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Reading a Chapel

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Meike Becker, Anke Ilona Blöbaum
and Angelika Lohwasser (Eds.)

“Prayer and Power”

Proceedings of the Conference on the
God’s Wives of Amun in Egypt during the
First Millennium BC

ÄGYPTEN UND ALTES TESTAMENT

Studien zu Geschichte, Kultur und Religion Ägyptens und des Alten Testaments

Band 84

Gegründet von Manfred Görg

Herausgegeben von Stefan Jakob Wimmer und Wolfgang Zwickel



Meike Becker, Anke Ilona Blöbaum
and Angelika Lohwasser (Eds.)

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Umschlag-Vignette: The God's Wives of Amun, Amenirdis I and Shepenwepet II, in the chapel of Amenirdis I in Medinet Habu (photo: A. Lohwasser)

Ägypten und Altes Testament, Band 84

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Reading a Chapel¹

Mariam F. Ayad

The funerary chapel of Amenirdis I, located to the southeast of the funerary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, is the earliest surviving stone chapel in a row of 4 chapels that originally stood with their facades facing the small 18th Dynasty temple of *Djeser-Djeserou*.²

A dedicatory inscription that runs along the entrance to the chapel proper indicates that the current stone chapel was constructed by Amenirdis's niece, adoptive daughter, and successor in office as God's Wife: Shepenwepet II, who declares that she had constructed "this monument of eternity for her mother."³

As it currently stands, a pylon-façade leads into a 4-columned courtyard that may have once supported a colonnade, leaving the center aisle exposed.⁴ Beyond that columned courtyard lies the funerary chapel of Amenirdis itself. It consists of two tent shrines set one inside the other, such that a corridor is created between the two shrines (Fig. 1).

Scenes depicting the funerary cult of Amenirdis are depicted on the inner walls of that corridor (i.e. the external walls of the inner structure), where Shepenwepet II appears as the main officiant performing various purification rites for the benefit of her deceased adoptive mother.⁵

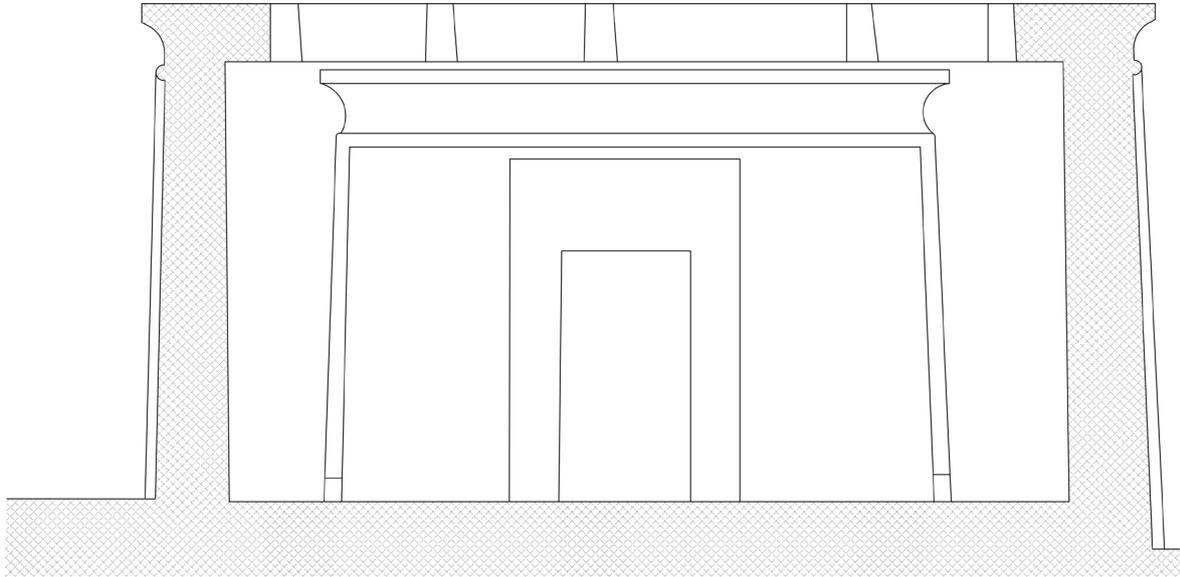


Fig. 1: Cross-section through the passage surrounding Amenirdis' cella, Funerary Chapel of Amenirdis at Medinet Habu (after Hölscher 1954, pl. 2; line drawing credit: Aliaa Ismail)

¹ The title of this paper is inspired by J. P. Allen 1994, whose methodology continues to inspire and influence my work. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. A. Lohwasser for the kind invitation to participate at the symposium on Prayer and Power: The God's Wives of Amun in Egypt during the First Millennium BC and for allowing me to submit this essay for inclusion in this volume.

² Hölscher 1954, 17–18, 20–23, pl. 2, fig. 24; Murnane 1980, 82–85.

³ Hölscher 1954, 22; Ayad 2003, 59; Ayad 2009, 133.

⁴ Hölscher 1954, 20.

⁵ Hölscher 1954, 20, pl. 2, fig. 24.

The corridor's opposite walls (i.e., the interior walls of the outer structure) are divided into two registers and bear the funerary texts of Amenirdis. A concise selection from the Pyramid Texts occupy the lower registers of the North, East, and West walls, while two Solar Hymns are inscribed on the lower register of the South wall. An extensive selection of scenes depicting various episodes of the Opening of the Mouth ritual is found on the upper register of the North, East, West, and South walls.⁶

While the Pyramid Texts, Solar Hymns, and Opening of the Mouth ritual are among the most studied of all Egyptian funerary texts,⁷ previous research has mostly tended to treat each genre separately, and in isolation from one another and from other texts that may be inscribed in their vicinity. This essay, which is based on doctoral research conducted at Brown University 1996–2002,⁸ demonstrates how these three genres work together to achieve the revivification and resurrection of Amenirdis, aiding her attain her ultimate goal of going forth from the chapel and joining the imperishable (circumpolar) stars, thereby achieving immortality. The three genres of texts inscribed on the inner walls of the external structure seem to work together to accomplish a three-fold goal: the revivification, the resurrection, and, ultimately, the guidance of Amenirdis toward the North sky.

Both the direction of writing/reading as well as the manner in which Amenirdis is represented in figural representations accompanying these texts provide valuable clues regarding their intended purpose and confirm this particular order of reading her texts: first the Opening of the Mouth ceremony was recited, then the Solar Hymns; and finally the Pyramid Texts.⁹

The first task was to restore Amenirdis' senses to her, and enable her to see, smell, hear, and taste once more. Without the restoration of senses, no Egyptian could hope to really enjoy the afterlife. The senses were restored through the repeated touching and application of various instruments and unguents to the mouth, ears, nose, and eyes to make them functional again. Typically, these actions were accompanied by ritual incantations and spells that were recited during the actual performance of the ritual or later on, in a commemorative sort of revivification of the deceased. Together, these spells and incantations constitute the ritual known in Egyptian as the Opening of the Mouth and the Eyes. This ritual, which is often abbreviated in modern scholarship to the Opening of the Mouth ceremony, is first attested, albeit in a very abbreviated form, in the Old Kingdom. By the time the chapel of Amenirdis was constructed, the ceremony had expanded to include more than 75 scenes.¹⁰ Each scene was typically comprised of 3–5 columns of text, accompanied by a figural representation showing the priests performing various actions on a representative figure of the deceased – his mummy or a statue of his.

Typically, the texts comprising the Opening of the Mouth Ceremony are inscribed in retrograde, instead of reading the hieroglyphs in the normal direction, reading into the glyphs (i.e. if the signs face right, then the text proceeds from right to left), when reading the Opening of the Mouth texts, one starts at the last column and proceeds against the orientation of the signs (i.e. if they signs face right, one starts reading at the leftmost column of inscriptions). In the chapel of Amenirdis, the arrangement of the Opening of the Mouth texts follows that same rule, her selections from the Opening of the Mouth ceremony are inscribed in retrograde.

But, while that arrangement of Amenirdis' selections from the Opening of the Mouth texts initially proved confusing, closer examination of the content of the scenes, supported a reading of her texts that starts at the chapel's doorway and proceeds inward.¹¹ If read in order in which they appear, those Opening of the Mouth scenes inscribed on the North wall of the corridor would be read first. On either side of the doorway leading into the chapel, symmetrically opposed butchery scenes occupy the two

⁶ Daressy 1904; Ayad 2003.

⁷ For the Pyramid Text, see most notably, Sethe 1908–1910; J. P. Allen 1989 and 1994; Patané 1992; For the Solar Hymns, see Assmann 1969, 139–159; Assmann 1971; Assmann 1975, 97–98, 111–112 and Assmann 1995; for the Opening of the Mouth ceremony, Otto 1960 remains the most comprehensive study of the ritual, but see also Baly 1930; Blackman, 1924 and Quack 2005.

⁸ Some of the ideas expressed here have appeared, in part, in Ayad 2003.

⁹ Ayad 2003, 217–218.

¹⁰ Otto 1960. Otto's scene numbers, however, often employ letters (e.g. 56A, 56B, and 56C) or Roman numerals (e.g. 24 I, 24 II, and 24 III) to indicate variants of the "same" scene or "similar" scenes. So the actual number of scenes far exceeds 75.

¹¹ Ayad 2003, 151–199, 208–210 and Ayad 2004.

sides of the corridor's North wall. Perhaps as a reflection of an Old Kingdom tradition that included sacrificing an ox at the tomb entrance,¹² the butchery scenes are placed on the wall closest to the doorway leading into the chapel of Amenirdis.¹³ Building on Goyon's remarks regarding the butchery scenes being enacted once for Upper Egypt and another for Lower Egypt,¹⁴ I have argued for a geographic basis not only for the parallel distribution of Opening of the Mouth scenes, but also for the repetitiveness of their content so noticeable in most versions of the Opening of the Mouth, including Amenirdis'.¹⁵

Marked by thematic continuity and distinct parallelism, Amenirdis' selections from the Opening of the Mouth ritual proceed simultaneously inward so that, in my view, they were not only intended to be read/recited simultaneously but also conclude at the South wall.¹⁶ Thematic continuity along the transitions from one wall to the other, e.g. the waking and dressing of the *sem*-priest, which occurs at the northeast corner on both the North and the East walls, points to a smooth inward progression of her texts.

Significantly, the scenes most concerned with her ritual purification and the opening of her mouth, while repeated on both the East and West wall, do not occur at exactly opposite points. Rather, these scenes occur at "diametrically opposed points". This specific layout implies to me a complementary relationship that governs the layout of these texts, so that two priests reading the texts simultaneously would at any one point recite scenes that complement in content, rather than repeat, one another.¹⁷ While various scenes may have been repeated to signify that they were performed more than once, possibly once at the sculptors' workshop and another at the tomb entrance, the inclusion of Upper and Lower Egyptian rites may have been intended to indicate "the national involvement in reviving Amenirdis",¹⁸ especially if these rites were recited simultaneously.

Amenirdis' Opening of the Mouth scenes seem to culminate at the South wall. The South wall, which is innermost in her chapel, seems to have had similar ritualistic function as a tomb's western wall, where one typically finds the false door or statue niche. It might be argued that the central symmetrically opposed representation of Amenirdis seated before her offering table (Fig. 2) is the ritualistic equivalent of the false door, which typically included a representation of the deceased seated before an offering table.¹⁹

That the South wall summed up the essence of the Opening of the Mouth ceremony can be gleaned from the manner in which the ritual is represented on New Kingdom funerary stelae. Because of the limited space available on those stelae, typically only two scenes of the Opening of the Mouth would be included on the stelae.²⁰ One scene would be concerned with the ritual purification of the deceased, and either a censuring or a libation scene would be depicted for that purpose. It has long been noted that in ancient Egyptian ritual, cool water and incense had the same, or similar, purification effects.²¹ The other scene would show the act of the Opening of the Mouth proper, typically either scene no. 26 or 27.²² In a similar manner, the scenes inscribed on Amenirdis's South wall summed up the essence of the Opening of the Mouth ritual. To the west of the central figural representation of Amenirdis is scene no. 27, in which Amenirdis' mouth is opened using the *nw3*-adze of meteoric iron. To the east of that central representation, scenes concerned with her ritual purity are represented (OMR scenes no. 2-5).²³

¹² Altenmüller 1997, 36; Wilson 1944, 213.

¹³ Ayad 2003, 182–183.

¹⁴ Goyon 1972, 121–135, 136–139, respectively.

¹⁵ Ayad forthcoming.

¹⁶ Ayad 2003, 207–210; Ayad 2004.

¹⁷ Ayad 2003, 208–209; Ayad 2004.

¹⁸ Ayad 2003, 209.

¹⁹ Ayad 2003, 185–186, 209–210 and Ayad 2004.

²⁰ Schulman 1984.

²¹ Blackman 1912, 75.

²² Schulman 1984, 181, 187, 191.

²³ Ayad 2003, 168–169.

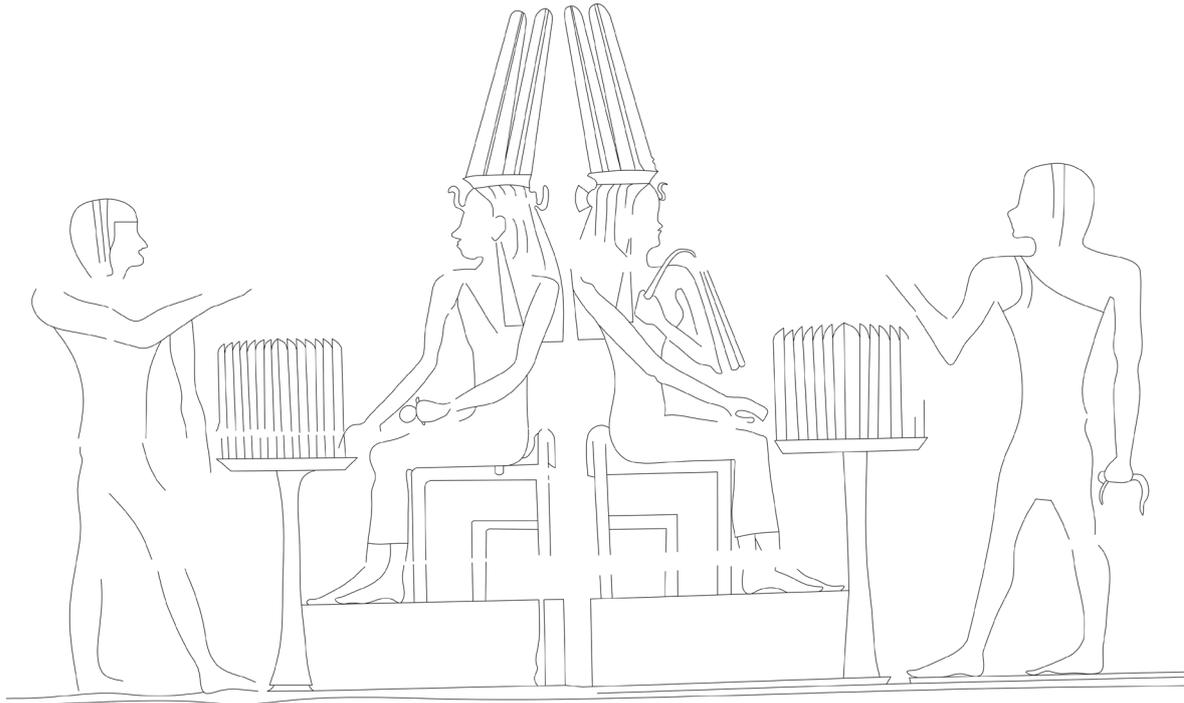


Fig. 2: Amenirdis at her offering table, corridor surrounding the *cella*, south wall, upper register (line drawing credit: Aliaa Ismail)

This particular understanding of the ritual is further confirmed by the manner in which Amenirdis is represented. At the center of the upper register of the South wall, Amenirdis appears, for the first time, animated. In a double, symmetrically opposed representation, Amenirdis, seated, extends an arm toward an offering table placed before her, her fingers almost touching the edge of the table (Fig. 2).²⁴ On the other side of the table, a priest stands, arm raised and extended above the table as he invites Amenirdis to partake of the funerary meal placed before her. Amenirdis' hand gesture gives her a decidedly animated look and indicates that here she is represented as a living person.²⁵ It is only here on the South wall of her chapel that the Opening of the Mouth rituals come to a successful conclusion:²⁶ Amenirdis' re-animation is now complete.

Throughout the scenes of the Opening of the Mouth ritual depicted on the upper register, while the process of her (re-)animation is taking place, Amenirdis is represented in a statue-like mummiform. In scenes of the Opening of the Mouth ritual, Amenirdis is represented standing on a pedestal, her posture stiff and her feet together (Fig. 3). Shown in a composite view, with shoulders squared, she holds an *nh*-sign in one hand that hangs by her side, while her other arm is bent at the elbow and placed across her chest, her fist clenched around a tri-strand flagellum. Although representations of statues, and other "lifeless" forms, sometimes utilized a complete side view, the three quarter view, with squared shoulders could still be used to depict a statue in two-dimensional representations.²⁷ The pedestal on which she stands clearly indicates that the Opening of the Mouth ritual is being performed on a lifeless form of Amenirdis, her mummy or her statue.²⁸ Whether that lifeless form is her mummy or her *k3*-statue is a moot point. For one thing, from at least the Fifth Dynasty, a mummy can be made to look like a statue by adding layers of modeled linen and plaster to it, or encasing it in plaster.²⁹

²⁴ Murnane 1980, fig. 68 on p. 83.

²⁵ Ayad 2003, 216–217.

²⁶ Ayad 2003, 184–192, 207–210 and Ayad 2004.

²⁷ Schäfer 2002, fig. 297 on p. 287, 305–306.

²⁸ Schäfer 2002, 12 and fig. 100 on p. 126.

²⁹ Ikram – Dodson 1998, 108–109, 111, 156.



Fig. 3: Opening of the Mouth, corridor surrounding the *cella*, north wall, eastern section, upper register (Photo credit: Mariam Ayad, due to the location of the relief the photo is blurred)

This practice, interpreted as an attempt to make the mummy look more like a statue, has been taken as indicative that from quite early on, the process of revivification accomplished through the Opening of the Mouth ritual was considered to work equally effectively on statues and mummies.³⁰ In fact, in order for a statue to function as an appropriate dwelling place for the deceased's *k3*, it had to be 'activated' through the enactment of the Opening of the Mouth ritual on it.³¹ Once activated, statues could become "the recipients of ritual actions".³² Animated in this way, a statue or the mummy could represent the full essence of the deceased once it was inscribed with the deceased's name and titles – for it was the name that imbued the statue with the full essence of a person's identity.³³ In fact, it has been pointed out that from the New Kingdom onwards, the deceased's mummy and his/her statue becomes intentionally indistinguishable in two-dimensional art.³⁴ If, indeed, the chapel of Amenirdis was intended to house her *k3*-statue as suggested by Carola Koch, then it is very possible that the depictions of the upper register do represent the statue of Amenirdis.³⁵

Once revived, Amenirdis is able to partake of the offerings placed before her. With food to sustain her, Amenirdis descends to the lower register, where she is seen burning incense and worshipping the two solar deities. Like the devout Egyptian she was, Amenirdis commences her journey out of the chapel by an act of worship.

³⁰ Teeter 2015, 332; Robins 2005, 1.

³¹ Fischer-Elfert, 1998.

³² Robins 2005, 1.

³³ J. P. Allen 2014, 101–102.

³⁴ K. Cooney, personal communication. See also Cooney 2010.

³⁵ C. Koch in this volume, p. 60

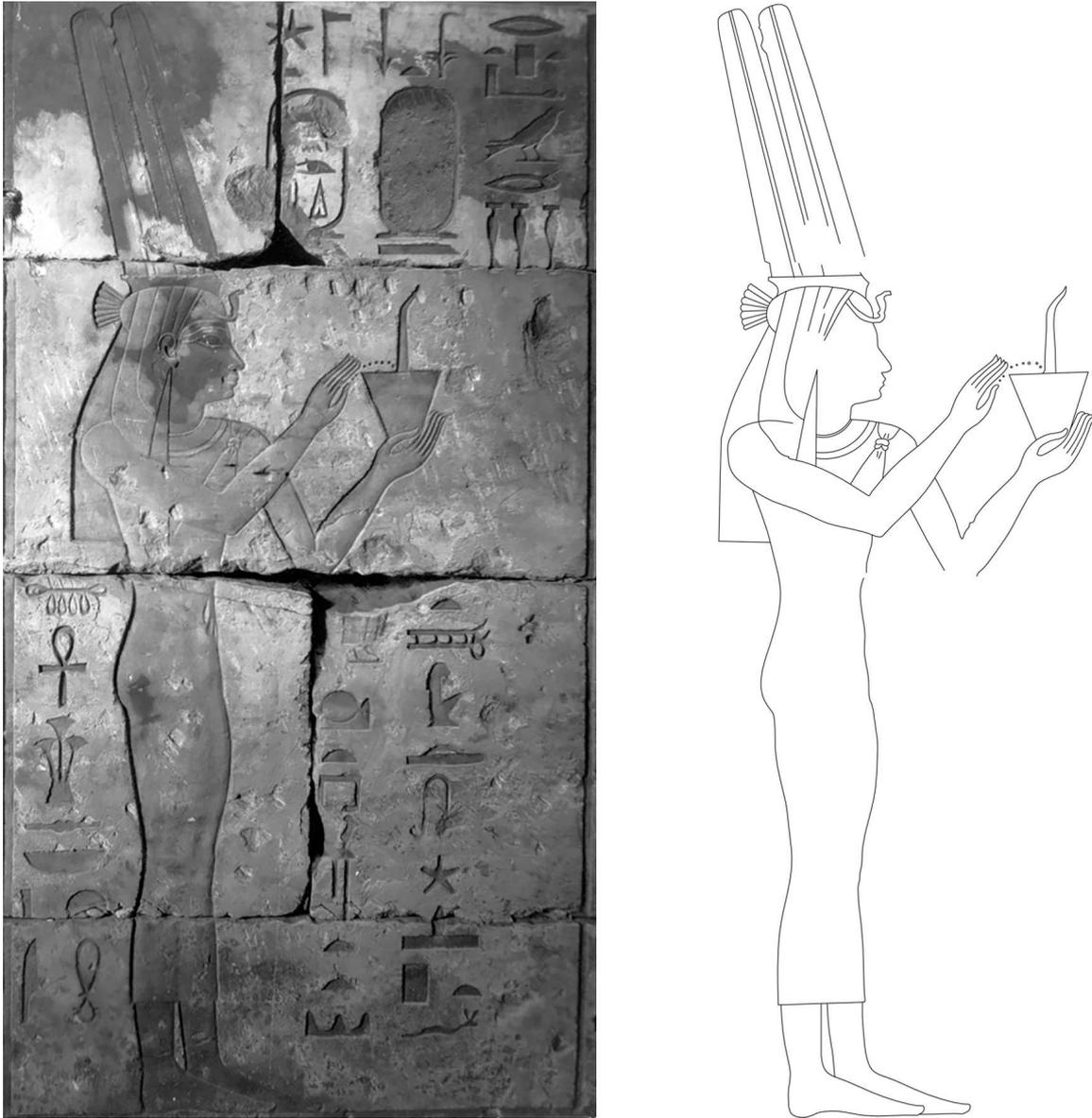


Fig. 4: Amenirdis offering incense, corridor surrounding the *cella*, south wall, lower register (line drawing credit: Aliaa Ismail)

At the center of the lower register of the South wall, and immediately under the offering scene discussed above, Amenirdis is, once more, shown in double, symmetrically opposed scenes. There, she is represented standing; arms bent at the elbows before her chest, as she holds an incense burner (Fig. 4).³⁶ Two representations of Amenirdis are shown back to back, facing the outer limits of the wall, as she offers incense to two gods shown at the two ends of the south wall. At the eastern end of the south wall, Re-Horakhty, the god of the rising sun stands facing Amenirdis, while at the western end of the same wall, Re-Atum, the god embodying the setting sun, is depicted. Between each god and Amenirdis is a solar hymn. On the eastern half of the south wall, both Amenirdis and the text of the hymn are orientated towards Re-Horakhty, while on the western part of the wall both Amenirdis and the text of the hymn face Re-Atum.

While this outward orientation is not very common, it is also not exceptional, and is quite justifiable in this instance. In the presence of a god, the king/officiant, as well as any accompanying texts, face that

³⁶ Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago Photographic archive, photo # 16106, accessible online at: <http://oi-idb.uchicago.edu/#D/PA/2016185/H/1446380639395>.

god.³⁷ By depicting Amenirdis orientated outwards, her artists/scribes were merely following the traditional conventions of Egyptian art.³⁸

Both hymns are versions of BD 15³⁹ that were also incorporated in the *Stundenritual*, or the “hourly ritual.”⁴⁰ The Hymn to the Rising Sun was part of the ritual for the First Hour, while the Hymn to the Setting Sun was included in the Twelfth Hour.⁴¹ When they occur on their own, and not as part of the longer *Stundenritual* compositions, the hymn to the First Hour stood for the entire morning ritual, while the hymn to the Twelfth Hour represented the evening ritual.⁴² As “both hymns have been shown to be hymns of adoration,” the South wall thus seems to have been exclusively reserved for Amenirdis’ acts of worship.⁴³

The particular iconographic representation of Amenirdis makes a lot of sense when considered in conjunction with the purpose and function of the texts next to which she appears. On the upper register, her mummy-like statue is subjected to various actions and incantations that are part of the Opening of the Mouth ritual. In both scenes on the South wall, Amenirdis is depicted in the manner of a living person: square shoulders; torso in three-quarters-view; hands animated: in the upper register her hand reaches out, almost touching the offering table, while on the lower register carrying a brazier.

That the scenes appear one under the other implies a sequential reading and interpretation of them. Once revived, Amenirdis receives some sustenance and commences her northward/outward journey with her act of worship: by offering incense to the gods and reciting the solar hymns for them/in their praise.

At the southern ends of both the East and the West wall, Amenirdis continues to be shown in a more animated manner: She holds an *ꜥnh*-sign in her hand, and her feet are a step or two apart, perhaps indicating her journey out of the chapel. That same manner of representation is also seen along the two corners of the North wall as Amenirdis heads out of the chapel. It is worth reiterating here the conclusions of my previous work:

Pyramid Text utterances occupy the lower register of the other three walls of Amenirdis’ corridor: PT 468 and 412 are inscribed on the East wall, PT 670, 454, and 33 are found on the West wall, while PT 81, 414, and 634A-635 occupy the North wall. Along the East and West walls, the hieroglyphs are oriented towards the South. Meanwhile, facing the nearest corner, the texts inscribed along the North wall, on either side of the doorway, are oriented away from the chapel’s entranceway.⁴⁴

At its southern end, the texts of the East wall start with an offering table, which is followed first by PT 468, then PT 412. Both of those utterances are “resurrection” texts, and in the chapel of Amenirdis, both are found in abridged form. Because of overlap in their content, the scribes of Amenirdis excluded some (redundant) sections from inclusion in Amenirdis’ chapel, choosing instead to include one version only and omitting the similar lines from the other. Despite their abbreviated nature, none of the essential elements of PT 468 or PT 412 is missing.

The texts on the West wall also commence at its southern end, with a “resurrection” text: utterance PT 670. It occupies more than half of the length of the entire West wall and is followed by a purification text, in which Amenirdis is censured and offered cool water (PT 33). Amenirdis is then called upon to surround the gods, their lives, and all their possessions (PT 454). The West wall ends with references to milk, nursing, and life:

³⁷ Fischer 1977, 9, 41.

³⁸ Ayad 2003, 211.

³⁹ T. G. Allen 1974, 12; T. G. Allen 1949, 349–355.

⁴⁰ Ayad 2003, 92.

⁴¹ Ayad 2003, 75–83, 91–92; Assmann 1969 and Assmann 1995, 5, 30.

⁴² Assmann 1969, 27–28.

⁴³ Ayad 2003, 211.

⁴⁴ Ayad 2003, 211–212; Ayad 2007b.

Amenirdis is asked to “take the Eye of Horus which is in the waters . . . [and] this cool water which is in the breasts of your mother Nut, that you may live therewith” (W 39–41).

Offering spells continue on the North wall. Spells PT 81 and part of PT 414 are inscribed on the western half of the North wall, while PT 634C–PT 635 and the rest of PT 414 are found on its eastern half. These utterances are all concerned with the presentation of cloth and clothing the deceased. The two halves of the North wall thus exhibit thematic continuity. The presentation of royal insignia was necessary for the establishment of the deceased’s authority. It equipped the deceased with power, “so that the gods may fear [the deceased] just as they fear Horus.” It is *only* in his/her capacity as the king of Upper and Lower Egypt that the deceased is able to strike terror in the hearts of the gods. By adopting the whole spell, including the part about becoming king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Amenirdis ensures that she will have an afterlife.⁴⁵

Instructions to repeat a spell a certain number of times, such as those found at the end of spell PT “words to be recited 4 times in front, and 4 times to the back,” do give the distinct impression that Amenirdis’s selections from the Pyramid Texts were meant to be read, or recited out loud.⁴⁶ In the chapel of Amenirdis, Pyramid Text spells are enclosed between a standing representation of Amenirdis on one side and an officiating priest on the other. On the east, west, and north walls, the Pyramid Texts have a normal direction of reading and they are all orientated such that the signs face Amenirdis. The orientation toward a tomb owner or the resident deity of a temple is typical.⁴⁷ So, it is hardly surprising here. But the implication of this particular orientation on the direction of reading the texts, and their progression is interesting. These texts were clearly meant to be read from south to north, or to put it in other terms, from the innermost part of the chapel outward. They were thus intended to be read by (the spirit of) Amenirdis as she proceeded out of the chapel.⁴⁸ On the other hand, the manner in which the officiating priest is depicted implies that his actions provided a visual complement for the textual content of the Pyramid Texts. Thus, we see him pouring libations at the northern end of the west wall, where the text of spell PT 670 speaks of offering “cool water” to Amenirdis,⁴⁹ or carrying stacks of cloths on the North wall, where spells PT 81, PT 414 and PT 635 mention the offering of “napkins,” “bright tunics” and other items of clothing made of fine linen.⁵⁰

So rather than assuming that the reader of these texts was the officiating priest shown at the other end of the wall, a closer examination of the orientation and progression of the texts reveals that they were intended to be read by Amenirdis or her spirit, on her way out of the chapel.

Further, the Pyramid Texts were then concerned with equipping Amenirdis with all that she needed to have a good afterlife. Her selections from the Pyramid Texts were so very carefully selected such that in just 8 spells, she was provided with the requisite food offerings, libations, clothing, and royal attire/crowns that would equip her to not only survive in the afterlife, but also thrive there.⁵¹ These spells were then strategically placed to aid and guide her journey out of the chapel and towards the north sky.

References to the North strategically placed near the entranceway to the chapel further elucidate the notion that the North sky was Amenirdis’s ultimate destination. Spell PT 412, inscribed towards the northern end of the East wall, tells that Amenirdis’s arm is grasped by the imperishable stars. At the corresponding location on the West wall, the authority of Amenirdis is emphasized by calling onto her to encircle the *Hau-Nebut*, which, in this context, clearly symbolizes the heavenly/northern realm. Thus, just as the Pyramid Texts of Unis were intended to lead him out of his tomb, Amenirdis’s selection of

⁴⁵ Ayad 2003, 211–213; Ayad 2007b.

⁴⁶ Ayad 2003, 122.

⁴⁷ Fischer 1977, 41.

⁴⁸ Ayad 2007b, 84, fig. 4.

⁴⁹ Ayad 2003, 116–117; Ayad 2007b, 78.

⁵⁰ Ayad 2003, 122–124; Ayad 2007b, 82–83.

⁵¹ Ayad 2008, 8; Ayad 2007b, 85.

Pyramid Texts served to guide her out of her chapel and lead her toward the North sky, where she could become one of the circumpolar, “imperishable,” stars.

[Further,] Amenirdis needed to be resuscitated before she could assume royal insignia. This logic is reflected in the order in which the Pyramid Text utterances appear on Amenirdis’s lower register: utterances taken from the Resurrection and Offerings dominated the East and West walls. But while the Offering utterances of these two walls present Amenirdis with *food* or *water*, the utterances found on the North wall are primarily concerned with equipping her with the proper clothing and crowns needed to achieve an afterlife.⁵²

In scenes depicted on the lower register next to the Pyramid Texts, Amenirdis is shown standing, right foot slightly forward. Across her chest, she holds a flagellum in one hand, while an *ꜥnh*-sign dangles from an arm than hangs by her side.

Instrumental in reconstructing the intended sequence of Amenirdis’s selections from the Opening of the Mouth, Solar Hymns, and Pyramid Texts is considering the identity of the intended “reader(s)” of her texts. The orientation of their hieroglyphic signs, their direction of reading provide valuable clues to understanding the ritualistic narrative preserved on the walls of the funerary chapel of Amenirdis.

The texts of Amenirdis’s upper register, written in retrograde, start at the chapel’s doorway in the north wall and proceed inward, culminating at the chapel’s innermost, south wall. They were intended to be read/recited by at least two priests as they proceeded into the chapel. While this interpretation runs contrary to the conventional understanding of the Opening of the Mouth ritual, in the chapel of Amenirdis, Opening of the Mouth scenes proceed from the doorway inwards.

[Thus,] while the texts of the Upper and Lower registers proceed in an uninterrupted flow, they do so in opposite directions. Both the orientation of the hieroglyphic signs and the direction of reading indicate that the texts inscribed on the upper register were meant to be read as one proceeded *into* the chapel, while the texts inscribed on the lower register proceeded *outwards*.⁵³

This particular layout was intended by the ancient scribes, who intended the texts of the upper register to be recited first before the text of the lower could be read. Once her (re-)animation is completed, Amenirdis partakes of the offerings set before on the south wall, then descends to the lower register of the same wall.

Placing the Solar Hymns, addressed to two complementary forms of the sun god, Re-Atum and Re-Horakhty, on the South wall was thus equally deliberate. The hymns were necessarily placed after (physically: under) the culmination of the Opening of the Mouth ritual. Amenirdis needed to be revived and her limbs re-animated before she could perform her acts of worship. Indeed, this is the sequence of events encountered in the later Demotic Liturgy of the Opening of the Mouth for Breathing. There, “the reconstitution of the individual” preceded the presentation of offerings, which was then followed by the “reintegration of the individual into cosmos.”⁵⁴ These hymns of adoration *had to* precede Amenirdis’s selections from the Pyramid Texts. As a devout Egyptian, Amenirdis commences her journey out of the chapel with her act of worship, reciting the Solar Hymns.⁵⁵ She needed to worship the gods before she could commence her journey towards the north sky. Pyramid Text utterances placed on the lower registers of the East, West, and North walls served to guide Amenirdis out of her tomb-chapel and equip her for the afterlife she desired. But whereas Opening of the Mouth scenes start at the North wall and end at the south wall, Pyramid Text utterances start at the southern end of the east and west walls and proceed northward (Fig. 5).

⁵² Ayad 2003, 213–214.

⁵³ Ayad 2003, 215.

⁵⁴ Smith 1993, 8.

⁵⁵ Ayad 2003, 210–211, 218; Ayad 2007b.

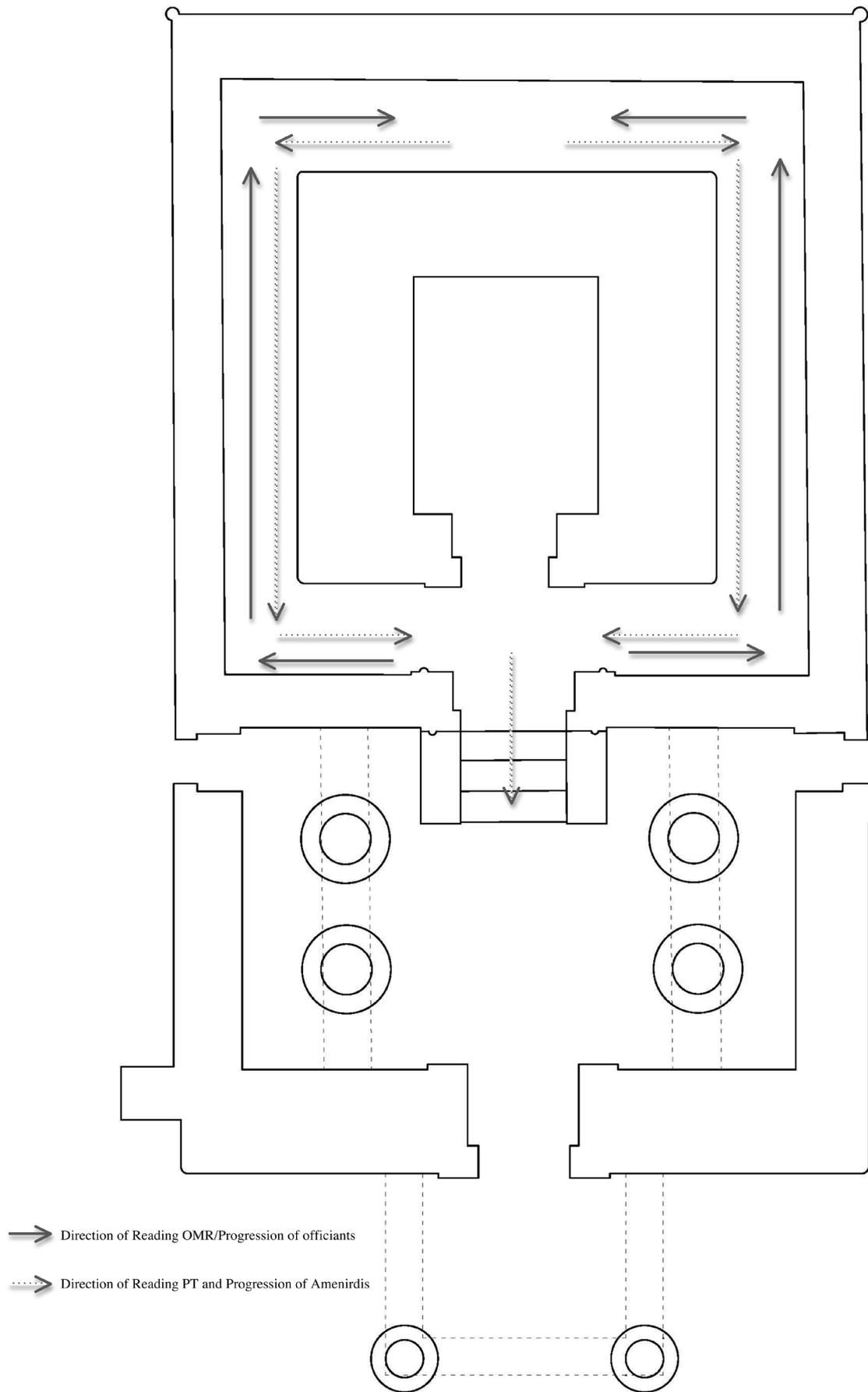


Fig. 5: Progression of Amenirdis' funerary texts (adapted from Ayad 2003, fig. 6.1)

A parallel reading of those texts would account for the cosmological references strategically placed along her walls and designed, which were intended to Amenirdis to the north sky. Themes from the Offering and Resurrection rituals dominate the east and west walls, while items of royal attire and clothing spells strategically placed on Amenirdis's north wall equip her for her ascension to the sky. Amenirdis's selections from the Pyramid Texts thus appropriately culminate at the north wall.⁵⁶

In the chapel of Amenirdis, the symmetry created by a central longitudinal axis governs not only the layout of [Pyramid Text] spells, but also the positioning and orientation of the solar hymns inscribed on the South wall and the layout of her selections from the Opening of the Mouth ritual. On the lower register, the texts on both the south and north walls are oriented *away* from this South-North central axis. The western and eastern halves of the chapel of Amenirdis thus seem to mirror each other.⁵⁷

The parallel reading of her Opening of the Mouth texts could have been performed by just two priests – each walking down one side of her corridor. Once they reached the south wall, where the Opening of the Mouth rites conclude, they could then turn back or proceeded to walk forward across one another. Either way, they would continue their incantations, reciting the Solar Hymns then the Pyramid Texts as they proceeded outward towards the chapel's doorway (Fig. 5). In reading the texts of the lower register, the priests would be reading/reciting the texts intended for the spirit of Amenirdis.

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⁵⁶ Ayad 2003, 214–215; Ayad 2007b, 85 and Ayad 2008.

⁵⁷ Ayad 2003, 224.

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Abbreviations

AF	Archäologische Forschungen (Berlin).
ÄA	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen (Wiesbaden).
ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament (Wiesbaden).
AAWB	Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin).
ADAIK	Abhandlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo (Glückstadt/Hamburg/New York).
ÄF	Ägyptologische Forschungen (Glückstadt/Hamburg/New York).
AH	Aegyptiaca Helvetica (Basel/Genève).
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology (New York/Baltimore).
ÄMP	Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung (Berlin).
ASAE	Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte (Le Caire).
AV	Archäologische Veröffentlichungen (Berlin/Mainz).
B-CK	Base de données Cachette de Karnak.
BAe	Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca (Bruxelles).
BAEDE	Boletín de la Asociación Española de Egiptología (Madrid).
BAR Int. Ser.	British Archaeological Reports, Internat. Series (London).
BD-Papyri	Book of the Dead Papyri.
BdE	Bibliothèque d'Étude (Le Caire).
BeiträgeBf	Beiträge zur Ägyptischen Bauforschung und Altertumskunde (Mainz).
BES	Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar (New York).
BIE	Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte (Le Caire).
BIFAO	Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale (Le Caire).
BM	British Museum (London).
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris).
BOREAS	Boreas. Uppsala Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations (Uppsala).
BSFE	Bulletin de la Société française d'égyptologie (Paris).
BTAVO Reihe B	Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients. Reihe B – Geisteswissenschaften (Wiesbaden).
BzÄ	Beiträge zur Ägyptologie der Institute für Afrikanistik und Ägyptologie der Universität Wien (Wien).
CAA	Corpus Antiquitatum Aegyptiacarum, Lose-Blatt-Katalog ägyptischer Altertümer (Mainz).
CdE	Chronique d'Égypte (Bruxelles).
CFEETK	Centro franco-egyptien d'étude des temples de Karnak (Karnak).
Cairo CG/CGC	Catalogue Général du Musée du Caire (Le Caire).
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East (Leiden).
CK	The Karnak Cachette Database Project (L. Coulon, E. Jambon).
CNMAL	Collections of the National Museum of Antiquities Leiden (Leiden).
CRAIBL	Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres (Paris).
CRIPeL	Cahiers de recherches de l'Institut de papyrologie et égyptologie de Lille (Lille).
CT	A. de Buck. The Egyptian Coffin Texts. 7 vol. OIP 34, 49, 64, 67, 73, 81, 87. 1935–1961 (Chicago).
DAIKS	Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Kairo Sonderschriften (Mainz).
DE	Discussions in Egyptology (Oxford).
Dict. Eg. CT	R. van der Molen. A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts. 2000 (Leiden).

EA	Egyptian Archaeology. The Bulletin of the Egypt Exploration Society (London).
EAO	Égypte – Afrique et Orient (Avignon).
EESOP	Egypt Exploration Society. Occasional Publications (London).
EGU	Egyptologische Uitgaven (Leuven).
EME	Études et Mémoires d'Égyptologie (Paris).
ENiM	Égypte nilotique et méditerranéenne (Montpellier).
ERA	Egyptian Research Account (London).
EVO	Egitto e Vicino Oriente (Pisa).
FCD	R. O. Faulkner. Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian. 1962 (Oxford).
FHN	T. Eide – et al. (eds.). Fontes Historiae Nubiorum. 4 vol. 1994–2001 (Bergen).
FIFAO	Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale (Le Caire).
GHPE	Golden House Publications. Egyptology (London).
GM	Göttinger Miscellen. Beiträge zur ägyptologischen Diskussion (Göttingen).
GM Beihefte	Göttinger Miscellen. Beihefte (Göttingen).
GOF IV	Göttinger Orientforschungen. IV. Reihe. Ägypten (Wiesbaden).
GWA	God's Wife of Amun.
HÄB	Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge (Hildesheim).
HdO	Handbuch der Orientalistik (Leiden/Köln).
HPA	High Priest of Amun.
IBAES	Internet-Beiträge zur Ägyptologie und Sudanarchäologie (Berlin).
IFAO	Institut français d'archéologie orientale (Le Caire).
INRAP	Institut national de recherches archéologiques préventives (Metz).
JARCE	Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt (Boston/New York).
JE	Journal d'Entrée du Musée du Caire (Cairo).
JEA	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology (London).
JEOL	Jaarbericht van het Vooraziat-Egypt. Genootschap Ex Oriente Lux (Leiden).
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies (Chicago).
JSSEA	Journal of the Society of the Studies of Egyptian Antiquities (Toronto).
KHM ÄOS	Kunsthistorisches Museum, Ägyptisch-Orientalische Sammlung (Wien).
KoptHWb	W. Westendorf. Koptisches Handwörterbuch. 1965–1977 (Heidelberg).
KRI	K. A. Kitchen. Ramesside Inscriptions. 1969–1990 (Oxford).
KSG	Königtum, Staat und Gesellschaft früher Hochkulturen (Wiesbaden).
L. E.	Lower Egypt(ian).
LÄ	Lexikon der Ägyptologie (Wiesbaden).
LD	K. R. Lepsius. Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien. 1900 (Berlin).
LED	L.H. Lesko. A Dictionary of Late Egyptian. 5 vol. 1982-1990 (Berkeley/Providence).
LGG	C. Leitz (Hrsg.). Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen. OLA 110-116. 2002 (Leuven).
LP	Late Period.
LRL	Late Ramesside Letters.
MAFTO	Mission Archéologique Française de Thèbes-Ouest.
MÄS	Münchener Ägyptologische Studien (Berlin, München).
MB	Museo Baracco (Roma).
MDAIK	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo (Wiesbaden/Mainz).
MENES	Menes. Studien zur Kultur und Sprache der ägyptischen Frühzeit und des Alten Reiches (Wiesbaden).
MFA	Museum of Fine Arts (Boston).

MIFAO	Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale (Le Caire).
MMA	Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York).
MMAF	Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission Archéologique Française au Caire. IFAO (Le Caire).
MMJ	Metropolitan Museum Journal. Metropol. Museum (New York).
MonAeg	Monumenta Aegyptiaca (Bruxelles).
NK	New Kingdom.
NLR	Nile Level Record.
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis (Fribourg, Göttingen).
OIC	Oriental Institute Communications (Chicago).
OIM	Oriental Institute Museum (Chicago).
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications (Chicago).
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta. (Leuven).
OMR	Opening of the Mouth Ritual.
Or	Orientalia. Nova Series (Roma).
OrAnt	Oriens antiquus (Roma).
PÄ	Probleme der Ägyptologie (Leiden).
pBerlin	Papyrus Berlin.
pBM	Papyrus British Museum.
PC	Papyrus Carlsberg (Kopenhagen).
pGreenfield	Papyrus Greenfield.
pHarkness	Papyrus Harkness.
pLeiden	Papyrus Leiden.
pLouvre	Papyrus Louvre.
PM	B. Porter – R. L. B. Moss. Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings. 7 vol. 1927-1995 (Oxford).
PMMAEE	Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Egyptian Expedition (New York).
pMunich	Papyrus München.
PT	Pyramid Texts.
Ptol. Lexikon	P. Wilson. A Ptolemaic Lexicon. A Lexicographical Study of the Texts in the Temple of Edfu. OLA 78. 1997 (Leuven).
QV	Valley of the Queens.
RAPH	Recherches d'archéologie, de philologie et d'histoire. IFAO (Le Caire).
RdE	Revue d'Égyptologie (Paris/Louvain).
Rec.Trav.	Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes (Paris).
RSE	Rassegna di Studi Etiopici (Roma).
SAGA	Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altägyptens (Heidelberg).
SAK	Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur (Hamburg).
SAKB	Studien zur Altaltägyptischen Kultur. Beihefte (Hamburg).
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations (Chicago).
SARS	Sudan Archaeological Research Society (London) / Sudan Archaeological Research Society Publications (London).
SCA	Supreme Council of Antiquities (Cairo).
SEAP	Studi di Egittologia e di Antichità Puniche (Bologna, Pisa).
SHR	Studies in the History of Religion (Leiden).
SL	Gardiner Sign List.
SMB	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Berlin).
SMPK	Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz.
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies. University of London (London).
SNM	Sudan National Museum (Khartoum).

SRaT	Studien zu den Ritualszenen Altägyptischer Tempel (Dettelbach).
SSEA Publications	Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities Publications (Mississauga).
SSR	Studien zur Spätägyptischen Religion (Wiesbaden).
Stockholm MM	Medelhavsmuseet Egyptiska Advelingen (Stockholm).
TÄB	Tübinger Ägyptologische Beiträge (Bonn).
TIP	Third Intermediate Period.
TLA	Thesaurus Lingua Aegyptiae. Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin).
TT	Theban Tomb.
Turin ME	Museo Egizio (Torino).
U. E.	Upper Egypt(ian).
UC	University College (London).
UGAÄ	Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ägyptens (Leipzig, Berlin, Hildesheim).
UMR	Unités Mixtes de Recherche (Lyon).
VA	Varia Aegyptiaca (San Antonio).
VA Ass	Vorderasiatisches Museum Berlin, Assur Sammlung. (Berlin).
Wb	A. Erman – H. Grapow (Hrsg.). Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache. 1926–1963 (Leipzig, Berlin).
Wb Med. Texte	H. von Deines – W. Westendorf. Wörterbuch der medizinischen Texte. 1961–1962 (Berlin).
WVDOG	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft (Berlin/Leipzig).
YES	Yale Egyptological Studies (New Haven).
ZÄS	Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde (Leipzig, Berlin).