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Women's Self-Presentation in Pharaonic Egypt

Mariam Ayad

When considering Egyptian culture and society, expressions of self-presentation are often hidden under layers of intermediaries. For men, we are dealing with one layer: the artist/scribe composer of the text or relief, who had to interpret the preferences of the “order-giving self.”¹ For women, an added layer of male relatives comes between us and women’s self-presentation in art and text. Nearly all surviving textual and iconographic representations of women were commissioned by their male relatives: a husband, a father, or a son.² The image that emerges from these textual and artistic representations is, thus, mostly mediated by a double male perspective: that of the male relatives who commissioned the work, as well as that of the scribes and artists who produced the work. The resulting representations and expressions are thus often reflective of this male perspective.³ Still, some information may be gleaned from women’s titles and epithets—how they developed, shifted, and evolved over time—and a few examples of women’s biographical texts. Despite the dearth of the latter, closer examination of these exceptional examples will help us achieve a more nuanced understanding of how ancient Egyptian women chose to present themselves for their peers and for all posterity.

The Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period

Egyptian self-presentational inscriptions from the Old Kingdom are attested in a funerary context. The earliest self-expressions are found on epitaphs inscribed in nonroyal tombs. This is true for both men and women's self-presentations.⁴ But whereas men's self-presentations focused on the professional progression of their careers and their 'moral personality,' women's self-presentational inscriptions consisted mainly of their honorary or priestly titles, and only occasionally, contained some genealogical information.⁵ Possibly because women were mostly confined to the private realm, their self-presentational inscriptions were more limited than men's.⁶

The earliest attestations of women's self-presentational epithets, dating to the Fourth Dynasty, belong to priestesses associated with the cult of Hathor.⁷ Priestesses of Hathor were drawn from the ranks of elite women, including royal princesses such as Hemetre (also called Hemi), whose tomb inscription identifies her as the "bodily daughter" of King Unas of the Fifth Dynasty.⁸ Whether the priestly titles of these women were honorific or reflected actual duty in the cultic service of Hathor has been the subject of some debate. But enough evidence survives to suggest that they earned some income, possibly in connection with their priestly duties.⁹

A priestess of Hathor, Nedjetempet, had her own separate tomb in the Teti cemetery in Saqqara, just a few meters to the northeast of the tomb of the vizier Mereruka, her son.¹⁰ Her false door is among the largest false doors solely dedicated to a woman.¹¹ Nedjetempet's inscriptions include:

An offering which the Great God gives
That she may travel the perfect ways of the West
And that she may be followed by her *kas*.
Having grown old most perfectly.
The royal acquaintance, priestess of Hathor lady of the sycamore,
priestess of Neith north of her wall, priestess of Wepwawet, the *imakhu*
in the sight of Anubis, Nedjetempet, whose perfect name is Iteti.¹²

Similar prayers are found on a group of First Intermediate Period funerary stelae from Naga al-Dayr. On the stela of Hedwi, a priestess of Hathor and "Sole Royal Ornament," a prayer reads:¹³

May she land and cross the heaven
May her hand be taken by the great god, Lord of the Sky, that he may
lead (her) to his pure places

At their core, such (simple) prayers reflect the deceased's desire for an afterlife.¹⁴

Slightly more substantial self-presentational information may be gleaned from a dedicatory inscription at al-Qasr wa-l-Sayed. Dating to the reign of Pepi II, the text is inscribed above a tomb shaft dedicated by one Idu Seneni to his "beloved wife Asenkai." After detailing the exact measurements of the shaft he had constructed for his wife, Idu Seneni threatens action against anyone who attempts to take the shaft away from her.¹⁵ In his rather lengthy text, Idu Seneni declares that he is the legal owner of the tomb and proceeds to praise his wife, writing that "She has not uttered a sentence which has repulsed my heart; she was not angry while she was alive."¹⁶ The text concludes with the speech by Asenkai, in which she says:

I am a priestess of Hathor, beloved of her whole town.
In respect of any person who shall take this shaft from me,
I shall be judged with them by the Great God.¹⁷

Naga al-Dayr stelae depicting women sitting alone before an offering table may have been similarly dedicated by husbands, desiring to have their wives join them in the afterlife.¹⁸

An example from Akhmim (CG 1613) dating to the end of the Old Kingdom, or possibly later,¹⁹ reads:

An offering which the king and which Anubis, who is on his mountain,
who is in his wrappings, give that invocation of offerings be made for the
royal acquaintance, priestess of Hathor, Iret
It was her husband who made these inscriptions, the royal document
scribe Bawy.²⁰

Highlighting a wife's concern for her husband's approval and blessing, the inscription of Nebet, a priestess of Hathor, ends with the phrase "one honored before her husband, his beloved, the praised one of her mother, Nebet, whose beautiful name is Iby" (*im3ht hr hi.s mrt.f hsyf mwt.s Nbt rn.s nfr Iby*).²¹ In her inscription, Nebet replaces a deceased's favorite god with a reference to her husband. Paralleling the standard balanced sentence construction of male biographies, Nebet declares that she was "beloved of her husband, praised of her children,"²² once more substituting "husband" for "father" and "children" for "mother," respectively. Similar substitutions may also be seen in the funerary inscriptions of Khamerernebt, another priestess of Hathor.²³ The same desire for approval is echoed in a stela from Naga

al-Dayr, dedicated to the “Royal ornament, noblewoman, royal acquaintance, the priestess of Hathor, Ankhnes-Pepy, whose good name was Neni,” who was also “praised of her husband” because of her “excellent character” (*nfr kd*).²⁴

Economically independent women, from the Old Kingdom onwards, could find their voice and express themselves. For instance, Khentit-ka, a priestess of Hathor, recites the threat formula on her son’s stela. She says: “As for any man who will do anything ill to this, there will be judgement with him because of it by the Great God.”²⁵ Typically, the tomb owner uttered this familiar threat. In this instance, Khentit-ka’s recitation of the threat formula may indicate that she provided for the burial of her son, Wer-ka, a metal worker. A mother’s provision for her son’s burial is also indicated on an inscription on a fragmentary false door recovered from Giza mastaba tomb 7766.²⁶ On a stela dating to the Heracleopolitan Period, a son clearly declares that the source of his wealth was his mother, who appears seated next to him.²⁷ That may have also been the reason why the son of a provincial governor names his mother on his false door, referring to himself as the “son of Khenet.”²⁸

The source of these women’s wealth could be hereditary or an array of administrative positions that women could hold during the Old Kingdom, including positions relating to stewardship or oversight and ones associated with the funerary service, such as “steward,” “overseer of department of stores,” “inspector of the treasure,” “treasurer,” and “overseer of funerary priests,” among others.²⁹

An Abydos stela (CG 1578) depicts one such woman: Nebet, who stands opposite a man, Khui, presumably her husband, from whose tomb the stela was recovered. Khui held title of overseer of the pyramid city. But it is Nebet’s titles that dominate the stela.³⁰ On it, she is identified as a “Judge” and a “Vizier.” Perhaps because this is the only known attestation of a female vizier of the Old Kingdom,³¹ Nebet’s titles have been dismissed as honorific. Fischer suggested that it was actually her husband Khui who “performed the functions of vizier.”³² Her exceptionally high status was also attributed to her close connection to King Pepy I of the Sixth Dynasty, who married two of her daughters, with the titles bestowed upon Nebet in “an attempt to enhance the otherwise commonplace background of a woman who became the grandmother of a king.”³³ The stela would have been erected as “a late commemoration for Nebet.”³⁴

Nebet’s self-presentational inscription, though, contains certain phrases borrowed directly from the standard male self-presentation, but modified to reflect her gender. Such phrases include “praised of *her* mother,” who had “a

caring heart for the orphan" (*smt-ib m nmhw*).³⁵ In asserting her generosity to the less fortunate, Nebet claimed one of the essential (male) attributes of the moral character.³⁶ But her assertion may also reflect her economic autonomy or independence.

Other women also borrowed 'stock' phrases from the typical male self-presentation, such as "one whom people praise" and "whom all her town loved."³⁷ While Fischer maintains that these late Sixth Dynasty self-presentational epithets are "isolated examples,"³⁸ such moral assertions reflect the women's desire to emphasize their moral character and may be linked to their economic self-sufficiency. These assertions may thus be reflective of these women's agency and their possible autonomy.

Similar phrases were also engraved on limestone blocks that once stood in the decorated tomb chapel of lady Djehutinakht at Barsha, dating to the late Eleventh Dynasty. The blocks, which were discovered in 2014 above her burial shaft, bear two epithets of Djehutinakht's: *im3ht* (revered one) and *iry-pst m3wt*. The adjective *m3wt* (new) placed after *iry-pst* (hereditary noble woman) suggests that Djehutinakht's titles had been recently acquired, possibly as a sign of royal favor. Stock phrases commonly found in the self-presentational inscriptions of men, including "I gave bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked," were inscribed for Djehutinakht.³⁹ While assertions such as Djehutinakht's are commonly found in male autobiographies dating to the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom, they are rarely inscribed for women. Indeed, there does not seem to be any evidence for female self-presentations in the Middle Kingdom.⁴⁰

The Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period

Although no self-presentational texts of women survive from the Middle Kingdoms and the Second Intermediate Period, there are other modes of self-expression that survive: titles as well as visual media, particularly statuary. Statuary often provided the context for inscriptions.⁴¹ But even when devoid of inscriptions, the decisions involved in carving and placing a statue are quite telling.

A title that first appears in the Eleventh Dynasty, *nbt pr* (mistress of the house), becomes quite popular by the mid-Twelfth Dynasty.⁴² Initially, the title *nbt pr* was held by the wives of the provincial elite. But by the end of the Middle Kingdom, women associated with the royal court could also self-identify as *nbt pr*.⁴³

The duties of a *nbt pr* revolved around overseeing household staff. In larger, better-off households, her duties also included supervising weavers and potters and anyone else responsible for the production of household

items and food preparation.⁴⁴ While confining women's role to the domestic realm, this title gave women power, economic and otherwise, over the household.⁴⁵

That this is so is evident from the case of the overseer of the Eastern Desert, Khenumhotep (II), who seems to have had two wives: Khety, who held the title of *nbt pr* and Tjat, who, initially held the title of *sd3wtyt/htmtyt* (sealer). Ward suggested that holders of this title "may have been in charge of household stores or perhaps the personal belongings of aristocratic women."⁴⁶ Tjat was thus a member of Khenumhotep's household staff. The distinction in status between Khety and Tjat is very clear on the south wall of the main chamber of Khenumhotep's tomb.⁴⁷ There, Khety is depicted on the western end of that wall, seated at an offering table. She sits facing left on a low-backed chair with feline legs and a piece of cloth folded on its back. She extends one hand toward the offering table, while in the other she holds a lotus flower to her nose.⁴⁸ Behind Khety, five women are depicted standing: three of her daughters; Tjat, who is accompanied by two children, a boy and a girl; and at the end of the procession, a *mnꜣt* (wet nurse).⁴⁹ There, Tjat is labeled as a "sealer" (*sd3wtyt/htmtyt*). Elsewhere in the tomb, Tjat holds that title, even when she appears next to Khenumhotep. Her presence in his boat in one of the fishing scenes implies that she was his second wife.⁵⁰ But while Khety lived, Tjat seems to have held a secondary, or unofficial, status. Whenever they appear together, only Khety is labeled as a *nbt pr*.⁵¹ Khety was also a daughter of a count (*s3t h3ty-ꜣ*), a countess (*h3tyt-ꜣ*), a priestess of Hathor (*hmt ntr hwt-hꜣr*), and a priestess of Pakhet (*hmt-ntr p3ht*).⁵² But of all her titles, it is *nbt pr* that immediately precedes her name.

Several nomarchs' wives seemed to prefer the title *nbt pr* over other titles, including the somewhat more prestigious title *hmt-hk3* (wife of a ruler). One such woman was Sat-ip, the wife of the nomarch Khenumhotep I, who appears next to her husband in his Beni Hassan tomb.⁵³

A *nbt pr* could occupy a prominent position on the walls of her husband's tomb. For example, on the south wall of her husband's tomb, the *nbt pr* Hetepet, who was also a daughter of a count (*s3t h3ty-ꜣ*), a priestess of Hathor, a priestess of Pachet, and a true royal acquaintance (*rh nsw m3ꜣt*), is depicted seated before her offering table, while six registers of household staff prepare and present her with food offerings.⁵⁴

Occasionally, a *nbt pr* could have her own funerary stela, statue, and even her own tomb. In the Late Middle Kingdom site of Harageh, near Fayoum, the wealthiest burial belongs to the *nbt pr* Iytenhab.⁵⁵ Although plundered in antiquity, the tomb yielded several pieces of inlaid jewelry, including two

silver pectorals, a cowry belt of shells, three mirrors, two cosmetic spoons, and several scarabs.⁵⁶ That Iytenhab was the sole owner of this tomb is clear from a stela recovered from it. The stela may have once stood in a chapel constructed above the tomb shaft, but it was misplaced and discovered inside the tomb.⁵⁷ The rectangular stela is decorated with a cavetto cornice and bears three lines of inscriptions that feature Anubis as the guarantor of funerary offerings in the *hꜥp di nsw* formula. The offerings are made for the *k3 n im3hyt hr inpw iit-n-hb tn m3't hrw msyt n hꜥ m3't hrw nbt im3h* (“the *ka*-spirit of the one revered before Anubis, this Iytenhab, justified, born of Hedjemaat, the justified, mistress of reverence”). No other person is mentioned on the stela. The only title included for Iyetenhab is *nbt pr*. Only her mother, with no titles, is named by way of filiation.⁵⁸ Represented on the left, Iytenhab faces right and is seated on a fine, low-backed, lion-legged chair with papyrus decoration, a piece of cloth folded on its low back. Iytenhab dons a long sheath dress and a tripartite wig as she extends a hand toward an offering table piled with three rows of offerings. On the other side of the offering table, an older woman sits on the ground holding a young boy on her lap.⁵⁹ This older lady may have been a grandmother, or a wet nurse hired to take care of the child.⁶⁰

A tomb (TT 60) located in the cemetery of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna on the Theban western bank seems to belong to the *nbt pr* Senet. The tomb was initially thought to belong to Antefiqer, a vizier under Senwosret I.⁶¹ Senet features prominently in that tomb, including on the false door, and often appears alone when receiving offerings from attendants.⁶² She was initially identified as Antefiqer's wife, but seems to have been his mother. A seated statue of Senet, and fragments of another, were recovered from the tomb.⁶³ Inscriptions on either side of Senet's legs include a *hꜥp di nsw* formula that invokes Osiris “the Lord of Abydos, who is in the midst of the western hills” and identifies Senet as “a priestess of Hathor” and “a revered one before the great god, the lord of the sky” (*im3hyt hr ntr ʿ3 nb pt*).⁶⁴ Oddly, the figure of the vizier is either erased from scenes where he normally would have been represented, or is “completely obliterated by red ink.”⁶⁵ The reasons for these erasures remain obscure. But it is possible that they were motivated by a need to make room for the tomb's new occupant.⁶⁶

A granite, 64-cm-high statue dating to the Thirteenth Dynasty depicts the *nbt pr* Henutpu seated on a cubic chair, her hands resting on her thighs (CG 42035).⁶⁷ Recovered as part of the Karnak cachette,⁶⁸ and presumably commissioned by her son, the vizier Ankhu, this statue was placed near the sanctuary of Amun-Re at Karnak along with two other statues, also commissioned by Ankhu, commemorating himself and his father. On her

statue, Henutpu is only identified as a *nbt pr.*⁶⁹ But the inscriptions on her son's granite statue further identify her as a vizier's wife, a king's daughter, and—surprisingly—a *t3tyt* (female vizier).⁷⁰ It has been suggested that Henutpu's importance may be attributed to her status as the wife of a vizier and the mother of another.⁷¹ But if taken literally, the title of *t3tyt* (female vizier) may account for the placement of her statue at Karnak, an honor not accorded any other woman of her time.⁷² Only three other statues depicting private women were placed in the precinct of Amun-Re at Karnak prior to the Late Period, all of which post-date the statue of Henutpu.⁷³

A Thirteenth Dynasty bronze statue represents a woman sitting in an asymmetrical squat, one foot tucked under her, while the other is solidly anchored on the ground in front of her. Her upright leg and knee support a naked boy to whom she offers her right nipple, which she holds between her thumb and index finger. The boy, whose youth is indicated by a sidelock, wears a uraeus at his forehead, and may thus have been a royal prince. Another uraeus appears atop the woman's tripartite wig, prompting speculation that she may have been a royal princess herself.⁷⁴ Of unknown provenance, the 10.5-cm-high statue is currently in the Brooklyn Museum. A crudely incised text inscribed on the statue's base identifies the woman as "the hereditary noblewoman Sobek-nakht." While no other titles appear on the statue, she may have been the same Sobek-nakht mentioned on a stela from Edfu. There, she is identified as "king's daughter" in addition to being a "hereditary noblewoman."⁷⁵ It is not clear whether Sobek-nakht's statue was a votive offering evoking Isis, commissioned in the hopes of bearing a child of her own, or whether the statue represents her while nursing her own son or a royal prince.⁷⁶

Statues representing wet nurses holding their nurslings are extremely rare, even in the New Kingdom, when royal nurses appear on funerary stelae and in the Theban tombs of their husbands and sons, holding their royal nursling.⁷⁷ In fact, only the New Kingdom statue of Satre holding Hatshepsut as king on her lap survives from that period.⁷⁸

The New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period

Satre's life-sized sandstone statue (Cairo JE 56264), which once stood in Hatshepsut's funerary temple at Deir el-Bahri, seems to have been smashed in antiquity.⁷⁹ Hieroglyphic inscriptions on the statue identify Satre as *mnꜥt wrt šdt nbt t3wy* (chief nurse, who nurtured the Mistress of the Two Lands).⁸⁰ Satre is represented seated on a high-backed block chair, holding Hatshepsut on her lap.⁸¹ Hatshepsut, who faces right, is depicted here as a miniature adult king in a manner reminiscent in composition and iconography of

the Old Kingdom statue of Pepi II seated on his mother's lap (Brooklyn 39.119).⁸² The placement of Satre's statue in the temple and its life-sized scale sets it apart from other New Kingdom, and particularly Eighteenth Dynasty, statues depicting women and may indicate that Hatshepsut herself commissioned it as a sign of her high esteem for Satre.⁸³ Satre's statue seems to be not only the earliest sculptural representation of a (nonroyal) wet nurse holding a royal child in that particular pose, but also "the earliest extant representation in any artistic medium of a nurse/tutor in a nurturing pose with a royal child."⁸⁴

In tomb representations, the earliest attestation of this motif of a royal nurse holding a child on her lap seems to occur in the tomb of Kenamun (TT 93), where his mother is shown holding the smaller figure of King Amenhotep II on her lap. She is depicted facing left, while the king wearing his royal regalia is orientated toward the right, his hand extended to touch her, while his feet rest on the backs of nine bound captives who are represented on the side of the chair. She extends her right arm around his back, as her hand supports his head. She is labeled as *mn^t wrt šdt ntr* (chief nurse, who nurtured the god). Standing opposite the king and his nurse are Kenamun and Pehsukher, presenting them with offerings.⁸⁵

In Saqqara, the tomb of Maya, the *mn^t nsw* (royal nurse) of Tutankhamun is one of the most elaborate tombs dedicated to a woman in the New Kingdom. The tomb, which was discovered in 1996 by the French mission working in Saqqara, is dominated by representations of Maya, who is shown with Tutankhamun sitting on her lap.⁸⁶ On the east wall of chamber 1, Maya is depicted enthroned, facing left, and donning an elaborate wig held in place by a floral band and topped by a perfume cone and a lotus blossom. Facing her is Tutankhamun, who sits on her lap wearing his royal kilt and the blue crown, a coiled cobra at his brow. Maya places a lotus blossom at Tutankhamun's nose. Behind Maya are two registers of high officials. Two kneeling men occupy the top register, while four men wearing long kilts and holding various scepters appear on the lower register. The small scale of these officials is rather remarkable. They only come up to the lower part of the chair's back.⁸⁷ Elsewhere in the tomb, Maya is shown at a larger scale than other individuals represented in the tomb. While this is typical for male tomb owners, the representations of Maya remain strikingly exceptional.⁸⁸

In belonging solely to her, and not to her husband, Maya's tomb is unique. Other royal nurses of the Eighteenth Dynasty appear prominently in the tombs of their husbands or sons, but do not have their own tombs in the Theban necropolis.⁸⁹

One such woman is Hunay, the royal nurse of Amenhotep II, whose name is known from the tombs of her son Mery (TT 95 and TT 84), who served as high priest of Amun during the reign of Amenhotep II. In both tombs, she appears next to her son in scenes where one might expect the wife. In the traverse hall of TT 95, whether standing behind Mery as both make offerings to Amun-Re, Ra-Horakhty, and Amenhotep II (on the pillars), or seated next to him as recipients of funerary offerings (on the left wall), Hunay is depicted at the same scale as her son. The inscriptions identify her as *mn^ct wrt n nb t3wy* (chief nurse of the Lord of the Two Lands), a title that indicates that she served a prince who later became a king.⁹⁰ In TT 84, a tomb partly usurped by Mery, Hunay's name is engraved where the name of the previous tomb owner's wife once stood, and the older inscription is changed to indicate that Hunay is Mery's mother, not his wife (*snt.f* changed to *mwt.f*). But Hunay's titles as royal nurse are not included in TT 84, possibly because of its earlier date to the reign of Thutmose III, whom Hunay had not served in this particular capacity.⁹¹

Another royal nurse, or *mn^ct nsw*, of Amenhotep II, Senetnay, appears in the tomb of her husband, Sennefer (TT 96) and is mentioned on his funerary cones. Her name is included next to his on stone vessels recovered from the Valley of the Kings (KV 42), and she is represented next to her husband in the tomb of the vizier Amenemopet (TT 29). In both TT 96 and TT 29, the epithet *sdt h^cw ntr* (the one who nurtured the body of god) appears next to her name. Senetnay appears seated next to her husband on a statue that once stood at the temple of Amun at Karnak and is currently housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (CG 42126). The half-life-size statue depicts Senetnay seated to the left of her husband, her arm wrapped around his waist. Shown at the same scale as her husband, she wears a simple wig and a sheath dress. In all identifying inscriptions on this pair statue, she is clearly identified as a *mn^ct nsw*.⁹²

In the tombs of Mery (TT 84), Kenamun (TT 93), Sennefer (TT 96), and Amenemopet (TT 29), scribal equipment is depicted underneath the seats of women.⁹³ While the names of some of these women no longer survive, so that it is not clear whether they were the royal nurses discussed above or their sisters or daughters-in law, the presence of these scribal kits indicate that at least some women in these rarefied social circles were literate.⁹⁴ Remarkably, four of the five women depicted with scribal kits and included in Bryan's study held the title of *šm^cyt* (chantress) in the service of Amun-Re, Mut, Monthu and other gods.⁹⁵

Although a few women held the title of *šm^cyt* prior to the New Kingdom, the title becomes commonplace during the New Kingdom and Third

Intermediate Period, particularly from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-first Dynasties.⁹⁶ Stelae depicting women alone abound in the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period. While many of the women continue to identify as *nbt pr* (mistress of the house), a substantial number were *šmꜣyt* (chantress). Although of diverse social status and geographic origin, the *šmꜣyt* were women with access to wealth.⁹⁷

Four self-presentational inscriptions belonging to women survive from the Libyan Period (Twenty-first through Twenty-third Dynasties).⁹⁸ But despite the dearth of evidence, a few patterns may be discerned in these biographies. One of the earliest examples of that period dates to the reign of Pinudjem I of the mid-Twenty-first Dynasty and belongs to Tawdjatra (*t3-wd3t-rꜥ*), a chantress of Amen-Re.⁹⁹ Two self-presentational sections are included in her funerary papyrus (Cairo SR VII 11498/ JE 34033).¹⁰⁰ In addition to her role in the cult of Amen-Re, Tawdjatra was a chantress in the “Pure Foundation of Ptah” (*šmꜣyt n p3 grg wꜥb n Pth*)¹⁰¹ and a singer in the cult of Mut, where her titles included “great singer in the chamber of Mut, mistress of heaven” (*hsyt ʕt ʕ n Mwt nbt pt*) and “singer in the chamber of Mut” (*hsyt n p3 ʕ n Mwt*).¹⁰² That latter title is found frequently in Theban tombs dating to the Twenty-first Dynasty, and is also attested in Memphis.¹⁰³ Tawdjatra’s inscriptions include the rather enigmatic assertion “I served the King of my time,”¹⁰⁴ possibly indicating that she was a royal appointee or that she served the king directly.

Dating to the Twenty-second Dynasty, the self-presentational text of Shebensopdet (*šb-n-spd*t), daughter of Nimlot C and granddaughter of Osorkon II, appears on both sides of her seated statue at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (CG 42228), and continues on the back of the statue.¹⁰⁵ An inscription running down the front of the statue and framing the legs of her seated figure indicates that the statue was dedicated by her husband Hor.¹⁰⁶ Shebensopdet was the daughter of Nimlot C, the son of Osorkon II by a minor wife. Nimlot C was the high priest, first in Heracleopolis and, later, in Thebes.¹⁰⁷ Shebensopdet’s marriage to Hor, a “Royal Secretary of the South” who hailed from a distinguished Theban family of high officials, served to consolidate her father’s Theban ties and helped him establish his position as high priest at Thebes. Hor’s dedication of this statue for his wife may be taken as a sign of his high regard and affection toward her. It may also account for why information regarding him and their children were included in her inscriptions. Additionally, the self-presentational statements in Shebensopdet’s inscription emphasize her personal charm. Such ‘feminine’ themes occur in the earliest attested female self-presentations.¹⁰⁸ Exceptionally, though, her inscriptions include the following lines:

On the left side:¹⁰⁹

ikrt mitt.i špst rh r.s

s3t nsw ikr-bi3 w^cb-^c.wy m ht nb

One virtuous like me, a noble lady who knows her speech,
King's daughter, who is good-natured, and pure-handed in everything.

And, on the back of her seat:

ikr-mdw hnmw.s iry m ntyw¹¹⁰

Skilled in speech whose fragrance is myrrh

and

wm.i hm hr tp t3 wd<.i> m3^c n bw nb¹¹¹

While I dwelled on earth I spoke truth to all.

Referring to Maat was an honor normally reserved for royal women.¹¹² That Shebensopdet included the statement that she “spoke truthfully (*wd.i m3^c*) to everyone,” with its reference to Maat, may be reflective of her high status: in addition to being a royal granddaughter, she also became the mother-in-law of “the future vizier Nekhefnut C.”¹¹³ Crucially though, Shebensopdet's marriage to Hor established an important link between the Theban elite and the Tanite ruling house.

The self-presentational inscription of Nesi-khonsu-pakhered (*Ns-hnsw-p3-hrd*), a granddaughter of Sheshonq I, is inscribed on a statue of her son Djed-Djehuti-ankh (CG 42206).¹¹⁴ Like Shebensopdet, Nesi-khonsu-pakhered may have served as a pawn in the ruling house's policy of establishing marriage alliances with prominent Theban dignitaries. She came from a similar background and, like Shebensopdet, married into an established Theban priestly family. Nesi-khonsu-pakhered's father Iput was appointed high priest of Amun at Thebes by his own father, King Sheshonq I, and was also granted the title of “army leader” (*h3wty*). Later, Iput's monuments refer to him as governor of Upper Egypt.¹¹⁵ Sometime during the reign of Sheshonq I, Nesi-khonsu-pakhered married Djed-Khons-ef-ankh, a descendant of an ancient Theban family of dignitaries (eleven earlier generations of Djed-Khons-ef-ankh's family are known).¹¹⁶

Much like Shebensopdet's, Nesi-khonsu-pakhered's biographical inscription combines elements emphasizing personal charm with information regarding her husband and children. Remarkably though, Nesi-khonsu-pakhered's inscription ends with a statement declaring her desire to establish her heirs

in the temple of Mut, and considers her ability to secure those positions for them as the ultimate achievement for which she would be remembered. The text reads, in part: *p3 sh3 n mnht mi kd ts iw^c.i m pr.s* (it is the remembrance of my own ability that my heirs flourish in her [Mut's] house).¹¹⁷ This kind of expressed desire to pass on official and priestly positions to one's descendants is often seen in male self-presentational inscriptions. But it is very rarely seen on monuments belonging to women, since, normally, most women had no power to transmit any official positions. A similar declaration survives on a block statue belonging to a woman whose name does not survive. Dating to the reign of Sheshonq I, the inscription details how she buried her son, established his funerary cult, and secured her son's position for his child, her grandson.¹¹⁸ Similar statements are often found in the self-presentational inscriptions of men, where the emphasis is on the burial of the father so that the son could succeed him in office, but are only rarely attested for women.

Dating to the reign of Osorkon II, similar family zeal may also be found in the inscriptions engraved on two statues of the fourth priest of Amun, Nakhtefmut. In addition to Nakhtefmut's own biographical statements, the statues bear prayers by Nakhtefmut's mother, wife, and daughter. While the mother boasts of her "noble descent," both mother and daughter express their emotional desire not to be separated from Nakhtefmut and to see him again, while the daughter declares her intention to protect the property her father had granted her.¹¹⁹ The wife further beseeches Amun to protect their daughter, praying:¹²⁰

We here wish to dwell together
 God not separating us!
 As you live for me, I leave you not!
 Let your heart not grieve!
 Rather sit at ease each day,
 There is no evil coming!
 Let us not go to the land of eternity,
 That our names not be forgotten!
 Worth more is a moment of seeing sun-rays
 Than lasting lordship of death-land!¹²¹

While the wife's prayer is not strictly biographical, it illustrates her closeness to her husband.

The Nubian, Saite, and Late Periods

A few more biographical inscriptions are attested from the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Dynasties and later. Self-presentational inscriptions are found

on two statues of Amenirdis I (CG 565 and CG 42198).¹²² A royal daughter and sister, Amenirdis was the daughter of Kashta and the sister of Pi(ankh) ye. She was also the first Nubian woman to become a God's Wife of Amun. Her appointment as God's Wife in Thebes probably helped consolidate Nubian power in the Theban region, making their subsequent conquest easier.¹²³ In her life-size alabaster statue (CG 565), Amenirdis I is represented standing, left foot slightly forward, wearing a tight sheath dress, anklets, and wide-cuff bracelets. In her hands Amenirdis hold a *menat*-necklace and a lily scepter, which she holds across her chest. A *modius* crown of cobras rests atop her tripartite wig and vulture headdress.¹²⁴ On the statue's back pillar, three long columns of text are inscribed. The second column reads, in part:

I am a God's Wife, efficient (*mnh*) for her town,
 pleasant/friendly to her district/nome,
 I gave bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked
 (because) I knew what the god of my city loves.¹²⁵

These lines echo standard phrases found in male autobiographies and are similarly found on her seated gray granite statue (CG 42198),¹²⁶ where we read:

I have come from my city
 I have descended from my nome,
 I have done what people love and the gods praise:
 I gave bread to the hungry, clothing to the naked.¹²⁷

These expressions are typical of male self-presentations.¹²⁸

Similarly, typically male phraseology is found on the fragmentary stela of Taniy, a (female) royal acquaintance (*rht nsw*). Found in Abydos, the bottom part of the stela is currently in Cairo (CG 20564), while the top part is in Vienna (Wien 192).¹²⁹ The two parts were (virtually) joined by Meulenaere, who initially assigned a Twelfth Dynasty date to the stela.¹³⁰ But both Lichtheim and Leahy later demonstrated that the stela dates to late Twenty-fifth Dynasty and seems to be contemporaneous with Mentuemhat.¹³¹ Taniy's inscriptions read in part:

I was a person of character
 foremost among people,
 Honored and praised by my Lord;
 One perfect in her pronouncements,
 Esteemed by the king because of her righteousness,

whom he rewarded with gifts daily.
 I entered in favor and went out beloved,
 One whose mouth made her excellence,
 One who spoke and things were done for her;
 One honored by the great queen, the crowned one,
 The true royal acquaintance Taniy, the honored one,
 Justified before the great god, lord of the west.¹³²

Although it is known from the Old Kingdom onward, Leahy suggested that the title *rh nsw mꜣꜥ* (true royal acquaintance) had become honorific by the late Twenty-fifth Dynasty, when it is attested for three wives of Mentuemhat, as well as for Irtierou and Mutirdis.¹³³

Mutirdis was a member of the entourage of the God's Wife of Amun during the early Twenty-sixth Dynasty.¹³⁴ Mutirdis boasted of her closeness to the God's Wife of Amun through the frequent use of epithets such as the "one to whom the God's Wife spoke (privately)"¹³⁵ and "the eyes of the Divine Worshiper, the ears [of the god's wife]" (*irti dwꜣt- ntr ꜥnhwj [n hmt-ntr]*).¹³⁶ Mutirdis further describes the easy access she enjoyed to the God's Wife by claiming that she was one "who freely moved around in the house of her mistress"¹³⁷ and "the first to enter and the last to come out."¹³⁸ Similar self-presentational statements and assertions of beneficence are found throughout her tomb in the Assasif cemetery.¹³⁹ Her statements bear striking resemblance to the phraseology of male self-presentations and include such stock statements as:

[I gave] bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty and clothing to the naked.¹⁴⁰

And

[I was . . .] a refuge for the inhabitants of her city,
 a protector of her fellow citizens;
 I gave bread to <the> hungry, water to <the> thirsty.¹⁴¹

When an attempt was made to compose an epithet that reflected Mutirdis's femininity, we get a statement such as "[I was] a nurse, rich in milk, from whom everyone sucked" (*mnꜣt ꜥꜣt irtt iw s nb snꜣ im.s*),¹⁴² a statement that Jansen-Winkeln has characterized as a particularly unfortunate choice of words.¹⁴³ It is, however, one that may harken back to the high-ranking New Kingdom women who held the title of *mnꜣt nsw* (royal nurse).

Self-presentational inscriptions are also engraved on a 70-cm-high statue of the Saite God's Wife Ankhnesneferibre (CG 42205). Ankhnesneferibre was the daughter of Psametik II and became God's Wife in the summer of 595 BC.¹⁴⁴ The statue shows her as a voluptuous woman, standing, a lily scepter in her right hand.¹⁴⁵ Further emphasizing her femininity are the biographical statements engraved on the statue. There, she is labeled as someone who is "beautiful of eyes to behold" (*nfr irty hr gmlhw*), a "mistress of all that the Aten encircles," (*hnwt m šn nb n itn*), someone who is "pure of hands, carrying the sistrum, with whose voice Amun-Re is pleased" (*w'cb wy hr sššty hr štp Imn m hrw.s*).¹⁴⁶ More details of Ankhnesneferibre's titles can also be gleaned from her 'adoption' stela (JE 39907). There, she is identified as the "great songstress in the residence of Amun" and the "high priest(ess) of Amun."¹⁴⁷ The latter title was an honor that had not been accorded a woman previously.¹⁴⁸ The stela details not only the ascension of Ankhnesneferibre to the position of God's Wife of Amun, but also her performance of every proper rite for her predecessor, Nitocris, during her interment. Carrying out the funerary rites of Nitocris legitimated Ankhnesneferibre's position as the rightful successor.¹⁴⁹

On his Serapeum stela, a priest named Hor (Louvre C137) provides us with the names and titles of his mother and sister(s).¹⁵⁰ His sister, Nitiqrt, is "praised of the god of her city, venerated one before her father, praised of her mother, gracious to her siblings," (*i3m ib n snw.s* = lit. "kind-hearted to her brothers"),¹⁵¹ while her sister, Shebensopdet, is characterized as being "of good character to everybody" (*nfrt m b3 hr-hr s nb*).¹⁵² By affiliating herself directly to her sister, the emphasis is placed on Nitiqrit rather than on Hor, the owner of the stela.

Conclusions

From these representative examples of women's self-presentation in ancient Egypt, certain patterns seem to emerge. From the Old Kingdom onwards, women of means could afford a burial. The evidence that these burials yield—tomb decoration, stelae, false doors, grave goods—and their locations point to the possibility that at least some women enjoyed a degree of financial independence.

In the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period, texts associated with women's burials mostly listed the deceased's titles, epithets, and, occasionally, some information on her descent (Nedjetempet, Hedwi). That these short self-presentational statements are often found on monuments dedicated to or commissioned by a woman's husband (Asenkai) suggests that the husbands wanted to include their wives in their afterlife. Similarly, women appropriating the format of the ideal (male) self-presentation, but adapting the phraseology to mention their husbands and children where men would include references

to the gods, implies that these women thought their husbands' approval and praise were indispensable for an afterlife. In this context, some women preferred to highlight their husbands' attachment to them (Nebet, Khamerernebtj). For some elite women, being able to assist others on their way to the afterlife allowed them to say things about themselves that most women could not (Khentit-ka).

Whatever the sources of a woman's wealth, having the means to sponsor another person's burial (typically, a son) may have justified for such a woman the appropriation of the same kind of 'moral character' expressed in the typical male self-presentation. One could thus remark, for example, on how her resources were judiciously used to help the less fortunate (for example, "a caring heart for the orphan"—Nebet, Sixth Dynasty). This is a particularly telling development, as it stresses the woman's activity, agency, and autonomy. It may also reflect a deeper (religious) shift toward a more self-reliant approach to the afterlife. Whereas, previously, a woman (Ankhnes-Pepy) had needed to insinuate that her husband's love had to do with her good character, she would now be entering the afterlife with a more open, self-assertive approach to self-presentation.

In the First Intermediate Period, a time of social upheaval and upward social mobility, the 'newly minted' noblewoman Djehutinakht could appropriate stock phrases from male autobiographies. "I gave bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked," she says in her Eleventh Dynasty inscription at Dayr al-Barsha. Choosing to emphasize that her elite status was recently acquired, she simultaneously boasted of her new position in life while indicating that she had both the economic means and moral character to carry out the moral obligations of such a position. Here, for the first time, we see two of the most important demonstrations of male power and agency appropriated by women: resources and morality. Later, in the Third Intermediate Period, this tendency becomes even more pronounced. Women of means could now indicate their concern with the appointments of heirs (Nesi-khonsu-pakhered) and could claim the typically male characteristics of being "efficient," "praised by," "a protector" (Amenirdis, Djehutinakht, Taniy, Mutirdis), or "truthful" ("speaking Maat"—Shebensopdet). Emphasizing their character, individual ability, and prowess, these character traits point to the deceased's agency and self-sufficiency in achieving success in this life as well as in the afterlife.

On the other hand, a more limited use of self-aggrandizing phrases seems to be linked to periods of political stability. Such statements are virtually absent from the Middle and New Kingdom evidence, where the emphasis is typically on a woman's family connections and/or her roles in the household (*nbt pr*), in the temple (*hnr*, *hsyt*, *šm^cyt*), or at court (*hkrt nsw*, *mn^t nsw*). The latter title is particularly significant, as its holders are often prominently depicted in their husbands' and sons' tombs, or on their own with the king shown as a nursling

sitting on their lap (Satre, Maya). Some of these New Kingdom women, particularly those with the title *šmꜣyt*, chose to emphasize their elite status by having scribal kits depicted under their seats in tomb art, possibly also pointing to their literacy.

The emphasis placed on a woman's more passive characteristics, such as beauty, personality, and family-informed self-presentations, seem to be associated with periods of relative stability (Ankhesneferibre, second half of the Saite Period). During less stable times, women seem to have enjoyed a broader ability to boast more openly about their own abilities and agency.

Notes

- 1 J. Assmann, "Preservation and Presentation of Self in Ancient Egyptian Portraiture," in P.D. Manuelian, ed., *Studies in Honor of William Kelly Simpson*, I (Boston, 1996), 55.
- 2 See, for example, M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom: A Study and an Anthology* (Freiburg, Göttingen, 1988), 37; K. Jansen-Winkeln, "Bemerkungen zu den Frauenbiographien der Spätzeit," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 31. 2 (2004), 373.
- 3 Also pointed out in G. Robins, "Ancient Egyptian Sexuality," *DE* 11 (1988), 61–73; G. Robins, "Some Images of Women in New Kingdom Art and Literature," in B.S. Lesko, ed., *Women's Earliest Records from Ancient Egypt and Western Asia: Proceedings of the Conference on Women in the Ancient Near East, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, November 5–7, 1987* (Atlanta, 1989), 105–16.
- 4 Lichtheim, *Egyptian Autobiographies*, 1–2, 5; N. Kloth, *Die (auto-)biographischen Inschriften der ägyptischen Alten Reiches: Untersuchungen Zu Pphraseologie und Entwicklung* (Hamburg, 2002). Fischer attributes the dearth in evidence for female administrative titles to the fact that these titles are known mostly from funerary contexts in H.G. Fischer, "Administrative Titles of Women in the Old and Middle Kingdom," in *Egyptian Studies: Varia I* (New York, 1976), 73.
- 5 Lichtheim, *Egyptian Autobiographies*, 5–6; M. Galvin, "The Hereditary Status of the Titles of the Cult of Hathor," *JEA* 70 (1984), 42.
- 6 Lichtheim, *Egyptian Autobiographies*, 37; H.G. Fischer, "Women in the Old Kingdom and the Heracleopolitan Period," in B.S. Lesko, ed. *Women's Earliest Records from Ancient Egypt and Western Asia: Proceedings of the Conference on Women in the Ancient Near East, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, November 5–7, 1987* (Atlanta, 1989), 5.
- 7 Galvin, "The Cult of Hathor"; R. Gillam, "The Priestesses of Hathor: Their Function, Decline, and Disappearance," *JARCE* 22 (1995), 211–237.
- 8 N. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age* (Atlanta, 2005), 386–87, no. 283.
- 9 Gillam, "The Priestesses of Hathor," 212–14.
- 10 PM III.2, plan LII; N. Kanawati and A. Hassan, *The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara: The Tombs of Nedjet-Em-Pet, Ka-Aper, and Others*, I (Sydney, 1996), 11–30, pls. 3–12; Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 396.

- 11 Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 396; Kanawati and Hassan, *The Teti Cemetery*, I, pl. 5.
- 12 Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 396. Similar expressions are cited in Lichtheim, *Egyptian Autobiographies*, 37–38.
- 13 D. Dunham, *Nag-Ed-Dêr Stelae of the First Intermediate Period* (London, 1937), 35–36, pls XII, 1 (Dunham no. 21); Lichtheim, *Egyptian Autobiographies*, 37–38.
- 14 Lichtheim, *Egyptian Autobiographies*, 37.
- 15 Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 188–89.
- 16 Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 189.
- 17 E. Edel, *Hieroglyphische Inschriften des Alten Reiches* (Leipzig, 1981), fig. 4; Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 189; Fischer, “Women in the Old Kingdom and the Heracleopolitan Period,” 5.
- 18 Dunham, *Nag-Ed-Dêr Stelae*, 35–36, 65–66, and 107–108, pls. XII, 1–2, XVI, 1, XXXIV, nos. 21, 22, 53, 87; Lichtheim, *Egyptian Autobiographies*, 38.
- 19 Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 394.
- 20 L. Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches (ausser den Statuen) im Museum von Kairo: Text und Tafeln zu nr. 1542–1808*, II (Cairo, 1964), 85, pl. 82; Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 394, no. 293.
- 21 É. Drioton, “Description Sommaire des Chapelles Funéraires de la VI^e Dynastie: Récemment Découvertes Derrière le Mastaba de Mérérouka à Saqqara,” *ASAE* 43 (1943), 496.
- 22 Drioton, “Chapelles Funéraires de la VI^e Dynastie,” 496.
- 23 Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 231, no. 144 (4–5).
- 24 Dunham, *Nag-Ed-Dêr Stelae*, 65–66, pl. XVI, 1; Lichtheim, *Egyptian Autobiographies*, 38.
- 25 Fischer, “Women in the Old Kingdom and the Heracleopolitan Period,” 9, and fig 2 on p. 13. The slab is currently in the Musée d’Ethnographie, Neuchâtel, Eg 323, cf. PM 3.2, 568.
- 26 MFA, Boston neg. B 6873, see Fischer, “Women in the Old Kingdom and the Heracleopolitan Period,” 9, n. 30; H.G. Fischer, *Egyptian Women of the Old Kingdom and of the Heracleopolitan Period* (New York, 2000), 59, n. 43.
- 27 Berlin 24032, see Fischer, “Women in the Old Kingdom and the Heracleopolitan Period,” 9–10; and H.G. Fischer “The Nubian Mercenaries at Gebelein during the First Intermediate Period,” *Kush* 9 (1961), 44–80, on p. 64, fig. 1, pl. 10.
- 28 Fischer, “Women in the Old Kingdom and the Heracleopolitan Period,” 10; H.G. Fischer “Four Provincial Administrators at the Memphite cemeteries,” *JAOs* 74 (1961), 26–29, at 28.
- 29 Some of these positions could also be held by men. See Fischer, “Administrative Titles of Women in the Old and Middle Kingdom,” 70–71, 73.
- 30 Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches*, II, 59–60; Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 395, no. 295; Fischer, “Administrative Titles of Women in the Old and Middle Kingdom,” 74–5.

- 31 B.M. Bryan, "In Women Good and Bad Fortune Are on Earth: Status and Roles of Women in Egyptian Culture," in A.K. Capel and G.E. Markoe, eds., *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven* (New York, 1996), 39.
- 32 Fischer, "Administrative Titles of Women in the Old and Middle Kingdom," 74.
- 33 Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 395; Fischer, "Administrative Titles of Women in the Old and Middle Kingdom," 75.
- 34 Bryan, "Status and Roles of Women in Egyptian Culture," no. 109, on pp. 190–91.
- 35 Drioton, "Chapelles Funéraires de la VI^e Dynastie," 495–96; Fischer, "Women in the Old Kingdom and the Heracleopolitan Period," 5.
- 36 M. Lichtheim, *Maat in Egyptian Autobiographies and Related Studies* (Freiburg, Göttingen, 1992), 14–15.
- 37 Fischer, "Women in the Old Kingdom and the Heracleopolitan Period," 5; Z.Y. Saad, "A Preliminary Report on the Excavations at Saqqara 1939–1940," *ASAE* 40 (1940), 681, fig. 72; Edel, *Hieroglyphische Inschriften*, fig. 4.
- 38 Fischer, "Women in the Old Kingdom and the Heracleopolitan Period," 5–6.
- 39 H. Willems, *Historical and Archaeological Aspects of Egyptian Funerary Culture: Religious Ideas and Ritual Practice in Middle Kingdom Elite Cemeteries* (Leiden, Boston, 2014), 74–75.
- 40 For example, R. Landgráfová, *It Is My Good Name That You Should Remember: Egyptian Biographical Texts on Middle Kingdom Stelae* (Prague, 2011); S. Kubisch, *Lebenbilder Der 2. Zwischenzeit: Biographische Inschriften Der 13.–17. Dynastie* (Berlin, New York, 2008), do not contain any examples for women's self-presentations.
- 41 Particularly pertinent in this context are Baines's remarks on the need to integrate the textual and visual material. See, for example, Baines, "Egyptian Elite Self-Representation in the Context of Ptolemaic Rule," in W.V. Harris and G. Ruffini, eds., *Ancient Alexandria: Between Egypt and Greece* (Leiden, Boston, 2004), 33–61, at 34–35.
- 42 For the earlier attestations of the title of *nbt pr*, see Fischer, "Administrative Titles of Women in the Old and Middle Kingdom," 76, n. 42, and P.E. Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, I (London, 1893), 14, 82, pls. 12, 18, 46. Contra W. Grajetzki, *Court Officials of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom* (London, 2009), 158, who is of the opinion that the title first appears in the middle of the Twelfth Dynasty. In that Grajetzki follows the chronology of the title first suggested by K. Pflüger in "Private Stelae of the Middle Kingdom," *JAOs* 67 (1947), 127–35, at 129.
- 43 Grajetzki, *Officials of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom*, 158.
- 44 D. Stefanovic, "The Non-Royal Women of the Middle Kingdom – I *mnat*," *GM* 216 (2008), 79; Grajetzki, *Officials of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom*, 161.
- 45 W.A. Ward, *Essays on Feminine Titles of the Middle Kingdom and Related Subjects* (Beirut, 1986), 8.

- 46 Ward, *Essays on Feminine Titles*, 17.
- 47 Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, I, pl. 35.
- 48 J. Kamrin, *The Cosmos of Khnumhotep II at Beni Hasan* (London, 1999), 125–26.
- 49 Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, I, 43, pl. 35.
- 50 W.A. Ward, “The Case of Mrs Tchat and her Sons at Beni Hassan,” *GM* 71 (1984): 59; Grajetzki, *Officials of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom*, 160–61.
- 51 See, for example, Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, I, pls. 32, 35.
- 52 Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, I, 43, pl. 35; Kamrin, *The Cosmos of Khnumhotep II*, 126, n. 367. For *h3tyt-ꜥ*, *hmt-nṯr P3ht*, and *hmt-nṯr hwt-hꜣr*, see Ward, *Essays on Feminine Titles*, 10.
- 53 Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, I, pl. 46.
- 54 Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, I, pl. 18.
- 55 W. Grajetzki, *Harageb, an Egyptian burial ground for the rich around 1800 BC* (London, 2004), 31; H. Ranke, *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen*, I (Glückstadt, 1935), 11, nos. 13, 14.
- 56 R. Engelback, *Harageb* (London, 1923), 15–16; Grajetzki, *Harageb*, 31–32.
- 57 Grajetzki, *Harageb*, 31.
- 58 Engelback, *Harageb*, pl. 73; The stela is currently in Copenhagen (AEIN 1664); AEIN 1664, see L. Manniche, *Egyptian Art in Denmark* (Copenhagen, 2004), fig. 40 on p. 96; O. Koefoed-Petersen, *Les stèles égyptiennes* (Copenhagen, 1948), no. 13, 12–13, pl. XX.
- 59 Engelback, *Harageb*, pl. 73; Manniche, *Egyptian Art in Denmark*, fig. 40 on p. 96; Koefoed-Petersen, *Les stèles égyptiennes*, no. 13, 12–13, pl. XX.
- 60 Manniche, *Egyptian Art in Denmark*, 97.
- 61 Antefiker held office as vizier between the years 17 and 20 of Senwosret I, see N. Davies, *The Tomb of Antefoker, Vizier of Sesostris I and of his Wife, Senet* (no. 60) (London, 1920); PM I.1, 121–23; J.P. Allen, “The High Officials of the Early Middle Kingdom,” in N. Strudwick and J.H. Taylor, eds., *The Theban Necropolis: Past, Present and Future* (London, 2003), 14–29; Grajetzki, *Officials of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom*, 157, 162–63; R. Soliman, *Old and Middle Kingdom Theban Tombs* (London, 2009), 131–33.
- 62 Davies, *The Tomb of Antefoker*, 25–26, pls. XXX, XXXIII, XXXIV.
- 63 PM I.1, 123; Davies, *The Tomb of Antefoker*, 26, pls. XXXVIII, XXXIX; Soliman, *Old and Middle Kingdom Theban Tombs*, 132.
- 64 Davies, *The Tomb of Antefoker*, 2.
- 65 Davies, *The Tomb of Antefoker*, 6, 22, pls. III, XIV, XXIII, XXV.
- 66 Davies, *The Tomb of Antefoker*, 4, 5–7; Soliman, *Old and Middle Kingdom Theban Tombs*, 132–33.
- 67 A. Verbovsek, “*Als Geunsterweis des Königs in den Tempel gegeben ...*” *Private Tempelstatuen des Alten und Mittleren Reiches* (Wiesbaden, 2004), 96, 99–100, 104, pl. 9 (d).
- 68 Grajetzki, *Officials of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom*, 165; A. Verbovsek, “Befund oder Spekulation? Der Standort privater Statuen in Tempeln des

- Alten und Mittleren Reiches,” in B. Haring and A. Klug, eds., *Ägyptologische Tempeltagung: Funktion und Gebrauch altägyptischer Tempelräume*. Leiden 4.–7. September 2002 (Wiesbaden, 2007), 260; G. Legrain, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire. Statues et Statuettes de Rois et de Particuliers: Nos. 42001–42138* (Cairo, 1906), 21.
- 69 Legrain, *Statues et Statuettes*, 21; Verbovsek, *Private Tempelstatuen*, 418.
- 70 CG 42034, line 3 on the right side, published in Legrain, *Statues et Statuettes*, 20, pl. XXI; Verbovsek, *Private Tempelstatuen*, 96, 437.
- 71 Verbovsek, “Befund oder Spekulation?,” 260.
- 72 Grajetzki, *Officials of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom*, 165; cf. the tables in Verbovsek, *Private Tempelstatuen*, 94–97.
- 73 Capel and Markoe, *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven*, 58, n. 9. The other statues are CG 42134, CG 42135, and CG 42228. Three additional statues depict women in family groupings. These are CG 42118, CG 42126, and CG 42133, see Legrain, *Statues et Statuettes*, I, 21, 67–68, 86–57, pls LXIX, LXXV, LXXIX; *Id.*, *Statues et Statuettes*, III, 67–70, pl. XXXV.
- 74 Brooklyn 43.137, published in Capel and Markoe, *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven*, 60–66. A scarab (Cairo JE 75039) dating to the Thirteenth Dynasty and bearing the same title and name as this bronze statue helps date it to the Thirteenth Dynasty. For the scarab, see Martin, *Egyptian Administrative and Private Name Seals* (Oxford, 1971), 109, no. 1409, pl. 19.1.
- 75 Capel and Markoe, *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven*, 60. For the stela Cairo CG 20537, see O. Lange and H Schäfer, *Catalogue Général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire: Grab- und Denksteine des Mittleren Reichs. Nos. 20001–20780, II: Nos. 20400–20780* (Berlin, 1908), 144–45.
- 76 Capel and Markoe, *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven*, 60.
- 77 C.H. Roehrig, “The Eighteenth Dynasty Titles Royal Nurse (*mn^t nswt*), Royal Tutor (*mn^c nswt*), and Foster Brother/Sister of the Lord of the Two Lands (*sn/ snt mn^c n nb ʔwy*)” (PhD diss., Univ. of California, Berkeley, 1990), 3–4.
- 78 Roehrig, “The Eighteenth Dynasty Titles Royal Nurse (*mn^t nswt*),” 3–4.
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