

Some new evidence for the cult of the Hathor cow in TT 263



Abstract: This paper examines the visual image of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain in the decorative programs of Theban tombs of nobles from the Ramesside period. It aims to shed light on the symbolic meaning of the image of the king, positioned in front of the Hathor cow in the Theban tomb of Piay (TT 263), which is published here for the first time. The study also explores the three-dimensional representations of the goddess Hathor in private cult chapels of Theban tombs from the time of Ramesses II, drawing on newly discovered fragments from the tomb of Piay (TT 263) that confirm the existence of a shrine in front of the niche with the head of Hathor in the courtyard of the tomb.

Keywords: Theban necropolis, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, private rock-cut tombs, Hathor cow, Beautiful Festival of the Valley, Deir el-Medina, ka-statue, Ramesses II

The well-documented role of the goddess Hathor as the protector of the dead, the tomb, and the personification of the desert, mountains, and rocky landscapes (since the time of the Old Kingdom¹) finds vivid expression in the

¹ Hathor's role as the personification of the desert and protector of the dead is well attested as early as the Old Kingdom and continues to develop in later epochs (Allam 1963: 67–68; Bleeker 1973: 42–45; Daumas 1977; Pinch 1993: 4; Vischak 2001).

Teodor Lekov¹

¹ Sofia University, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Centre for Eastern Languages and Studies

rocky landscape of Western Thebes. This distinctive terrain of the Theban necropolis suggests that the goddess was conceived as the embodiment of the sacred mountain, which protects the tombs carved into the rock and the dead buried there (Rummel 2016; Semat 2022: 711–717).

The cult of the goddess is one of the central features of religious life in the Theban necropolis, reflected in numerous monuments bearing her name and image. She was represented there through a rich repertoire of images, often depicted in anthropomorphic form in the company of other gods to emphasize her role in rela-

tion to other divine beings (McClymont 2012). As the personification of the sacred mountain and the tomb that houses the dead, Hathor is typically portrayed as a cow emerging from a mountain, adorned with a *menat*-necklace around her neck and a crown of ostrich feathers with a sun disk between her horns. The cow's body is usually painted yellow or orange, symbolizing gold and evoking Hathor's common epithet, "The Golden one" (*nbwt*) (Wb II, 239, 3; Leitz 2002: 180–181). In some cases, the cow's skin is spotted, reflecting the iconography of the celestial cow Mehet-Weret, who is closely associated with Hathor.

THE IMAGE OF THE HATHOR COW EMERGING FROM THE MOUNTAIN FROM TT 263 IN CONTEXT

The image of Hathor as a sacred cow emerging from the mountain is often depicted in the Theban tombs of the elite during the New Kingdom. It appears in scenes illustrating the funeral procession, rituals performed in front of the tomb, the burial, and the presentation of offerings, as well as in depictions of the tomb owner and his wife showing reverence to the goddess. These two motifs —A) Hathor as the personification of the sacred ground, the West, and the afterlife, positioned near the tomb, and B) the homage and offerings made to the goddess as she welcomes the dead into her realm— are interwoven within the decorative programs of the tombs. As a result, they are difficult to sepa-

rate, either by their position within the sequence of scenes or by their purpose and meaning.

The image of the Hathor cow (without the mountain) first appears in Theban tombs in the early Eighteenth Dynasty (TT 15, Davies 1925a: Pl. II). The depiction of Hathor as a cow emerging from the mountain, however, does not appear until the reign of Amenhotep III (TT 81, Davies 1925b: Pl. XXXI, 2).

This representation of Hathor becomes much more typical in Ramesside tombs, especially those constructed during the reign of Ramesses II.²

Ramesside tombs: TT 5 (PM I, 1: 13 (4)); TT 13 (PM I, 1: 25 (10)); **TT 16** (PM I, 1: 28 (5)); TT 25 (PM I, 1: 42 (3)); TT 30

2 The following list of representations from the Theban tombs could be expanded. It excludes the heavily damaged images where only traces of the scene are visible. The tombs dated with a certain degree of confidence to the time of Ramesses II, or those supposedly attributed to his reign, are marked in bold.

(PM I, 1: 47 (2)); **TT 45** (PM I, 1: 85 (3)); **TT 54** (PM I, 1: 105 (4)); **TT 133** (PM I, 1: 249 (2)); **TT 141** (PM I, 1: 255 (6–7)); **TT 156** (PM I, 1: 266 (Burial chamber)); **TT 157** (PM I, 1: 267 (3), 268 (Pyramid, east wall)); **TT 158** (PM I, 1: 270 (20)); **TT 177** (PM I, 1: 283 (1)); **TT 178** (PM I, 1: 284 (9–10)); **TT 250** (PM I, 1: 336 (4)); **TT 273** (PM I, 1: 351 (7)); **TT 278** (PM I, 1: 355 (4)); **TT 286** (PM I, 1: 368 (6)); **TT 293** (PM I, 1: 375 (1)); **TT 296** (PM I, 1: 378 (5)); **TT 302** (PM I, 1: 381 (6)); **TT 305** (PM I, 1: 383 (3)); **TT 306** (PM I, 1: 384 (2)); **TT 324** (PM I, 1: 396 (13)); **TT 336** (PM I, 1: 405 (Vaulted ceiling, 5)); **TT 362** (PM I, 1: 426 (2)); **TT A12** (Manniche 2011: 17–18); **TT B3=TT 392** (Manniche 2011: 88–89).

The depiction of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain appears on stelae in the New Kingdom, likely for the first time in the late Eighteenth Dynasty (Blumenthal 2001; Pinch 1993: 83–101). During the Ramesside period, this scene was also represented on stelae outside the Theban necropolis, at Saqqara. Examples include the stela of Paser (BM EA 165, see James 1970: Pl. 24); the stela of Amenemope (Louvre C 209, see Rummel 2016: Fig. 4), and the stela of Khonsu (Louvre C 99), all from the necropolis of Memphis.

The context in which these images appear emphasizes Hathor's role as a protectress of the mummified body and the burial place. The goddess was particularly important in selecting an appropriate location for the construction of the tomb. Inscriptional evidence from Theban tombs supports this idea. An inscription from the tomb of Thutemhab (TT 194) exemplifies this significance, describing how the goddess Hathor appeared in a dream and foretold the proper place for a tomb, highlighting the close and intimate relationship between the deceased and the goddess.³

However, Hathor's role was not limited to burial, the preservation of the tomb, and the protection of the dead body. Embedded within these functions were many more layers of religious significance. The cult of Hathor at Deir el-Bahari and her shrines⁴ there were closely linked with the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, the main religious festival held for centuries on the west bank of ancient Thebes.⁵ Originally a Hathoric celebration in Thebes, the festival became dominated by the cult of Amun-Re during the New Kingdom. It lasted for two days in the second month of *shemw* during the new moon. During the festival, the sacred

3 KRI VII, 153:12–15; RITA VII, 100. For the detailed study of the text, see Assmann 1978; Seyfried 1995: 70–73 (Text 119–120).

4 In the mortuary complexes of Deir el-Bahari, two shrines dedicated to Hathor were built: one in the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut (*dsr-dsrw*), see Beaux 2012, the other in the mortuary temple of Thutmose III (*dsr 3ht*), see Lipińska 1977: 38–45. Moreover, it is possible that an earlier Hathoric shrine, linked to the temple of Montuhotep II (Eleventh Dynasty), stood beneath the present shrine in the temple of Hatshepsut, see Arnold 1974: 83–84. Outside the area of Deir el-Bahari, there is also a small Hathoric shrine in Deir el-Medina, see Pinch 1993: 174 and Bruyère 1948: 20, n. 1, and 22–23 (especially for the similarities between the shrines in Deir el-Bahari and that of Deir el-Medina).

5 For the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, see Schott 1952; Graefe 1986; Hartwig 2004: 11–12 with n. 52; and Fukaya 2007.

barges of Amun, Mut, and Khonsu embarked on a processional journey across the Nile from Karnak Temple on the east bank, visiting royal memorial temples on the west bank to honor deceased ancestors. Inscriptional evidence from private Theban tombs testifies that during the event, the mortuary priests and family members gathered at tombs to pay homage to their deceased ancestors. Following their visit to the memorial temples of the kings, the royal procession reached the sanctuary of Hathor at Deir el-Bahari for the final celebration of the union of Amun with the goddess, where the bark and statues remained overnight. The religious meaning of the festival underscores the annual meeting between the living and the dead, thereby intertwining the divine sphere with the cults of deceased kings and private mortuary practices (Wiebach 1986).

Thus, to the significance of Hathor cow as a representation of the Western Desert and the sacred mountain, as well as her role as a protector of the tomb, was added the idea of perpetuating the mortuary cult of the dead through annual religious celebrations. The decorative program of private Theban tombs reflects this main religious event in the Theban necropolis on the west bank, combining the image of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain with depictions of royal statues carried during the festival. Furthermore, the decorative program also reflects ancestral worship through images of ancient kings, especially Amenhotep I and Queen Ahmose Nefertari, who were venerated as local deities and patrons of the village of Deir el-Medina.⁶ The motif of the king positioned beneath the chin of the emerg-



Fig. 1. Scene of King Mentuhotep Nebhepetre and Queen Ahmose Nefertari in front of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain, from the tomb of Amenemone (TT 277) (Photo T. Lekov)

6 For Amenhotep I and Ahmose Nefertari as patrons of Deir el-Medina, see Hollender 2009.

ing cow not only symbolically recalls the Beautiful Festival of the Valley but also, to some extent, the actual imagery of the Hathor shrine at Deir el-Bahari and the famous statue of the cow and King Amenhotep II (or Thutmose III?), now housed at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (JdE 38574-5).⁷

The image of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain, in the context of the venerated ancient kings, appears in TT 216 (PM I, 1: 314 (18)) with Amenhotep I and in TT 277 (PM I, 1: 354 (2-3)) with Mentuhotep Nebhetepre and Ahmose Nefertari [Fig. 1]. A variation of this scene depicts the tomb owner and his wife worshipping in front of the ancient kings and Hathor protecting the king: TT 285 (PM I, 1: 368 (10)) shows the couple before Amenhotep I and Ahmose Nefertari, and before Hathor protecting a king; TT 377 (PM I, 1: 434 (2)) portrays Amenhotep I and Ahmose Nefertari seated, with the Hathor cow protecting a king(?), emerging from the mountain and a pyramid-tomb (Kampp 1996: 598, with some clarifications on the scenes; also Semat 2022: 716–720); TT 4 (PM I, 1: 12 (8)); TT 23 (PM I, 1: 41 (43)); TT 216 (PM I, 1: 314 (18)); TT 326 (PM I, 1: 396, on a boat in the tomb).

In addition to these tomb scenes, the stela of Huy from the Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel (MEN Eg. 238), dating to the time of Ramesses II and found at Deir el-Medina,⁸ also depicts Hathor emerging from the mountain in the context of the veneration of Amenhotep I and Ahmose Nefertari.

Another variation of this theme is a simple representation of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain, protecting the image of the king, who is positioned beneath the cow's chin or very close in front of her.

An example of this scene appears in the tomb of Piay (TT 263). Piay, an official during the reign of Ramesses II, held the positions of scribe in the granary of the domain of Amun and scribe of accounts in the Ramesseum. He chose to place his tomb in the courtyard of the tomb of Duaneheh (TT 125) in Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, which was originally constructed during the time of Hatshepsut/Thutmose III. Piay remodeled the southwest corner of the courtyard to accommodate his burial. The tomb of Piay consists of two relatively small chambers, with finely carved reliefs near the two doorways, while the rest of the tomb was painted — though now heav-

7 For the shrine and statue, see Saleh and Sourouzian 1986: No. 138. The actual shrine of Hathor is represented in the tomb of Neferhotep, TT 49 (PM I, 1: 94 (22); Davies 1933: Pl. LIV). For recent discussions on this topic, see Pereyra et al. 2018: 65–74; Bonanno 2021: 18–21. The influence of the imagery of the cow statue from Deir el-Bahari can be seen in the bas-relief in the Walters Art Museum (22.121) from the tomb of Vizier Paser (TT 106), which depicts the young king suckled by the Hathor cow (Marohn 1995: Abb. 1–2). For a color photo of the relief, see: <https://art.thewalters.org/detail/25775/relief-displaying-the-king-suckled-by-the-hathor-cow/>. Similar iconography is attested as early as the time of Montuhotep II in Deir el Bahari, see Drenkhahn 1989: 62–63, No. 18, for the painted relief fragment of a black-skinned king suckled by the Hathor cow, now in Hannover (Kestner Museum, 1935.200.82).

8 Stela MEN Eg. 238=Neuchatel, Stele No. 12 (Bruyère 1930: 209, Fig. 108; KRI III, 793:11–794:10; Valloggia 2014: 126).

ily damaged. The south wall of the inner room features a niche with sculptured seated figures of the tomb owner, his wife, and two additional anonymous figures (one male and one female). The Hathor cow scene is positioned nearby, on the left (east) side of the south wall. The composition depicts Piay being led by Horus in adoration of Osiris and Hathor (shown as a standing woman) within a shrine. Behind the divine couple, the image of the Hathor cow emerges from the mountain cliffs. Porter and Moss did not mention the figure of the king in this scene, likely because it is barely visible due to the heavily damaged surface of the painting in this area (PM I, 1: 345 (10)). The scene is published here for the first time [Fig. 2:a–b].

The closest parallel to the image of the Hathor cow and a king in the tomb of Piay is a scene from the tomb of Amenmose (TT 19) in Dra Abu el-Naga, which is much better preserved and more finely executed [Fig. 3] (PM I, 1: 33 (4); Foucart 1935: Pl. 9). The relationship between these two tombs goes beyond their iconographic similarities. Piay is actually depicted on the wall of the first chamber of the tomb of Amenmose as a member of a group of priests (Foucart 1935: Pl. 31). This important evidence serves as a strong clue for precisely dating the tomb of Amenmose to early in the reign of Ramesses II, just as is the case for the tomb of Piay.

The image of the king, wearing a *nemes* headdress, is also painted in alignment with the cow, with his arms stretched

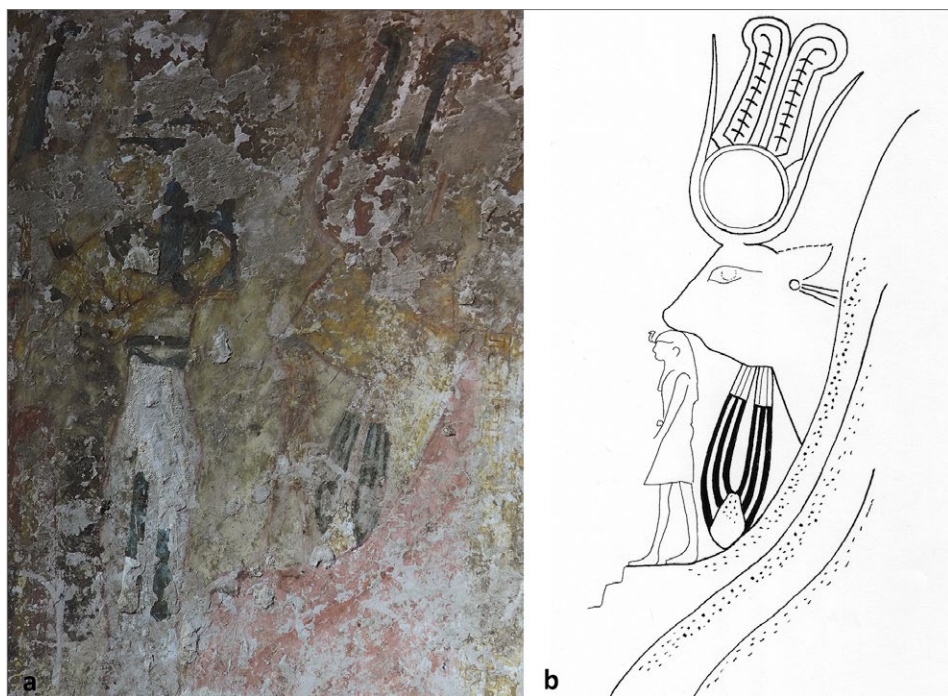


Fig. 2. a – Scene of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain in the tomb of Piay (TT 263); b – line drawing of the scene (T. Lekov)

in line with the body. The king's head is positioned just beneath the cow's chin, indicating that the depiction likely represents a statue.⁹ The representation of the king in Piay's tomb follows the same compositional pattern, with contour lines in red, matching the lines of the cow's head.

In search of an explanation for these specific characteristics of the king's image, we must compare them with other surviving images of the king being protected by Hathor as a cow in Theban tombs. In the tomb of Tjay, TT 23 (PM I, 1: 41 (43); Ivanov 2018: Fig. 9), the scene is symmetrically positioned on both sides in front of the main vaulted shrine in the inner room, which contains three divine statues, with Osiris at

the center. Due to a lack of space, the depiction of the Hathor cow on the left omits the image of the king, while on the right side, the king's figure is positioned beneath the cow's chin. The inscription identifies the king's image as Ramesses II, referred to as "the Great God" (*p3 ntr ʿ3*). The tomb is dated to the reign of Merneptah.

Another parallel image comes from the tomb of Nakhtamun, head of the altar of the Ramesseum, TT 341 (PM I, 1: 408 (4)). This image is similar to that in TT 23, depicting the same black statue of an unnamed king in the same position (Davies 1948: 31–41, Pls XXV–XXVII; Hofmann 2004: Abb. 39). The depiction of the cow also shares similarities with the one



Fig. 3. Scene of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain in the tomb of Amenmose (TT 19) (Photo T. Lekov)

9 For two-dimensional representations of statuary, see Eaton-Krauss 1976: 23; 1984.

in Tjay's tomb, particularly the spotted skin, which is characteristic of the celestial cow Mehet-Weret (closely associated with Hathor). According to Porter and Moss (PM I, 1: 408), the tomb of Nakhtamun must date to the reign of Ramesses II due to the presence of an image of Ramesses II within the tomb (Davies 1948: Pl. XXIII, behind the image of Ptah-Sokar-Osiris in a shrine). However, recent studies suggest a much later date on the basis of iconographic characteristics and stylistic features typical of the Twentieth Dynasty (Kampp 1996: 579). This later dating is further supported by the atypical writing of the king's name — Ramesses Mery-Amun. On the other hand, although the royal statue depicted in the scene does not bear a name, it is most likely that of Ramesses II. Supporting this assumption is the fact that Nakhtamun served in the Ramesseum and that the king is depicted among a group of gods. This important new dating of the tomb allows us to draw more definitive conclusions about the repertoire of royal statue imagery.

All four royal images in these scenes appear to represent statues of Ramesses II. Although in most cases of “cow and mountain” scenes where a king is depicted beneath the cow's chin, the king is either Ramesses II or Amenhotep I (Pinch 1993: 180), attributing an anonymous king to a specific ruler remains challenging. The only depiction explicitly identified as

Ramesses II is the one from TT 23. The king's figure represents a *ka*-statue, similar to the famous *ka*-statues of Tutankhamun (Cairo Museum JdE 60708).

The images of TT 263 and TT 19 depict statues of the living ruler, whereas those in TT 23 and TT 341 represent posthumous depictions of the king as a *ka*-statue. The image in TT 263 must depict the living king, i.e. Ramesses II, based on the dating of the tomb to the early years of his reign and Piay's position in his mortuary temple. In the case of the king's image in TT 19 (a close parallel to the image in TT 263), it is also likely to represent the same king.¹⁰ Supporting this identification of the royal images is the well-documented veneration of royal sculptures as divine entities, a common feature of the cult of Ramesses II. He is frequently depicted making offerings to his own statues (Habachi 1969).

These images not only hold symbolic significance but may also serve as evidence of specific activities involving the king in the Theban necropolis. The resemblance between the two-dimensional black *ka*-statues of the king in front of the Hathor cow in Theban tombs and the actual sculpture of Amenhotep II and the Hathor cow, found *in situ* at Deir el-Bahari, is striking. According to Lise Manniche, the black color of King Amenhotep II's body represents a specific stage in the king's transformation after his physical death. Black symbolizes the initial phase of the rites

¹⁰ Although Amenmose was the first prophet of “Amenhotep of the Forecourt” and, according to his titles, one can assume that this particular image of the statue is of Amenhotep I (see Hollender 2009: 33–39; Semat 2022: 717, n. 76), this is not a conclusive proof for such an attribution. The images of the former venerated kings in the same tomb are marked everywhere with their names, see Foucart 1935: Pl. XI (Nefertari), Pl. XIII (Thutmose III), Pls XXIII, XXVIII (Amenhotep I), etc.; quite the opposite, the image of the king's statue beneath the chin of the Hathor cow is not something obvious that need not be noted.

associated with the mysteries at Buto, which prepare the king for rebirth in the marshes. The royal *ka* (depicted in black) merges with the goddess Hathor and creates Ihy, the “black child of Hathor” (Manniche 1979: 16). This mythological background could potentially have been incorporated into the rites of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, performed at its focal point in Deir el-Bahari. However, many details regarding the actual performance and meaning of these rites remain unknown. Regardless of varying interpretations, the general consensus is that these statues do not represent the king as a living being but rather emphasize his divine nature (Reuterswärd 1958: 43–52; Eaton-Krauss 1976; Hartwig 2008: 123–124; Hollender 2009: 7; Semat 2022: 716–717). In cases such as the depiction of the living ruler Thutmose IV censing his own statue in the tomb of Tjenuna (TT 76), Melinda Hartwig identifies a deeper symbolism in the use of color. The painted yellow figure of the living ruler represents gold—the flesh of the gods and the sun—while the black color of his statue, which he censes, signifies his posthumous divinized form as Osiris. She concludes that the image of Thutmose IV censing himself “could relate to his participation within the solar cycle, as the sun that appeared yellow in the day sky and dipped into the black of the underworld at night to be rejuvenated” (Hartwig 2008: 123).

Some clues suggesting an alternative interpretation of the scene depicting the king’s statue in front of the Hathor cow lead us in another direction—toward Deir el-Medina. Early in his reign, Ramesses II remodeled the existing sanctuary of Hathor in Deir el-Medina, replacing the old, modest structure with a stone one (Valbelle 1985: 169; Maitland 2022: 160–161; Richter 2023: 239). The construction was overseen by the scribe of the royal tomb, Ramose (I),¹¹ and the vizier Paser (TT 106). They also built an annex to the Hathor sanctuary, named after the king—“The Residence (*hnw*) of Ramesses”—which indicates a personal contribution from the king to this sanctuary. It appears that the sanctuary was, at least in part, dedicated to the cult of the living royal *ka* (Valbelle 1985: 168–169). The cult statue within the sanctuary may have resembled the image of Hathor as a cow protecting the king, as depicted in the bas-reliefs of the “Residence of Ramesses”, which bear the name of its builder, Ramose (I) (Bruyère 1952: Pl. 36; Exell 2006: 53–54; Maitland 2022: 173–174; Richter 2023: 240). The relief from the Louvre, known for its superior craftsmanship, depicts Ramesses II (Ramesses, Mery-Amun) as a small, upright figure with the *menat*-necklace of the cow around his neck, symbolizing protection and his close relationship with the goddess [Fig. 4:a].¹² The cow is depicted on a sledge in the papyrus marshes. The combination

11 Bruyère 1952 II: 39, 66–68, Pl. 36, DeM Nos 87–88; Louvre E16276; Cairo JdE 72017. The bas-relief in Cairo shows the image of Thutmose IV, and above the cow are the cartouches of Ramesses II, Thutmose IV, and Horemheb under the sun disks. The presence of these kings’ names is a good indication of a royal ancestral worship. For a photo of the relief in Louvre E 16276, see <https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/clo10006771>.

12 Similar representations of the king beneath the Hathor cow’s chin can be found in the Shrine of Hathor in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari—Beaux 2012: Fig. 4i–j.

of key iconographic elements —the juvenile king (his age is inferred from the figure's proportions), the emergence from the marshes, and the protective *menat*-necklace— supports the idea that the image represents the rebirth of the king as Ihy, the son of the goddess.

Similar depictions of Ramesses II in front of the Hathor cow are preserved on two stelae from Deir el-Medina.

The stela of Penbuy (I) (Leipzig AM 5141, Blumenthal 2001; 2005: 4, Abb. 1–2) shows Ramesses II (the cartouche with User-Maat-Re-setepen-Re in front of the figure is partially preserved) in a squatting position beneath the chin of the cow [Fig. 4:b]. The king is depicted wearing a *nemes*-headdress and a *menat*-necklace around his neck, just as in Louvre E 16276. The motif of the papyrus marshes from which the cow emerges is also identical.¹³

The second stela, BM EA 555 (Hall 1925: Pl. 31; Bierbrier 1993: Pls 30–31; KRI III, 816–817), belonging to the workman Khabekhenet (TT 2), who lived during the reign of Ramesses II, depicts a royal fig-

ure in front of the Hathor cow [Fig. 4:c]. The juvenile king (probably Ramesses II himself) holds a scepter and a whip in one hand and an *ankh* in the other. He wears a side-lock of youth, symbolically presenting him as a child. These features led Kitchen to identify the figure as a “Royal Prince” (KRI III, 816). The name designating the royal image is puzzling and reads: *P3-rh-nw(3)*. The name Parekhnu could be interpreted as “The one who knows (is the one) who foresees”. This same name appears as one of the names of the owner of tomb Bubasteion I.16, the royal messenger Netcherouymes (Zivie 2006: 69). Zivie identified Netcherouymes as the key figure of *Pi-ri-ih-na(a)-ua*, involved in the peace process with the Hittites (Edel 1948: 16 (IX)). The exact relationship between the royal image and this name remains open for further debate.

The examples discussed above suggest that the two-dimensional representations of the statue of Ramesses II in front of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain, found in the decorative

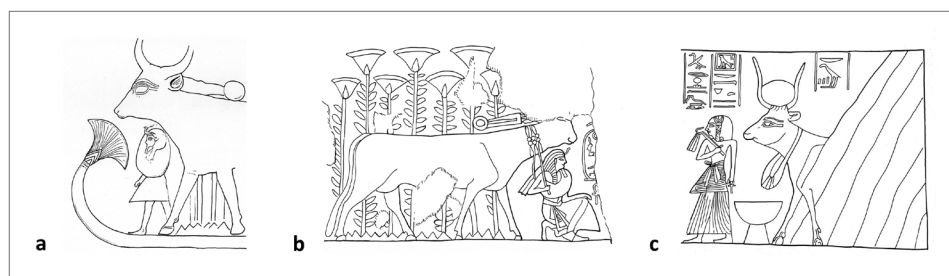


Fig. 4. Images of King Ramesses II beneath the Hathor cow: a – Louvre E 16276 (Photo <https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010006771>); b – stela of Benbuy (Leipzig AM 5141) (Redrawn from Blumenthal 2001: Abb. 2); c – image of the royal prince beneath the Hathor cow on stela of Khabekhet (BM EA 555) (From Bierbrier 1993: Pl. 31, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA555)

13 For the depiction of the Hathor cow emerging from the marshes, see also Pinch 1993: 175–179; Vernus 2005: 602–607.

repertoire of elite Theban tombs, may have been inspired by the existing statues of the king in the Hathor sanctuary at Deir el-Medina.¹⁴ If so, these representations could convey not only the symbolic meaning of a close connection between royal ancestor worship and the goddess Hathor but also reflect actual cultic activities of the reigning king. Nevertheless, it is not necessary to definitively assert that the visual imagery in Theban tombs was directly influenced by actual cult statues, nor to determine which of the cult sites—the Hathor chapels of Deir el-Bahari or Deir el-Medina—had a greater influence in this respect. The artistic imagination of ancient painters and sculptors may have produced multilayered and symbolic visual imagery that differed significantly from the visible reality they reflected.

In the period after the New Kingdom,

the image of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain continued to be widely employed in funerary contexts, this time on different media—such as coffin decorations and vignettes in funerary papyri (Heyne 1998; Liptay 2003). In the Book of the Dead from the New Kingdom, a similar yet not entirely identical scene appears in a vignette from Chapter 186.¹⁵ Later funerary papyri exhibit an abundant repertoire of variations on this theme. A scene on a coffin from the Third Intermediate Period also demonstrates a complex symbolic development, though a detailed review of these changes is beyond the scope of the present article. Regardless of the evolving meanings and forms, the importance of the cult of the goddess Hathor—as an incarnation of the sacred burial ground and a guarantor of the afterlife—remains a significant theme.

THE SHRINE OF HATHOR IN THE COURTYARD OF TT 263

The evidence for the cult of Hathor in the Theban necropolis is not limited to two-dimensional images in tombs. In some cases, sculptural or bas-relief images of the cow were placed in niches

or other spaces within funerary complexes.¹⁶ Examples include a niche with a destroyed sculpted image, cut directly into the stone, in the tomb of Ramose¹⁷ (TT 212) in Deir el-Medina from the time

14 Similar suggestion that the three-dimensional groups carved in high relief in Deir el-Medina tombs could illustrate similar statue groups within the Hathor shrine in Deir el-Medina was proposed by Semat 2022: 717. See also Pinch 1993: 179–182.

15 For BD 186, see Quirke 2013: 183–185. For the vignette of BD 186, see Liptay 2003: 15–18; 2012.

16 Examples of small statues presenting private persons beneath the cow's chin as replicas of royal statues protected by the Hathor cow from the period of the New Kingdom, and probably deriving from Deir el-Medina, are attestations of "personal piety" and the process of adaptation of the idea of Hathor as a protectress of the king into the personal, private sphere—see Verbovsek 2003: 443–444 with the examples of statues Wien ÄS 1188 and Leiden, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden AM 108.

17 PM I, 1: 309 (4); Bruyère 1925: 64; Schott Archive No. 3591, color photo in: https://www.osirisnet.net/popupImage.php?img=/tombes/artisans/ramose_7-212-250/photo/ramose212_sm_0296_01.jpg&lang=en&sw=1920&sh=1080

of Ramesses II, and a niche in the tomb of Baky¹⁸ (TT 298) in Deir el-Medina, which probably originally contained a statue of the Hathor cow protecting the king(?). The presumed presence of statuary images of Hathor in these two tombs is based on comparison with the famous niche in the tomb of Qen¹⁹ (TT 4), also in Deir el-Medina and dating to the reign of Ramesses II, where Hathor is depicted guarding a small statue of King Amenhotep I. The king's statue is flanked by two representations of Ahmose Nefertari and the "sister of the king", Princess Meritamen. This particular decorative program reflects the stylistic changes introduced in Ramesside tombs. In some cases, the family statues in tombs were replaced by divine images. The tendency to build shrines featuring sculpted images of gods is one of the distinctive new features of Ramesside tombs in Thebes (Hofmann 1995; Assmann 2003). However, its influence extended further and can also be observed in the cemetery of Saqqara.

Excavations conducted by the French mission of the Bubasteion (MAFB) since 1996 have revealed another important monument featuring the motif of the Hathor cow protecting the king in the tomb of Netcheruymes (Bubasteion I.19). This was a well-preserved painted statue of the Hathor cow with the king standing in front of her (Zivie 2007: 126–129). The king, wearing a *nemes*-headdress, is

positioned directly under the cow's chin. The statue's well-preserved colors show the pharaoh's red skin, along with a yellow headdress and a skirt resembling the body of a cow. According to Alain Zivie (2001), the statue represented the living Ramesses II, although he did not entirely rule out the possibility that it could depict a deified pharaoh from the Old Kingdom — possibly serving as a protector of the Memphite necropolis, similar to King Teti, whose pyramid was revered during the New Kingdom for ancestor worship. Later, Zivie (2003) concluded without doubt that the statue depicts Ramesses II. His research led him to observe close stylistic connections between the tombs of Deir el-Medina and the Saqqara tomb of Netcheruymes. He believes that these similarities strongly suggest that the creators of Netcheruymes' tomb were most likely Khabekhnet (TT 2) and some members of his team, as well as Qen (TT 4) for the engravings and sculptures. Thus, a close relationship between the imagery in TT 4 and Bubasteion I.16 is established.²⁰

Similar sculpted divine figures could be carved into the bedrock and enclosed within a shrine in the forecourt of tombs. However, the placement of such images in more open and accessible locations likely prevented this practice from becoming widespread. There are only two known examples of niches featuring the image of

18 PM I, 1: (1); Bruyère 1928: 88–89, Fig. 60.

19 PM I, 1: 12 (8); Černý 1927: 174, Pl. IV, Fig. 2; Hofmann 1995: 274, Taf. XVIIb; 2004: 99, Taf. XIX (Abb. 55).

20 The relationship between the capital in Memphis and Thebes is evident in many ways — sociopolitical, administrative, economic, and religious. A good example of these close ties is the presence of the administrative elite of the Ramesseum in Saqqara, which otherwise might seem rather strange (Staring 2015).

the Hathor cow among the tombs in the Theban necropolis. The tomb of Meryptah (TT 387), dating from the first half of Ramesses II's reign, contains six niches on the east–west side of the forecourt, each housing sculpted images. Four of these niches depict the tomb owner in the form of an Osiris figure, while the remaining two, located on the façade, are dedicated to deities. The niche on the left belongs to the god Osiris, while the one on the right represents the Hathor cow, with what was presumably a statue of the king in front — now destroyed.

The other example is from the forecourt of the tomb of Piay (TT 263).²¹ As mentioned above, Piay repurposed the



Fig. 5. View from the forecourt of TT 263 (Photo T. Lekov)

existing courtyard of TT 125 to construct his own tomb, remodeling the south wall of the courtyard to form the façade of his own tomb's entrance. On the west side of the courtyard, to the left of the entrance of TT 125, he placed his stela and a niche containing the head of the Hathor cow [Fig. 5]. In the courtyard of the two tombs (TT 125 and TT 263), Norman de Garis Davies discovered a sandstone block from an architrave bearing the cartouches of Ramesses II and the name of Piay.²² The lower part of the block shows traces of ceiling bands. The block was later observed inside TT 125 by J.M.A. Janssen, who worked there in 1953.²³ Janssen speculated whether the block “would and could it have been a part of the roof above the niche?” The cartouche of Ramesses II on the sandstone block is an important clue for dating Piay's tomb to the first two decades of Ramesses II's reign [Fig. 6]. The peculiar orthography of the king's name, with a double “s” (O34 in Gardiner's Sign List), supports this conclusion (Kampp 1996: 540). A similar spelling of the king's name was found on a lintel in Piay's office at the Ramesseum, though it was not noticed by Kampp. In 2012, a Bulgarian mission from the New Bulgarian University discovered a sandstone block inscribed with the names of both the king and Piay in TT 125 while studying the site. Sixteen fragments from TT 263's decoration were found on the floor of TT 125, among them pieces of sandstone related to the architrave block [Fig. 7]. These fragments suggest that the

21 PM I, 1: 344 (1); Kampp 1996: 416, Figs 307, 540.

22 Norman de Garis Davies, MSS. II.2 (Archive of the Griffith Institute, Oxford).

23 Polz 1990: 50.

shrine around the Hathor cow niche was constructed from sandstone blocks. Unfortunately, only a few pieces could be definitively placed within the original structure. During the process of cleaning the tomb's shafts, a considerable number

of pieces of sandstone were also found. These pieces likely belonged to the same structure, as they had no functional place inside the tomb itself. Two fragments are of particular importance: one from the left end of the shrine's cornice [Fig. 8] and



Fig. 6. Block from the architrave of the Hathor shrine in TT 263, found in TT 125 (Photo E. Buzov)



Fig. 7. Fragments of the decoration from TT 263, stored in the first room of TT 125, as seen in 2012 (Photo E. Buzov)

another from the lower part of the right side wall of the shrine [Fig. 9]. The painted relief on this second piece preserves the feet of the tomb owner and his wife, along with the baseline. The figures are oriented to the left, facing the venerated image of the goddess.

In support of this conclusion is the existence of the small recess to the right of the door of TT 263, whose purpose remains unexplained.²⁴ This recess was cut into the rock to support the block of the roof of the Hathor shrine [Fig. 10]. These facts allow us to envision the construc-

tion around the niche with the head of the Hathor cow and to present a preliminary reconstruction of the shrine [Fig. 11]. Forthcoming campaigns at the site may reveal more information about the architectural form of the shrine, but so far, our current knowledge undoubtedly confirms its basic existence.

In 2020, a piece of the cow statue was found above the piled stones of the modern wall that supports the courtyard [Fig. 12:a]. The curved lines of a snake's body were preserved on both sides, and these lines matched exactly with the body



Fig. 8. Fragment of the cornice from the Hathor shrine of TT 263, found in TT 125 (Photo E. Buzov)



Fig. 9. Fragment of the wall supporting the Hathor shrine in front of TT 263 (Photo E. Buzov)



Fig. 10. Recess to the left of the door of Piay's tomb, TT 263 (Photo E. Buzov)



Fig. 11. Hypothetical visualization of the Hathor shrine in front of Piay's tomb, TT 263 (T. Lekov)

24 Kamp 1996: 541: "Zwischen Türrahmen und die Fassade von TT 125 wurde ein balkenähnlicher Rücksprung ausgehauen, dessen Funktion nicht erklärbar ist."

of its remaining part in the bedrock. The stone piece found its exact position; its surfaces perfectly aligning with the pre-

served sculpted form *in situ* [Fig. 12:b–c]. The recently discovered stone block reveals another important fact: there is

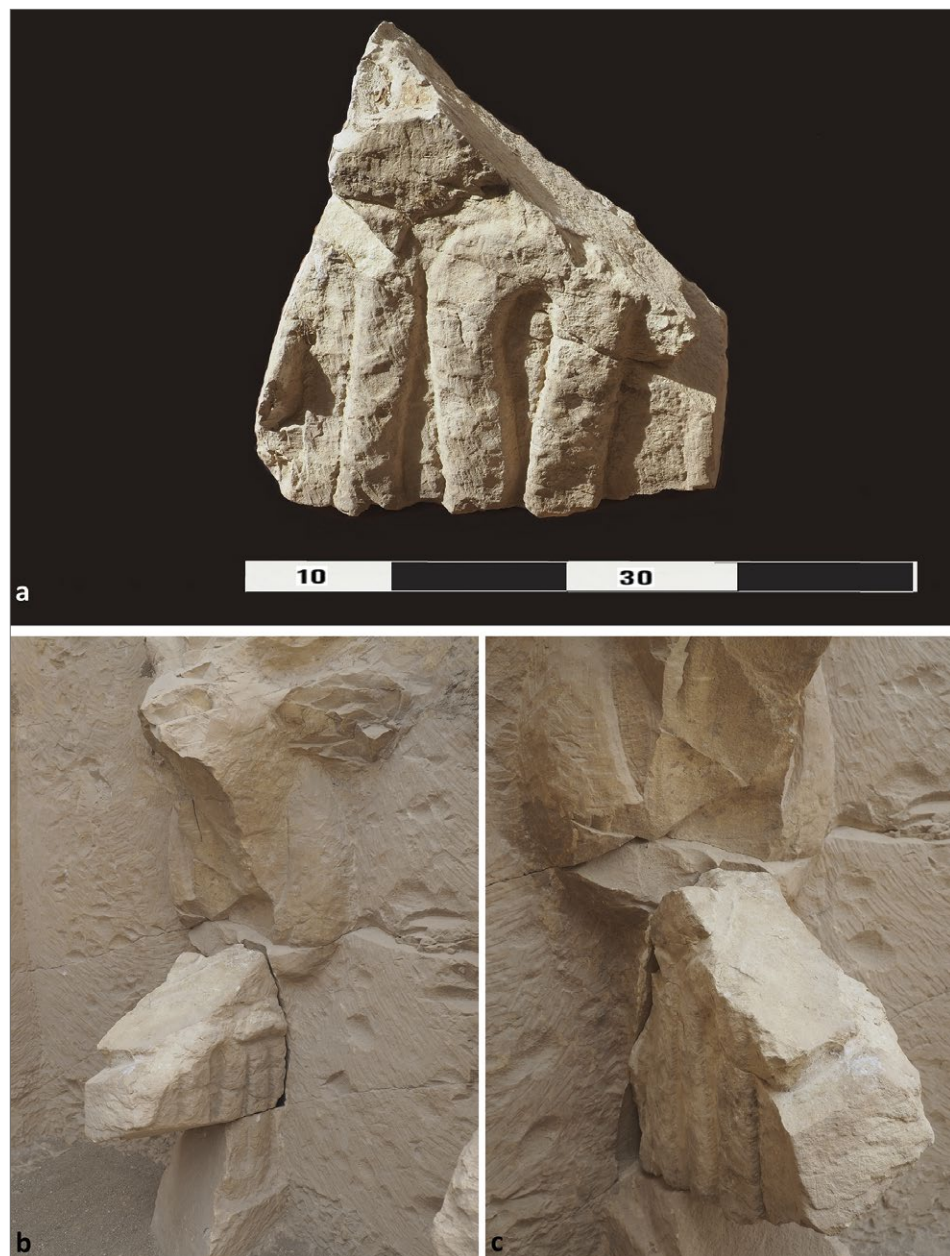


Fig. 12. Fragment of Hathor's statue in TT 263: a – frontal view (Photo T. Lekov); b – view from the right (Photo T. Lekov); c – view from the left (Photo T. Lekov)

not enough space to place the figure of the king in front of and below the head of the cow, as seen in other examples of similar statuary. We can assume that the original form of the monument was closer to the statue of Hathor now housed in the Louvre (Louvre E 26023),²⁵ where the image of a snake with a human face lies beneath the head of the cow. This statue dates from the Ramesside period and is believed to have originated from Deir el-Medina.

The presence of the snake in combination with the image of the Hathor cow in the funerary complex of TT 263 can be understood as a fusion of different hypostases of the desert mountain goddess — Hathor as a cow and Meretseger

as a snake. The fusion of these goddesses is a well-established fact,²⁶ and the image of the snake undoubtedly refers to Meretseger. Although the cult of Meretseger is predominately documented in Deir el-Medina, the presence of her image in the tomb of Piay should not be considered an anomaly.

The practice of devotion to sculpted images of the goddess Hathor in the form of a cow continued beyond the Ramesside period in the Theban area, particularly in combination with the king's image being protected by the goddess. Considerable evidence from the Late Period confirms the deep-rooted devotion to Hathor in the Theban necropolis (Pischikova 2008).

CONCLUSIONS

The decorative program of the tomb of Piay (TT 263) in Sheikh Abd el-Qurna clearly demonstrates devotion to Hathor by presenting her images in both two- and three-dimensional forms. When considering the painting of the king's statue in front of the Hathor cow emerging from the mountain and the sculpted form of the Hathor cow in her shrine outside Piay's tomb within a broader context of Ramesside tombs in Thebes, it becomes evident that the decorative program in TT263 exhibits typical characteristics of the reign of

Ramesses II. The depiction of the royal statue of the living king Ramesses II in front of the Hathor cow in TT 263 helps distinguish representations of the statue of the living king from posthumous *ka*-statues of the same ruler in later tombs. This observation could serve as a dating criterion for newly discovered examples of the same visual motif.

Certain aspects of the images found in TT 263 provide grounds for establishing stylistic and socio-religious connections between the tomb of Piay and

25 For the photo and bibliography of this monument, see: <https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010008300>. See also Barbotin 2007: 14, 18, 148–150, Figs 1–6, 244–245, No. 87.

26 During the reign of Ramesses II, Hathor was designated as Meretseger using the formula *m rn.f*—“Hathor in her beautiful name of Meretseger”—KRI III, 606:15, 729:10. See also the cult image of Hathor (Garstang Mus. E.66) from Esna, where the goddess is referred to as “Hathor, Lady of the Sacred Land, Meretseger, Mistress of the West”. See the reproduction of the statue in Bruyère 1930: 272, Fig. 139.

Deir el-Medina. The depiction of the snake in the form of Hathor as a symbol of Meretseger—who was venerated in the workmen’s village—and the king’s statue of Ramesses II in front of the Hathor cow in the painting as a possible reflection of the cult of the same king in the Temple of Hathor in Deir el-Medina support this perspective. Further evidence reinforcing this view is the fact that the Temple of Hathor in Deir el-Medina consistently received donations from the neighboring Ramesseum (Richter 2023: 239). Additionally, Piay’s role as the “head of the storehouse”²⁷ at the Ramesseum suggests his potential involvement in such transactions.

Nevertheless, these assumptions do not exclude the possible influence of the Festival of the Valley and the religious activities in the temple of Deir el-Bahari related to Hathor as inspirations for the creation of such imagery. Piay’s devotion to cultic life in Deir el-Bahari is attested in the *ḥtp-dj-nsw* formula inscribed on the left doorjamb of the second room of his tomb, where he petitions the god Amun to grant him “that I should wear a clear garment and take off another when I follow this god

in his departure from Deir el-Bahari (*dsr-dsrw*) on his feast day at the beginning of the season” (Assmann 1983: 306–307).

The contextual and directional relationship between the two-dimensional and three-dimensional images of the Hathor cow in TT 263 also warrants attention. In choosing to carve his tomb into an already exploited space created by previous builders, Piay had to alter the “ideal” east–west orientation of the tomb, instead aligning it along a north–south axis. Consequently, he placed the shrine of Hathor to the right of the entrance to his tomb, facing west. The representation of the cow emerging from the mountain is oriented in the same way, with the mountain cliffs on the right (west) and the cow emerging from the mountain facing east. The placement of this image is intricately connected to the niche housing the family statues, visually conveying the concept of the goddess protecting the king’s statue while also extending her protection to the statues of the tomb owner and his family. This integration of royal and personal religious aspects underscores the complex nature of devotion in Piay’s tomb.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teodor Lekov

Sofia University

Centre for Eastern Languages and Studies,
Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology
tlekov@uni-sofia.bg

How to cite this article: Lekov, T. (2025). Some new evidence for the cult of the Hathor cow in TT 263. *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*, 34.3, 165–188. <https://doi.org/10.37343/uw.2083-537X.pam34.3.04>

27 For the titles of Piay and their meaning, see Polz 1990: 50–60.

Abbreviations

- KRI Kitchen, K. (1968–1990). *Ramesside inscriptions: Historical and biographical* I–VIII. Oxford: Blackwell
- RITA Kitchen, K. (1993–2014). *Ramesside inscriptions: Translated and annotated* I–VII. Oxford: Blackwell

References

- Allam, S. (1963). *Beiträge zum Hathorkult (bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches)* (=Münchener Ägyptologische Studien 4). Berlin: Bruno Hassling
- Arnold, D. (1974). *Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari* I. Architektur und Deutung (=Archäologische Veröffentlichungen 8). Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern
- Assmann, J. (1978). Eine Traumoffenbarung der Göttin Hathor. Zeugnisse “Persönlicher Frömmigkeit” in thebanischen Privatgräbern der Ramessidenzeit. *Revue d'Égyptologie*, 30, 22–50
- Assmann, J. (1983). *Sonnenhymnen in thebanischen Gräbern* (=Theben 1). Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern
- Assmann, J. (2003). The Ramesside tomb and the construction of sacred space. In N. Strudwick and J.H. Taylor (eds), *The Theban necropolis: Past, present, and future* (pp. 46–52). London: British Museum Press
- Barbotin, C. (2007). *Les statues égyptiennes du nouvel empire: statues royales et divines*. Paris: Editions du Musée du Louvre; Khéops
- Beaux, N. (2012). *La chapelle d'Hathor: Temple d'Hatchepsout à Deir el-Bahari* I. Vestibule et sanctuaires (=Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 129/1). Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale
- Bierbrier, M.L. (ed.). (1993). *Hieroglyphic texts from Egyptian stelae etc.* XII. London: British Museum Press
- Bleeker, C.J. (1973). *Hathor and Thoth: Two key figures of the ancient Egyptian religion* (=Studies in the History of Religions 26). Leiden: Brill
- Blumenthal, E. (2001). *Kuhgöttin und Gottkönig: Frömmigkeit und Staatstreue auf der Stele* Leipzig Ägyptisches Museum 5141 (=Siegfried-Morenz-Gedächtnis-Vorlesung 11). Leipzig: Ägyptisches Museum
- Blumenthal, E. (2005). Bild und Schrift – das alte Ägypten. *Akademie-Journal*, 1, 4–9
- Bonanno, M. (2021). TT49 (Neferhotep) como punto de inflexión en el pensamiento funerario egipcio. In A. Brancaglion Jr., G. Chapot, and D.S. Ribeiro (eds), *Semna – Estudos de Egiptologia VII* (pp. 16–28). Rio de Janeiro: Editora Klínē
- Bruyère, B. (1925). *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1923–1924)* (=Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire 2). Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale

- Bruyère, B. (1928). *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1927)* (=Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire 5.2). Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale
- Bruyère, B. (1930). *Mert Seger à Deir el Médineh* (=Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 58). Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale
- Bruyère, B. (1948). *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1935–1940) I* (=Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire 20.1). Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale
- Bruyère, B. (1952). *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1935–1940) II* (=Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire 20.2). Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale
- Černý, J. (1927). Le culte d'Amenophis I^{er} chez les ouvriers de la nécropole thébaine. *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale*, 27, 159–203
- Daumas, F. (1977). Hathor. In W. Helck and E. Otto (eds), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie II* (cols 1024–1033). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz
- Davies, N. de G. (1925a). The tomb of Tetaky at Thebes (No. 15). *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 11(1/2), 10–18
- Davies, N. de G. (1925b). *The tomb of two sculptors at Thebes*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art
- Davies, N. de G. (1933). *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes* (=Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art Egyptian Expedition 9). New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art
- Davies, N. de G. (1948). *Seven private tombs at Kurnah* (A.H. Gardiner, ed.) (=Mond Excavations at Thebes 2). London: Egypt Exploration Society
- Drenkhahn, R. (1989). *Ägyptische Reliefs im Kestner-Museum Hannover*. Hannover: Kestner-Museum
- Eaton-Krauss, M. (1976). Two representations of black-skinned statues in ancient Egyptian painting. *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, 13, 21–24
- Eaton-Krauss, M. (1984). *The representations of statuary in private tombs of the Old Kingdom* (=Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 39). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz
- Edel, E. (1948). Neue Keilschriftliche Umschreibungen ägyptischer Namen aus den Boğazköytexten. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 7(1), 11–24
- Exell, K. (2006). The Senior Scribe Ramose (I) and the cult of the King: A social and historical reading of some private votive stelae from Deir el Medina in the reign of Ramesses II. In R.J. Dann (ed.), *Current Research in Egyptology 2004: Proceedings of the fifth annual symposium which took place at the University of Durham, January 2004* (pp. 51–67). Oxford: Oxbow Books
- Foucart, G. (1935). *Tombe thébaine de la nécropole de Dirâ' Abū'n Nāga. Le tombeau d'Amonmos (Tombeau No. 19)* (=Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 57). Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale
- Fukaya, M. (2007). Distribution of life force in the Festival of the Valley: A comparative study with the Opet festival. *Orient*, 42, 95–124
- Graefe, E. (1986). Talfest. In W. Helck, E. Otto, and W. Westendorf (eds), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie VI* (cols 187–189). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz

- Habachi, L. (1969). *Features of the deification of Ramesses II* (=Abhandlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo 6). Glückstadt: J.J. Agustin
- Hall, H.R. (1925). *Hieroglyphic texts from Egyptian stelae, etc., in the British Museum VII*. London: British Museum Press
- Hartwig, M. (2004). *Tomb Painting and Identity in Ancient Thebes, 1419–1372 BCE* (=Monumenta Aegyptiaca IX). Bruxelles: Brepols
- Hartwig, M. (2008). A vignette concerning the deification of Thutmose IV. In S.H. D'Auria (ed.), *Servant of Mut: Studies in honor of Richard A. Fazzini* (=Probleme der Ägyptologie 28) (pp. 120–125). Leiden: Brill
- Heyne, A.K. (1998). Die Szene mit der Kuh auf Särgen der 21. Dynastie. In A. Brodbeck (ed.), *Ein ägyptisches Glasperlenspiel: Ägyptologische Beiträge für Erik Hornung aus seinem Schülerkreis* (pp. 57–68). Berlin: Gebr. Mann
- Hofmann, E. (1995). Typen ramessidischer Plastik in thebanischen Privatgräbern. In J. Assmann, E. Dziobek, H. Guksch, and F. Kampp (eds), *Thebanische Beamtennekropolen: Neue Perspektiven archäologischer Forschung: Internationales Symposium Heidelberg 9.–13.6.1993* (pp. 271–279). Heidelberg: Heidelberger Orientverlag
- Hofmann, E. (2004). *Bilder im Wandel: Die Kunst der ramessidischen Privatgräber* (=Theben 17). Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern
- Hollender, G. (2009). *Amenophis I. und Ahmes Nefertari: Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung ihres posthumen Kultes anhand der Privatgräber der thebanischen Nekropole* (=Sonderschriften des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo 23). Berlin: De Gruyter
- Ivanov, S.V. (2018). The tomb of Tjay (TT 23). Progress report. *Egypt and Neighbouring Countries*, 2, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.24411/2686-9276-2018-00007>
- James, T.G.H. (1970). *Hieroglyphic texts from Egyptian stelae, etc. IX*. London: British Museum Press
- Kampp, F. (1996). *Die Thebanische Nekropole. Zum Wandel des Grabgedankens von der XVIII. Bis zur XX. Dynastie I–II*. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern
- Leitz, C. (ed.). (2002). *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen IV* (=Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 113). Leuven: Peeters
- Lipińska, J. (1977). *The temple of Tuthmosis III. Architecture* (=Deir el-Bahari 2). Warsaw: PWN – Éditions Scientifiques de Pologne
- Liptay, É. (2003). Between heaven and earth. The motif of the cow coming out of the mountain. *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts*, 99, 11–30
- Liptay, É. (2012). “The bull coming out of the mountain”: The changing context and connotations of an iconographic motif. In K.A. Kóthay (ed.), *Art and society: Ancient and modern contexts of Egyptian art. Proceedings of the international conference held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 13–15 May 2010* (pp. 169–184). Budapest: Museum of Fine Arts
- Maitland, M. (2022). The king and I: Commemorating the privilege of royal statue dedication in Ramesside Deir el-Medina. In S. Töpfer, P. Del Vesco, and F. Poole (eds), *Deir el-Medina through the kaleidoscope: Proceedings of the international workshop, Turin, 8th–10th October 2018* (pp. 158–180). Turin: Museo Egizio

- Manniche, L. (1979). The complexion of Queen Ahmosi Nefertere. *Acta Orientalia*, 40, 11–19
- Manniche, L. (2011). *Lost Ramessid and post-Ramessid private tombs in the Theban necropolis* (=Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications 33). Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press
- Marohn, G. (1995). Ein wiedergefundenes Relieffragment aus dem Grab des Veziers Paser (TT 106). *Göttinger Miszellen*, 149, 63–66
- McClymont, A. (2012). Hathor in “spheres of belonging”: The goddess in non-royal tombs of New Kingdom Thebes. *The Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology*, 23, 45–69
- Pereyra, M.V., Manzi, L.M., Catania, M.S., Bonanno, M., and Iamarino, M.L. (2018). *Espacios de interpretación en la necrópolis tebana*. Buenos Aires: Instituto de Historia Antigua Oriental “Dr. Abraham Rosenavasser”
- Pinch, G. (1993). *Votive offerings to Hathor*. Oxford: Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum
- Pischikova, E. (2008). “Cow statues” in private tombs of Dynasty 26. In S.H. D’Auria (ed.), *Servant of Mut: Studies in honor of Richard A. Fazzini* (=Probleme der Ägyptologie 28) (pp. 190–197). Leiden: Brill
- Polz, D. (1990). Die *šn*’-Vorsteher des Neuen Reiches. *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, 117, 43–60
- Quirke, S. (2013). *Going out in daylight: prt m hrw. The ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead: Translation, sources, meaning*. London: Golden House Publications
- Reuterswärd, P. (1958). *Studien zur polychromie der plastik I. Ägypten* (=Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis 3). Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell
- Richter, B.A. (2023). The priesthood of Hathor at Deir el-Medina: Devotion to the goddess by her clergy and their families. In D. Kiser-Go and C.A. Redmount (eds), *Weseretskau “Mighty of Kas”: Papers in memory of Cathleen A. Keller* (pp. 235–270). Columbus, GA: Lockwood Press
- Rummel, U. (2016). Der Leib der Göttin: Materialität und Semantik ägyptischer Felslandschaft. In S. Beck, B. Backes, I.-T. Liao, H. Simon, and A. Verbovsek (eds), *Gebauter Raum: Architektur, Landschaft, Mensch. Beiträge des fünften Münchner Arbeitskreises Junge Ägyptologie (MAJA 5), 12.12. bis 14.12.2014* (=Göttinger Orientforschungen IV/62) (pp. 41–74). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz
- Saleh, M. and Sourouzian, H. (1986). *Offizieller Katalog die Hauptwerke im Ägyptischen Museum Kairo*. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern
- Schott, S. (1952). *Das schöne Fest vom Wüstentale: Festbräuche einer Totenstadt* (=Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur 11). Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur
- Semat, A. (2022). Depicting the mountain and the tomb at Thebes. Ancient images of the Theban necropolis. In S. Töpfer, P. Del Vesco, and F. Poole (eds), *Deir el-Medina through the kaleidoscope: Proceedings of the international workshop, Turin, 8th–10th October 2018* (pp. 701–724). Turin: Museo Egizio
- Seyfried, K.-J. (1995). *Das Grab des Djehutiemhab (TT 194)* (=Theben 7). Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern

- Staring, N.T.B. (2015). The personnel of the Theban Ramesseum in the Memphite necropolis. *Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Genootschap "Ex Oriente Lux"*, 45, 51–92
- Valbelle, D. (1985). *Les ouvriers de la tombe: Deir el-Médineh à l'époque ramesside* (=Bibliothèque d'étude 96). Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale
- Valloggia, M. (2014). Une stèle de Houy de Deir el-Medina parmi les dessins de Henri Wild. *Orientalia. Nova Series*, 83(1), 124–129
- Verbovsek, A. (2003). "Die Kuh auf dem Schlitten": Die ikonographisch-ikonologische Betrachtung eines singulären Motives des privaten Rundbildes. In N. Kloth, K. Martin, and E. Pardey (eds), *Es werde niedergelegt als Schriftstück: Festschrift für Hartwig Altenmüller zum 65. Geburtstag* (pp. 437–444). Hamburg: Buske
- Vernus, P. (2005). Vache. In P. Vernus and J. Yoyotte, *Le bestiaire des pharaons* (pp. 602–607). Paris: A. Viénot
- Vischak, D. (2001). Hathor. In D.B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford encyclopedia of ancient Egypt II* (pp. 82–85). Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Wiebach, S. (1986). Die Begegnung von Lebenden und Verstorbenen im Rahmen des thebanischen Talfestes. *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur*, 13, 263–291
- Zivie, A. (2001). Une statue rupestre de la déesse Hathor. Fouilles et découvertes dans le tombeau d'un dignitaire de Ramsès II à Saqqara. *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 145(1), 693–710
- Zivie, A. (2003). Un détour par Saqqara. Deir el-Médineh et la nécropole memphite. In G. Andreu (ed.), *Deir el-Médineh et la Vallée des Rois: la vie en Egypte au temps des pharaons du Nouvel Empire. Actes du colloque organisé par le Musée du Louvre les 3 et 4 mai 2002* (pp. 67–82). Paris: Khéops
- Zivie, A. (2006). Le messenger royal égyptien Pirikhnawa. *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan*, 6, 68–78
- Zivie, A. (2007). *The lost tombs of Saqqara*. Toulouse: Cara.cara editions