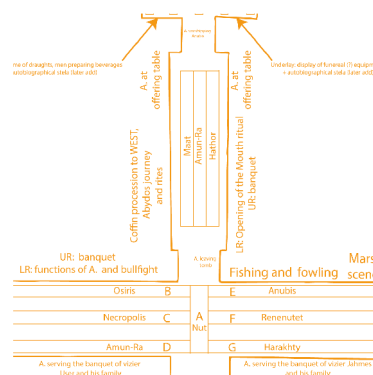


Observations on the ceiling inscriptions in the Theban tomb of Amenemhat, TT 82



Abstract: This paper analyzes the ceiling inscriptions of Theban tomb No. 82. As part of the decorative program, these texts were selected from the textual corpus of contemporary tombs and other related mortuary sources but were modified to create a unique composition for the tomb owner. This study investigates the potential reasons behind the selection and placement of each text. Particular attention is given to the divine names used in the ceiling inscriptions and their likely correlation with other elements of the decoration, as well as the ideal cardinal orientation assumed within the tomb. Based on the presence of such correspondences in the first two chambers, the ceiling inscriptions of the third and innermost chamber are also reexamined and newly interpreted.

Keywords: funerary and mortuary culture, Theban tombs, TT 82, ceiling texts, New Kingdom

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INTRODUCTION

The tomb of Amenemhat (TT 82), who held the titles of “scribe, steward of the vizier, and grain accountant of Amun”, among others, was constructed on the hill of Sheikh Abd el-Gurna during the reign of Thutmosis III.¹ An investigation of the tomb’s decorative program reveals that the ceiling inscriptions exhibit signs of careful design, with apparent consid-

eration of cardinal directions and their placement relative to other elements of the tomb’s decoration. Moreover, the divine names and themes used in the ceiling texts appear to be complementary, and thematic sequences known from other mortuary liturgies are present and organized in a meaningful manner that may be unique to this tomb.

DESCRIPTION OF THE TOMB

In the description of the tomb below and in [Fig. 1], the names of the rooms follow Davies’s publication (Ni. Davies and Gardiner 1915: 101–102, Pl. 25; Urk. IV: 1062–1064).² The abbreviations UR and LR in the description of the decoration refer to “upper register” and “lower register”, respectively. Variations in text size in the decoration descriptions are meant only to reflect the relative size of the wall portions they occupy. The tomb’s ground plan forms an inverted T-shape, oriented toward the west, and comprises the following sequence of spaces.³ Opening from the west wall of an external courtyard, a long passage leads to

a transverse hall that is perpendicular to the main east–west axis. Opening from the center of the hall’s west wall, an elongated passage continues and ends at the entrance to a rectangular shrine. The west wall of the shrine contains a niche, and beneath its floor, a shaft descends into a decorated burial chamber. The rooms and ceilings of the tomb are richly decorated, although damaged in places.⁴

The decorative program of the tomb is not described in full but is summarized in [Fig. 1], where the most important decorative themes are indicated on the ground plan.

CEILING INSCRIPTIONS OF THE HALL

The first ceiling inscription to be discussed is the Nut formula, which occupies

the central position in the hall along the east–west axis of the tomb —similar to

1 PM I: 163–169. For the discussion of Amenemhat’s titles, see below.

2 Ragazzoli (2017) discusses some of the texts and titles in this tomb from a different perspective, focusing on Amenemhat’s relationship with his superior and his self-representation in terms of professional contacts.

3 The cardinal directions used in this paper reflect an ideal orientation in which the main axis of the tomb is east–west.

4 The decorative program of the courtyard and the first passage —if any existed— is not preserved; hence, they are not discussed here.

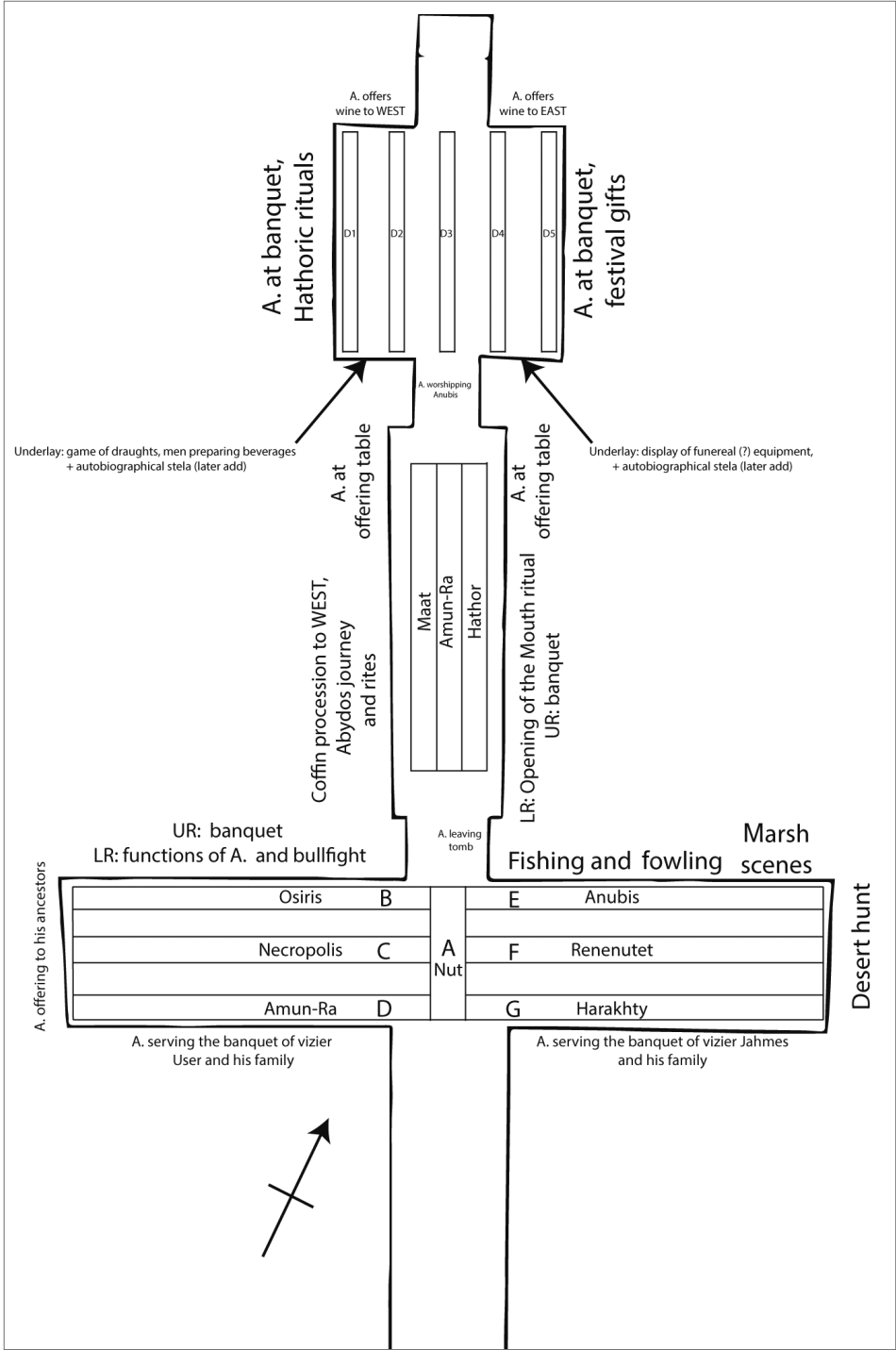


Fig. 1. Plan of TT 82 (Drawing D. Takács)

its placement on coffins and other tomb ceilings of the era—attesting to its importance (Galán 2013: 120). The other bands of texts on the ceiling, surrounding the Nut formula, are organized in a manner reminiscent of the cross bands found on coffins and sarcophagi [see Fig. 1], though they do not replicate their contents.⁵ Using the letter designations assigned by Davies [see Fig. 1], the texts are reproduced here in updated English translation only, as a detailed grammatical analysis is beyond the scope of this study.⁶

A. “[The scribe who counts the grain of Amun (?)], Amenemhat, he says: “[O mother] Nut, spread yourself over me, may you place me among the imperishable stars which are in you, as I shall not die.”⁷

There were two versions of the Nut formula that appeared on Middle Kingdom coffins, both later reused on coffin lids and chapel ceilings in the early New Kingdom. The first version incorporates excerpts from the Pyramid Texts (PT), while the second, though heavily based on these, represents a slightly different and newer tradition (Galán 2013: 120). TT 82 features the latter version, but since it de-

rives from the former, a brief discussion of the first variant is essential to uncover its potential functions within the tomb.

According to Morales (2017: 1–2, 150), a series of Pyramid Texts focused on the role of Nut in the process of reconstituting the body of the deceased, forming a group of texts whose content and function were homogenous in this regard. This is significant because it suggests that even shorter sequences—such as the brief verses in the Coffin Texts and the New Kingdom Nut formulas used in TT 82—could represent the function of the entire group.⁸

According to Hays, these “Nut texts” were originally sacerdotal in nature, intended to be performed by priests for the benefit of the deceased. He identified the connection between the Pyramid and Coffin Text versions of this group and concluded that they constituted mortuary services performed during the *Stundenwachen*, the hour-vigil held over the corpse of Osiris (Hays 2009: 58; Morales 2017: 6, 155).

Furthermore, Morales (2017: 7, 149) noted that the Nut group in the Middle Kingdom attests to the fact that the hour-vigil remained a living tradition

5 In the case of coffins, the short bands perpendicular to the central band, invoking gods, are usually formulated as “*jm3hy hr* + divine name”. In TT 82, by contrast, the six long bands all begin with the *hṯp-dj-nsw* formula, similar to the long inscriptions written along the tops of the side walls of coffins. See, for example, the coffin of Khnumnakht (MK): <https://www.met-museum.org/art/collection/search/544326>. For an example of this pattern in a contemporary tomb ceiling, see No. Davies 1923a: Pl. 60.

6 For translations and hieroglyphic versions, see Ni. Davies and Gardiner 1915: 43–44, Pl. 30.

7 This translation by Galán was based on a more completely preserved version taken from the tomb of Djehuty, TT 11; see Galán 2013: 120.

8 This seems to be confirmed by Morales (2017: 6): “No doubt, the fluid configuration of the sequence seems to indicate that the function of the grouping was not dependent on a fixed number of spells or a certain order, but on the assemblage of texts with the same theme”.

during that period, with a goal similar to its Old Kingdom antecedent. The continuity of the hour-vigil into the New Kingdom is uncertain, but it seems plausible, as both types of Nut texts were adapted to similar settings (coffin lids and chapel ceilings), and the vigil itself resurfaced in later periods.⁹ The positioning of the Nut formula on the ceilings of New Kingdom chapels could support this idea, as it corresponds to its earlier placement on the interior side of coffin lids — attesting to a similar understanding of the text and its primary function: the bodily protection of the deceased by Nut (Morales 2017: 155, 172).

The Nut formula of TT 82 appears to be a significantly abbreviated version of the PT verses and can be divided into two parts, each corresponding to distinct but complementary functions known from the PT spells. The first part, “[O mother] Nut, spread yourself over me...”, invokes Nut’s protective and reconstitutive role, as suggested by Morales (2017: 155–157) in his analysis of similar PT spells.

In the second part of the Nut text in TT 82, “...may you place me among the imperishable stars which are in you, as I shall not die”, the mention of the im-

perishable stars may further allude to this passage’s function within the hour-vigils, as noted by Morales in reference to the PT spells.¹⁰

These two complementary parts of the Nut formula encapsulate the role of the goddess: reconstituting the body of the deceased and allowing it to roam freely among the stars as a symbol of eternal life. In this way, the short spell effectively summarizes the overall decorative program of Amenemhat’s tomb chapel.

The Nut formula in the hall is surrounded by the following six bands, provided here in an updated translation of Davies (Ni. Davies and Gardiner 1915: 43–44, Pl. 30). Regarding their relationship to the central Nut formula, one might ask whether the gods mentioned in them could be seen in a similarly supportive role as the goddesses depicted on the sides of coffins (as in the case of CT 644), participating in the celebration of funerary rituals.¹¹

B. “An offering-which-the-King-gives to Osiris in the Thinite nome, the Lord of Eternity, who quelled the warfare of the Two Lands, the again-born, the heir of Geb; may he grant to travel in the divine bark in the train of the great god in his

9 Galán (2013: 123, No. 12) remarks that: “Hays and Schenck (2007) do not include the Nut spells in their study of Pyramid Texts in Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tombs”.

10 “In addition, the hour-vigil was also characterized by nautical symbolism, the mummification bed being understood as a ship and the libations of Osiris as its navigation waters. The libation waters were also connected with Nun and the inert character of Osiris, the tired. Interestingly, the texts that show this symbolism are ferryman texts, such as CT 398 and CT 399 in which the deceased navigates to the abode of Osiris accompanied by the decan stars, a clear motif of the passing of the hours in the vigil rites” (Morales 2017: 158).

11 The position of the texts in the hall may be connected to the funerary rites (e.g. embalming) mentioned in CT 644 and the hour-vigil, which would have been conducted primarily outside the tomb. These rites constituted liminal rituals (see Morales 2017: 172), just as the hall represents a liminal space between the external and internal parts of the tomb. Such rites may also have been re-enacted during certain festivals, as noted by Morales (2017: 172).

procession of the beginning of the year, for the *k3* of the scribe who reckons the grain of Amun, Amenemhat, justified; and to receive a place among his followers in his place of the Peker-district; and to come in peace and justification, (his) *b3* to the sky, (his) corpse to the Underworld, for the steward of the Vizier, the scribe Amenemhat”.

C. “An offering-which-the-King-gives to the Western Necropolis, the land of hiding which conceals those who are in it, which glorifies [...] of the Netherworld, which envelops the corpse [...] the flesh, which conceals corruption, the heart of the noble dead [being established (?) in] its place, all his limbs performing their functions; for the scribe who reckons the corn of Amun, Amenemhat, justified; may you open for him all doors, may he come in and go forth as he wishes, without being turned back from Ro-setau for ever and ever”.

D. “[An offering-which-the-King-gives to Amun-Re], Lord of Thrones-of-the-Two-Lands, the foremost of Karnak, the living god who came into being of himself, who lives upon truth every day; may he grant *pṛt-r-hrw* offerings of bread and beer, oxen and geese, all things good and pure, the sweet breeze of the north wind, to drink water from the swirl (of the Nile), for the *k3* of the steward who reckons the grain of Amun, Amenemhat, justified, [born of the lady of the] house, [Antef] [...] begotten of the overseer of ploughed fields, Djehutymes, justified”.

E. “An offering-which-the-King-gives to Anubis, foremost of the divine booth, who is in the place of embalming, lord of the sacred land, Wepwawet, presiding over the Two Lands; may he grant

the opening of the Netherworld, union with the burial-chamber, to see rays [in the place of] darkness; for the scribe who reckons the corn of Amun, Amenemhat, justified, born of the lady of the house, Antef, the steward [of the Vizier], Amenemhat, justified, begotten of the revered overseer of ploughed fields, Djehutymes, the justified”.

F. “An offering-which-the-King-gives to Renenutet, who is in the sacred land, the great lady of the necropolis, mistress of the city of eternity; may you grant the noble to abound in your provisions, may you sustain him with the offerings that are in you, may you feed him from the altar of the lord of ceremonies in the course of every day; for the steward of the Vizier, the chief of the weavers of Amun, the scribe Amenemhat, [justified]; [may he make] transformations to his heart's content, unhindered in that which he wishes for ever and ever”.

G. “[An offering-which-the-King-gives to Harakhty (?)], chief of the Two Lands, dwelling in the sacred place, the noble hawk who makes festive the breast, who inundates the Two Lands with gold when he arises, may he grant offerings and provisions, cloth, thread, incense, and oil, gifts of all that grows, what heaven gives, what earth creates, what the Nile brings; for the *k3* of the scribe who reckons the grain of Amun, Amenemhat, justified, born of the lady of the house, Antef, justified; and to be in the train of this great god in his processions by water and by land, for the scribe Amenemhat, justified”.

A few important remarks can be made regarding these texts. Based on the deities invoked and the themes they reference,

it can be surmised that the ceiling bands were distributed in accordance with correspondences between their content and the symbolic significance of the adjacent parts of the tomb.

Bands D and G are inscribed along the east wall of the hall, next to the entrance. They invoke solar gods associated with the external world — Amun-Re and Re-Harakhty. Their placement recalls the solar hymns and greetings often found on the entrance thicknesses of New Kingdom tombs, which occupy similar positions.¹²

Bands B and E are situated along the west wall of the hall, next to the entrance to the inner passage. These invoke Osiris and Anubis, respectively — both gods linked to a successful transition into the netherworld. The wishes expressed in these bands reflect this role.

The positioning of these bands next to the entrance to the passage leading into the inner part of the tomb chapel — and opposite the ceiling bands invoking solar gods — seems to create a symbolic complementarity: “netherworld vs. external world” represented in spatial terms.

Bands C and F invoke the personified necropolis (C) and Renenutet as the lady of the necropolis (F), who mediate between the outer world (life), represented by Amun-Re and Re-Harakhty in bands D and G, and the inner realm (the netherworld) represented by Osiris and Anubis in bands B and E. In band C, the personified necropolis embraces Amenemhat,

makes his body whole, and facilitates passage into and out of the necropolis. In band F, the couplet “sustenance and transformation” appears, complementing the themes in band C — since sustenance is the prerequisite for bodily wholeness and safe passage.¹³

Examples from other Theban tombs illustrate both similarities and differences in the ceiling band texts and their positioning in transverse halls, supporting the notion that the layout in TT 82 was deliberate.

In the transverse hall of TT 84, a contemporary tomb, the bands in positions similar to B, D, and G (all beginning with *hṯp-dj-nsw*) invoke the same deities as those in TT 82: Osiris, Amun-Re, and Harakhty (Paksi 2025a; 2025b). The deities in the remaining three bands cannot be identified due to the loss of names, but differences do occur — for example, the central band of the south wing in TT 84 likely invoked a solar deity, in contrast to the central band in TT 82, which invokes necropolis deities (Paksi 2025b). Paksi’s reconstruction also suggests the presence of other deities and a now-damaged Nut formula in the central section.

Paksi concludes that some ceiling inscriptions in TT 84 were probably copied from TT 82 and subsequently modified. These texts were also shared across other contemporary tombs to some extent, with variations in wording and execution (Paksi 2025a: 388, 391–394). She further observes that other bands were copied

12 For solar hymns in tombs, see Assmann 1995: 5. For the association of these two gods, see Assmann 1995: *passim*.

13 See e.g. Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 356, on *wstn* — “walking freely” — and sustenance.

from additional tombs — for instance, band G's parallel can be found in TT 99 and was repositioned in TT 96A (Paksi 2025a: 407; see also Strudwick 2016). These practices suggest that while maintaining social ties expressed through shared scenes and texts was important, individual choices also played a significant role — highlighting the conscious choices made by the tomb owner or decorators during the design process.¹⁴

In TT 90 (dating to the time of Thutmose IV – Amenhotep III),¹⁵ the bands positioned next to the entrance contain the names of Harakhty and Anubis *hnty zh ntr* (corresponding to D and G in TT 82, respectively), introduced by a *htp-dj-nsw* formula. Only one of the central long bands is preserved, and it contains the names of Ptah, Thoth, and Atum. The bands at the rear of the transverse hall invoke deities associated with the funerary/mortuary sphere: Osiris, Anubis *nb t3 dsr*, Ptah-Sokar, and Wennefer. In the center of the hall ceiling, three short lines were added in a position comparable to that of the Nut formula in TT 82, invoking the names of Amun, Harakhty, and Osiris, again following a *htp-dj-nsw* formula.

In TT 90, some divine names are positioned similarly to those in TT 82. Deities associated with the “outside” world appear next to the entrance of the hall: Harakhty and Anubis with an epithet connecting him with the embalming hall, an institution located above-ground in

the necropolis. The rear of the hall, closer to the tomb's inner sections, features gods of the necropolis and the netherworld. However, the overall division does not exactly mirror that of TT 82.

A particularly interesting feature of TT 90's transverse hall is the short line of inscription at its southern narrow end. This line recalls of the abbreviated *jm3hy hr* + deity formula found on the short bands perpendicular to the Nut formula on coffins. It names Duamutef and Qebehsenuef; a now destroyed counterpart on the opposite end likely invoked the remaining two Sons of Horus. These short lines are absent from the ceiling of TT 82, but appear in the tomb of Puyemra,¹⁶ where a longer line beginning with *htp-dj-nsw* runs parallel to the Nut formula.

Three common types of inscriptions from the exterior of coffins — long lines beginning with *htp-dj-nsw*, short lines with “*jm3hw hr* + deity”, and the central Nut formula — appear in various combinations on Eighteenth Dynasty tomb ceilings. Their rearrangement in different tombs points to creative reinterpretation and conscious decision-making.

TT 82 is different from other tombs in that it demonstrates particular care in the placement of divine names. The ceiling inscriptions in the hall reflect the three main spheres most significant to the deceased 1) the external world=life=solar sphere; 2) the necropolis; and 3) the netherworld=the domain of Osiris. These spheres were positioned in places where they expressed this

14 See Paksi 2025a: 407, n. 64, for a short bibliography on the phenomenon and her conclusions in Paksi 2025b.

15 See the details and diagram in No. Davies 1923b: Pl. 38.

16 Though not in his transverse hall, see No. Davies 1923a: Pl. 60.

the best: 1) next to the entrance, symbolizing the world outside; 2) between the outer world and the burial chamber; and 3) next to the passage leading to the burial chamber. This suggests that the ceiling bands functioned in a complementary and symbolic relationship, indicating careful planning of the decorative program. Fur-

thermore, since they were spatially located in a way that can be read in a progressive manner—from the entrance of the chapel to the passage—they may represent the deceased's journey to the West and his transformation.

In the following section, the ceiling inscriptions in the passage are examined.

CEILING INSCRIPTIONS OF THE PASSAGE

There are three bands of texts on the ceiling of the passage, each beginning with the *hṭp-dj-nsw* formula, possibly echoing the similar bands in the hall. The southern band invokes Maat; the northern band likely invokes Hathor (the name is broken, but the accompanying epithets strongly suggest her); and the central band invokes Amun-Re. All of the wishes in the latter text are obliterated, and the other two bands are also damaged, but some correspondences can still be recognized. The translation presented here is once again an updated version of Davies's (Ni. Davies and Gardiner 1915: 68, Pl. 30).

Northern band: "An offering-which-the-King-gives to [Hathor(?), lady of] Karnak, the fair-faced, the solar disk, the forehead in front of which are coiled the two Uraei, that she may grant to go forth on the birthday of Re(?), on the birthday of Osiris, and on all feast-days [to the *k3* of the scribe who reckons] the grain, [Amenemhat, justified]."

Southern band: "An offering-which-the-King-gives to Maat, mistress of the gods, beautiful of appearances in the Bark of Millions, beloved of Re every day, that she may grant offerings of bread and beer, oxen and geese, all things to be hale of flesh, and to lie joined to one's place in the Netherworld by the favor of the god of the town."

Central band: "[An offering-which-the-King-gives to Amun-Re, Lord of the Thrones] of the Two Lands, King of Eternity, enduring of life, long of years, may he grant ..."

These wishes associated with Hathor and Maat appear to complement each other.¹⁷ While Maat provides the necessary conditions for the deceased's safe existence in the netherworld—thus portraying him in a passive role as recipient—Hathor ensures his active role in life by allowing him to participate in Theban festivals (Fukaya 2014). These two aspects ensure Amememhat's inclusion in both the community

¹⁷ The general association between these two goddesses is well known, and the nature of their relationship may also be complementary within the context of Theban tombs. See Davies 1943: Pls 63–67 for the banquet scene in the tomb of Rekhmire, positioned in a location comparable to that in Amenemhat's tomb, where Hathoric emblems are presented to the tomb owner and Maat's role in Hathoric celebrations is mentioned. In the tomb of Kheruef (The Epigraphic Survey 1980: 42, Pl. 24), compare the text in front of Queen Tiye, who stands behind Hathor in a kiosk: "It is like Maat following Re that she is in the following of Your Majesty."

of the dead and that of the living — two complementary requirements for a successful afterlife.

In the absence of a preserved text, it can only be speculated that the central band invoking Amun-Re served to connect these two aspects, perhaps in a way similar to the Nut formula in the hall. The fact that Amun is called “King of Eternity, enduring of life, long of years” may suggest that the purpose of the band was to provide precisely these qualities — an enduring eternity that encapsulates the themes of the other two bands.¹⁸

The division —Hathor/north, Maat/south— was likely mirrored in the wall decorations as well. On the north wall, a banquet appears, depicting music, singing, and drunken celebration, all of which fall under the domain of Hathor in the necropolis, as the Beautiful Feast of the

Valley and other festivals were celebrated under her auspices.¹⁹ The procession on the south wall, returning from Abydos and moving toward the necropolis goddess, has an implicit connection with Maat. Through this procession, the deceased is closely associated with Osiris, who presides over the justification process, while Maat is said to provide a place to “lie joined to one’s place in the Netherworld”, as expressed in the southern band.

The complementary nature of the wishes and deities in these ceiling texts —and their potential correspondence with the wall scenes— suggests an intentionally designed program with close attention to thematic detail. The fact that such thematic complementation can also be observed in the ceiling texts of both the hall and the passage invites a similar investigation of the inscriptions in the shrine.

CEILING INSCRIPTIONS OF THE SHRINE

There are five single-line bands of text on the ceiling of the shrine, running parallel to the long east–west axis of the tomb. They were described in Davies’s publication in an order starting on the southern side and progressing northward, which is followed here as well.

The transliteration of these texts is based on Davies (Ni. Davies and Gardiner 1915: Pl. 27) and has been compared with Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek (2005), incorporating emendations to the titles not included in the latter. The transliterations and titles are essential to the argu-

¹⁸ It may also be observed that the southern band invoking Maat corresponds to the southern wall of the passage, where a reception by the goddess of the West is depicted. As a component in the deceased’s justification, Maat plays an essential role in his acceptance into the West and could symbolically represent the “internal”, whereas Hathor —associated with the northern band— could embody the “external”. Hathor may also be connected to the Opening of the Mouth ritual on the north wall, where a banquet is shown. Her well-attested connection to banquets, festivals, and rituals likely extended to those performed in the tomb courtyard. These proposed links, however, fall more into the category of looser interpretive possibilities. It is also possible that the two bands of text were intended to create a connection between the passage and the sanctuary, where Hathoric festivals are depicted on the northern and southern walls.

¹⁹ However, the north wall also features the Opening of the Mouth ritual. For Hathor’s role in festivals and related iconography, see Bryan 2014.

ment presented below (unlike the previous ceiling texts, where translation alone sufficed). The translations are drawn from both publications, providing an updated English rendering of the texts.

South band 1 (D1):²⁰

ḏd-md.w jmy-r pr ḥsb wnn.wt zh3 [Jmn]-m-ḥ3.t m3^c-ḥrw ḏd rn=k m-ḥnw ḥw.t=k twt.w=k m jtr.wt=sn b3=k ḥnh.w ḥ3.t=k [mn.tj] m js=k n ḥr.t-ntr, [rn=k] w3ḥ.w m r3 ms.w=k d.t

“Recitation: (O)²¹ Steward, accountant of that which exists, the scribe [Amen] emhat, justified. May your name endure within your mansion, and your statues in their shrines, your *b3* living, your corpse [being established] in your tomb of the Necropolis, [your name] enduring in the mouth of your children eternally.”

South band 2 (D2):²²

ḏd-md.w jmy-r pr ḥsb rmt [zh3 Jmn]-m-ḥ3.t m3^c-ḥrw ḏj smj.t ḥwy=s r=k Jmn.t ḥ^cj=s m nfr.w=k jrj=s n(j)n(j) m ḥsf=k m-ḥt rnp.wt jm3ḥ.w sjp=s tw n jmj.w-ḥt=s wnnjj.w n d.t

“Recitation: (O) Steward, accountant of people, [the scribe Amen]emhat, justified. The Desert extends her arms towards you, the West rejoices at your beauty, she makes the *njn*-gesture in meeting you

after years of revered old age, she assigns you among her followers who exist eternally.”

Central band (D3):²³

ḏd-md.w jmy-r pr ḥsb jt zh3 Jmn-m-ḥ3.t ḥk=k prj=k m jmnt.t wstn=k ḥr sb3 n dw3.t dw3=k R^c wbn=f m ḏw sns=k sw ḥtp=f m 3ḥ.t šsp=k 3w.t ḥtp=k ḥr šb.w ḥr wḏḥ.w n nb d.t

“Recitation: (O) Steward, accountant of grain, the scribe Amenemhat. May you enter into and go forth from the West, may you stride through the gate of the Netherworld, may you adore Re when he arises from the mountain, may you worship him when he sets in the horizon, may you receive oblations, and may you be satisfied with repasts from the table of the Lord of eternity.”

North band 2 (D4):²⁴

ḏd-md.w jmy-r pr ḥsb 3ḥ.wt zh3 Jmn-m-ḥ3.t m3^c-ḥrw swtw=k r mrr=k ḥr m3^c nfr n š=k ḥntš jb=k m mn.w=k skbb=k ḥr nh.wt=k ḥtp jb=k m nw m-ḥnw ḥnm.t jrj.t.n=k r nhḥ ḥn^c d.t

“Recitation: (O) Steward, accountant of fields, the scribe Amenemhat, justified. May you wander as you wish on the beautiful shore of your garden-pond, may your

20 Urk. IV: 1062.16–1063.4. For the transliteration, along with a commentary and emendations, see Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 350.

21 Although no vocative particle such as “Oh” is used in the original, its inclusion in the English translation better conveys the intended tone and function of the titles and the tomb owner’s name within the recitation, especially given that the following texts address him in the second person singular (hereafter Sg. 2) in all five cases.

22 Urk. IV: 1063.6–10; Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 348.

23 Urk. IV: 1063.12–1064.3; Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 356.

24 Urk. IV: 1064.5–10; Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 351–352.

heart have joy in your garden, may you have refreshment under your sycamore trees, may your heart be appeased with water from within the well which you made, for ever and ever.”

North band 1 (D5):²⁵

*ḏd-md.w jmy-r pr ḥsb ḥmt zh3 [Jmn]-m-
ḥ3.t m3^c-ḥrw wb3=k ḏw.w nw ḥr.t-nṯr m3n=k
pr=k n ḥw.w sḏm<=k> ḥrw ḥss šm^c m rwy.
t=k jmj.t t3 pn jrj=k s3 n ms.w=k r nhḥ ḥn^c ḏ.t*

“Recitation: (O) Steward, accountant of bronze, the scribe [Amen]emhat, justified. May you open the mountains of the Necropolis, so that you may see your house of the living, (and) hear the sound of singing and music in your hall that is on this earth, (and) may you be protection unto your children for ever and ever.”

The various themes present in the bands of the shrine ceiling were examined in detail by Assmann and colleagues, who categorized the texts into thematic groups, providing parallels and possible origins. Accordingly, only relevant details are discussed here (Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 347–356). A few key assumptions made by Assmann and colleagues regarding these themes should be recalled.

They argue that these texts were not part of any broader context—whether ritual or decorative—unlike similar texts on stelae or statues, which they consider the probable sources (Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 347). Consequently, they attribute the inclusion of such texts in tombs to personal innovation, wherein the significance of the tomb and its owner is expressed. According to Assmann and colleagues, this lack of contextual embedding permits the development of a “quasi-philosophical” thematic discourse (Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 348).

While these observations are likely accurate to a certain extent, the thematic correspondences identified above in both the hall and the passage suggest that the shrine texts were not entirely devoid of context. Moreover, in the opinion of this author, the texts also exhibit an internal structure, further supporting the idea of deliberate integration within a larger conceptual framework.

As a useful starting point for discussing the shrine ceiling texts, their proposed origin—as surmised by Assmann and colleagues—is outlined here. They suggest that similar compositions found on contemporary stelae served as their source.²⁶

25 Urk. IV: 1064.12–17; Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 351.

26 An alternative hypothesis regarding the origin of the ceiling texts in the shrine of TT 82 must also be noted, though it cannot be explored in detail in the present article. Quirke (2013: 504) draws a connection between these texts and a long line of inscription found on the verso of a Book of the Dead papyrus from the same period: “A rare and remarkable feature of the New Kingdom papyri with *pṛt m ḥrw* formulae is the addition of a single line stretching the full length of the papyrus, filling a band at mid-height along the roll. This feature appears already on the papyrus for the master builder Amenhotep, from the first decades in which *pṛt m ḥrw* papyri became a regular feature of elite Theban burials (1450–1400 BC). ... Conceptually, these long bands seem to echo the recurrent, if not universal, practice of including a line of inscription down the middle of the ceiling (Eighteenth Dynasty) or between wall-registers (Nineteenth Dynasty) in rock-cut Theban tomb chapels. ... The tomb-chapel bands often include wishes for the deceased, and these motifs occur within the bands on the back of *pṛt m ḥrw* papyri.”

These are treated in Chapter 3 of their book, and for the sake of clarity, this group of texts is referred to in the present study as Liturgy No. 3. It is worth summarizing what is said there about Liturgy No. 3.

All stela text variants described in Chapter 3 of Assmann and colleagues originate from the period “Hatshepsut – Amenhotep II”, which corresponds with the temporal frame of TT 82, demonstrating the relevance of these texts to the ceiling inscriptions.²⁷ According to Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek (2005: 251), Liturgy No. 3 is not an independent composition but is usually situated between the offerings of the *hṯp-dj-nsw* formula and a biographical text. The shrine texts in TT 82 are likewise adjacent to *hṯp-dj-nsw* bands (found on the ceilings of the hall and passage), while biographical texts can be found on the two stelae within the shrine (Ni. Davies and Gardiner 1915: Pls 25–26).

This suggests that the other ceiling inscriptions form a kind of contextual framework for the shrine texts. Moreover, the biographical stelae in the shrine could also contribute to

this context, enhancing Amenemhat’s self-representation as a professional — a theme explored in detail by Ragazzoli.²⁸

The relationship between Liturgy No. 3 and the shrine bands can be further supported by thematic parallels and a potential correspondence in the sequence of themes. This comparison is analyzed in the following section.

In [Table 1], a correspondence is presented between the various themes of Liturgy No. 3 (in the version from Paheri’s stela at El Kab) and the ceiling bands of TT 82’s shrine. The left-hand column outlines Assmann and colleagues’ division of Liturgy No. 3, the middle column presents a more detailed breakdown prepared by the author of this paper,²⁹ and the right-hand column lists the corresponding themes in the ceiling texts of the shrine in TT 82. In the left and middle columns, the numbers refer to the line numbers of Paheri’s text (used by Assmann and colleagues as the main example for Liturgy No. 3), while the numbers in the right column (D1, etc.) correspond to the order of the ceiling bands as given by Davies.³⁰

27 Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 251. The later shortened variants of these stela texts appear on coffins and focus on embalming and the reception of offerings — an emphasis that aligns with the shrine texts in TT 82, which are flanked by offering scenes on both sides.

28 See Ragazzoli 2017. This aspect is not essential for the interpretation proposed in this paper and is therefore not discussed in detail.

29 This division was made to present the themes in greater detail and to facilitate comparison with the texts from TT 82.

30 Since the bands are very short and appear to express closely related ideas, there was no need to subdivide the ceiling texts further.

Table 1. Correlation between the sequence of themes in Liturgy No. 3 and the ceiling inscriptions of the shrine in TT 82

Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005's division of Liturgy No. 3	Author's division of Liturgy No. 3	TT 82 shrine ceiling
<i>ḥtp-dj-nsw</i> offerings	<i>ḥtp-dj-nsw</i> offerings preceding stepping out	<i>ḥtp-dj-nsw</i> in hall and passage
1–6 Funeral	Freely walking: 1 Having a funeral: 2–6	D1 – Tomb D2 – Reception by the West (after old age)
7–12 Transformation	Transforming into a <i>b3</i> , <i>bnw</i> , swallow, etc., to enter the bark: 7–12	D1 – Living <i>b3</i>
13–16 <i>b3</i>	Rebirth: 13 Acceptance by other <i>b3</i> s: 14–16	D2 – Reception by the West and acceptance by its followers
17–20 Statue and offering	Statue accepting offerings; ability to drink; breath: 17–20	D1 – Mansions, statues, shrines
21–24 Eyes etc.	Reconstitution of body parts: 21–30	D1?
25–28 Body		
29–30 Heart		
31–36 Transformation and offering	Coming and going to the sky and opening the Duat: 31 Calling out to the daily offerings of Osiris: 32–36	D3 and perhaps D5 D3
NN	For the <i>k3</i> of ...: 36a–f	
37–40 <i>šns</i> -cake by the god, free passage?		
41–44 Opening 45–48 <i>wšḥ.t-m3^c.ty</i>	Coming and going freely from Duat, followed by entering <i>wšḥ.t m3^c.ty</i> and other netherworld sites: 41–48	D3? D4 – Wandering according to wish
49–54 <i>šḥ.t-j3rw</i>	Fields and their products for the deceased: 49–52	D4 – Fields
55–60 Day/Night	Bark for the deceased; free movement; lighting a torch (in the house of the living): 53–60	D5 – Returning and perhaps D3
61–64 Morning	Seeing Re and Amun: 61–62 Awakening without hindrance: 63–64	D5? and perhaps D3
65–68 <i>nḥḥ</i>	"Conclusion": spending the <i>nḥḥ</i> successfully (divine blessing, sound heart, offering service): 65–68	

It can be seen from the table above that the themes are generally similar between Liturgy No. 3 and Amenemhat's

ceiling inscriptions. More importantly, however, the sequence of themes in the TT 82 bands as proposed by Davies

(and Urk. IV) is almost identical to the thematic order of Liturgy No. 3, even if not all themes correspond perfectly. While the presence of similar themes is unsurprising given the funerary context of both sources, the fact that their sequence largely aligns raises the question of whether there was a specific rationale behind adopting this particular order in the shrine of TT 82.

Furthermore, one might ask why Assmann and colleagues published the shrine texts in an order different from that of Davies, especially since they themselves proposed Liturgy No. 3 as the origin of the shrine texts.

In their analysis of the shrine ceiling inscriptions, Assmann and colleagues assumed that the texts formed a collection of loosely related ideas without a strict organizing structure.³¹ However, as noted above, they discuss the five ceiling bands in a different order than that found in Davies and Urk. IV. This implies that they perceived some form of internal structure—perhaps a thematic progression—that was not reflected in Davies's sequence. A brief summary of their proposed order is presented in their book, where the thematic sequence is listed (Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 356). The numbers at the beginning indicate the band order in Assmann and colleagues, while the numbers following them refer to their order in Davies/Urk. It is clear that they

significantly reordered the bands, presumably for a reason (Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 356).

- 5.1.1. Reception in the West – D2
- 5.1.2. Enduring in the tomb – D1
- 5.1.3. Returning to the house – D5
- 5.1.4. Stroll in the garden – D4
- 5.1.5. Receiving offerings in the tomb – D3

The difference between the sequence of the shrine ceiling texts proposed by Assmann and colleagues (D2–D1–D5–D4–D3) and the sequence in this paper (D1 to D5) are evident. The author of this paper contends that the order published by Davies more closely reflects the potentially intended sequence—especially since it appears to align with the thematic sequence found in Liturgy No. 3. While the correspondence between Liturgy No. 3 and the bands in TT 82 is clear, the bands in the shrine of TT 82 seem to conflate related topics into single columns, whereas Liturgy No. 3 treats them more extensively. This may represent an innovative reconfiguration of the thematic material, adapted to the spatial constraints of the ceiling.

Moreover, the placement of the *hṭp-dj-nsu* formulas at the beginning of Liturgy No. 3 (as seen in the version of Paheri; see Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 251) is similar to the position of the *hṭp-dj-nsu* formulas located

31 This is never stated explicitly in their work, but it is implicitly assumed, as they do not address the possibility of thematic progression. See also their final conclusions about the texts in Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 356, which are loosely translated here into English: “They can therefore be understood as a commentary on the tomb, explaining to the deceased the advantages of having a tomb in the necropolis. Through this tomb, he has a place on earth, in the arms of the Goddess of the West, where his name endures, where he receives offerings, and from which he can visit his house, protect his children, and enjoy his garden.”

in the hall and passage of TT 82, “preceding” the bands of the shrine ceiling. In the author’s opinion, this correspondence — along with the parallels described above — supports the argument that the bands of the shrine were arranged in a deliberate sequence, essentially matching the order in which Davies published them.

Furthermore, the different themes represented in the individual bands do not appear to result from random selection; rather, they reveal closer thematic relationships. The proposed sequence and brief interpretation of the themes in each band are as follows:

D1: The listed wishes concern elements of the deceased’s person and identity that persist after death: his name, statue, living *b3*, corpse, and memory. These represent the fundamental components necessary for a successful afterlife and define the new persona created through the process of death and revival. This band provides a static backdrop to the more dynamic actions expressed in the other bands.

D2: The deceased is accepted by the West among its people — the ancestors. One of the social requirements of a successful afterlife, namely integration into the community of ancestors, is presented here (Assmann 2005: 58). The direction of movement is inward, into the realm of the dead.

D3: The deceased is able to move freely between the beyond and the world of the living, and is thus able to adore the sun — taking part in the solar journey by being present at its key stages — and to receive offerings.³² This band might also represent the final phase of the deceased’s revivification through nourishment, symbolized by the offering ritual at the conclusion of the Opening of the Mouth ritual (Otto 1960/I: 153–155; 1960/II: 179–181; Barta 1963: 113–114).

D4: The deceased enters fields and marshlands which, among other meanings, represent exiting the tomb and venturing further outward — perhaps following revivification through the offerings and sunlight described in D3. This band can also be read as an allegory for the completion of the rebirth process and the attainment of a successful existence in the afterlife, where all the deceased’s wishes are fulfilled (Assmann 2005: 221–223).

D5: The deceased steps out from the tomb by cleaving the mountainside and visits his former relatives at home, providing them protection. Additionally, it is said that he hears “the sound of singing and music in your [i.e., his] hall that is on this earth”, which might refer to jubilations in the former home³³ or

32 See Assmann 2005: 240, where provisioning and transfiguration are connected. Also see the offering ritual in *ibid.* 343 *passim*, where free movement and the sun’s presence are followed by offerings, in a manner reminiscent of D3. See also Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 356 regarding the connection between *wstn* (“walking freely”) and sustenance.

33 The combination of visiting the home and encountering jubilations does not occur often, as shown by the examples cited in Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 264–268. One instance appears in TT 23 (temp. Merneptah), with the following wording: *ḳ=k r pr=k n ḥh.w jw=k rš.tj ḥḥ.tj* — “May you enter to your house of the living, being happy and jubilating.”

perhaps elsewhere, as the word used here —*rwyt* (Wb. II: 407.13–15), translated as “hall”— seems to refer to an official building.³⁴ His return to earth to visit and protect his living relatives and to celebrate with them could allude to the yearly necropolis festivals, during which the communities of the dead and the living were reunited in celebrations held in the tomb courtyards (Bryan 2014: 107; Fukaya 2014: *passim*).

Throughout this proposed sequence, a spatial progression of the deceased can be observed, which parallels his metamorphosis into an *3h*. The themes begin in the external world (e.g. name in a mansion, statue in a shrine; D1) and progress to the necropolis (D1: *b3* and corpse in the necropolis), where Amenemhat is welcomed by the West and by the ancestors (D2). His ability to move freely enables the completion of the revivification process through offerings and the life force emanating from the sun (D3). This, in turn, allows him to venture farther outward and enjoy the pleasures of his gardens, which provide eternal refreshment (D4). Finally, the themes culminate in the celebratory reunification of the deceased with his living relatives (D5), perhaps referencing the periodic festivals of the Theban necropolis.

Through the progression presented in the five bands of the ceiling, one can observe the deceased's journey of entering

and exiting the necropolis while becoming a fully venerated *3h* who participates in both the afterlife and the world of the living.

A similar progression —supporting the interpretation proposed here— can be found in the unique opening of Patheri's version of Liturgy No. 3 (Assmann, Bommas, and Kucharek 2005: 251). Lines 1–12 follow a thematic progression that is also temporal, as outlined by Assmann and colleagues:

Lines 3–4: departure from this world (old age);

Lines 5–6: entry into the afterlife (burial);

Lines 7–8: transformation into a living *bA* to receive offerings (tomb court);

Lines 9–10: transformation into different forms (from the afterlife);

Lines 11–12: entering a ferry (returning to this world).

To summarize so far: Based on the above observations of thematic correlations and complementarity in the ceiling inscriptions across the various chambers of Amenemhat's tomb, it may be concluded that these texts were the result of deliberate planning. This planning took into account not only the cardinal and symbolic directions but also the overall decorative program and intertextual relationships between the inscriptions.

34 Wb. II states that this word is an alternative spelling of the words *rwyt* or *rryt* (Wb. I: 209.13), potentially connected to *rwyt/rrwt* (Wb. I: 210.13, 211.8), meaning “gate” of a house or other building. One could also note its possible relation to *rwyt* (Wb. II: 404.1–10), “gate”. It is therefore not impossible that *rwyt* refers in this text to a gate — perhaps the gate of the former house or the tomb. In the latter case, the mention of jubileations could allude to necropolis festivals, though this cannot be confirmed with certainty.

In the hall, the bands of texts were arranged such that their themes reflect the spatial positioning of the gods they mention: 1) next to the entrance (i.e. the external world), solar gods are invoked; 2) in the central area, necropolis gods — mediating between the world of the living and the netherworld — are featured; and 3) at the rear, gods of the funerary and mortuary domains, representing the netherworld, are addressed. These three zones may also be interpreted as a symbolic progression from life to the afterlife.

In the room beyond the hall, the ceiling inscriptions of the passage exhibit a similar complementary structure. Here, Maat and Hathor provide the deceased with funerary/mortuary offerings and festivals respectively — perhaps reflecting two complementary aspects of these deities.

In the shrine, the themes evoked in the individual bands appear to follow a particular order, also found on contemporary stelae (e.g. Liturgy No. 3), which describe a process of rejuvenation of the deceased. Since Liturgy No. 3 was often placed between *hṭp-dj-nsw* formulas and autobiographical texts, it may be inferred that the *hṭp-dj-nsw* formulas found in the hall and passage ceilings, together with the autobiographical stelae in the shrine, formed a comparable contextual framework for the ceiling texts — attesting to the interconnected nature of inscriptions in the different chambers of the tomb.

Given these signs of meticulous planning in the tomb's decoration, the author would now like to draw attention to another notable feature of the shrine ceiling texts.

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE TITLES OF AMENEMHAT AND THE THEMES OF THE SHRINE CEILING INSCRIPTIONS

The phenomena discussed above — including the thematic complementarity of the texts — suggest that the five different titles of Amenemhat used in the shrine ceiling inscriptions were not randomly selected.

Among the various titles used in the ceiling inscriptions of the shrine, only two — *ḥsb jt* and *ḥsb rmt* — appear in other parts of the tomb. This suggests that the remaining titles were selected specifically for this context. A brief survey of the titles used in these inscriptions, compared to those found elsewhere in the tomb, supports this notion.

The titles of Amenemhat recorded in other parts of the tomb are as follows (Ni. Davies and Gardiner 1915: 6–7, 128–129; Ragazzoli 2017: 196, 201):

ḥsb jt n Jmn — “grain accountant of Amun”;

ḥsb jt m šn.wt hṭp-ntr n Jmn — “accountant of grain in the granary of the divine offerings of Amun”;

smsw/smsm h3yt n pr Jmn — “master of ceremonies of the house of Amun”;

zh3 n t3ty — “scribe of the vizier”;

jmy-r pr n t3ty — “steward of the vizier”;

jmy-r ḥbsw — “overseer of the ploughed lands”;

ḥry mrw n Jmn — “overseer of the weavers(?) of Amun”.

As mentioned, only two of the following titles found on the shrine ceiling are used in other parts of the tomb.³⁵

ḥsb wnn.wt – “accountant of that which exists”. Taylor (2001: No. 1759) cites only TT 82 as a source. However, in Urk. IV: 1929.7, the title appears in the phrase: *jp nt.t ḥsb wnn[.wt] m pr Jmn* “The counter of what is, the accountant of that which exists in the house of Amun”, among other administrative titles on the funerary stela of Siese.

ḥsb rmt – “accountant of people” (Ward 1982: No. 167; Taylor 2001: No. 1766; Quirke 2004: 62). This title appears only in the shrine ceiling text and once more on the south wall of the passage where it appears as *ḥsb rmt Jmn* – “the accountant of the people of Amun” (Ni. Davies and Gardiner 1915: Pl. 11).

ḥsb jt – “accountant of grain” (Taylor 2001: No. 1745; Quirke 2004: 62, No. 161). This is a shortened version of Amenemhat’s longer title: “grain accountant of Amun... etc.”

ḥsb 3ḥ.wt – “accountant of fields”.³⁶ Taylor only cites TT 82.

ḥsb ḥmt – “accountant of copper”.³⁷ Taylor only cites TT 82.

Each of these titles features the role of *ḥsb* – “accountant” – known from other parts of Amenemhat’s tomb, followed by a specific domain where this function is

applied. In both Quirke and Ward (for the Middle Kingdom), *ḥsb* titles can be preceded by *jmy-r pr*, as is the case for Amenemhat.³⁸ In Ward (1982: 129), *ḥsb* titles without *jmy-r pr* are also attested, but none are combined with “copper”, “field”, or “*wnn.wt*” in either Quirke, Ward, or Taylor. The title *ḥsb wnn.wt* was found by the present author in Urk. IV: 1929.7.

Another point worth noting is that the titles used on the ceiling of the shrine are all general – i.e. not further specified – unlike the other titles in Amenemhat’s tomb. For example, *ḥsb rmt Jmn* vs. *ḥsb rmt*, or *ḥsb jt n Jmn* vs. *ḥsb jt*. This contrast suggests that the shrine titles were conceived in a more general sense, and not necessarily as actual functional titles held by their owner.

To summarize the abovementioned observations: the titles used in the shrine ceiling texts are distinct for each band, in some cases quite unique (only attested here), with three out of the five not occurring in other parts of the tomb. Moreover, they are used in a generalized form, as opposed to the more specific titles found in other parts of the tomb.

Furthermore, while the hall ceiling texts recall a set of themes similar to those in the shrine, it is notable that the titles used for Amenemhat in the hall differ from those in the shrine. In the shrine, each band is associated with a distinct

35 Ragazzoli (2017: 200) interprets these titles as expressions of Amenemhat’s competence within the context of his career, which is probably a correct interpretation of at least one of their aspects in this setting.

36 Taylor 2001: No. 1736. The function associated with this title appears to be similar to that of Amenemhat’s *jmy-r ḥbsw* – “overseer of the ploughed lands”.

37 Taylor 2001: No. 1767. Ragazzoli (2017: 201) transliterates *ḥmt* here as *bj3*, meaning “ore”; however, both interpretations would yield a similar translation.

38 Additional “*ḥsb* of ...” titles are also listed in Quirke 2004: 62.

title that is not repeated, whereas in the hall, repetitions occur. This supports the notion that the distinct usage of titles in the shrine had a specific function.

It is suggested here that these facts are not mere coincidence, but rather the result of the careful design discussed in the preceding parts of this paper.

The textual bands and their distinctive titles are quite unique as a composition, and no exact parallel has been found to facilitate their interpretation. As such, the following presents only potential hypotheses regarding the selection (or invention?) of Amenemhat's titles in this specific context.

In D1, Amenemhat is called “accountant of that which exists” (*hsb wnn.wt*). The main wishes of the accompanying text list the most important elements of the deceased's self-representation: name, statue, *b3*, corpse, tomb, and memory — entities that endure (*wnn*) after death.

In D2, Amenemhat is called “accountant of people” (*hsb rmt*), and the main wishes of the accompanying text reflect his acceptance into the West=necropolis=afterlife, where he is placed among the “followers who exist eternally”, i.e. the society of ancestors (Assmann 2005: 39–63). This ancestral society may be understood as corresponding to the “people” referenced in the title.

In D3, Amenemhat is entitled “accountant of grain” (*hsb jt*), which links

with the theme of receiving offerings that empower the deceased to move freely between worlds and adore the sun. Here, the grain mentioned in Amenemhat's title may represent a part-for-whole relationship with offerings more generally.

In D4, Amenemhat is called “accountant of fields” (*hsb 3h.wt*), a title correlated with his ability to walk freely in his pleasure garden, as expressed in the following text.

In D5, Amenemhat is entitled “accountant of bronze” (*hsb hmt*), and the associated text grants him the ability to cleave the mountainside and reunite with his living relatives in festive gatherings. This might allude to the idea that such an opening could be made using metal tools (Arnold 1991: 257–258). While this is not a typical representation of the *b3* exiting the tomb — and it is not suggested here that this is the intended meaning — the act of opening the mountain with a copper tool may symbolically parallel the tomb owner leaving the Theban mountains.

Another potential motivation for this association may lie in the connection between metal (especially copper) and Hathor, who is also associated with music and festivities — both themes present in this final band. Her role in enabling the deceased to leave the tomb and participate in necropolis festivals is well attested in other sources.³⁹

39 One may recall the frequent appearance of Hathor in mining regions — some associated with copper, such as at Timna (see Pinch 1993: 59–70). For further analysis of the connections between Hathor, other gods, minerals, and desert activities, see Darnell 2021: 40–62. For Hathor's involvement in the necropolis festival and her role in allowing the tomb owner to step out, see No. Davies 1925: Pl. 5 and 53–54: “Sitting down, to make merry (*shmh-jb*) during a pleasant day (*hrw nfr*) in his house of the west, in this his chapel of eternity which is in the divine pavilion of Hathor (*zh n hh*), mistress of the necropolis (*dsrw.t*). That she may grant you exit to come on to the land, into the open courtyard of the tomb, so that you can see the sun at its rising and listen to the noise of livestock which moo. For the Ka of ...”

The reason for using different titles in each line was perhaps that Amenemhat could exert better control over the themes presented in the following texts

by positioning him as the “controller” of the wishes represented by the individual words following the term “accountant” (*hsb*).

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the following observations can be made about the ceiling inscriptions of TT 82. These texts likely originated from different traditions, which were innovatively adapted in the tomb of Amenemhat to form a new composition. The Nut formula in the hall recalls Old and Middle Kingdom sacerdotal texts from the Pyramid and Coffin Texts, originally performed by priests during the hour-vigil (*Stundenwachen*). In those, Nut protects, reconstitutes, and revivifies the body of the deceased, enabling him to roam freely afterward. In TT 82, an abbreviated version of these main themes—and thus their underlying purpose—is found alongside *hṭp-dj-nsw* prayers, evoking a similar organizational structure as seen on coffins and other tomb ceilings.

The placement of the long textual bands in the hall ceiling appears to be carefully designed: the divine names invoked in the individual bands correspond to spatial zones of the cosmos. Amun-Re and Harakhty appear next to the entrance, symbolizing the “outside” (the solar sphere and life); Osiris and Anubis are placed next to the inner passage, representing the netherworld and afterlife; and the Necropolis goddess and Renenutet are positioned in between, corresponding to the necropolis itself, which lies between the earthly realm and the afterlife. The complementary spheres

form a totality of existence, suggesting a spatial and transformational progression undergone by the deceased on his journey to the afterlife.

The ceiling texts in the passage also appear to be organized in a complementary manner: Hathor and Maat grant corresponding gifts for the afterlife—access to sacred festivals and regular funerary and mortuary provisions. These gifts may correspond to the wall decorations in this space, which show banquet scenes and funerary rituals, respectively.

Based on the above signs of deliberate planning, this paper also hypothesized that the ceiling inscriptions in the shrine exhibit a form of organization that complements that of the previous rooms.

The investigation of the shrine ceiling texts revealed that they are more generally rooted in the so-called Liturgy No. 3 (as identified by Assmann and colleagues), which cites contemporary stela texts but assumes no broader functional context. Contrary to the view of Assmann and colleagues, who argue for the lack of such context, this paper proposed a wider framework for the ceiling inscriptions and a strong correlation between the sequence of themes in Text No. 3 and the shrine ceiling texts. It is further proposed that the intended sequence of the texts is that published by Davies, which aligns with the thematic

progression observable in Liturgy No. 3 — rather than with the order in which Assmann and colleagues discuss them.

Since a strong resemblance between the sequence of themes in Liturgy No. 3 and the shrine ceiling texts was observed —and since complementary themes were used in the other ceiling texts of the tomb— it was hypothesized in this paper that a type of progression is present in the shrine texts, describing the deceased's transformation as follows:

In D1, the personal existential requirements for a successful afterlife are listed (name, statue, living *b3*, corpse, and memory of the person). In D2, the necropolis greets Amenemhat and integrates him into the community of the dead. In D3, the deceased is said to be able to roam freely in and out of the

tomb and to perceive the sun after his revivification through offerings. In D4, this freedom of movement is extended to lush gardens and fields, bestowing life — and particularly a pleasant afterlife— on Amenemhat. In D5, Amenemhat is said to be able to leave the tomb on festival occasions to reunite with his family and to continue fulfilling his duties of protecting them.

The themes of these bands are potentially echoed in the titles of Amenemhat used in the texts: D1 — “accountant of that which exists”; D2 — “accountant of people”; D3 — “accountant of grain”; D4 — “accountant of fields”; D5 — “accountant of bronze”. Through these titles, Amenemhat was perhaps better able to take symbolic possession of the elements necessary for a successful afterlife.

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