

When memory shapes identity: Khety, Senenmut, and the landscape of Deir el-Bahari



Abstract: The paper explores the relationship between Senenmut, the most prominent courtier under the female pharaoh Hatshepsut, and Khety, who served at the court of Mentuhotep II Nebhepetra around 500 years earlier. The paradigm for juxtaposing these two men is the well-known reference to Mentuhotep II by Hatshepsut, clearly illustrated by the installation of her memorial temple at Deir el-Bahari beside that of Mentuhotep II. The thesis proposed here is that Senenmut perceived Khety as his great predecessor, with whom he shared many responsibilities at the court, and the reference to this figure from the past is expressed, among other things, by the installation of Senenmut's lower tomb, TT 353, in close spatial proximity to TT 311, the monument of Khety. It is postulated that TT 353 should be viewed—in addition to its widely discussed relationship with the Temple of Hatshepsut—as an homage to Khety. This connection between their tombs was intended to shape and communicate Senenmut's socio-professional identity. The background for the study is the theory of cultural memory, the phenomenological approach used in landscape studies, and the theory of intertextuality and intericonicity. These theories are applied to the funerary monuments of Senenmut and Khety in Western Thebes and beyond, taking into account various attestations of their activities in Aswan, Gebel Silsila, Shatt el-Rigal, the Karnak Temple, and Armant. Another reference point considered here is the necropolis of Asyut, in the context of Senenmut's TT 353, with the placement of (another?) Khety therein.

Keywords: cultural memory, social identity, intertextuality and intericonicity, palimpsest, TT 353, TT 311, Hatshepsut, Mentuhotep II

Anastasiia Stupko-Lubczynska

University of Warsaw, Polish Centre
of Mediterranean Archaeology

Acknowledgments

People

This article is dedicated to the memory of Jan Assmann, who passed away on February 19, 2024, while this text was in preparation. A brilliant mind reaching far beyond the boundaries of Egyptology, he will be remembered, not least, for introducing the theory of cultural memory, adopted as the paradigm of this study.

Since the paper addresses Armant as a possible place of origin of Senenmut --a tutor of Hatshepsut's daughter-- acknowledgment is also due to another person from that town: Ahmed Al-Tawab Mohammed Ahmed. At the time of writing (2024), he had been associated with the PCMA UW projects in Western Thebes for exactly forty years. In Armant, Ahmed worked as a schoolteacher. Within our expeditions, his formal responsibilities concern primarily base logistics; however, his contribution has extended well beyond that role. Known among team members as Ahmed Armanti, he has been an Arabic language teacher for many of us and, over the years, has become a valued and long-standing member of our archaeological community.

Further thanks go (in chronological order) to Chloé Ragazzoli for sharing the manuscript of her unpublished book on visitors' inscriptions in the Theban Necropolis; to Dawid F. Wiczorek and Paweł L. Polkowski for guidance on ancient Egyptian sandstone quarries, rock inscriptions, and desert routes -- subjects lying beyond the author's expertise; and to J.J. Shirley for sharing her knowledge on several Egyptian administrative titles discussed here. Some of the ideas presented in this paper were developed and probed through discussions with Paulina Karwowska and Marina Sartori of the North Asasif epigraphic team, whose constructive criticism is gratefully acknowledged. The author is likewise indebted to Paul Whelan for the careful linguistic revision of the manuscript.

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To perceive the landscape is to carry the act of remembrance.
(Ingold 2000: 189)

SETTING THE SCENE: DEIR EL-BAHARI AND THE CONCEPT OF MEMORY – A THEORETICAL OUTLINE

The role of memory as an influential factor in landscape archaeology (e.g. Van Dyke and Alcock 2003; Holtorf and Williams 2006) is clearly exemplified in Egypt, where older monuments could appeal to the imagination of beholders centuries later, not only due to the materials used but, first and foremost, because of

their decoration and inscriptions. A place that particularly accumulates people's memories and functions as a depository for them is called a *mnemotope* (Assmann 2011: 44–45). The landscape of Deir el-Bahari is a classic example of such a place, which is easily understood given that it is part of the Theban necropolis, in use for

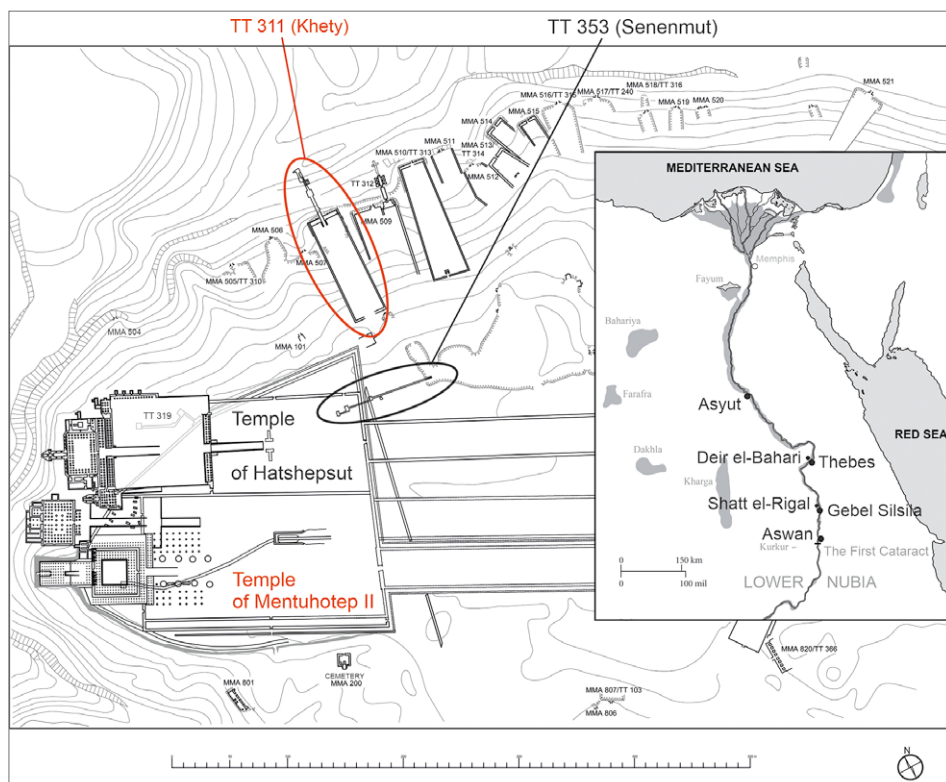


Fig. 1. Plan of the Deir el-Bahari and Asasif area (Drawing K. Andracka after Di. Arnold and Winlock 1979: Pls 38, 42; Eigner 1984: Pl. 1, with additions by A. Stupko-Lubczynska after Dorman 1991: Pl. 40b and Winlock 1923: Fig. 6); inset: map of Egypt showing the locations mentioned in the text (Drawing D.F. Wiczorek)

many centuries and, like any necropolis, functioning as a place of commemoration (for a theoretical overview, see e.g. Daróczy 2012; for an important reference study on the landscape of Western Thebes and memory, see Meskell 2003).

In terms of commemoration, the memory concerned is “collective memory”—a concept introduced into the humanities by the sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1925; 1950)¹—the broadest definition of which is “the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts” (Erll 2010: 2). Jan Assmann (1995: 126–127), developing Halbwachs’ theory of collective memory, has introduced the important distinction between its two types: communicative memory and cultural memory (also in Assmann 2011: 34–41). Communicative memory is characterized as a concept which “includes those varieties of collective memory that are based exclusively on everyday communications” and is rooted in the field of oral history. An important feature of this kind of memory is its limited temporal horizon, which does not extend beyond three or four generations and “shifts in direct relation to the pass-

ing of time”. Cultural memory, on the contrary, is, in Assmann’s words (1995: 129), “characterized by its distance from the everyday. Distance from the everyday (transcendence) marks its temporal horizon. Cultural memory has its fixed point; its horizon does not change with the passing of time. These fixed points are fateful events of the past, whose memory is maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication (recitation, practice, observance). We call these ‘figures of memory’ (my emphasis)”.²

From this perspective, Deir el-Bahari [Fig. 1] should indeed be seen as a palimpsest of the said figures of memory,³ in terms of both built monuments and ritual activities taking place in this landscape. In the case of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut (around 1573–1558 BC), the installation of her memorial temple, *Djeser-djeseru*, in Deir el-Bahari—containing her own mortuary cult along with places of worship for Amun-Ra, Hathor, and Anubis—is commonly seen as a manifestation of her special attitude toward Mentuhotep II Nebhepetra. This

1 For discussions on the legacy of this founding father of modern collective memory studies, see e.g. Erll 2010: 8 and passim; Assmann 2011: 21–33ff.; Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy 2011: 16–25 and passim.

2 The use of the plural refers to the co-authorship of Jan Assmann’s wife, Aleida Assmann, in the conception of these ideas (cf. Assmann 1995: 126 with n. 5). The subject of figures of memory is developed further in Assmann 2011: 23–28.

3 The notion of palimpsest, omnipresent in archaeology (e.g. Bailey 2007; Holtorf and Williams 2006: 237–238), is borrowed by the present author from rock art studies (cf. e.g. Ambrosino 2019). Applying the imagery of rock art, the Deir el-Bahari amphitheater, with its temples, tombs, and their decorated walls, is understood as a three-dimensional equivalent of a two-dimensional rock surface, with one graffito attracting subsequent ones—creating a network of meanings and engaging in a dialogue with one another (as, NB, will be the case with the graffiti in Wadi Shatt el-Rigal, discussed below). It is worth noting that the term “palimpsest” is also frequently used as a metaphor in discussions of intertextuality (notably, Genette 1997) and the mechanisms of memory (for a summary, see, e.g. Lara-Rallo 2009: 99–106), two concepts that are also relevant to our discussion.

ruler, perceived as the founder of what is known as the Middle Kingdom period in modern historiography, lived about five centuries before Hatshepsut (around 2055–2004 BC). To the ancient Egyptians, he was remembered as a unifier of the Egyptian state, alongside Menes of the Early Dynastic period and Ahmose, the first king of the Eighteenth Dynasty (cf. e.g. Kemp 1989: 60–61; Di. Arnold and Do. Arnold 2015: 39–40). Mentuhotep II was also venerated by the Thebans as a local saint (Habachi 1963; El-Enany 2003).

The installation of Mentuhotep II's memorial temple, *Akh-isut*, in Deir el-Bahari (Di. Arnold 1974a; 1974b; 1975b; 2015a: 12–13; Di. Arnold and Winlock 1979) created a fixed point of cultural memory, to use Assmann's expression — a point to which subsequent generations would refer. Indeed, Mentuhotep II was not only the first ruler to build his temple (and tomb) in Deir el-Bahari —along with the tombs of his family members and court, as was customary in ancient Egypt (Arnold 1975a: 1007–1008; Polz 2008)— but he also introduced the cult of Amun-Ra there alongside his own cult (Di. Arnold 1974a: 78–80; 1974b: 33), a feature that would later be repeated by Hatshepsut and her successors in their memorial monuments.

In ritual terms, Mentuhotep II's temple became the ultimate destination of a festival that —during the time of Hatshepsut and beyond— was known as the Feast of *Djeser-djeseru*, the Feast of the Valley, or the Beautiful Feast of the Ruler. Prior to that, during the Middle Kingdom, it was referred to as the Feast of the Valley of Neb-

hepetra (Dolińska 2007: 71–72; Di. Arnold 1975a: 1006–1007; Graefe 1986: 187 with nn. 1–3; Winlock 1941: *passim* esp. 154–157, Pl. 1 (1) = Winlock 1947: 84–87, Pl. 40 (1)).⁴ During this annual festival, celebrated in April (Dolińska 2007: 73–74), Amun's statue traveled by bark from its temple residence in Karnak, on the opposite bank of the river, to Deir el-Bahari, where it spent the night in the royal mortuary temple — first in that of Mentuhotep II, and later in the Main Sanctuary of Hatshepsut's Temple (Dolińska 2007: 76–77; Bietak 2012: 23–28).

The original meaning of the *Talfest* is believed to have been the hierogamy of Amun with the cow-goddess Hathor, the initial host of Deir el-Bahari (Bietak 2012: 24). Amun's visit to Hathor, the patroness of the Theban necropolis (Rummel 2016; 2020), provided a sacred framework for the ruling king to visit the memorial temples of his predecessors. The festival, attended by crowds of local people, was an occasion for the participants to visit the tombs of their ancestors. Thus, a collective act of remembrance was made: “Literate and non-literate alike assembled in the chapel [of the tomb] where they probably collectively read and viewed the painted decoration and texts. Offerings to the sun god were burnt; animals were butchered; food offerings were made; bouquets were presented;⁵ and an all-night vigil was held with banqueting, music, and drinking” (Hartwig 2004: 12).

Regarding historical attribution, some scholars argue that Mentuhotep II did not inaugurate the site of Deir el-Bahari. It is possible that long before his time —

4 For festivals as “organizers” of cultural memory, see Meskell 2003: 47–49; Assmann 2011: 41–44.

5 These were flowers initially brought to Deir el-Bahari and presented to Hathor (Hartwig 2004: 94–95).

perhaps as early as the Old Kingdom—the place was devoted to the worship of Hathor (Gillam 1995: 228; Rzepka 2003). Dieter Arnold, for instance, suggests that a speos dedicated to Hathor already existed at the site in the time of Mentuhotep II (if not earlier). This structure may have occupied the location later taken by the Temple of Hatshepsut, possibly even the exact spot of her Hathor Shrine (Di. Arnold 1974a: 83–84). However, this cannot be verified today, as Hatshepsut's temple irreversibly altered the landscape, cutting away thousands of tons of rock to accommodate her terraces.⁶

At this point, one has to stress that, in terms of the methodology applied in the argument below, our approach must distinguish between the archaeological and other hard facts currently available to us and the knowledge (including memory, imagery, etc.) of the site that people of Hatshepsut's epoch may have had. Looking at Deir el-Bahari from this phenomenological⁷ perspective, it seems that Mentuhotep II remained the unrivaled reference point from the distant

past for the people of the Eighteenth Dynasty, taking into account how his own monument and those of his contemporaries dominated the landscape of Western Thebes (e.g. Di. Arnold 2015b: 317–318).⁸ One of the key elements of collective memory is its reconstructive nature (Assmann 2011: 26–28): “Memory (...) works through reconstruction. The past itself cannot be preserved by it, and thus it is continually subject to a process of reorganization according to the changes taking place in the frame of reference of each successive present” (Assmann 2011: 27; cf. also Holtorf and Williams 2006: 241–243). While the “present” of this article is anchored in the epoch of Hatshepsut, our goal is a nested reconstruction: a reconstruction of how the people of the Eighteenth Dynasty themselves reconstructed their past. In doing so, we must be cautious about accessibility — both in terms of the physical accessibility of monuments (or specific parts, e.g. decorated burial chambers) and access to information stored elsewhere (e.g. in archives).⁹ Additionally, we must ac-

6 Post-Eighteenth-Dynasty activities at the site further obscured the picture, as established during recent excavations in the Hathor Shrine conducted by the PCMA Expedition. Even if a pre-Hatshepsut phase once existed at this location, no evidence of it has been found (Chudzik 2022: 131–144).

7 By definition, phenomenology “studies various types of experience, ranging from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion (...), and social activity (...).” (Smith 2018). In the last two decades, this approach has become central to landscape archaeology (see Johnson 2012) and has been applied, among other areas, to Western Thebes (Rummel 2016; 2020, both works providing a broad overview of the subject literature).

8 Of the Old Kingdom, only three tombs are known in the Theban Necropolis (Saleh 1977). Meanwhile, the entire area is literally strewn with Middle Kingdom tombs (cf. e.g. Roehrig 1995: 255–261; Soliman 2009), both undecorated/unfinished and decorated ones. The decoration of the latter monuments, especially textual elements, could serve as a clue for their placement in time, aided by references to the ruling king found therein, as will be discussed below.

9 This approach is, in a way, a continuation of the vantage point applied in the present author's contribution to the previous *Deir el-Bahari Studies*, entitled “What an artist saw” (Stupko-Lubczynska 2021b).

knowledge that the “hard archaeological facts” available to us today may have been distorted, transformed, or even entirely disregarded by the people of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

Collective memory, by definition, functions as a sociological binder: it is constructed, shared, and passed on by large and small social groups, the “groups who conceive their unity and peculiarity through a common image of their past” (Assmann 1995: 127).¹⁰ In the Theban Necropolis, the impression one may gain from studying its monuments and their internal dialogues is that the groups constructing their self-definitions through the cultivation of collective memory included kings and, as a separate group, their subordinates—the courtiers—who were further divided into smaller units or clusters based on their professional and/or familial identities and positions within the society (e.g. viziers, priests, military men, etc.; cf. Den Doncker 2017, and below). Although royal and non-royal groups appear not to have interfered with one another in terms of identification,¹¹ the mechanisms driving the processes of their in-group definitions were similar.

Hatshepsut’s relationship with Mentuhotep II, as communicated by her temple, has usually been seen as an expression of piety and a self-fashioning statement — a successor’s reference to a great predecessor. Two votive artifacts

are known that bear a dedicatory formula from Hatshepsut to “her father Nebhepetra” (Dodson 1989; Donohue 1994; Laboury 2013: 16 with n. 37, Fig. 2). Additionally, the very placement of her temple (and also her tomb, KV 20) next to that of Mentuhotep II, along with the architectural and iconographic interplay between the two terraced structures in Deir el-Bahari, is well known and has been widely discussed (e.g. Di. Arnold 1978: 5–8; 2005: 135–136; Roth 2005: 147; Polz 2008: *passim*, esp. Fig. 2; Ćwiek 2014: 62, 68–69, 72, 76; Iwaszczuk 2017: 44–45). In terms of architecture, one may observe that Hatshepsut’s temple does not merely imitate the earlier one but rather emulates it — through its overall size, the extensive wall surfaces available for decoration with scenes and texts, the number of terraces, porticoes, sanctuaries, and other elements. This scheme, which Alexis Den Doncker (2017: 346–349) applies to non-royal Theban tombs, is described as a standing-out strategy that, in his words, “bears a notion of surpassing by means of copying” (Den Doncker 2017: 348).

Since Hatshepsut’s temple (with its Main Sanctuary of Amun) provided a monumentalized accommodation for Amun’s bark during the Feast of the Valley, her architectural emulation automatically diminished the ritual significance of “her father’s” temple as the final destination of the traveling statue of Amun of

10 In this quote, Assmann refers exclusively to the communicative memory and primarily draws on Maurice Halbwachs’ understanding of it. Halbwachs’ theory, expressed in Halbwachs 1950 and later expanded in Halbwachs 1985, served as a starting point for Assmann’s work, first published in 1988.

11 Although, royal and non-royal contexts interweave extensively in the design of their respective mortuary monuments, as has been discussed elsewhere (cf. e.g. Stupko-Lubczynska 2013; 2023).

Karnak (cf. Di. Arnold 1974a: 68).¹² With the introduction of Hatshepsut's temple as a ritual device, Mentuhotep II's temple seems to have lost its former prominence (e.g. its processional avenue was abandoned, and the temple was accessed from Hatshepsut's precinct (cf. Iwaszczuk 2017: 45–46)).¹³ Under such circumstances, the name of the main feast of Western Thebes as the Feast of the Valley of Nebhepetra could no longer be retained.

Against this background, the present article aims to take a closer look at the self-definition of Senenmut, Hatshepsut's most favored official, as expressed and communicated through his lower tomb, TT 353. This analysis is undertaken with the relationship between Hatshepsut and Mentuhotep II in mind, which will serve as a model for our discussion.¹⁴ Indeed, while Hatshepsut's reference to her great predecessor of the Eleventh Dynasty is undisputed, and has been thoroughly researched, the relationship between her courtiers and the members of Men-

tuhotep II's elite —whom Hatshepsut's officials would naturally have perceived as *their own* predecessors— has, in a sense, remained underexplored in Egyptological studies.¹⁵ For Senenmut, it will be argued, the most natural reference point was the funerary landscape associated with Mentuhotep II's circle, particularly the elite monuments cut into the slope of North Asasif, a natural continuation of the rock amphitheater of Deir el-Bahari. Chief among these was the tomb of Khety, TT 311.

The tomb of Khety was first entered in 1922/1923 by the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art Expedition (Winlock 1923: 11–19), and its decoration has subsequently been referenced in various works (see below). Since 2015, the tomb has been re-investigated by the Polish Archaeological Expedition (Asasif Project) of the PCMA UW (Chudzik 2016b: 291–295; 2018: 185–188; 2020: 170–183; Ragazzoli 2021; Stupko-Lubczynska 2021b: 199–202; Karwowska 2023: 151–152ff.) with the aim of

12 The same approach was subsequently adopted by Thutmose III with his *Djeser-akhet* temple, which was intended to replace Hatshepsut's construction at Deir el-Bahari as the final destination of Amun's bark during the Feast of the Valley (cf. Dolińska 2007: 77–78).

13 However, Mentuhotep II's temple remained a popular place of worship throughout the Eighteenth Dynasty and beyond, particularly as a focus for the cult of Hathor, Lady of *Akh-isut* (cf. Pinch 1993: 4–6; Dolińska 2007: 80–82, 85).

14 To express this reference, the title of the present paper paraphrases the work by Daniel Polz (2008): “Mentuhotep, Hatshepsut und das Tal der Könige — eine Skizze”.

15 A notable exception is Galán 2014: 266. The low interest in the North Asasif tombs among Egyptologists studying the Eighteenth Dynasty resulted, in part, from the fragmentary state of their decorations. These monuments were probably destroyed during an earthquake around 1000 BC, along with the temples at Deir el-Bahari and many other monuments in the Theban Necropolis (cf. Dolińska 2007: 86 with n. 100; Karakhanyan and Avagyan 2010). Subsequently, they were further devastated by stone robbers and stone vessel producers. The poor state of preservation appears to have impacted the publication of these monuments, as none of them have been published individually, leading to their apparent “invisibility” in scholarly literature. Among the North Asasif tombs, many were left unfinished. The only fully decorated ones appear to be TT 319 (Neferu) and TT 311 (Khety), while in TT 240 (Meru), decoration is only found in its burial chamber (for a summary, see Stupko-Lubczynska 2021b: 198–199).

its complete publication. During the past field season (the Fall of 2023), the team continued epigraphic work in the tomb,

which —along with the overall experience of the surrounding landscape¹⁶— has inspired the creation of the present text.

THE ROLE OF THE TOMB IN SOCIAL EXPRESSION AND THE CASE OF TT 353

Before addressing what Senenmut had in common with Khety, it is necessary to pause and consider the long-debated issue of what tomb owners in ancient Egypt had in common with the design of their tomb. To what extent were tomb owners involved in the conception of these monuments, beyond the fact that they —for obvious reasons— appropriated the entire semantic space of the tomb with their omnipresent “self” (Assmann 1987: 211–213 and *passim*). The question remains open as to whether the tomb owner should be regarded as the author of the monument’s final appearance, or whether this was primarily the work of an (often anonymous) artist operating at their own discretion, thereby reducing the tomb owner’s role to that of a mere consumer of their art.¹⁷

As the necropolis was as much a place for the living as for the dead —bursting with activity during festivals such as the aforementioned Feast of the Valley in the Theban Necropolis as well as other occasions¹⁸— the tomb has long been recognized as a monument through which its owner’s social status was communicated and their memory cultivated (Assmann 1987; 2005: 55–56; Baines and Lacovara 2002: 9–10; Alexanian 2006;

Hartwig 2004; Den Doncker 2017). In Egyptology, it has been suggested that tomb placement and decoration —the latter reflecting deliberate choices from an existing repertoire— played a key role in constructing the tomb owner’s self-definition. Thus, the tomb was an element of social strategy that, while referencing the past, aimed to appeal to both contemporaries and future generations (i.e. it connected the retrospective and prospective aspects of the memory of the dead (Assmann 2011: 45–46)).

For instance, Useramun, the vizier under Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, speaks with his own voice from the walls of his tomb, TT 131:

I erected for myself a magnificent tomb in my city of eternity. I equipped most lavishly the site of my rock tomb in the desert of eternity. May my name endure on it in the mouths of the living, while the memory of me is good among men after the years that are to come (quoted from Hartwig 2004: 6).

The text explicitly acknowledges the awareness of the tomb decoration’s in-

16 The factor of human lived experience is central to landscape phenomenology, cf. n. 7, above.

17 For the focus on artist’s involvement in this context, see Laboury 2012: 199 and *passim*.

18 An excellent reference point from the necropolis of Saqqara is provided by Weiss 2022 and Staring 2023.

tended recipient and may serve as indirect evidence of the tomb owner's involvement in the design process of their memorial monuments.¹⁹ After all, how can we imagine entrusting an artist with the creation of one's own portrait for posterity (i.e. the tomb chapel, as a place of commemoration intended to be visited) without at least consulting its commissioner?

Beyond the decoration, there can be no doubt that the placement of the tomb within the necropolis landscape conveys a message about its owner's status within society. Yet this aspect of the tomb's rhetoric was beyond the competence of the artist responsible for its design and, on the contrary, very much within the competence of the tomb owner (as a direct result of their career; cf. e.g. Alexanian 2006: 3–4ff.). Thus, there are strong indications that monumental funerary structures, planned as social spaces for posterity, bore their owner's "personal touch". It is therefore most reasonable to consider the owner of the tomb at least its co-author.²⁰

With Senenmut, it may be postulated that the situation was no different. However, one must remember that his TT 353 was designed as an entirely subterranean monument, comprising only the tomb's burial component, which was not intend-

ed to be visited. Consequently, it lacked an audience that could learn from its walls about the greatness of its owner. The function of a social space, serving as Senenmut's true memorial, was instead assigned to his upper tomb, TT 71 — a structure with a classical T-shaped plan, prominently located in one of the most exposed spots within the Theban Necropolis, high up in the hill of Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, among Senenmut's predecessors and contemporaries (cf. Dorman 1991: 21–66, Pls 1–28; for a summary on Senenmut's two tombs, see Dorman 1995: 144; 2005b).²¹

In contrast to TT 71, TT 353 was intended to be sealed after the interment of the body (Dorman 1991: 85–86, 99; 1995: 144 with n. 27). Therefore, none of Senenmut's descendants, "after the years that are to come", would have been able to see its unique astronomical ceiling (Etz 1997, with further literature), its rich corpus of funerary texts (Assmann 1990: 22–23), or the appeal to the living, all of which comprised the decoration of Chamber A (Dorman 1991: 99–146, Pls 60–86; 1995: 144).²² However, in the course of its construction—which, we may imagine, lasted some time, running parallel to the construction of Hatshepsut's temple—the tomb was undoubtedly accessible, and its location was known.

19 See e.g. Den Doncker 2017: 336–337ff. for case studies indicating the involvement of the tomb owners in the design of their monuments.

20 A similar view was expressed in Laboury 2015: 327, n. 1: "I use here the expression "artistic author" in order to distinguish the latter from his commissioning patron who is also, in a way, an author of the monument." The degree of the owner's involvement may have varied, ranging from modest consultations to full involvement in some cases.

21 Even though the decoration of TT 71 is heavily damaged and thus a major part of the structure's message is lost, the tomb still exhibits features of "one of the jewels of the Theban Necropolis" of its time (Dorman 2005b: 131).

22 Although the tomb was never finished (Dorman 1991: 94; 2005b: 132) and there is no indication of where Senenmut's body was ultimately placed, his sarcophagus was found in TT 71, broken into pieces and apparently never used (Dorman 1988: 106–108; 1991: 70–76, Fig. 16, Pls 30–34).

Its decoration could have been discussed at the conceptual stage among Senenmut's colleagues and later within the circle of artists responsible for executing the pre-planned decoration. Here, too, there was room for the tomb owner's social self-fashioning, operating within the framework of communicative memory.

The case of TT 353 is reminiscent of a slightly later²³ situation with the aforementioned Vizier Useramun's burial chamber (Den Doncker 2017: 345–346), which, through its decoration —using the Litany of Ra and the Book of Amduat— referred to contemporary royal models. Quoting Den Doncker (2017: 346), it “was similarly effective on a sociological (i.e. people knew about it, even if they didn't have access to it) or even metaphysical level (i.e. its funerary effectiveness).” Notably, Useramun's tomb —just like Senenmut's funerary monument— also consists of two parts (Dziobek 1994; Dorman 1995: 145): lower TT 131 and upper TT 61 (the latter containing the aforementioned decorated burial chamber).

Useramun's TT 61 also exemplifies a deliberate reference to the Middle

Kingdom, as it incorporates an unfinished structure dating to that period (Kampp 1996: 277–279). Moreover, this choice seems to have been dictated by the proximity of TT 60, the tomb located literally next door to TT 61, designed for Senet and Antefoker —mother and son— the latter being the vizier under Senwosret I. Eberhard Dziobek (1994: 16), who notes several similarities between TT 60 and TT 61, interprets them as a result of Useramun's homage to his Middle Kingdom professional predecessor (see also Den Doncker 2017: 343–344). In other words, Antefoker was perceived as an idealized reference point —a figure of memory, to use Jan Assmann's term— for Vizier Useramun's social identity.

In the following pages, we will argue that a comparable scheme of references is realized by Senenmut's lower tomb, TT 353, in relation to Khety, a courtier of Mentuhotep II. The argument below will attempt to adopt Senenmut's perspective — when he was active in Deir el-Bahari, overseeing Hatshepsut's construction project, and, at some point, commissioning his own tomb there.

TT 353 IN THE LANDSCAPE OF DEIR EL-BAHARI: WHEN KHETY IS ENCOUNTERED FOR THE FIRST TIME

TT 353 has been often perceived in relation to the Temple of Hatshepsut (Winlock 1928: 42; Ratié 1979: 253; Meyer 1982: 237; Dorman 1988: 105; Engelmann-von Carnap 2014: 341). As an entirely un-

derground monument, its rear section, with the burial chamber, is located within Hatshepsut's sacred precinct [*Figs 1 and 2*]. While Peter Dorman (1988: 104–106) is not fully convinced of the symbolic

23 Useramun began his vizierate under Hatshepsut, but his tombs were built and decorated around year 28 of Thutmose III (i.e. during the sole reign of this king), according to a stela in the tomb of Amenemhat (TT 82), who was Useramun's steward and in charge of the works in TT 131 and TT 61 (Shirley 2014: 185 with n. 35; Den Doncker 2017: 340 with n. 36).

meaning of its placement,²⁴ the undeniable fact remains that, among Hatshepsut's courtiers, Senenmut is the only one to have his tomb in such a spectacular location.

However, while Senenmut stands alone among his contemporaries, TT 353 is not completely isolated in the area. Immediately above it rises the slope of the North Asasif, where the monumen-

tal tombs of Mentuhotep II's elite were cut. The tomb of Khety, TT 311, is the westernmost of the three largest tombs in the cliff, and its courtyard was almost aligned with the east wall of the "shield-shaped" enclosure of his king's temple (Allen 1996: 20–21; [see Fig. 1]). A path leading to TT 311 starts precisely at the location of TT 353.

Khety was one of the most prominent officials of Mentuhotep II, equal in rank to the vizier (Allen 1996: 3–26; 2003: 18–19; Grajetzki 2000: 44–45; 2009: 47–53). His most important functional title was *jmj-r3 hmt*, Overseer of what is sealed²⁵ (the official responsible for the commodities of the royal palace — the title is often translated as "Treasurer"; for further information on the title, see: Helck 1958: 77–80; Grajetzki 2000: 66–78; 2009: 43–46; 2013: 238–241; for additional literature, see Caminos and Osing 2021: 91 with n. 77). The tomb of Khety [Fig. 3] consists of a corridor leading to a square cult chapel, with a sloping passage opening in the rear wall of its cult niche, aligned with the axis, and leading through two false burial chambers. After a 180° turn, it reaches the actual burial chamber, where the sarcophagus was once sunk into the floor. Among the tombs of North Asasif, Khety's TT 311 appears to be the only one with completed decoration, which also demonstrates the highest craftsmanship of its time. Its corridor and cult chapel were lined with limestone blocks and

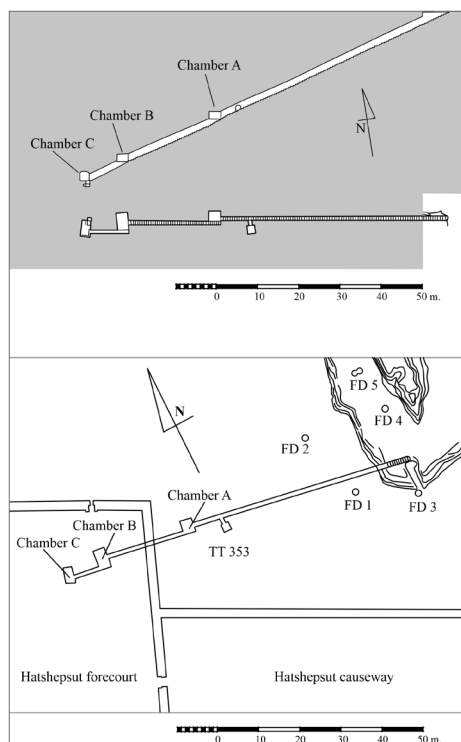


Fig. 2. Plan and cross-section of Senenmut's tomb, TT 353, with its foundation deposits, FD 1–5, and its spatial relationship to the Temple of Hatshepsut (After Dorman 1991: Pl. 40b, 51c; digitization A. Stupko-Lubczynska)

24 "[T]he most distinctive architectural feature of the tomb, its considerable length and depth, may not so much reflect a desire to partake vicariously in the divine ritual to be celebrated in *Dsr-dsrw* as to take advantage of something far more prosaic: good rock" (Dorman 1988: 104).

25 For this translation of *hmt*, see Berlev 1978: 167–170 (with *hmt* transcribed there as *sd3wt*).

decorated with reliefs,²⁶ while in the burial chamber, a limestone casing was painted. In front of the entrance to the tomb, a granite altar was installed and

found *in situ* [Fig. 4] (Winlock 1923: 11–19; Hayes 1953: 163–164; Allen 1996: 18–19; Grajetzki 2009: 48–53; Chudzik 2016b: 291–295 with Figs 2–8).

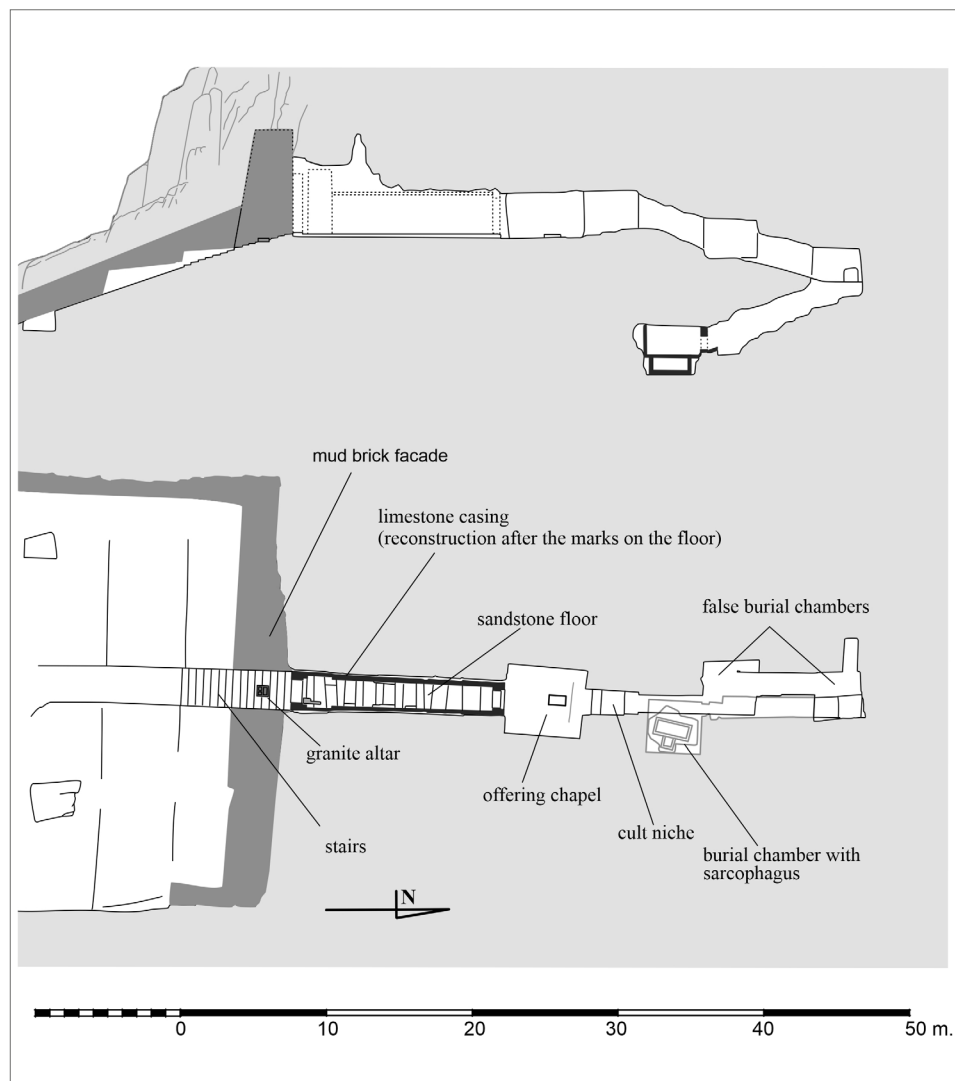


Fig. 3. Plan and cross-section of Khety's tomb, TT 311/MMA 508 (Collation of Winlock 1923: Fig. 6 and the documentation of PCMA Asasif Project; drawing K. Andraka based on 3D model by M. Mackiewicz; digitization A. Stupko-Lubczynska)

26 The cult chapel was initially plastered and painted; the stone casing was added in a subsequent phase of its decoration (Allen 1996: 18).

Reflecting Khety's position at court, his tomb is the most exposed monument in the Eleventh Dynasty Theban landscape, set high above the processional avenue leading to the king's temple and closest to the temple itself.²⁷ What TT 311 seems to communicate to a visitor, through its location, monumental size, materials used, and decoration, is: "I am the first among the people of my king", much like what we know about Senenmut's privileged position at Hatshepsut's court (for a summary of Senenmut's career, see Helck 1958: 356–363, 473–478; Ratić 1979: 243–264; Dorman 1988: *passim*, esp. 165–181; 2005a; Roehrig 2005c; Shirley 2014: 188–193; see also [Table 1, below]).

Extremely important for our further discussion is the fact that TT 311 was a popular place to visit in the Eighteenth Dynasty and beyond, according to research conducted by Chloé Ragazzoli (2020: 225 and Fig. 1; 2021: 222–224 and *passim*; forthcoming). A considerable number of visitor graffiti have been recorded on its walls, most dating to the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty. In fact, the number of these secondary inscriptions in TT 311 suggests that it was among the most popular monuments in the Theban Necropolis — indeed, a *lieu de mémoire* in literate circles of the time (Ragazzoli 2021: 222). Among the decorated

Theban tombs, TT 311 has more graffiti than all but the aforementioned TT 60 of Antefoker/Senet (though TT 60 is far better preserved, while the decoration in TT 311 is highly fragmentary, meaning many of its secondary inscriptions may have been lost). Overall, the graffiti are believed to commemorate visits made both as a sign of devotion to the tomb owner as a prominent figure of the past and in search of inspiration for ongoing construction projects (Ragazzoli 2021: 224ff.; Den Doncker 2012: esp. 30–31; 2017: 335–336; further references in Stupko-Lubczynska 2021b: 189–190 with nn. 6–8). This latter motivation is suggested by an iconographic link identified between the decoration of TT 311 and the Chapel of Hatshepsut in her Deir el-Bahari temple (Stupko-Lubczynska 2021b: *passim*).

Looking at the placement of Mentuhotep II's temple and TT 311 within the landscape, James P. Allen (1996: 21) notes that their spatial (and social) relationship is comparable to that observed between Meketra and his storekeeper, the *jmj-r3 st*, Wah: Wah's satellite tomb is placed in the courtyard of Meketra's tomb, to the right of its main axis (Winlock 1920: 15, Fig. 4). The same situation applies to the anonymous TT 314/MMA 513 and, satellite to it, the burial chamber of Horhotep (CG 28023; Morales and Osman 2018: Figs 2a–b, 5), as well as to

27 Several tombs are located to the west of TT 311 (MMA 505/TT 310, MMA 506, and MMA 507) that postdate the reign of Mentuhotep II (dating to the early Twelfth Dynasty: Allen 1996: 21 (with n. 89), 25). However, they bear no decoration. From the vantage point of "what Senenmut (or the artist(s) responsible for the design of his tomb) could see", one may argue that these tombs were semantically irrelevant for a potential Eighteenth Dynasty visitor, as were the undecorated tombs to the east of TT 311 (e.g. MMA 509, located just next to it [cf. Fig. 1]). In terms of architecture, however, the message of these monuments was as explicit as that of their decorated neighbors (see below).

the tomb of Ipi (TT 316/MMA 516) and the burial of his subordinate, Meseh (Allen 1996: 16 with n. 75), both at North Asasif [cf. Fig. 1]. One may wonder if the placement of Senenmut's TT 353, just in front of Hatshepsut's temple and to the right of its main axis, is a reference to the same tradition, especially in light of the fact that Senenmut's career began with the supervision of Hatshepsut's (and her daughter's) household (most likely as early as the reign of Thutmose II, cf. Shirley 2014: 189–191, with further literature).

Further concordance between the occupations of Senenmut and Khety is presented in [Table 1]. A quick look at that chart indicates that the two individuals had quite a lot in common. Putting aside their identical honorific titles, their shared responsibilities seem to primarily involve the supply and administration of precious materials (as *jmj-r3 htmt* and

jmj-r3 prwj-ḥd), as well as livestock (as *jmj-r3 ḥb whmt nšmt šw* (Khety) and *jmj-r3 ḥb whmt* (Senenmut)).

Another consideration, however, is that such concordance has its limitations. Given the differences in administration between the time of Mentuhotep II and Hatshepsut, the titles do not always overlap, and when they do, the actual responsibilities or functions may differ. Conversely, overlapping titles do not necessarily mean the same thing in both cases. For instance, according to Grajetzki (2009: 46; 2013: 239), the title *jmj-r3 prwj-ḥd* was not a functioning one in the Middle Kingdom, when the responsibilities of the treasurer were held by those with the title *jmj-r3 htmt* (see above). In contrast, in the New Kingdom, the treasurer is predominantly described with the title *jmj-r3 prwj-ḥd/prwj-nbw* (with variants, Taylor 2001: 17–19 (Nos 157–173); Awad 2002: 47ff.; Al-Ayedi 2006: 75–76 (No. 194)), although *jmj-r3 htmt* is not entirely abandoned (Taylor 2001: 42 (Nos 386–389); Awad 2002: 64; Al-Ayedi 2006: 127–129 (Nos 358, 363)).

Moreover, shared or similar functions do not have to be reflected by the same title. In such cases, contextual evidence can help identify common ground. Khety's responsibility for linen, as a precious good stored in the treasury of the palace, is indicated by the presence of his name and title *jmj-r3 htmt* on the linen found in the burials of Mentuhotep II's women (Allen 1996: 5–6 with nn. 15, 16; Grajetzki 2009: 45). Senenmut was also in charge of linen production and storage (in Amun's precinct), which is reflected in his title—not included in our Table 1—*ḥrj-mrt (n) jmn*, Supervisor of the *mrt*-people of

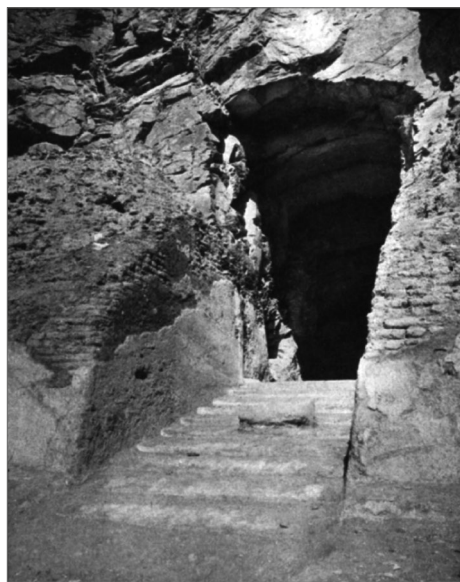


Fig. 4. Entrance to TT 311 during the MMA Expedition's works (Winlock 1923: Fig. 4)

Amun (Dorman 1988: 209 and Price 2018: 230–233 with n. (f) and Fig. 1d (where the title is misinterpreted); for the title *hrj-mrt* and its connection with linen, see Stupko-Lubczynska 2016: 136–138, 270 with n. 1499).

Being aware of how misleading the strict title comparison may be, we will attempt to reconstruct the contexts of Senenmut’s and Khety’s “common places” — the moments or settings in their careers where they might “meet” (or, rather,

where and how Senenmut could meet his antecedent).²⁸ In addition to the aforementioned case of Useramun referring to Antefoker, the paradigm for such an approach may be the case of Paser, the vizier under Ramses II, who left his inscription in TT 311, referring to Khety as “the father of the father of (his) father”, thus inventing a symbolic lineage between himself and his predecessor, with whom he shared many professional functions (Ragazzoli 2021: 224–225 and *passim*).

Table 1. Concordance of titles shared by Khety and Senenmut. Khety’s titles are collated as attested on his monuments (decoration of TT 311, sarcophagus, offering table in TT 311), on the linen of Mentuhotep II’s queens, among the reliefs of the temple of Mentuhotep II at Deir el-Bahari, and also outside Thebes, as is discussed in the main text (for the attestations of the titles, with source literature, see Allen 1996: 5; 2006: 19; Grajetzki 2000: 44–45; see also [Fig. 8], below). As for Senenmut, the chart presents an excerpt from the wide array of his titulary (for the complete list and occurrences, see Dorman 1988: 203–211); here, chosen are the most frequently attested titles or those shared with Khety.

		Khety		Senenmut
Rank titles	1.	<i>jrj-pꜣt</i>	Hereditary prince	<i>jrj-pꜣt</i> Hereditary prince
	2.	<i>ḥ3tj-ꜥ</i>	Count	<i>ḥ3tj-ꜥ</i> Count
	3.	<i>smr wꜣtj</i>	Sole friend	<i>smr wꜣtj</i> Unique friend
	4.	<i>ḥtmtj-bjtj</i>	Sealbearer of the king of Lower Egypt	<i>ḥtmtj-bjtj</i> ²⁹ Sealbearer of the king of Lower Egypt
	5.	<i>rḥ nswt jmj jb.f</i>	King’s acquaintance and intimate	<i>rḥ nswt m3ꜥ</i> King’s true acquaintance
Functional titles				<i>jmj-r3 pr wr n nswt / n s3t nswt nfrwrꜥ / n jmn</i> Chief steward of the king/of the king’s daughter Nefrura/of Amun (with variants)
				<i>jmj-r3 šnwtj n jmn</i> Overseer of the double granary of Amun (with variants)
				<i>jmj-r3 k3t nbt nt nswt / nt jmn</i> Overseer of every work of the king/of Amun (with variants)

28 One must remain mindful, however, of the reconstructive character of the cultural/collective memory, as mentioned above.

29 Read by Dorman (1988: 211) as *sd3wtj bjtj* (= Ward No. 1472).

		Khety		Senenmut	
Functional titles	6.	<i>jmj-r3 hmt</i>	Overseer of what is sealed	<i>jmj-r3 hmt</i> ³⁰ <i>jmj-r3 hmt</i> <i>nbt</i>	Overseer of (everything) that is sealed
	7.	<i>jmj-r3 prwj-hd</i>	Overseer of the double house of silver (i.e., the treasury)	<i>jmj-r3 prwj-hd</i>	Overseer of the double house of silver
	8.	<i>jmj-r3 hd hnc</i> <i>nbw jmj-r3</i> <i>hsbd mfk3t</i>	Overseer of silver and gold, overseer of lapis-lazuli and turquoise	<i>jmj-r3 prwj-hd prwj nbw</i>	Overseer of the double house of silver and the double house of gold (with variants)
	9.	<i>jt-ntr mry ntr</i>	God's father, god's beloved	<i>jt-mnc wr</i> <i>n s3t-nswt</i> <i>hnwt-t3wj</i> <i>hmt-ntr nfrw-r^c</i>	Chief/great tutor of the king's daughter, mistress of the Two Lands, god's wife Nefrura
	10.	<i>hrp rh(w) nswt</i>	Director of king's acquaintances		
	11.	<i>jmj-r3 'b whmt</i> <i>nšmt šw</i>	Overseer of horn, hoof, scale, and feather	<i>jmj-r3 'b whmt</i>	Overseer of horn and hoof

ARCHITECTURAL REFERENCES

First, the architecture of TT 353 warrants a brief comment. Regarding TT 353, Dorman writes that it is an entirely subterranean monument, which “conforms to a simple, if unorthodox, ground plan: three chambers laid out sequentially in an essentially linear configuration, to which access is gained by a series of three descending passageways” (Dorman 1988: 80, my emphasis; also 1991: 92). This arrangement of excavated spaces clearly stands in avant-garde opposition to the common burial space organization in the first half of the Eighteenth Dynasty, which typically features a shaft leading directly to a burial chamber (overview in Kampp

1996: 82–85, with Tab. 58 and Fig. 71, and ff.). However, it appears entirely orthodox when compared with the architecture of the Theban tombs from the time of Mentuhotep II, which feature sloping passages and intermediate (false) burial chambers leading to the final proper chamber. The following tombs at Deir el-Bahari and North Asasif are particularly notable in this regard: TT 319 (Queen Neferu), TT 311 (Khety),³¹ MMA 510/TT 313 (Steward Henenu), MMA 516/TT 315 (Vizier Ipi), TT 240/MMA 517 (Overseer of the sealbearers Meru), among others (Di. Arnold 1971: 45–46; plans and sections in Winlock 1942: 54, Fig. 6, 102, Fig. 8

³⁰ Read by Dorman (1988: 207) as *jmj-r3 sđ3wt* (= Ward No. 364).

³¹ In this tomb, the final section of the sloping passage turns “backwards” and leads to its fourth room — the actual burial chamber [cf. Fig. 3]. However, such a layout appears to be atypical for North Asasif tombs of this period.

(Ipi and Neferu); Gracia Zamacona 2019: Fig. 4 (Henenu); Chudzik 2016b: Fig. 11 (Meru)). The architecture of these tombs, in turn, emulates that of Mentuhotep II at Deir el-Bahari (Chudzik 2016a: 75–76, Figs 2, 4).

One may thus claim that the spatial arrangement of the excavated spaces in TT 353 reflects the general concept of tomb architecture found in North Asasif (understood as “the tombs from the epoch of King Mentuhotep II”). This is further supported by the presence of a small side chamber in TT 353, excavated in the corridor leading to Chamber A, to the left of the main axis (Dorman 1991: 92; [cf. Fig. 2]). Similar chambers are attested in corresponding locations in MMA 516/TT 315 (Ipi), TT 240/MMA 517 (Meru), and, additionally, in TT 280 (Meketra) outside North Asasif — the latter found intact and furnished with wooden models (Allen 1996: 16 with n. 74; Chudzik 2016b: 298, with further examples and literature). This feature also has a precedent in the burial apartments of Mentuhotep II (Di. Arnold 1974a: 45–46, Pl. 36; 1981: 11–13).

A significant difference between Senenmut’s TT 353 and the Eleventh Dynasty corridor tombs lies in the first passage, which in TT 353 slopes down

instead of running horizontally. This segment of TT 353 — a narrow, relatively low corridor with stairs leading down to Chamber A — recalls Hatshepsut’s tomb KV 20, a similarity noted since the discovery of TT 353 (Winlock 1928: 42; cf. Dorman 1988: 101 with n. 153). Dorman (1988: 102–103) attributes this resemblance between KV 20 and TT 353 to a shared objective: reaching layers of good solid rock.³² Among Senenmut’s contemporaries, the only comparable arrangement is found in the tomb of the Second Prophet of Amun, Puyemra (TT 39), located low in the Asasif Valley, east of Deir el-Bahari and south of Hatshepsut’s processional avenue (Davies 1922; 1923). Puyemra’s burial chamber is similarly preceded by several rooms and sloping passages,³³ though these are accessed via a shaft excavated at the right-hand edge of the transverse hall of his tomb chapel (Davies 1922: 12–13; 1923: Pls LXXIII (1–3), LXXVI; Kampp 1996: 231–232; Engelmann-von Carnap 2014: 357, Figs 14.34, 14.35).³⁴ In turn, a similar shaft-passage combination in the burial apartment is found in TT 61 (cf. Kampp 1996: 85 with n. 368, 279; Dziobek 1994: Pl. 49), whose owner, Hatshepsut’s Vizier Useramun, references the Middle Kingdom in his own way, as outlined above.

32 And/or, in the case of KV 20, to establish close proximity between its burial chamber and the cult chapel (i.e. the Chapel of Hatshepsut) within the Deir el-Bahari temple (Dorman 1988: 106).

33 A side chamber is also attested there, in the left-hand wall of the first sloping passage, similar to TT 353.

34 Interestingly, Norman de Garis Davies (1922: 12–13) notes a possible inspiration for the burial chamber of Puyemra in that of Mentuhotep II: “Puyemrê [...] in devising a mode of burial went back [...] to ancient models, one of which, if he knew of it, was near at hand, the strange place of internment of King Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahri. Sarcophagus and sarcophagus chamber, namely, are one”.

OUTSIDE THEBES: WHEN KHETY IS ENCOUNTERED FOR A SECOND TIME

South of Thebes lies a location currently known as Wadi Shatt el-Rigal [see Fig. 1]. Many of Mentuhotep II's courtiers left inscriptions there (Winlock 1940; 1947: 58–76; Caminos and Osing 2021: 17–23ff.), but only Khety is depicted twice facing the king. In one instance, he appears alone before Mentuhotep II, who is dressed in *heb-sed* attire (Caminos and Osing 2021: 17, 57, Pl. 34 (No. 33 B)). In the second instance, he is featured in a monumental panel (No. 26 B) positioned at the mouth of the wadi, in its most prominent location. In this depiction, Khety is accompanied by the royal relative Intef (the king's son or father)

and the king's mother Iah [Fig. 5]. In this graffito, Khety, bearing the title *hmtj-bjtj jmj-r3 hmt*, is shown in a respectful posture, with his right hand on his chest (Caminos and Osing 2021: 17, 47–48 (H), Pl. 34 (No. 26 H); for the panel's location, cf. Caminos and Osing 2021: Pl. 15 (No. 26)).

Unfortunately, the Shatt el-Rigal graffiti remain enigmatic regarding the event(s) they commemorate. The prevailing view is that they record the successful return of a desert caravan that traveled south and west via Kurkur Oasis to the land of Wawat (Lower Nubia), bypassing the obstacles of the



Fig. 5. Shatt el-Rigal rock-cut panel showing Mentuhotep II with his mother Iah, the god's beloved father, son of Ra Intef, and the sealbearer of the king of Lower Egypt, the overseer of what is sealed, Khety (Photo Roland Unger, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=58311476>, accessed: 04.04.2024)

Nile's First Cataract (Winlock 1940: 159–161; 1947: 73–76; more recently: Darnell 2004: 27 (with n. 11)–37, Pl. 1, with further literature).³⁵ Another interpretation links Shatt el-Rigal with the region's sandstone quarries (R. Klemm and D.D. Klemm 1993: 242–259; D.D. Klemm and R. Klemm 2001: 637; Aston, Harrell, and Shaw 2000: 55; for an overview of the various interpretations of the graffiti, see Caminos and Osing 2021: 30–32, though the authors themselves are inclined to link Mentuhotep II's court graffiti with a desert hunt in which the king participated).

Whatever the true purpose of the Shatt el-Rigal graffiti, what is important for our argument is that the site lies only 3.5 km north of the sandstone quarry at Gebel Silsila, where shrines of Hatshepsut's courtiers, including that of Senenmut (No. 16), were excavated (Caminos and James 1963: 53–56, Pls 33–34, 40–44; Kucharek 2010). According to Dorman (1988: 116 with n. 33; 2005a: 107), Senenmut's shrine at Gebel Silsila was installed in conjunction with his reopening of the quarry for Hatshepsut's building projects in Thebes.

Like TT 311 in the Theban Necropolis, Shatt el-Rigal attracted visitors during the Eighteenth Dynasty, some of whom left their graffiti at the site. For instance, directly beneath the feet of Mentuhotep II in the aforementioned panel No. 26 B—where the king is depicted with Khety and the royal relatives—an inscription reads:

jwt pw jr:n sš jb <r> m33 [...] ḥnh dt nhh

This is the visit made by the scribe Ib <to> see³⁶ [cartouche erased], may he live forever and ever (Caminos and Osing 2021: 17, 48 (J), Pl. 24 (No. 26 J)).

The signature 25 cm below it reads: “scribe Ib, scribe Djab” (Caminos and Osing 2021: 48 (L), Pl. 24 (No. 26 L)).

Another graffito, composed in three lines (Caminos and Osing 2021: 17, 49 (W), Pl. 25 (No. 26 W)), located near the panel in question, records a visit by a person whom we have every reason to consider a contemporary of Senenmut and possibly even his colleague in royal construction projects:

1. Overseer of work of Amenhotep I, justified, Peniaty
2. Overseer of work of Thutmose I, Peniaty
3. Overseer of work of Thutmose II, Peniaty

Peniaty left another inscription on a desert cliff southwest of the wadi (Caminos and Osing 2021: 17, 77, Pls 9a, 58 (No. 79B)): “Overseer of work in the House of Amun, Peniaty”. This time, his inscription appears alongside the cartouches of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III.

According to Caminos and Osing (2021: 17 with n. 57), the Eighteenth Dynasty visitors to Shatt el-Rigal were most likely engaged in construction and

35 Mentuhotep II's expeditions to the south extended even farther, as evidenced by a graffito recently discovered as far as Gebel Uweinat, at the Sudanese–Libyan border (Förster 2013: 314–321).

36 The phraseology *jwt pw jr:n sš NN r m33* is typical for visitor inscriptions found, among others, in Theban tombs (cf. Ragazzoli 2013: 289).

decoration work in the aforementioned Silsila shrines of Hatshepsut's officials and/or in sandstone quarrying. During such visits, one can assume that, along with the image of Mentuhotep II himself, Khety's figure — the most prominently depicted member of the court — could hardly have gone unnoticed. Could Senenmut himself have visited the place? There is no direct evidence of this.

However, Senenmut's graffito in the granite quarries of Aswan (east bank of the Nile, in the area called Mahattah, cf. PM V: 248; de Morgan et al. 1894:



Fig. 6. Aswan rock-cut panel showing Senenmut before Hatshepsut at the granite quarries of el-Mahatta (From Habachi 1957: Fig. 3)

41 (No. 181bis); Habachi 1957: 92ff., Fig. 3; further bibliography in Dorman 1988: 197–198 (7);³⁷ for the location, see Rumelhard Le Borgne 2018) bears a striking resemblance to the panel depicting Khety before Mentuhotep II in Shatt el-Rigal. In this graffito, Senenmut is shown standing before Hatshepsut, who is represented as both god's wife and king's wife [Fig. 6]. The accompanying inscription states that she commanded Senenmut to quarry "two great obelisks of eternity". These obelisks have been identified as Hatshepsut's earliest pair, which were installed in Amun's precinct at Karnak, in the middle of Thutmose II's courtyard, at the temple's main entrance. The epithets and titles used for Hatshepsut in the inscription allow scholars to date this graffito to the very end of her regency period (Dorman 1988: 115–116; Laboury 2014: 70–71 with nn. 53, 58; Shirley 2014: 189 with n. 52).

Significantly, the epithets of Hatshepsut in Senenmut's Silsila shrine ("the king's eldest daughter"), along with other factors, also indicate its early date (Dorman 1988: 113–115, 170 with n. 35; "close to Hatshepsut's accession"; Kucharek 2010: 147–148, with nn. 34–35, with further literature; Shirley 2014: 189 with n. 52). Andrea Kucharek (2010: 148) argues that already during the reign of Thutmose I, Senenmut held the title of Overseer of all royal works (for the early attestation of this title on Senenmut's statues BM 1513 and BM 174, see Dorman 1988: 116–119, 212). Kucharek further suggests that it was in this capacity that Senenmut came to Gebel Silsila.

37 In Dorman 1988, the graffito is erroneously placed on Schel Island.

Given the close timing of the execution of both Senenmut's monuments—his shrine at Silsila and his graffito in Aswan (cf. also Dorman 1988: 113)—a visual similarity between Senenmut's Aswan graffito and Khety's graffito in Shatt el-Rigal (notably in the gesture and dress of both courtiers, with an inversion of the scenes) suggests a possible inspiration that the Shatt el-Rigal graffito may have had on the one in Aswan, despite the physical distance between them.³⁸

In both graffiti, Khety and Senenmut, standing before their rulers, are designated as *htmtj bjtj*. This title is often met in strings of ranking titles (*jrp-p^ct h3tj-^c htmtj bjtj smr-w^ctj*:



Fig. 7. Aswan rock-cut panel dated to the 41st year of Mentuhotep II, mentioning Khety and Meketra (From Petrie 1888: Pl. VIII, No. 213)

Grajetzki 2000: VII; 2013: 220) as a prefix to higher functional titles (excluding that of the vizier). However, in some contexts, it does not seem to be devoid of a specific meaning, denoting “a man involved in high state affairs” — the leader of a group assigned by the king to complete a particular task, such as an expedition or workforce management (Quirke 1990: 61–62, 70 with n. 27, 170–171; Eichler 1993: 234; for further references, see Jones 2000: 763–764, No. 2775). In both rock inscriptions, *htmtj bjtj* appears to be used in precisely this sense, as it occurs separately from the rank-related titles. In this respect, one may indeed consider the possibility that Senenmut deliberately referenced the Shatt el-Rigal image of his predecessor as an act of homage, acknowledging him as a professional counterpart in the king's “expedition/quarrying business”.³⁹

Additionally, it is worth noting that one Khety from the time of Mentuhotep II is known from a graffito in Aswan, where he is also identified as an expedition leader [Fig. 7]. The inscription reads:

1. Year 41 under Horus Sema-tawy, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Neb-hepet-Ra, alive like Ra forever.
2. Return of the *htmtj-bjtj*, Unique friend, Overseer of sealers (*jmj-r3 htmtjw*) Khety, born of Sit-Ra, justified —

38 The mirrored (inverted) arrangement —if there is indeed a link between the two scenes— is a well-known method of creating a new version through copying; “[g]iven the freedom in orientation of Egyptian image and script, inverting a scene (...) was the easiest way to get both an identical and different version of it” (Den Doncker 2017: 350).

39 Regardless of whether the Shatt el-Rigal graffiti of Mentuhotep II were originally connected with the quarries or not (see above).

3. boats of Wawat⁴⁰ — and Meket-Ra, the Sealbearer.

This inscription was recorded in 1887 by Flinders Petrie on the east bank of the Nile between Aswan and the village of Shellal (PM V: 248; Petrie 1888: Pl. VIII (No. 213); Breasted 1906: 206–207 (§§ 425–426); Winlock 1940: 147; 1947: 34; Allen 1996: 5; Grajetzki 2000: 147) — approximately the same area as Senenmut's graffito. Unfortunately, neither the size of Khety's inscription nor its precise location are known.⁴¹ Was Senenmut (or his associates) aware of it? The question remains unanswered.⁴²

During Hatshepsut's era, the best-known expedition leader was Nehesy, *jmj-r3 htm*, Overseer of what is sealed, who organized and led the expedition to Punt (Bryan 2006: 78–79; Shirley 2014: 293–295; Taterka 2020:

128, 143–144). That Senenmut was involved in the preparation of the Punt expedition is suggested by a relief in the Deir el-Bahari temple's Southern Middle Portico (Punt Portico), where three courtiers — Nehesy, Senenmut, and the third anonymous man — are depicted before Hatshepsut's throne. They are accompanied by a lengthy speech from Hatshepsut, in which she proclaims her decision to organize the expedition (Naville 1898: Pl. LXXXVI; Taterka 2019: 197ff.; Galán and Díaz Iglesias-Llanos 2020: 165).⁴³

In the Eleventh Dynasty, preparations for the Punt expedition were overseen by a certain Henu, who left a text in Wadi Hammamat detailing his involvement in this endeavor. The text dates to the reign of Mentuhotep III Sankhkare (Couyat and Montet 1912: 81–84 (No. 114), Pl. XXXI; Hayes 1949:

40 According to Darnell (2004: 32–33 with n. 41), this reference to the boats of Wawat, alongside Khety, may suggest that the Shatt el-Rigal graffiti were executed in connection with Mentuhotep II's expedition to Nubia (see also above, pp. 97–98).

41 In 1926, Herbert Winlock and Percy Newberry visited the site in search of this graffito but were unable to find it (Winlock 1940: 152 with n. 57; 1947: 34).

42 This Khety may or may not be the same person as “our” Khety, given that the title recorded in the Aswan graffito is *jmj-r3 htmjw*, and not *jmj-r3 htm*, the latter attested for Khety in TT 311 and Shatt el-Rigal (for the discussion, see Allen 1996: 7 and Fig. 3; on the title *jmj-r3 htmjw*, which seems to denote a person working under or alongside the high steward, see Grajetzki 2000: 155–157; 2009: 80–82). Be that as it may, this distinction seems irrelevant for the present discussion, which attempts to take the vantage point of “what Senenmut saw” (personally or through his people), as one can hardly imagine an in-depth investigation in his time into whether “a Khety” from the time of Mentuhotep II was equivalent to “the Khety” of TT 311 and Shatt el-Rigal. A similar situation arises with Khety's statues from the Karnak temple (see below).

43 The figures in question were erased along with the text in a manner typical for the proscription of Hatshepsut during the sole reign of Thutmose III, while Senenmut's name and titles had been removed from the scene even earlier, presumably still under Hatshepsut (cf. Taterka 2015: 33–34). The latter fact has been interpreted as an indication of Senenmut's fall from grace (Taterka 2015: 33–35). However, the issue of Senenmut's alleged *damnatio memoriae* is far more complex, as demonstrated in Dorman 1988: 141–164, and is certainly beyond the scope of the present paper. As for this particular erasure of Senenmut's name, while its dating to the reign of Hatshepsut raises no doubts, its motivation remains obscure, as commented elsewhere by the present author (Stupko-Lubczynska 2024: 25).

43 with n. 1; Bradbury 1988: 127–138; Taterka 2020: 47–52). Henu appears to be the same individual as Henenu, whose tomb, TT 313/MMA 510, is located in North Asasif as the third in a row, adjacent to Khety's TT 311/MMA 508 and the anonymous MMA 509 (Allen 2003: 16) [cf. Fig. 1].

In the context of our argument regarding the placement of Senenmut's lower tomb as a reference to his Middle Kingdom predecessors, it is noteworthy that Henenu's most prominent title was *jmj-r3 pr*, Steward (Allen 1996: 11; 2005: 16; Gracia Zamacona 2019: 75 with Fig. 2; Grajetzki 2009: 70–71), just as Senenmut's was (Dorman 1988: 205–206 (*jmj-r3 pr wr*, Chief steward, with variants, cf. Table 1)). On the façade of Henenu's tomb, two stelae were placed (Hayes 1949: *passim*, with the better-

preserved stela shown in Pl. IV), inscribed with a string of Henenu's titles as well as his autobiography, which is dated to the reign of Mentuhotep II, i.e. before the Punt expedition, but mentioning Henenu's expedition to the land of the "Sand-Dwellers" (Bedouins of the Eastern Desert?) (Hayes 1949: 46 (lines 9–11), 48 with nn. (g), (h)), as well as the cutting of cedars in Lebanon (Hayes 1949: 46 (line 16), 49 with n. (k)). In this self-presentation, Henenu appears primarily as *jmj-r3 pr* and the expedition leader. One may therefore imagine how information about the tomb owner—easily accessible even without going inside the tomb—might have captured the imagination of the (literate) individuals involved in the construction of Hatshepsut's temple and Senenmut's TT 353.

OVERSEEING THE WORK AT DEIR EL-BAHARI

Senenmut's involvement in Hatshepsut's building project at Deir el-Bahari, and even his leading role there, is suggested by a wide variety of sources. His own declaration on the matter is found on his statue from Karnak (CG 579; Dorman 1988: 126–127):

[It has been ordered] that the high steward Senenmut supervise every work of the king in Ipet-sut in Iunu

of Upper Egypt,⁴⁴ [in the Temple of Almun called *Djeser-djeseru*, in the House of Mut in Isheru,⁴⁵ in the Southern Sanctuary of Amun⁴⁶ [satisfying the heart of the Majesty] of this noble god and magnifying the monuments of the Lord of the Two Lands (*Urk.* IV, 409.5–12; the English translation follows Taterka 2015: 30–31, with minor changes; my emphasis).

44 The Temple of Karnak in Thebes (on the toponym "Iunu of Upper Egypt" as, in this case, referring to Thebes, see Dorman 1988: 126 with n. 72).

45 The Mut precinct in Karnak.

46 The Luxor Temple.

Later in the same text, he claims to be, among other things, “(...) the director of all the work of the king’s house,⁴⁷ who leads all artistry/craftsmanship (*hmwt*)⁴⁸” (*Urk.* IV, 411.16–17).

Senenmut is also mentioned on three ostraca containing notes from the time of the temple’s construction, found at the site (Hayes 1960: 35–37, Pls X, XA (Nos 7, 8, 10 *recto*)), although, notably, among many of his contemporaries (Hayes 1960: 38–39 and *passim*). Moreover, his name is attested (again, alongside those of other courtiers) on the “name stones” from Hatshepsut’s Valley Temple. These artifacts, placed in the temple’s foundations, were intended to commemorate —according to common interpretation— the contributions of the mentioned individuals to the construction process of the Deir el-Bahari complex (Hayes 1942: 45–46; Helck 1982: 338 with n. 4; Meyer 1982: 258; Roehrig 2005b; Iwaszczuk 2009: 59, 61; Engelmann-von Carnap 2014: 342).

The unfinished tomb MMA 504, located just above the temple (the so-called Scribes’ Cave, also known as the Dirty Cave [cf. *Fig. 1*]), contains a number of inscriptions contextually linked to the construction and decoration of Hatshepsut’s temple (Ragazzoli 2017: 59–61). The portrait of Senenmut, drawn in the most prominent location within

the cave, along with the offering formula written for him opposite his image (Ragazzoli 2017: 130–132, 169–173), is interpreted as a sign of piety towards Senenmut as “the great superior” of Hatshepsut’s entire architectural endeavor at Deir el-Bahari (Ragazzoli 2017: 29, 102–104).

Further contextual evidence, often cited as suggesting Senenmut’s involvement in the temple’s construction, includes the presence of his *ex voto* images behind the doors of the temple (Winlock 1942: 105–106; Hayes 1957: 80–85; Barwick 2020) and the cryptographic frieze of Hatshepsut’s throne name, Maatkara, attested in the temple and used in some of Senenmut’s statues (Keller 2005b; 2005c; 2005d: 117, 118; Sankiewicz 2008: 200–212, with further literature). While Senenmut’s *ex votos* should rather be understood as an expression of Hatshepsut’s exceptional favor (Dorman 2005a: 108), as indicated by the royal decree accompanying one such image in the North Room of Amun (Hayes 1957: 83–85), the cryptographic frieze may indeed be seen as an indication of Senenmut’s contribution to the design of the temple’s decoration — i.e. that he was the inventor of Hatshepsut’s cryptogram (cf. Meyer 1982: 202; Sankiewicz 2008: 203–204; Taterka 2015: 26; but note Dorman 1988: 138).

47 *Pr-nswt* (following Kurt Sethe’s transcription of hieroglyphic script in *Urk.* IV, 411.16) or, alternatively, *pr-hd*, “the house of silver”, i.e. the treasury (following Breasted’s translation, 1906: 147 (§ 352)). The present author has not had the opportunity to consult the original text. The second interpretation does not seem entirely without merit, given Senenmut’s title as Overseer of the double house of silver [cf. *Table 1*], and, more broadly, the close connection between the treasury, artistic production, and royal building projects (Krejčí 2000: 70–71 and *passim*; Bryan 2006: 85–87; Stupko-Lubczynska 2024; Devillers 2025).

48 On the term *hmwt*, understood as the closest equivalent to our modern concept of art, see Stauder 2018: 252; Ragazzoli 2019: 395–398; Laboury and Devillers 2023: 166–167.

As for Khety under Mentuhotep II, the picture is less explicit. He is not *jmj-r3 k3t nbt nt nswt*, “Overseer of all royal works” — the first title that comes to mind for a person responsible for royal building activity (this title is attested for Senenmut [see Table 1 above]; on it, see Helck 1958: 45–46; Strudwick 1985: 217–250; Krejčí 2000; for Hatshepsut’s reign, Bryan 2006: 76, 86). However, this title does not appear to have been in use during the time

of Mentuhotep II.⁴⁹ Wolfram Grajetzki (2009: 45) indicates that in the Middle Kingdom, involvement in the king’s building projects was one of the responsibilities of an official holding the title *jmj-r3 htmt*, which was Khety’s main functional title, as mentioned above. Khety’s participation in royal projects may also be suggested — at least for the Eighteenth Dynasty — by his title *jmj-r3 prwj ḥd*, “Overseer of the double treasury” [Fig. 8]. The treasury may have functioned not only as a repository of precious materials but also as a kind of “design bureau” for such projects (in the Old and New Kingdoms the offices of Overseer of royal works and Overseer of the treasury were often held by one person, e.g. Senenmut; see n. 47 above).

Khety’s exceptional appearance — as *jmj-r3 htmt* — among the aforementioned Shatt el-Rigal graffiti, near the area where sandstone was quarried in the Eighteenth Dynasty (see above), could further imply his connection with royal construction works, especially that under Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, holders of this title were still involved in various expeditions, including those for building materials (Bryan 2006: 77–81). The extensive use of sandstone in Mentuhotep II’s temple at Deir el-Bahari would have been easily recognizable to an Eighteenth Dynasty visitor: all pavements, pillars, architraves, and ceiling slabs were made of this material, as well as the statues of Mentuhotep II along the processional avenue (Di. Arnold 1975b: 1016; Di. Arnold and Do. Arnold 2015: 38 with Fig. 41; Do. Arnold 2015: 50, with further literature). Further-



Fig. 8. Fragment of TT 311’s entrance decoration, preserving two of Khety’s titles: “[Overseer] of what is sealed” and “Overseer of the double treasury” (Fragment’s attribution to the façade of TT 311 by the MMA Expedition, as per drawing AM 705, unpublished | photos P. Karwowska, figure A. Stupko-Lubczynska)

49 Overseers of all royal works are sporadically attested in the Middle Kingdom (Ward Nos 399–402), but it has been argued that by that time, the title was “more a biographical phrase than an official appointment” (Grajetzki 2013: 216–217).

more, sandstone pavements and ceiling slabs are attested in the monumental tombs of Mentuhotep II's courtiers, including Khety's TT 311 (Davies 1913: 30; Chudzik 2016b: 291–293, 295).⁵⁰

Even though there is currently no full agreement as to whether Mentuhotep II's sandstone was actually quarried in the

vicinity of Shatt el-Rigal,⁵¹ it is plausible that it could have been perceived as such in the Eighteenth Dynasty. Given Khety's prominent presence in Shatt el-Rigal, he could have appeared—at least to an Eighteenth Dynasty observer—as the best candidate to be linked with that task.

TEACHING THE ROYAL CHILD(REN)

Among the reliefs preserved in TT 311, one of Khety's titles is *jt-ntr mry-ntr*, “God's father, god's beloved”.⁵² The same title for Khety is recorded among the reliefs in the Temple of Mentuhotep II (Allen 1996: 7 with n. 22), where he appears to be depicted at the head of the courtiers paying homage to the enthroned king. Grajetzki (2009: 48, 148) suggests that the title either denoted Khety's blood connection with the royal family (for example, that he was the father of one of Mentuhotep II's minor wives) or, alternatively, that he was the teacher of the king's children (i.e. a non-royal father of a future king, referred to as “god” in the title). However, the latter interpretation of the title in the Middle Kingdom

is ambiguous, as the scholar notes. Notably, this second interpretation aligns with Senenmut's well-known role as the tutor to Hatshepsut's only child, Nefrura, *jt-mn^c wr n s3t-nswt hnwt-t3wy hmt-ntr nfrwr^c* (Dorman 1988: 170–171, 208; Roehrig 2005c; Shirley 2014: 189–191).

This title of Senenmut is attested on his four statues: Berlin 2296 (block statue with Nefrura), with no certain provenance (Dorman 1988: 188); CG 42116 (seated, with one knee raised, with Nefrura in lap (Dorman 1988: 191–192), from the Amun temple at Karnak; BM 1513 (block statue), most probably from Karnak (Dorman 1988: 189), and CG 47278 (block statue with Nefrura) from Karnak-North (Dorman 1988: 192–193).

⁵⁰ In Hatshepsut's temple, sandstone is present, albeit on a slightly smaller scale compared to Mentuhotep II (Iwaszczuk 2017: 10–11). Notably, it includes the sphinxes placed along the temple's processional avenue (Smilgin 2012; Kasprzycka 2019). Agata Smilgin (2012: 259) suggests that the sandstone used for Hatshepsut's sphinxes most likely came from the area extending from Shatt el-Rigal to Gebel Silsila.

⁵¹ Dieter Arnold (1975b: 1016) states, for instance, that the sandstone used by Mentuhotep II at Deir el-Bahari was of “unknown provenance”. In Arnold and Winlock (1979: 31), the sandstone of Mentuhotep II's temple, as well as that used in the tombs of his courtiers, is suspected to come from Qubbet el-Hawa in Aswan, which is, however, doubted in Lucas and Harris (1962: 56). Rosemarie and Dietrich Klemm (1993: 255, 259; 2001: 637) would, nevertheless, place the sandstone quarry of Mentuhotep II at Gebel Silsila, similarly to Aston, Harrell, and Shaw (2000: 55).

⁵² According to Allen (1996: 5 with n. 14; 2003: 19 with n. 60), who quotes MMA Theban Expedition Journal III (unpublished: 116), the PCMA Expedition has not yet identified the fragment(s) discovered by the MMA Expedition preserving this title in TT 311.

Additionally, on the statue Chicago Field Museum 173800, presumably also from Karnak (Dorman 1988: 193; Roehrig 2005a), portraying Senenmut standing and holding Nefrura, the text says:

“(…) I was efficient in his (the king’s, i.e., Hatshepsut’s) opinion in that I nurtured the eldest princess, the God’s Wife, Nefrura, alive. I was given to her as the goddess’s father (*jt-ntr*), because of my effectiveness on behalf of the king” (Roehrig 2005a: 116 with n. 2).

As for Khety, a seated statue is known, also found in Karnak (Leiden AEBB⁵³), along with an offering table (JE 67858),

probably with the same provenience, on which Khety’s main titles, mentioned above, are listed, along with *jt-ntr* (*htmtj-bjtj smr-w^ctj jt-ntr jmj-r3 htmt m t3 dr:f jm3hw hty m3^c hrw*) (Boeser 1910: 5 (No. 40), Pl. XXI (Fig. 13); Allen 1996: 7–8 with nn. 27–28; 2003: 19 with n. 61). James Allen (1996: 8–9; 2003: 19) points out that both these objects are stylistically later than the Eleventh Dynasty (probably from the Twelfth Dynasty); thus, they either reflect a commemorative attitude of later generations toward Khety of TT 311, or, alternatively, they were made for a later Khety with the same titles.

Leaving aside the uncertainty mentioned above about what the *jt-ntr* title could actually mean in Khety’s case, and

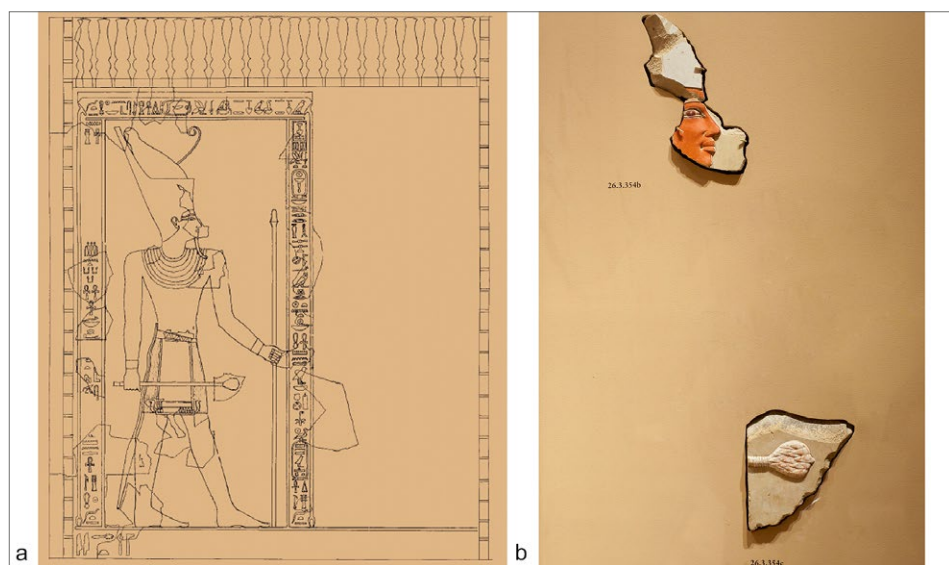


Fig. 9. a – The MMA Expedition’s collage of scenes depicting Mentuhotep II, based on fragments discovered in TT 311; b – fragments preserving the king’s face and his mace, on display at the MMA; Acc. Nos 26.3.354b–c (26.3.354-8-related); <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/590886?ft=Khety&offset=0&rpp=40&pos=8> (accessed: 04.04.2024)

53 The head of the statue, featuring a royal *uraeus* and “*nemes*” headdress (cf. <https://www.rmo.nl/en/collection/search-collection/collection-piece/?object=47>, accessed: 04.03.2024), is a modern (19th century) restoration, made of painted plaster, cf. Winlock 1940: 147 with n. 31.

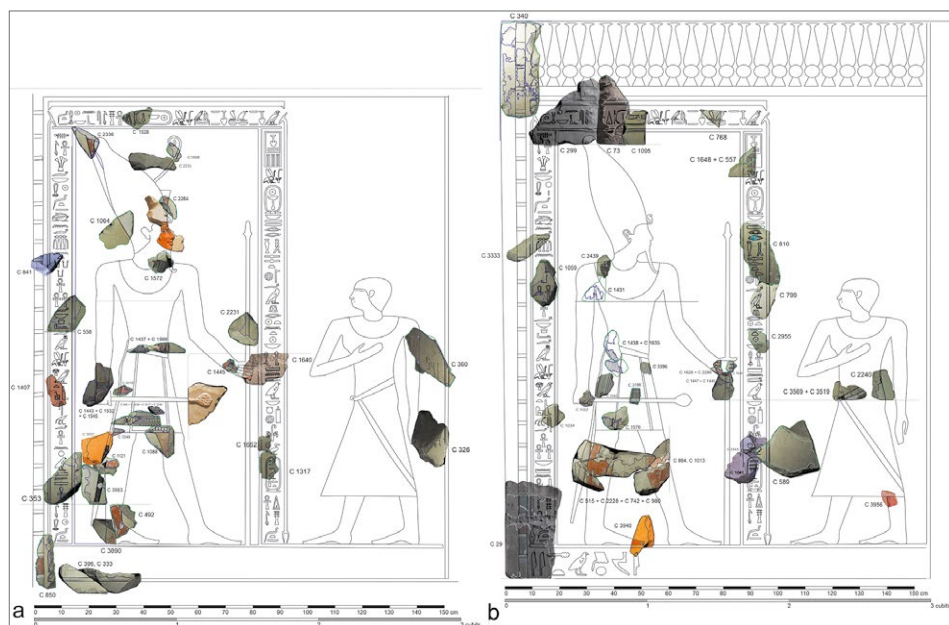
even the uncertainty of whether the aforementioned artifacts from Karnak belonged to “our” Khety, what is important is how the title would have been perceived in the New Kingdom. In that period, Grajetzki (2009: 148, after Brunner 1961) emphasizes that the title was certainly associated with teaching the royal children. Considering

the possibility that Senenmut could have been familiar with Khety’s title, either through the inscriptions in TT 311, in Mentuhotep II’s temple, or in Karnak (or through a combination of these three locations), one may assume that Senenmut would have understood it as another function that he shared with Khety.

IN THE PRESENCE OF MY KING FOREVER: INTERICONIC AND INTERTEXTUAL LINKS BETWEEN TT 353 AND TT 311

Returning to the Theban Necropolis, in TT 311 of Khety, fragments have been preserved that indicate the image of King Mentuhotep II was among the key visual elements of this monument. The scene has

been discussed in Hayes (1953: 163–164), Allen (1996: 6 (with n. 18), 18), Vasiljević (2005: 133), Grajetzki (2009: 53, Fig. 21 (f)), and more recently in Karwowska (2023: 151ff.) as the earliest attestation of the



king's image in a non-royal tomb. The fragments of the scene were discovered by the MMA Expedition and later collated into a single image [Fig. 9:a]. However, at the time of their discovery, overlapping details preserved on some of the fragments made it evident that the scene was, in fact, duplicated. The caption to the MMA Expedition reconstruction drawing AM 708 (unpublished) notes that it represents a "[c]omposite of fragments of two scenes on either side of corridor, just inside door".

Thus, there were two figures of the king in TT 311, both shown striding and facing right [Fig. 10:a–b]. The king wore a short pleated kilt and an apron adorned with two cobras, holding the *ḥd*-mace in his right hand and, presumably, a *mdw*-staff in his left hand. In panel A, the king wears the Double Crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, while in panel B, the Upper Egyptian Crown is to be reconstructed.⁵⁴ Apart from two fragments [Fig. 9:b], the remaining fragments of the scenes are still in TT 311. These were studied by the PCMA Expedition in 2022 and 2023, leading to the identification of a number of new pieces. For instance, fragments preserving a *uraeus* and a curl (PCMA field Nos TT 311/C 2264, C 1608, C 2235) now complement the previously proposed reconstruction of the king's head wearing the Double Crown. Additionally, a fragment preserv-

ing Mentuhotep II's "divine" beard (PCMA field No. TT 311/C 1572; see Karwowska 2023: 151–152, 156ff., with Figs 1, 2) further enhances this reconstruction [cf. Fig. 10:a].

The figures of the king were topped by the *pt*-sign supported on two *w3s*-signs, thereby creating a frame along which three textual units were arranged: (1) a horizontal line above the king's head and two columns of text, (2) in front of, and (3) behind the king, reading:⁵⁵

(1) [*hr sm3-t3wj nb tj sm3-t3wj bjk nbw k3-šwtj nswt-bjtj*] 'nb-*ḥpt-r*' *dj* 'nh' *dd* 'w3s snb nb mj r' *dt*

[Horus Sematawy, Two Ladies Sematawy, Falcon of Gold Kashuty, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt] 'Nebhepetra', given all life, 'stability', and health, like Ra 'forever'.

(2) [*hr sm3-t3wj njswt bjtj nb-ḥpt-r nb*] 't3wj' *jrr ḥsst ntr* [*njw*].*f m hr[t n]t r*' [*nb*] 'nh.(w) mj' *mnt' w nb* [*jwnw*] 'šm'w s3 r' *mntw* [*ḥtp dj nh*] *dd* 'w3s dt'

[Horus⁵⁶ Sematawy, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt Nebhepetra, Lord of] 'the Two Lands,' who accomplishes what the god of his [town] favors in the cou[rse of every]day, 'may he be alive as' Mont'u, Lord' [of Heliopolis] 'of Upper Egypt,⁵⁷ son of Ra Mentu' [hotep, given life], stability, and

54 This set of crowns, not entirely symmetrical, is quite common in the Egyptian iconography, notably including Hatshepsut's Osiride figures at the Upper Terrace of her Deir el-Bahari temple (Ćwiek 2014: 90–91 with n. 175).

55 The reconstructed texts treat fragments attributed to panels A and B collectively. The study of both scenes is in progress and it is possible that the fragments' attribution to panels A or B may change in its course.

56 The reconstructed Horus-sign is joint for texts (1) and (2).

57 A descriptive name for Thebes (see below).

‘dominion forever.’

(3) *s3* ‘*nh*’ [*dd w3s h3.f nb mj r^c wn.*] *f hnt k3w nhw.f nb(w) h^c.* [*f m nswt bjtj hr*] *st* ‘*hrw*’ *sšm.* [*f nh*] *w mn.(w) nh.(w) dd.(w) w3s.(w) mj r^c dt*

May all protection, ‘life’, [stability and dominion surround him like Ra forever. May] he [be] at the fore of all his living *kas*, [may he⁵⁸] appear [as the King of Upper and Lower Egypt upon] the seat

‘of Horus’ (and) may [he] lead [the living⁵⁹], (being) permanent, alive, stable, and dominant like Ra forever.

The note in the reconstruction drawing AM 708 (MMA, unpublished) states that the panels “probably contained figure of Khety as at Shatt el-Rigal”. Such a reconstruction has been proposed in our Fig. 10, incorporating the fragments found in TT 311 that appear to match in scale

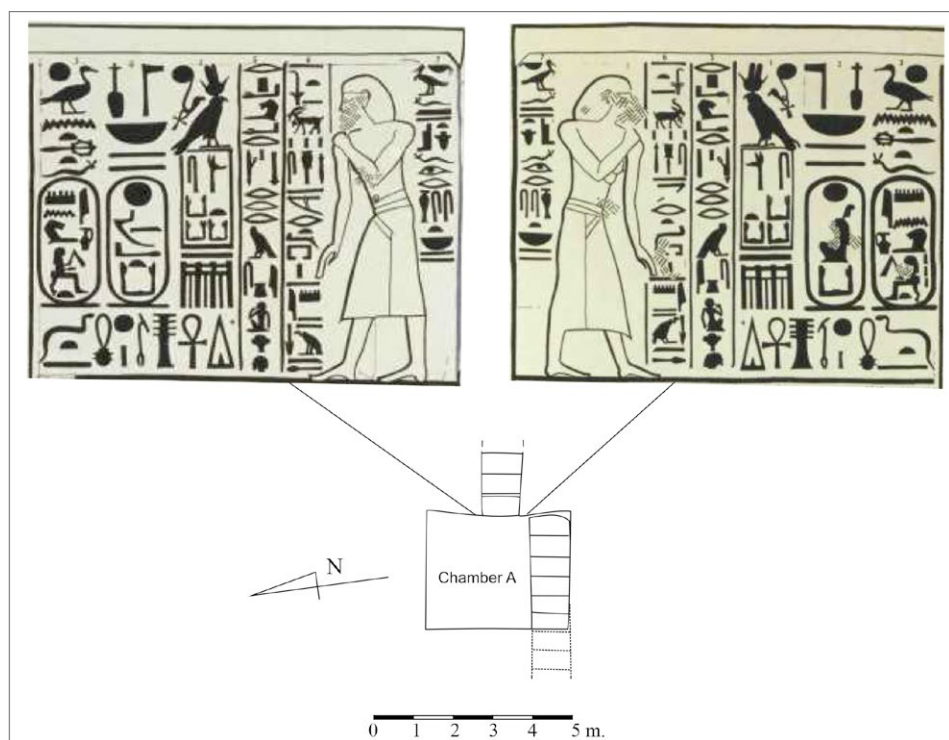


Fig. 11. Two vignettes showing Senenmut adoring Hatshepsut's names and their locations in TT 353 (From Dorman 1991: Pls 52a (detail, digitization A. Stupko-Lubczynska), 61, 81 (details))

58 In the absence of the verb ending, we propose a reconstruction of the subjunctive *sšm.f* forms in the 3rd person singular here (*h^c.f* and *sšm.f*). For phrases of this type, cf. Stupko-Lubczynska 2021a; e.g. the texts accompanying Hatshepsut in her “birth cycle” in the Deir el-Bahari temple, Stupko-Lubczynska 2021a: 466–467 with Fig. 8.

59 Or “all the living”; the entire phrase shows slight variation in writing between the panels [cf. Fig. 10].

and relief workmanship. However, it must be emphasized that until a direct join is found linking the fragments of the proposed figure of Khety to the text in front of the king, this reconstruction remains purely hypothetical.

In TT 353, two panels are also placed in Chamber A, depicting Senenmut bowing before Hatshepsut's names (Dorman 1991: 99, Pls 61, 81) [Fig. 11]. Their exact prototype has been identified in Asyut, in the tomb of Djefaihapy (Asyut I), the nomarch from the time of Senwosret I (Kahl 2014: 161–163; on this scene, see also Vasiljević 2005: 134–135). While Djefaihapy's tomb contains only one such panel, located in the great hall to the left of the entrance [Fig. 12], Senenmut's TT 353 features a duplication of these panels, placed symmetrically on either side of the entrance to Chamber A. One may wonder whether this duplication was

inspired by the double scene in TT 311. Comparing Senenmut's scenes with their Asyutan model, one can observe an inversion: while in Asyut I, the king's names are oriented rightward —i.e. into the tomb's interior— in TT 353, it is Senenmut who faces this direction, as if entering the tomb, while Hatshepsut's names are oriented outward.

As for the placement of Khety's panels in TT 311, given the current state of research, it is impossible to determine their exact location within the tomb. However, the most probable placement appears to be the area “just inside the entrance”, as proposed by the MMA Expedition (Hayes 1953: 163; drawing AM 708, unpublished). This attribution is further supported by the architecture of the tomb, as the space behind the entrance is considerably higher than the rest of the corridor [cf. Fig. 3]. Bearing in mind that the right-hand wall

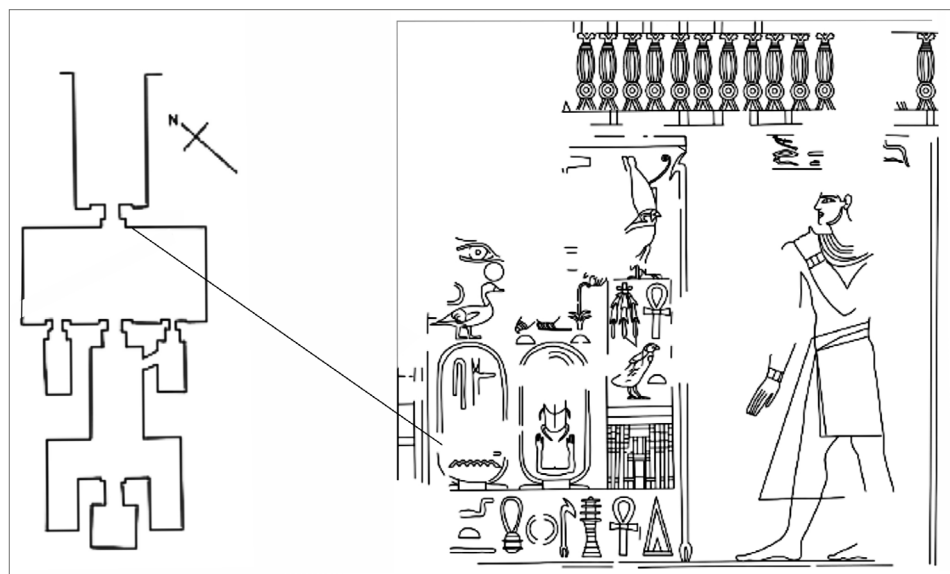


Fig. 12. Vignette showing Djefaihapy I adoring Senwosret I's names and its location in Asyut I (Digitization P. Karwowska after PM IV: 260 (plan) and Kahl 2014: Fig. 2 (scene))

in this area was largely covered by the door leaf, as suggested by a single door socket located to the right of the entrance (Chudzik 2020: 180 with Fig. 10; [Fig. 13]), the only feasible placement for both panels appears to be on the left-hand (west) wall. If this scenario were accurate, the king's figure would be oriented toward the interior of the tomb, while the reconstructed figure of the tomb owner would be facing outward, as if emerging from his tomb to welcome the king. This arrangement of the figures aligns with the orientation found in Djefaihapy's panel in Asyut I but contradicts all known attestations of the king's figures in non-royal tombs in the Theban Necropolis,

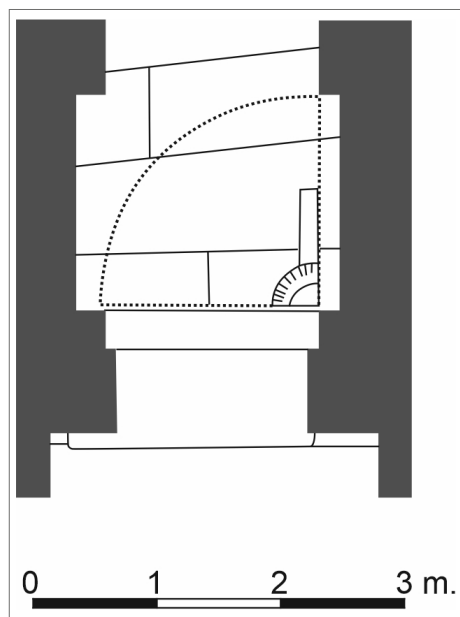


Fig. 13. Reconstruction of TT 311's entrance and its door system (After Di. Arnold 1971: Fig. 3a; digitization A. Stupko-Lubczynska)

beginning with the scene in TT 60 (for an overview of these scenes and their orientation, see Karwowska 2023: 162–163). In all such examples, the king faces outward, while the tomb owner is depicted approaching the ruler as if entering his own tomb from the outside (which is also seen in Senenmut's panels).

In TT 311, if one wished to achieve such an arrangement, with the king looking outward, both of the king's figures would have had to be placed on the right-hand wall. In this case, however, the scenes would have been hidden behind the door. This seems highly improbable, given the fundamental message conveyed by the king's image in a non-royal tomb, which, in all other attested examples, is given the most prominent place within the tomb space — referred to as *Blickpunktsbild* (see overview in Karwowska 2023: 162).

In terms of iconography, both Khety's panels appear quite similar — at least, as far as one can judge from the preserved fragments (with the primary difference being the king's headgear). In terms of workmanship, however, one panel is of significantly better quality, with all details executed in relief, while in the other panel, these details are painted [Fig. 14]. This difference suggests at least two possible explanations for the attribution of scenes A and B. One possibility is that the discrepancies indicate the work of a master and his apprentice, who were executing the scenes side by side on opposite walls.⁶⁰ However, in this scenario, one of the king's figures would be depicted “entering” the tomb while the other

60 Examples of symmetrical scenes executed by two individuals — a master and an apprentice — are well known in Egyptology. These can be identified based on stylistic and workmanship discrepancies (cf. Laboury 2020: 93, with further references).

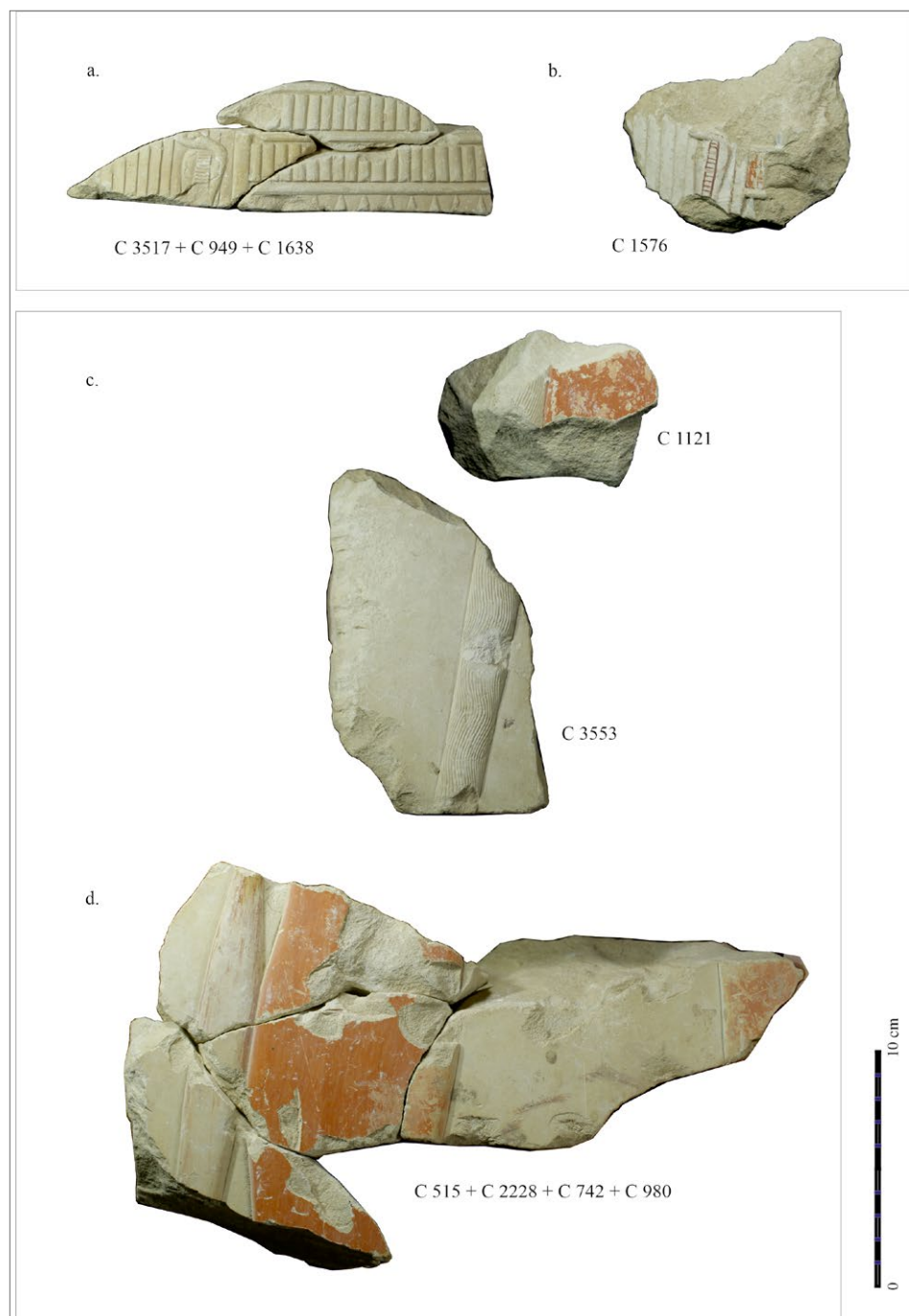


Fig. 14. Details of two panels depicting Mentuhotep II in TT 311, illustrating differences in the workmanship of the king's kilt and his bull's tail: fragments a and c attributed to panel A; fragments b and d attributed to panel B (Photos P. Karwowska, figure A. Stupko-Lubczynska)

would be “leaving” it — an unprecedented arrangement in a non-royal tomb.⁶¹ Moreover, the right-hand scene would have been entirely covered by the door leaf when the door was open, which, as noted above, would be highly unusual.

An alternative solution would be to position the two scenes one above the other. In this scenario, the height of this part of the corridor would be utilized, with both scenes placed on the left-hand wall — the best-lit area when the door was open. The

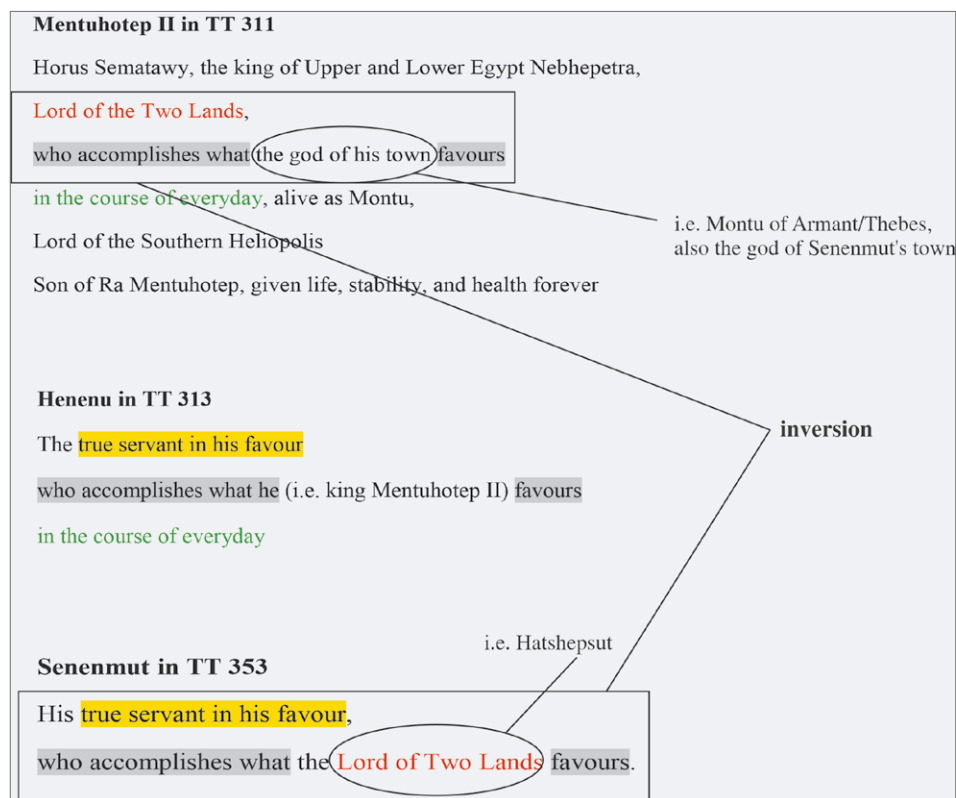


Fig. 15. Intertextual relationship between the “who accomplishes...” passages in TT 311, TT 313, and TT 353 (Figure A. Stupko-Lubczynska)

⁶¹ Although one must keep in mind that during the period when Khety's tomb was being decorated, the artistic conventions of the Middle Kingdom were still taking shape, thus various peculiar iconographic solutions cannot be completely excluded. The only example known to the present author in which a king's figure, placed on different walls within the same room, faces different directions is the *antichambre carrée* of pyramid temples (cf. Stupko-Lubczynska 2021a: *passim*, esp. Fig. 6). It is interesting to note that in the scenes decorating this type of room in the Old Kingdom, the lowest register commonly features bowing officials (Stupko-Lubczynska 2021a: Fig. 2a). The postures of some of these officials are identical to those attested for Senenmut in the discussed panels in TT 353. They also resemble the postures of the three officials (with Senenmut among them) standing before Hatshepsut's throne in the Punt Portico (Naville 1898: Pls LXXXV–XXXVI).

better-executed panel would be positioned at the viewer's eye-level, while the slightly lower-quality panel would be placed above it, where differences in workmanship would not be as noticeable from ground level.⁶² Research on the scenes depicting the king in Khety's tomb is ongoing, and future field seasons will hopefully shed more light on their attribution. For now, the latter scenario appears to be the most plausible.

When it comes to Senenmut's panels, several of their features are noteworthy. His posture, identical to that in Djefaihapy's example, recalls the decoration of the Temple of Hatshepsut in the Punt Portico, specifically the previously discussed scene depicting three courtiers standing before Hatshepsut's throne (cf. n. 61 in the present text). On the other hand, there also appears to be a link with the tombs of North Asasif. A short formula inscribed behind Senenmut's figure in the panels in TT 353 reads:

b3k.f m3ʕ st jb.f jrr ḥsst nb t3wy

His servant, truly in his favor, who accomplishes what the Lord of the Two Lands favors (Dorman 1991: 99).

This formula, which naturally refers to Hatshepsut, is absent in Djefaihapy's example. Notably, a strikingly similar formula opens the inscription on Henenu's stela, found in TT 313 (Hayes 1949: 46 (1), Pl. IV), following the top frame that contains the names and epithets of Mentuhotep II:⁶³

*b3k m3ʕ n st jb.f jrr ḥsst.f nbt m ḥrt
nt rʕ nb*

The servant, truly in his favor, who accomplishes everything what he (i.e. Mentuhotep II) favors in the course of everyday (Henenu's titles follow).⁶⁴

Since the phrase “who accomplishes what NN favors” is a common one, frequently attested in texts where a person refers to a superior figure —usually the king (e.g. Doxey 270–272)— the presence of similar texts in TT 353 and TT 313 may be purely coincidental. However, considering that a strikingly similar formula appears before the king in Khety's panels in TT 311, describing this king's attitude toward the god Montu —“who accomplishes what the god of his town favors” (text (2), see

62 Such situations are also known, for instance, from the Old Kingdom mastaba of Mereruka, see Pieke 2011: 220 with Figs 3–6.

63 “Horus Sematawy, Two Ladies Sematawy, Horus of Gold Ka-shuty, to whom Ra has given the crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, to whom Montu has given the kingship of the Two Lands (...)” (Hayes 1949: 46; my emphasis). The highlighted passage, in turn, recalls a widely discussed phrase in Senenmut's Aswan graffito, in which Hatshepsut is referred to as “the noble, the great of praise and charm, the great of love, the one to whom Ra has given the kingship righteously in the opinion of the Ennead (...)” — a highly significant epithet attested on several of Hatshepsut's early monuments (translation after Laboury 2014: 70 with n. 55; my emphasis). Indeed, both Mentuhotep II and Hatshepsut were not born as kings but had to seize absolute royal power. In the case of Mentuhotep II, the epithet in Henenu's stela may be read literally: given the military achievements of this king —leading to the conquest of the North and the unification of Egypt— it was, indeed, the warrior god Montu who granted him kingship over the Two Lands (a similar interpretation is suggested in Di. Arnold 1974a: 76 with n. 288).

64 Notably, an almost identical phrase closes the aforementioned inscription of Henu in Wadi Hammamat (Cuyat and Montet 1912: 84 (No. 114), Pl. XXXI).

above)— the overall picture begins to resemble an intertextual network of references [Fig. 15].

This latter interpretation is reinforced by Senenmut's title *jmj-r3 hm(w)-ntr n mntw m jwny*, “Overseer of Priests of Montu in Iuny (Armant)”, attested among his monuments⁶⁵—including TT 353 (Dorman 1991: 179)⁶⁶— as well as the possibility that Armant, the cult center of Montu, was Senenmut's place of origin (Dorman 1988: 118–119, 166 with n. 11, 170; 2005a: 107; Shirley 2014: 188 with n. 47). Taking all this into account, the expression in Khety's panels —“the god

of his (i.e. Mentuhotep II's) town”, most likely referring to Thebes— could have been interpreted by Senenmut as “the god of my town too” (i.e. Armant) (see what follows).

The Temple of Montu in Armant, most likely founded by Mentuhotep II, was expanded by his Middle Kingdom successors, while in the New Kingdom, it was enlarged or rebuilt by Hatshepsut and Thutmose III (Eggebrecht 1975: 436; Thiers 2013: 720). It is believed that Senenmut, who installed three of his statues there (Dorman 1988: 127–128; Keller 2005a; 2005b; 2005c) —two of



Fig. 16. a – Inscribed shell-shaped stone from foundation deposit 3 of Senenmut's tomb, TT 353. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1927, Acc. No. 27.3.497. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/548933> (accessed: 25.04.2024); b – inscribed tablet from a foundation deposit of Mentuhotep II's temple, Deir el-Bahari. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1922. Acc. No. 22.3.187. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/544002> (accessed: 25.04.2024)

65 Cf. Dorman 1988: 206 (TT 353, CG 579, sandstone plaque Berlin 15086, statue BM 174, statue Fort Worth AP 85.2, sarcophagus). The same title is attested on statue fragment Manchester 4624, recently attributed to Senenmut (Price 2018: 230–231 with n. (b) and Fig. 1a).

66 Altogether, the title appears in TT 353 five times, including on the same wall as the southern panel in question (SE 16).

which contain a cryptogram of Hatshepsut's throne name, as mentioned above— was responsible for overseeing the works in the temple (Dorman 1988: 8; 2005a: 109 with n. 3). This is further suggested by two model bivalve shells found in the foundation deposits of TT 353, bearing the following inscriptions (Dorman 1991: 154–155, Pl. 91 c, f (Cat. Nos 57a and 57c)):

Cat. No. 57a (1) The good god Maatkara, given life, (2) beloved of Montu, lord of *Iuny* (Armant)

and

Cat. No. 57c (1) The good god Maatkara, given life, (2) beloved of Montu, lord of *Waset* (Thebes), (3) the bull who resides in *Iuny* (Armant) [Fig. 16:a].

Dorman (1988: 81 with n. 65), following Winlock (1928: 38), suggests that these objects were taken from one of Hatshepsut's construction projects in Armant. Their placement in the foundation deposits of TT 353, beyond indicating the tomb owner's ties to his presumed hometown, takes on new sig-

nificance when TT 353 is viewed in dialogue with the aforementioned Eleventh Dynasty monuments in both Armant and Thebes.

In Khety's inscription before Mentuhotep II, Thebes is referred to as , *jwnw šm'w*, Heliopolis of Upper Egypt, while , *jwny* (Armant), appears in the case of Senenmut's artifacts from the deposits of TT 353 — the latter location sometimes also referred to as “Heliopolis of Upper Egypt” (Wb I, 54.6; Wb IV, 473.5; Di. Arnold 1974a: 76; Eggebrecht 1975: 435). Bearing in mind the possible interplay of associations between Armant and Thebes—both serving as cult centers of Montu—one may imagine how familiar the formula before Mentuhotep II in TT 311 would have sounded to Senenmut and, more broadly, how this king—whose nomen means “Montu is satisfied”—may have resonated with him. Collating the above data, one comes to the conclusion that Mentuhotep II and Senenmut could have been “familiar” with each other not only through Deir el-Bahari, but possibly even before Hatshepsut's building activities there began, with Montu serving as their “common ground”.⁶⁷

67 Senenmut's activity in Armant is placed at the beginning of his career, prior to Hatshepsut's coronation (Dorman 1988: 8, 170 with n. 34). The picture of Senenmut's devotional attitude toward Mentuhotep II appears to be complemented by statue fragment Manchester 4624, recently attributed to Senenmut (Price 2018), on which the title “Overseer of Priests of Montu in Armant” is also attested (see above). According to Campbell Price (2018: 229, 233), the statue's findspot suggests it was originally placed within the precinct of Mentuhotep II at Deir el-Bahari. The title of the statue's donor, “God's Wife” (name not preserved, reconstructed as Hatshepsut) (Price 2018: 230 with Fig. 1a, 232, Pl. 1a), indicates the statue was executed during the pre-coronation period. It is therefore possible that the statue's installation in the Temple of Mentuhotep II could have occurred even prior to the construction of Hatshepsut's temple (Price 2018: 232–233). However, taking into account the centuries of subsequent reuses and secondary deposition of various architectural elements over considerable distances throughout the Deir el-Bahari area (e.g. Chudzik 2021: 73), Price's hypothesis, although very attractive in light of our argument here, should be treated with caution.

At this point, one cannot overlook the very Temple of Mentuhotep II at Deir el-Bahari, which, according to its foundation deposits, was dedicated to Montu-Ra (Di. Arnold 1975b: 1011 with n. 2; 2015a: 13). Six plaques out of 12 found in these deposits (Hayes 1953: 155 with Fig. 92, 157; Di. Arnold and Winlock 1979: 49–50, 52, 55 (with Fig. 12), 56, Pl. 31) are inscribed with formulae very similar to those from TT 353's foundation deposits, mentioning Hatshepsut, beloved of Montu [Fig. 16b]:

The King of the Upper and Lower Egypt, Nebhepetra, alive forever, beloved of Montu-Ra, Lord of Waset (Thebes).

Obviously, Senenmut could not see the content of Mentuhotep II's foundation deposits. However, judging by the preserved (sadly, very fragmentary) reliefs once decorating the Eleventh Dynasty temple, the prominent presence of the god Montu there raises no doubts (cf. Di. Arnold 1974a: 75–76; 1974b: 18 (with n. 36), 19, 24 with Pls 15–16, 25–26; BM EA1397: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA1397). One can easily imagine the epithet of Nebhepetra as “beloved of Montu” featured repeatedly on the temple walls.⁶⁸

This case of an individual depicted in front of a king (here, Senenmut in front of Hatshepsut in TT 353) exemplifies how even a long-identified relationship between a model and a copy (Djefaihapy I in Asyut and Senenmut in Western Thebes) can, upon closer inspection, provide much more than a simple reference to one source. It starts to appear, indeed, as “a mosaic of quotations” (to use the definition of intertextuality coined by its founder, Julia Kristeva (1986: 37⁶⁹), rather than a mere quotation of a single source. Given that the reconstruction of Khety's figures in front of Mentuhotep II [see Fig. 10] is correct, TT 311 must also be considered one of these sources.

Thinking of the placement of TT 353 in the landscape as a macro-scale repetition of what is depicted in the panels discussed here —representing Senenmut bowing in front of Hatshepsut— one may conclude that it is not only Hatshepsut, in the presence of whom Senenmut located himself for eternity, but also Mentuhotep II,⁷⁰ to whom he could have had a special devotion. This devotion may have originated, possibly, in his assumed hometown of Armant.

68 Later votive monuments found within the temple precinct suggest the building's association with this god as well. For instance, the Nineteenth Dynasty stela of the god's wife of Amun represents her paying homage to Montu —described as *ntr 3 hrj-jb dsrt*, “great god who resides in *Djeseret*”— with Mentuhotep II standing behind the deity (Naville, Hall, and Ayrton 1907: 57; BM EA 926: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA926). This invites the assumption that, in Senenmut's time, the perception of the temple may have been the same.

69 For more on this metaphor and its subsequent life in the world of literary criticism, see, e.g., Lara-Rallo 2009: 90–94.

70 Especially since the sacred precincts of both temples overlap [see Fig. 1], so that the rearmost part of Senenmut's TT 353 is located, in fact, within the court of the Temple of Hatshepsut and the Temple of Mentuhotep II.

RECAPITULATION

In this paper, we presented a reconstruction of what Senenmut “could have seen” (in terms of both the physical and mental landscape, the latter creating the landscape of his cultural memory) when he found himself in Deir el-Bahari, in charge of Hatshepsut’s building project. We explored how this could have impacted the design of his own burial monument, which he was simultaneously overseeing — and, in the conception of which, we argue, he was at least somewhat involved. The application of the phenomenological approach (“looking through the eyes of a man from the past”, in this case, Senenmut) —enhanced by various contextual evidences— has led us to the following conclusions:

- The placement of Senenmut’s lower tomb, TT 353, should be seen, in addition to its reference to the Temple of Hatshepsut, through the prism of its relationship with the tombs of Mentuhotep II’s most prominent courtiers, but also with the Temple of Mentuhotep II.
- Among Mentuhotep II’s people, the “closest” to Senenmut (in terms of both physical proximity of their monuments and the more elusive factor of social memory) seems to be Khety. Senenmut could have “known” him through the decoration of TT 311, possibly from the rock inscriptions in Shatt el-Rigal, from votive objects

commemorating him (or another Khety), placed in the Karnak Temple, and from other sources, such as the reliefs in the Temple of Mentuhotep II or (perhaps) the Aswan graffito of Khety. By placing his lower tomb, TT 353, at the foot of TT 311, Senenmut would refer to Khety as his great predecessor — the person of exceptional favor in the eyes of his king, a position that Senenmut himself enjoyed at Hatshepsut’s court. In doing so, Senenmut mirrored the scheme in which, on the one hand, Hatshepsut referred to Mentuhotep II through her own monument, and on the other hand, Khety expressed his relationship to his king through his tomb, TT 311.

At this point, we return to the concordance of titles shown in [Table 1] and Khety’s and Senenmut’s “overlapping” responsibilities as treasurer. It is well known that Senenmut was by no means the only treasurer during Hatshepsut’s reign (Awad 2002: 47, 214–215). Hatshepsut’s “main” treasurer seems to have been Djehuty, the owner of TT 11 (see e.g. Shirley 2014: 195–198; Galán 2014: 249–252; Stupko-Lubczynska 2024). Moreover, the titles related to the treasury appear somewhat sporadically among Senenmut’s monuments. The full list of attestations may be presented as follows [Table 2] (after Dorman 1988: 206):

Table 2. Attestations of Senenmut's titles related to the treasury

Title	Monuments
<i>jmj-r3 ḥtmt</i>	TT 353, statue BM 174
<i>jmj-r3 ḥtmt nbt</i>	TT 353
<i>jmj-r3 prwj-ḥd</i>	TT 353, name stone No. LXV
<i>jmj-r3 prwj-ḥd prwj nbw</i>	TT 353, statue BM 174, sarcophagus
<i>jmj-r3 prwj nbw</i>	TT 353, name stones Nos LXII, LXIII, and LXIV

From this chart, one can easily notice that, except for BM 174, the seated statue with Nefrura, found in Karnak (Dorman 1988: 118–119, 188–189), all the remaining attestations of treasury-related titles of Senenmut come from his funerary monuments: from TT 353, his sarcophagus found in TT 71, and his name stones incorporated into the retaining walls of TT 71 (for the name stones, see Hayes 1942: 45–47, 49–50). Dorman (1988: 171 with n. 40) explains this occurrence by suggesting that the title of treasurer was used early in Senenmut's career and was subsequently superseded by the more prominent title of “Steward of Amun”. This may be true; however, another title which Senenmut shares with Khety, *jmj-r3 ʿb whmt*, “Overseer of horn and hoof”, is attested solely on another of Senenmut's name stone (Hayes 1942: 50, No. LXIX; Dorman 1988: 203), which altogether suggests a deliberate link between Senenmut's identity and that of Khety through the use of specific titles in the particular context of the necropolis.

At the same time, it is important to emphasize that the comparison drawn above between TT 353 and TT 311 (and, further, between the personalities of their owners) should not obscure the differences between the two structures. TT 353 is solely an underground (burial) component of the tomb, which was never intended to be visited (as noted above), and was complemented by a cult component at Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (TT 71). Therefore, TT 353 served a different function than TT 311, which traditionally combined both a cult chapel and a burial chamber in a single monument. In the theoretical framework adopted here, TT 353's message or strategy seems to represent an example of “communicative memory”. Its decorative content—and indeed its very existence—would only have been known by Senenmut's contemporaries and their immediate descendants, whereas Khety's monument would have formed part of the broader cultural landscape of the Deir el-Bahari bay.⁷¹

71 The accessibility of Khety's decorated burial chamber, in the Eighteenth Dynasty and beyond, remains an open question, as discussed in Stupko-Lubczynska 2021b: 203–206. As for Senenmut's TT 353, even if the tomb itself was meant to remain inaccessible, one cannot exclude the possibility that archived master copies of its wall decorations were consulted by later generations of designers (cf., e.g., the astronomical ceilings in later royal projects, a composition first attested in TT 353; Neugebauer and Parker 1969: 105ff.; Etz 1997: 145ff.). Of course, the question of whether these hypothetical master copies were known as “those of Senenmut” cannot be answered.

In closing, it seems worthwhile to return to the notion of palimpsest, which was touched upon at the beginning of this paper. In the discourse on palimpsests, in their various realizations (textual, architectural, iconographic, etc.), a central image is that of the superimposition of presence and absence, past and present — metaphorically described as “ghost presence” (for a summary, see e.g. Lara-Rallo 2009: 103–106). Here, we argue that in the monument of Senenmut, TT 353, Khety’s figure functions as such a “ghost”, though one might assume that this monument is densely packed with other ghosts — of places, built structures, people, and, further, memories or even imagined deeds. These include Djefaihapy I from Asyut, Henenu of TT 313, and a somewhat abstract notion of “a courtier of King Mentuhotep II” as a *collectivum* (the latter expressed through TT 353’s architecture), as well as other personages, places, and memories whose identities escape us today.

Some of these personages could have been Senenmut’s contemporaries, such as the aforementioned Treasurer Djehuty of TT 11, who is believed to have originated from the Hermopolitan region, near Asyut (Galán 2014: 250; Galán and Díaz-Iglesias

Llanos 2020: 155–156).⁷² Djehuty may have been involved in the transmission of sources from that area to Thebes.⁷³ In this context, it is interesting to note that —just as the references to Djefaihapy I of Asyut, identified in the panels depicting the tomb owner before the king’s names, and in liturgy 7 found in TT 353 (which has its counterpart in Djefayhapy’s tomb, cf. Kahl 1999: 53–186; 2014: 161, 166–167)— Senenmut’s famous astronomical ceiling (Dorman 1991: 138–146, Pls 84–86) also bears a close resemblance to Asyut’s sources: the list of decanal stars occupying the southern part of the ceiling has its antecedents in the “star-clocks” found on the Middle Kingdom coffin lids typical for Asyut (cf. Kahl 1999: 197–198, 201–205; Zitman 2010: 271–272, esp. n. 1923). Interestingly, another of Hatshepsut’s courtiers, who has yet another text attested in Asyut I (*Sicherungsformel*) and implemented in his Theban tomb (TT 39), is the aforementioned Second Prophet of Amun, Puyemra (cf. Kahl 1999: 219–224; 2014: 160, for a summary of correspondences between TT 353, TT 39, and Asyut I, see Kahl 2014: 168–169 with Table 1). Additionally, the tripartite plan of TT 39 is reminiscent of Asyut I (Kahl 1999: 271–273; 2014: 160).⁷⁴

72 For instance, Djehuty was the “Overseer of Priests of Hathor Lady of Qis”, with the city of Qis located in the 14th Upper Egyptian nome, an area neighboring to the north with the Asyutan nome (nome 13).

73 Although one should stress that the transmission of Asyutan sources to Thebes was a complex phenomenon that likely occurred in more than one phase, and some of these phases could predate Hatshepsut’s reign (Kahl 1999: esp. 302–313). The transmission could also have involved master or intermediate copies, rather than direct copying from the walls of, for instance, Asyut I (cf. Kahl 1999: 296–297). Even if so, it is worth noting, following Jochem Kahl (1999: 312), that before Hatshepsut, none of the Theban monuments show Asyutan influence.

74 The placement of TT 39 is also remarkable: besides Senenmut’s TT 353 discussed here, it is the only tomb from the Hatshepsut era to be located along her processional avenue (to the south of it and more to the east, compared to TT 353), cf. Engelmann-von Carnap 2014: 343 and Fig. 14.8.

All three of the mentioned individuals —Senenmut, Djehuty, and Puimra— are attested as being involved in the building process of Hatshepsut's temple (Stupko-Lubczynska 2013; 2024) and could have collaborated during the design of its decoration. The present author is under the impression that, parallel to this task, they might have acted as a team in the design of their own funerary monuments, exchanging ideas, model sources, and so on (see above for the architectural similarities between TT 353 and the burial apartment of Puyemra in TT 39).⁷⁵ Thus, one may hypothesize that —as argued above regarding the tomb owner's role as a co-author of the design of their tomb, working with the main artist, whose name is unknown (and whom we may call the executive artist)— in such circumstances, each of the tombs in question could have had more than one co-author.⁷⁶

Returning to Khety, it should be noted that it is possible that the Khety known to us (and to the Thebans of the Eighteenth Dynasty) from TT 311 and other sources discussed above could be identical with another Khety, a nomarch from Asyut and the owner of tomb Asyut IV (Spanel 1989; Kahl 1999: 21; El-Khadragy, Kahl, and Engel 2004: 239–241; Zit-

man 2010: 39, with earlier literature). This Khety⁷⁷ was active during the final phase of the Heracleopolitan Kingdom (Tenth Dynasty), just before it was conquered by Mentuhotep II. In his Asyut tomb, the name of his mother, Si[t-...], is mentioned, while in the aforementioned Aswan graffito, Khety, the courtier of Mentuhotep II, is said to be born of Sit-Ra. Based on this convergence, the identification of the two Khetys was proposed by Henry Breasted (1906: 188 (§ 405), 191 (§ 414, n. a)) and later supported by Winlock (1940: 146; 1947: 65), who noted that Khety of TT 311 appears suddenly in the post-reunification sources of Mentuhotep II (such as the linen found in the burials of the royal women) but is completely absent in earlier documents. This observation is also in line with Allen's (1996: 20–21) notes on the relative dating of the North Asasif tombs —Khety's TT 311 is assumed to be a later addition to the already existing anonymous MMA 509 and Henenu's TT 314/MMA 519— and Allen's overall dating of Khety into the final phase of Mentuhotep II's reign (Allen 1996: 5–6).

Regardless of whether the identification of the Theban Khety with the Asyutan Khety is accurate,⁷⁸ it would be inter-

⁷⁵ One cannot exclude the possibility of them even sharing the workforce to execute their tombs.

⁷⁶ The issue certainly needs further research, but even at the present stage, it is evident that the three tombs are in dialogue with one another. This is apparent not only from the aforementioned inspiration drawn from the sources of Asyutan provenience —common to TT 353 and TT 39— but also from the intericonic and intertextual links between TT 39 and TT 11 (Espinel 2014: 300; Stupko-Lubczynska 2024: 31–32 with n. 40).

⁷⁷ In the subject literature, this man is referred to as Khety II to distinguish him from Khety I, his Asyutan predecessor and the owner of the tomb Asyut V (cf. Kahl 1999: 21; Zitman 2010: 28ff. and *passim*). In the present text, this numbering has been omitted to avoid confusion among the various Khetys discussed.

⁷⁸ Some scholars, for instance, assume that Khety of Asyut IV died shortly before the unification of Egypt under Mentuhotep II (e.g. Spanel 1989: 307).

esting to know if such an identification was recognized in Eighteenth Dynasty Thebes. Even if it was not, the Thebans' documented interest in the Asyut region—where its monuments may have functioned as a monumental library for Theban projects, as discussed above⁷⁹—suggests that their familiarity with the Asyutan Khety, and his autobiography inscribed in his tomb-chapel, cannot be ruled out.

If this were the case, one passage from Khety's autobiography could have been of particular interest to those who served Hatshepsut, the female pharaoh who ruled as co-regent with her minor step-

son, Thutmose III. The passage in question (Griffith 1889: Pl. XV, Cols 40–29 (original numbering preserved); Breasted 1906: 191 (§ 414)) concerns the death of Khety's predecessor in the office of the Asyutan nomarch and the regency of his daughter (Khety's mother) on behalf of her minor son. It includes, among other things, the following words:

(30) (...) *njw.tjw hrt hr ddt.s*

(29) [*jr.n.s m*] *nb r hpr.n s3.s m nhn-^c*

(30) (...) the city dwellers (were) satisfied with that which she said.

(29) [She acted as] lord, until her son became strong-armed.

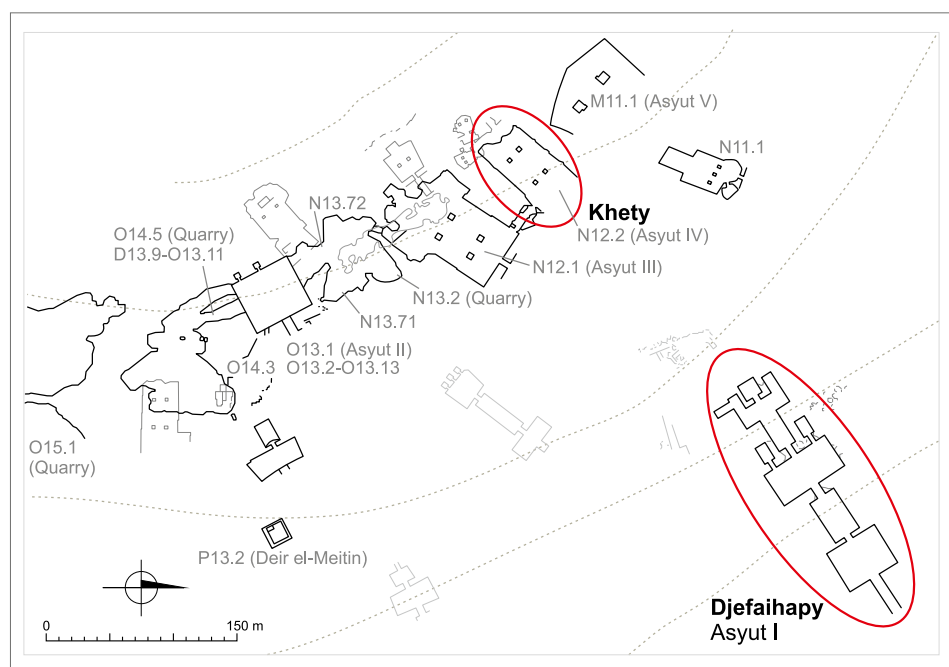


Fig. 17. Plan of the Asyut necropolis, showing the spatial relationship between the tombs of Djefaihapy I (Asyut I) and Khety (Asyut IV) (Drawing M. Momot from Kahl 2012: Fig. 2, graphic additions A. Stupko-Lubczynska)

79 In addition, this interest is proven by the Eighteenth Dynasty visitors' inscriptions in Asyutan tomb 13.1 (e.g. Verhoeven 2023) and by various indications of the living cult of Djefaihapy I during that period (Kahl 2012).

Indeed, the parallel with the reality of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III's co-rule could not be more striking.

In terms of the landscape, it is noteworthy that Khety's tomb, Asyut IV, is approximately aligned with Djefaihapy's tomb, Asyut I, the latter cut into the bottom of the same slope (cf. Zitman 2010: Maps 2 and 5; [Fig. 17]). On the one hand, this recalls the relationship between Useramun's TT 131 and TT 61 (and, further, with TT 60)

at Sheikh Abd el-Gurna; on the other hand, it evokes the connection between Senenmut's TT 353 and Khety's TT 311 [cf. Fig. 1]. The latter analogy is particularly compelling given the references in TT 353 to Djefaihapy's decoration, as discussed above. Thus, it may be posulated that, by placing TT 353 at the bottom of the row of the North Asasif tombs (with its special link to Khety's TT 311), the landscape of Asyut was referenced.

In the field of literary criticism, as in the history of intertextuality as a critical concept, it has been emphasized that a fundamental feature of any text is its openness — its resistance to a closed or final meaning and its immersion in the process of perpetual rewriting. “[T]he palimpsest —and (...) intertextuality, too— has become a useful theoretical and critical tool for the exploration of practices of revision and reinterpretation of writing, history, and identity” (Lara-Rallo 2009: 105–106 with n. 9). Deir el-Bahari and North Asasif —with Senenmut's extraor-

dinary role within it— appear to be a literal illustration of this phenomenon of continuous rewriting. In light of the argument presented above, this place under Hatshepsut emerges as, indeed, a mosaic of quotations: of places (Asyut, Armant, Shatt el-Rigal/Silsila⁸⁰), of people (Khety or Khetys, Henenu, Djefaihapy I, and, of course, Mentuhotep II), and of memories associated with them — all collected and rewritten anew to create a certain idealized reality, ultimately contributing to the construction of an identity “for the years that are to come”.

Dr. Anastasiia Stupko-Lubczynska

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3845-0085>

University of Warsaw

Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology

a.stupko-lubcz@uw.edu.pl

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80 As well as the Memphite area, and the Old Kingdom monuments located there. These, however, have been explored in more detail elsewhere, cf. e.g. Ćwiek 2014; Stupko-Lubczynska 2016.

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