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Kitab – Egyptology in Focus

Material Culture of ancient Egypt and Nubia

1

The Middle Kingdom Ramesseum Papyri Tomb and its Archaeological Context

Gianluca MINIACI

NICANOR Books

A Stephen Quirke,

*perché averlo incontrato
è stata una rivoluzione interiore,
un'esplosione di nuove idee e continue visioni*

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Acknowledgments

The drafting of this volume started in the middle of August 2019, when I went to London and had just one afternoon of discussion with Stephen Quirke. It was a rough copy of an article I intended to submit about the Ramesseum Papyri Tomb architecture, where I also partially discussed some long-lasting hybrid interpretations of its archaeological context. Stephen's enthusiasm and passionate comments turned the article into a book, opening up an entirely new world and generating a new creature. What you are holding in your hands now is the product of a vision, inspired by and shared with Stephen.

I am deeply grateful to Wolfram Grajetzki who patiently – and constantly over the years – supported all the ideas generated inside my head: when I proposed the creation of a new series to him, I had just a vague idea in my mind. And it is never easy to transfer an idea into something concrete. Wolfram's discussions gave me the foundation to formulate ideas and transform them into a physical container, *Egyptology in Focus*; without his energy and passion all my ideas would be dispersed into the universe of infinite – yet never expressed – possibilities. He also patiently followed from the beginning every step in the gestation of this book; he spent his time reading it over and over again, adjusting it and providing innumerable and valuable suggestions (by now he should be absolutely bored with anything concerning the Middle Kingdom Ramesseum tomb).

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Foreword

Among the groups of objects to attract most attention from research visitors to Manchester Museum, those from the Ramesseum Tomb stand out. Of apparently greatest intrigue, the wooden female figurine with a divine face or mask is one of the most well-illustrated from the Museum's 18,000-strong Egyptology collection. Along with outlying pieces in Cambridge and Philadelphia and papyri in London and Berlin, the integrity of this group of objects as a single assemblage, meaningfully collected and deposited, has frequently been presented without hesitation.

An envisaged identity of a single owner fits a convenient image of a practitioner of healing and magic. This healer-magician appeals as a distinctive and intriguing historical persona to museum visitors and has found a particular resonance within the biomedical focus of part of the University of Manchester's Egyptology teaching programmes. But rarely are things so simple – or convenient.

It is therefore to be greatly welcomed that Gianluca Miniaci has undertaken a thorough – and long overdue – investigation of each of the traceable objects from the find, paying close attention to competing accounts of context and making informative comparisons with a range of parallels. His analysis highlights that individual pieces have not suffered from scholarly neglect, although a synthesis of the whole deposit – if indeed it was intended to be one – has up until now been lacking.

Despite the bold assertion by the archaeologist who took credit for the find, James Quibell, that there was 'no doubt that all these objects are from one interment and of one date', the contents of the space(s) known as the Ramesseum Tomb were in complete confusion and excavators took no account of any anthropological remains. Repeated and intense reuse is typical of Pharaonic burial sites, especially in the most sacred zones – which are, in turn, the most interesting areas to looters and archaeologists alike. Such problems imparted by the palimpsest landscape are particularly acute with the Ramesseum Tomb material. Quibell's statement, though, betrays the age-old Egyptological desire for evidence of knowable individuals and the need to allocate an 'identity' to retrieve meaning from disturbed and incomplete assemblages.

Just as abstracting individual pieces deprives them of contextual information, so considering them as an assemblage has limited their potential contribution to understanding both ancient object habits and our modern biases in attempting to reconstruct them. As Miniaci shows, assumptions about the gender and professional status of any single 'owner' of these objects are particularly widespread. Each interpretation has in common, I would suggest, that as Egyptologists we want to see something of ourselves in the skilled, literate performer who really *knows* how to use and animate objects through our restricted knowledge, in order to conjure powerful entities from another world. The Ramesseum Tomb group highlights more than most others the elusive – and illusory – nature of the identities behind our sources.

Dr. Campbell Price,
Curator of Egypt and Sudan, Manchester Museum, University of Manchester

List of Abbreviations

- ADAIK = *Abhandlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo (DAIK). Ägyptologische Reihe* (Glückstadt/Mainz/Berlin)
 ÄgFo = *Ägyptologische Forschungen* (Glückstadt/Hamburg/New York)
 ÄUAT = *Ägypten und Altes Testaments: Studien zur Geschichte, Kultur und Religion Ägyptens und des Alten Testaments* (Bamberg/Wiesbaden)
 ÄuL = *Ägypten und Levante: Zeitschrift für ägyptische Archäologie und deren Nachbargebiete* (Wien)
 ÄMP = Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung (Berlin)
 ApE = *Archaeopress Egyptology* (Oxford)
 AshM = Ashmolean Museum (Oxford)
 BAR IS = *BAR International Series* (Oxford)
 BdE = *Bibliothèque d'Étude* (IFAO, Le Caire)
 BIFAO = *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* (IFAO) (Le Caire)
 BiOr = *Bibliotheca Orientalis* (Leiden)
 BM EA = British Museum, Egyptian Antiquity (London)
 BME = *British Museum Expedition to Middle Egypt* (London)
 BMH = *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* (Budapest)
 BMMA = *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA)* (New York)
 BMPAES = *British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan* (Leuven/Louvain)
 BMSAES = *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* (London)
 BSAE = *British School of Archaeology in Egypt* (London)
 BSAE/ERA = *British School of Archaeology in Egypt/Egyptian Research Account* (London)
 CAJ = *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* (Cambridge)
 CG = *Catalogue General du Musée du Caire* (Cairo Museum)
 CNIANES = *Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Ancient Near Eastern Studies Publications* (Copenhagen)
 DGA = Directorate General of Antiquities, National Museum of Beirut
 EDdA = *Études et documents d'archéologie* (Paris)
 EEF = Egypt Exploration Fund (London)
 ERA = *Egyptian Research Account* (London)
 ET = *Études et Travaux. Travaux du centre d'archéologie méditerranéenne d'Académie polonaise des sciences* (Warsaw)
 EVO = *Egitto e Vicino Oriente: Rivista della sezione orientalistica dell'Istituto di Storia Antica, Università degli Studi di Pisa* (Pisa)
 FitzM = Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge)
 FIFAO = *Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale (IFAO) du Caire. Rapports préliminaires* (Le Caire)
 GHPE = *Golden House Publication Egyptology* (London)
 GM = *Göttinger Miszellen* (Göttingen)
 HÄB = *Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge* (Hildesheim)
 HPKMB = *Hieratische Papyrus aus der königlichen Museen zu Berlin* (Berlin)
 IFAO = *Institut français d'archéologie orientale* (Le Caire)
 JARCE = *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* (Boston/Princeton/New York/Cairo)
 JE = *Journal d'Entrée* (Cairo Museum)
 JEA = *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* (EES, London)
 JEgH = *Journal of Egyptian History* (Swansea)
 LO = *Lettres Orientales* (Leuven)
 MÄS = *Münchener Ägyptologische Studien* (Berlin/Munich/Mainz am Rhein)

ManchM= Manchester Museum
 MDAIK = *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo* (Berlin)
 MEEF = *Memoir of the Egypt Exploration Fund* [later: MEES]
 Memnonia = *Memnonia: Bulletin édité par l'Association pour la sauvegarde de Ramesseum*
 (Le Caire/Paris)
 MK = Middle Kingdom
 MKS = *Middle Kingdom Studies* (London)
 MMA = Metropolitan Museum of Arts (New York)
 MMJ = *Metropolitan Museum Journal* (New York)
 MRAH = *Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire* (Brussels)
 MZKAOW = *Mededelingen der Zittingen. Koninklijke Academie voor Overzeese Wetenschappen/Bulletin des Séances. Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer* (Bruxelles)
 OBO = *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* (Freiburg/Göttingen)
 OLA = *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* (Louvain)
 OMCA = *Oxford Monographs on Classical Archaeology* (Oxford)
 OSAD = *Oxford studies in Ancient Documents* (Oxford)
 PÄ = *Probleme der Ägyptologie* (Leiden/Boston/Köln)
 PM = Porter, B., R. Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings*, 7 vols, 1927–
 PMMA = *Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Egyptian Expedition)* (New York)
 qtd. = quoted in
 RdE = *Revue d'Égyptologie* (Paris)
 SA= *Social Archaeology* (Oxford)
 SAK = *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* (Hamburg)
 SAOC = *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation* (Chicago)
 SdAE = *Studi sull'antico Egitto* (Todi)
 SDAIK = *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo, Sonderschrift* (Cairo)
 SMET = *Studi del Museo Egizio di Torino* (Turin)
 THEBEN = *Theben* (Mainz am Rhein)
 TTS = *Theban Tombs Series* (London)
 UC = Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, University College (London)
 UGAÄ = *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ägyptens* (Hildesheim/Leipzig/Berlin)
 UZK = *Untersuchungen der Zweigstelle Kairo des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts, herausgegeben in Verbindung mit der Ägyptischen Kommission der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Wein)
 YES = *Yale Egyptological Studies* (New Haven)
 ZÄS = *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* (Berlin/Leipzig)

The Middle Kingdom Ramesseum Papyri Tomb and its Archaeological Context

In 1895–96, William Matthew Flinders Petrie and James Edward Quibell discovered a shaft-tomb around the area of the gallery no. 5 of the ‘Ramesseum’, the funerary temple of Ramses II at Thebes.¹ The tomb is most famous for having the largest group of Middle Kingdom papyri – also known as the Ramesseum Papyri² – found in a single spot together with a number of distinctive objects, such as carved ivory tusks and miniature figurines in various materials.³ Although the archaeological context of the tomb was published soon after its discovery by Quibell there still remains a number of inconsistencies and open questions relating to its discovery, location, architecture and dating that deserve to be (re)considered. The same can be said for the group of objects from this tomb: while the papyri have captured most of the Egyptological attention,⁴ the other artefacts have never been fully published together⁵ nor has the whole assemblage been methodically analysed.

The History of the Discovery

In 1895–96, Petrie turned his excavations towards the Ramesseum temple area because ‘no regular digging’ had been undertaken there before.⁶ At the time he was working elsewhere in the Theban Necropolis and assigned responsibility for the Ramesseum excavations to Quibell, his apprentice student from Oxford.⁷ Although Quibell alone was responsible for the publication, drawings of ‘plans, descriptions of finds, etc., and the work of excavation’, he himself mentioned that ‘a considerable part of the Ramesseum was excavated by Dr. Petrie’,⁸ implying that the work of the two may have overlapped to a certain extent.⁹ The excavations were supported by several persons and scholars, including James Quibell’s wife, Annie Abernathie Pirie Quibell,¹⁰ his sister Kate Quibell, and Joseph Grafton Milne.¹¹ Occasionally, Percy Newberry and Wilhelm Spiegelberg assisted their work or visited the excavations.

Under the north-western group of storerooms at the Ramesseum, Quibell and Petrie unearthed a number of burials (five or six) dating from the early to the late Middle Kingdom, among which was the tomb containing the famous papyri group.¹² The structure is usually

¹ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 3–4, pl. 1–3. See DROWER, *Flinders Petrie*, 218–21.

² GARDINER, *The Ramesseum papyri*, 1–6. Summary in PARKINSON, *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*, xi–xiii; QUIRKE, in LOPRIENO (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 379–401; GILLAM, *Performance and Drama*, 51–3, 62–3. See also below under C.

³ PM I², 2, 678–9, pl. 12.5; KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 166; BOURRIAU, in QUIRKE (ed.), *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 20.

⁴ Cf. PARKINSON, in STRUDWICK (ed.), *Masterpieces*, 102–4; PARKINSON, *Reading Ancient Egyptian Poetry*, 146–60.

⁵ Often the only reference for the whole group of objects is the drawing produced by Annie Pirie for the publication, which is moreover incomplete.

⁶ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 1.

⁷ ‘Meanwhile Mr. Quibell cleared the Ramesseum and the great building around that’, PETRIE, *Six Temples*, 1.

⁸ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 2.

⁹ Spiegelberg also mentioned that Petrie was excavating in the Ramesseum: ‘Dank dem liebenswürdigen Entgegenkommen von Flinders Petrie, welcher um jene Zeit im Ramesseum ausgrub [...]’, SPIEGELBERG, *Zwei Beiträge*, 2.

¹⁰ BIERBRIER, *Who Was Who*, 450.

¹¹ BIERBRIER, *op. cit.*, 374.

¹² QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 3–5 (three tombs below magazines nos. 32, 36–7; one below the great northern wall; and two others below magazine no. 5 and colonnade no. 7, corresponding to the MK Ramesseum Papyri tomb and Sehetepibre’s tomb respectively; the latter two can be only one tomb,

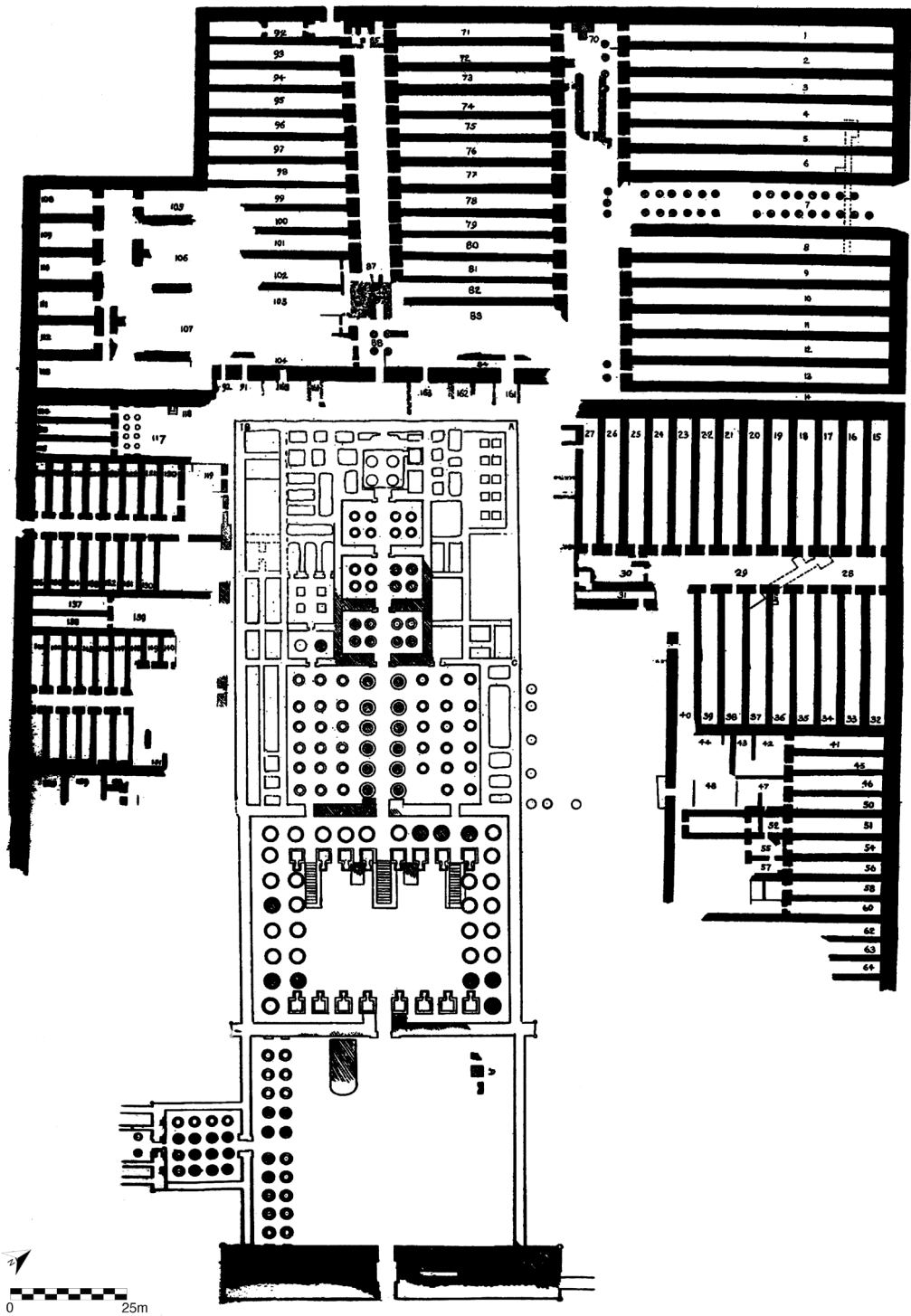


Fig. 1: Plan of the Ramesseum as illustrated in QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, pl. 1, with a metric scale calibrated on the 'plan topographique du Ramesseum d'après le relevé de J.-Fr. Carlotti, M. Chalmel, A. Lecoigne, G. Roesch'

known in Egyptological literature as ‘Tomb 5’, ‘Tomb no. 5’ or ‘Tomb Ramesseum no. 5’;¹³ all of these names are improperly derived from the fact that the structure – left unnamed in the publication of Quibell – was stated to be located under the fifth magazine of the Ramesseum (see Fig. 1). Thereafter, Egyptologists began inaccurately referring to the tomb using the above number of the Ramesside storeroom for the sake of simplicity. This mistaken identification has created a misleading correlation with the number 5;¹⁴ a correlation that did not exist in the published records. Quibell did not number the tomb but simply provided a vague topographical indication in relation to the fifth storeroom of the Ramesseum. At the time of the discovery the tomb was occasionally referred to as the ‘Tomb of ivory boy’;¹⁵ a designation soon abandoned. A label ‘Middle Kingdom Ramesseum Papyri Tomb’ – as it is mainly renowned for being the location of a wooden box full of papyri – would be a more appropriate identity for this otherwise undesignated tomb.¹⁶

The published report

Quibell’s report of the tomb’s discovery and excavation is found on pages 3–4 of the volume ‘The Ramesseum’ published in 1898, two years after the work, and here reported verbatim:

[QUIBELL’S *VERBATIM* PUBLISHED REPORT OF THE MK RAMESSEUM PAPYRI TOMB]

‘The most important tomb of the XIIth dynasty period consisted of a long, oblong shaft, skew to the wall of one of the chambers (No. 5, PL. I) and running under it. In the shaft were scattered two types of ushabtis, one of green glaze, another of clay painted yellow but not baked. These were of XXIInd dynasty style, as were also a wooden head from a coffin lid, some small wax figures of the four genii, and fragments of red leather braces.

At the bottom of the shaft, 13 feet down, two small chambers opened. These were cleared out and found to be empty. Lastly, the heap left in the middle of the shaft was removed, and in it, in a space about 2 feet square, was found a group of objects, some of which are shown in PL. III.

First was a wooden box about 18 x 12 x 12 inches. It was covered with white plaster, and on the lid was roughly drawn in black ink the figure of a jackal. The box was about one third full of papyri which were in extremely bad condition, three quarters of their substance having decayed away; if a fragment of the material were pressed slightly between the finger and thumb it disappeared in a mere dust. But the papyrus was inscribed; characters apparently of the XIIth dynasty hieratic could be distinguished. The papyrus was packed with care and has been brought to England. It is too delicate even to be unfolded, but it is to be hoped that Mr. Griffith may, by copying what can be seen on one fold and then brushing or scraping this away, get access to the next and so make out much of the text.

see below, *The Location of the Tomb and its Architecture*). In the same area, other burials of the late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period (LEBLANC, *Memnonia* 16, 33–4; NELSON, *Memnonia* 17, 115–6) have also been recently documented, testifying to a continuity of use of the area during the Middle Bronze Age (2055–1550 BC) and later (early New Kingdom; KALOS, NELSON, *Memnonia* 7, 69–82).

¹³ E.g. KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 166; BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 113.

¹⁴ YOYOTTE, *RdE* 11, 172–5.

¹⁵ DOWNING, PARKINSON, *BMSAES* 23, 36.

¹⁶ The tomb and its group of objects could also be labelled ‘Ramesseum tomb’ and ‘Ramesseum group’ when the context is sufficiently explicit for the reader to immediately understand, BOURRIAU, in QUIRKE (ed.), *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 20.

In the box was also a bundle of reed pens, 16 inches long and a tenth of an inch in diameter, and scattered round it were a lot of small objects; parts of four ivory castanets (iii, 1, 2, 3) incised with the usual series of mythical creatures, a bronze uraeus entangled in a mass of hair; a cat and an ape in green glaze (5, 6), and a handful of beads. These comprised spherical beads in amethyst and agate, barrel-shaped in haematite and carnelian, glaze and carnelian beads of the shape of an almond, and one covered with minute crumbs of glaze. The green glaze object (7) like a cucumber in shape is not understood. There is one at Gizeh and another has lately been found in a XIIth dynasty grave at El Kab. (Cf. also Mission du Caire, Planche XXII.) The ivory piece (8) is pierced at the round end for the insertion of a handle; similar objects were found at Kahun (Kahun, VIII, 18), but their use is not known. The rude doll (9), without arms or legs, is made of a flat slip of wood 1/8 inch thick, the painted cross-lines on the body seem to represent some plaid material. The next two dolls, with arms but cut off at the knees, are of limestone and glaze respectively (10, 11). A patch on the latter is covered, not with smooth glaze like the rest of the figure, but with minute grains of blue frit; this must be due to imperfect firing, and shows that the glaze was applied as a wash of ground frit. The same method is seen in the ushabtis of a far later period.

The figure of a dancer (12) is in wood; the girl wears a mask and holds a bronze serpent in each hand (cf. the canvas mask found at Kahun, Pl. VIII, 14). The doll (13) is in limestone, the ape (14) in blue glaze, the dad in ivory, and the coarse cup (16) in blue glaze, while the plain castanet (17), and the handle (?) with two lions engraved on it, are of ivory. Seeds of the dom palm and of balanites were also found here. A very curious fragment is the ivory boy with a calf upon his back (length 2 inches). Found alone this might have passed for Roman work, but the position can leave no doubt that all these objects are from one interment and of one date.

The history of the tomb would appear to be as follows. The XIIth dynasty interment was discovered and robbed long ago, perhaps by the workmen of Rameses II, the valuables being taken away and the other objects thrown out into the shaft and left. When the Ramesseum was ruined and had been given over to some families of the XXIIInd dynasty as a cemetery, the ready-made shaft was again utilised; it was cleared out until the mouths of the chamber were reached, and in them the second burials were placed. At some later period these too were disturbed, but in neither of the two last instances was the bottom of the shaft reached: so that when we, after finding the chambers empty, cleared completely the ground between them, we found this patch covered with the remains of the first interment. There was a third chamber pierced in the long S. side of the well, half way down. This contained a few fragments from a late burial, a leather sandal, a glass ring, a small figure in gilt clay, parts of wreaths and of two coffins, one of clay, another of wood. These were all probably later than the XXIIInd dynasty'.¹⁷

The Archaeological Context

Unfortunately, the report is rather vague but some important information can be gathered from it: the structure is located below one of the Ramesseum magazines, more specifically no. 5. The tomb consists of a rectangular shaft 3.9 metres in depth with two chambers opening at its bottom and one halfway down on the south side of the shaft. From a note appended by Quibell at the beginning of the report about the average shaft dimensions of the Middle Kingdom structures in the Ramesseum area, one can assume that the mouth of the shaft was approximately of 3.6 x 0.9 metres.¹⁸ The long sides are arranged on the south and north. The two lower chambers might have their openings on the eastern and western sides, which are the shorter ones; Quibell explicitly refers to the third chamber as – unconventionally (?) – opening on one of the

¹⁷ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 3–4.

¹⁸ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, 2 (12 x 3 feet).

long (south) sides of the shaft (Fig. 2).¹⁹ Any superstructure of the tomb, wherever its entrance might have been (see below p. 10), would have already been removed in the Ramesside Period, levelled by the ranks of brick magazines built around the stone temple.²⁰ This would account for the absence of any mention of superstructures of the earlier cemetery in Quibell's report, as they had disappeared in ancient times already.

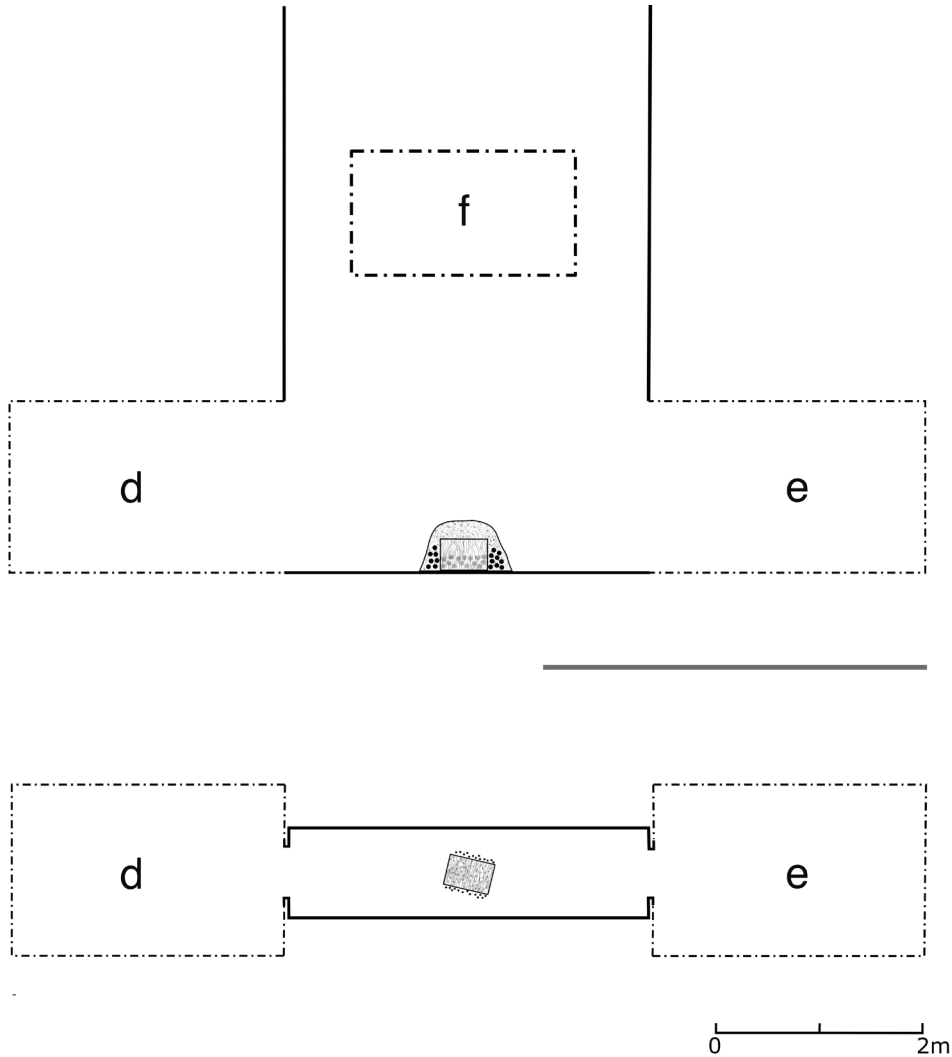


Fig. 2: Hypothetical reconstruction of the section and plan of the architecture of the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb, according to the description provide by Quibell in his published report. NB. the reconstruction is simply evocative and not grounded in any documentary evidence; some of the measurements have been inferred from the description provided in Quibell's report (in continuous line) © drawing by M. Colella

¹⁹ Burial chambers opening halfway down the shaft may be an original structural feature of late Middle Kingdom tomb architecture, see below p. 78–9. However, upper chambers more conventionally open on the short sides of the shaft, unlike in the Ramesseum tomb. Therefore, the third chamber in the Ramesseum tomb seems to be a much later addition.

²⁰ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, pl. 2, no. 3; NELSON, in STRUDWICK, TAYLOR (eds), *The Theban Necropolis*, 88–94.

The tomb was found heavily robbed – certainly already in ancient times but most probably also in the modern era. According to Quibell – building on a suggestion of Waldemar Schmidt – the presence of Third Intermediate Period shabtis in the shaft debris seems to suggest that modern ravaging happened before the early nineteenth century, when shabtis statuettes became part of the antiquity market trade.²¹ The lower burial chambers, according to the report, were found ‘cleared out’ and completely empty. The bottom of the middle of the shaft seems to have been the only area left undisturbed on the lower ground and it could have preserved part of the original contents of one of the first (?) phases of the structure’s use. The artefacts were all grouped in a very small space and, according to Quibell, were outside their original context, because the middle of the shaft is a non-normative area for their deposition. All the objects found at the bottom of the shaft are consistent with a narrow chronological time frame (late Middle Kingdom) and show no sign of there being intrusion of any later material. There is no mention in the report of human remains being found in the lower levels, either because the funerary rooms were already deeply ransacked and yielded no diagnostic bones, or because the excavators paid no attention to human remains found out of context or ones that were too disarticulated for reasonable analysis. The burial equipment of the third chamber located half-way down the shaft seems to have suffered a similar degree of disturbance; it contained only the remains of material dated to a vague ‘late period’, and should have included at least two burials, since there were two coffin fragments (one in wood and another in clay).

The only report of the discoveries provided is that of Quibell in the *Ramesseum* volume; and, apart from a few scattered notes made by Percy Newberry²² found by Downing and Parkinson in the Griffith Institute archives, no other documentation has come to light to shed more light on the discovery and the context of this tomb.

The Circulation of the Artefacts

Soon after the discovery, the group of objects²³ was dispersed across a number of private individuals who had funded Petrie’s excavation at that time, although a large part of the assemblage was granted to the northern textile manufacturer Jesse Haworth (19 items, see *B.*, *D.*, *F.–J.*, *M.–U.*, *X.–Y.*, *AA.*). In 1896, Haworth presented all the antiquities in his possession, including the *Ramesseum* group, to the Manchester Museum, where the bulk of this group is now kept.²⁴ Beside the documented group of objects, the Manchester Museum also preserves ten (**E.*, **K.–*L.*, **V.*, ***II–**NN*) additional artefacts, possibly from the same tomb (see below, *The Assemblage of Artefacts*). Apparently a single object (*W.*) entered the collections of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in 1901–02, and another one (*Z.*) was donated to Frederick Green,²⁵ who gave it to the Fitzwilliam Museum when he was appointed as Keeper of Antiquities there (1908–49). All of the papyri (*B.*) were brought to London and kept in the Edwards Library at University College in order to be studied by Francis Llewellyn Griffith.²⁶ However, in the early 1900s, Petrie entrusted their publication to Alan Gardiner, who agreed to cover the considerable cost of the papyri’s restoration. In return, Gardiner could dispose of them as he wished. For the restoration process, Gardiner enlisted Hugo Ibscher²⁷

²¹ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 2–3.

²² He visited the excavations while the tomb was being excavated, see below p. 8.

²³ See below *The Assemblage of Artefacts*.

²⁴ BIERBRIER, *Who Was Who*, 246; PARKINSON, *Reading Ancient Egyptian Poetry*, 234.

²⁵ BIERBRIER, *op. cit.*, 224.

²⁶ GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 2.

²⁷ BIERBRIER, *Who Was Who*, 273.

who was the Berlin Museum's restorer of papyri at that time.²⁸ Although Gardiner intended to present the entire series of papyri to the British Museum as a joint gift of Petrie's British School of Archaeology in Egypt and himself, a few papyri were sold to the Berlin Museum to repay the expensive restoration costs, with the rest entering the British Museum.²⁹ Only the present location of the papyri box (A.) is unknown at the moment (see below *Description of the single artefacts: A. Wooden box*).

The Location of the Tomb and its Architecture

The precise location and architecture of the tomb is a matter of debate. In the published report, Quibell stated that it was 'skew to the wall' of storeroom no. 5 in the northwest area of the Ramesseum; yet his description does not match any of the structures reproduced in the plan (Fig. 3).

[QUIBELL'S PUBLISHED REPORT OF THE MK RAMESSEUM PAPYRI TOMB – HIGHLIGHTED EXCERPTS]

*'The most important tomb of the XIIth dynasty period consisted of a long, oblong shaft, skew to the wall of one of the **chambers (No. 5 [i.e. Ramesseum gallery no. 5], PL. I) and running under it [...]. At the bottom of the shaft, 13 feet down, two small chambers opened [...]. There was a third chamber pierced in the long S. side of the well, half way down**'.*³⁰

As highlighted in bold in the architectural description provided in the published report of Quibell, the tomb entrance should have been located below gallery number 5 of the Ramesseum with a rectangular shaft 3.9 m (=13 feet) deep and two chambers opening at its bottom – very possibly on the eastern and western sides, and a third chamber opening on the long, southern side halfway down the shaft (see the proposed reconstruction in Fig. 2). The only lower ground structure drawn with dotted-lines below magazine no. 5 in the Ramesseum plan provided by Quibell has a square shape and does not show any side chambers. In addition, a recent investigation in the area of the fifth storeroom of the Ramesseum aiming to relocate this structure was unsuccessful³¹ indicating that the information Quibell provided is either inaccurate or somehow confused.

In 2016 Downing and Parkinson brought attention to some notes made by

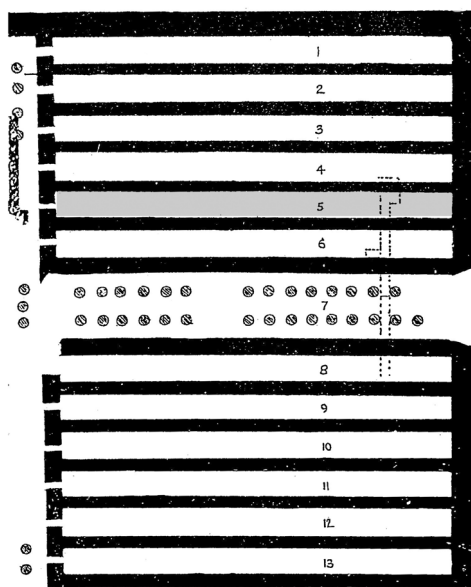


Fig. 3: Magnification of the area around the magazine no. 5 of the Ramesseum as illustrated in QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, pl. 1

²⁸ LEACH, *JEA* 92, 225–40.

²⁹ PARKINSON, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, online, sec. 'The modern history of the papyri'.

³⁰ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 3–4. Bold is mine.

³¹ NELSON, *Memnonia* 17, 115–29.

Percy Newberry held in the Griffith Institute in which he remarked that the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb was actually located inside the tomb of the ‘priest’ (*ḥm-ntr*) Sehetepibre,³² and more precisely in one of the shafts cut into the passage of this tomb.

[NEWBERRY’S ANNOTATION – HIGHLIGHTED EXCERPTS]

*‘Tomb of Sehetepibre^c [...]. It is not generally known that it was in this tomb that was found the box containing the Ramesseum Dramatic Papyrus, the Ramesseum copy of Sinuhe etcetera. Quibell (op. cit. p.4) refers to it as “another tomb”, but I was present at Thebes when the discovery was made & clearly recollect that the shaft in which the box was found was **cut in the floor of the inscribed corridor of Sehetepibre^c**, a plan of the tomb is given by Quibell (Pl. 1) in dotted outline between chambers Nos 5 & 7.*

*There was only one tomb here but there were two or more mummy-pits in it’.*³³

Thus, Newberry explicitly mentions that Quibell had failed to correctly place the structure in his publication and that he assigned the group of objects, including the papyri, to ‘another tomb’, while they should have been associated with the tomb of Sehetepibre. In addition, Newberry mentioned that for the plan of Sehetepibre’s tomb, Quibell had drawn ‘only one tomb here [*i.e.* Sehetepibre’s] but there were two or more mummy-pits in it’, missing out the other shafts cut inside this tomb. Newberry’s statement has credibility since he was present at the time of the discovery. As explicitly reported by Quibell,³⁴ a considerable area was supervised by Petrie and not by himself,³⁵ therefore the final report by Quibell may have been adversely affected by gathering and incorporating someone else’s excavation notes.

Although Downing and Parkinson suggested that the Ramesseum tomb could have actually been located inside the tomb of Sehetepibre, they concluded that *‘the two authoritative but different accounts [Quibell’s and Newberry’s] of the location of the tomb-shaft with the papyri are incompatible. One states that the shaft with the box of papyri was under magazine 5, the other that it was a shaft cut into the corridor of the tomb of Sehetepibre; the date of the second location may be incompatible with that of the find of papyri [...]. The ground of the Ramesseum may one day reveal how these two divergent accounts can be resolved’.*³⁶ The main reasons for viewing the two accounts as incompatible are given as:

a) the location of the MK Ramesseum Papyri tomb as proposed by Newberry ‘in the floor of the inscribed corridor’ of Sehetepibre’s tomb does not connect it with gallery no. 5 by any means;

b) the dating of the tomb of Sehetepibre seems incompatible with the late Middle Kingdom assemblage.

However, the two accounts [Quibell’s published report and the notes of Newberry] may rather overlap and solve the apparent discrepancies in the identification of the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb in Quibell’s plan, if we admit that both records were not very precise (but that they complement each other).

The subterranean structure shown in dotted line lying between the seventh (entrance) and the fifth storeroom (ending with a square chamber) of the Ramesseum matches rather accu-

³² PM I², 679.

³³ DOWNING, PARKINSON, *BMSAES* 23, 39 (draft version no. 2, believed to be the earliest; the last line is taken from other versions of the same note). Bold is mine.

³⁴ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 2.

³⁵ See above nn. 8–9.

³⁶ DOWNING, PARKINSON, *BMSAES* 23, 41.

rately with Quibell's description of Sehetepibre's tomb,³⁷ although the scale (1:400), as already noted by Downing and Parkinson, is inaccurate (Fig. 4):

[QUIBELL'S PUBLISHED REPORT OF SEHETEPIBRE TOMB – HIGHLIGHTED EXCERPTS]

*'in the long colonnade to the N.W. (Pl. I, 7) [...] a brick passage running nearly at right angles to the colonnade [...]. The passage ended to the west in a façade of rock in which opened a **tunnel** 50 feet long. The brick walls of the passage had been plastered, whitewashed, and painted with a series of scenes executed in a rough and bold style [...]. Twenty feet further on was a **small niche** 3 feet above the ground; it was empty. Here too the passage narrowed slightly as if for a door. Beyond was the **chamber**, and in it, on the right, an **oblong mummy-pit**; six feet lower this opened into **two chambers**, both entirely spoiled [...]. It had been re-used, like everything else, in the XXIInd dynasty'.³⁸*

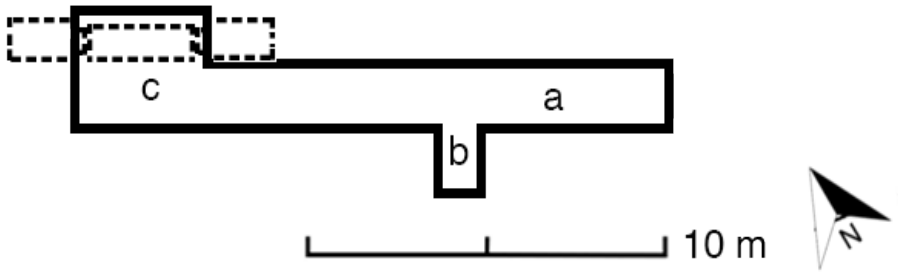


Fig. 4: Plan of Sehetepibre's tomb © drawing of the author from QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, pl. 1

The tomb of Sehetepibre consisted of a long passage (15 metres long?) running below the colonnade (Ramesseum room no. 7) towards the west (a), a small niche (b) opening on the left side of the passage, and a chamber (c) at the end of the passage, with a rectangular shaft (not drawn in the plan) 1.8 m (=6 feet) deep opening on the northern side leading to two chambers (d–e) both entirely spoiled (not drawn in the plan).

The long decorated passage (a) described by Quibell as constructed in both brick and excavated in the rock ('tunnel') could describe a passageway leading to a cult chapel characteristic of Middle Kingdom tomb architecture (cf. the tomb of Senet, wife or mother of the vizier Intefiqer – TT 60).³⁹ The nature of the passage with the first section made of brick and the second one cut into the rock may be the result of the morphology of the floodplain; unlike tombs excavated into the mountainside, an initial brick-lined section of the corridor was required to extend through the unstable sandy matrix before reaching bedrock. Moreover, the excavator's impression of a 'tunnel' might be due to the ceiling progressively descending in height from the entrance towards the rear, as in other Middle Kingdom tombs at Thebes.

Chamber (c), which could be considered the chapel at the end of the passageway, gave access to the burial apartments via a vertical shaft connected to two funerary rooms. Quibell did not provide a plan for the shaft or for the two lower rooms in the plan of chamber (c) – as remarked

³⁷ As suggested in Newberry's notes: 'Sehetepibre. A plan of the tomb is given by Quibell (Pl. 1) in dotted outline between Chambers 5 and 7 [6 crossed out]', DOWNING, PARKINSON, *BMSAES* 23, 39 (draft version no. 5).

³⁸ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 4. Bold is mine.

³⁹ PM I², 1,121–3; KAMPP, *Die thebanische Nekropole*, vol. I, 275–6.

by Newberry: ‘There was only one tomb here but there were two or more mummy-pits in it’.⁴⁰

The description of the funerary rooms (*d–e*) inside chamber (*c*) matches the structure attributed to the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb: they both lay directly below the fifth storeroom; the shaft shape is in both cases rectangular, ‘a long, oblong shaft’ [MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb] and ‘an oblong mummy-pit’ [Sehetepibre’s tomb]; both shafts lead to two lower chambers which were ‘cleared out and found to be empty’ [MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb] and ‘both entirely spoiled’ [Sehetepibre’s tomb].⁴¹ Similarly, both structures were re-used in the Twenty-second Dynasty: ‘these were of XXIIInd dynasty style’ [MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb] and ‘it had been reused [...] in the XXIIInd dynasty’ [Sehetepibre’s tomb].⁴² The only significant discrepancy⁴³ is the depth of the two shafts: for the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb it is stated to be 3.96 m (=13 feet), while the shaft leading from chamber (*c*) of Sehetepibre is only 1.82 m (=6 feet) deep. However, it should be noted that the shaft in room (*c*) is already located below the surface ground level since room (*c*) is located at the end of an underground ‘tunnel’, but unfortunately Quibell does not specify how deep the tunnel went. Since the height of the niche (*b*) is 0.91 m (=3 feet), one may assume that the shaft in room (*c*) was at least more than 2.73 m (= 1.82 + 0.91 m) deep below the surface ground level. In addition, passageway (*a*) will have been partly covered by the Ramesseum debris to create the temple foundation⁴⁴ adding some further depth to the subterranean apartments. Therefore, the measurements given by Quibell for the shaft of the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb may have been the total depth of the two structures from the surface ground level (Fig. 5).

In conclusion, it is highly probable that Quibell had misunderstood some of his own (or Petrie’s) excavation notes, leading to the identification of two separate structures, when in fact it was only one. Newberry, who was particularly interested in the exceptional discovery of the papyri, remembered more precisely the location of the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb and correctly placed it inside the tomb of Sehetepibre. However, he could have mistaken as the find-spot ‘the floor of the inscribed corridor’ for the location of the shaft, given the short visit he paid to the excavations, which were probably still ongoing at that time. More plausibly, the location could have been at the end of the passage, in chamber (*c*). Such a reconstruction explains why the excavations lead by Nelson around storeroom no. 5 of the Ramesseum failed to locate the entrance of the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb: the shaft mouth was simply not cut from the ground level but was simply located below gallery no. 5 with no access possible from the surface. Any access to the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb should be found in Ramesseum room no. 7 between the colonnades and inside the tomb of Sehetepibre.

The Dating of the Tomb (Sehetepibre’s)

The wall decorations of Sehetepibre’s tomb have never been stylistically dated with precision and those published are more likely to represent a hand copy or sketch rather than a facsimile, as the style reproduced by Quibell is not always convincing; it was assumed by Quibell to belong to the Twelfth Dynasty; other studies unquestioningly continued the transmission of such

⁴⁰ DOWNING, PARKINSON, *BMSAES* 23, 39.

⁴¹ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 3–4. No mention of a third chamber cut halfway down the shaft is made for the shaft inside chamber (*c*) of Sehetepibre, but mention of a third chamber for the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb comes only at the end of the discussion, as if considered of little relevance.

⁴² QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, 3–4.

⁴³ The silence about a possible third chamber halfway down the shaft of Sehetepibre is possibly due to it being considered a later addition, and therefore excluded from the description (in several other instances, later chamber additions were not mentioned in the *BSAE* reports).

⁴⁴ NELSON, KALOS, *Memnonia* 11, 132.

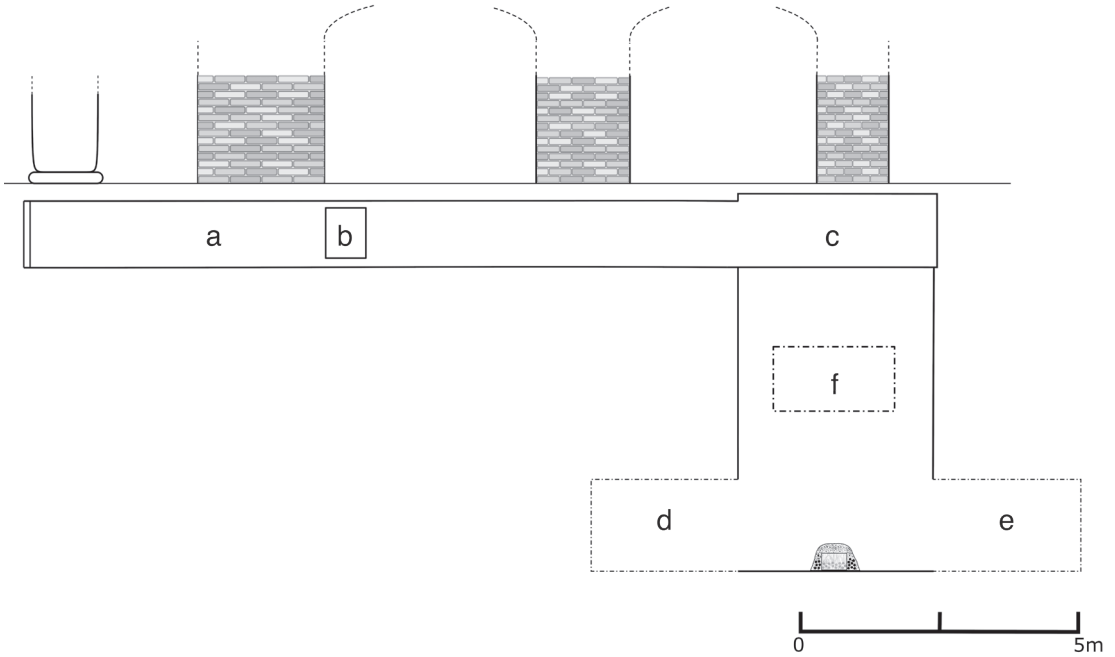


Fig. 5: Hypothetical reconstruction of the architecture of the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb combined with the tomb of Seheteipibre. Section. NB. the dimension and shape of the structure is simply evocative and not grounded in any documentary evidence; some of the measurements have been inferred from the description provided in Quibell's report (in continuous line) © drawing by M. Colella

a dating.⁴⁵ Recently, Downing and Parkinson have drawn a parallel for them with analogous representations in the tomb of the Senet (TT 60),⁴⁶ wife or mother of the vizier Intefiqer, known from various sources to be in office during the reigns of kings Amenemhat I and Senwosret I.⁴⁷ The infrequent representation of the *mww*-dancers⁴⁸ wearing their high and open-work head-dresses is found in both Senet and Seheteipibre's tomb scenes (Fig. 6).⁴⁹ Also the architecture of the two tombs share a number of similarities: a long corridor [12 m for Senet; 15 m – ? – for Seheteipibre] leading to a chamber at its end through a slightly narrower passage; an upper chamber leading to a shaft and lower funerary chamber(s) [a single chamber for Senet; at least two chambers for Seheteipibre]. The most remarkable discrepancy between the two structures is that the shaft of Senet is at the centre of the upper chamber and is perfectly aligned with the axis of the tomb's plan, while for Seheteipibre the funerary shaft seems to be misaligned, located on the northern side ('on the right'). However, other early Middle Kingdom tombs with off-axis shafts inside the chapel room are well attested at Thebes, see for instance tomb C37 (chamber

⁴⁵ PM I², 2, 679 ('Middle Kingdom').

⁴⁶ DOWNING, PARKINSON, *BMSAES* 23, 41. Cf. DAVIES, *The Tomb of Antefoker*, pls. 17–18, 21–2.

⁴⁷ GRAJETZKI, *Court Officials*, 27–30; ALLEN, in STRUDWICK, TAYLOR (eds), *The Theban Necropolis*, 23–4.

⁴⁸ SETTGAST, *Untersuchungen zu altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen*, 33.

⁴⁹ BRUNNER-TRAUT, *Der Tanz*, 43; REEDER, *KMT* 6, 68–78; WILLEMS, *The Coffin of Heqata*, 235; WEST, *The tekenu*.

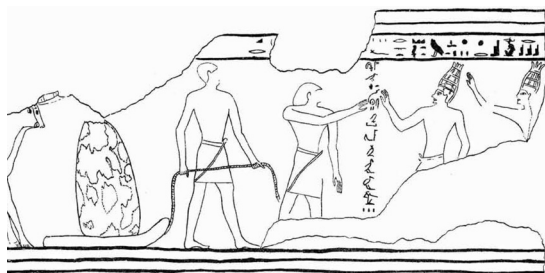


Fig. 6: Scene of *mww*-dancers from the tomb of Sehetepibre as illustrated in QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, pl. 9

Period);⁵¹ the tomb of Tetiky (Seventeenth Dynasty–early Eighteenth Dynasty).⁵² Tooley has observed that the pilgrimage scene shows a boat in full sail, with curled stern, belonging to the type V with double rudders, *wedjat*–eyes on the bows and a canopy amidships, which could point to a late Twelfth Dynasty iconography.⁵³ Also the presence of two facing chambers at the bottom of the shaft is a feature well attested in late Middle Kingdom funerary architecture, especially in those burials containing a similar array of burial equipment types to that in the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb.⁵⁴

In conclusion, the scant evidence from the architecture and decoration of the tomb of Sehetepibre allows for only a very broad Middle Kingdom, including also the late Middle Kingdom (very compatible with the dating of the assemblage of objects found inside the Ramesseum Papyri Tomb).

However, even a dating of Sehetepibre's tomb to the early/mid-Middle Kingdom should not be envisaged as an obstacle for associating this structure with the Ramesseum assemblage, which uniformly dates to the late Middle Kingdom (see below, *The Dating of the Assemblage*).⁵⁵ Reuse of early Middle Kingdom tombs during the late Middle Kingdom is attested elsewhere, also in connection with a similar range of artefacts. Tomb 19 at Deir el-Bersha, belonging to the governor Nehri I of the early Middle Kingdom, contained secondary burials whose dating extends into the late Middle Kingdom.⁵⁶ Diagnostic objects from Pit 15 at Lisht South and Pit 453 at Lisht North belong to two different phases in the material culture, the early and late Middle Kingdoms, suggesting that both structures may have been cut and used during the early Middle Kingdom and then reused in the late Middle Kingdom.⁵⁷ All these tombs contained faience figurines and/or ivory tusks like those from the Ramesseum Tomb. The reshaping of an original early Middle Kingdom plan in the late Middle Kingdom is attested elsewhere. For instance, the

C with shaft D at the Asasif), which attests to some reuse (in the Second Intermediate Period).⁵⁰ Nonetheless, in the absence of a proper plan and archaeological evidence, later modification may have occurred also in Sehetepibre's tomb which altered the original plan.

However, the *mww*-dancers represented on the walls of Sehetepibre's tomb have some close parallels also in the tombs of the late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period–early Eighteenth Dynasty, as for instance, the tomb of Sobeknakht at Elkab (late Middle Kingdom–early Second Intermediate

⁵⁰ CARTER, CARNARVON, *Five Years' Explorations at Thebes*, pl. 55; MINIACI, *Rishi Coffins*, fig. 81; for the dating of the two phases, see ROSATI, with MINIACI, in MINIACI, GRAJETZKI (eds), *The World of Middle Kingdom*, vol. II, 233, fig. 15.

⁵¹ TYLOR, *The Tomb of Sebeknekht*, 2–4.

⁵² CARTER, CARNARVON, *Five Years' Explorations at Thebes*, pl. 8.1.

⁵³ TOOLEY, *Middle Kingdom Burial Customs*, 144; QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, pl. 6; VANDIER, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne*, vol. V, 919, fig. 344.2.

⁵⁴ MINIACI, QUIRKE, *BIFAO* 109, 363–7. See also below p. 82–3.

⁵⁵ Cf. DOWNING, PARKINSON, *BMSAES* 23, 41, who commented – in relation to the ownership of the papyri – 'If Sehetepibre was buried in Dynasty 12, then he cannot be the owner of the Ramesseum box of papyri, which contains papyri from Dynasty 13'.

⁵⁶ LONG, DE MEYER, WILLEMS, *SAK* 44, 215–36.

⁵⁷ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, Pit 453: short note in MACE, *BMMA* 9, 218–20.

architecture of Pit 333 at Lisht North belongs to the early Middle Kingdom but it shows clear signs of extension during the late Middle Kingdom, adapting the original shape to the needs of that time. The square shaft of Pit 333 may be suggestive of an early to mid-Twelfth Dynasty date;⁵⁸ a narrow recess sunk into the floor of one its chambers to accommodate a rectangular coffin is indicative of a single occupant.⁵⁹ However, the presence of another room at a different depth, and of a different size and proportions can be considered a later extension during a phase of reuse of the structure, which may have occurred during the late Middle Kingdom, as attested by a scarab belonging to the so-called ‘Sobkhotep group’.⁶⁰

The Find-spot of the Group of Objects

The archaeological context of the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb was found highly disturbed. The structure was ravaged and the two lower funerary chambers were completely empty; the group of objects was recorded outside of any of the chambers, in a heap left in the middle of the shaft, at its bottom, in a space of c. 0.18 m² (=2 feet square, approximately corresponding to a surface of 43 x 43 cm); this is an extremely narrow find spot taking into consideration that it included also a large wooden box (A.) of ca. 45 x 30 x 30 cm (Fig. 7).⁶¹ Unfortunately, Quibell does not offer any more specific information about it, nor do we know how deep in the shaft the deposit lay or if it was above the bedrock or in the middle of the debris. Also, its position is vaguely indicated as being ‘in the middle of the shaft’ but its location could have been more towards one of the rooms. The relationship between the objects is not indicated although, according to the statement of Quibell, a part of them could have been lying below the wooden box (‘in a space about 2 feet square, was found a group of objects [...] first was a wooden box’).⁶² Given also the fact that most of the 2 feet square space mentioned by Quibell were occupied by the box itself, some of the objects should have been necessarily distributed at different heights (not necessarily corresponding to a separate archaeological layer). Due to the expected vertical

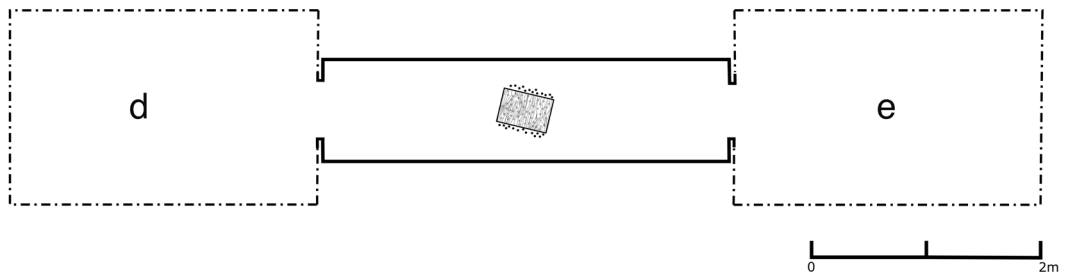


Fig. 7: Hypothetical reconstruction of the plan of the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb, highlighting the possible find-spot of the group of objects, including the papyrus box, as suggested by the report of Quibell
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⁵⁸ Personal communication from Dorothea Arnold.

⁵⁹ Cf. POLZ, *Für die Ewigkeit geschaffen*, 36–7.

⁶⁰ MMA 15.3.62 features a single line loop surrounding fecundity figures, attested in the late Middle Kingdom until the mid-Thirteenth Dynasty, see BEN-TOR, *Scarabs*, type IB4, 41, pl. 25.18.

⁶¹ David Lorand raised some doubts about the records of Quibell, which could have vaguely implied that all the objects were contained inside the wooden box, LORAND, *Le papyrus dramatique*, 11, n. 8. However, his doubt seems to be without grounds. See also PARKINSON, *Reading ancient Egyptian Poetry*, 142; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 185, n. 24.

⁶² QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 3.

distribution, it is possible that there were some objects occupying lower or higher layers that were not directly connected to each other. However, Quibell's description of the objects 'scattered round' the box, all of which lay in a 'heap' at the bottom of the shaft, suggested that the artefacts were all apparently connected to each other. Certainly, their disposition was not so accurate and methodical, probably giving an impression of disorganization, which led him to suppose that this was not their original position.

Quibell suggested that the objects had been dragged out of the two chambers during a first phase of robbery/misappropriation that may have happened during the Ramesside Period: 'the valuables being taken away and the other objects thrown out into the shaft and left'.⁶³ It is plausible that the heap of objects went overlooked by other robberies and intrusions that happened in the tomb (some of a later date), which were especially focussed on the funerary chambers, emptying them and leaving untouched – for the sake of time/energy – the bottom middle of the shaft.

Although Quibell's reconstruction remains plausible, the extreme fragility of the pieces and the state of preservation of some of the artefacts (see below, *The 'Contextuality' of the Assemblage*) suggest other possibilities. The group of objects could have also belonged to one or more ransacked burials deposited right at the bottom of the shaft. The late Middle Kingdom burial of Renseneb at Thebes (tomb no. 25, Asasif) represents an enlightening parallel. The burial was found intact at the bottom of the shaft ('in the shaft itself, at the bottom, was a single coffin') of a tomb heavily ravaged, where most of the original material had been moved around.⁶⁴ In fact, below the coffin were found an ivory gaming box and a wooden toilet box shattered in a hundred pieces, some of which were also found scattered in other rooms.⁶⁵ Apparently, the coffin of Renseneb was lowered into a structure already full of coffins and already ransacked and left at the bottom of the shaft. Also at Lisht North, in Pit 757, three faience hippopotami found at the bottom of the shaft, although in a very disturbed context,⁶⁶ may testify to the presence of burials located outside the normative funerary areas, especially during the late Middle Kingdom, when the number of individuals per structure notably increased.⁶⁷

An even more unlikely scenario would be for the group to have been intentionally deposited outside the door of one of the rooms, although this unusual feature is not entirely without parallel. For instance, a similar range of objects – including figurines in faience and ivory – were found deposited right in front of the closing brick-wall of the burial chamber of Hepy at Lisht South,⁶⁸ lying at the bottom of the external side of the closing wall.⁶⁹ However, the Ramesseum objects were not lying in proximity of any of the entrances of the two funerary rooms, therefore, unless one supposes that they were moved to the centre of the shaft during the various periods of re-use, the position indicated by Quibell (in 'the middle of the shaft') makes more unlikely a direct connection with any ritual activity performed in the shaft during/after the closure of the funerary chambers, as in the case of Hepy's tomb.

Also, the movement rather than deposition of the objects at the bottom of the shaft cannot be excluded, probably intended as a more or less careful removal of objects to give space for new burials. In this case, the objects could come from different burials contained in the two rooms.

⁶³ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 3.

⁶⁴ CARTER, CARNARVON, *Five Years' Explorations at Thebes*, 54.

⁶⁵ CARTER, CARNARVON, *op. cit.*, 54–60; MINIACI, *Rishi Coffins*, 90; QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 107–9.

⁶⁶ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, Pit 757.

⁶⁷ GRAJETZKI, in GRALLERT, GRAJETZKI (eds), *Life and Afterlife*, 24–30; MINIACI, in NYORD (ed.), *Concepts in Middle Kingdom*, 117–49.

⁶⁸ ARNOLD, *Middle Kingdom Tomb Architecture*, 26, pls. 26–9; archaeological context: LANSING, HAYES, *BMMA* 29, 27–41; HAYES, *The Scepter of Egypt*, vol. I, 232, fig. 148; notes in QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 135–6. See also ARNOLD, *The Burial of the Young Woman Hepy*, forthcoming.

⁶⁹ LANSING, HAYES, *op. cit.*, 29–30. See comments in ARNOLD, *Middle Kingdom Tomb Architecture*, 26.

The Assemblage of Artefacts

The final number of objects is unfortunately unknown, since the published reports of the early twentieth century (especially of the BSAE excavations)⁷⁰ did not always list every object discovered in a single context but would highlight only the most remarkable ones.⁷¹ The drawing provided on pl. 3 of Quibell's publication includes only some of the objects found in the tomb, as explicitly admitted by the excavator himself – 'group of objects, some of which are shown in Pl. III' (Fig. 8) – implying that there could have been others not illustrated.⁷² The objects certainly belonging to the group amount to twenty-five (counting papyri and beads by type and not by number); other four objects may be attributed to the group with a good degree of probability (*E., *K., *L., *V.), while six others can be only connected with the group on a very questionable base (**II.–**NN.). Therefore, the objects marked with '*' before their identifying letter most likely belong to the Ramesseum group, given the information provided in the accession register of the Manchester Museum and based on the fact that they pair with other objects of the group. Other objects that may also belong to the Ramesseum assemblage according to the museum register but lack any other supporting evidence, have been appended separately to the primary list and marked with double '**'.

The group has been discussed to a certain extent by Barry Kemp,⁷³ Janine Bourriau,⁷⁴ Richard Parkinson,⁷⁵ Andrea Gnirs,⁷⁶ David Lorand,⁷⁷ Díaz Hernández,⁷⁸ and Stephen Quirke;⁷⁹ their aim was mainly to provide reference parallels for the dating of the group and the correct chronological and cultural setting, but they often lack detailed descriptions and/or complete illustrations.⁸⁰ Occasionally, certain artefacts have been more thoroughly analysed singularly⁸¹ or by type,⁸² but still suffered contextual isolation from the other pieces. The aim of this section is to offer an overview of the assemblage, with detailed descriptions of individual objects, provide a wide range of close parallels from excavated and documented contexts, together with information gathered from analogous archaeological contexts, and supply a full photographic record and drawings, which until now has only been available for individual objects and from the drawings of some in plate 3 of Quibell's publication (Fig. 8).⁸³

⁷⁰ Some exceptions can be found, for instance, Engelbach for Harageh or Brunton for Qau and Badari: ENGELBACH, *Harageh*, Tomb Register; BRUNTON, *Qau and Badari*, vol. I–III, Tomb Register, with several omissions or forgetfulness though.

⁷¹ Cf. TOOLEY, in MINIACI, GRAJETZKI (eds), *The World of Middle Kingdom*, vol. I, for tomb E1 at Abydos.

⁷² QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 3; see also TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 438, n. 48. There are some objects excluded in the drawing at pl. 3: the ivory herder (*W.*), illustrated in a photograph in pl. 2, the tail of the cobra miniature and the 'mass of hair' in which it was entangled (*Z.*), see Fig. 32 for the tail.

⁷³ KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 166–7.

⁷⁴ BOURRIAU, in QUIRKE (ed.), *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 20.

⁷⁵ PARKINSON, *Reading Ancient Egyptian Poetry*, 142–4; PARKINSON, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, online, sec. 'The archaeological context'.

⁷⁶ GNIRS, in KESSLER *et al.* (eds), *Texte – Theben – Tonfragmente*, 128–56.

⁷⁷ LORAND, *Le papyrus dramatique*, 9–44.

⁷⁸ DÍAZ HERNÁNDEZ, *Der Ramesseumpapyrus E*, 5–15, pls. 1–19.

⁷⁹ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 97–104.

⁸⁰ See also PARKINSON, *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*, xii–xiii; LORAND, *Le papyrus dramatique*, 13–22; GNIRS, in KESSLER *et al.* (eds), *Texte – Theben – Tonfragmente*, 128–9; FORESHAW, *The Role of the Lector*, 141, Appendix 1; DÍAZ HERNÁNDEZ, *Der Ramesseumpapyrus E*, 5–15.

⁸¹ E.g. QUIRKE, in OPPENHEIM *et al.*, *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, 206–7.

⁸² TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 421–56.

⁸³ All the measurements, except for the faience figurines, have been calculated from the metric scale

THEBES. XIIITH DYNASTY TOMB. RAMESSEUM.

III.

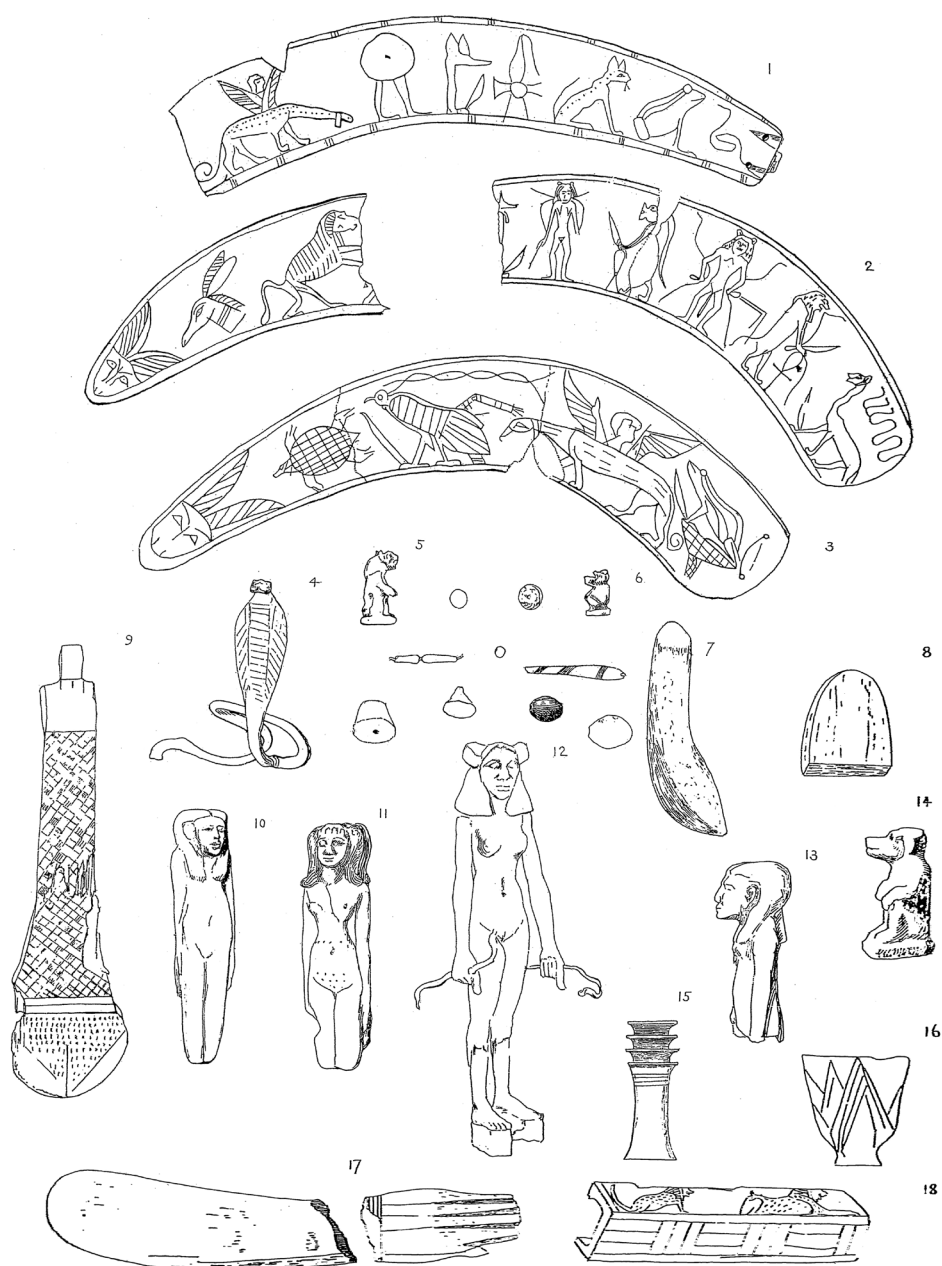


Fig. 8: The group of objects from the Ramesseum as illustrated in QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, pl. 3

*Papyri box*⁸⁴ (current state of conservation unknown)

A. 1 box of rough wood, white-plastered, with a black painted jackal [45.75 x 30.5 x 30.5cm];

containing:

B. bundle of 118 reed pens (ca. l. 39–41 cm; diam. 0.25 cm each; ManchM 1882) (Fig. 9);⁸⁵

C. 24 literary, healing and ritual papyri, labelled from A to E and from I to XX (Pls. I–XIII);⁸⁶

- **Papyrus A:** Tales of Khuninpu (–r)/Sinuhe (–v) [c. h. 21 x l. 490 cm; ÄMP 10499];⁸⁷
- **Papyrus B:** Ceremonial play celebrating the coronation of Senwosret I, also known as ‘Dramatic Papyrus’ (–r)/plan of a building (–v) [c. h. 27 x l. 215 cm; BM EA 10610];⁸⁸
- **Papyrus C** (+pXVIII, see below): military accounts relating to a number of Nubian fortresses, Semna, Mirgissa, Serra East, probably Elephantine, and others,⁸⁹ also known as the Semna dispatches (–r), dated to year 3 of *Amenemhat III⁹⁰/execration ritual (–v) [c. h. 16 x l. 100 cm; BM EA 10752];⁹¹
- **Papyrus D:** Word-list, also known as the ‘Onomasticon’, containing the name of Amenemhat III (–r)/blank (–v) [c. h. 14 x l. 356; ÄMP 10495];⁹²
- **Papyrus E:** Funerary liturgy (play as in B?) (–r)/administrative document recording the distribution of grain and mentioning Senwosret I (–v) [c. h. 11 x l. 250 cm; BM EA 10753];⁹³
- **Papyrus I:** Lament of the accountant Sasobek (–r)/administrative documents (–v; only fragments) [c. h. •15 x l. •443 cm; BM EA 10754];⁹⁴
- **Papyrus II:** Teachings and literary maxims (–r/–v) [c. h. •13 x l. •95 cm; BM EA 10755];⁹⁵

in the photographs. The measurements for C. have been taken from PARKINSON, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, online, sec. ‘The catalogue’ and from the British Museum database. The measurements for B. and *II.–*NN. have been taken from the online database of the Manchester Museum.

⁸⁴ EYRE, *The Use of Documents*, 299–300 and DOWNING, PARKINSON, *BMSAES* 23, 36–7.

⁸⁵ PINARELLO, *An Archaeological Discussion of Writing Practice*, 37, fig. 19, pl. 2.

⁸⁶ All of the papyri are preserved in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin and British Museum in London (see above p. 7). In the following list I give only the main and most recent bibliographic references. A full catalogue of papyri is published online by PARKINSON, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, online, sec. ‘The catalogue’ with bibliography; a synthesis is provided in LORAND, *Le papyrus dramatique*, 25–36, with bibliography. The measurements of the papyri have been taken from the single publication, where present; in the absence of any information, they have been calculated by the author based on the photographic images from the British Museum database and these are marked with ‘•’ in front of the numbers provided.

⁸⁷ VOGELSANG, GARDINER, *Literarische Texte*; PARKINSON, *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*.

⁸⁸ SETHE, *Dramatische Texte*; GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 18, fig. 2; QUACK, *ZÄS* 133, 72–89; LORAND, *Le papyrus dramatique*; GEISEN, *A commemoration ritual for Senwosret I*.

⁸⁹ GRATIEN, in BERGER, CLERC, GRIMAL (eds), *Hommages à Jean Leclant*, vol. II, 190; SEIDLMAYER, in LEDER, STRECK (eds), *Akkulturation und Selbstbehauptung*, 89–113.

⁹⁰ The dating to the third year of reign of Amenemhat III is inferred by scholars on solid bases but the name of the king has never been mentioned in the text; see below, n. 91. Therefore the name of the king is prefixed with the sign ‘*’, see also Tables 2, 4, 7.

⁹¹ SMITH, *JEA* 31, 3–10; GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 8, pls. 29–32; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 26–41, 297–306. LISZKA, KRAEMER, *JEGH* 9, 151–208 propose that pXVIII belongs to pC.

⁹² GARDINER, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*, 1–23, pls. 1–6.

⁹³ GARDINER, *JEA* 41, 9–17, pls. 1–6; HELCK, *SAK* 9, 151–66; DIAZ HERNANDEZ, *Der Ramesseumpapyrus E*.

⁹⁴ GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 8, pls. 1–2; BARNS, *Five Ramesseum Papyri*, 1–4, pls. 1–9; QUIRKE, *Egyptian Literature*, 192–6.

⁹⁵ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 8–9, pls. 3–4; BARNS, *op. cit.*, 11–4, pls. 7–9.

- **Papyrus III:** Prescriptions against ophthalmic diseases, stomach pain, issues relating to urination, gynaecology, and paediatrics (–r)/grain distribution list mentioning six year reign of an unknown king (–v) [c. h. •15 x •344 cm; BM EA 10756];⁹⁶
- **Papyrus IV:** Rituals for pregnancy and birth for the mother and child (–r; 35 paragraphs)/administrative document (–v) [c. h. •21 x l. •118 cm; BM EA 10757];⁹⁷
- **Papyrus V:** Prescriptions for ointments to relax the body (–r; 74 columns)/very short jottings [c. h. •14 x l. •110 cm; BM EA 10758];⁹⁸
- **Papyrus VI:** Hymn to Sobek of Crocodilopolis, containing the name of Amenemhat III (–r; 143 columns)/blank (–v) [c. h. •13 x l. •148 cm; BM EA 10759];⁹⁹
- **Papyrus VII:** Formulae for protection (–r)/accounting text and mathematical formulae (?) (–v) [c. h. 13 x l. 100 cm; BM EA 10760];¹⁰⁰
- **Papyrus VIII:** Formulae for the protection of the head and against the *šmnt* fever, also known as ‘The Banquet of Hedjhotep’ (–r)/blank (–v) [c. h. 12 x l. 200 cm; BM EA 10761];¹⁰¹
- **Papyrus IX:** Formulae for the protection of the house against snakes and spirits (–r)/blank (–v) [c. h. 16 x l. 65 cm; BM EA 10762];¹⁰²
- **Papyrus X:** Formulae for the protection against snakes (–r/–v) [c. h. •13 x •44 + scattered fragments; BM EA 10763];¹⁰³
- **Papyri XI:** Formulae possibly related to love incantation (–r)/blank (–v) [c. h. 9.5 x l. 47 cm; BM EA 10764];¹⁰⁴
- **Papyrus XII:** Medical texts for healing, invocation of a crocodile god by means of different epithets (–r)/a sort of agenda of 77 days (–v) [c. h. 13 x l. 35 cm; BM EA 10765];¹⁰⁵
- **Papyrus XIII:** Number of formulae (–r)/a sort of agenda of 77 days (–v) [c. h. 10 x l. 24 cm; BM EA 10766];¹⁰⁶
- **Papyri XIV:** Formula against spirits and the evil (–r/–v) [c. h. 8 x l. 11.5 cm; BM EA 10767];¹⁰⁷
- **Papyri XV:** Formulae against snakes (?), allusion to mythological episodes (–r/–v) [c. h. 11 x 21.5 cm; BM EA 10768];¹⁰⁸
- **Papyri XVI:** Formulae for the protection, including ones against snakes, sickness, evil spirits and nightmares, hymn to different forms of the sun (–r/–v) [c. h. 11 x l. 600 cm; BM EA 10769];¹⁰⁹

⁹⁶ GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 9, 17, pls. 7–10, 63–4; BARNS, *Five Ramesseum Papyri*, 15–23, pls. 10–5.

⁹⁷ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 9, pls. 10–4; BARNS, *op. cit.*, 24–9, pls. 16–20; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*.

⁹⁸ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 9, pls. 15–7; BARNS, *op. cit.*, 30–4, pls. 21–3.

⁹⁹ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 10, pls. 18–21; GARDINER, *RdE* 11, 43–56, pls. 2–4; ZECCHI, *Sobek of Shedet*, 94–103.

¹⁰⁰ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 10–1, pls. 22–6; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 6–25, 279–96.

¹⁰¹ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 11–2, pls. 33–39; MEYRAT, *Le papyrus Ramesseum VIII*; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 41–74, 307–23.

¹⁰² GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 12–3, pls. 40–2; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 74–80, 324–9.

¹⁰³ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 13, pl. 43; MEYRAT, *op. cit.*, 80–3, 330–1.

¹⁰⁴ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 14, pl. 44; MEYRAT, *op. cit.*, 84–8, 332–3.

¹⁰⁵ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 14, pl. 45; MEYRAT, *op. cit.*, 88–99, 334–5.

¹⁰⁶ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 14, pl. 46; MEYRAT, *op. cit.*, 99–100, 336–7.

¹⁰⁷ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 14–5, pl. 46; MEYRAT, *op. cit.*, 100–3, 338–9.

¹⁰⁸ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 15, pl. 47; MEYRAT, *op. cit.*, 103–7, 340–3.

¹⁰⁹ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 15–6, pls. 48–61; MEYRAT, *op. cit.*, 107–61, 344–75.

- **Papyrus XVII:** Incantations for the epagomenal days at the turn of the year (–r/–v) [c. h. 12 x l. •144 cm; BM EA 10770];¹¹⁰
- **Papyrus XVIII** (+ pC, see above): Nubian fortress dispatches (–r)/invocation against spirits (–v) [BM EA 10771];¹¹¹
- **Papyrus XIX:** Ritual formulae (–r/–v) [c. h. 11 x •45 cm; BM EA 10772];¹¹²
- **Papyrus XX (?):** Grain accounts [ÄMP 10131];

Ivory clappers and birth tusks

- D. 1 clapper in form of left arm [h. 3.7 x l. c. 19.5 cm; ManchM 1796] (Fig. 10a–b);¹¹³
 *E. 1 clapper in form of right arm [h. 3.8 x l. c. 22.3 cm; ManchM 1797] (Fig. 11a–b);¹¹⁴
 F. 1 birth tusk (only one end) [h. 4.8 x l. 13 cm; ManchM 1798] (Fig. 12a–b);¹¹⁵
 G. 1 birth tusk [h. 4.5 x l. 18.8 cm; ManchM 1799] (Fig. 13a–b);¹¹⁶
 H. 1 birth tusk (complete) [h. 5 x l. 27 cm; ManchM 1800] (Fig. 14a–b);¹¹⁷
 I. 1 birth tusk (almost complete) [h. 4.8 x l. 26 cm; ManchM 1801] (Fig. 15a–b);¹¹⁸

Faience miniatures

- J. 1 baboon [h. 5.7 x l. 3 x w. 3 cm; ManchM 1835] (Fig. 16a–b);¹¹⁹
 *K. 1 simian (only lower part) [h. 3.7 x l. 2.5 x w. 3 cm; ManchM 1840] (Fig. 17a–b);¹²⁰
 *L. 1 hedgehog (fragment) [h. 4.2 x l. 3.2 cm; ManchM 1841] (Fig. 18a–b);¹²¹
 M. 1 truncated-leg female figure [h. 11.3 x l. 3.7 x w. 2.9 cm; ManchM 1787] (Fig. 19a–b);¹²²
 N. 1 vegetable melon [l. 9.1 x diam. 2.5 cm; ManchM 1792] (Fig. 20a–b);¹²³
 O. 1 footed lotus-cup [h. 4.5 x diam. 4.3 cm; ManchM 1791] (Fig. 21a–b);¹²⁴
 P. 1 baboon (amulet?) [h. 1.8 x l. 1 x w. 1.1 cm; ManchM 1837] (Fig. 22a–b);¹²⁵
 Q. 1 lion (amulet?) [h. 3.1 x l. 1.3 x w. 1.7 cm; ManchM 1839] (Fig. 23a–b);¹²⁶

Wood miniatures

- R. 1 lion-faced or lion-masked female individual holding two copper alloy snake wands in the hands [h. 20.2 x l. 4.7 cm; ManchM 1790] (Fig. 24);¹²⁷

¹¹⁰ GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 16 (no plate); MEYRAT, *op. cit.*, 162–74, 376–95.

¹¹¹ GARDINER, *op. cit.*, 17, pl. 62. See POSENER, *RdE* 33, 139.

¹¹² MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 175–9, 396–9.

¹¹³ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum* pl. 3.17; MORRIS, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 298–9, fig. 4.

¹¹⁴ Not reported in QUIBELL, *op. cit.*; MORRIS, *op. cit.*, 298–9, fig. 4.

¹¹⁵ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.2a; QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 97, cat no. T1.

¹¹⁶ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.2b; QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 97, cat no. T2.

¹¹⁷ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.3; QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 97, cat no. T3.

¹¹⁸ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.1; QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 97, cat no. T4.

¹¹⁹ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.14; MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, The-bab1.

¹²⁰ Not reported in QUIBELL, *op. cit.*; MINIACI, *op. cit.*, The-sim1.

¹²¹ Not reported in QUIBELL, *op. cit.*; MINIACI, *op. cit.*, The-hed1.

¹²² QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.11; TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 438–41, figs. 14–17; MINIACI, *op. cit.*, The-tlf4.

¹²³ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.7; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 198; MINIACI, *op. cit.*, The-cuc1.

¹²⁴ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.16; MEYRAT, *op. cit.*, 21 and n. 36; MINIACI, *op. cit.*, The-ves3.

¹²⁵ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.6; MINIACI, *op. cit.*, The-bab2.

¹²⁶ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.5; MINIACI, *op. cit.*, The-liol1.

¹²⁷ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.12; BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 110, fig. 1; PINCH, *Magic*, 57, fig. 27.

S. 1 'paddle doll', painted [h. 18.9 x l. 5 cm; ManchM 1832] (Fig. 25a–b);¹²⁸

Limestone miniatures

T. 1 truncated-leg female figure [h. 10.3 x 3.2 x 2.8 cm; ManchM 1789] (Fig. 26a–b);¹²⁹

U. 1 truncated-leg (?) female figure (only upper part) [h. 7.4 x l. 4 x w. 3.2 cm; ManchM 1794] (Fig. 27a–b);¹³⁰

*V. (?) 1 figurine of a truncated-leg female individual (only lower part), limestone [h. 6.5 x l. 4.3 x w. 2.8 cm; ManchM 1788] (Fig. 28a–b);¹³¹

Ivory miniatures

W. 1 figurine of a herder carrying a calf [h. 7.3 x w. 3.3 cm; Philadelphia E 13405] (Fig. 29);¹³²

X. 1 cuboid rod segment [h. 2.8 x l. 12.2 x w. 2.8 cm; ManchM 1795] (Fig. 30a–b);¹³³

Y. 1 figurine of a *djed*-pillar [h. 5.8 x l. 2.2 x w. 0.9 cm; ManchM 1838] (Fig. 31a–b);¹³⁴

Copper alloy miniatures

Z. 1 rearing cobra (probably a wand?), found entangled in a mass of hair [h. 7 x l. 16 cm; FitzM E.63.1896] (Fig. 32);¹³⁵

Writing implements (?)

AA. 1 rounded flat-bottomed slab, ivory [h. 4.4 x l. 3.8 x w. 1.6 cm; ManchM 1834] (Fig. 33a–b);¹³⁶

Beads (current location of conservation unknown) (Fig. 34)¹³⁷

BB. spherical beads, amethyst and agate (Harageh type 79);

CC. barrel beads, haematite and carnelian (Harageh type 73A–F?);

DD. 'almond' beads, faience and carnelian (Harageh type 73O?);

¹²⁸ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, pl. 3.9; TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 446–50, figs. 27–9.

¹²⁹ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.10; TOOLEY, *op. cit.*, 441–3, figs. 17–20.

¹³⁰ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.13; TOOLEY, *op. cit.*, 444–6, figs. 21–4.

¹³¹ Not reported in QUIBELL, *op. cit.*. This piece has been attributed to the assemblage of the Ramesseum based on information recorded in The Manchester Museum's Accessions Register, which indicates the artefact as coming from a 'generic Ramesseum', and based on the stylistic evidence offered by TOOLEY, *op. cit.*, 446–7, figs. 25–6. See also Tooley's caution in assigning this piece to the Ramesseum group, 2017, 451, n. 69. However, the possibility that this object belongs to the Ramesseum group and was simply omitted by Quibell in the drawing and description because it represented only the lower part of a category of object already well represented in his account/drawing, is high. The piece is reported in the list of objects coming from the Ramesseum group in KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 166.

¹³² QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 2.1–2.

¹³³ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.18.

¹³⁴ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.15.

¹³⁵ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.4; BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 113, cat. no. 100; See also QUIRKE, in OPPENHEIM *et al.* (eds), *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, 206–7, cat. no. 141A and RITNER, in SZPAKOWSKA (ed.) *Through a Glass Darkly*, 207–8.

¹³⁶ QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3.8; PINARELLO, *An Archaeological Discussion of Writing Practice*, 37, fig. 20.

¹³⁷ All reproduced in QUIBELL, *op. cit.*, pl. 3 (unnumbered). Parallels with Harageh type series from QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 101.

- EE. ‘crumb’-coated bead, faience (Harageh type 50);
 FF. truncated cone bead from a flail (Harageh type 61);
 GG. bichrome spiral-striped tapering tubular bead, from a collar (Harageh type 65);

Seeds (current location of conservation unknown)

HH. seeds of ‘dom palm and of balanites’.¹³⁸

*Other objects which, according to The Manchester Museum’s Accessions Register, may have been found in the same tomb but without any supporting evidence (marked with **).*¹³⁹

- **II. 1 double kohl-tube, wood (in two fragments) [h. 8.6 x diam. 3.7 cm; ManchM 1883] (Fig. 35a–b);
 **JJ. 1 piece of ivory inlay [h. 5.1 x l. 1.8 cm; ManchM 1884] (Fig. 36a–b);
 **KK. fragment of a reed mat or sandal [h. 3 x l. 8 cm; ManchM 1885] (Fig. 37);
 **LL. 1 offering-tray with a rim around three of the four sides, pottery; representation of offerings modelled on the surface [h. 7.9 x l. 39 x w 26 cm; ManchM 1863] (Fig. 38);
 **MM. 2 pieces of wood of uncertain use, possibly part of a box; each piece is pierced with three holes [h. 1 x l. 8 cm; ManchM 1886a–b] (Fig. 39a–b);
 **NN. 4 pieces of a wooden box [h. 4.7 x 3 cm; ManchM 1887a–d] (Fig. 40a–b).

Description of the single artefacts

A. Wooden box = Unfortunately, Quibell did not provide a drawing of the box and its current location is unknown. In his publication of the papyri, Gardiner reported information he defined as an ‘unsubstantiated rumour’ that the box had been dropped down the shaft during the excavations.¹⁴⁰ Although the box is rather distinctive, featuring a jackal figure, it has not yet been identified in any of the collections related to the distribution of finds from this group: Berlin, Cambridge, Manchester, Pennsylvania and London (the British and Petrie Museums). Despite some rumours that the box had been left in Egypt because of its bad state of preservation, by summer 1896 the container should have been in London together with all the other objects from the tomb.¹⁴¹ In the Manchester Museum there are a few wooden fragments (**MM.– **NN.) – which might be connected with this box, but their provenance from the Ramesseum is uncertain. According to Parkinson, the box may have been transferred into the care of the conservator Hugo Ibscher with the papyrus fragments still in it, awaiting for more accurate restorations, and left there.¹⁴² Therefore, Berlin could be one of the possible locations for the box worthy of further investigation.

Robert Ritner connected the representation of the jackal on the box with the hieroglyph depicting a recumbent jackal over a shrine;¹⁴³ the sign is also used to indicate the title, *hry-sšt*, ‘the master of secrets’, emphasising the role of the possible owner of the box as an official

¹³⁸ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, pl. 3.

¹³⁹ None are reported in QUIBELL, *op. cit.*. Due to the uncertainty about the sources for the Museum’s Accessions Register information, at the moment this group of objects cannot reliably be associated with the Ramesseum tomb and so are not extensively described here. Even if their type and dating does not conflict with a late Middle Kingdom Theban provenance, Petrie and Quibell discovered other late Middle Kingdom tombs in the same area to which they could belong as well.

¹⁴⁰ GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 7.

¹⁴¹ DOWNING, PARKINSON, *BMSAES* 23, 36–7.

¹⁴² LEACH, *JEA* 92, 221, n. 2; PARKINSON, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, online, sec. ‘The archaeological context’.

¹⁴³ GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar*, Sign-List, E 16; BETRÒ, *Geroglifici*, 77.

‘with privileged access to cultic mysteries’ (see below *The Identity of the Recipient(s) of the Assemblage*).¹⁴⁴ However, the presence of a roughly drawn jackal on the box could simply have meant to ‘rewrite’ the ontology of that artefact itself from the living to the funerary world. Also, the white plaster applied over the box may point to some kind of ritual transformation of the artefact, perhaps from use in daily life to that of a funerary context. For instance, several objects in the burial of the ‘overseer of works’ Kha were purposely covered with white plaster over their original colour/decoration when converted from daily life to funerary use.¹⁴⁵

B. 118 reed pens = Assortment of 118 reed pens tied together with two ancient (?) twines. The state of preservation of the pens is very good and they appear to be un-used (Fig. 9).

There are a number of parallels for reed pens included in funerary contexts, spanning from the Old Kingdom to the Late Period.¹⁴⁶ Usually the number of reed pens is limited to a few and such a quantity of reed pens explicitly connected with writing activity has never been attested. In tomb C 37 in the Asasif at Thebes,¹⁴⁷ Carter and Carnarvon discovered an oval shaped basket (no. 25) containing some items from a writing outfit, including 26 and 15 reed pens, respectively placed inside two pen cases.¹⁴⁸ The use of tomb C 37 spans from the early Middle Kingdom to the early Eighteenth Dynasty.¹⁴⁹ However, chamber C seems to have been mainly in use during the early Eighteenth Dynasty; the box was closely related to two anthropoid coffins belonging to the white type (nos. 23–24, inscribed for two individuals called Djehuty and Ahhotep/Tanedjem)¹⁵⁰ and the Carnarvon Tablet III.¹⁵¹ Tombs with high numbers of writing reeds in Second millennium Egypt are so far unknown.¹⁵²

C. Papyri = The papyri were deposited inside the wooden box (A.) together with the reed pens (B.); from Quibell’s description it seems that the box would originally have been fairly full but most of the papyri had decayed.¹⁵³ Gardiner and Ibscher estimated a total of 23 manuscripts with a set of fragments. The papyri in the British and Berlin Museums are now respectively contained in 153 and 17 frames (two sheets of glass with the four edges sealed with tape), with numbers assigned to them by Gardiner and Ibscher.¹⁵⁴ The contents of the papyri deal with a wide range of topics: literary, epistemological, theological, liturgies, prescriptions and formulae for health and body protection, military reports, administrative accounts, and private

¹⁴⁴ RITNER, *The Mechanics*, 231–2. See also QUACK, *BiOr* 67, 524; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 187, n. 47, 209, n. 258.

¹⁴⁵ E.g. FERRARIS, *La tomba di Kha e Merit*, 135.

¹⁴⁶ See PINARELLO, *An Archaeological Discussion of Writing Practice*, 28–77.

¹⁴⁷ PM I², 2, 615–6; MINIACI, *Rishi Coffins*, 84–91.

¹⁴⁸ JE 43174 and JE 43176; PINARELLO, *An Archaeological Discussion of Writing Practice*, 38–9.

¹⁴⁹ ROSATI with MINIACI, in MINIACI, GRAJETZKI (eds), *The World of Middle Kingdom*, vol. II, 228–33.

¹⁵⁰ CARTER, CARNARVON, *Five Years’ Explorations at Thebes*, 74–7, pl. 64 (basket), 66 (outfit); LILYQUIST, *JEA* 106, 13, fig. 11. For the coffins, see BARWICK, *ET* 18, 7–33, D3 and D4. For Djehuti’s coffin see HAYES, *The Scepter of Egypt*, vol. II, 71–2; LILYQUIST, *JEA* 106, 12, n. 60.

¹⁵¹ The tablet is inscribed with Kemit and part of a narrative or exercise. For its archaeological context see now LILYQUIST, *op. cit.*, 13.

¹⁵² In tomb 321 at Saqqara, in the enclosure of Teti’s pyramid, a writing kit consisting of a writing palette with reed pens and a bundle of rush pens, whose quantity is unfortunately unspecified, was found, QUIBELL, *Excavations at Saqqara*, 3, 80, pl. 36.1.

¹⁵³ The box was ‘about one third full of papyri which were in extremely bad condition, three quarters of their substance having decayed away’, QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 3.

¹⁵⁴ LEACH, *JEA* 92, 226 and Appendix.



Fig. 9: Bundle of 118 reed pens (**B.**), ManchM 1882 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price

notes.¹⁵⁵ The condition of the papyri is poor, although stable; their dark appearance and general fragility may be due by the fact that the material was stored in damp condition (low-lying ground close to the flood-plain) for a long period of time.¹⁵⁶

In spite of the diversity of subjects, the papyri were found in a single box; their contemporaneity inside a space confined by a physical container suggests that they most probably constituted an intentional collection aimed at being purposely deposited in a burial. Had they been found without any container, the ensemble might be considered more plausibly as an accidental accumulation of documents gathered from different spots and thrown/collocated in the shaft.¹⁵⁷ The content of the papyri does not pertain to the funerary sphere but it can be arranged in five broad themes: literary topic, health/protection issues, epistemological topic, theological topic, administrative accounts. The inclusion of non-funerary papyri within burials is attested, though rarely: the earliest example dates back to the Fourth Dynasty (Old Kingdom), in an anonymous tomb at Gebelein.¹⁵⁸ From the Middle Kingdom, four written documents were found by George Reisner in an early to mid-Twelfth Dynasty tomb at Naga el-Deir¹⁵⁹ and two documents (Boulaq Papyri 18)¹⁶⁰ found by Auguste Mariette in the late Middle Kingdom tomb of the accountant Neferhotep;¹⁶¹ other examples come from Harageh¹⁶² and Lisht.¹⁶³ To this list also should be added the so-called Heqanakht papyri, discovered inside the tomb of Meseh, a side tomb cut

¹⁵⁵ For a brief summary of the contents see QUIRKE, in OPPENHEIM *et al.* (eds), *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, 207 and QUIRKE, in PRICE *et al.* (eds), *Mummies, Magic and Medicine*, 192–3.

¹⁵⁶ LEACH, *JEA* 92, 227.

¹⁵⁷ QUIRKE, in PRICE *et al.* (eds), *Mummies, Magic and Medicine*, 187, quoting the second-third century AD papyri from Tanis and Tebtunis as counter example (see CUVIGNY, in BAGNALL (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, 50).

¹⁵⁸ POSENER-KRIÉGER, DEMICHELIS, *I papiri di Gebelein*.

¹⁵⁹ SIMPSON, *Papyrus Reisner I*.

¹⁶⁰ QUIRKE, *The Administration*, 10–3.

¹⁶¹ MINIACI, QUIRKE, *BIFAO* 109, 342–3.

¹⁶² ENGELBACH, *Harageh*, 32–3 refers to eight fragments of papyri found in the tombs of the Harageh necropolis, nos. 265, 268, 269, 271 and 539. Among the papyrus fragments is pHarageh 1 (UC 32773) which contains excerpts of Sinhue's tale.

¹⁶³ QUIRKE, *Egyptian Literature*, 23.

into the funerary complex of the vizier Ipi (TT 315) at Thebes.¹⁶⁴ However, their find-spot and condition (Letter III found still folded and sealed)¹⁶⁵ suggest that they represent undelivered documents and that they ended up in the tomb by pure chance. Also, a large group of literary papyri, now in the Berlin Museum, containing a copy of the most famous Middle Kingdom stories (the Tales of Sinhue and Khuninpu, the Dialogue of Man and his Ba), might represent a single group deposited together in a late Middle Kingdom Theban burial.¹⁶⁶ Even in the New Kingdom, when inscribed papyri (mainly of a funerary nature) became more frequently part of burial equipment, the documented contexts are extremely rare: three mathematical and medical papyri (pEdwin Smith, pEbers, pRhind Mathematical) possibly from a single Theban tomb of the early New Kingdom.¹⁶⁷ Nonetheless, none of the written documents (presumably) found in a funerary context exhibit such a variety of themes, they are mainly of an administrative or a literary nature. The only archaeological context comparable to the Ramesseum papyri box comes from a group of papyri of more than half millennium later (late thirteenth century BC), which is considered to have come from a single Ramesside burial at Deir el-Medina (Papyri Chester Beatty 1–19 + Papyrus Ashmolean + Papyrus IFAO Deir el-Medina 1, 3–17, 21–22).¹⁶⁸ This group of papyri contains a similar wide array of subjects; they were collected and copied by a man called Qenherkhepshef, ‘secretary to the project for the king’s tomb’, and passed down to his successor and then from generation to generation.¹⁶⁹ However, given the present state of knowledge and limited to within Middle Bronze Age customs, the Ramesseum group represents an exceptional character of unicity.

Most scholars have pointed out that the large batch of papyri concern topics in relation with the sphere of healing and protection, focussing their attention especially on the formulae related to the protection of mother and child during and after pregnancy (marked in the following tables with the sign ‘#’). Nonetheless, although the number of papyri devoted to issues of health/protection is certainly remarkable in the group (15 vs 5 devoted to literary texts), which has led to a distorted perception,¹⁷⁰ the total amount of papyrus surface occupied by them is not so unevenly overwhelming. In fact, if one calculates the very approximate area (in cm²) of the ‘preserved’ portions of papyrus,¹⁷¹ the sum of those papyri whose recto concerns issues of health and protection is inferior to the papyri which deal with literary topics (Table 1; see also Table 8 at the end for an overview of papyri content categories).

¹⁶⁴ ALLEN, *The Hekanakht papyri*, 3–6.

¹⁶⁵ ALLEN, *op. cit.*, 8–9.

¹⁶⁶ PARKINSON, *ZÄS* 130, 120–33; QUIRKE, *Egyptian Literature*, 15–6.

¹⁶⁷ SPALINGER, *SAK* 15, 255–8; QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 16–7.

¹⁶⁸ QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 18–9.

¹⁶⁹ PESTMAN, in DEMARÉE, JANSSEN (eds), *Gleanings from Deir el-Medina*, 155–72.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. ‘all but a few were magical and medical-magical texts’, WEINGARTEN, in MYNÁŘOVÁ, ONDERKA, PAVÚK (eds), *There and back again*, 185.

¹⁷¹ Note that Quibell remarked on their extreme fragility apparently due to dampness in the tomb-shaft, ‘if a fragment of the material were pressed slightly between the finger and thumb it disappeared in a mere dust’, therefore the tables below cannot be representative of the original composition of the papyri group but only of what has been preserved, *i.e.* a fragmented reality resulting from the decaying process from their deposit to their final conservation; see LEACH, *JEA* 92, 225–40. Gardiner noted that Newberry’s first attempts to unroll and preserve some of the papyri resulted in a loss of papyri fragments: ‘the loss in these two cases is irreparable, since undoubtedly many fragments were lost or destroyed in the process’, GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 2.

Recto – Type of content of papyri	Surface of the preserved papyri
Literary topic	c. 26725 cm ²
Health/protection issues	c. 24777 cm ²
Epistemological topic	c. 4984 cm ²
Theological topic	c. 1924 cm ²
Administrative account	c. 1600 cm ²

Table 1: Approximate surface occupied by the type of content in the rectos of the papyri

The two largest papyri are represented by two documents whose recto is occupied by literary texts (pA and pI); however, it must be acknowledged that the longest papyrus is pXVI, at approximately 6 metres, which contains formulae for protection against snakes, sickness, evil spirits and nightmares. The documents containing health and protection texts are mainly relegated to medium and small size papyri. In spite of such a distribution pattern, the verso of several papyri was used for inscribing or copying texts whose main focus concerns health and protection (as highlighted in red bold in the table below). The documents which preserve sections related to birth issues – among other topics – belong to the longer papyri (pIII; pIV),¹⁷² both marked with the sign ‘#’ (Table 2).

Papyrus	Recto – Type of contents	Verso – Type of contents	Royal name on the document	Surface (in cm ²)
	Longest papyri			
pA	Literary	Literary		10290 cm ²
pI	Literary	Private account (?)		6645 cm ²
pXVI	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue		6600 cm ²
pB	Literary	Private account	Amenemhat I, Senwosret I	5805 cm ²
pIII	Health/protection issue #	Private account		5160 cm ²
	Long size papyri			
pD	Epistemological	BLANK	Amenemhat III	4984 cm ²
pE	Literary (?)	Private account	Senwosret I	2750 cm ²
pIV	Health/protection issue #	Private account		2478 cm ²
pVIII	Health/protection issue	BLANK		2400 cm ²
	Medium size papyri			
pVI	Theological	BLANK	Amenemhat III	1924 cm ²
pXVII	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue		1728 cm ²
pC	Administrative accounts	Health/protection issue	*Amenemhat III	1600 cm ²
pV	Health/protection issue	Private account (?)		1540 cm ²
pVII	Health/protection issue	Private account (?)		1300 cm ²
pII	Literary	Literary		1235 cm ²

¹⁷² Cf. TÖPFER, *Dynamis* 34, 317–35.

	Small size papyri			
pIX	Health/protection issue	BLANK		1040 cm ²
pX	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue		572 cm ²
pXIX	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue		495 cm ²
pXII	Health/protection issue	Private account (?)		455 cm ²
pXI	Health/protection issue	BLANK		446 cm ²
pXIII	Health/protection issue	Private account (?)		240 cm ²
pXV	Health/protection issue (?)	Health/protection issue (?)		231 cm ²
pXIV	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue		92 cm ²

Table 2: Arrangement of the papyri by surface in decreasing order:
longest > 5001 cm²; long size 2001 ÷ 5000 cm²; medium size 1201 ÷ 2000 cm²; small size 1 ÷ 1200 cm²

According to Quirke, the presence of administrative jottings and accounts on the back of some papyri and the reference to ‘my house’ (*pr=i*) on the back of pIII can be taken as evidence that this group of papyri was part of a private collection rather than a regional or national archive from an administrative bureau or a temple (Table 3).¹⁷³

Papyrus	Recto – Type of contents	Verso – Type of contents	Different recto/verso
pB	Literary	Private account	√
pE	Literary (?)	private account	√
pIII	Health/protection issue #	Private account	√ – ‘my house’ (<i>pr=i</i>)
pIV	Health/protection issue #	Private account	√
pI	Literary	Private account (?)	√
pV	Health/protection issue	Private account (?)	√
pVII	Health/protection issue	Private account (?)	√
pXII	Health/protection issue	Private account (?)	√
pXIII	Health/protection issue	Private account (?)	√
pC	Administrative accounts	Health/protection issue	√

Table 3: List of papyri whose verso content type was different to that one on the recto

Based on an analogy with the vicissitudes affecting the Chester Beatty Papyri as reconstructed by Pestman, some of the papyri could have been passed down from one family member to another over several generations, therefore being re-used (cut, erased, or inscribed on the blank verso) for writing down private notes, accounts, and drafts.¹⁷⁴ The private accounts on the verso correspond to later additions, as confirmed by their palaeography.

Furthermore, a number of papyri were not inscribed on the verso, and these can be divided into two groups: α) one papyrus concerning epistemological matters (the ‘Onomasticon’) and

¹⁷³ QUIRKE, *The Administration*, 189.

¹⁷⁴ PESTMAN, in DEMARÉE, JANSSEN (eds), *Gleanings from Deir el-Medīna*, 159–61.

theological matters on another (the hymn to Sobek); they are linked only by the explicit mention of king Amenemhat III, whose prenomen appears on both documents; and β) three papyri relating to health and protection issues (including a possible love spell); they are linked by the subject of the text (Table 4).

Group	Papyrus	Recto – Type of content	Verso	Mention of king	Palaeographic dating	Length
α	pD	Epistemological	BLANK	*Amenemhat III	late 12–early 13	356 cm
	pVI	Theological	BLANK	Amenemhat III	late 12–early 13 (?)	148 cm
β	pVIII	Health/protection issue	BLANK		early 13	200 cm
	pIX	Health/protection issue	BLANK		late 12–early 13	65 cm
	pXI	Health/protection issue (?)	BLANK		late 12–early 13	47 cm

Table 4: List of papyri not inscribed on the verso

The presence of Amenemhat III's name on group α could simply be a coincidence, although it may provide a nuance to the group's appreciation: both papyri (pD and pVI) cannot be fully included within the literary category but they represent two isolated categories in the ensemble; moreover, they might have been considered to be of particular value, as they appear to be the last ones used for personal notes on the verso.

Perhaps more significant is the absence of any written text on the verso of group β. Although the blank area may be the result of the extremely fragmentary state of both (pIX and pXI have less than one metre preserved), pVIII is preserved for *c.* 2 metres and exhibits clear signs that the verso had not been reused. The versos of papyri containing health/protection texts have also been used for private annotations, as attested for pIII–pV, pVII, pXII–pXIII; however, the fact that three of them have possibly been left blank could be a chronological indicator, inasmuch as they were the last ones intended for reuse.

This remark can be linked with three other pieces of evidence: *a)* in a number of instances health/protection texts on the verso continue or join with similar types of texts on the recto; this makes six cases in which health/protection texts are found written on the verso; *b)* the verso of pC+pXVIII, containing the Semna dispatches on the recto, is used for a health/protection text instead of the more expected private accounts (Table 5). Although the health/protection text inscribed on the verso seems to be connected with the content of the recto, as it deals with an execration text apparently related to the capture and ritual killing of an enemy chief – a plausible occurrence in frontier zones – the handwriting of the two sides is different, indicating a chronological separation between the redaction of the two texts; *c)* pXVI, containing health/protection texts, exhibits the latest palaeography of the group, and one of its many spells was certainly copied from pX.¹⁷⁵

If the box of papyri brings together a collection of written material accumulated over time, the verso of some papyri would have become progressively filled with additional texts, certainly closer to the needs of one of the last owners/users (hence the private dimension of most of the accounts on the verso). Therefore, the fact that six health/protection papyri (pX, pXIV–pXVII, pXIX) were used to accommodate a health/protection text might be evidence that this was one of the main

¹⁷⁵ MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 83.

concerns of the last owners/users, in the same way as there were private records on the verso of the other papyri.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, the fact that the verso of three papyri containing health/protection texts were left blank could also indicate that any lapse in time between their composition and their reuse was not so long, positioning them in the latest phases of use of the papyri as a group.

Addressing the papyri in their entirety are an assemblage, a preliminary hypothesis, awaiting further detailed and comprehensive analyses, suggests that the last person (or group of persons, given the broad chronological framework provided by the palaeographic evidence) to have had active access to the papyri appears to be concerned with issues of health and protection.

Papyrus	Recto – Type of content	Verso – Type of content
pX	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue
pXIV	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue
pXV	Health/protection issue (?)	Health/protection issue (?)
pXVI	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue
pXVII	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue
pXIX	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue
pC(+pXVIII)	Administrative accounts ≠	Health/protection issue

Table 5: List of papyri whose verso was used for writing health/protection formulae or topics

In pVI, Sobek is labelled with the epithet *nb W3st ʿ3 m Swmnw* ‘lord of the Theban nome, great in Sumenu’; this topographical indication as well as a few other details¹⁷⁷ has led scholars to believe that at least some of the papyri came from the ancient city of Sumenu,¹⁷⁸ corresponding to modern Dahamsha located just south of Thebes, 7 km north of Gebelein.¹⁷⁹ The presence of the papyri in a Theban tomb has been explained as evidence for the possible movement of the royal and hegemonic classes towards Thebes at the turn of the Second Intermediate Period, when the poles of power switched from the north to the south of the country.¹⁸⁰ Sumenu could have been one of the areas favoured by this power movement towards Thebes, as testified by the statue of Merankhre Mentuhotep,¹⁸¹ probably a king of the late Thirteenth Dynasty,¹⁸² found in the Karnak *cache* and bearing an inscription for Sobek of Sumenu.¹⁸³ In contrast, Joachim Quack proposed that the administrative documents and the Dramatic Papyrus (pB) were more likely to have originally come from the region of the Residence at Lisht, as well as pVI, which explicitly mentions Sobek of Crocodilopolis in the Fayum. However, Quack was unable to provide a plausible explanation for their presence at Thebes.¹⁸⁴ Nonetheless, an approximately

¹⁷⁶ QUIRKE, in PRICE *et al.* (eds), *Mummies, Magic and Medicine*, 188.

¹⁷⁷ Summarised in MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 200–18.

¹⁷⁸ MORENZ, *Beiträge zur Schriftlichkeitskultur*, 153–4; GEISEN, *The Ramesseum Dramatic Papyrus*, 19–20; MEYRAT, *op. cit.*, 200, 217–8. See Quack’s comments in ZÄS 133, 74.

¹⁷⁹ PM V, 161–2; MORENZ, *Die Zeit der Regionen im Spiegel der Gebelein-Region*, 131–3; KOCKELMANN, *Der Herr der Seen*, 312–21.

¹⁸⁰ MINIACI, in BUZI, PICCHI, ZECCHI (eds), *Aegyptiaca et Coptica*, 235–49.

¹⁸¹ RYHOLT, *The Political Situation in Egypt*, 391, File 16/d.

¹⁸² SIESSE, *La XIII^e dynastie*, 34–35, 83–5, 394.

¹⁸³ CG 42021; LEGRAIN, *Statues et statuettes*, 12–3, pl. 12; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 217.

¹⁸⁴ QUACK, ZÄS 133, 74–5.

contemporary tomb found by Carter and Carnarvon in the Asasif at Thebes, Tomb C 25,¹⁸⁵ contained a toilet box belonging to a ‘store keeper and cupbearer’ called Kemeni, inscribed with the royal name of Amenemhat IV and mentioning Sobek of But, a place associated with Letopolis in the Second Lower Egyptian Nome in the Western Delta.¹⁸⁶ Karin Kopetzky has noted the presence of material from the Lisht residence of the late Middle Kingdom scattered across several parts of the country, but also in the Levant, as being reused in later tombs (c. 1600–1550 BC).¹⁸⁷ However, none of the topographical cult references provided in the papyri should be taken for indication of their possible place of provenance. The focus on Sobek is part of the intellectual production clearly present in Middle Kingdom sources: Sobek-Ra in the Twelfth Dynasty may have played a similar role of Amun-Ra for the Eighteenth Dynasty.¹⁸⁸ The reference to local forms of cult (as Sobek of Sumenu and Sobek Crocodilopolis) does not necessarily mirror a regional product but may be connected with an interregional intellectual court culture, gathering various regional forms of cult for a centralised purpose (ensuring eternal life to the king and *maat* over the country), as happened in Roman times when the emperors connected with specific regional cults.¹⁸⁹ Therefore, seen in this light, the reference to Sobek of Sumenu can be interpreted as the southern counterpart of the northern Sobek of Shedyt, without any topographical implication with the region south of Thebes.

The papyri seem to encompass a wide chronological range, spanning the late Twelfth to mid-Thirteenth Dynasties. The handwriting styles on the papyri testify that they were not necessarily produced during the same time span, but may constitute a collection accumulated over years – probably centuries? (c. 1860 BC to 1700–1650 BC).¹⁹⁰ At least nine different hands (Table 6), excluding the administrative accounts on the verso, can be identified (some of them are comparable but not necessarily identical)¹⁹¹ and Pierre Meyrat has produced palaeographic tables in relation to the papyri pIV–pXIX.¹⁹²

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3	Hand 4	Hand 5	Hand 6	Hand 7	Hand 8	Hand 9
pA	pC	pI, pIV, pIX	pIII	pV, p VI	pVIII, pXIV, pXVII	pXV r	pXV v	pXVI

Table 6: Number of handwriting styles recorded by scholars on the papyri

In the verso text of papyrus E the prenomen of Senwosret I is mentioned, although this is not connected at all with any chronological coordinate; also the Dramatic Papyrus (pB) refers

¹⁸⁵ CARTER, CARNARVON, *Five Years' Explorations*, 54–60; MINIACI, *Rishi Coffins*, 90; QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 107–9; see now MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*.

¹⁸⁶ MMA 26.7.1438; LEITZ, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter*, vol. III, 620–1; OPPENHEIM *et al.* (eds), *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, 121–2, 141–2; COLLOMBERT, in VUILLEUMIER, MEYRAT (eds), *Sur les pistes du désert*, 38.

¹⁸⁷ KOPETZKY, *ÄuL* 28, 309–58. Cf. also MINOR, *The Use of Egyptian and Egyptianizing Material* and MINIACI, *EVO* 42, 13–32 for Kerma burials of the Egyptian Cemetery reusing late Middle Kingdom artefacts in the Second Intermediate Period.

¹⁸⁸ ZECCHI, in PERNIGOTTI, ZECCHI (eds), *Il coccodrillo e il cobra*, 103–10; YOYOTTE, *BIFAO* 56, 81–95.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. the so-called ‘Nomenprägungen’ (‘Nomes coins’), whose iconography gave the impression that each coin type was the individual product of an individual Nome, while their minting was certainly centralised, probably in Alexandria’s mint, WEBER, GEISSEN, *Die alexandrinischen Gaumünzen*.

¹⁹⁰ FORMAN, QUIRKE, *Hieroglyphs*, 107; QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 103.

¹⁹¹ LORAND, *Le papyrus dramatique*, 40.

¹⁹² MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 401–10.

to two early Twelfth Dynasty kings, Senwosret I and Amenemhat I; since they are the characters of a narrative topic, its composition must have occurred after the reign of the last of these two pharaohs.¹⁹³ The hymn to Sobek (pVI) explicitly invokes Amenemhat III, which can be considered as a *terminus post quem* for the inclusion of the papyri in the funerary context; the papyrus known as Onomasticon (pD) also mentions the name of Amenemhat III in relation to a toponym. The Semna dispatches repeatedly mention a ‘year 3’, which is considered with some certainty to be that of Amenemhat III’s reign.¹⁹⁴ Therefore the reign of Amenemhat III seems to be a reliable *terminus a quo* for the inclusion of the papyri in the tomb. Nonetheless, several of them could have been actually composed later. The text of Sinuhe on the verso of pA has been dated on palaeographic grounds to the first part of the Thirteenth Dynasty.¹⁹⁵ Pierre Meyrat has produced a chronological sequence for the health/protection papyri based on their palaeographic analysis, although the author himself has questioned its reliability because of the scarcity of comparable elements and because of his own assumption that the text on the verso of pC used somewhat later but in the same military context as the recto, and thus a dating to early in the reign of Amenemhat III. In general terms, the handwriting of the personal accounts on the back of the papyri belongs to a period postdating the redaction on the recto, probably corresponding to one of the latest phases of use of the papyri. Papyrus pXVI, which is considered one of the latest papyri of the group, displays a cursive writing style which has several elements in common with the papyrus Boulaq 18,¹⁹⁶ dated to late Twelfth–early Thirteenth Dynasty.¹⁹⁷

In conclusion, the latest palaeographic style for the papyri group can be attributed with a certain degree of confidence to the early-/mid-Thirteenth Dynasty,¹⁹⁸ as proposed for pXVI and for the writing of the private accounts on the verso of many of them (Table 7).

Papyrus	Recto – Type of contents	Verso – Type of contents	Royal name on the document	Date by palaeography
pC	Administrative accounts	Health/protection issue	*Amenemhat III	late 12
pXVIII	Administrative accounts	Health/protection issue	*Amenemhat III	late 12
pD	Epistemological	BLANK	Amenemhat III	late 12–early 13
pVI	Theological	BLANK	Amenemhat III	late 12–early 13
pIX	Health/protection issue	BLANK		late 12–early 13
pX	Health/protection is.	Health/protection		late 12–early 13
pXI	Health/protection is.	BLANK		late 12–early 13
pXII	Health/protection issue	Private account (?)		late 12–early 13

¹⁹³ LORAND, *Le papyrus dramatique*, 44, 146.

¹⁹⁴ SMITHER, *JEA* 31, 5; BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 80, cat. no. 62; QUIRKE, *The Administration*, 191; VOGEL, *Ägyptische Festungen und Garnisonen*, 84–5, n. 81.

¹⁹⁵ GARDINER, *Notes on the Story of Sinuhe*, 2–3; PARKINSON, *Reading ancient Egyptian Poetry*, 151–3.

¹⁹⁶ Personal communication of Stephen Quirke, on 10.06.2020; cf. BORCHARDT, *ZÄS* 28, 66–7.

¹⁹⁷ MINIACI, QUIRKE, *BIFAO* 109, 342 (with bibliographic reference); see BERLEV, in *Древний мир*, 50–62, for the court visiting Thebes in the reign of a mid-Thirteenth Dynasty king.

¹⁹⁸ GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 16; PARKINSON, *Reading Ancient Egyptian Poetry*, 156–7; QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 103; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 107, 403.

pXIII	Health/protection issue	Private account (?)		late 12–early 13
pXIX	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue		late 12–early 13
pXV	Health/protection issue (?)	Health/protection issue (?)		late 12 r / late 12–early 13 v
pVIII	Health/protection issue	BLANK		early 13
pXIV	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue		early 13
pXVII	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue		early 13
pXVI	Health/protection issue	Health/protection issue		early/mid 13

Table 7: Dating of the papyri according to their palaeography

D. Clapper – ManchM 1796 (Fig. 10a–b) = Ivory clapper in the shape of a left hand, with an incised decoration of three or more lines representing a bracelet. The ivory has a bright colour and any trace of dirt is absent or has been carefully removed (*cf.* instead *E.*); just a few incrustations are visible in a few spots between the fingers. The proximal end (root of the tusk) of the clapper seems to be worn. The hand is broken in two pieces at the wrist, but the portion missing is minimal. The fingertips, with the exception of the thumb, are all neatly cut off. From between the fingers are a series of black lines, penetrating a few millimetres and running to the proximal end, which are part of the ‘grain’ structure of ivory¹⁹⁹ (this is a structural feature not visible in *E.*).

***E. Clapper – ManchM 1797** (Fig. 11a–b) = Ivory clapper in the shape of a right hand, with an incised decoration of four lines representing a bracelet. The ivory has an off-white colour darkened to grey, a patina caused by a layer of dirt covering it. The proximal end of the clapper appears to be worn. The hand is broken in two pieces across the forearm; the missing section might be smaller than it appears in the photograph, because the hand fragment is missing a portion of its side and thus looks thinner than it is. The fingertips are all preserved with the exception of the thumb, which is missing; the upper part of the little finger has been scratched away.

Clappers *D.* and **E.* seem to be a pair, although the cracks visible in **E.* are different and fewer in number to those in *D.* and neither their colouring nor state of preservation match perfectly. The slightly different measurements of the two clappers, which do not perfectly match (**E.* seems to be longer than *D.*), is a rather frequent occurrence: paired clappers can often be different lengths.²⁰⁰ The difference in colouring and state of preservation may indicate: *a)* the two clappers were not a pair and therefore more probably come from different contexts; *b)* they come from two different sources (either in terms of raw material or workshop); *c)* they were originally conceived and used as a pair but each was subject to a different post-depositional experience: *i.e.* probably one was more exposed to damp than the other.

¹⁹⁹ KRZYSZKOWSKA, MORKOT, in NICHOLSON, SHAW (eds), *Ancient Egyptian Materials*, 329.

²⁰⁰ For this *cf.* BM EA 37303 from tomb Abydos G62, MINIACI, in REGULSKI (ed.), *Abydos*, 205, pl. 10.

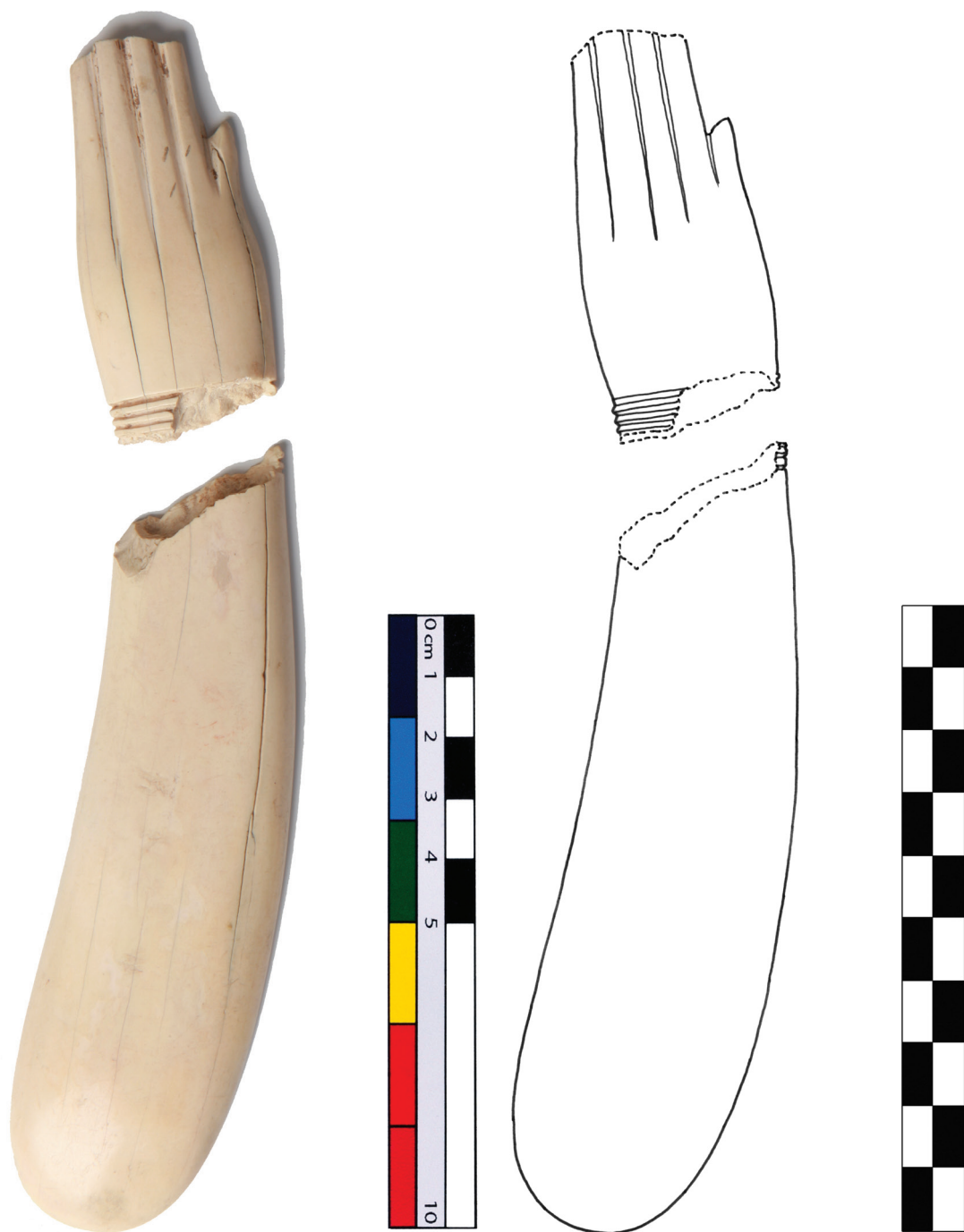


Fig. 10a–b: Clapper in the form of a left arm (*D.*), ManchM 1796 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price; drawing by L. Grassi



Fig. 11a-b: Clapper in the form of a right arm (**E.*), ManchM 1797 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price; drawing by L. Grassi

The closest parallel for the Ramesseum clappers are a pair of clappers found at Lisht North from Pit 752,²⁰¹ located between the *mastabas* of Rehuerdjersen (384) and Senwosret (758). The objects from this tomb point to a broad Middle Kingdom date, although the presence of four faience figurines (a hippopotamus foot, a ring stand, a cup, an undetermined figure, and a truncated-leg female figurine) may possibly point towards a late Middle Kingdom date.²⁰² Another pair of clappers UC 30352a–b, although unprovenanced, represent a very close parallel, except for the fact that they have been pierced at their ends.²⁰³ Other relatively close parallels also come from late Middle Kingdom contexts.²⁰⁴

F. Birth tusk – ManchM 1798 (Fig. 12a–b) = Fragment of a hippopotamus ivory tusk incised with (from left to right) a canid's head (probably a fox or a jackal) at the distal end of the tusk, the head of a donkey, and a striding baboon.²⁰⁵ On the upper and lower edges of the tusk is a single line framing the images and running parallel to the curvature of the tusk; the lines merge at the animal head. The fragment, transversely broken, is well preserved and the signs of wear are limited in comparison to the other tusks (*G.–I.*); the surface is worn smooth around the area of the baboon figure, whose incised lines are less sharp.

G. Birth tusk – ManchM 1799 (Fig. 13a–b) = Four fragments of a hippopotamus ivory tusk incised with (from left to right) a jackal-headed leg holding a knife, a front-facing lion-maned/eared female figure (identifiable with the later Beset) holding and biting snakes, a striding hippopotamus-lion figure with a dorsal ridge, holding a knife in its paws which rest upon a *s3*-sign, a frontal lion-maned/eared male figure (probably to be identified with Aha/late Bes) holding snakes, a lion standing on its hind legs biting a snake and holding a knife in its paws which rest upon an *nh*-sign, a long-necked feline surmounted by a triple head and coiling snake.²⁰⁶ On the upper and lower edges of the tusk is a single line framing the images and running parallel to the curvature of the tusk. The tusk is broken into four pieces, all of which rejoin, apart from a very minor break across the lion-hippopotamus figure; the distal end is missing. The fragments are all transversely broken, although the rupture next to Aha/Bes figure is rather unusual.²⁰⁷ There are three chips along the upper side and one at the lower side. The proximal end shows clear signs of wear, as the hind part of the long-necked feline is erased and the snake tail worn smooth. Other signs of abrasion and scraping are attested, especially in the area of the 'Bes' figure. Scratches and incised lines across the tusk are frequent. The tusk fragments show variable weathering, creating a stark separation between those closer to the proximal end and the one closer to the distal end (where the hippopotamus figure is broken in two). Differential weathering is noticeable on the other tusks (*F., H., I.*).

H. Birth tusk – ManchM 1800 (complete) (Fig. 14a–b) = Four fragments of a hippopotamus ivory tusk incised with (from left to right) a canid's head – probably a fox or a jackal – at the

²⁰¹ MORRIS, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 300, fig. 5.

²⁰² MMA 08.200.18 (female figurine); for the group and tomb architecture see MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, LiN-tlf4.

²⁰³ PETRIE, *Objects of Daily Use*, 43, no. 20, pl. 35.20 (l. 15.8 and 16 cm); DI TEODORO, *Labour Organisation*, pl. 9.

²⁰⁴ See a list of contexts in MORRIS, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 292–305, figs. 1–7.

²⁰⁵ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 402 (fox/jackal), 403 (donkey), 364 (baboon).

²⁰⁶ QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 347 (jackal-headed leg), 361 (Beset), 327 (Ipy), 357 (Bes), 335 (standing lion), 392 (long-necked feline), 377 (snake).

²⁰⁷ Cf. with UC 16379, QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 18, fig. 1.3.



Fig. 12a–b: Birth tusk (*F*), ManchM 1798 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price; drawing by L. Grassi

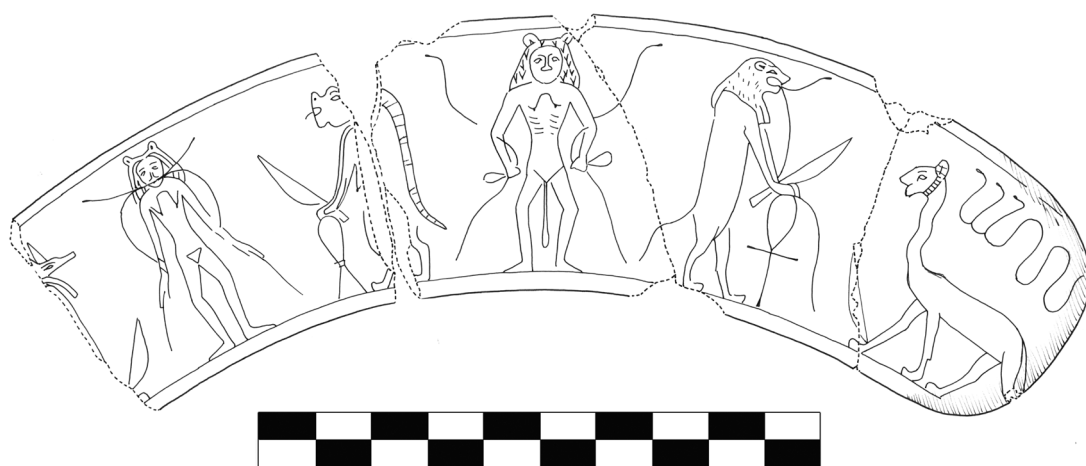
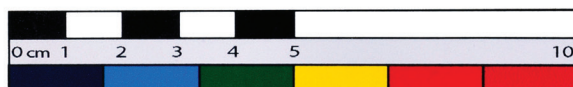


Fig. 13a–b: Birth tusk (G.), ManchM 1799 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price; drawing by L. Grassi

distal end of the tusk, a turtle, a vulture with a knife, two twisted snakes, a winged griffin with human head facing backwards located between the wings, a toad or frog over a basket supported by a short column and holding a knife, and the blade of a knife held by a now missing figure.²⁰⁸ On the upper and lower edges of the tusk is a single line framing the images and running parallel to the curvature of the tusk, merging into the canid head. Apart from a little break in the proximal lower edge, the tusk is complete, although broken into three large fragments (plus a small one) that rejoin. The large fragments are all transversely broken. One end shows clear signs of wear, since the elements of another figure – now completely erased – holding a knife are still visible. Scratches and erasures may indicate that this part of the artefact was extensively used. In the proximal end are also two holes, pierced across the tusk with disregard for the decorated images, actually looking as though they were deliberately drilled at either end of the knife blade. The holes may have served for suspension or to allow a handle to be attached by a cord or similar. The distal end shows less marked signs of wear, but the contour lines of the figure are slightly fainter.

I. Birth tusk – ManchM 1801 (almost complete) (Fig. 15a–b) = Six fragments of a hippopotamus ivory tusk incised with (from left to right) a winged griffin with a human head located between the wings facing inwards, a disk on legs, a jackal-headed leg holding a knife, a torch, a feline (probably a cat or a serval) sitting on its hind legs with two whiskers downward, a toad or a frog, and a coiling snake (cobra? – but not depicted with its usual hood) raising its head.²⁰⁹ On the upper and lower edges of the tusk is a single line framing the images and running parallel to the curvature of the tusk. Between the framing lines and the edges of the tusk are sets of three vertical groove-like lines incised at regular intervals and running over the edge of the thickness. Curiously, such a feature, appearing only on this tusk out of the four attested from the Ramesseum, is not a frequent decoration in this category of object (see below about dating remarks). The six fragments, all transversely broken, form an almost complete tusk; the proximal end is missing, as is a small chip above the griffin figure, and a central thin section next to the flame. At the distal end are two small holes with two little grooves, which show heavy signs of erasure. The tip has been reworked in order to obtain a tenon. The two holes and the tenon were probably intended to receive a separate piece of wood (not found), slotted into it, representing an animal head (probably a fennec, a fox, or a canid)²¹⁰ and partially overlapping with the snake (?) representation. Abrasions are present in the area of the frog, which can be interpreted as traces of wear. The whole is chipped in places; a tool mark line clearly visible in front of the jackal-head is probably evidence of an attempt to straighten the curvature of the framing lower line.

Although a few doubtful birth tusks may belong to the early-mid Middle Kingdom (1950–1850 BC),²¹¹ the vast majority of them belong to the late Middle Kingdom, from the reign of Senwosret III (or later) to the mid-Thirteenth Dynasty. The decorated tusk of king Se(ne)bkay, whose tomb has recently been identified by Josef Wegner at Abydos,²¹² may extend this time span even slightly later towards 1700–1650 BC.²¹³ The notch decoration of *I.* can be paralleled

²⁰⁸ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 402 (fox/jackal), 370 (turtle), 380 (vulture), 377 (snake), 353 (griffin), 350 (frog).

²⁰⁹ QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 353 (griffin), 387 (disk on legs), 347 (jackal-headed leg), 389 (cat), 350 (frog), 373 (cobra).

²¹⁰ QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 402.

²¹¹ QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 231.

²¹² WEGNER, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 479–83.

²¹³ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 231.

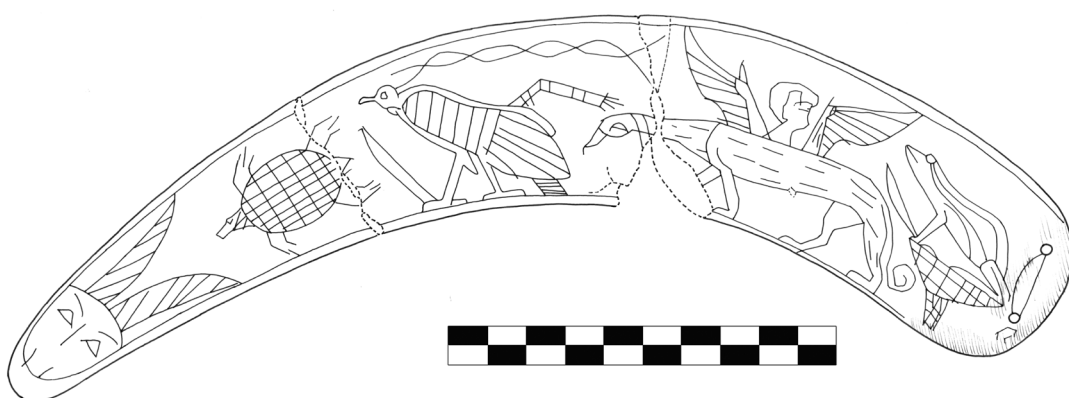


Fig. 14a-b: Birth tusk (*H.*), ManchM 1800 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price; drawing by L. Grassi



Fig. 15a-b: Birth tusk (*I.*), ManchM 1801 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price; drawing by L. Grassi

with the ivory tusks from tombs 741 and 839 at the Asasif (Thebes) and Abydos E 10.²¹⁴ Of these, only tomb 741 can be dated to the late Middle Kingdom with confidence. By the end of the Second Intermediate Period birth tusks are no longer attested in the material culture of ancient Egypt.

J. Baboon miniature – ManchM 1835 (Fig. 16a-b) = Squatting baboon on a base with its forepaws on its knees and its tail slightly rendered on the right side; the body is decorated with spots and facial details are marked with black ink; a phallus is clearly modelled between the legs. The faience shows a pale blue-green turquoise colour; the glaze has faded slightly in some places. The figurine is complete, although originally broken in at least three main pieces (several cracks are visible across the surface); the head and feet were detached from the main body and reattached after restoration. Chipped in places.

Close parallels come from the late Middle Kingdom deposit *f* of the Obelisk Temple at Byblos²¹⁵ and from the ‘radim’ (?) of Lisht North from the MMA excavations.²¹⁶

²¹⁴ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, respectively 110–1 (T 7), 105–6 (T5), 127–8 (Aby4).

²¹⁵ DGA 1668 (?); DUNAND, *Fouilles de Byblos*, 749, no. 15209.

²¹⁶ MMA 15.3.886; see MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, LiN-bab5.



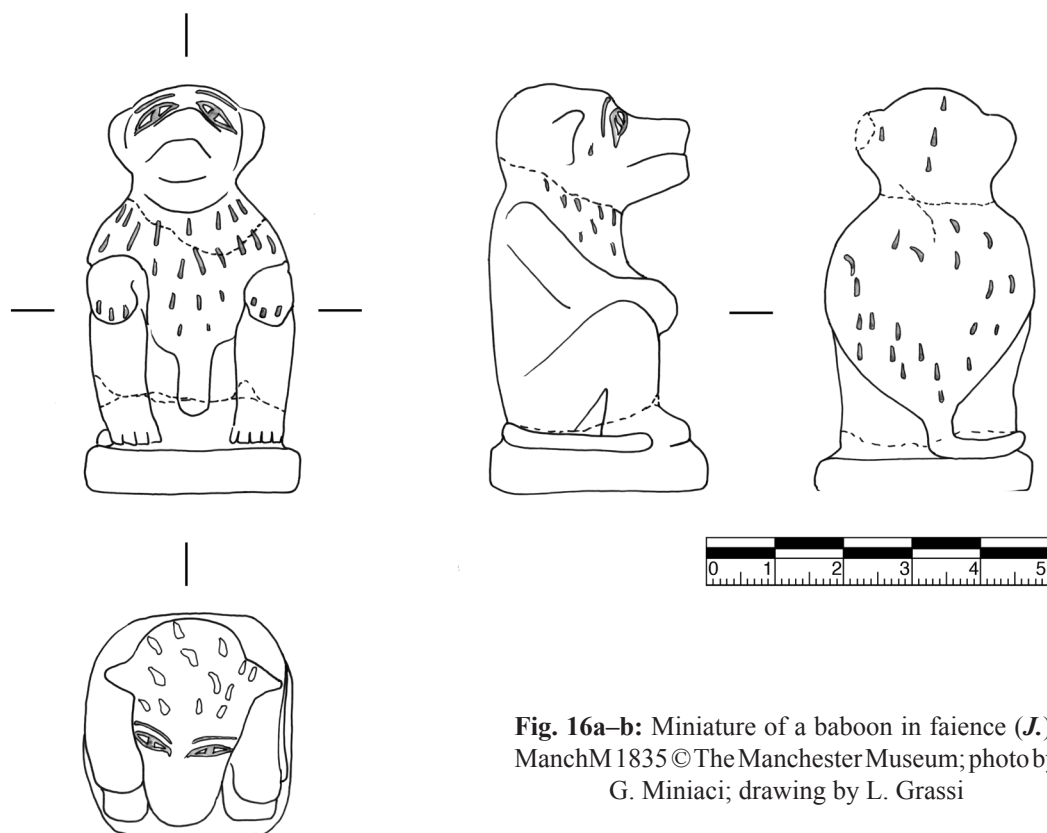


Fig. 16a–b: Miniature of a baboon in faience (*J.*), ManchM 1835 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi

***K. Simian miniature – ManchM 1840 (only lower part)** (Fig. 17a–b) = Lower part of a seated simian on a base, most probably to be identified with a baboon due to the pose; the arms are not very clearly modelled, although it looks like the animal was presenting something; the tail lies on the right side over the base. The black ink details are missing, probably due to the fading of the faience. The colour of the faience is pale blue. The figurine is broken off at the head, which is missing. The break has exposed the core which is white in colour. The feet were broken off from its base and restored in place. It is chipped in several places with a little round break in the chest. Its manufacture and accuracy for details are very different from *J.*

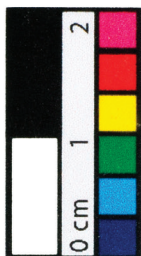
There are no exact parallels for this artefact, due to its fragmentary state, although it fits within the corpus of faience figurines of the late Middle Kingdom representing seated baboons or simians.²¹⁷

***L. Hedgehog miniature – ManchM 1841 (fragment)** (Fig. 18a–b) = Upper part of the body of a miniature representing a hedgehog, with the spikes in relief and painted black. The colour is pale blue green and the core white. Despite its fragmentary state, the spikes are still partly preserved and unworn.²¹⁸

Similarly decorated hedgehogs with relief spikes on the back have been found at Byblos

²¹⁷ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*.

²¹⁸ Cf. for instance other faience hedgehogs where the spikes were all worn.



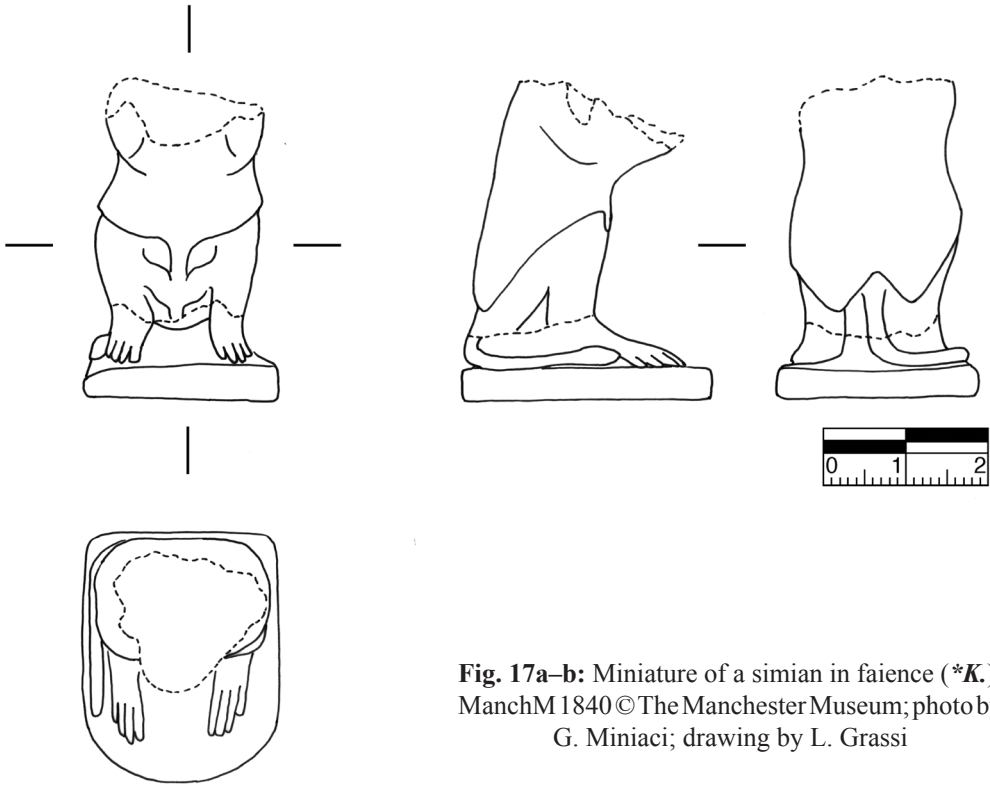


Fig. 17a–b: Miniature of a simian in faience (*K), ManchM 1840 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi

in the Obelisk Temple, deposit f;²¹⁹ Abydos tomb 416;²²⁰ Hu, deposit W 161;²²¹ and Elkab.²²² Apart from deposit W 161, which can be dated to the Second Intermediate Period, and Elkab, which lacks a more precise context, all the other hedgehog figurines are dated to the late Middle Kingdom.

M. Truncated-leg female miniature – ManchM 1787 (Fig. 19a–b) = Faience figurine of a naked female with truncated legs, exaggeratedly long arms along the sides of the body, the hair worn in five thick ringlets around her head, each thick braid ending in a curl and bangs across the forehead. The top of the head features a circular tonsure, intentionally left undecorated/unpainted. The pubic triangle is decorated with dots; dots are also used to indicate nipples (only the left one is preserved) and a girdle around her waist (present on the back). A body chain, outlined in black, crosses her breast from the shoulder diagonally to the left hip (absent on the

²¹⁹ DGA 1677, DGA 1646, DGA 1684, see DUNAND, *Fouilles de Byblos*, 757, nos. 15287–88, 15292, pl. 107; MORFOISSE, ANDREU-LANOË (eds), *Sésostriis III*, 286, cat. nos. 220, 228; VON DROSTE ZU HÜLSHOFF, *Der Igel*, 132, nr. 98.

²²⁰ AshM E 3274; KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 139–40, pls. 13, 15, 416.A.07.93; MOOREY, *Ancient Egypt*, 23, fig. 14; HOULIHAN, *The Animal World*, 68, fig. 50; VON DROSTE ZU HÜLSHOFF, *op. cit.*, 134, nr. 102, pl. 11.

²²¹ UPM E 3979; PETRIE, *Diospolis Parva*, 44, pl. 29; VON BISSING, *Zeit und Herkunft*, 30.36; VON DROSTE ZU HÜLSHOFF, *op. cit.*, 131, nr. 95, pl. 11.

²²² UPM E 2386. No more precise information about its provenance can be provided, see VON DROSTE ZU HÜLSHOFF, *op. cit.*, 132, nr. 97.

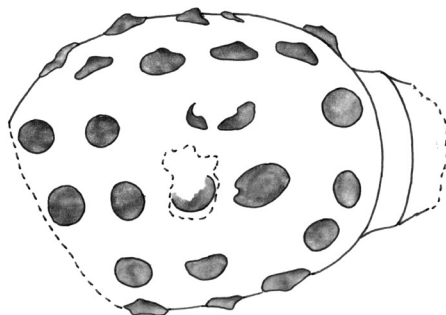
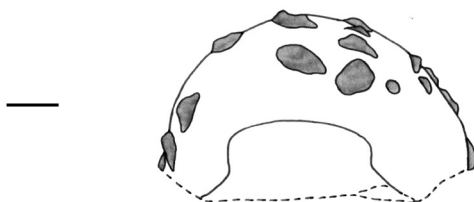
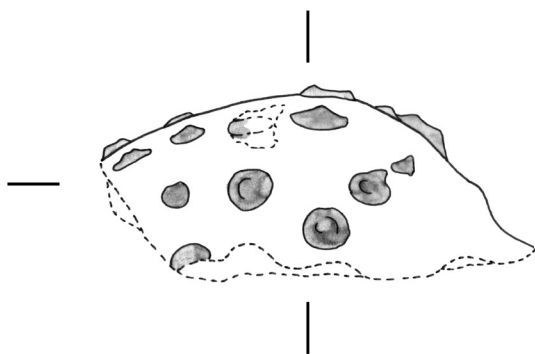


Fig. 18a–b: Miniature of hedgehog in faience (**L.*)
 ManchM1841 ©TheManchesterMuseum;photoby
 G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi



Fig. 19a: Miniature of a truncated-leg female figure in faience (*M.*), ManchM 1787 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci

back; the chain over the left shoulder is very faint).²²³ The figurine is a pale green turquoise colour. It was found broken into five main fragments (one additional break below the neck seems to have occurred at a later time), which join together to make the complete figure, notwithstanding a few scratches and chips.²²⁴ The five fragments display slightly different weathering.

This example is rather unique among the corpus of faience figurines; there is no direct parallel for the arrangement of the five braids and the scalp tonsure. A closer parallel is a female figurine with truncated legs from the late Middle Kingdom deposit *f* in the Obelisk Temple at

²²³ Information kindly provided by Angela Tooley.

²²⁴ For a full description, see TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 438–41.

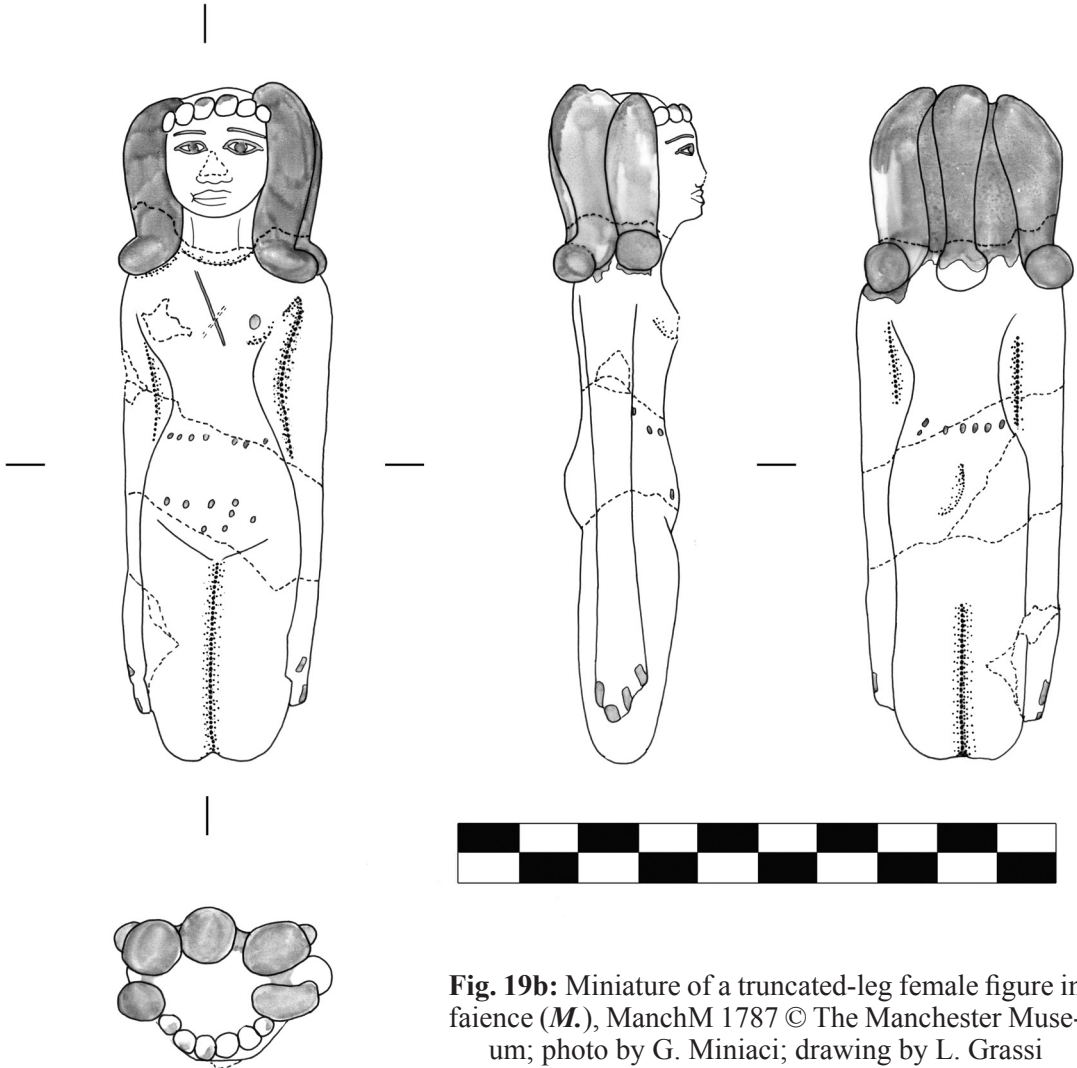


Fig. 19b: Miniature of a truncated-leg female figure in faience (M.), ManchM 1787 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi

Byblos.²²⁵ Stylistically, the arrangement of the hair and braids of this figurine may anticipate the style exhibited by the one in the Ramesseum group. The closest parallels for the hairstyle of M., defined by Tooley as 'proto-three braid',²²⁶ are found on other female figurines with truncated legs in different materials, such as limestone, especially those from tomb XV under the Temple of Tuthmosis III at Thebes.²²⁷ This type of figurine has been classified by Angela Tooley within her 'middle phase' of development, dating to around the mid-Twelfth to late Thirteenth Dynasty.²²⁸

²²⁵ DGA 1170, DUNAND, *Fouilles de Byblos*, 764–5, no. 15363, pl. 99; TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 441. For the dating of the group, see MINIACI, *AuL* 28, 388–9.

²²⁶ TOOLEY, *SAK*, forthcoming.

²²⁷ MARTÍNEZ BABÓN, in ROSATI, GUIDOTTI (eds), *Proceedings of the XI International Congress*, 387, fig. 3.

²²⁸ TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 426, 430. See also TOOLEY, in MINIACI, GRAJETZKI (eds), *The World of Middle Kingdom*, vol. I, 351–2, n. 116 and TOOLEY, *SAK*, forthcoming.

N. Vegetable melon miniature – ManchM 1792 (Fig. 20a–b) = Figurine representing the fruit of a *Cucumis melo*, or more commonly called vegetable melon, in white faience. The artefact is broken into two pieces which rejoin. There are small scratches and chips across the body.

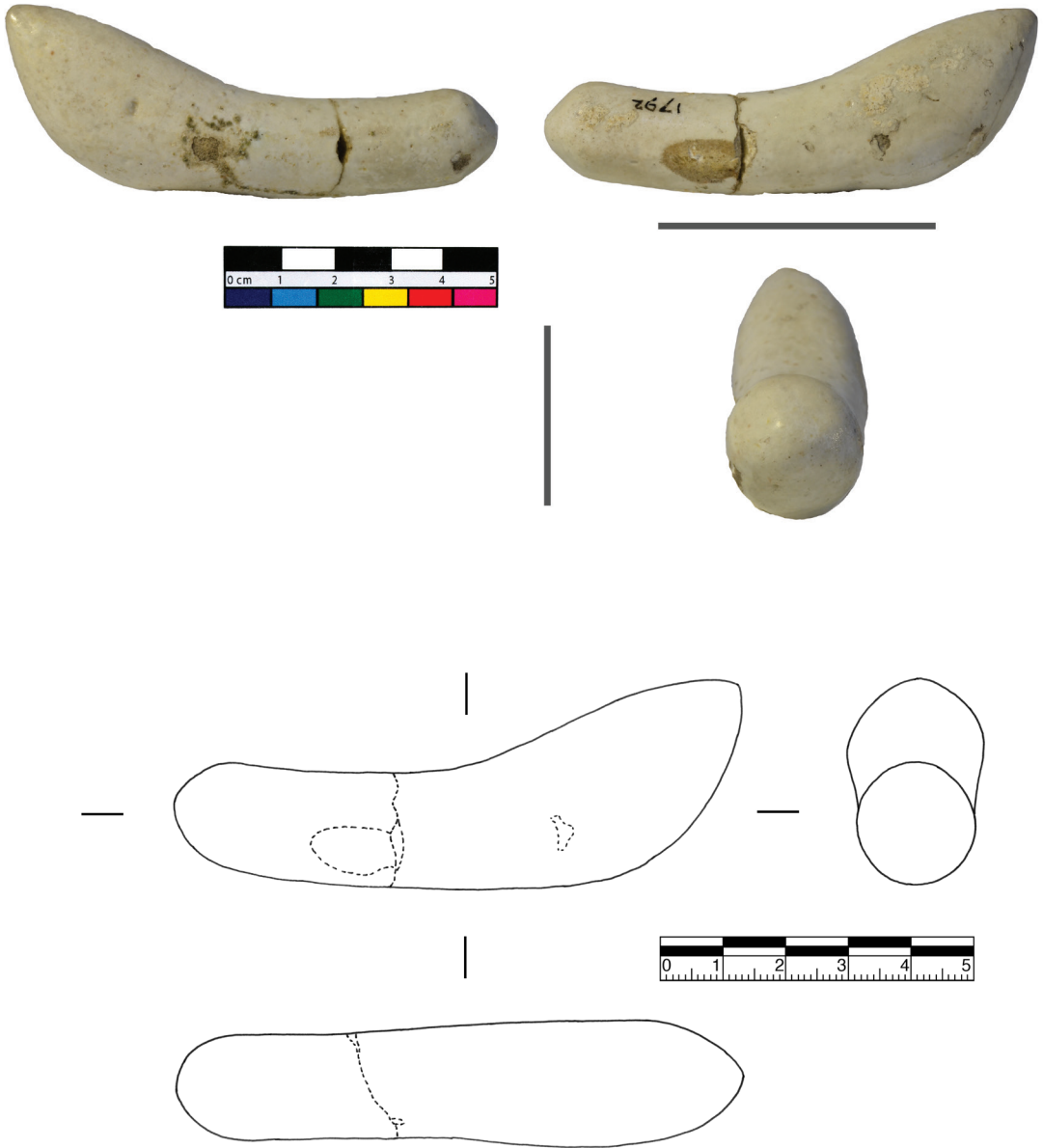


Fig. 20a–b: Miniature of a vegetable melon in faience (N.), ManchM 1792 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi

Faience figurines of vegetable melons are rather widespread during the late Middle Kingdom.²²⁹ The closest parallels for the Ramesseum example are: *a*) a vegetable melon found at Byblos in the late Middle Kingdom deposit *f* of the Obelisk Temple;²³⁰ *b*) a vegetable melon from tomb 1 at Elkab²³¹ of a broad Middle Kingdom date; *c*) a vegetable melon from the so-called el-Matariya group²³² whose provenance cannot be proved.²³³

O. Cup miniature – ManchM 1791 (Fig. 21a–b) = Footed lotus-cup in green faience decorated with a plain water-lily pattern around the outside in black ink. The rim is uneven, modelled by hand in a wavy and irregular shape and painted with black ink. The colour of the faience is green turquoise. One part of the cup wall has broken away and is now missing.

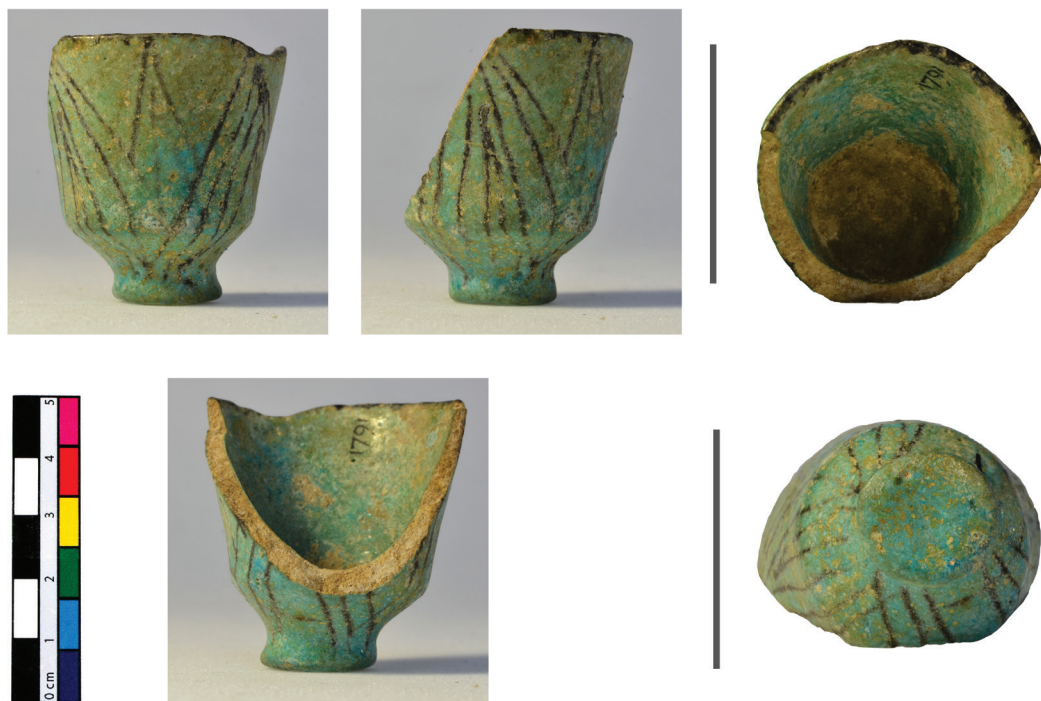


Fig. 21a–b: Miniature of a footed lotus-cup in faience (**O.**), ManchM 1791 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi (next page)

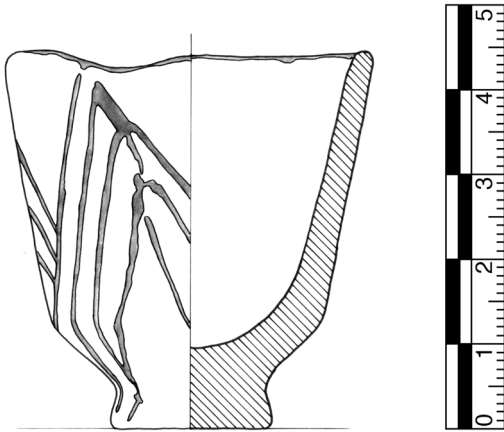
²²⁹ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*. Cf. BABA, YAZAWA, in MINIACI, GRAJETZKI (eds), *The World of Middle Kingdom*, vol. I, 20, figs. 23.1–2, pl. 12.

²³⁰ DUNAND, *Fouilles de Byblos*, 771, no. 15451, pl. 112.

²³¹ QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, 18, pl. 5.1; KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 167.

²³² Louvre E 14188D, KEIMER, *BIFAO* 28, 49, 92; CAUBET, PIERRAT-BONNEFOIS (eds), *Faïences*, 38–39, cat. no. 70; MORFOISSE, ANDREU-LANOË (eds), *Sésostris III*, 212, fig. 4; FRIEDMAN, BORROMEO, LEVEQUE (eds), *Gifts of the Nile*, 239, cat. no. 149.

²³³ MINIACI, *EVO* 42.



Several miniature cups in faience are known, but only two very close parallels come from documented archaeological contexts: *a*) a miniature cup from Pit 453 at Lisht North,²³⁴ which can be dated to the late Middle Kingdom, although the tomb also contained a number of objects which could belong to the early Middle Kingdom and early Second Intermediate Period;²³⁵ *b*) a miniature cup in faience from Tomb 644, Cemetery S at Harageh, whose context is dated to the late Twelfth Dynasty, probably the reign of Amenemhat III, or even later²³⁶ due to the presence of two juglet fragments (AshM 1914.655A).²³⁷ Other comparable examples are of unprovenanced origin (FitzM E.GA.3080.1943;²³⁸ BM EA 65680; Brooklyn Museum 35.1275).

P. Baboon reduced-scale miniature or amulet – ManchM 1837 (Fig. 22a–b) = figurine of a small seated baboon on a base, in pale green faience. The details are very roughly marked, due to the small size of the miniature, which might have been an amulet, although no holes for suspension or hooking are present. Complete, with just some traces of incrustation over the base and in a few places on the body.

The only comparable reduced-scale miniature (although from the image reproduced in the publication there is no certainty that it was not pierced) is a cynocephalus figurine from tomb T 131 in Cemetery MX at Mirgissa.²³⁹ Another object of faience was also found in the same tomb: a circular lid of a vessel in blue-green glaze, 8.5 cm in diameter, decorated with a water plants motif.²⁴⁰ The tomb equipment contains a number of objects diagnostic of an advanced phase of the late Middle Kingdom (*cf.* a female statuette in steatite, Lille E 25618;²⁴¹ a rectangular coffin;²⁴² shell-shaped golden pendant;²⁴³ a group of miniature pottery vessels.²⁴⁴ In addition, one of the masks seems to bear incomplete hieroglyphic signs²⁴⁵) and others more oriented

²³⁴ MMA 15.3.128.

²³⁵ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, Pit 453.

²³⁶ KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 39 and 44, fig. 20, with several cautions provided by the same authors about the instability of pottery seriation for Cemetery S: 'better for the present not to take the seriation for the S tombs, fig. 20, very seriously', KEMP, MERRILLEES, *op. cit.*, 34.

²³⁷ The juglets may belong to the Levanto-Egyptian group I and extend the dating of the assemblages even into the late Thirteenth Dynasty, see ASTON, BIETAK, *Tell el-Dab 'a VIII*, 142, *cf.* sub-type I.2 and I.3.

²³⁸ BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 103, cat. no. 89b.

²³⁹ VILA, in VERCOUTTER, *Mirgissa II*, 196, no. 69; see also RIGAULT, *Masques de momies*, 216–7.

²⁴⁰ VILA, *op. cit.*, 195, no. 51.

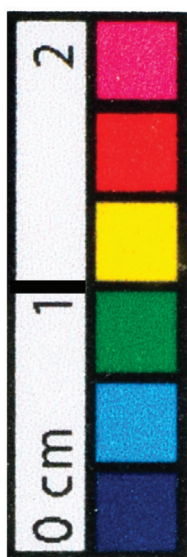
²⁴¹ CONNOR, *Être et paraître*, 85, 338–9.

²⁴² VILA, in VERCOUTTER, *Mirgissa II*, 196, no. C3.

²⁴³ VILA, *op. cit.*, 196, nos. 73–74. *Cf.* similar shell golden pendant from the Pit 453 at Lisht North, MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*.

²⁴⁴ VILA, in VERCOUTTER, *Mirgissa II*, 196, fig. 82.

²⁴⁵ RIGAULT, *Masques de momies*, 219. *Cf.* MINIACI, *RdE* 61.



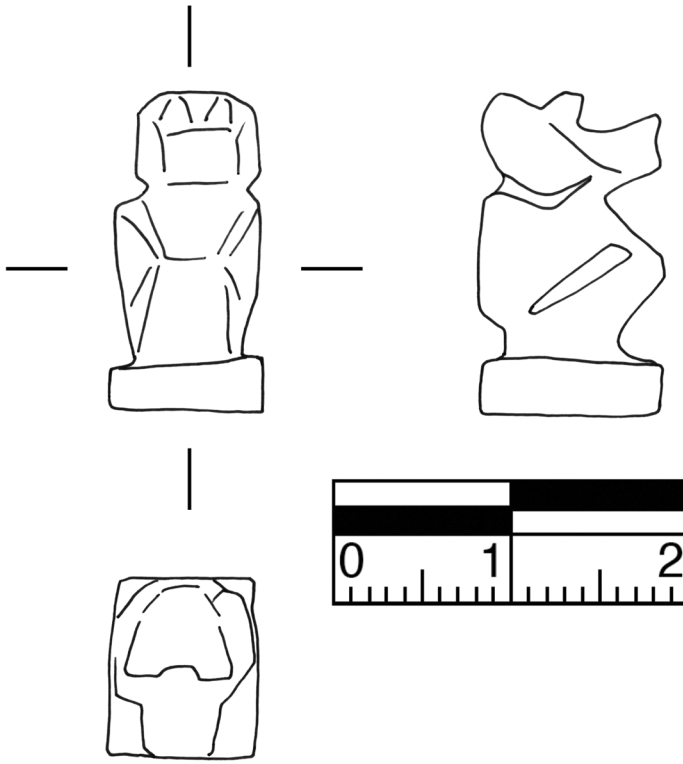


Fig. 22a–b: Small scale miniature of a baboon in faience (**P**), ManchM 1837 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi

towards the Second Intermediate Period, such as the *rishi* masks²⁴⁶ and new types of pottery. The tomb was intended for hosting more than a single deceased, judging from its architecture and the number of interments; its use extends over a prolonged period of time, ranging from the Thirteenth Dynasty to the Second Intermediate Period.²⁴⁷ Quirke notes an elongated version of the Ramesseum baboon miniature in the late Middle Kingdom tomb 79 at Abydos, although in this case it was pierced from top to bottom.²⁴⁸

Direct parallels without doubtful associations are difficult to find for this type of object, since baboon amulets of similar size and shape are attested from the Old Kingdom²⁴⁹ and also during the whole of the late Middle Kingdom,²⁵⁰ but they are usually pierced or have a suspension ring in order to be hung, contrary to the Ramesseum example. However, its iconography is directly influenced by the corpus of faience figurines, appearing to be just a reduced-scale version of them.

Q. Lion reduced-scale miniature or amulet – ManchM 1839 (Fig. 23a–b) = Figurine of a small lion in a walking position on a base. The details are very roughly marked, due to the small size of the miniature, which might have been intended as a sort of amulet, although no holes for suspension or hooking are present. The mane, ears, eyes, mouth and fur are painted in black ink. The faience colour is of a deep green turquoise. The miniature is complete.

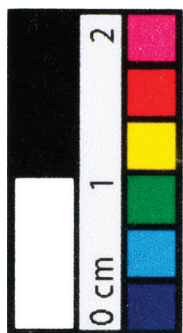
²⁴⁶ Cf. MINIACI, *Rishi Coffins*.

²⁴⁷ BOURRIAU, in WILLEMS (ed.), *Social aspects of funerary culture*, 6; MINIACI, in NYORD (ed.), *Concepts in Middle Kingdom funerary culture*, 124–5.

²⁴⁸ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 124; see also below p. 83.

²⁴⁹ DUBIEL, *Amulette*.

²⁵⁰ GRAJETZKI, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 205–8.



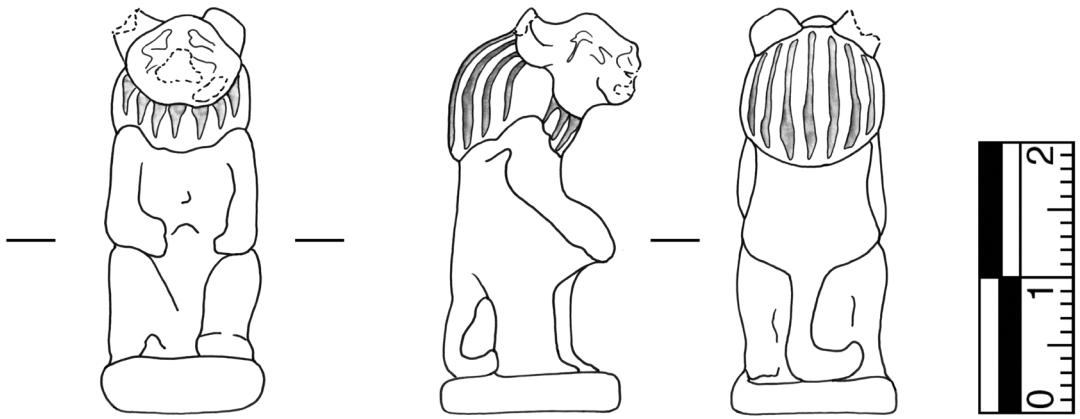


Fig. 23a–b: Small scale miniature of a lion in faience (*Q*), ManchM 1839 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi

To my knowledge there is no direct parallel for this type of object, although its iconography is directly influenced by the corpus of faience figurines; it appears to be just a reduced-scale version of some of them (*cf.* for instance MMA 22.1.178 from Pit 885 at Lisht North).²⁵¹ The position of the lion standing in a striding position, may be part of the same iconographic repertoire circulating at the same time which was used also for the imagery on ivory tusks.²⁵²

Faience figurines can be firmly attributed to late Middle Kingdom contexts (1800–1650 BC), especially those documented in key sites of this period such as Lisht, Lahun and Harageh.²⁵³ The large group of faience figurines found in deposit *f* at Byblos can be also dated to the same period.²⁵⁴ Early/mid-Middle Kingdom or Second Intermediate Period faience figurines are rarer;²⁵⁵ by the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty they had completely disappeared from funerary contexts.²⁵⁶ Due to the size of faience miniatures *P.* and *Q.* they can be classified more as amulets rather than as standard faience figurines from which they may have derived their iconography. Nonetheless, they still do not fully belong to the amulet type because they have no facility for suspension. However, their reduced size does not completely set them apart from the world of faience figurines: for instance, Tomb 112 at Harageh (Cemetery A) contained several very small scale miniatures in faience (representing human beings, vessels, and a rabbit).²⁵⁷ The pottery corpus and other diagnostic elements from this tomb can be located in the later phase of the Middle Kingdom sequence, probably dating around the early Thirteenth Dynasty.²⁵⁸

²⁵¹ MINIACI, *ÄuL* 28, 396, fig. 13.

²⁵² QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 335–6.

²⁵³ MINIACI, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 260–3. *Cf.* KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 165–74.

²⁵⁴ DUNAND, *Fouilles de Byblos*, 741–66, pls. 93–108; reassessed in MINIACI, *ÄuL* 28, 379–408.

²⁵⁵ MINIACI, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 235–84.

²⁵⁶ MINIACI, in TAYLOR, VANDENBEUSCH (eds), *Ancient Egyptian Coffins*, 262–7.

²⁵⁷ UC 6359–64, UC 6370–74, MRAH E 05678, ManchM 6138a–b; ENGELBACH, *Harageh*, pl. 59 [tomb register]; MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, Har-hum1–14.

²⁵⁸ See below under item *W.*, p. 64; for pottery seriation, see also KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 29, fig. 11.

R. Lion-faced female miniature – ManchM 1896 (Fig. 24) = Wooden figurine of a slender naked human female with a lioness's face and ears protruding from the hair. Despite the clear female attributes, the head is framed by the mane of a male lion. There is also a small hole in the top of her forehead, perhaps for another attachment (rather than for the insertion of a crown or a headdress, as the head of this type of figure is usually not surmounted by such an element). The facial features include overly large eye sockets and staring eyes, a large flat nose, and bulging cheeks. The arms were made separately and are attached to her body with wooden dowels. The arms were probably intended to be moved up and down, given the use of dowels. The figurine holds a separately fashioned copper alloy serpent in each hand, inserted through a hole in each fist. The breasts are carved in relief and an incised long vertical line below the pubic triangle indicates the vulvic cleft. The feet are turned slightly outward and naturally carved over a thick base, which may have been inserted into another support, unfortunately missing or not placed into the burial. Pierre Meyrat has tantalisingly proposed that this miniature could have been fitted inside the top of a missing forked copper alloy or wooden butt used to trap the head of a snake.²⁵⁹ The artefact is chipped in a limited number of places: the left ear, below the right breast, at the hips, on the legs. The right arm dowel is lost; a series of cracks in the wood are visible starting from the base of the left foot going up to the knee. There are traces of yellow paint on the body and black paint on the hair or wig. Written sources provide a name for the late Middle Kingdom depiction of the figurine's male counterpart, Aha, while there is no label for the female version;²⁶⁰ later sources identify her with Beset, the female counterpart of Bes.²⁶¹ The artefact has been variously interpreted as the representation of a goddess,²⁶² a human female impersonator (priestess?) wearing a male leonine mask,²⁶³ or an 'unclothed' hybrid demon with human body and animal features.²⁶⁴

This figurine seems to be a faithful three-dimensional representation of the female human being with lion's mane and ears holding snakes that appears on late Middle Kingdom birth tusks (cf. G.) and on the birth brick discovered at Abydos.²⁶⁵ However, this particular figurine is unique because of the size, material and type of representation, lacking any close parallels in the plastic arts. Of these, a vaguely similar wooden figurine – of smaller size and much less detailed – was found in the late Middle Kingdom town of Lahun in a hole under the floor of a house chamber (middle south side of rank A), associated with two ivory clappers.²⁶⁶ This figurine had small pegs below the feet for attachment to a support. Another, very eroded Middle Kingdom figurine of a female lion-faced figure made of wood – but again smaller in size (h. 10.7 x th. 2 cm)²⁶⁷ and a third, roughly sketched piece of wood²⁶⁸ come from the MMA

²⁵⁹ MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 190, quoting CHERF, *ZÄS* 109, 90, 97, who connects anti-snake weapons to the iconography of Aha/Bes.

²⁶⁰ Perhaps ḥꜣ.t, see GNIRS, in KESSLER *et al.* (eds), *Texte – Theben – Tonfragmente*, 131. The female figure is only once labelled 'the one who protects', which is more like a generic epithet rather than a name.

²⁶¹ For a more extensive description, see QUIRKE, in OPPENHEIM *et al.* (eds), *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, 206–7, cat. no. 141A.

²⁶² RITNER, *The Mechanics*, 223, n. 1037.

²⁶³ BOSSE-GRIFFITHS, *JEA* 63, 102–3; LORAND, *Le papyrus dramatique*, 18.

²⁶⁴ WEINGARTEN, in MYNÁŘOVÁ, ONDERKA, PAVÚK (eds), *There and back again*, 188.

²⁶⁵ WEGNER, in SILVERMAN, SIMPSON, WEGNER (eds), *Archaism and Innovation*, 476–71.

²⁶⁶ PETRIE, *Kahun*, 30, pl. 8.14, QUIRKE, *Lahun*, 81–2.

²⁶⁷ MMA 15.3.1088, Lisht North, surface find; ALLEN, *The Art of Medicine*, 31, cat. no. 24.

²⁶⁸ MMA 15.3.1105, Lisht North, Pit 449, WEINGARTEN, in MYNÁŘOVÁ, ONDERKA, PAVÚK (eds), *There and back again*, 185, fig. 2.c.6. Another example in wood but of unknown provenance is in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow, no. 5667 (ex-Coll. Golenishchev 1677), published in WEINGARTEN, *op. cit.*, 185, fig. 2.c.2.



Fig. 24: Statuette of a lion-faced or lion-masked female individual (*R.*), ManchM 1790 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci

excavations at Lisht. From the Second Intermediate Period deposit 1300 at Sedment comes an ivory miniature of a lion-faced male figure with pierced clenched hands (as if to hold some items, snake staves?), a rounded belly, scrotum and phallus formed as strips, elongated legs (with the left one advanced forward, feet pointing outwards, and the tail descending along the right leg), displays a comparable, albeit male version of the physiognomy comparable with *R*.²⁶⁹ The wood figurine has been often connected with a mask (Manchester Museum inv. no. 123) made of cartonnage and found in a house at Lahun. This mask was heavily worn, made of three layers of canvas and modelled with Bes-like face: painted black, with grotesque arches over and under the eyes, spots on the cheeks, a band across the head and red lips; the nostrils and the eyes were provided with holes.²⁷⁰ Due to this parallel, the wooden figurine has been often interpreted as a masked woman.

S. ‘Paddle doll’ – ManchM 1832 (Fig. 25a–b) = Very stylised female figurine made of a flat, painted piece of wood, with no limbs and a small rectangular projection for the head. This type of artefact is improperly known as a ‘paddle doll’, given its shape and the former interpretation as a toy.²⁷¹ This type of figurine often has artificial hair made of linen strings or plant fibres threaded with mud or clay balls and faience beads;²⁷² the face is occasionally augmented with a clay or resin ball in which tiny faience ring beads are pressed to form the eyes; however, if it was the case also for *S*., they are no longer present, nor were they documented. Visible around the neck is a black painted choker; from this hangs a necklace, still partly visible as a few descending vertical lines. The body of the figurine is decorated from the breast to the hips with a polychrome checker pattern alternately filled with white, green, red, and yellow pigment. This was probably intended to represent a tunic with diamonds or lozenges. Above the tunic appears to be a black dot on the left side perhaps to indicate a nipple. The rounded lower section displays a large painted pubic triangle, detailed with black dashes and a long vertical line indicating the vulvic cleft. Above the pubic triangle is a girdle featured by a single black line, which continues on the back of the figure. Two black spots on the back above the girdle may indicate dimples; above the right one is a black cross. Further examination of the figurine using DStretch has revealed the horizontal line of the left side cross mark above the sacral dimple dot with suggestions of the vertical line also. This appears to lie partially below a layer of erosion or encrustation of the surface of the wood at this point.²⁷³ The arms are missing. The edges of the lower part of the figurine are partially worn away, probably eaten by white ants.²⁷⁴

‘Paddle doll’ wood figurines come from Beni Hasan, Rifeh, Naga ed-Deir, Sheikh Farag and ‘Akhmin’ – other isolated examples are also known – although the vast majority of them are from Theban funerary contexts; the date usually proposed for them is early Middle Kingdom.²⁷⁵ Bourriau considered *S*. to be an intrusive element inside this group, explaining it as an heirloom from circa two hundred years earlier.²⁷⁶ However, there are no securely attested cases of ‘paddle dolls’ in the early Middle Kingdom (not even the tomb chapel of Unisankh at Thebes, quoted

²⁶⁹ UC 16069. LILYQUIST, in MAGEE, BOURRIAU, QUIRKE (eds), *Sitting beside Lepsius*, 295, fig. 1b, 303; BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 112, no. 98.

²⁷⁰ PETRIE, *Kahun*, 30, pl. 8.27.

²⁷¹ Cf. TOOLEY, *GM* 123, 101–11; QUIRKE, in QUIRKE (ed.), *Lahun Studies*, 141–51.

²⁷² Cf. BM EA 22632; MMA 31.3.35; see TOOLEY, *Mehen* 2020, 172–3.

²⁷³ Personal communication from Angela Tooley, on 14.05.2020.

²⁷⁴ For a full description, see TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 447–50.

²⁷⁵ BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 127. MORRIS, *JARCE* 47, 72, giving a broader range from the Sixth to Thirteenth Dynasty. See recently also BEHA, DONNAT, in DONNAT, HUNZIKER-RODEWALD, WEYGAND (eds), *Figurines féminines nues*, 59–64.

²⁷⁶ BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 127.



Fig. 25a: ‘Paddle doll’ (S.), ManchM 1832 © The Manchester Museum; photo by A. Tooley

by Morris as one of the first examples),²⁷⁷ as remarked by Quirke: ‘pending publication of the relevant contexts, all wood truncated figurines might be from late Middle Kingdom production and deposit, with none securely early Middle Kingdom or Second Intermediate Period’.²⁷⁸ Cemetery MMA 800 in the Asasif area, from where a significant number of Theban ‘paddle doll’ figurines derive, also include late Middle Kingdom funerary assemblages. For example, among the finds from MMA 828, a rock-cut tomb with a small courtyard in front lying on the southern side of the Mentuhotep II causeway, was a ‘paddle doll’,²⁷⁹ a papyrus ‘burnisher’,²⁸⁰ a truncated-leg female miniature in faience,²⁸¹ and a limestone group figure of two baboons.²⁸² Although the tomb had already been looted in ancient times with the possible reshuffling of

²⁷⁷ MORRIS, *JARCE* 47, 75, n. 36.

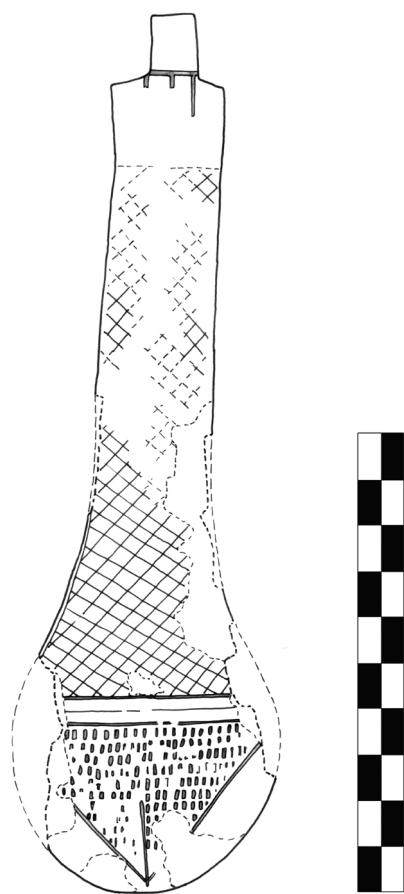
²⁷⁸ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 99.

²⁷⁹ MMA 15.10.90 (painted); and four other ‘paddle dolls’, probably made of wood.

²⁸⁰ MMA 15.10.134.

²⁸¹ MMA [15.10.93] (deaccessioned), MORRIS, *JARCE* 47, 79–80, respectively MMA tomb card no. 2816.

²⁸² MMA 22.3.333; HAYES, *The Scepter of Egypt*, vol. I, 222, fig. 138.



material and different phases of use, and a number of objects may suggest a late Twelfth Dynasty.²⁸³ The papyrus ‘burnisher’ finds a close parallel with similar tools dated to the late Middle Kingdom from Lahun²⁸⁴ and Lisht;²⁸⁵ the figures of the two baboons can be compared with the painted limestone figurine of two men wrestling from tomb 416 A’07 at Abydos;²⁸⁶ the faience female figurine seems to fit into the late Middle Kingdom corpus of faience miniatures.²⁸⁷ In addition, the cross mark applied to the back of *S.* – as suggested by Tooley – exhibits a tradition rare within the wooden ‘paddle doll’ corpus, but is much more widespread in female figurines in the round with truncated legs made in limestone and attested in the late Middle Kingdom.²⁸⁸

In conclusion, a dating of *S.* to the late Middle Kingdom cannot be excluded and is made more likely by the doubtful and fluid situation of cemetery MMA 800, which awaits further research.²⁸⁹ A close parallel for the decoration of *S.* can be found on the ‘paddle doll’ in the Staatliches Museum Ägyptischer Kunst in Munich, ÄS 431, which is unfortunately unprovenanced.²⁹⁰

Fig. 25b: ‘Paddle doll’ (*S.*), ManchM 1832 © The Manchester Museum; drawing by L. Grassi

²⁸³ LILYQUIST, *Ancient Egyptian Mirrors*, 43.

²⁸⁴ PETRIE, *Kahun*, pl. 8.18.

²⁸⁵ HAYES, *The Scepter of Egypt*, vol. II, 294.

²⁸⁶ KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 145–6, no. 416.A.07.107, pl. 17.

²⁸⁷ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*.

²⁸⁸ TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 430.

²⁸⁹ See for instance, the tomb Müller no. 35 at Thebes (‘paddle doll’ = JE 43088; ANTHES, *MDAIK* 12; MINIACI, QUIRKE, *BIFAO* 109, 345, n. 28; GRAJETZKI, *Burial Customs*, 59–60), belonging to a transitional phase from the early to the late Middle Kingdom. Probably also Asasif Tomb 839, usually attributed to the early Middle Kingdom, might instead be dated to the late Middle Kingdom (for the archaeological context see QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 105–6; MORRIS, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 296–7). See also tomb TT 316 (MMA 518) which can be dated to the mid-late Middle Kingdom and, although in a disturbed context, includes a truncated-leg female figurine and a hippopotamus miniature, both in faience (respectively JE 47710/ GEM 1338 and JE 47711/ GEM 34085; see MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*), a faience scarab (JE 47714) belonging to Tufnell’s class 6B1 dated to the late Middle Kingdom (TUFNELL, *Studies on Scarab Seals*, 126, pl. XXIV.2069; BEN-TOR, *Scarabs*, 139, pl. 14.6–7, 25), two block statues (JE 47708–09) bearing the title *iry pḏt* ‘bow-keeper’, which is not attested before the late Middle Kingdom (STEFANOVIĆ, *The Holders of Regular Military Titles*, 170–7, nos. 903–956), a blue anhydrite cosmetic vessel not attested before the reign of Senwosret I and in use until the Second Intermediate Period (FAY, *MMJ* 33, 27).

²⁹⁰ DIAZ HERNANDEZ, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 126, fig. 1.

T. Truncated-leg female miniature – ManchM 1789 (Fig. 26a–b) = Painted limestone figurine of a naked female with truncated legs, with the arms along the sides of the body (the left is longer than the right). The large ears are exposed and asymmetrical, with the left larger than the right. The hairstyle consists of a tripartite wig with two broad sections falling to the front, tucked behind the ears and with straight edged ends resting on each breast, and a group of four individual braids set side by side at the back. The middle of the wig is featured by a wide groove running from the forehead to the crown, painted in blue; this may indicate the cropping or shaving of the head (similarly in *M.*).²⁹¹ The skin is painted yellow and the hair, eyes, eyebrows (?), and pubic triangle in black. The body is decorated with a red coloured girdle around



Fig. 26a: Miniature of a truncated-leg female figure in limestone (*T.*), ManchM 1789 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci

²⁹¹ TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 443.

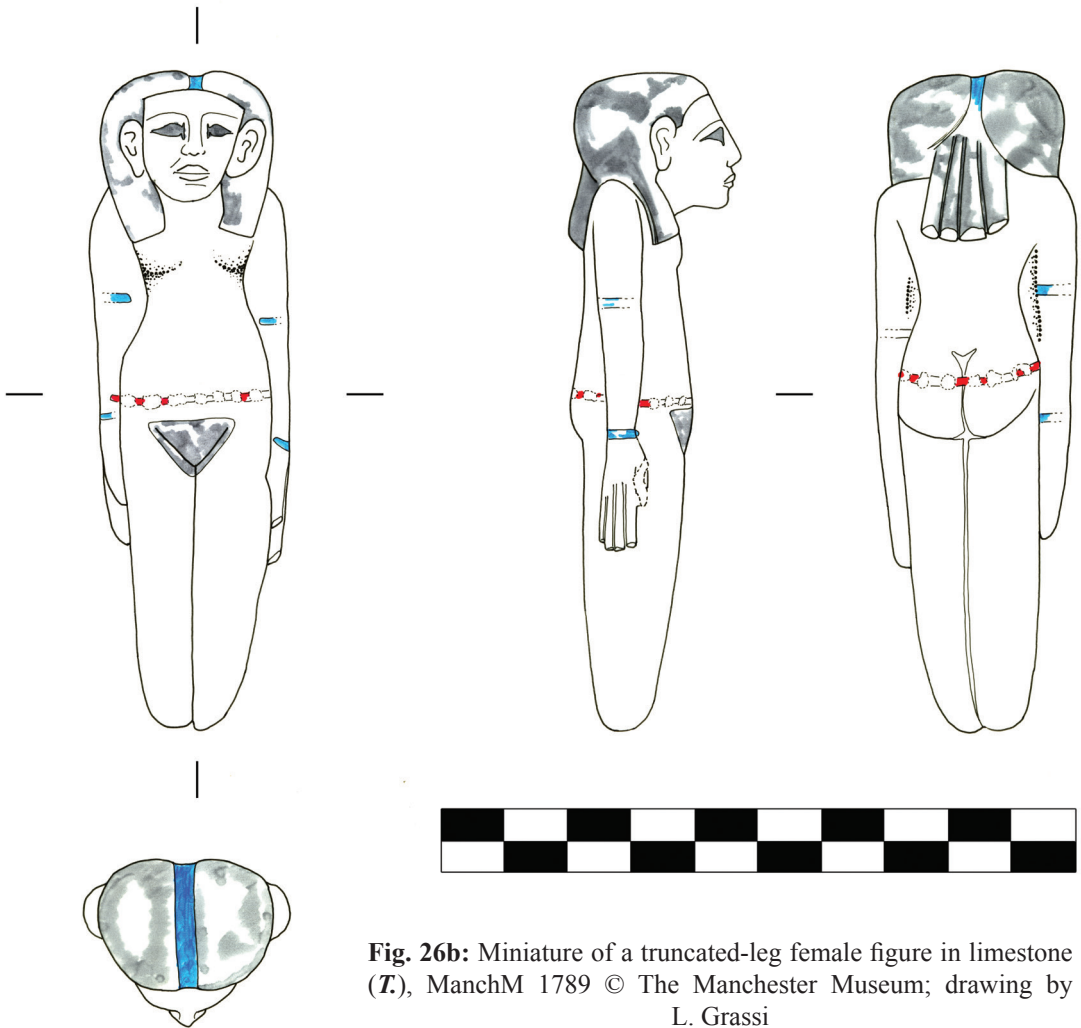


Fig. 26b: Miniature of a truncated-leg female figure in limestone (*T*), ManchM 1789 © The Manchester Museum; drawing by L. Grassi

the hips, a row of bracelets painted in blue-green around the wrists and armlets on the upper arms. The coloured decoration of the girdle and bracelets seems to have been intentionally scratched away, as in several places the damage follows the shape of the painted object, whose colours are just occasionally preserved especially in places not easily removed, such as in the junctions between body parts. Some of the black paint of the pubic triangle is also scratched away. Faint traces of a cross-hatching pattern of a clothing (?) are visible on the back. The figurine is undamaged.²⁹²

U. Female miniature – ManchM 1794 (upper part) (Fig. 27a–b) = Upper part of a painted limestone figurine of a naked female, very probably of the same type as *T*, *i.e.* with truncated legs, preserved to the level of the hips. The arms hang by the sides of the body. The large ears are exposed and asymmetrical, with the left larger than the right and set at a lower level. The figurine has a similar hair style to that of *T*. with a similar groove in the middle of the head (the blue paint is absent). There are traces of yellow paint on the skin and black paint marking the

²⁹² For a full description, see TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 441–3.

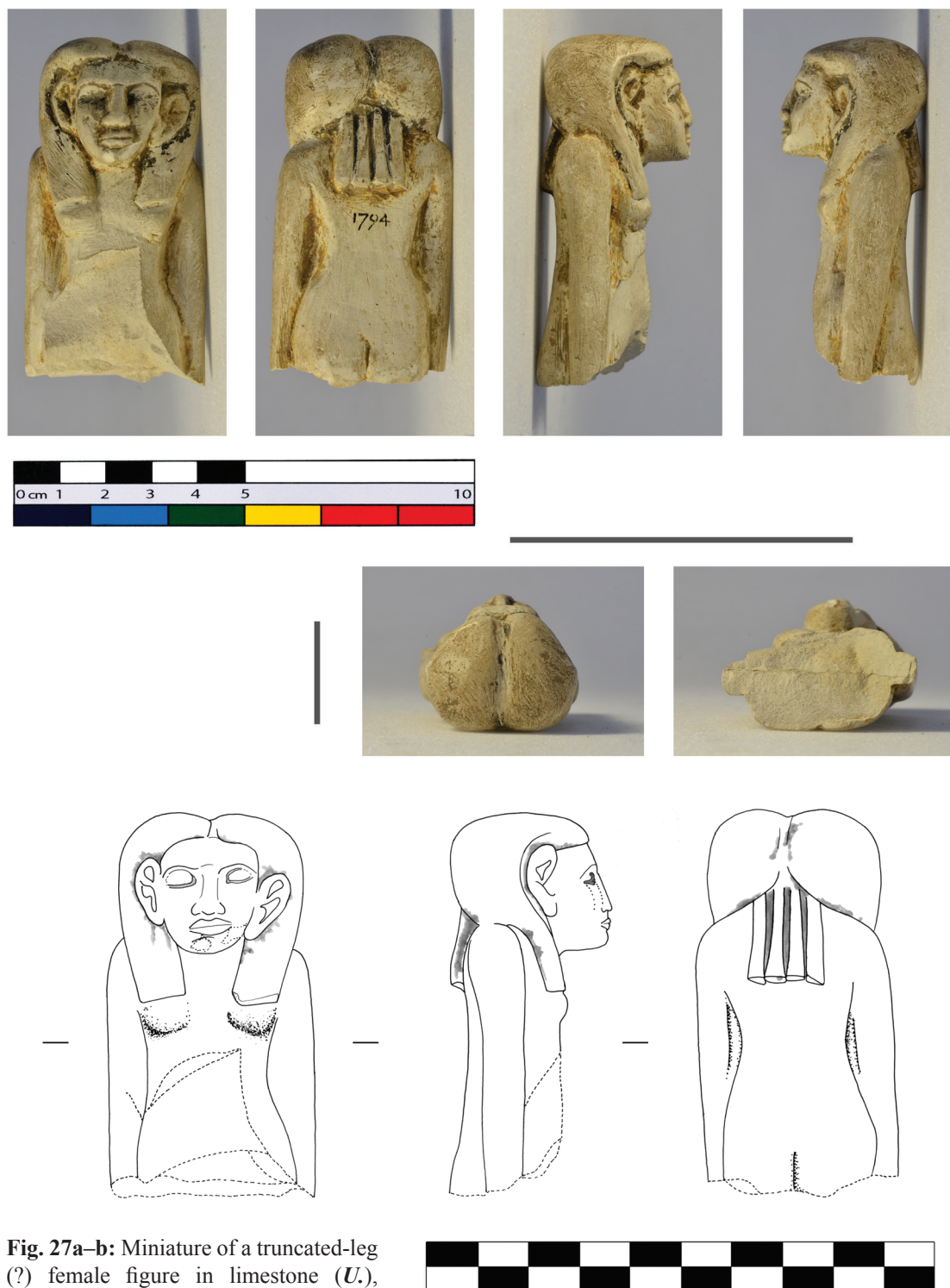


Fig. 27a–b: Miniature of a truncated-leg (?) female figure in limestone (*U.*), ManchM 1794 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi

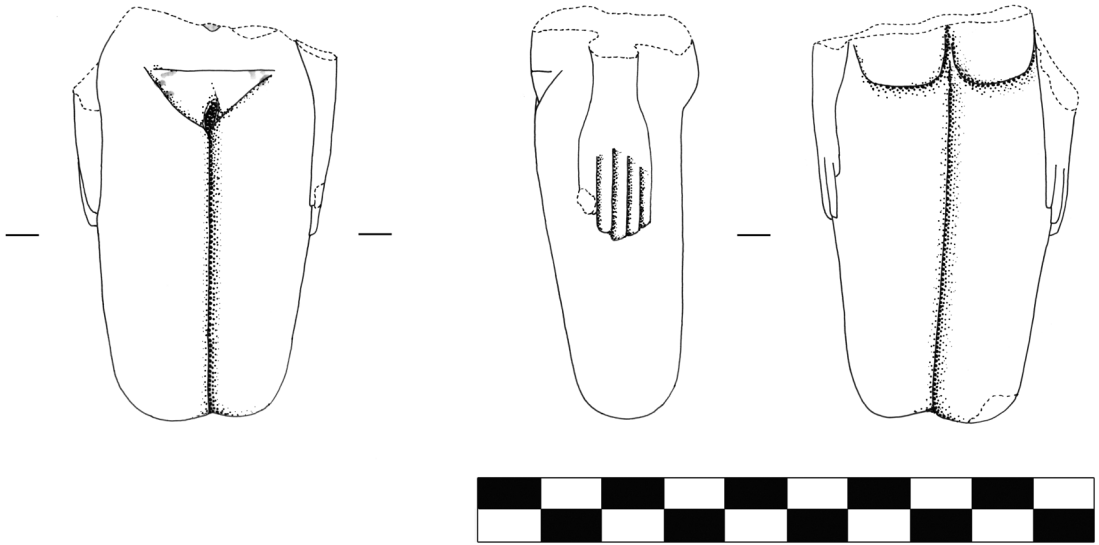
pubic area, the hair, and other details such as the eyes. The front part of the body is fractured below the breast. The break seems to be recent, as it is free from ancient dirt unlike other stone figurines in the group. In contrast to figurines *T.* and **V.*, the body of *U.* is full of scratches, slightly less over the face, where there are a few traces of colour preserved; yellow for the face and body parts and black for the hair and facial details (eyes; eyebrows?).²⁹³

***V. Truncated-leg female miniature – ManchM 1788 (lower part)** (Fig. 28a–b) = Lower part of a painted limestone figurine of a naked female with truncated legs, with the arms along the sides of the body. The pubic area features a lightly incised horizontal line and a deeper vertical groove. The navel is slightly hollowed and then painted black. The figurine was broken off at the waist, and this break is probably ancient as it is covered in dirt (cf. unlike *W.*).



Fig. 28a–b: Miniature of a figurine of a truncated-leg female individual in limestone (**V.*), ManchM 1788 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi (next page)

²⁹³ For a full description, see TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 444–6.



All of the truncated-leg figurines (including *M.* and **V.*) belong to the so-called Type 1 of Geraldine Pinch, who aimed at classifying female figurines in association with Hathor or domestic cults.²⁹⁴ The Type 1 figure is distinguished by the absence of the lower part of the legs, their manufacture in specific materials (faience, wood, ivory, limestone), and being modelled in the round. Type 1 was in use between the Twelfth Dynasty and the Second Intermediate Period.²⁹⁵ According to Tooley, who has revised Pinch's typology in light of archaeological contexts and distinctive hairstyles, miniatures *T.* and *U.* (including also *M.*, see above) can be dated to the middle phase of the production of Type 1 female figurines – her 'middle phase' – in contexts dating to the end of the Twelfth to mid/late Thirteenth Dynasty.²⁹⁶ Figurines *T.* and *U.* fit the style of the middle phase:²⁹⁷ the frontal part of the hair style resembles the common lappet wig type found on statuary of the late Middle Kingdom,²⁹⁸ while the rear part of four braids set side by side is rather unique and can be compared with a steatite statuette from Coptos, dated to the late Middle Kingdom/Thirteenth Dynasty according to Simon Connor's stylistic analysis.²⁹⁹ The craftsmanship of *T.*, *U.*, and **V.* could be the result of a single individual or workshop.³⁰⁰

W. Herder miniature – Philadelphia E 13405 (Fig. 29) = Ivory miniature of a male human being carrying a calf on his back. The figurine does not aim to represent a dwarf,³⁰¹ but more probably to show the slightly grotesque figure of a herder, with some exaggerated traits, exposed genitalia, swollen abdomen, and overt nudity;³⁰² an iconography reproduced in faience

²⁹⁴ PINCH, *Votive Offerings*, 198–9.

²⁹⁵ PINCH, *op. cit.*, 198–9, 226–7, List 1.

²⁹⁶ TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 430–1, 450, 453.

²⁹⁷ See also TOOLEY, *SAK*, forthcoming.

²⁹⁸ TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 443.

²⁹⁹ UC 16888; CONNOR, *Être et paraître*, 199; TOOLEY, *op. cit.*, 443, n. 57.

³⁰⁰ TOOLEY, *op. cit.*, 446 (cf. Bonhams Lot 23).

³⁰¹ Cf. GNIRS, in KESSLER *et al.* (eds), *Texte – Theben – Tonfragmente*, 141.

³⁰² KÓTHAY, *BMH* 116–117, 15–6.

figurines of the time.³⁰³ The right leg and the head of the human figure are missing, as well as the lower part of the animal's body. The body of the animal was diagonally broken in two halves and rejoined already during the excavations. It is chipped in places.³⁰⁴

A comparable bone figurine of a calf – probably being carried over the shoulders of a human figure (missing) – comes from Harageh tomb 112.³⁰⁵ According to the seriation of Kemp, the pottery corpus of tomb 112 seems to belong to the later phase of the Cemetery A sequence, probably dating to around the early Thirteenth Dynasty.³⁰⁶ Among the diagnostic elements from the tomb is a bag-shaped beaker with pinched ring base of a widespread type attested from the time of Amenemhat II to the early Thirteenth Dynasty, while an ovoid jar with round base, tall flaring neck, and rolled rim type occurs more frequently in the latter part of the Twelfth–Thirteenth Dynasty.³⁰⁷ A double scarab, though quite rare, is a type attested especially in the late Middle Kingdom.³⁰⁸ The *rdi r* formula and the interlocking scroll and spiral design may



Fig. 29: Miniature of a figurine of a herder carrying a calf in ivory (*W.*), Philadelphia E 13405 © University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology; photo courtesy of Kevin Cahail

³⁰³ MINIACI, in HUDÁKOVÁ *et al.* (eds), *Art-facts and Artefacts*, 75–6; cf. MFA 11.1524, HORNE MANN *Types of Ancient Egyptian Statuary*, vol. V, no. 1339; DASEN, *Dwarfs*, 284, cat. no. 191, fig. 9.23; qtd. KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 139.

³⁰⁴ The pieces have not been inspected by the author; all the descriptions are based on the photographic record provided by Quibell at the time of the report.

³⁰⁵ UC 6365; ENGELBACH, *Harageh*, 11–2, pl. 14.1.

³⁰⁶ KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 41–50.

³⁰⁷ See for the beaker SCHIESTL, SEILER, *Handbook of Pottery*, vol. I, 538, 540, no. 3 and 665, no. 1; for the jar see ASTON, *Tell el-Dab'a XII*, type 5, 82–3, no. 145, pl. 40, dated to the late Twelfth Dynasty.

³⁰⁸ UC 51039; MINIACI, QUIRKE, *BIFAO* 109, fig. 12 = early–mid-Thirteenth Dynasty.

equally point to a late Middle Kingdom or Second Intermediate Period date.³⁰⁹ In conclusion, diagnostic elements from tomb 112 are all consistent with a rather advanced phase of the late Middle Kingdom, which could extend also into the early Second Intermediate Period.³¹⁰ A miniature calf head, modelled in clay and unfortunately broken off from its original body, was found in the ‘rubbish’ pile north of the main entrance to the pyramid temple of Senwosret I, together with sealings bearing the names of Senwosret I, Senwosret II, and Sobekhotep III.³¹¹ Robert Ritner has drawn an interesting association between the pose of the figurine with the fording rite of cattle crossing a canal and Old Kingdom scenes of herdsmen carrying calves into the water.³¹²

X. Cuboid rod – ManchM 1795 (fragment) (Fig. 30a–b) = Part of an ivory magic rod decorated with two recumbent feline animals on each side. One side is decorated with an incised vertical line followed by a feline (probably a lion) rising on its front legs with mane indicated by transverse lines and a vertical band (*cf.* UC 16885 from Lahun)³¹³ and its body with dashes indicating the fur, and a recumbent lion with mane indicated by an incised chevron pattern. The uppermost part of the head and the eyes of the two figures are cut away. The other side is decorated with a vertical incised line followed by a feline (probably a cat) rising on its front legs, with dashes indicating the fur, and a recumbent feline (lion?) with dashes over the body. The head of both these representations is cut away. The underside of the rod is decorated with incised alternating horizontal and vertical triple bands, and two at the ends. The body of the artefact has a circular cavity, perhaps a method of joining with other similar pieces. In fact, cuboid rods are usually made up of individual segments (up to four) joined by dowels; some examples have small steatite animals attached to the top. In the Ramesseum example, any additional segments and small animal pegs are missing.³¹⁴ The upper part seems to be cut away, and according to Gnirs, this could have been the result of plunderers removing the miniature elements – animals – usually pinned on the top of this type of object, due to their value and supposedly being made of a material more precious than ivory.³¹⁵ The lower part of both sides appears worn, because the lower lines of the animals are erased or worn off. Both ends of the cuboid rod are intact indicating that this is its original length.

Comparable parallels come from Pit 315 at Lisht North,³¹⁶ deposit *f* from Byblos³¹⁷ (comparable rods in the Fitzwilliam Museum, E.426.1982 and E.2.1986, although both of undocumented provenance); the village of Lahun,³¹⁸ and Thebes.³¹⁹ The last two examples (from

³⁰⁹ BEN-TOR, *Scarabs*, 20–1, pl. 12.1–4.

³¹⁰ MINIACI, *EVO* 43, forthcoming.

³¹¹ LANSING, *BMMA* 28, 22, fig. 18.

³¹² RITNER, *The Mechanics*, 225–7; KOLEVA-IVANOV, *BIFAO* 106, 173; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 194, n. 120; see also MINIACI, in HUDÁKOVÁ, JÁNOSI, JURMAN, SIFFERT (eds), *Art-facts and Artefacts*, 75–6.

³¹³ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 342.

³¹⁴ BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 116, cat. no. 105; QUIRKE, *Lahun*, 99–100.

³¹⁵ GNIRS, in KESSLER *et al.* (eds), *Texte - Theben - Tonfragmente*, 137. This reconstruction is rather doubtful. Most of the known small pegged animals on top of the cuboid rods are made of steatite, which certainly would not be considered a precious material worth being removed. If actually stolen or removed because of their value, then ivory and copper alloy should also be ruled out, since other elements in these materials are preserved in the group.

³¹⁶ BOURRIAU, in QUIRKE (ed.), *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 17; MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*.

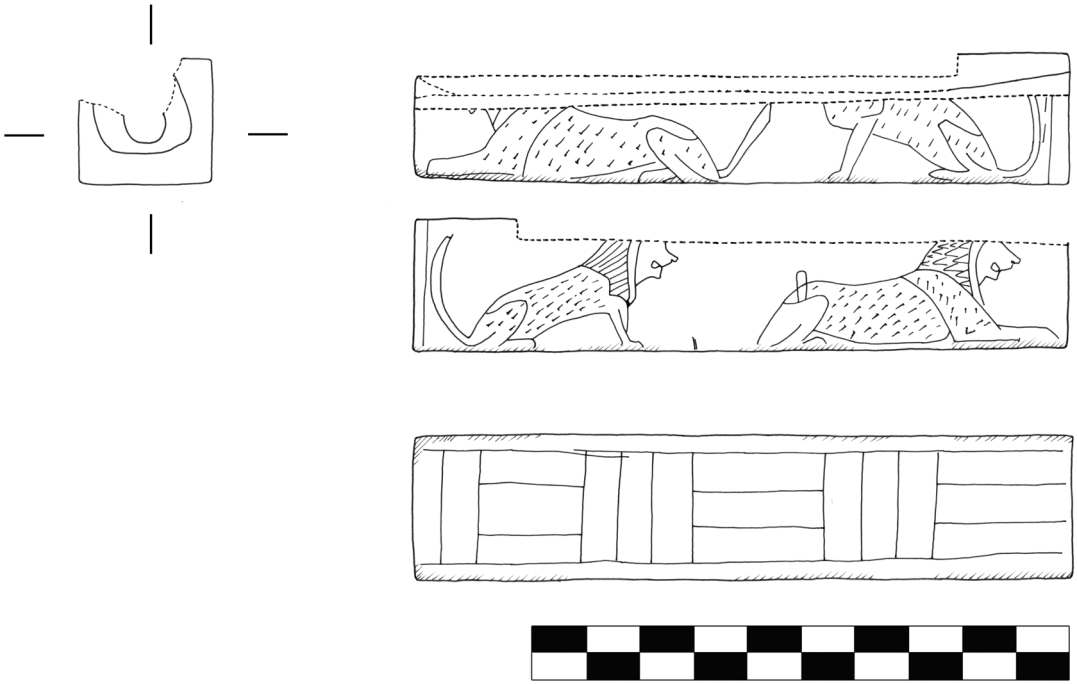
³¹⁷ DUNAND, *Fouilles de Byblos II*, 767, 772, nos. 15377, 15378–15383 + 15462–15463; vol. I, pl. 95.

³¹⁸ UC 16685, PETRIE, *Kahun*, pl. 8.11; QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 342, fig. 4.41.

³¹⁹ BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 116.



Fig. 30a–b: Cuboid rod segment (X), ManchM 1795 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi (next page)



Lahun and Thebes) cannot be dated with precision, although Lahun is suggestive of a late Middle Kingdom dating,³²⁰ while the first two (Pit 315 and deposit *f*) both date to the late Middle Kingdom. There is also the cuboid rod MMA 26.7.1275a-j³²¹ which could be added to the list; however, its stated provenance from el-Matariya is highly questionable, as it comes from a group of objects assembled by the dealer Nahman from the antiquities market.³²² In addition, another glazed steatite cuboid rod – of unknown provenance – is inscribed with the personal name and throne name of Senwosret III, providing a good chronological anchor for the time span of use of this specific category of object.³²³ The iconography on the rods is similar to that found on wands/tusks.

Y. Djed-pillar miniature or amulet – ManchM 1838 (Fig. 31a–b) = Artefact in ivory modelled in the shape of a *djed*-pillar, a column with a broad base which narrows as it rises to a capital and is crossed by four parallel lines. Below the lowest capital are three incised horizontal lines running around the artefact. The artefact has a very thin profile and is pierced at the top and bottom, and although it is possible that it is pierced through, it cannot be established with certainty as the hole is obstructed. The *djed*-pillar could have been joined to another object with a dowel; Meyrat considered the formula BD 137A³²⁴ where a faience *djed*-pillar miniature was

³²⁰ The fact that the cuboid rod comes from Lahun can certainly collocate it in the late Middle Kingdom, but we must bear in mind that Petrie also recorded material from the New Kingdom onwards at the site.

³²¹ KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 163–4, no. 9.

³²² MINIACI, *EVO* 42, 75–99. Other unprovenanced cuboid rods are in the Louvre (E9940) and Hannover (1949.350), see DELVAUX, *MKNAW* 60, 395–411.

³²³ FitzM EGA.1146.1943; BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 115–6, cat. no. 104. See also DELVAUX, *op. cit.*, 395–411.

³²⁴ QUIRKE, *Going out in Daylight*, 307–10.



Fig. 31a–b: Miniature of a *djed*-pillar (Y), ManchM 1838 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci; drawing by L. Grassi

fixed on top of an unbaked clay brick and collocated in the west wall of the embalming hall.³²⁵ As no trace of a suspension loop is preserved, it seems unlikely that it was intended to be worn or hung around the neck or over the deceased's body. It is chipped in some places and shows traces of use and has cracks (no breaks) on one side.

There are no parallels for this object to my knowledge apart from six 4 cm high *djed*-pillar amulets from the excavations of Byblos in a context of the early Second Millennium BC. They come from a deposit located beneath the floor tiles of the temple of Baalat in Byblos ('Temple syrien' of Montet). The deposit, originally dated by Dunand to the Sixth Dynasty because of the occurrence of the royal names of Pepi I and II on some stone vessels, may actually belong to a broader early Second Millennium BC context.³²⁶ Also one of the jewel boxes from the tomb of Sathathoriunet was decorated on the outside with *djed*-pillar inlays in ivory;³²⁷ nonetheless, the ivory element from the Ramesseum group can be hardly interpreted as any type of inlay.

Z. Cobra staff or miniature – FitzM E.63.1896 (Fig. 32) = Copper alloy miniature in the form of a twisting, rearing cobra, found in two pieces and almost complete. The snake is rearing upwards with the body twisting in a series of coils, which are part of the maker's original design. The hood features a pattern of incised vertical central lines, flanked by diagonal ones, aiming to reproduce a cobra's ventral scales. The miniature is broken in two at its midpoint, probably the result of accidental breakage, corrosion or repeated handling. Although often interpreted as a staff in the form of a cobra, given its actual dimensions it is more likely to belong to the world of the miniatures or a wand.³²⁸

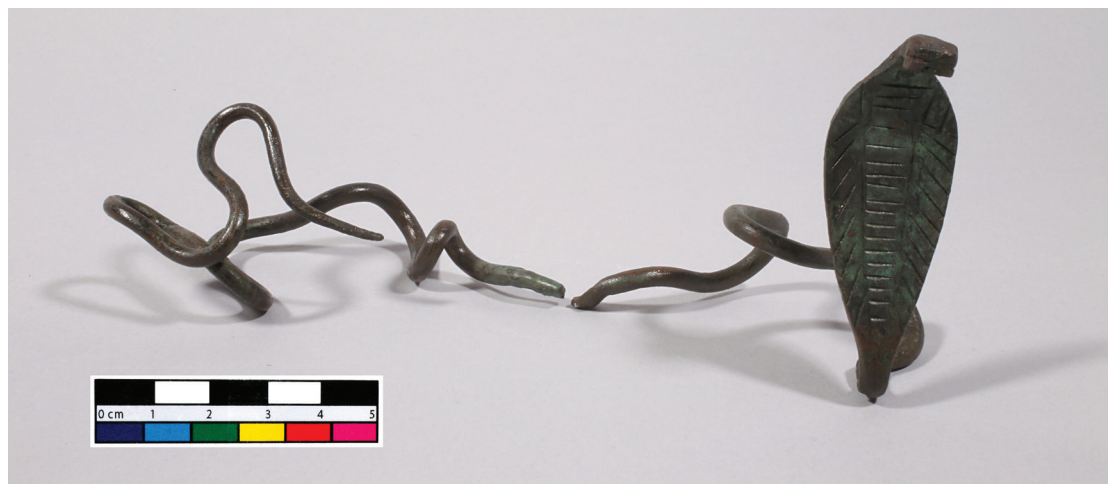


Fig. 32: Miniature of a rearing cobra (Z.), FitzM E.63.1896 © The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; photo courtesy of Helen Strudwick

³²⁵ MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 191; cf. RAVEN, *JEA* 91, 46–9. See TAYLOR, *Journey through the afterlife*, 119, cat. no. 50.

³²⁶ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 102; MONTET, *Byblos et l'Égypte*, 97, nos. 241–6, pl. 54. See image in MORFOISSE, ANDREU-LANOË (eds), *Sésostris III*, 287, no. 212, Louvre AO 10971. For the dating of the deposit see also WARD, *Studies on Scarab Seals*, vol. I, 8–9; VAN HAARLEM, *Temple Deposits*, 62.

³²⁷ WINLOCK, pl. 1B. See also GRAJETZKI, *Tomb Treasures*, 37–8;

³²⁸ Given its dimensions (only 16 cm long), Gnirs supposed that this was a miniature rather than a real staff, GNIRS, in KESSLER *et al.* (eds), *Texte – Theben – Tonfragmente*, 142–3; see also MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 189–91.

Although the image of a cobra with twisting body and rearing hood is rather frequent in Egyptian representations, especially in the late Middle Kingdom and is depicted on ivory tusks,³²⁹ a copper alloy miniature in the form of a snake is rather unique,³³⁰ especially within the figurative world of Middle Kingdom plastic art. Its rarity may be due in part to the accident of discovery, but it is almost certainly also because of the high value of the metal which would have seen it removed by robbers and melted down/re-purposed. There is only one possible parallel in the plastic arts in copper alloy; a rearing cobra with an undulating tail, which is 164 cm long, and therefore ten times longer than the miniature found in the Ramesseum. The cobra staff was found in chamber A of tomb C37 in the Asasif, inside a coffin (belonging to a man called Mentuhotep) of a type dated to the earliest phase of the white anthropoid coffins of the early Eighteenth Dynasty.³³¹ Chamber A was sealed under the reign of Tuthmosis I and therefore it must belong to any period contemporary with or earlier than his reign. Another copper alloy snake (not a cobra) in the form of a staff has been found at Hu in tomb Y458,³³² which is dated to the Middle Kingdom.³³³

44. Ivory papyrus ‘burnisher’ – ManchM 1834 (Fig. 33a–b) = Piece of ivory with the narrow sides slightly concave and a flat base; the upper part is slightly flattened and pierced with a deep hole that does not completely pass through the artefact. One of the faces is slightly concave and chipped in one spot (in the form of a shallow hole). One side shows wear in the form of vertical scratches. Three cracks run vertically from the base. Originally attached to this type of implement is usually a single piece of wood inserted into the hole at the top, which served as a handle.³³⁴ The artefact is usually interpreted as the lower part of a writing tool for smoothing papyri, a sort of ‘burnisher’, based on a description offered by Carter for a similar tool found in the tomb of Tutankhamun.³³⁵ Although scholars have questioned its use as a proper burnisher, due to the difficulty in applying pressure with such a tool,³³⁶ it is unmistakably associated with writing equipment. The object found in the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb is certainly incomplete, as the handle, which would once have fitted into the hole, is presumably missing.

Close parallels in ivory come from: *a*) Pit 465 located inside the enclosure of the mastaba of Nakht (493) at Lisht North and assigned to a broad Middle Kingdom date in the absence of further analyses;³³⁷ *b*) Pit 6L.P17 located inside the enclosure of Sehetepibreankh at Lisht South, whose tomb contained material typical of the late Middle Kingdom³³⁸ and belonging to a higher

³²⁹ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 374–8.

³³⁰ Cf. copper alloy snake staves, MFA 2002.31–32 (unprovenanced), see RITNER, in SZPAKOWSKA (ed.) *Through a Glass Darkly*, 207–8, pl. 1.

³³¹ BM EA 52831; CARTER, CARNARVON, *Five Years’ Explorations at Thebes*, 85, under no. 74; REEVES, TAYLOR, *Howard Carter before Tutankhamun*, 97; STRUDWICK, *The Legacy of Lord Carnarvon*, 26 [6]; TAYLOR, *Journey Through the Afterlife*, 40, cat. no. 8. For the archaeological context, see above n. 50.

³³² AshmM E 1909; PETRIE, *Diospolis Parva*, pl. 32.19; BOURRIAU, in MAGEE, BOURRIAU, QUIRKE (eds), *Sitting beside Lepsius*, 51; QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 375, fig. 4.117.

³³³ BOURRIAU, *op. cit.*, 84.

³³⁴ PINARELLO, *An Archaeological Discussion of Writing Practice*, 78.

³³⁵ CARTER, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen*, 79–81, pl. 22.C (no. 271g; JE 62095); PINARELLO, *op. cit.*, 78, 83, cat. no. #10.

³³⁶ PINARELLO, *op. cit.*, 78–9.

³³⁷ MMA 15.3.164; PINARELLO, *op. cit.*, 82, cat. no. # 7, pl. 5. For the plan and architecture see ARNOLD, *Middle Kingdom Tomb Architecture*, 72–7, pl. 137.

³³⁸ From one of the pits inside the *mastaba* of Sehetepibreankh (Pit 6L.P19) comes an artefact inscribed with the cartouche of Senwosret III, see ARNOLD, *op. cit.*, 59.



Fig. 33a: Rounded flat-bottomed slab (*AA*), ManchM 1834 © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci

level of society;³³⁹ and *c*) the tomb of Neferhotep at Dra Abu el-Naga at Thebes, dated to the Thirteenth Dynasty.³⁴⁰ Another papyrus burnisher comes from the village of Lahun, possibly of late Middle Kingdom date.³⁴¹

BB.–GG. Beads (different types and materials) (Fig. 34) = Some of the beads find close parallels in the late Middle Kingdom corpus from the cemetery at Harageh. The current location of the beads is unfortunately unknown at the moment.

During the late Middle Kingdom burials belonging to the royal circle and highest social levels display a number of common objects (a set of royal insignia and weapons, staves, sticks,

³³⁹ MMA 24.1.36; PINARELLO, *An Archaeological Discussion of Writing Practice*, 82, cat. no.# 8, pl. 5. For the plan and architecture see ARNOLD, *Middle Kingdom Tomb Architecture*, 58–9, pl. 108.

³⁴⁰ MINIACI, QUIRKE, *BIFAO* 109, 357.

³⁴¹ PETRIE, *Kahun*, 32, pl. 8.18.

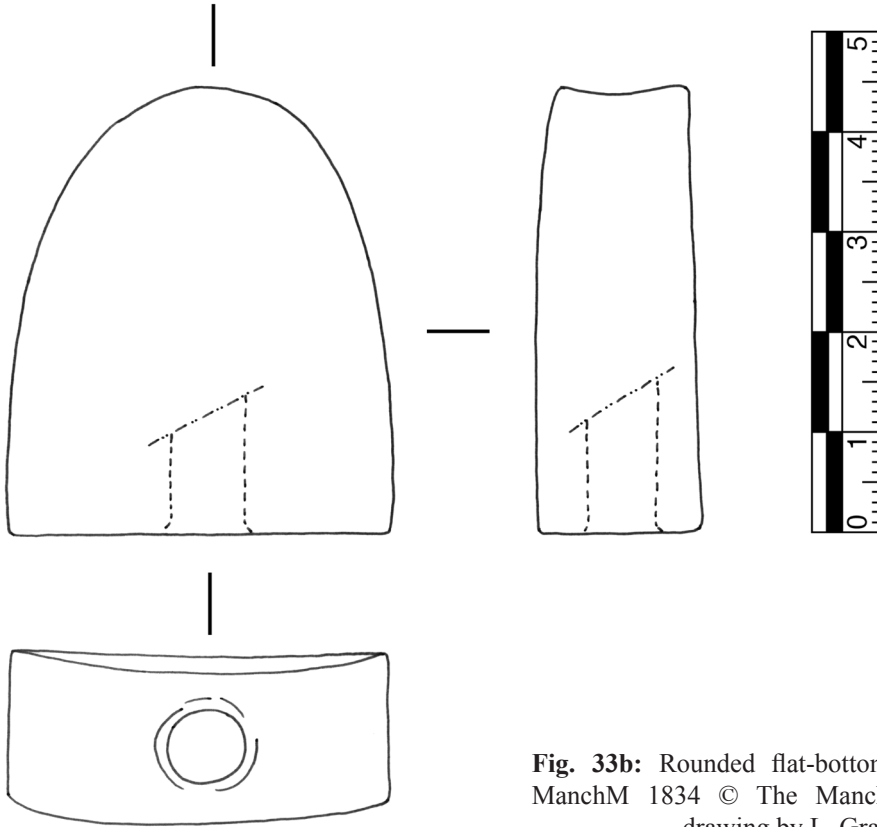


Fig. 33b: Rounded flat-bottomed slab (44.), ManchM 1834 © The Manchester Museum; drawing by L. Grassi

sceptres, flails, mace-heads, mirrors, daggers, bows, arrows) which were meant to create a correspondence between the deceased and Osiris; among them are also the solar-related apron made of long barrel beads,³⁴² broad collars,³⁴³ flails made of conical beads, and armlets.³⁴⁴ Therefore some of the beads found in the Ramesseum tomb may be part of an original ceremonial collar and flail from this type of *Osirification* burial assemblage. The ‘crumb’ beads have been found in late Middle Kingdom contexts such as Pit 319, Pit 883, and Pit 907 at Lisht North,³⁴⁵ and in Pan-grave no. 3248 from Mostagedda.³⁴⁶ All these contexts may extend the dating of these beads into the Second Intermediate Period due to the range of burial equipment found with them.³⁴⁷

³⁴² Cf. the wooden mirror found in the burial of Nubheteptikhered, CG 44010, DE MORGAN, *Fouilles à Dahchour* [1903], 109, fig. 256; GRAJETZKI, in HUDÁKOVÁ *et al.* (eds), *Art-facts and Artefacts*, 243 and fig. 2 and GRAJETZKI, in TAYLOR, VANDENBEUSCH (eds), *Ancient Egyptian Coffins*. An amulet in the form of a swallow with a sun disk was attached to the apron of Nubheteptikhered, see GRAJETZKI, in HUDÁKOVÁ *et al.* (eds), *Art-facts and Artefacts*, fig. 3.

³⁴³ GRAJETZKI, in HUDÁKOVÁ *et al.* (eds), *Art-facts and Artefacts*, 25–39.

³⁴⁴ GRAJETZKI, *op. cit.*, for a synthesis and a complete discussion.

³⁴⁵ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*.

³⁴⁶ Mostagedda type 52, for the archaeological context of this burial see BRUNTON, *Mostagedda*, 120, 123, 126, 129–32, pls. 63, 69, 74, 76; MINIACI, in BADER *et al.* (eds), *Second Intermediate Assemblages*, forthcoming.

³⁴⁷ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*.

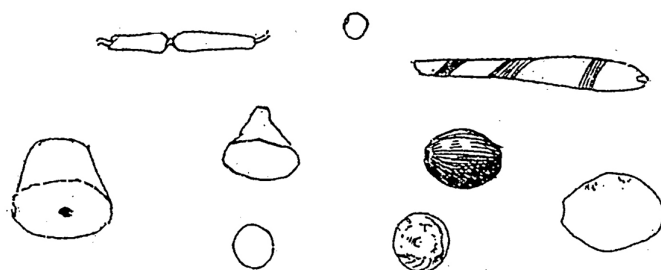


Fig. 34: Beads (*BB.–GG.*), present location unknown, from QUIBELL, *The Ramesseum*, pl. 3

****II.– **NN.** Other objects which may have been found in the same tomb but without any supporting evidence (not described) – ManchM 1863, 1883–1887 (Figs. 35–40)



Fig. 35a: Double kohl-tube (****II.**), exterior, ManchM 1883 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price



Fig. 35b: Double kohl-tube (****II.**), interior, ManchM 1883 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price

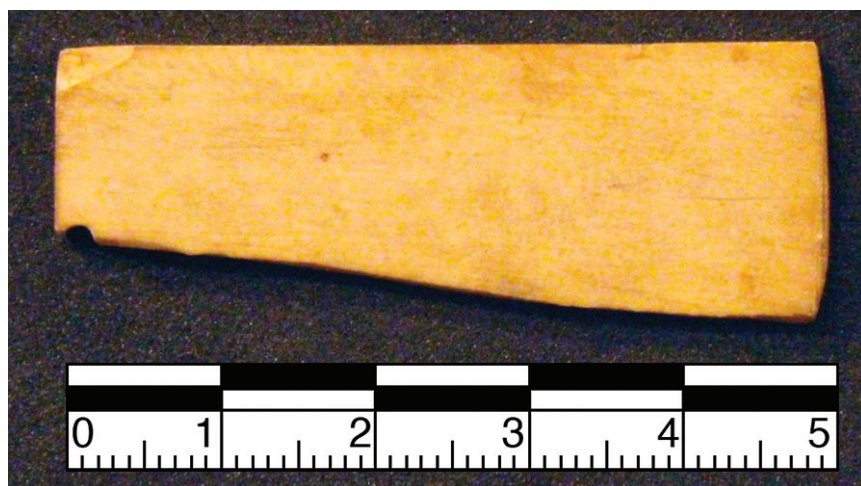


Fig. 36a: Piece of ivory inlay (****JJ.**), front, ManchM 1884 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price

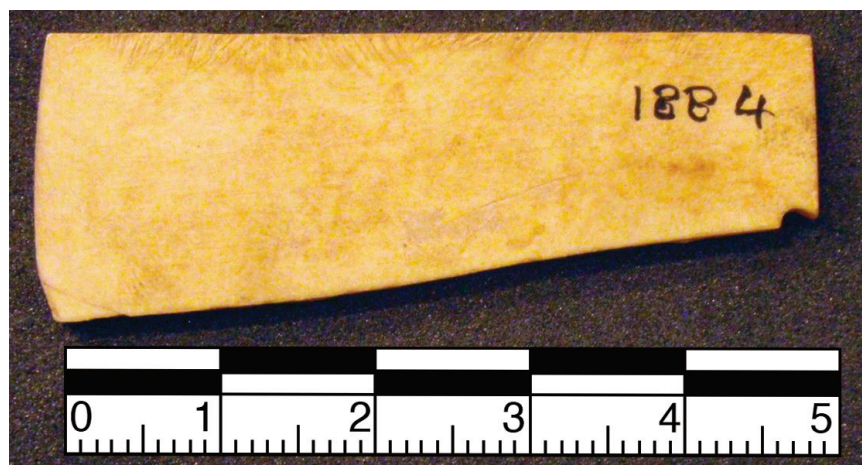


Fig. 36b: Piece of ivory inlay (**JJ.), back, ManchM 1884 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price

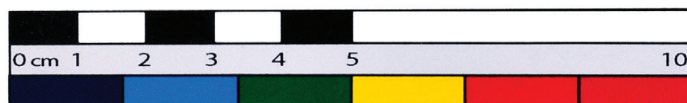


Fig. 37: Fragment of a reed mat or sandal (**KK.), ManchM 1885 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price



Fig. 38: Offering-tray (***LL.*), ManchM 1863 © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price



Fig. 39a: Two pieces of wood of uncertain use (***MM.*), front, ManchM 1886a–b © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price

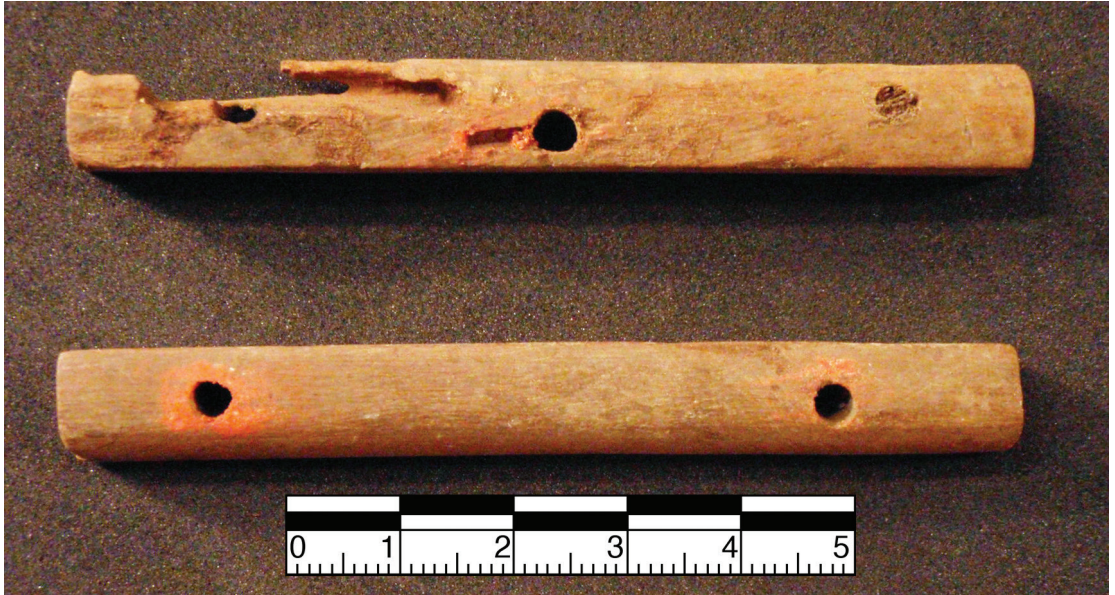


Fig. 39b: Two pieces of wood of uncertain use (**MM.), back, ManchM 1886a–b © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price



Fig. 40a: Four pieces of a wooden box (**NN.), front, ManchM 1887a–d © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price



Fig. 40b: Four pieces of a wooden box (***NN.*), back, ManchM 1887a–d © The Manchester Museum; photo courtesy of Campbell Price

The Dating of the Assemblage

All of the objects in the group are consistent with a broad date in the late Middle Kingdom. The group contains a number of artefacts which support a slightly more advanced phase, *i.e.* the mid-Thirteenth Dynasty: the handwriting of the latest written documents³⁴⁸ (*C.*) and miniatures *M.*, *P.–Q.*, *T.*, *W.* find closer parallels with objects belonging to an advanced phase of the late Middle Kingdom.³⁴⁹ The only element for which some chronological doubts can be raised is the ‘paddle doll’ (*S.*); however even for this type of object a late Middle Kingdom date cannot be completely ruled out. Unfortunately, Quibell did not record any pottery from the tomb, which could have been useful to corroborate the dating of the group. Although Quibell did not provide any plan of the tomb, his description of two chambers at the bottom of the shaft and a third chamber mid-way down can be paralleled with a type of tomb architecture frequently attested in the late Middle Kingdom.³⁵⁰ In cemetery D at Abydos, Mace describes a fitting type of structure for the architecture of late Middle Kingdom tombs (‘XIIIth–XVIIth Dynasty’)

³⁴⁸ PARKINSON, *Poetry and Culture*, 71; QUACK, *ZÄS* 133, 75; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*.

³⁴⁹ QUIRKE, in PRICE *et al.* (eds), *Mummies, Magic and Medicine*, 185; BOURRIAU, in QUIRKE (ed.), *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 20; KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 166.

³⁵⁰ Cf. MINIACI, QUIRKE, *BIFAO* 109, 363–7; KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 110, fig. 37.

that calls to mind the structure of the Ramesseum tomb: '*The pits of this period in cemetery D were from twelve to fifteen feet deep, with a chamber opening from either end; occasionally an extra chamber was cut out at a higher level*'.³⁵¹ Also, late Middle Kingdom structures containing both/either faience figurines and ivory tusks share similar architectonic features, including chamber(s) at the bottom and one half way down the shaft: examples are attested at Lisht and Abydos.³⁵² However, for the sake of clarity, there is the possibility that the third chamber arranged at a higher level in the Ramesseum tomb was a later addition, as it contained only later material and was unconventionally cut into the long side.³⁵³

In conclusion, a late Middle Kingdom date, more probably mid-Thirteenth Dynasty, can be secured on the basis of the material evidence and close parallels for the dating of this group.

The 'Contextuality' of the Assemblage

Uniqueness/regularity of the assemblage

The combination of (most of) these types of artefacts in burial equipment is common in the late Middle Kingdom, as already demonstrated by Kemp and Merrillees for Tomb 416 at Abydos and emphasised by Bourriau in her analysis of a similar range of burials of that time.³⁵⁴ Nonetheless, the number of contexts where faience figurines occur together with ivory tusks and cuboid rods is very limited, occurring only in c. 11% of surviving contexts (which are mostly in disturbed and multiple burial contexts).³⁵⁵ More frequent is their association with ivory clappers³⁵⁶ and figurines of other materials (although never assembled in such a variety of materials).³⁵⁷ Two items are unique and have no exact parallel: the lion-faced female figure (*R.*) and the *djed*-pillar (*Y.*). For *R.*, other wooden figurines of larger size than other miniatures have been documented in late Middle Kingdom burials with a similar range of burial equipment, see for instance the wooden truncated-leg figurine (h. 18.7 cm) of Satrenenutet in Tomb 58 at Hawara.³⁵⁸ Also, such a high number and variety of papyri is completely unparalleled.³⁵⁹ Only the tomb of Neferhotep at Dra Abu el-Naga can constitute some kind of comparative 'bridge'; in the same funerary context, two administrative papyri were associated with a faience figurine of a hippopotamus, a birth tusk, and two papyrus burnishers (the same categories of objects as in the Ramesseum group).³⁶⁰ Finally, no other late Middle Kingdom burial is known to have contained four birth tusks³⁶¹ and figurines in four different types of materials (wood, faience,

³⁵¹ RANDALL McIVER, MACE, *El Amrah and Abydos*, 69.

³⁵² MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, Pits 724, 883, 885 from Lisht North; House Pit 1 from Lisht; tomb 416 from Abydos (with only a single lower chamber), KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, fig. 37. See also Pits 466 and 880 from Lisht North, not included in MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*.

³⁵³ Cf. instead PEET, *The Cemeteries of Abydos*, 35–6, where halfway chambers are usually located above one of the lower chambers, which open on the shorter sides of a rectangular shafts.

³⁵⁴ BOURRIAU, in QUIRKE (ed.), *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 10–6; KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, 168–74. See also MINIACI, in REGULSKI (ed.), *Abydos*, Abydos tomb G62 for a wider range of examples.

³⁵⁵ MINIACI, in HUDÁKOVÁ *et al.* (eds), *Art-facts and Artefacts*, 67–9.

³⁵⁶ MORRIS, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 318, 320, 322; MINIACI, in REGULSKI (ed.), *Abydos*, 180–2.

³⁵⁷ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*. Cf. Abydos 416, in KEMP, MERRILLEES, *Minoan Pottery*, pl. 17.

³⁵⁸ PETRIE, WAINWRIGHT, MACKAY, *The Labyrinth*, 35–6; TOOLEY, *Middle Kingdom Burial Customs*, 332–3.

³⁵⁹ QUIRKE, in PRICE *et al.* (eds), *Mummies, Magic and Medicine*, 185.

³⁶⁰ MINIACI, QUIRKE, *BIFAO* 109, figs. 4, 7, 18.

³⁶¹ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*.

copper alloy and stone).³⁶² Although there is no absolute certainty that these items – despite their proximity – were originally deposited in the same place together (see above *The Find-spot of the Group of Objects*), even in other documented cases of multiple and/or disturbed depositions, such a combination of elements has never been recorded for the late Middle Kingdom.

In conclusion, although all of these objects could fit perfectly together within a typical late Middle Kingdom burial, there are several features that make their assemblage without equal/unique.

Breakage

Although broken, the fragments of most of the objects actually rejoin to make a complete piece; and in some cases their breakage may evoke a certain systematicity, which could add to our understanding of their deposition (see below). Reduced-scale miniatures *P.* and *Q.*, *djed*-pillar (*Y.*), lion-faced (*R.*) and truncated-leg (*T.*) figurines are all complete and unbroken; as noticed by Tooley, the cut in the lower part of female figurine (*U.*) – with the resulting loss of the lower part (although this does not imply that it had originally been deposited in a complete state) – may be modern, probably occurring at the time of excavation. The papyrus burnisher (*AA.*) is also complete, just the stick is missing; probably made of wood, it could have been overlooked by Quibell's workmen.

Clappers (*D.*–**E.*) are both broken in the middle but are almost complete, and the multiple breaks occurring in similar categories of objects like the ivory birth tusks, often broken into several pieces, are not evident with the clappers. Birth tusk fragment *F.* is in a very fragmentary state, missing the large part of the tusk (if this was ever placed in the tomb); two other tusks are almost complete (*G.*, *I.*), and one (*H.*) is unquestionably complete; in addition, all the breaks across the birth tusks are transversal, only in two or three sections are there more lengthways or incidental breaks which could have been caused by the weight of earth, falling stones, poor excavation techniques, accidental trampling or tossing and discarding actions; also the chipping on the tusks is very limited. The faience figurines like baboon (*J.*), truncated-leg female figurine (*M.*) and vegetable melon (*N.*) although found broken, were all complete and made of pieces which rejoin. The breaks of *J.* and *N.* may follow a more conventional procedure: the head and feet are detached (*J.*; similarly with the simian figure **K.*, although here the head is missing) or the object is broken in two (*N.*). The break of **U.* across the waist could be intentional, as it is in line with the other types of breakage occurring on other limestone truncated-leg figurines. The break of *M.* is less ordinary,³⁶³ although can be compared with MMA 32.1.131a-d from Pit 15 at Lisht South, which was broken into four parts but with more regular breakage lines.³⁶⁴ The cobra (*Z.*) was broken in two pieces at the midpoint, probably caused by some sort of voluntary action upon the object or by repeated holding. The arms of the 'paddle doll' (*S.*) are both missing, while the rest of the body was left absolutely intact, if not partially eaten by ants at the lower right end. The cuboid rod (*X.*) show signs of a deliberate horizontal cut, which is uneven across both sides; there appears to be a rationale behind the act - to purposely cut away the heads of all the felines (right at the height of the eyes on one side).³⁶⁵ No other fragments connected to this object were recovered, as for instance has happened in other cases (cf. deposit *f* in Byblos).³⁶⁶ The herder (*W.*) displays breaks at the head (which is missing), one of the legs and the rear part

³⁶² QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 99.

³⁶³ See TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 451, 'clean deliberate breaks [are] usually around the midsection or waist, on other figurines'.

³⁶⁴ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*.

³⁶⁵ Cf. MINIACI, *RdE* 61, 113–34.

³⁶⁶ Cf. MINIACI, *ÄuL* 28, 386.

of the animal; in this case, although the parts vulnerable to breakage are missing, their breakage seems to be more accidental than voluntary or systematic.

Only the hedgehog miniature (**L.*) is substantially incomplete and heavily damaged and its belonging to the group is not ascertained in Quibell's original account.

From the above analysis, it appears evident that there could have been a number of objects intentionally (ritually?) broken: the ivory tusks, clappers, cuboid rod, 'paddle doll', most of the faience (with the exception of the reduced-scale ones and the hedgehog) and copper alloy miniatures: their breakage shows traits of systematicity and repetition. The wood figurine (*R.*) was left surprisingly intact, as is the case for at least one (*T.*), if not two (*U.*), stone figurines. Concerning this last category, any assumption about any normative pattern in the breakage is difficult to assess, as *U.* shows a modern break, which may imply that the lower part was still in place at the time of the excavation (not resumed by Quibell; being of white limestone it may have been inadvertently lost during the excavation phase),³⁶⁷ and **V* may not even belong to the group (see above, p. 15). Therefore, the stone miniatures in the Ramesseum group may potentially have been deliberately exempted from breakage. However, *T.* shows curious spots of damage corresponding to the painted decoration, like on the girdle around the waist, armlets and bracelets, appearing as deliberate attempts to remove the decoration. Figurine *U.* shows even deeper scratches, especially visible on the parts one would expect to have originally been painted, e.g. the wig. Probably also here the intention was to remove (more extensively and successfully) the paint from the statuette. The difference in breakage seems to be connected with specific materials or object types rather than the result of some random accident, unloading, or action: the breaks appear to have been targeted at specific artefacts and parts of them, probably stressing a specific role and function for some of them.

The noticeable difference in the state of preservation and weathering could be due to their different distribution within the heap, as some items might have been covered up and protected by the box (cf. *D.*–**E.*, or the different pieces composing *M.*; see above, *The Find-spot of the Group of Objects*). It cannot be excluded that some of them could originally have belonged to different burials (with different degrees of preservation). However, the fragmentation of objects *per se* does not necessarily represent a sign of destruction, pillaging, or reshuffling, since some objects could have been deposited already broken (being then useless for the living, while still powerful for the dead) or were broken at the time of their deposition in the burial.³⁶⁸

Traces of wear

At least some of the artefacts may have been widely used – probably in daily life or ritual activities – as they show traces of use and adaptation, and were then intended secondarily to assist in the tomb-owner's rebirth after burial. The serpent miniature (*Z.*) was worn thin and broken at the point where it could have been held (if it can be interpreted as a wand);³⁶⁹ the *djed*-pillar, ivory tusks, and cuboid rod are all visibly worn. The clappers show a minor degree of wear and the absence of the frequent holes at their ends may raise the question if they had only been intended for a funerary/votive purpose. The birth tusk *H.* shows more evident signs of use (two holes for suspension?). More difficult to assess is the degree of wear and use of the faience and wooden objects although, for instance, any trace of decoration is absent (worn off?) from the simian figurine **K.*

³⁶⁷ The lower part of *U.* was not found by Quibell, implying either that it was never deposited inside the tomb, or it had been removed during later activity, or that it had been inadvertently lost.

³⁶⁸ Cf. MINIACI, in BADER *et al.* (eds), *Second Intermediate Assemblages*, forthcoming. See also CHAPMAN, *Fragmentation in Archaeology*.

³⁶⁹ RITNER, in SZPAKOWSKA (ed.) *Through a Glass Darkly*, 207, n. 16.

Such traces of wear and alteration suggest that these objects were not exclusively produced for burial purposes but saw considerable use among the living before they were deposited in the tomb. The objects may have been strongly connected with rituals including protection of health and birth in daily life.³⁷⁰ The fact that at some point these objects were included in tombs could have been stimulated by a need to counterbalance or echo the *regalia* assemblage of the *Osirification* burials, which belonged to the higher social status in Egyptian society and display a more theological emphasis while still remaining principally connected with the salvation and rebirth of the deceased.³⁷¹

Craftsmanship

The limestone figurines are of similar manufacture and share the same hairstyle, defined by Tooley as a ‘modified tripartite’, and they are certainly the work of the same craftsman (see the position of the left ears in both figurines are modelled lower than the right).³⁷² The faience figurines also share some common traits: with the exclusion of the simian (*K.) and the vegetable melon (N.), which is made of white faience, all the other faience figurines show a similar degree of colouring turning to green (from pale blue-green to deep green turquoise) which is not the predominant colouring in the faience figurine corpus.³⁷³ This may indicate that these figurines come from common workshop(s) and that they had been kept together (for a long time or only briefly) before being deposited in the burial (see above, *The Dating of the Assemblage*). Although difficult to interpret, the carving on the ivory tusks does not seem to be the product of the same hand; the very clean line design and steady hand of G. is different from the more insecure and inaccurate hand in I., where lines often do not intersect, overrun their borders and show attempts to adjust direction; it is also very different from the rougher hand used for H., where some contour shapes are not even well defined (see the turtle) and figures are more rigid. Also the carving on the cuboid rod X. is very different from the other ivory objects, being much more detailed and delicate.

The Number and Gender of the Recipient(s) of the Assemblage

In his report, Quibell concluded that ‘*the position can leave no doubt that all these objects are from one interment and of one date*’; nonetheless, the actual number of the deceased was not provided by the excavator. This is probably due to the fact that the tomb was completely ravaged at the time of discovery, so that even a vague anthropological assessment based on the osteological remains would have proved impossible. The number of individuals cannot be assessed on the basis of the presence of more than one chamber, as multiple chambers do not necessarily correspond to multiple burials: there are a number of examples in the late Middle Kingdom where two chambers opening off a shaft may have been intended for a single

³⁷⁰ QUIRKE, *Exploring Religion*, 213.

³⁷¹ GRAJETZKI, *Tomb Treasures*, 148–54; BOURRIAU, in QUIRKE (ed.), *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 20; MINIACI, *JEGH* 7, 109–42.

³⁷² TOOLEY, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 453; TOOLEY, *SAK*, forthcoming, fig. 2, no. 15.

³⁷³ For faience objects and colouring in the Middle Kingdom, see MINIACI, in MINIACI *et al.* (eds), *The Arts of Making*, 139–58.

occupant³⁷⁴ or for two or more deceased.³⁷⁵ For instance, the late Middle Kingdom tomb of Senebtysy,³⁷⁶ found intact at Lisht North, or the late Twelfth Dynasty tomb of the estate overseer Mentuhotep, found intact at Thebes,³⁷⁷ are cases in point where multiple chambers were reserved for a single deceased.³⁷⁸

Neither can one assess on a more secure basis the number of deceased from the types of objects found, as there is no clear archaeological correlation between an object type ratio and the number of deceased individuals. For instance, in front of the funerary chamber of Hepy at Lisht South, reserved for a single mid-Twelfth Dynasty interment, were found a single hippopotamus-lion faience figurine,³⁷⁹ a single vegetable melon faience miniature³⁸⁰ and four truncated-leg female faience figurines.³⁸¹ The presence of at least four birth tusks in a unique context must be considered unusual. In this regard, ivory tusks seem to appear in numbers greater than one in only four cases out of fifty-four documented archaeological contexts: the Ramesseum group; tomb 79 in cemetery D at Abydos; Pits 883 and 885 at Lisht North.³⁸² It is certain that at least the two tombs at Lisht were used for several interments over a prolonged period of time. However, Pits 883 and 885 lay below a house and a second house with a chapel, while tomb D 79 was located near a chapel; these are all factors which may have contributed to the alteration or contamination of the original composition of the burial assemblage and resulting in a larger number of birth tusks than the normative quantity.³⁸³ According to the recorded archaeological contexts, there are pieces of evidence to favour the Ramesseum group being associated with either individual or multiple burials.

Single individual assemblage

The main factors advocating the possibility of a single individual assemblage are the narrow find spot, the state of preservation and the breakage criteria. The fact that these objects were found in an extremely narrow find spot (in an area only 0.18 m² – and especially considering that it also included a box of ca. 45 x 30 x 30 cm) might point to an intentional deposit,³⁸⁴ unless we admit to the possibility that most of the shaft floor could have originally been crowded with these types of items and the heap was the only part preserved because it was left undisturbed. In addition, the state of preservation of the objects is not extremely poor, especially if one takes

³⁷⁴ MINIACI, QUIRKE, *BIFAO* 109, 364, with some uncertain interpretations; cf. Senebtysy's burial at Lisht, ARNOLD, *Middle Kingdom Tomb Architecture*, 81, although the chambers off the shaft were not opposite each other, but on adjacent sides.

³⁷⁵ MINIACI, *CAJ* 29; MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*. Cf. CARTER, CARNARVON, *Five Years' Explorations at Thebes*, 55 (tomb of Renseneb, no. 25).

³⁷⁶ ARNOLD, *Middle Kingdom Tomb Architecture*, 81–2, pls. 147–8, 156a, 157.

³⁷⁷ MINIACI, QUIRKE, *BIFAO* 109, 364–6.

³⁷⁸ MACE, WINLOCK, *The Tomb of Senebtisi*, 4–8.

³⁷⁹ MMA 34.1.127; MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, LiS-hyb1.

³⁸⁰ LANSING, HAYES, *BMAA* 29, 30, fig. 20.

³⁸¹ MMA 34.1.125; JE 63861; JE 63862; JE 63863. The tomb group is discussed in MINIACI, *Miniature Forms* and ARNOLD, *The Burial of the Young Woman Hepy*, forthcoming. For the archaeological context, see LANSING, HAYES, *op. cit.*, 27–41; HAYES, *The Scepter of Egypt*, vol. I, 232, fig. 148; notes in QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 135–6.

³⁸² QUIRKE, *op. cit.*, 91–2, Table 2.1.

³⁸³ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, Pits 883 and 885.

³⁸⁴ Some scholars have suggested that some of the items could have been included inside the box; however, this seems highly improbable, LORAND, *Le papyrus dramatique*, 11; MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 185.

into consideration the extreme fragility of certain materials, such as ivory, wood, and faience. The latter material can be more resilient but is easily chipped and can become de-glazed. The figurines show little signs of chipping or faded glaze (*cf.* with Lisht North examples, which were more exposed to actual reshuffling of the material, where most of the glaze is gone). The breaks across several of the objects might in part be associated with some kind of deposition ritual and therefore why they are essentially in a complete state (after rejoining; for the missing pieces and different weathering condition, see above, *Traces of wear* and n. 368). Even if the objects were deposited in this spot at the same time, this does not necessarily mean that it was a primary deposit; they could have been placed in the heap after their removal from their original place. Nonetheless, it seems a deliberate process of assembling or keeping these objects together rather than roughly and randomly throwing them out from other chambers, as would be expected in the case of robbery or intrusive re-use. Furthermore, the assemblage includes materials and objects which had never been found associated before (see above, *Uniqueness/regularity of the assemblage*), even in multiple burial contexts: this may lean towards the belief that we are confronted with an uncommon burial, distinguished from others containing a similar range of items. Therefore, the unicity of such an assemblage might point towards the result of an individual choice rather than a combined choice of a number of individuals, who were buried with a number of unique items.

Multiple individual assemblage

The main factor advocating for a multiple individual assemblage is the fact that the association between the objects is not secure: the general context of the structure clearly indicates that it had been heavily disturbed and ravaged more than once. In addition, the number of objects and their incompleteness seems to indicate that originally there was a much larger number of objects than were present at the time of the discovery. Faience figurines are more frequently attested in multiple burial contexts, suggesting that there is a high degree of probability that this assemblage may also be the result of pieces originating from different burials inside the same structure (*cf.* Pits 391, 453, 724, 805, 857, 879, 883, 964 at Lisht North; Tombs 7, 55, 56, 141, 399 at Harageh; Tomb 416 at Abydos, Tombs C 24 and 25 at Thebes).³⁸⁵ The large number of birth tusks in a single context may indicate the presence of more than one burial equipped with this type of object, as they usually follow the ratio '1 structure : 1 birth tusk', at least as recorded in modern excavations. For instance, Pit 475 at Lisht North, dated to the late Middle Kingdom, contained several faience figurines but only one birth tusk.³⁸⁶ Pit 475 was probably reserved for a single individual, although the archaeological context was heavily disturbed. In addition, faience figurines and ivory tusks are rarely associated (see above, *Uniqueness/regularity of the assemblage*), a sign that their association may be the result of an artificial confluence of the equipment from different types of burials in the same place. Finally, the find-spot is certainly not normative and a deposit at the bottom of the shaft represents an exception (although some parallel examples can be quoted; see above, *The Find-spot of the Group of Objects*).

Gender assumption

Presented with such an unusual group, scholars have tended to present male-driven interpretations, though more recently these have been counterbalanced by suggestions which postulate a connection with the female sphere (see below, *The Identity of the Recipient(s) of the Assem-*

³⁸⁵ MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*. *Cf.* MINIACI, *EVO* 41, 88–9; MINIACI, in HUDÁKOVÁ *et al.* (eds), *Art-facts and Artefacts*, 63–84.

³⁸⁶ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 93; MINIACI, *Miniature Forms*, Pit 475.

blage).³⁸⁷ However, the burial assemblage lacks any gender-based elements. Therefore, beyond the above-mentioned single/multiple burial issue, it is important to be aware that the group – and single objects – cannot provide any gender information, however tempting it may be to associate birth tusks (*F–I.*), the numerous female figurines (*M., S., T., W., *V.*) and the rarely attested lion-faced female figure (*R.*) with a female individual.³⁸⁸ Apart from the rare miniature *R.* all the other objects have been found in male and female burials,³⁸⁹ therefore they cannot be used to make any gender assumptions.

The Identity of the Recipient(s) of the Assemblage

The funerary assemblage from this tomb has attracted much scholarly attention in relation to the (social) identity of the deceased connected with this group of objects (in association with a postulated single burial). However, none of the items bear a name or a title, so there is no direct evidence for any hint as to the identity of the deceased. Moreover, the papyri – advocated as one of the main sources for providing information about the identity of their owner, consequently imagined as the deceased – were assembled over a long time and certainly belonged to different persons and families over the years,³⁹⁰ and could come from different parts of Egypt.

Since a large batch of the papyri deal with healing and protection (often referred to as ‘magic’),³⁹¹ scholars have tended to construct a dense network of connections between the contents of the papyri (actually only one aspect, those relating to health/protection), certain object types and the identity of the owner (=the deceased). Therefore, several scholars have searched for clues leading to a possible ‘professional’ profile for the owner of the Ramesseum assemblage, variously interpreted as an erudite individual,³⁹² a magician,³⁹³ medical practitioner,³⁹⁴ a *wab*-priest of Sekhmet,³⁹⁵ a doctor,³⁹⁶ healer,³⁹⁷ embalmer,³⁹⁸ storyteller, ritualist,³⁹⁹ nurse or midwife,⁴⁰⁰ a shamanic performer associated with birth,⁴⁰¹ a lector priest,⁴⁰² an expert in ritual and literary performance,⁴⁰³ or one involved in local accounting.⁴⁰⁴ Most of the hypotheses

³⁸⁷ GNIRS, in KESSLER *et al.* (eds), *Texte - Theben - Tonfragmente*. PINCH, *Magic*, 131 comments ‘It might have been a woman, perhaps a Hathor priestess, but the papyri make this less probable’.

³⁸⁸ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 103.

³⁸⁹ Cf. MORRIS, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 289.

³⁹⁰ MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 183, on the evidence that one of the spells of pXVI was copied from pX, suggests that ‘*si ces précieux rouleaux ont changé de propriétaire au fil du temps, ils sont vraisemblablement restés, sinon dans une même famille ou dans le même corps de métier, du moins dans une même classe sociale*’.

³⁹¹ See comments in QUIRKE, *Exploring Religion*, 25–6 for the modern assumptions over use of the word ‘magic’.

³⁹² RITNER, *The Mechanics*, 222–3 (*rh-ht*). See discussion in LORAND, *Le papyrus dramatique*, 37–43.

³⁹³ PINCH, *Votive Offerings*, 217.

³⁹⁴ GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 1; EYRE, *The Use of Documents*, 309.

³⁹⁵ MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 196–9.

³⁹⁶ BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 110.

³⁹⁷ QUACK, *ZÄS* 133, 72–89.

³⁹⁸ QUIRKE, *The Administration*, 187–8.

³⁹⁹ EYRE, *The Use of Documents*, 299.

⁴⁰⁰ GNIRS, in KESSLER *et al.* (eds), *Texte - Theben - Tonfragmente*, 130, 149–55.

⁴⁰¹ MORRIS, in MINIACI, BETRÒ, QUIRKE (eds), *Company of Images*, 318–9.

⁴⁰² YOYOTTE, *RdE* 11, 172–5; FORSHAW, *The Role of the Lector*, 30–44; PINCH, *Magic*, 131.

⁴⁰³ EYRE, *The Use of Documents*, 19.

⁴⁰⁴ GARDINER, *The Ramesseum Papyri*, 1.

invariably assumed the papyri to have a single owner and superimposed, with the exception of one instance, a male-centric vision of the person (see above, *The Number and Gender of the 'Recipient(s)' of the Assemblage*).

However, the administrative notes and accounts on the back of several papyri may provide more solid information about the economic state and social level of the individual(s) who owned the papyri (rather than pointing to any specific professional profile) than the ritual formulae and literary texts can actually do. In addition, as already noted, most of the objects used to corroborate the health/magic-based interpretation of the owner's profile are themselves commonly attested in burials of the same period (although with a 'deviation' given by some exceptional artefacts, the *djed*-pillar amulet, the snake and the hybrid female-lion miniatures) and may relate more to the protection of the deceased than to his/her professional activity.⁴⁰⁵ Several studies have cautioned scholars about identifying any gender⁴⁰⁶ and profession⁴⁰⁷ in the composition of burial equipment.⁴⁰⁸ Recently, Quirke has brought to scholarly attention a parallel, comparing the Ramesseum group with Chester Beatty Papyri, for which we have information about the identity of one of their owners, Qenherkhepshef.⁴⁰⁹ In this case, no connection exists between his profession, 'accountant of the project' (for building the tomb of the king), and the contents of the papyri, which included compositions for good health and protection formulae.⁴¹⁰

One should stress here that the profession of the imagined user(s) of the assemblage may have differed from that of its last owner, who was buried with it. Probably, the question should be moved from the ownership of the assemblage (including papyri) to the recipient and what this group of objects should have represented for this person, assuming that all were aimed at equipping a single person.⁴¹¹ Already, for the funerary assemblage of an elderly woman named Madja and a man named Hapuseneb, buried in tomb 1370 in the Eastern necropolis of Deir el-Medina during c. 1500 BC,⁴¹² Stephen Quirke has queried the role of the objects possibly connected with 'healing' practices, suggesting a change of perspective from the self-identification of the deceased through such objects to one focussing on the recipients.⁴¹³ Madja and Hapuseneb could have acquired the relevant objects during their lifetime for preserving their health or perhaps decided to equip their burial with them for use in the afterlife, serving as motifs of eternal protection within the prevailing burial customs.⁴¹⁴

The Ramesseum group is extraordinarily rich in types of objects and materials, so much so that Janine Bourriau indicated that the recipient of them (if a single individual) could have belonged to the educated elite, who had access to certain means and resources to be placed in the tomb.⁴¹⁵ Nonetheless, the artefact types are slightly contradictory although not incompatible. Quirke has positioned birth tusks in a social level he tentatively defines as 'middle class', but

⁴⁰⁵ QUIRKE, *Exploring Religion*, 194–5; QUIRKE, in OPPENHEIM *et al.* (eds), *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, 207; PINCH, *Votive Offerings*, 217; QUACK, *ZÄS* 133, 75–6.

⁴⁰⁶ LILYQUIST, *Ancient Egyptian Mirrors*, 83–5.

⁴⁰⁷ SEIDLMAYER, in HAWASS, RICHARDS (eds), *The Archaeology*, 89–113.

⁴⁰⁸ See discussion in QUIRKE, in PRICE *et al.* (eds), *Mummies, Magic and Medicine*, 186–7.

⁴⁰⁹ QUIRKE, in OPPENHEIM *et al.* (eds), *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, 207.

⁴¹⁰ QUIRKE, in PRICE *et al.* (eds), *Mummies, Magic and Medicine*, 192; see CORTEGGIANI, in JOURET (ed.), *Thèbes 1250 J.-C.*, 88–107.

⁴¹¹ MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 183.

⁴¹² BRUYÈRE, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1934-1935)*, 150–7.

⁴¹³ MESKELL, *Archaeologies of Social Life*, 180–1, 193–5.

⁴¹⁴ QUIRKE, *Exploring Religion*, 183–4.

⁴¹⁵ BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 110.

that still includes richer members of society, although it may exclude the dominant classes.⁴¹⁶ In contrast, faience figurines seem to be a feature of burials belonging to a less wealthy and less powerful level of society.⁴¹⁷

Given the current situation, any hypothesis must be assessed against the weight of probability that all of these objects could have belonged to a single individual or were assembled from multiple funerary equipment.

Conclusion

The structure containing the famous assemblage of the MK Ramesseum Papyri Tomb may indeed be the underground part of Sehetepibre's chapel, whose tomb is located below the Ramesseum galleries nos. 5–7. The tomb of Sehetepibre seems to be dated by its architecture and painted walls scenes to the early/mid-Middle Kingdom, although this does not prevent any later extension or re-use. The group of objects found inside the tomb at the bottom of its shaft is chronologically homogeneous, with all the diagnostic object types dating to the late Middle Kingdom and probably deposited in the middle of the Thirteenth Dynasty. The assemblage shares common features with other burials of the period, notwithstanding certain singularities such as the presence of the papyri (especially their high number and variety of subjects) and some uncommon artefacts (such as the lion-faced female miniature, the copper alloy cobra figurine/staff, etc.), as well as the unusual association of artefacts (number and type). Collectively, these elements make the assemblage unique in the panorama of late Middle Kingdom funerary material culture. Since the number of interments in the tomb is unknown, the group may be composed of elements of burial equipment from different chambers or belonging entirely to a single individual.⁴¹⁸ However, some of the object types frequently occur in multiple depositions of the period (e.g. faience figurines). Assumptions on gender and profession cannot be derived from the contents of this assemblage,⁴¹⁹ because the type of objects are diagnostic of burials of the period and the papyri contents do not speak in favour of any of them. The use of most of these objects in daily life is evidenced by the numerous traces of wear. Their final function may have been mainly to serve as protection for the deceased in the afterlife rather than marking a profession in life. Likewise, the papyri found in the box relating to health and incantations represent only one part of the contents, suggesting that any hypothesis about the social identity of the owner(s) of the box cannot rely solely on the nature of the preserved papyri.

This book aims to provide the reader with an archaeological and stratigraphic overview about the discovery and the context of the tomb group, without attempting to solve any open questions, and leaving open all the channels that such a discovery brought up. The exceptional value of certain objects, the presence of copious manuscripts, the rarity of the combination of object types among them, and the 'shadowy' published archaeological report, will continue to provide ground for further and future speculation, and continue giving life to the Ramesseum late Middle Kingdom assemblage.

⁴¹⁶ QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 217.

⁴¹⁷ MINIACI, in HUDÁKOVÁ *et al.* (eds), *Art-facts and Artefacts*, 63–84.

⁴¹⁸ QUACK, *ZĀS* 133, 76; QUIRKE, *Birth Tusks*, 103–4.

⁴¹⁹ See on this point MEYRAT, *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum*, 183–4, 196–9.

Papyrus	Recto – Main subject	Verso – Main subject	Recto – Type of contents
pA	Khuninpu	Sinhue	Literary
pB	Dramatic Papyrus	Plan of building	Literary
pC	Nubian fortress dispatches	Execration rituals	Administrative accounts
pD	Onomasticon	–	Epistemological
pE	Funerary liturgy	Administrative document	Literary (?)
pI	Lament of Sasobek	Administrative documents	Literary
pII	Teachings and literary maxims	Teachings and literary maxims	Literary
pIII	Prescriptions	Grain distribution	Health/protection issue #
pIV	Rituals for pregnancy	Administrative document	Health/protection issue #
pV	Prescriptions	Very short jottings	Health/protection issue
pVI	Hymn to Sobek	–	Theological
pVII	Formulae for protection	Accounting text/ mathematical formulae	Health/protection issue
pVIII	Formulae for protection	–	Health/protection issue
pIX	Formulae for protection	–	Health/protection issue
pX	Formulae for protection	Formulae for protection	Health/protection issue
pXI	Formulae related to love (?)	–	Health/protection issue
pXII	Medical texts	Agenda of 77 days	Health/protection issue
pXIII	Formulae	Agenda of 77 days	Health/protection issue
pXIV	Formula against spirits	Formula against spirits	Health/protection issue
pXV	Formula against snakes (?)	Formula against snakes (?)	Health/protection issue (?)
pXVI	Formulae for protection	Formulae for protection	Health/protection issue
pXVII	Incantations for the epagomenal days	Incantations for the epagomenal days	Health/protection issue
pXVIII	Nubian fortress dispatches	Invocation against spirits	Administrative accounts
pXIX	Ritual formulae	Ritual formulae	Health/protection issue
pXX	Grain account	–	private account (?)

Table 8: The Ramesseum papyri: content overview

CONCLUSION

Verso – Type of contents	Royal name on the document	Date by palaeography	Inventory number
Literary			ÄMP 10499
Private account	Amenemhat I, Senwosret I		BM EA 10610
Health/protection issue	*Amenemhat III	late 12	BM EA 10752
BLANK	Amenemhat III	late 12–early 13	ÄMP 10495
Private account	Senwosret I		BM EA 10753
Private account (?)			BM EA 10754
Literary			BM EA 10755
Private account			BM EA 10756
Private account			BM EA 10757
Private account (?)			BM EA 10758
BLANK	Amenemhat III	late 12–early 13 (?)	BM EA 10759
Private account (?)			BM EA 10760
BLANK		early 13	BM EA 10761
BLANK		late 12–early 13	BM EA 10762
Health/protection issue		late 12–early 13	BM EA 10763
BLANK		late 12–early 13	BM EA 10764
Private account (?)		late 12–early 13	BM EA 10765
Private account (?)		late 12–early 13	BM EA 10766
Health/protection issue		early 13	BM EA 10767
Health/protection issue (?)		late 12 r / early 13 v	BM EA 10768
Health/protection issue		early/mid 13	BM EA 10769
Health/protection issue		early 13	BM EA 10770
Health/protection issue		late 12	BM EA 10771
Health/protection issue		late 12–early 13	BM EA 10772
–			ÄMP 10131

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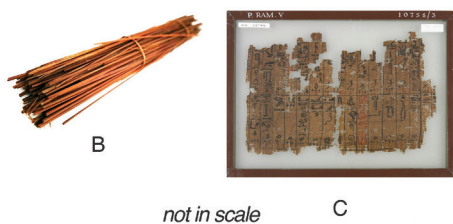
Pl. XIII: Papyrus XVI, frame 27, BM EA 10769 © The Trustees of the British Museum (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)



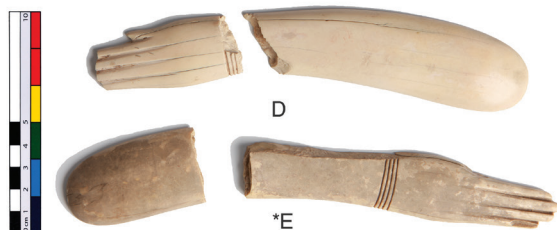
Pl. XIV: Group of the objects from the Ramesseum MK Papyri Tomb preserved in The Manchester Museum, overall view © The Manchester Museum; photo by G. Miniaci

Thebes – Ramesseum Papyri Tomb

Contained inside the papyrus box



Outside the box



Outside the box



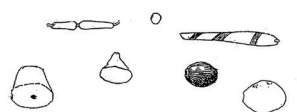
Pl. XV: Assemblage of the objects from the Ramesseum MK Papyri Tomb – overall view

Thebes – Ramesseum Papyri Tomb



Pl. XVI: Assemblage of the objects from the Ramesseum MK Papyri Tomb – overall view

Thebes – Ramesseum Papyri Tomb



not in scale

BB-GG

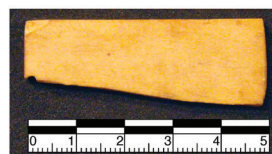
Objects doubtfully attributed to the Ramesseum Papyri Tomb



**II



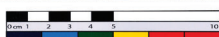
**II



**JJ



**KK



**LL



**MM



**NN



**NN

Pl. XVII: Assemblage of the objects from the Ramesseum MK Papyri Tomb – overall view