now, after dawn of the next day came about,** then /// came ///

Commentary
Plot dynamics + Motifs: the Hero-Child-Boy, and the Animals

A) "Animal issue"
B) Identity of the Hero: Child/Boy

A) Having arrived at the end of the *Doomed Prince* and witnessed the plot dynamics, we must now return to the questions posed earlier: What is the mutual relation of the three animals? How do they relate to the issue of legitimacy? How do the relate to the Hero?

A. Spalinger remarked: "[...] the three fates are in essence one: death. The triplet is used for emphasis".[67] As much as this is true, the three "fates" seem to be distinguished from one another.[68] They are not qualitatively on the same level in relation to the Hero. The snake seems to be outwardly negative and encounters the prince only once. Having come into contact twice, the crocodile seems less negative. During the first encounter he poses a threat to the Hero, but the second one seems to indicate that in relation to the Force in the water they can, in fact, become allies. The third animal, the dog, is the least inimical. He has been with the prince since being a

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[66] P. Harris 500: 8,9–8,14; *LES*: 8,12–9,5. Trans. by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 380–381.

[67] Spalinger, "The Re-Use of Propp", p. 123.

[68] Already suggested by Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians,* p. 151: "the animal Fates thus act upon the Prince in different ways: the dog has an impact on account of its proximity to the Prince, the Snake on account of its behaviour and the Crocodile on the basis of its persuasive powers. However, their actions are often (but not always) thwarted by the actions of the Prince and his vigilant wife". She did not, however, develop on the subject.

puppy, has endured with him all the adventures only to reveal/threaten the Hero very late into the story. Why so late?[69]

Ch. Eyre after pursuing several mythological parallels with regard to the *Doomed Prince* remarked: "[...] the connections of Seth with the crocodile [...], the dog [...] and the snake might not prove irrelevant". Similarly, Di Biase-Dyson ventured in this direction when remarking: "If a [...] link were to be made between the Princess and Isis in this tale, The Doomed Prince—which is of course by no means certain—the role of Seth in the Osirian myth could also be seen as being represented by the three animal Fates."[70] Let us therefore briefly have a look at the inimical—Sethian—characteristics of the three animals.

Snakes,[71] Crocodiles,[72] and Dogs[73]

A) Seth is traditionally viewed as the enemy of Osiris/Horus, whose life he threatens either directly[74] or as the leader of a group variously called the Followers of Seth.[75] This group appears in texts throughout Egyptian history and never seems to be exactly specified of whom it is composed.[76] It is quite understandable, however, that all animals which were considered benign to the king/deceased must have automatically belonged to this group – and snakes were amongst its most despised members. The so-called *Snake Spells* form an important part of the main corpora of ancient Egyptian mythological texts.[77] These present a plethora of various types of snakes which were all considered dangerous.[78]

The case of the crocodile is in many ways similar to the snake. Both are dangerous reptiles and as such were the object of magical spells and various means of protection throughout Egyptian history.[79] They are therefore among the animals

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[69] This has been noted by some commentators, for example Spalinger, "The Re-Use of Propp", p. 123.

[70] Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 140, n. 77.

[71] The literature devoted to the motif of snake in Ancient Egypt is indeed vast (see Störk, "Schlange").

[72] Brunner-Traut, "Krokodil", cols. 791–801, esp. cols. 795–797, V–VI; Hopfner, *Tierkult der Alten Ägypter*, p. 131–134.

[73] Fischer, "Hunde".

[74] te Velde, *Seth*, p. 81–98 with references therein.

[75] For a brief overview of the various names and forms of this group from the Old to the Greco-Roman Period, see: Meurer, *Feinde des Königs*, esp. p. 105–191 (esp. p. 105–109).

[76] However, the so-called *Legend of the Winged Disk*, which is part of the mythological texts focusing on Horus carved on the walls of the temple at Edfu, does describe the transformation of Seth's followers into crocodiles and hippopotami. See conveniently Fairman, "The Myth of Horus at Edfu–I"; Sternberg, *Motive und Mythenbildung*.

[77] For the Pyramid Texts, see: Meurer, *Feinde des Königs*, p. 269–315 (see p. 269–271 for the appraisal of literature for other time periods as well) and references therein. Many of these texts then found their way into the corpus of the *Coffin Texts* and the *Book of the Dead* (see Meurer, *Feinde des Königs*, p. 270).

[78] See for example Leitz, *Schlangennamen*. For the *Pyramid Texts*, see: Meurer, *Feinde des Königs*, p. 273–276.

[79] For a brief overview of sources depicting the crocodile in negative context from the Old Kingdom to the Greco–Roman Period, see: Wilson, "Slaughtering the Crocodile", p. 181–183.

which figure on the so-called protective Horus-stelae (or *cippi*), a type of curative monuments which start appearing from the New Kingdom on and represent the young Horus standing on crocodiles and holding other dangerous beasts in his hands (scorpions, snakes, etc.).[80] Together with the snake the crocodile is representative of the enemies of the sun at the beginning of *The Litany of Re* (*Sonnenlitanei*) in the subterranean graves in the Valley of the Kings (see fig. 1).[81]

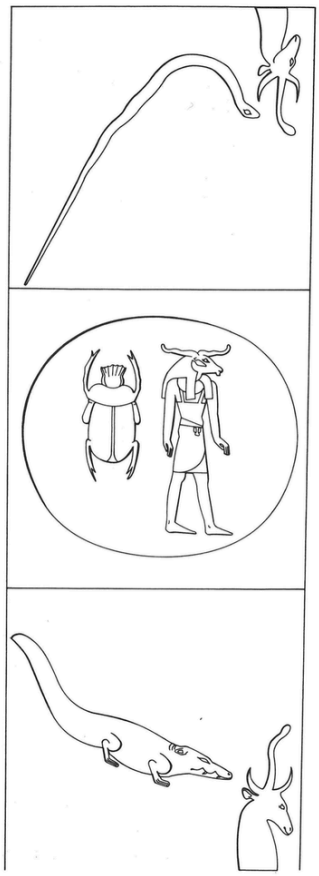

fig. 1
after: Hornung, *Sonnenlitanei*

The negative connotations of snakes and crocodiles in connection to Seth are therefore well attested. What is however more difficult to find is a direct depiction of Seth as a snake or a crocodile. In later periods, he was traditionally represented as an ass or a pig. In his study on Seth, te Velde showed that various predynastic depictions and figures of asses have been equated by egyptologists with Seth.[82] This is quite understandable if one recalls the terrible (and chilling) sound an ass can produce, which is in line with Seth's epithet such as *šd-ḫrw* (Noice-maker)[83] or generally his connection to atmospheric disturbances or his raging character.[84] Ward suggested that a possible connection might be attested since the Middle Kingdom[85] where, among others, the *ḥjw*(-ass) is determined by the same classifier (recumbant Seth-animal) as other epithets of Seth.[86] In his article on the topic, Ward makes a connection between the *ḥjw*-ass and the *ḥjw*-serpent concluding that the meaning of the serpent predated that of the ass, which was an epithet of Seth.[87] Ward's most important source for this association is a short *Coffin Text* Spell 266 (CT III, 396a–f):

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[80] Ritner, *Mechanics of Magical Practice*, esp. p. 106–108 n. 583, and references therein; also Meurer, *Feinde des Königs*, p. 270.

[81] Hornung, *Sonnenlitanei*, II, 28f., p. 55.

[82] te Velde, *Seth*, p. 7–12. A clear graphical association of Seth and the ass (god/man with an ass's head) is documented only for the Greco-Roman Period, see: LGG VI, p. 691, Ba–b. See also Hopfner, *Tierkult der Alten Ägypter*, p. 100–103.

[83] Ward, "The *ḥiw*-Ass, the *ḥiw*-Serpent", p. 23–24 (with reference to Monnet, *Les Antiquités égyptiennes de Zagreb,* no. 20).

[84] te Velde, *Seth*, p. 22–25, LGG VI, p. 691–698; VIII, p. 667–670.

[85] Ward, "The *ḥiw*-Ass, the *ḥiw*-Serpent": 23.

[86] Ward, "The *ḥiw*-Ass, the *ḥiw*-Serpent": 24.

[87] Ward ("The *ḥiw*-Ass, the *ḥiw*-Serpent") further recognizes two different traditions in relation to these terms: *Coffin Texts* from the north generally do not imply new spells using the *ḥjw*-ass and prefer to recycle the spells from the Pyramid Texts which speak of the *ḥjw*-serpent. He explains this by the different social and religious background of the Upper and Lower Egypt (p. 28–29), mainly because of the presence of Seth's cult places in Upper Egypt.

a	*jnk ṯm*	I am Atum
b	*m rn=f n(y) Rʿ[-ṯm]*	in his name of Re[-Atum]
c	*jnk Mnw*	I am Min
d	*m rn=f n(y) Mnw*	in his name of Min
e–f	*jnk ḥjw-ʿ3*  *ʿ3 ḥr(y) ḫ.t=f*	I am the *ḥjw*-ass/Great One[88] on his belly.

This text is unique to the coffin *S1C* originating from Assyut. Even though the word *ḥjw* is determined by the sign of the ass, according to Ward, the description "on his belly" points to the fact that it refers to a snake.[89] He further supplements this by reference to an ass-headed serpent (but with no annotation) illustrated on two coffins from Bersheh (B1C, B5C). Although D. P. Silverman later published texts from the tomb of Pepy-Ima (Bersheh), which undermine certain Ward's conclusions as to the distribution and origin of the individual motifs within the *Coffin Texts* corpus,[90] the evidence is still quite interesting, even though very limited and as such does not seem to be indicative of any major trend.

This situation dramatically changed in later periods. An important source to us are the papyri from the corpus of the *Wilbour Late Period Papyri* located in the Brooklyn Museum, which are being gradually published. Two compositions are important for the topic: *Brooklyn Magical Papyrus* (47.218.156)[91] and especially the *Snake-Charmer Treatise* (47.218.138).[92] These texts provide parallels in which Seth is directly likened to various types of snakes that threaten the deceased,[93] including his identification with Apophis.[94] As much as the material is fascinating, we must take into account the different milieu which we witness in the Late Period towards Seth, who started gradually taking on the role of the arch-enemy.[95] Furthermore the prominent position which Seth enjoyed under the Ramessides,[96] who—given their

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[88] There seems to be a graphic pun on the word ass (*ʿ3*) and Great One (*ʿ3*).

[89] Ward, "The *ḥiw*-Ass, the *ḥiw*-Serpent": 30.

[90] Silverman, "Coffin Texts from Bersheh, Kom el-Hisn, and Mendes", esp. p. 139–140.

[91] Sauneron, *Papyrus Magique.*

[92] Goyon, *Animaux venimeux*.

[93] See Goyon, *Animaux venimeux*, p. 101–105, 125.

[94] See Goyon, *Animaux venimeux*, p. 14–15, 133.

[95] For the latest reconsideration of this topic, see for example Altmann-Wendling, "Gegen Seth heißt für Osiris?", who analyses two papyri (P Louvre N 3129 and P BM 10252) dating to the Ptolemaic period, which contain curse rituals against Seth. For relatively scarce evidence to the contrary in this period, see Turner, *Seth – a Misrepresented God*, esp. p. 63–64.

[96] Fuscaldo, "Sutekh" sketches the history of Seth worship under the Ramessides with special emphasis on the political importance of this god.

Lower Egyptian origin—directly linked their dynasty to this god,[97] is very different from his later demonic emanations.

However, ancient Egyptians did associate great evil with one particular snake, the arch-enemy of Re (and therefore the order as such), Apophis.[98] Whereas Seth is attested in many positive roles,[99] Apophis has always and exclusively been the representative of chaos. Thus we see Seth, Great of force (*ꜥ3 pḥty*), battling the monster on the prow of Re's bark (see p. 204–205)[100] during its journey in the Netherworld. However, his ability to do so was conditioned by the many affinities which Seth shared with Apophis,[101]snakes respectively. This Seth's dual character led to his demonisation in the later parts of Egyptian history.[102]

Up to now we have been speaking only of the negative associations of snakes and crocodiles. Needless to say, we simultaneously find these very same animals in

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[97] The most important document in this regard is the *Four Hundred Year Stela*. Stadelmann, "Vierhundertjahrstele", cols. 1039–43 with references therein; *contra* theories suggested by S. Schott, R. Stadelmann, and H. Goedicke, see: Rosenvasser, "La Estela del año 400"; H. Goedicke later partly revised his views in: "The '400-Year Stela' Reconsidered". For the more recent studies on the topic, see: Murnane, "Kingship of the Nineteenth Dynasty", p. 192–196 (discusses dynastic implications); for archaeological context of the earliest cult of Seth in Avaris, see: Bietak, "Seth von Avaris"; Beckerath, "Nochmals Die ' Vierhundertjahr-Stele'" discusses particular issues concerning the founding date of the cult of Seth which the stela describes (1700 BC) predating it several decades prior to the Hyksos.

[98] For an overview, see Hornung, "Apophis". In a recent article J. Quack ("Die Geburt eines Gottes?") published an edition of a late hieratic papyrus fragment from the Berlin collection (P Berlin 15765a), which probably describes the birth of the sun-god and the genesis of Apophis from the umbilical cord of Re. This would nicely show the close connection between Re as the upholder of order and Apophis as his direct opposite born at the same moment as order itself.

[99] Turner, *Seth – a Misrepresented God*.

[100] See te Velde, *Seth*, p. 99–108. An excellent overview of this motif (starting with the *Coffin Texts*, proceeding to the *Amduat*, *Book of Gates*, to the Late period sources) is still Borghouts, "The Evil Eye of Apopis", who presents a very detailed overview of the various sources of the legend of the sun-boat. He specifically focuses on the hypnotizing and lethal "evil eye" of the snake and the subsequent fight with Seth. Also see: Brunner, "Seth und Apophis: Gegengötter". For more recent publications, see: Morenz, "Apophis: On the Origin"; Manassa, *Late Egyptian Underworld*, esp. p. 303–306, 311–312. Meurer, *Feinde des Königs*; Turner, *Seth – a Misrepresented God*, the New Kingdom is covered on p. 28–46.

[101] In this context it is very interesting that the Amduat actually refers to the *hjw*-snake in connection with Apophis: Hornung, *Amduat II*, p. 57 No. 11, p. 126 No. 7. ("The name of the hour of the Night, which this Great God transverses, is: "The One Who Drives Away the *hjw*-snake and Who Decapitates the *Nḥ3-ḥr*" – which are both epithets of Apophis) (A I, Seventh Hour, introduction, vertical register b–f, p. 118; First Hour, upper register, over a group of twelve Goddesses of the Hours, no. 37: *ḫsf.t-zm3.t-stḥ*, The One Who Drives Away Seth); From these two attestations Hornung claims (*Amaduat II*, p. 15–16, no. 37) that Apophis and the *hjw*-serpent are interchangeable, thus arguing that the essential correspondence between Seth and Apophis can be traced already here; see also Ward, 'The *ḥiw*-Ass, the *ḥiw*-Serpent: 26, n. 20, p. 29–30.

[102] According to Velde, col. 910, this shift occurred sometime around Dyn. 25.

the position of protective powers.[103] After all, Sobek, who was worshiped in the form of a crocodile, had several important cult centres in Egypt (especially in the Fayum) throughout its long history[104] and the local theological systems integrated him into the central cosmic mythological events: he was considered the creator god;[105] had a close relationship to the office of the king,[106] and was further associated with the events surrounding Osiris's death (as one of the aiding deities).[107]

The link between Seth and a dog is somewhat different from the previous two cases. As is notoriously known, the zoological identity of the Seth animal still alludes us (provided it was a specific zoological species)[108] even though it resembles a member of the broad *canidae* family (of which the *caninae* are a sub-family).[109] As opposed to the snake and the crocodile, who were associated with Seth mainly through their similar functions, a dog can be associated to Seth simply through its appearance. This indeed happened to Seth and various other deities that all share the canine animal form. Especially informative in this regard is the article of T. DuQuesne in which he presents some unusual material from the Third Intermediate Period providing, nevertheless, a very useful overview of other relevant sources. DuQuesne for example presents material contemporary to the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince* (Dyn. 19). First is a pyramidion of a certain Ptahmose (København AA d 20),

fig. 2
after DuQuesne, "Seth and the Jackals", pl. 1.1

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[103] Various serpent goddesses (such as Renenutet, Mafdet, etc.) had protective powers or were associated with well-being in general. See: Evans, "Goddess Renenutet"; virtually all Egyptian goddesses could be associated with the uraeus on the forehead of the gods/king providing protection (see, for example, von Lieven, "Schlange, Auge, Göttin"). Re in his bark during his journey through the Netherworld was protected by the great serpent Mehen, who coiled around him, etc. For the crocodile, see Brunner-Traut, "Krokodil", cols. 796–797, who remarks: "In seiner Zwielichtigkeit ist es aber auch Götterfreund, hat Horuseigenschaften so gut wie sethische."

[104] Literature on this topic is, again, very voluminous. For the Old to the Middle Kingdom, see: Zecchi, "Sobek come divinità funeraria"; For the Ramesside period, see: Zecchi, "Sobek di Shedet in età ramesside"; For the Fayum in the Graeco-Roman Period, see the classic study: Rübsam, *Götter und Kulte in Faijum*; for a recent study, *inter alia*: Kockelmann, "Sobek doppelt und dreifach"; on Sobek in the Memphite area, see: el-Sharkawy, "Sobek at Memphis" and other articles by this author. *The Book of Fayum* represents an invaluable source of information: Beinlich, *Buch vom Fayum I, II.*

[105] For example: Widmer, "Sobek in the Primaeval Ocean".

[106] For the most recent contributions, see: Bagh, "Sobek Crowned", who demonstrates the royal role attributed to Sobek of Shedet (Fayum) on archaeological finds of his crowned statues.

[107] For example Zaki, "Sobek et le rapatriement d'Osiris".

[108] te Velde, *Seth*, 13–26; Brentjes, "Hyänenhund als Seth-Tieres", who argues that the model of the Seth-animal was the African hunting dog (*Lycaon pictus*), to which elements of other animals were added in later times.

[109] Bianchi, "Los cánidos en el mito y la religión egipcias"; Gransard-Desmond, *Étude sur les Canidae.*

probably originating from Memphis (see fig. 2).[110] On it we see a pair of jackals and and Seth animals (the snout and the ears are quite distinctive) facing each other. Second is a papyrus fragment from Deir el-Medina showing Anubis in a very Seth-like form harpooning a group of crocodiles (see fig. 3).[111] Other documents dating to Dyn. 21 and 27 respectively[112] are thematically connected as they all show variants of jackals and Seth-animals pulling the bark of Re. From these depictions DuQuesne moves on to texts in which the motif of jackals towing the boat of Re-Harakhty appear (earliest from Dyn. 18 to the Ptolemaic Period) providing a few examples.[113] The connection between Seth and the jackals is then explained through their similar function of guiding (jackals) and thus protecting (Seth) the sun god from Apophis.[114] DuQuesne pays special attention to the late Ptolemaic Papyrus Jumilhac[115] in which the the interaction between Seth and jackal-deities is very prominent. One of the episodes describes Seth's transformation into Anubis (I x + 8); Anubis receives his name from Seth (XX 11–14), and both deities are at one moment explicitly identified with each other (VI 17–VII 1).

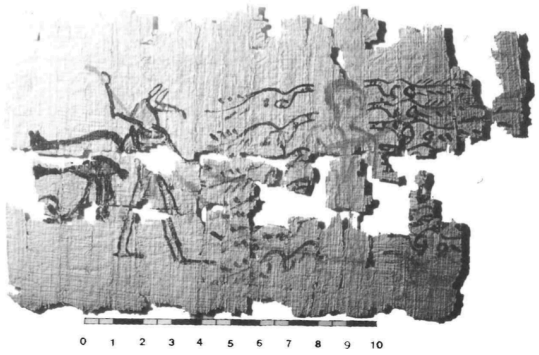

fig. 3
after DuQuesne, "Seth and the Jackals", pl. 1.2

To sum up, the material, which DuQuesne presented, shows very well the fluid relationship between Seth and other canine deities not only because of common physical appearance but also through their functions at least from the New Kingdom on. One more detail seems to be quite important in this context: canines do not generally function as forces against which various magical means need to be provided. As an example we may use a spell from the *Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden* (col. 20, II. 1–27, PDM xiv. 594–620)[116] in which the injury of a scorpion sting is mythologically contextualised with reference to the injury of Anubis and his subsequent cure by Isis, who instructs Anubis to lick his wound. The patient is then assimilated to Anubis and advised to proceed in the same manner, thus acting as a dog licking his wounds. In this specific text the dog exhibits his healing powers.

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[110] DuQuesne, "Seth and the Jackals", p. 614, pl. 1.1.

[111] DuQuesne, "Seth and the Jackals", p. 617, pl. 1.2.

[112] DuQuesne, "Seth and the Jackals", p. 614–617.

[113] DuQuesne, "Seth and the Jackals", p. 617–619.

[114] DuQuesne, "Seth and the Jackals", p. 619–621.

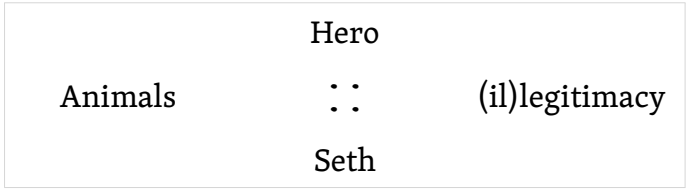
[115] For the edition, see: Vandier, *Jumilhac*; DuQuesne, "Seth and the Jackals", p. 624–625.

[116] Ritner, *Mechanics of Magical Practice*, p. 96. For a recent translation, see: Betz, *Greek Magical Papyri*, p. 228; Dieleman, *Priests, Tongues, and Rites*.

Summary

1) The snake is considered the most inimical being which must be mutilated, felled, dismembered or otherwise disabled as documented already in the *Snake Spells* of the *Pyramid Texts*, *Coffin Texts* and later material. In this function the snake belongs to the retinue of Seth along with other creatures. The arch-enemy of order, Apophis, takes on the form of a snake. Having certain affinities with Seth (as to occasionally being identified with each other), they are nevertheless represented as enemies, especially in the Ramesside period. No major Egyptian deity with a temple cult was actively worshipped in the form of a snake.
2) Crocodiles are often mentioned in magical spells as inimical creatures also belonging to the retinue of Seth. Nevertheless, a very strong tradition of crocodile-form deities integrated into the Egyptian pantheon existed (especially Sobek). A tradition well attested in the Fayum describes the crocodile as saving Osiris from Seth by carrying (parts of) Osiris on his back which, again, associates him with Seth as the bull who carries Osiris on his back as punishment for his crime already in the *Pyramid Texts*.
3) The dog has the strongest connection to Seth because of their common zoological family of canines (or at least resemblance). Seth was often associated with or even identified with various canine deities with whom he shared certain functions (protecting, guiding). Dogs or canines in general do not tend to have such negative connotations in magical practice compared to snakes and crocodiles.

After this brief survey, let us now try and answer the questions about the nature of the relationship between the animals, Seth, Hero, and the overarching theme of (il)legitimacy. Using a very simple structuralist tool, we shall now define all the possible relationship combinations which are possible among these four terms.



1	Hero	:	Seth	:: animals	:	(il)legitimacy
2	Hero	:	animals	:: Seth	:	(il)legitimacy
3	Hero	:	(il)legitimacy	:: Seth	:	animals

Having established the relationship of Seth to individual fate-animals, and having analysed the relationship of the Hero to (il)legitimacy, we should commence our analysis with the combination number three.

Hero's relationship to legitimacy is paradoxical. Episode Cluster I and II have shown how his claim as an heir can be both legitimate and illegitimate at the same

time. This means that the same paradox will be discernible in the relationship of Seth to the animals. It should be possible to claim that the animals both are and are not representative of Seth, which is exactly what our brief inquiry has shown. Seth could and was at some time identified with every one of them. However, this relationship could be re-contextualised in such a way as to clearly distinguish him from them. Thus we see that the Egyptians equate Seth with the snake Apophis, but we also see Seth slaying this monster. Similarly, his destructive character gained positive connotations once confronted with the Sea (just as the crocodile in the *Doomed Prince*) in various other Egyptian compositions.

We can check the relevance of this model by focusing on one of the two other combinations, for example number two. Seth's claim to the throne of Osiris is antithetical in exactly the same way as the Hero's (see the *Contendings of Horus and Seth*, for example). The same is true for the relationship Hero–animals. To understand, it is important to accept the idea that the animals are representative of a spectrum. From a certain point of view, they are him (his fates). This is why the Hero intercedes when the wife wants to attack the dog – at that moment she is threatening the part of the spectrum which is the closest to him. That is also why he falls in a coma-like state when the snake comes and attacks – being representative of the opposite side of the spectrum, Hero's death-like state is a method of expressing his absolute distance from such an evil principle. The more evil the animal is, the more passive the Hero gets (snake) and *vice versa* (dog). Hero's wife, on account of being a woman, is obviously not susceptible to these categories (see p. 218–226). That is why she guards the Hero when he sleeps and that is why she had to stay in the house when the dog revealed himself – otherwise she would have protected the Hero as she did in case of the snake. But for the plot to move forward, the Hero must confront the animals and the female character must be neutralised.

By progressing from the most dangerous to the least dangerous animal the story in fact employs a tripartite pattern in which the animals serve to mediate or create a semantic spectrum between two irreconcilable opposites "enemy × friend". The narrative also defines the interaction pattern of the characters towards this spectrum: one must proceed from the least ambiguous member (snake as closest to evil) to the most ambiguous one (the dog – friend but also representative of fate and thus a danger), not the other way around as was attempted by the Hero's wife (dog) and the crocodile (distracted by the Force in the water). This pattern is reinforced when, at the beginning of the Episode Cluster IV (J–K), the Hero runs from the dog, who reveals himself only to force the Hero into confronting the crocodile, who is "in line", so to say. As the fragments of the story seem to confirm, their interaction does seem to be as inimical as was the case with the snake.

This interpretation framework further enables us to answer the question why do the animals appear in such an order and also why so late into the story (especially relevant in case of the dog), which also brings us back to the question of legitimacy and Hero's maturity. Episode Clusters III and IV (we could say the "animal

sequence") could not occur sooner as the plot dynamics which it carries is connected to the most important issue of the hero's maturity – and as we are reminded by the text itself, his transition from a "boy" to a fully legitimate heir has yet to occur.

B) After clearing the "animal issue" let us now have a look at an aspect of the story which was at hand throughout the narrative but which was only touched upon in context of Hero's "false" identity as a son of a chariot warrior. A lexical analysis of the identity terms connected with the Hero[117] reveals that outside those situations, which relate him to other characters (son to his father, husband to his wife), he is addressed in two basic ways as: a "child" (*ḥrd*)[118] and a "(handsome) boy" (*p3 šrj* [*nfr*]).[119] The change occurs when he meets the Daughter of the Chief of Naharin, herself called "girl" (*šrj.t*) by reaching her window.[120] Even though Di Biase-Dyson argues for a lexical growth of the main character,[121] it is a rather dubious growth: from a "child" to a "boy". I cannot help but feel that we are still missing a step, the Hero does has not matured even after he has actually founded a house and moved in with a wife (see above, p. xxiii–xxiv). With the last (preserved) fragments we can spot that the plot dynamics focus is again changing: the issue of (im)mobility seems irrelevant—in fact it is his wife, who is now incapacitated and cannot leave the house. The themes from Episode Cluster I (restriction, isolation) have been overcome as well as the issue of exteriority with regard to the source of power (Episode Cluster II). What is left is the issue of (im)maturity which was present all the time, but—just as the dog—comes forward at the end. From the plot dynamics and based on the analysis of the function of the animals, I am persuaded that the Hero's interaction with the remaining two fates (crocodile, dog) will lead, in the end, to his overcoming them (not necessarily leading to their death, though) and thus attaining maturity so as to return to Egypt and claim the position of his father, the pharaoh. The dog and the Hero's immaturity—which is the last obstacle for his claim —are one and the same. After all, he has "reared him from a puppy". In the person of the Hero and the dog the two themes of (il)legitimacy and (im)maturity, which have been going through the whole narrative, finally intertwine and… the end is missing.

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[117] See conveniently Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 170–173, esp. fig. 3.12.

[118] *ḥrd*: P Harris 500: 4,4; 4,6; 4,9; 4,11; 5,7 (2x); 5,9; 6,3; 6,5; 7,9 (retrospec.); LES: 1, 8; 1, 11–2, 1; 2, 6; 2, 10; 3, 11; 3, 13; 4, 11; 4, 14; 7, 1 (retrospec.).

[119] *šrj nfr*: P Harris 500: 5,10 (LES: 3,15); *p3 šrj*: P Harris 500: 6,16 (LES: 6, 1–3; 6, 11; 7, 4; 7, 10–11; 7, 14; 8, 8; 8, 15)

[120] P Harris 500: 6,5; (LES: 4,14).

[121] Di Biase-Dyson, *Foreigners and Egyptians*, p. 170.

Comparison of the *Two Brothers* and the *Doomed Prince*

36	Bata in the form of persea trees is presented to the pharaoh, who grows very fond of him. Bata reveals himself to his wife, who urges and persuades the pharaoh to fell Bata *34b hero as animal reveals himself* *26b wife persuades husband to kill hero in the form of a plant very dear to him*	---
37	---	Hero is alone without the protection of his wife, when the crocodile reveals itself as hero's fate *24a hero unprotected* *34a animal reveals itself to hero*
38	---	Crocodile proposes that he will let the Hero go if he (fights?) the "Force" (in the water) *35 interaction between the hero and water entities*
39	Bata begets himself in his wife thus becoming his opponent and wife's son. Both grow very fond of him *25b hero unknowingly accepted and protected by opponent and his wife (as son)*	see unit 22
40	Bata becomes crown prince, subsequently pharaoh, executes his wife/mother, makes his older brother Anubis crown prince (i.e. his son), who also becomes a pharaoh after Bata's death *4b hero in the centre of power*	---

Commentary:

For Units 36–37, see above in commentary to Units 34–35. Unit 38 has no parallel in the Two Brothers – unless we consider the interaction with the Force in the water (*p3 ym*) similar to character of *p3 Ym* in the *Two Brothers* (Unit 17). The parallel between Unit 39 in the *Two Brothers* and Unit 22 in the *Doomed Prince* is rather tentative. We can speculate that the end of the *Doomed Prince* would finish in a similar manner as the *Two Brothers* (see below).

Conclusion

Having arrived at the end, let us have a look at the *Doomed Prince* from a distance and summarise the individual conclusions we arrived at within the analysis. I will focus on both the individual and overarching themes, plot dynamics foci and and the main outcomes of individual Episodes:

Plot dynamics foci

Episode Cluster I				
Episode A	immobile ("tomb")	restricted	isolated "inside"	child
Episode B	immobile ("tomb")	restriction limited	isolated "inside"	child
Episode C	mobile (guided)	not restricted	liminal/"outside"	child
Episode Cluster II				
Episode D	immobile (injured)	–	"outside" edge	boy
Episode E	mobile	–	"outside" middle	boy
Episode F	mobile (guided)	–	"outside" centre	boy
Episode Cluster III				
Episode G	immobile (home)	friend	–	boy
Episode H	immobile (home)?	enemy/friend	–	boy
Episode I	immobile (absolute)	enemy	–	boy
Episode Cluster IV				
Episode J	H. mobile (Wife im.)	friend	–	boy
Episode K	H. mobile (Wife im.)	enemy/friend	–	boy
Episode L	?	?	?	?

Main outcomes of Episodes

Episode A: Positive relationship develops between father and Hero.
Episode B: Negative relationship develops between father and Hero.
Episode C: Both parties are separated, negative relationship resolved.

Episode D: Positive relationship develops between Hero and Sons and Daughter.
Episode E: Negative relationship develops between father-in-law and Hero.
Episode F: Hero and Father-in-law reconciled, negative relationship resolved.

Episode G: Unsuccessful confrontation (of the wife) with the dog (dog too dear).
Episode H: Unsuccessful confrontation with the crocodile (Force intercedes).
Episode I: Successful confrontation (of the wife) with the snake (killed).

Episode J: Unsuccessful confrontation (of the dog) with the Hero (runs away).
Episode K: Offer of a truce from the crocodile to the Hero (fight common enemy).
Episode L: ?

The overarching theme of the narrative is the question of (il)legitimacy of the Hero to the throne and also the issue of (im)maturity. The difference is that legitimacy is thematised at the onset of every Episode Cluster (Episodes A, D, G) save the last one where the theme of immaturity takes finally over, being only latently present throughout the story in the Hero's designations of "child" and "boy". Both themes than directly connect in the anticipated interaction of the hero with the dog.

Issue of legitimacy is clearly emphasised at the very beginning of the narrative but already there it exhibits an inherent paradox:

a) the pharaoh has no son, i.e. no legitimate heir to the throne;
b) Hero's birth is granted by the gods (seemingly unproblematic);

but

c) Hero is forced to live in a house, "which was equipped with personnel and with every good thing of the palace, l.p.h.", but in fact is not the palace resembling rather a tomb.

Thus even though the Hero is an uncontested heir, his characterisation does not at all fit the image of a fully competent successor: he is outside the centre of power, he is isolated, immobile, restricted and a child.

From this point on the plot dynamics of every Episode Cluster focus on one of these issues, present them as two extremities and gradually mediate between them simultaneously always having a recurse to the issue of legitimacy (through immobility). The outcome at the end of every such movement is always a stable but unsatisfactory situation thus conditioning the continuation of the plot.

The first Episode Cluster (A–C) therefore thematises the issue of "restriction". First he is allowed to obtain a dog, which in turn leads to his emancipation and request to leave thus becoming mobile after his initial immobile state. Having achieved this, he is, however, evicted "outside" the orderly zone.

I have repeatedly argued that whenever a "foreign" locale, character or motif is included, we must keep in mind that its primary goal is to provide a framework in which typically Egyptian issues are then formulated and typically Egyptian solutions found. Episode Cluster II (D–F) therefore sketches out a hierarchically stratified cultural landscape with the Chief of Naharin as ruler, his daughter as his only heiress, and a class of young elite Syrian aristocrats who are all eligible for

marriage and thus for the status of the ruler. Thus Episode Cluster II represents an inversion of the Egyptian landscape in Episode Cluster I. There the hero was alone, isolated and without a contender to the throne – but also without the possibility to advance from his isolation to the centre of order, the palace and attain maturity. This strengthens the idea already proposed by other commentators that the Chief of Naharin seems to be playing a structurally similar role to that of the Hero's actual father, the pharaoh. In this framework, the motif of Hero's immobility (injured feet) is once again put to use in connection with the topic of legitimacy. First of all, the injury enables to integrate the Hero among the ranks of the local princes: the Syrian Princes take care of him and provide for him thus showing their respect to him as their peer. Contextually, however, it also reaffirms the Hero's rightful claim to the throne. The princes are, at that moment, *the* group from which the status of the characters is derived. Simultaneously, being a projection of the Egyptian milieu into this fictional "foreign" landscape, it also enables to bring the Hero from his isolated state from the beginning of the story and place him among other contenders to the throne – exactly as one would expect in the reality of the Egyptian situation (Ramesses II's, during whose reign the surviving copy of the *Doomed Prince* was created, 96 sons and 60 daughters are very illustrative in this context!)[122] This Hero's "re-contextualisation" was enabled by means of his self-presentation as the "son of a chariot-warrior from Egypt". I have argued that even though the issue of (lower) social status is here thematised, considered contextually, his position of a possible successor to the ruler is confirmed – only this time as "one of many". Furthermore, the royal imagery associated with the chariot and weapons in Egypt, might have been intentionally alluded to so that his characterisation would have been automatically understood by the readers/listeners as "a prince" (pharaoh himself being *the* chariot-warrior of Egypt, as we see on temple-wall reliefs). Furthermore, it has been remarked that the Hero is characterised in such a way in total of three times in each of the Episodes (D–F) and in each case it leads to different results. As mentioned, the first time it enables hero's recognition by the Syrian Princes. The second time it is employed to introduce the Hero to the Chief of Naharin provoking his anger. Hero's identity therefore has both a legitimising and an illegitimising effect. I have tried to explain this by pointing out the fact that before actually becoming a pharaoh, even the crown prince's claim could have been questioned by other (senior) members of the royal house which is so nicely portrayed in the Horus vs. Seth interaction. The story could not have played out such a dynamic if it were actually happening "inside" Egypt: precisely because the initial situation straightforwardly stipulated Hero's claim to the throne as the *only* rightful son. By transposing the plot of the story "outside", the narrative can take advantage of the

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[122] Dodson & Hilton, *Complete Royal Families* p.166. In view of this the beginning of the story might have been considered especially amusing to the contemporary Egyptian acquainted with the situation of the royal court.

"foreign" milieu to stress certain paradoxical aspects which it is only impossible (and maybe precarious) to describe if staying solely within an Egyptian setting (who would dare doubt the claim of the crown prince?). By depicting "a prince" (read: son of a chariot warrior from Egypt)—once as a legitimate heir among others and simultaneously as an illegitimate "outsider"—stresses the implicit paradox of the status of a crown prince. Every prince is a legitimate heir but potentially also an illegitimate foreigner (depending on who actually ascends the throne).

Third time Hero's identity as the son of a chariot warrior is revealed is when the Chief of Naharin has him brought in front of him. The Hero introduces himself in the identical way as did the servants before, which consequently caused the Chief's rage. Only this time the very same sentence managed to persuade the Chief about Hero's worth. From this point of view the whole episode containing the Chief of Naharin's attempt at Hero's life seems to be completely redundant. However, as the dynamics of this Episode Cluster focus on the gradual progression of the Hero within the three basic hierarchical levels of the "outside" as sketched out by the plot (Princes, Daughter, Chief), Episode Cluster II enables the Hero to overcome his isolation from the centre of power, which was an important issue in Episode Cluster I. from this point of view the "redundant" exchange becomes necessary.

In Episode Cluster III (G–I) the main plot dynamic lies in establishing the hierarchy in which the animal fates have to be dealt with mediating between two opposites of friend × enemy. The hierarchy of the animals is indicated by the failed attempt of the wife to have the dog killed and by the failed attempt of the crocodile. The narrative made it obvious that the most clearly defined category of evil must be confronted first (the dog himself attempts the same at the beginning of the following cluster leading to Hero's flight from him).

With the beginning of Episode Cluster III, we witness another change of focus on the existential transformation of the Hero through addressing the issue of (im)maturity. Whereas all the other categories (being restricted, proximity to the source of power) are in a way external qualities, maturity can be attained only through an existential transformation. It has been remarked that such a status was in Egyptian reality achieved by a young man founding his own household. Even though this event occurred and the Hero moved in with his wife, it had no effect on his status as he was still continuously being referred to as a "boy". The animals therefore represent a mechanism through which the process can take place. To understand why exactly the story chose these three precise animals as vehicles for this process, I conducted a brief survey into the associations the animal's had with categories of evil and subsequently also the god Seth who—even though not mentioned in the text itself—is traditionally associated with these categories. The conclusions of this survey have corroborated the picture presented by the narrative itself: the snake being on one end of the spectrum, crocodile in between, and the dog on the other. Furthermore, all of the animals are directly connected with Seth and,

interestingly enough, the dog being the one most similar. Through the principle of homology, I formulated that:

1	Hero	:	Seth	::	animals	:	(il)legitimacy
2	Hero	:	animals	::	Seth	:	(il)legitimacy
3	Hero	:	(il)legitimacy	::	Seth	:	animals

Having established the relationship of Seth to the animals and based on the analysis of the previous parts of the narrative which focused on the Hero *vis à vis* the issue of legitimacy, I concluded that the relationship of the animals towards the category of (il)legitimacy is the paradoxical character of the spectrum of which they are representatives. Evil and death have many forms. Some of these forms are easily recognizable. Others, however, are not as easily defined and by defying clear classification represent an existential threat to both the individual and the society.

The dog must therefore come last because—as the most complicated category of the three animals—he is, in fact, the biggest threat to the Hero being the most ambiguous of the three fates. The ability to accommodate ambiguity thus proves not only being the essential message of the whole narrative and religion, but—once again—the very core of ancient Egyptian kingship.

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