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Covadonga en la Caldera del Teide. José Miguel Barrios Mufrege.

“Those Who Mourn for Re”: Mourning and Regeneration in the Book of the Twelve Caverns

Daniel Miguel MÉNDEZ-RODRÍGUEZ



Plañidera. Isabel Sánchez Marqués.

The Book of the Twelve Caverns is a cosmographic composition whose main content is an illustrated enumeration of the deities who dwelled in these regions of the mythical topography of the Beyond. Names, actions and depictions of some groups of these supernatural beings may be related to mourning. Gesture poses in the vignettes exhibit some similarities with that of the professional mourners in the funerals. The main aim of this article is to analyse them to better comprehend their meaning within the context of the book.

“Los que se lamentan por Ra”. *Duelo y regeneración en el Libro de las Doce Cavernas*

El Libro de las Doce Cavernas es una composición cosmográfica cuyo contenido principal es una enumeración ilustrada de las divinidades que habitaban en estas regiones de la geografía mítica del Más Allá. Los nombres, acciones y las representaciones de algunos grupos de estos dioses parecen hacer alusión a un contexto de lamento. Su gestualidad en las viñetas presenta similitudes con la del duelo que aparece asociada a las plañideras en los cortejos fúnebres. El objetivo principal de este artículo es realizar un análisis con vistas a comprender mejor su significado en el contexto de la obra.

Keywords: Book of the Twelve Caverns, mourning, regeneration, gesture.

Palabras clave: Libro de las Doce Cavernas, duelo, regeneración, gestualidad.

This article is a tribute to Covadonga Sevilla Cueva, one of the most pleasant and affective figures in the ranks of Egyptology that I have ever met. Even when I was never officially her student, she taught me many remarkable academic and non-academic issues. It is a privilege to have shared so many joyful moments with her in the temple of Debod, in Madrid, and during the archaeological seasons of the *Proyecto dos cero nueve* in Egypt.

The Book of the Twelve Caverns¹ –henceforth BTC– is one of the cosmographic texts known as the Books of the Netherworld.² It consists of a litany of deities who dwelled in the regions of the Egyptian Underworld which were crossed by the sun-god during his nightly journey. The composition offers not only textual information but also it was also illustrated with vignettes depicting these cavern-divinities. Several groups of deities seem to be related to mourning or grief due to their names and actions, expressed in texts

¹ The most recent study concerning this composition is the unpublished PhD thesis by the author (Méndez-Rodríguez 2016) which is currently under preparation for its publication. Prior to this, the most complete research was published by Piankoff and Jacquet-Gordon (1974). For a general view about the book: Hornung 1999 [1997]: 54-55; Méndez Rodríguez 2012; Müller-Roth and Weber 2010; Roberson 2016: 324-325.

² This text was previously known as spell 168 from the Book of Going forth by Day (aka Book of the Dead) until several scholars such as Alexandre Piankoff (Piankoff and Jacquet-Gordon 1974) and Thomas George Allen (Allen 1974) suggested it should be considered as an independent composition. For a general view about the history of its research: Müller-Roth and Weber 2010: 64-65; Méndez Rodríguez 2012: 696-698; Müller-Roth 2012: 36-38, 42-43; Méndez-Rodríguez 2016: vol. I, 29-68; Méndez-Rodríguez 2017b: 405.

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or gestures depicted in the vignettes. The main aim of this article is to focus on three groups of deities and analyse them in the religious and cosmographic context of the Netherworld Books and more specifically within the BTC.

The content included in the BTC can be briefly summed up. It has been organised based on Piankoff and Jacquet-Gordon's (1974) classification and denomination. Element I is an introductory text to the composition. Element II consists of introductory texts to each of the twelve caverns. Element III contains the most important information about the divinities: their names (Element IIIa), vignettes (Element IIIb) and numbers (Element IIIc), which allude to the members of each group of deities. Finally, Element IV is composed of the offering formulae and offering texts. The latter mention the benefits received as counterpart for the performed offering ritual. The specific information about certain groups of gods is only included in Element III, as the offering texts related to them (Element IV) differ from one source to another.

1. | Names

The cavern deities are organised in many groups depending on the cavern with each of these groups containing a different number of members. There are groups with only one god, but others include many more divinities (e.g. the sixth group from the 10th Cavern has thirty-one members). For this reason, their names are generally applied to groups and the individual denominations are not known.³ Their divine

identity works generally as groups of supernatural beings.

1. 1. | 8th Cavern – Group 3

The name (Element IIIa) of the third group of gods of the 8th Cavern may be generalised as *h3(y)wt r^c* “Those who mourn for Re”, although some divergences in certain sources occur (figs. 1 and 2):

teO: *h3(y)wt r^c*

Those (fem.) who mourn for Re.

pCI: *h3yw(t) r^c*

Those (fem.) who mourn for Re.

pBM I: *hwywt⁴ r^c d=sn jw snw n wsjr NN mj šmsw n(y) r^c htp=f*

Those (fem.) who strike (themselves for) Re. May they grant that offerings come to the Osiris [of] NN as [they come to] the followers of Re at his sunset.

pH: *hwywt⁵ r^c shtp(w) ntrw n(j)m(yw) dw3t d=sn wsjr NN m3^c-hrw htp m šmsw n(y) r^c*

Those (fem.) who strike (themselves for) Re, who appease the gods who are in the Duat. May they grant that the Osiris [of] NN, justified, be in peace among the followers of Re.

pM: *hf3ywt r^c shtp(w) ntrw (j)m(yw) dw3t d=sn jn (...) 4(?) w(...) wsjr NN m3^c-hrw n w3dj^t m3^c-hrw m htp m šmsw n(y) r^c jrwt m jmn(y)t m-hnw nšr(?) pt twt s3=j(?) gb tp(y) jt j3w jr(w) m(?)*

Those (fem.) who render homage to Re, who appease the gods who are in the Duat. May they grant (...) that the Osiris [of] NN justified of Wadyet (Aphroditopolis) be in peace in the following of Re, and [be the one who makes] actions as the daily of-

³ The only exception occurs in the version of the temple of Hathor in Dendara where in some cases the specific name of each deity is written (Méndez Rodríguez 2017a: 685). An example will be detailed below.

⁴ Quirke's (2013: 408) translation is “The clapping women of Ra”.

⁵ Cf. *hw3: Wb III: 50.2-4*.

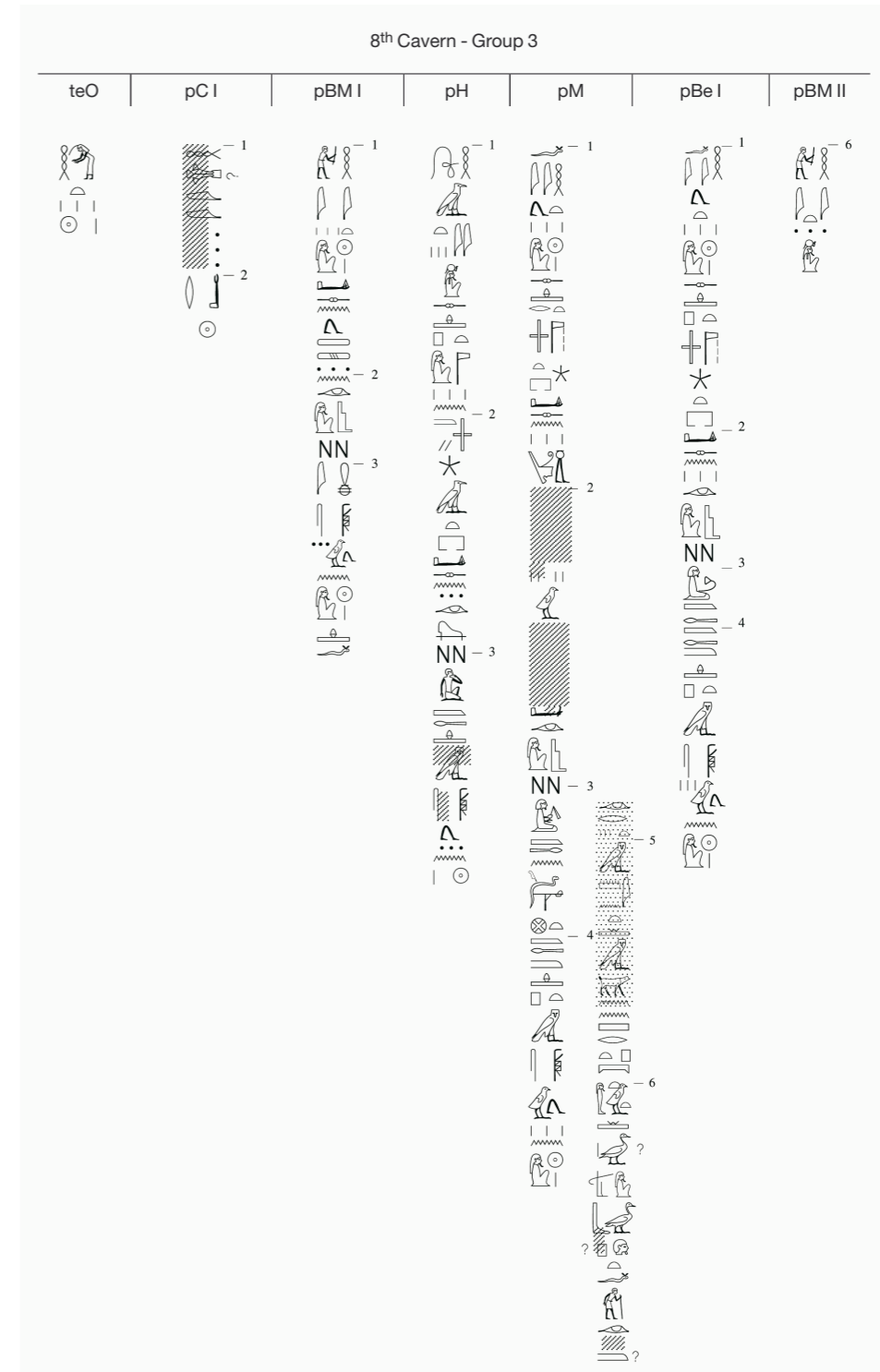
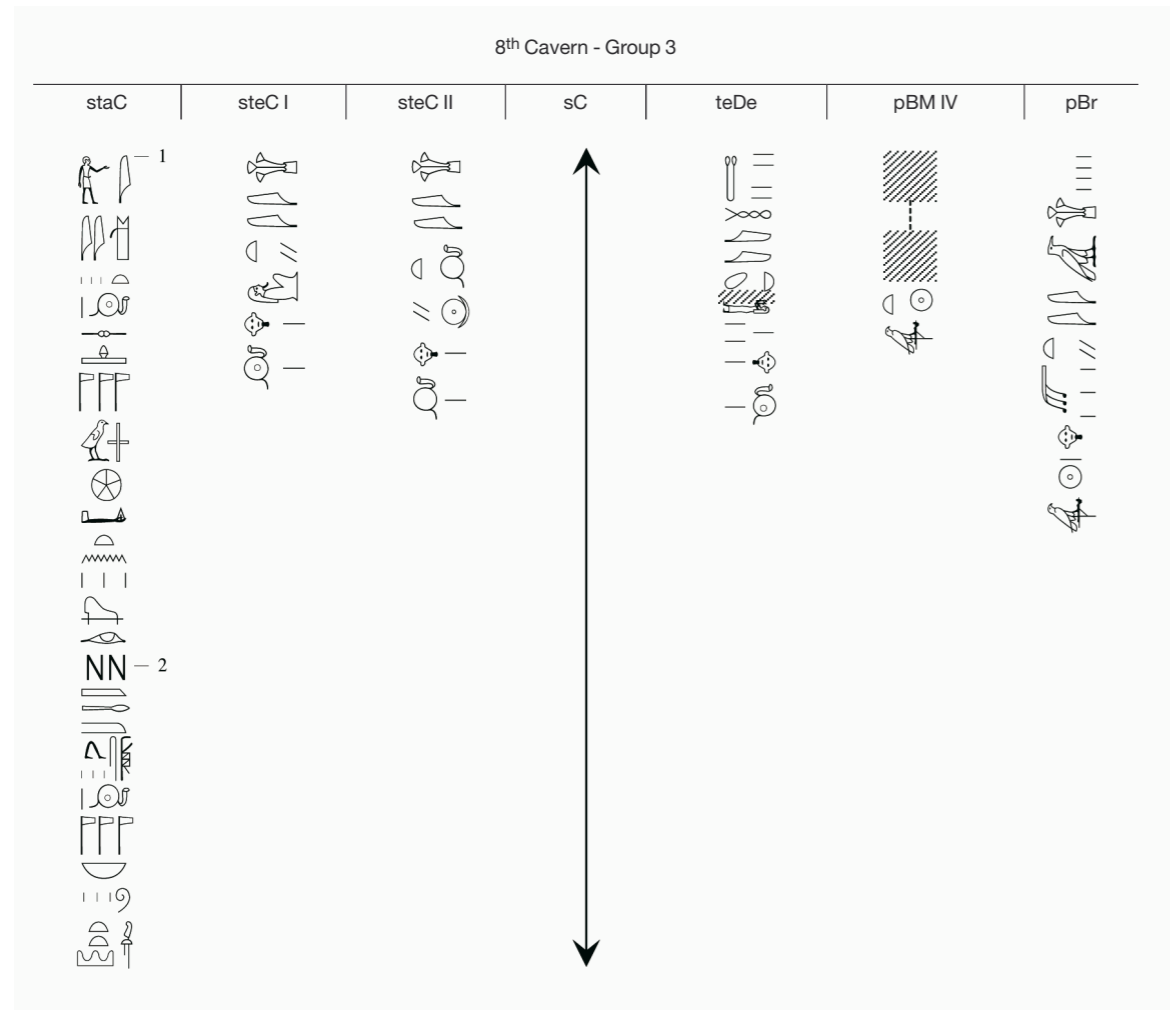


Figure 1. Names of the cavern gods. Group 3, 8th Cavern (1/2).

Figure 2. Names of the cavern gods. Group 3, 8th Cavern (2/2).

ferings inside(?)⁶ [and] expel(?)⁷ from the sky the image of my son Geb who is the leader(?) of the father of the eldest(?) who makes(?)...⁸

pBe I: *h3ywt r^c shtp(w) ntrw(j)m(yw) dw3t d=sn wsjr NN < m3^c-hrw >*⁹ *m htp m šmsw n(y) r^c*

Those (fem.) who render homage to Re, who appease the gods who are in the Duat. May they grant that the Osiris [of] NN, justified in peace, be in the following of Re.

pBM II: *hwywt r^c*

⁶ The sentence may be incomplete at this point due to a supposed lack of a complement.

⁷ This translation does not seem totally appropriate in this context. Furthermore, the verb *nš* should use the preposition *hr* (from) (Faulkner 1988 [1962] –henceforth *FCD*–: 140).

⁸ Incomplete sentence.

⁹ *m3^c-hrw* is erroneously written twice.

Those (fem.) who strike (themselves for) Re.

staC: *j hnywt r^c shtp(w) ntrw(j)m(yw) dw3t d=tn wsjr NN m3^c-hrw m šmsw r^c ntrw nbw jmntt*

Oh Householders¹⁰ of Re, those who appease the gods who are in the Netherworld, may they grant that the Osiris [of] NN, justified, be in the following of Re and of the gods, the Lords of the west.

steC I: *h3yty hr r^c*

The two (deities) (fem.) who mourn for Re.

steC II: *h3ywt hr r^c*

Those two (deities) (fem.) who mourn for Re.

teDe: *4 h(3)ywt hr r^c*¹¹

4 (deities): Those (fem.) who mourn for¹² Re.

pBM IV: (...) *r^c*

(...) Re.

pBr: *4 h3ywt hr r^c*¹³

4 (deities): Those (fem.) who mourn for Re.

Two main variations from these deities' names are “Those (fem.) who mourn for Re” and “Those (fem.) who strike (themselves for) Re”. While the first one was copied at least in three sources (teO, pC I, teDe) with a little variation in the number of members in steC I and steC II the second one is attested in two papyri (pBM

I and pBM II) as well as in pH, which is slightly different. The original name is also displaced by the one from the sixth group of the 8th Cavern in two other manuscripts (pM and pBeI). A different name was introduced in staC beginning with a vocative. Additional information is the number of group members (Element IIIc) included in some sources (teDe and pBr).

The denomination of the group of deities presents them mainly as Re's mourners. The verb *h3j* (𓂏𓂏𓂏) (*Wb* III: 6.10–7.4) is often translated as “mourn” and generally related to a real or mythical funerary context.¹⁴ When applied to someone, determinatives as *Mu 15^{14bis} (𓂏𓂏) (palms inwards), (𓂏𓂏) (palms outwards),¹⁵ A28 (𓂏) and *B115 (𓂏) are sometimes added. Diamond-Reed states that the verb *h3j* may no longer be classified as a mourning word due to several reasons (orthography, genre of sources, contextual setting... etc.).¹⁶ Its main determinative A28 (𓂏) depicts a man with upraised arms which may be more associated to an act of rejoicing.¹⁷ The action of *h3j* is not synonymous with mourning but is related to mourning because of the contexts in which this term appears.¹⁸ She suggests that *h3j* may be better translated as “transport”, that is, to ritual-

¹⁰ Piankoff and Jacquet-Gordon 1974: 56; *Wb* III: 102.20.

¹¹ Leitz 2002-2003 –henceforth *LGG*–: V 9.

¹² Cauville (1997c: 157) translated it as “with” (lit. “avec”) surely because the solar deity is depicted in front of the goddesses.

¹³ *LGG* V 9.

¹⁴ TLA 100650; *FCD* 160; Hannig 2003: 754 {19261-19262, 19264}; Hannig 2006: 1583 {19261-19263}. This concept has also been treated by Gardiner (1955), Green (1983: 35) and more recently analysed in detail by Diamond-Reed (Diamond-Reed 2008, Diamond 2010). I thank Kenneth Griffin for these references.

^{14 bis} Codes of hieroglyphic signs not included in Gardiner's sign list are taken from Visualglyph numbering and preceded by an asterisk.















¹⁵ The codes from these signs are not mentioned since they were not originally included in Gardiner's list.




¹⁶ Diamond-Reed 2008.

¹⁷ The author also considers that “the A28 pose may demonstrate the elevation of the spiritual essence that would ascend toward the heavens and thus activate the revivification of the deceased. Or the upraised arms may represent the “mystical embrace” that refers the life force from one to another” (Diamond-Reed 2008: 180).

¹⁸ The author also asserts that “I have not found an instance where the word *h3i* appears in the caption of a scene depicting the traditionally recognizable mourners. Similarly, the people who do appear in the scenes featuring captions containing the word *h3i* do not perform any gesture other than that of the upraised arms (A28), except in

ly transport one in the sense of revivifying the deceased for the Afterlife, or transforming one from a physical being into a spiritual being.¹⁹

However, in the specific case of the cavern deities, the verb *h3j* is nominalised and *B115  appears just in teO as a phonetic sign.²⁰ The determinatives of *h3ywt* in other sources are *B122  (teDe) and D3  (pBr). The three signs (*B115, *B122 and D3) are clearly related to mourning. *B122  represents a standing woman with both hands raised before the face, as though covering it while weeping. The importance of the hair in the context of mourning²¹ is highlighted in the other two determinatives. Sign D3 , representing braids of hair, is included in other words related to bewail: *h3rt*, “widow”   (Wb III: 232, 2),²² *s3mt*, “mourning”   (Wb IV: 18, 10), *j3kb*, “mourn”   (Wb I: 34, 5–8) and *j3kby*, “mourner”   (Wb I: 34, 13) (see below the tenth group from the 11th Cavern). Finally, sign *B115  depicts a leaning woman with a lock of hair hanging in front of her, with her arms slightly outstretched and her palms downwards. The position of the arms can also be understood as a gesture meaning respect or submission.²³

The name of the third group from the 8th Cavern is different in three other sources: pBM I, pH and pBM II. The noun *h3yt* “mourner” has a variation as *hwyt*   (Wb III: 49, 19) including the sign D3  as a determinative. However, its absence in the texts from pBM I, pH and pBM II, together with the use of sign

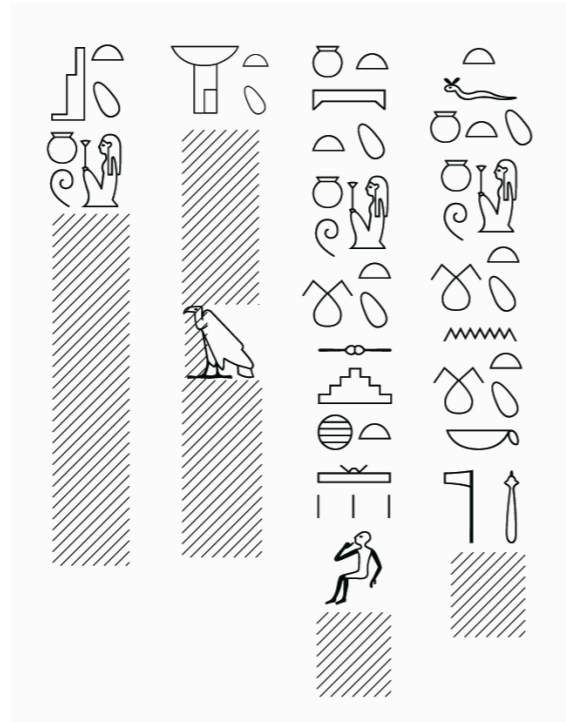





Figure 3. Names of each member of the third group of the 8th Cavern (teDe).

A24  as a phonogram leads to the consideration that the word written derives from the verb *hwj*   (Wb III: 46, 19), which means “to strike”. Striking themselves may be considered as an action practiced by the mourners in order to publicly display their grief.

The name written in other two sources, steC I and steC II, alludes to the group of deities as a couple of goddesses. This differs from the information shown in the rest of testimonies.

the case of the tomb of Qar. In this example the women have only one arm upraised” (Diamond-Reed 2008: 174). However, the verb *h3j* can be found in the captions of the third group from the 8th Cavern, whose deities show clearly mourning poses (see below section 2.1.).




19 Diamond-Reed 2008: 180.

20 It is remarkable that the vignette accompanying this text (see below) represent a different bodily gesture.

21 Valdesogo 2003, 2005.

22 Díaz Rivas 2012.

23 Wilkinson 2001: 21.

These depict in the vignettes or refer (with the numbers related to the illustrations) to a group composed of four divinities (teO, pC I, pBM I, teDe and pBr). Additionally, despite the feminine dual form written in steC I, a sign of a masculine squatting god A40  is used as determinative. The goddesses seems to have a celestial connotation in steC II, with solar and lunar disks included as determinatives: N6  and *N104 . This could point to some celestial connotations of the term *h3yty* during the Ptolemaic Period referring directly to the sun and the moon²⁴ or to certain deities related with them.²⁵

Leitz’s *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen (LGG)* does not record this group of deities in other religious compositions or funerary sources, thus suggesting that it is exclusive to the BTC.²⁶

Some sources (pH, pM, pBe I and staC) present a longer textual version, including what may seem a divine epithet. Its location after the name of the solar god can cast doubt on to whom it alludes, whether to Re or to the specific group of gods. Either way, it describes the effect caused to the rest of the cavern deities by his/their action: their appeasement.

Another textual extension is attested in some sources. In this case, it consists of an additional sentence inserted in some of the funerary sources (pBM I, pH, pM, pBe I and staC).

Information provided may not be especially relevant referring exclusively to this specific group of deities since these supplementary phrases were copied related to the name of different groups depending on the source.²⁷ These texts explain the pious request of a benefit carried out by the divinities to an Osiris so-and-so: offerings (pBM I) and appeasement and the granting of his/her presence between the divine followers of Re (pH, pM, pBe I).

The actual name of each divinity is never specified unless the group is composed of just one single member.²⁸ However, some exceptions exist due to the inclusion of several deities’ names in the BTC version depicted in the Osirian chapels from the temple of Hathor in Dendara²⁹ (teDe). The third group of the 8th Cavern is depicted in the first scene of the lowest register on the south wall of the first western chapel. Each member was associated in this context with the following names (fig. 3):³⁰

3st: “*nwj* [...]”

nbt-hwt: “[...]”

nwt: “*nwj tm3t sjr jhwt* [...]”

tfnt: “*nwj tm3t nt tm3t=k ntr* [...]”

Isis: “I am [...]”.

Nephthys: “[...]”.

Nut: “I am the mother who brings the offerings [...]”.

24 Esna IV, 400.


25 LGG V 7.

26 This group is included as *h3yty hr r* (LGG V 8), *h3ywt fdwt hr r* (LGG V 9), *h3ywt hr r* (LGG V 9) and *hwyt r* (LGG V 56).

27 A similar situation applies to the offering texts (Element IV), which have a different location related to different groups of divinities depending on the source. For this reason these texts are not explanatory and have not been included in this research as their information can also be applied to other groups of caverns deities.

28 This occurs in twenty-three cases of the total sixty-three groups of divinities.

29 For the BTC in this context cf. Méndez Rodríguez 2017a.

30 Cauville 1997a (Dendara X/1): 292; 1997b (Dendara X/2): 148, 154, 159, 170; 1997c: 157; 1997d: 145. This text has been collated with Cauville’s publication. As a result, a sign H8  as a determinative of the goddess Tefnut was found missing and therefore included.

Tefnut: “I am the mother of your mother, great god [...]”.

The identity given to the goddesses may be clearly understood in the Osirian context of the chapels. Isis, Nephthys, Nut and Tefnut have a very close family relationship with Osiris. They are, respectively, his sister-wife, sister, mother and grandmother.³¹ Of them, Isis and Nephthys are commonly exhibited in many scenes fulfilling their role as the *djerety* or “two kites”, the mythical mourners who bewail Osiris and also the deceased identified with him.³² Nevertheless, distinctive gestures performed by these goddesses in abundant representations have not been attested in this context, as will be further discussed below.

1.2. | 8th Cavern – Group 5

The name of the fifth group from the 8th Cavern varies in a lesser extent compared to the previous group (figs. 4 and 5):

teO: *nnyw*

The Tired Ones (masc.).

pC I: *nnyw*






The Tired Ones (masc.).

pBM I: *nn(y)w d=sn n nhm wsjr NN m wsht m3^cty*

The Tired Ones (masc.). May they grant that the Osiris [of] NN dance with joy³³ in the Broad Hall of the Two Maats.

³¹ Méndez Rodríguez 2017a: 685.

³² Seeber 1980: 445; Volokhine 2008: 176-182.

³³ FCD 135: *dance for joy(?)*. In the *Wb* II: 286.1-2 the determinatives are similar to Faulkner’s publication A24  and D54  but offer a different meaning. Piankoff and Jacquet-Gordon (1974: 57) translate the verb *nhm* as *pass through*, surely due to the determinative D54 . The verb *nhm* when its determinative is A2  or A26  means to cheer, rejoice or shout for joy (Hannig (2006: 1308 {15979}): jubeln, jauchzen). Perhaps Faulkner’s translation adds a connotation of movement and joy that could require the verb translation.

³⁴ *Wb* V: 252.14.

³⁵ *nfrw* was mistakenly written instead of *hrw*.

³⁶ *m3^c-hrw* is erroneously written twice.

pH: *nn(y)w q3(w) tw[r](?) hrw d=sn wn wsjr NN m3^c-hrw] mm (j)m(y)w dw3t*

The Tired Ones (masc.) with high-pitched and respectful(?)³⁴ voices. May they grant that the Osiris [of] NN, justified, be among those who are in the Netherworld.

pM: *nn(y)wt q3(wt) d(j)w(t) 3t <hrw>³⁵ d=sn wn tp sn jn hntk wsjr NN m3^c-hrw jmnt w3st... smrw... m[m] (j)m(y)w dw3t jt nḥ n šms(w) n(y)... smr... mry=j(?)*

The Tired Ones (fem.) with high-pitched shrieks and loud(?) voices. May they grant that (...) the Osiris [of] NN, justified of the west of Waset (Thebes) be among those who are in the Netherworld [as] the father who lives in the following of...

pBe I: *nn(y)wt q3(wt) d(j)w(t)(?) 3t hrw d=sn wn wsjr NN <m3^c-hrw>³⁶ nb jm3ḥ m htp mm (j)m(y)w dw3t*

The Tired Ones (fem.) with high-pitched shrieks and loud(?) voices. May they grant that the Osiris [of] NN, justified, be a possessor of veneration together with those who are in the Netherworld.

pBM II: *nnyw*

The Tired Ones (masc.).

staC: *j nn(y)w q3w tw[r](?) [s]htp(w) hrw d=tn wn wsjr NN m3^c-hrw m nb 3wt m jmnt m-b3ḥ ntr 3*

Oh Tired Ones (masc.) with high-pitched, respectful and appeasing(?) voices! May you grant that the Osiris [of] NN, justified, be a possessor of gifts in the west before the great god.

steC I: *4 nn(y)w*

4 (gods): The Tired Ones (masc.).

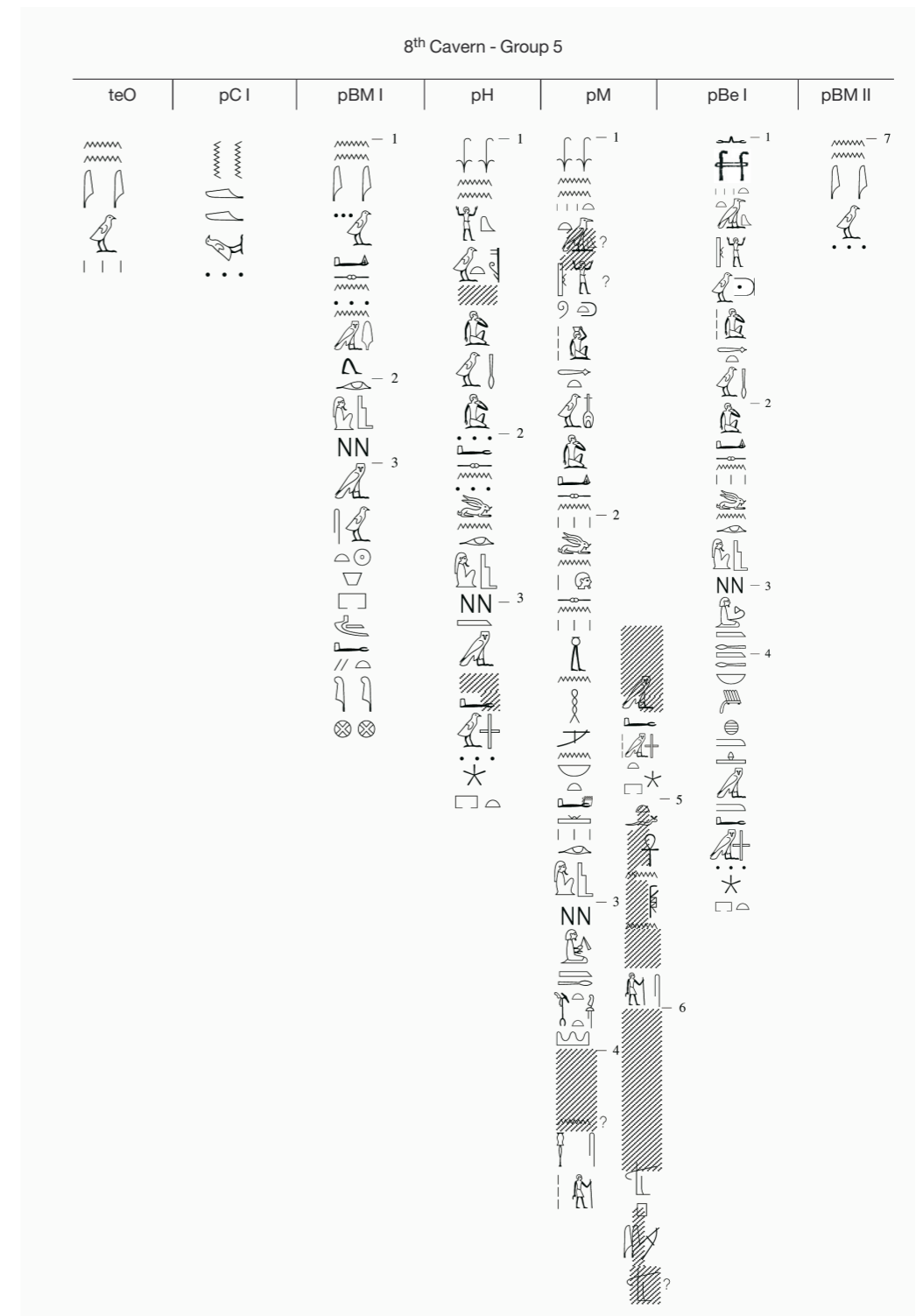


Figure 4. Names of the cavern gods. Group 5, 8th Cavern (1/2).

sC: *nnyw*³⁷

The Tired Ones (masc.).

teDe: Omitted.

pBM IV: *4 nnyw q3(w) hrt(?)*







4 (gods): The Tired Ones (masc.) with high-pitched(?) (...)

pBr: *4 nnyw*

4 (gods): The Tired Ones (masc.).

Several variations between these texts can be also observed, including a gender change in some sources. While the vast majority of the texts present a masculine group of gods (*nm(y)w*: *LGG IV 249–250*), two of them include a feminine version (pM and pBe I; *nm(y)wt*: *LGG IV 250*). This contrasts with the gender shown in the vignettes (see below), where the majority depict goddesses. This may indicate that the final *-t* of the feminine gender was not added in the texts or there was some confusion during the transmission process.³⁸ The only source where text and vignette gender were copied accordingly in masculine is pC I, the hitherto oldest attested source,³⁹ which might be meaningful. Perhaps the feminine version in pM and pBe I's texts was a correction due to the linked illustration depicting goddesses. While the masculine version of the name (*nnyw*) has been found in several other religious compositions as the Coffin Texts, the Book of Going forth by Day, the Book of Gates or the Books of Breathing,⁴⁰ the feminine counterpart has only been found in the BTC.⁴¹

Other minor changes attested are a vocative inclusion before the gods' name (staC) and the number of members (Element IIIc: in steC I, pBM IV and pBr). This annotation of the members' number pointing to a group of four divinities matches with the information provided by other sources (teO, pC I and pBM I).

The only source including a relevant sign for its semantic analysis is steC I. The rest do not add any determinative at all. In steC I the sign  may be used as a variant of A7  as a phonetic sign. The similarity in the bodily pose, mainly the arms, of both signs suggests a similar meaning. The A7 sign is mostly used as a determinative in words related to weariness or tiredness, such as *wrd*  “tire, grow weary” (*Wb I*: 337–338), *wrdw*  “weariness” (*Wb I*: 338, 9), *bdš*  “become faint, weak, exhausted” (*Wb I*: 487) and *gnn*  “be soft, weak” (*Wb V*: 174–175).⁴²

Certain sources display a longer textual version through the addition of several words. These allude to the vocal sounds the deities produce,⁴³ that is, highly-pitched shrieks. Their voices are also described as loud (lit. great), respectful and probably appeasing which may be explained by some references from another cosmographic composition, the Book of the Hidden Chamber (better known as Amduat).

In the upper register from the Second Hour a group of deities and their relationship with the solar god are described as follows:

jn hwt=sn sbb sw m-ht wd=fn=sn mdw
jn hrtw=sn sšm sw r=sn

³⁷ This name is attested twice in the sarcophagus: in its eastern and western sides.

³⁸ For a general approach to the transmission of the composition, see Méndez-Rodríguez 2017b. This issue has been extensively developed in Méndez-Rodríguez 2016.

³⁹ It is a funerary papyrus (pCairo CG 24742 –J.E. 34001–) found in the tomb of Amenhotep II (KV 34). Cf. Daressy 1902: 160, 184–189, pls. XLI–XLII; Piankoff and Jacquet-Gordon 1974: pls. 10–16.

⁴⁰ *LGG IV 249*.

⁴¹ *LGG IV 250*.

⁴² Gardiner 1988 [1927]: 442.

⁴³ For some examples of sounds in Netherworld Books, see Manassa 2008.

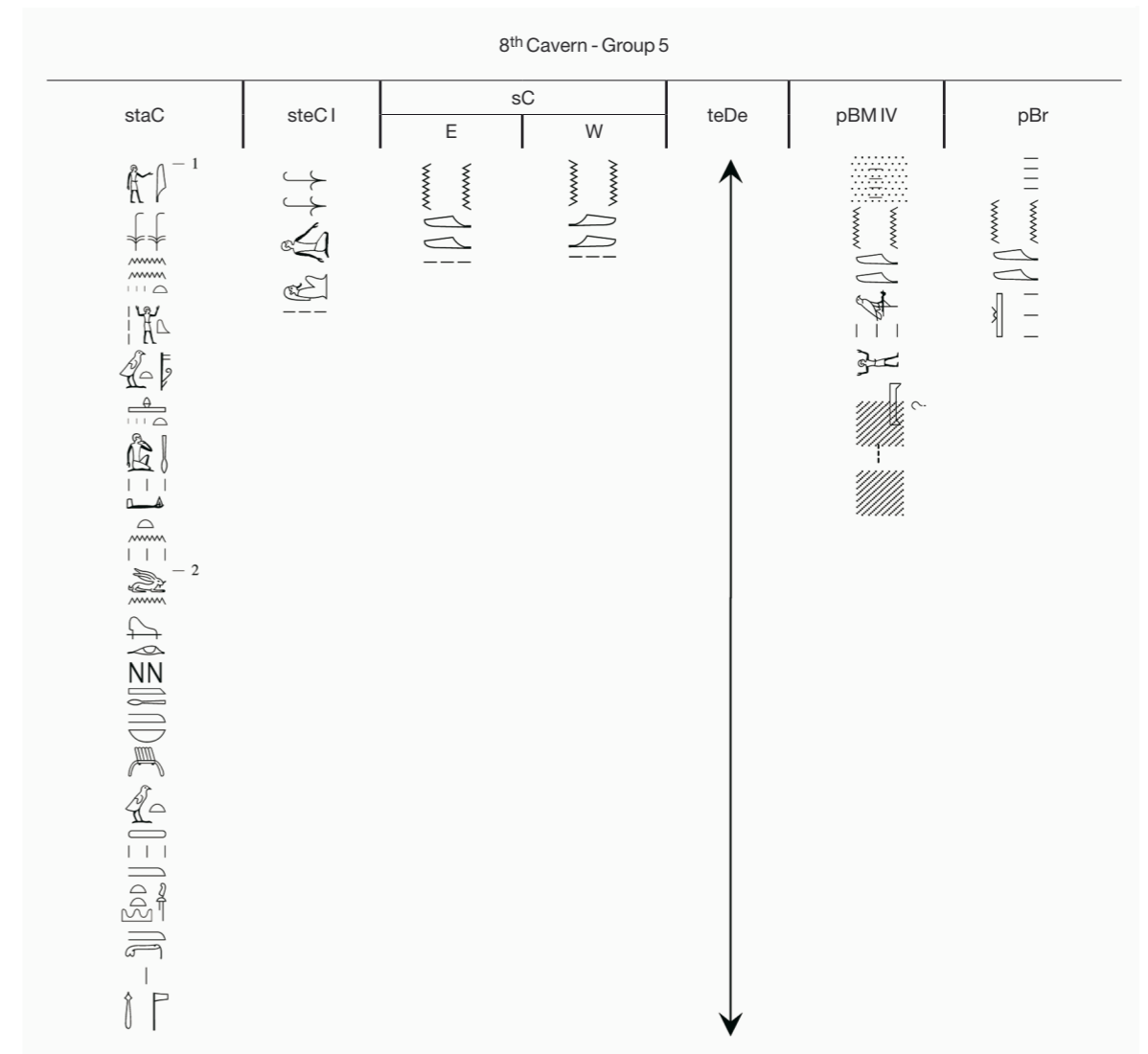


Figure 5. Names of the cavern gods. Group 5, 8th Cavern (2/2).

jn hwt=sn sbb sw m-ht wd=fn=sn mdw

They adore this great god [Re] after he has reached them.

It is their voices that guide him to them.

It is their wailing that accompanies him, after he has given his orders to them.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Warburton, Hornung and Abt 2007: 56.

The Egyptian Underworld is a place where many supernatural beings dwell in complete darkness. In this cosmographic context, the deities' voices may provide guidance in order to be found by the sun-god. His light over them only lasts until Re continues his way through

the Netherworld, as one text from the middle register of the Eighth Hour from the Book of the Hidden Chamber explains:

ntr pn dwj=f r=sn m-ht spr=f sn
sn dwj=sn n ntr pn
m hrw=sn nj srw š t3w
ntr pn hkn=f m hrw=sn
jr m-ht ʿpp=f hr=sn h3phr=st kkw

This god [Re], he calls to them after he has reached them,
 and they do too, they call to this god
 with their voices of mysterious rams.
 This god, he is joyful at their voices.
 But after he has passed by them, darkness envelops them.⁴⁵

In the BTC context, an additional sentence only included in some sources may relate the deities of the fifth group from the 8th Cavern with different aspects: being in the company of the inhabitants of the Netherworld (pH, pM) and being venerated like them (pBe I), joyfully dancing in the Broad Hall of the two Maats supposedly through ensuring the justification of the deceased (pBM I), and being equipped with gifts in the west before the great god (staC).

1.3. | 11th Cavern – Group 10

The denomination of the tenth group of the 11th Cavern shows even more homogeneous information than the two previous groups (figs. 6 and 7):

⁴⁵ Warburton, Hornung and Abt 2007: 265.

⁴⁶ LGG III 136.

⁴⁷ Allen (1974: 162): “such as it is made for”.

⁴⁸ The end seems to be corrupt and has not been translated.

⁴⁹ East side of the sarcophagus.

⁵⁰ West side of the sarcophagus.

teO: *psdt j(3)kbyw*

The ennead of mourners (masc.).

pC I: *psdt j(3)kbywt*⁴⁶

The ennead of mourners (fem.).

pBM I: *psdt j3kby(w) d=sn j(3)kb n wsjr NN mj jrt n wsjr*

The ennead of mourners (masc.). May they grant mourning to the Osiris [of] NN as it is done⁴⁷ for Osiris.

pH: *psdy(?) j[3]k[byw](?) j3kb(?)=tn (...) wsjr NN s3 NN mjtt n wsjr*

The two(?) enneads of mourners(?). May you (pl.) mourn the Osiris [of] NN son of NN like for Osiris.

pM: Omitted.

pBM III: *psdt j(3)kbyw j3kb=tn n wsjr(?) NN m3^c-hrw (...)*

The ennead of mourners (masc.). May you (pl.) mourn the Osiris [of] NN, justified (...)

pBM V: *psdt j(3)kbyw wsjr j(3)kb=tn wsjr NN m3^c-hrw mj jrt n <wsjr> m hr(y)t-ntr*

The ennead of mourners (masc.) of Osiris. May they mourn the Osiris [of] NN, justified, as it is done for Osiris.

pHab: *psdt j3kby[w] wsjr j3kb wsjr NN m3^c-hrw... mj jr wsjr tn(?) tn(?)*

The ennead of mourner[s] (masc.) of Osiris. May [you] mourn the Osiris [of] NN, justified, as it is done [for] Osiris...⁴⁸

pBM II: Omitted.

sC: *psdt j3kbyw*⁴⁹

The ennead of mourners (masc.).

*j3kbyw*⁵⁰

The mourners (masc.).

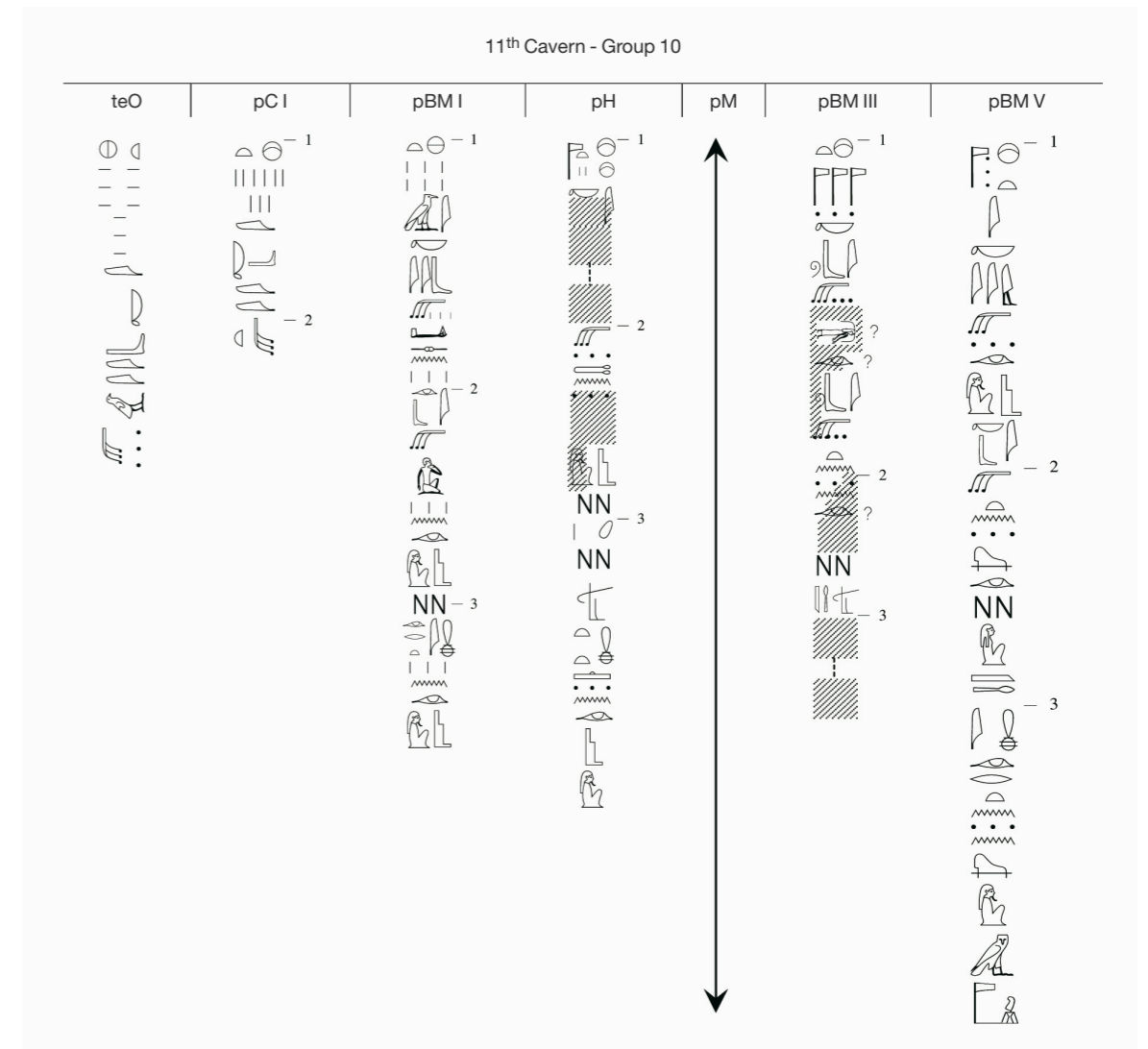


Figure 6. Names of the cavern gods. Group 10, 11th Cavern (1/2).

teDe: Omitted.

pBM IV: Omitted.

pBr: Omitted.

The name of this group of deities (*psdt j(3)kbyw*) is hitherto only attested in the BTC.⁵¹ Three main

textual variations occur in this case, with gender change perhaps the most visible one. While seven of the sources have a masculine version of the noun *j3kbyw* (teO, pBM I, pBM III, pBM V, pHab, sC), only one includes the final *-t* indicating the feminine (pC I). Perhaps this ending was

⁵¹ LGG III 136.

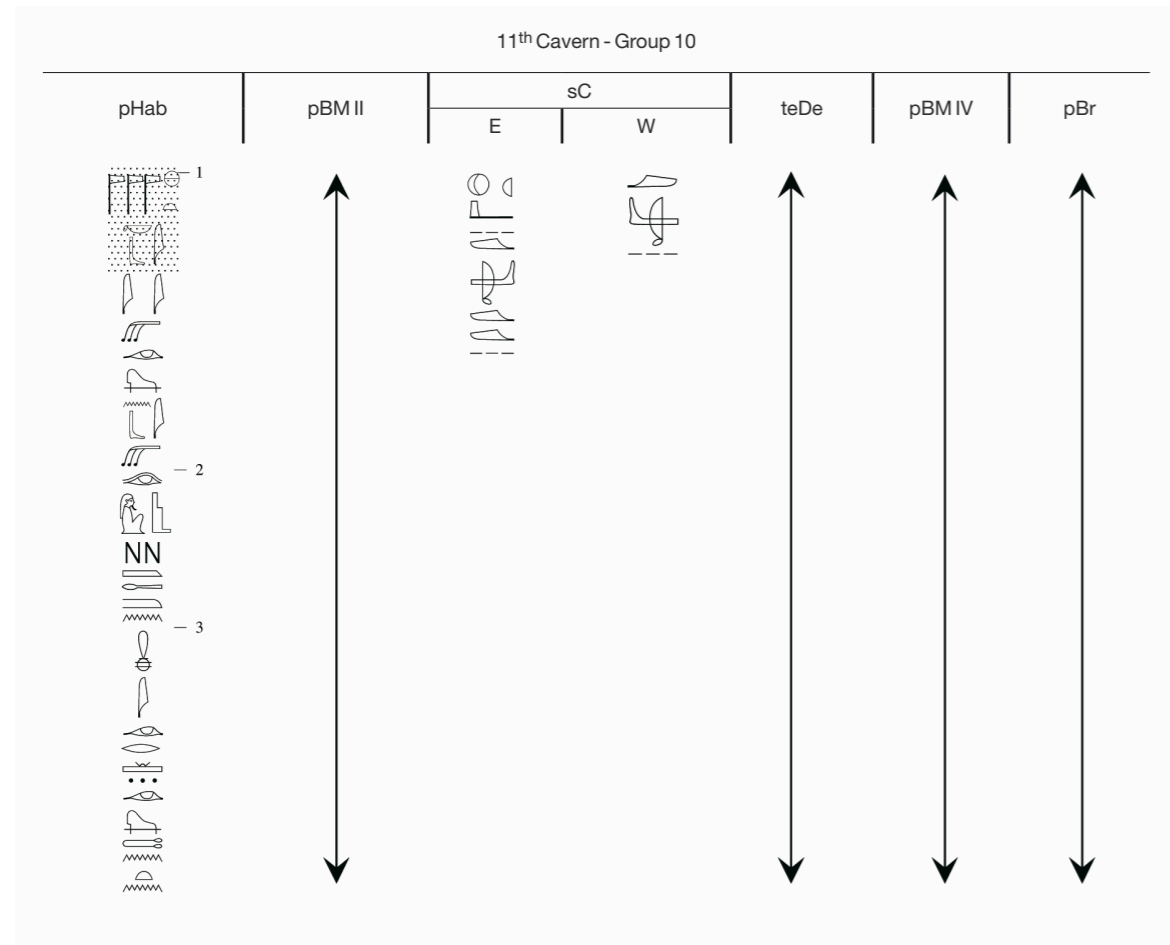



Figure 7. Names of the cavern gods. Group 10, 11th Cavern (2/2).

omitted and manifested through the vignette depiction (see below). Additions were also made in a couple of sources including the name of Osiris at the end (pBM V and pHab). Additionally, in one of the sources the reference to the ennead was omitted (version in the west side of sC).

As previously mentioned, the usual determinative for the term *j3kbyw* is the sign representing hair (D3 , see above). Another determinative depicting a goddess in a horizontal position may have been written in pBM III, but this is uncertain due to the poor state of conservation of the papyrus.

The extension of the text through the addition of a sentence informs us that these grieving deities grant mourning for the deceased as was done for Osiris (pBM I, pH, pBM III, pBM V, pHab). In this context, the previously mentioned addition of Osiris' name to the group of deities in pBM V and pHab can be better understood.

The number of group members is not explicitly included in any textual version. However, the term *psdt* means an ensemble of nine deities as it was indeed depicted in teO (see below).

Mourning is attested in other Netherworld Books as, for example, the Book of the Hidden

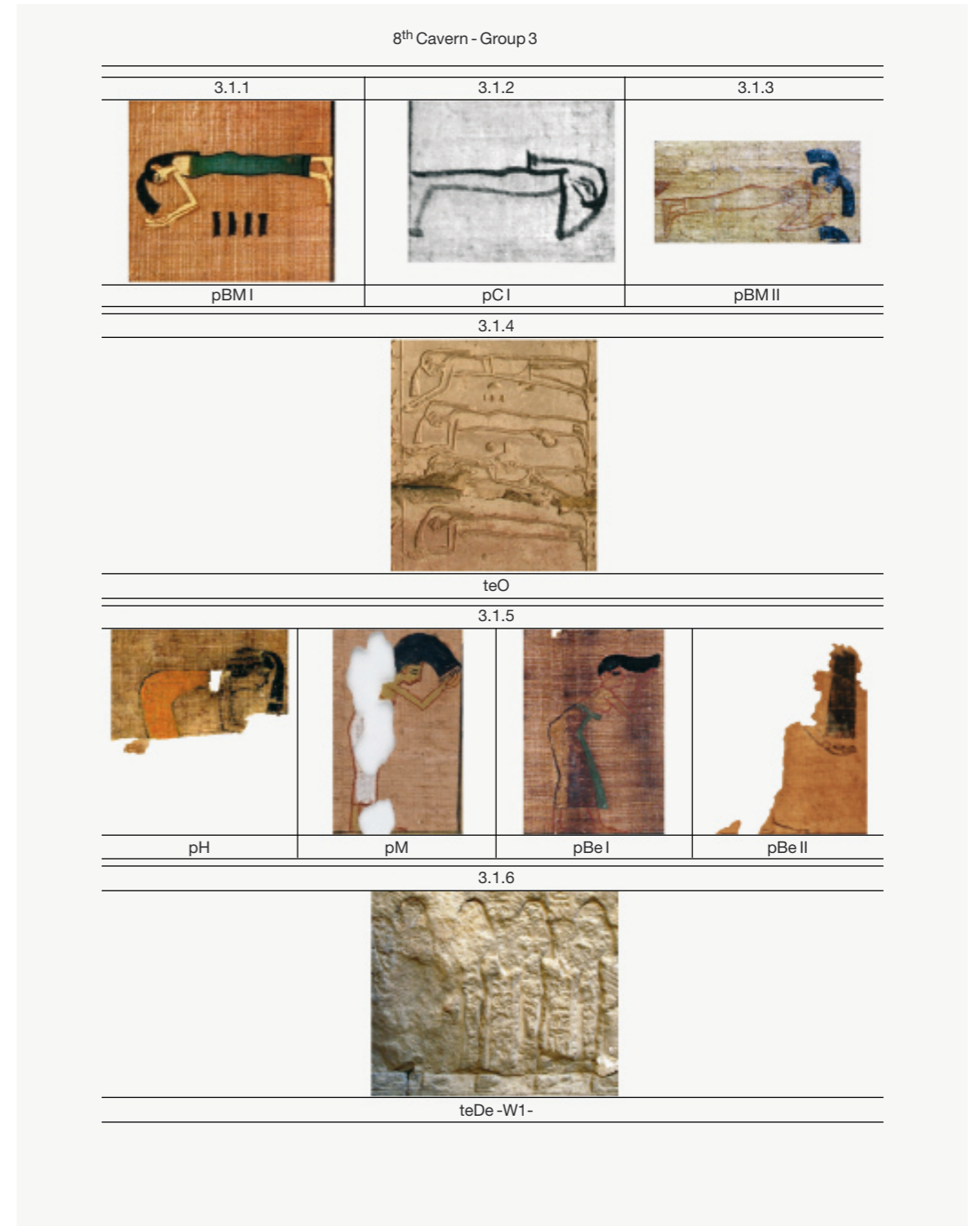


Figure 8. Vignettes iconographic typology. Group 3, 8th Cavern.

Chamber related to the passing of the sun-god. In this sense, in the upper register of the Second Hour⁵² it is mentioned that the deities:

*jw=sn hwt=sn n ntr pn*⁵³
*jw=sn j3kb=sn n=fm-ht*⁵⁴ *pp=fhr=sn*

They wail because of this great god,
 They mourn him after he has passed by them.⁵³

2. | Vignettes

Cosmographic information in the BTC is conveyed as in other Books of the Netherworld, not only through the names of the inhabitants of the caverns of the *Duat* but also through their image. Illustrations of the cavern deities also provide relevant information for an iconographic analysis.

Vignettes have been classified by the author as part of his PhD thesis according to types and subtypes. While the former consists of a noteworthy variation from each other, the latter represents just slight modifications in certain details. This information has been organised through a numerical code including two digits: the first one is the type and the second the subtype (Eg. 1.3). Not all the groups of deities present more than one type.

Vignettes (Element IIIb) related to the three groups of gods selected for their analyses seem to represent a mourning gesture. A description of each vignette will be provided below, taking into account the pose of the whole body, its orientation, the number of hanging hair locks and the position of the hands and their orientation.

2. 1. | 8th Cavern – Group 3

The illustration related to the third group of deities from the 8th Cavern is depicted with a certain point of variability depending on the source (fig. 8). A brief description of the vi-

gnettes based on their typology is provided as follows:

1.1: Horizontal goddess, oriented to the left, face downwards, a lock of hair hanging in front of her face, hands raised in front of her lock of hair, palms inwards (pBM I).

1.2: Horizontal goddess, oriented to the right, face downwards, hands raised, hands raised in front of her head, palms inwards(?) (pC I).

1.3: Horizontal goddess, oriented to the right, face downwards, two locks of hair one forward and the other backward hands raised in front of her head, palms outwards (pBM II).

1.4: Four horizontal male and female gods, oriented to the left, face downwards, one lock of hair hanging in front of their faces, hands raised in front of their lock of hair, palms inwards (teO).

1.5: Leaning goddess, oriented to the right, her hair hanging in front of her face, hands raised in front of her hair, palms inwards (pH, pM, pBe I and pBe II). Inclination of the deities differs on the vignettes from different sources.

1.6: Four standing goddesses, oriented to the left, hands raised in front of their heads, palms outwards (teDe).

2. 2. | 8th Cavern – Group 5

The vignettes from the fifth group of the 8th Cavern show slight differences within the same range of meaning related to mourning (fig. 9). A description is given as:

1.1: (Four) horizontal goddess(es), oriented to the left, face(s) downwards, one lock of hair hanging in front of her/their face(s), hands raised in front of her/their lock of hair, palms inwards (pBM I, teO).

1.2: Mummified god, oriented to the right, face downwards, one lock of hair hanging in front of his face, hands raised and grasping his lock of hair (pC I).

1.3: Horizontal goddess, oriented to the right,

face downwards, two locks of hair one forward and the other backward, hands raised in front of her head, palms outwards (pBM II).

1.4: Leaning goddess, oriented to the right, her hair hanging in front of her face, hands raised in front of her hair, palms inwards (pH, pM, pBe I and pBe II(?)). Inclination of the deities differs in the vignettes from different sources.

1.5: Standing goddess, oriented to the right or left, one lock of hair hanging in front of her face, hands raised and grasping her lock of hair (sC –E– and sC –W–).

in front of her hair, palms inwards. Below her, another horizontal deity (goddess(?)), face downwards(?), his/her hair hanging in front of his/her face, arms next to the body (pV).

1.6: Horizontal goddess, oriented to the right, face downwards, two locks of hair one forward and the other backward, arms slightly outstretched before the body, palms facing down.

2.1: Standing mummified god, oriented to the right or left, hands raised almost in front of his head, palms outward (sC –E– and sC –W–).

3. | Discussion

Ancient Egyptian mourning rites are associated with a set of emotional public expressions. These ritualised emotions involve not only the participants in the funeral rites, but also a group of professional mourners. Different organised manifestations of affliction can be observed in this grief performance: postures and words of sadness, or noisy demonstrations (crying and shouting).⁵⁴ The selected groups of cavern deities show certain mourning features in their representations that deserve being analysed. Whereas some of them may seem similar to those displayed in depictions of common mourners, others are much more specific and with remarkable details. A comparative view will be provided below.

Cavern-deities related with mourning are masculine and feminine. Therefore, gender changes from one source to the other occur.⁵⁵ Additionally, the Osireion version (teO) presents a full-length illustration of the cavern

2. 3. | 11th Cavern – Group 10

The illustrations from the tenth group of the 11th Cavern are depicted showing small variations (fig. 10). A description is provided as:

1.1: Nine horizontal goddesses, oriented to the right, face downwards, one lock of hair hanging in front of their faces, hands raised in front of their locks of hair, palms inwards (teO).

1.2: Horizontal goddess, oriented to the right, face downwards, one hand raised in front of her face, palm inward (pC I).

1.3: Horizontal goddess, oriented to the right, face downwards, two locks of hair one forward and the other backward, hands raised in front of her frontal lock of hair, palms inward (pBM I).

1.4: Leaning goddess, oriented to the right, her hair hanging in front of her face, hands raised in front of her hair, palms inwards (pHab, pV).

1.5: Leaning goddess, oriented to the right, her hair hanging in front of her face, hands raised

⁵² Almost the same text is repeated in the lower register of the Second Hour (Warburton, Hornung and Abt 2007: 65) and in the lower register of the Third Hour (Warburton, Hornung and Abt 2007: 95).

⁵³ Warburton, Hornung and Abt 2007: 57.

⁵⁴ Volokhine 2008: 163.

⁵⁵ For example, whereas the vast majority of the sources depict goddesses, in pC I (fifth group of the 8th cavern) and sC (tenth group of the 11th cavern) gods were represented in the vignettes.

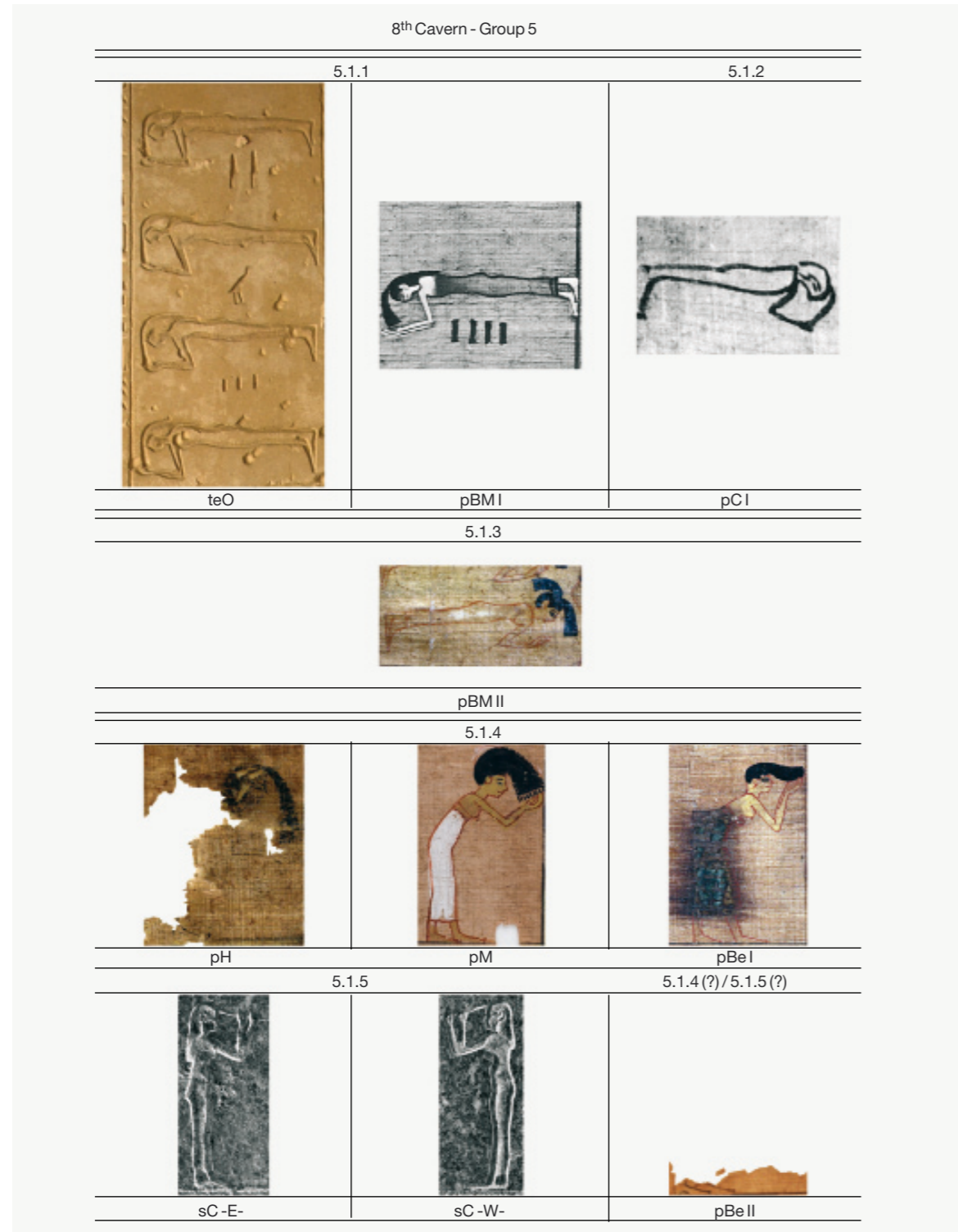


Figure 9. Vignettes iconographic typology. Group 5, 8th Cavern.

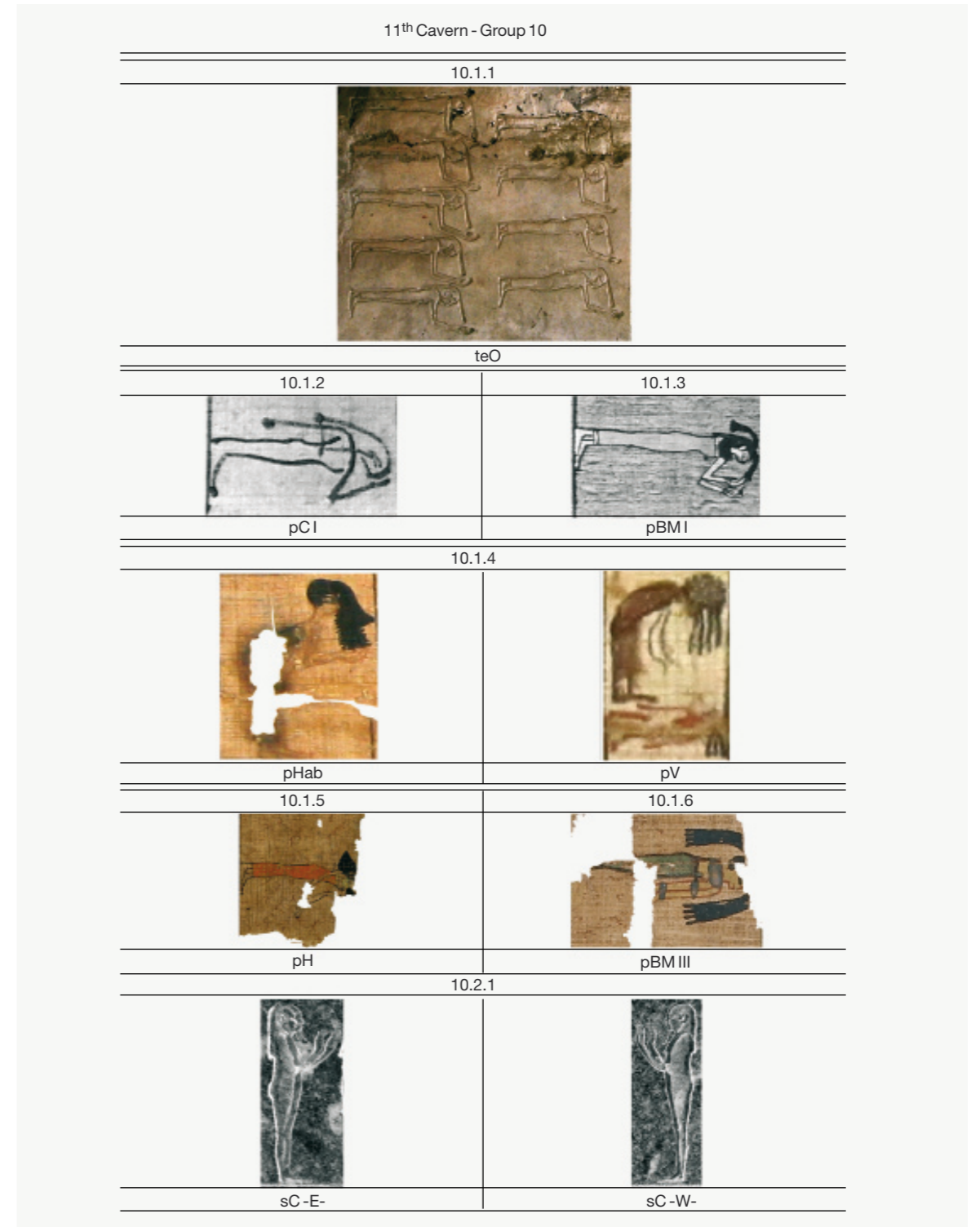


Figure 10. Vignettes iconographic typology. Group 10, 11th Cavern.

deities which allows seeing each of the divinities. In this sense it is remarkable that the third group of the 8th Cavern is shown as a combination of male and female divinities.⁵⁶

The clothing of professional mourners varies chronologically in their representation but generally it is quite traditional.⁵⁷ Werbrouck points out a general evolution.⁵⁸ During the Old Kingdom a tight dress with one or two straps was the most common outfit depicted. This was substituted at the beginning of the 18th Dynasty by a tight dress covering the body almost entirely until the forearms level. Later, the dress changes during the Ramesside Period with the uncovering the shoulders, looser and including plenty of folds. In the BTC vignettes, goddesses wear both New Kingdom models although in some sources the upper edge of the dress is not clearly visible and it is difficult to differentiate them.⁵⁹ Neck-high dresses allowing visible shoulders are portrayed in pBe I, pBM I, pBM II, pBM III, pH, pHab, and pM⁶⁰ and possibly pV. Dresses depicted are generally tight and do not include folds.⁶¹ This different typology is not related chronologically with the sources, as the tight dress until the neck is used in several of the oldest sources (pC I, teO) from the 18th-19th Dynasty, but it may also be represented in another more recent one from the 5-4th centuries BC (sC). The type of clothing

depicted in the vignettes may imply another common feature of professional mourners, as it is the breast exposure. This can be seen in a certain number of sources.⁶²

The colour of the outfit of the mourners is sometimes grayish-blue and not as white as the rest of the women's clothes portrayed in the surrounding scenes.⁶³ In the case of the cavern deities, their dresses present certain variability: white or whitish (pBM II and pM), bluish-green (pBM I), green (pBM III, pHab(?)), orange (pH) and yellow with green edges (pBe I).

Absence of accessories in order to show respect in a time of grief and constriction is also another feature from common mourners.⁶⁴ The cavern deities sometimes fit this description, depending on the source. All of them are barefoot, but in some papyri necklaces and bracelets are noticeable.⁶⁵ Being barefoot is common to the representation of human mourners and it is also shared by all the representations of the cavern gods.

Gesture constitutes one of the most remarkable features in the BTC vignettes. Beyond this and in general, it plays a relevant role in the non-verbal language in many aspects of the ancient Egyptian daily life. As Wilkinson (2001: 20) states "certainly no other aspect of iconographic symbolism is as widespread in Egypt

⁵⁶ For mourning manifestations analysed from a gender point of view *cf.* Sweeney 2001.

⁵⁷ Werbrouck 1938: 129.

⁵⁸ Werbrouck 1938: 129, figs. 65-68.

⁵⁹ This is the case for teO (groups 3 and 5 from the 8th Cavern) and the lack of details in pC does not allow us to discern which type the dress is.

⁶⁰ pV's vignette is not sure due to the bad quality of the photography available of this source.

⁶¹ The outfit of the group 5 of the 8th Cavern from pBe I may be an exception. However, the analysis is not conclusive due to the bad state of preservation of the vignette.

⁶² pBe I, pBe II, pBM II, pH, pM, and maybe pHab.

⁶³ Werbrouck 1938: 130-131.

⁶⁴ Werbrouck 1938: 128.

⁶⁵ Vignettes of the group 10 from the 11th cavern in pBM I and pBM III.

as the use of gestures to connote specific contextual meaning and significance". Gesture accompanies, complements and replaces verbal communication in both ritual and non-ritual contexts.⁶⁶

According to their origin, gestures may be natural, formalised or mimetic. While natural gestures are unconsciously employed, formalised ones are those consciously learned and used as part of a ritual behaviour. Emotional gestural expressions as weeping are natural in contrast to a formalised sequence of ritual movements. Mimetic gestures are a combination of both of them: they are consciously learned and employed, but to some extent mimic natural behaviour.⁶⁷

Authors as Brunner-Traut (1977: 575), Dominicus (1994) and Wilkinson (2001: 21) classified sorrow between the main areas of gesture usage, relating it with Egyptian concepts of sadness, bereavement or mourning (*h3j, qm3*). Although originally mourning gestures may be seen as natural, many Egyptian representations depicting these publicly displayed emotions are mimetic gestures of ritualised emotions. Different organised manifestations such as the poses, the words or expressions and noisy demonstrations (eg. yelling and weeping), gives as a result a meticulous grieving performance and a ritualisation of the involved emotions.⁶⁸

Funeral processions depicting professional mourners accompanying the deceased family show a catalogue of poses. The most frequently gesture is raising both arms before the head

in order to cover the face (as if weeping), placing them above or on top of the head while standing, sitting or squatting on the ground. Sometimes mourners throw dust upon themselves, partially undressed and, even, using gestural violence through the striking of their heads⁶⁹ or the pulling of their hair. There is indeed a wide range of positions of the arms related to mourning scenes for the dead, which have been typologically classified by Dominicus (1994: 67-69). Professional mourners are generally depicted with no specific attributes but are easily distinguished from other female figures because of their attitude and sometimes wearing very traditional clothing, as has been stated above.

Weeping as an emotional expression of intense grief is commonly found in depictions of professional mourners showing abundant tears.⁷⁰ However, this kind of manifestation was not included in the vignettes of the BTC. This may be due to the fact that it was considered inappropriate because of the context. While common mourners are depicted deeply bereaved in a public performance of a funerary procession related to the death of the deceased, cavern deities may be related with the regeneration and resurrection of the sun-god during his nightly journey, as will be further discussed below.

The pose of the whole body is somehow shared by the three groups of deities in some sources. While the position shown in several vignettes is horizontal, in others the deities are leaning.⁷¹ This horizontal position may be due

⁶⁶ Brunner-Traut 1977; Wilkinson 2001.

⁶⁷ Wilkinson 2001: 21-22.

⁶⁸ Volokhine 2008: 164.

⁶⁹ A similar information was recorded by Herodotus (Hdt. II, 85) before the deceased was mummified.

⁷⁰ Sales 2015-2016: 62.

⁷¹ Horizontal: pBM I, pBM II, pBM III, pC I and teO; Leaning: pBe I, pBe II, pHab and pM. Standing: sC and teDe. In pH, while the third group from the 8th cavern is shown leaning, the tenth group of the 11th cavern is depicted horizontally.

to the divine nature of the supernatural beings represented as it is shared with other groups: the fourth group of the 8th Cavern and the sixth group from the 10th Cavern (in this case facing upwards).⁷² This difference between a depiction of a human being and a deity is shown in pLondon BM EA 10010. While the cavern deities are in a horizontal pose, the deceased is standing and leaning forward (fig. 11).

Illustrations of the selected cavern deities exhibit a certain degree of diversity in their gestures. However, almost all poses seem to function within the same general range of mourning symbolism. These can be summed up in the following poses. The first one consists of the deity's hand before the head, as though covering the face weeping, which has only been attested once, in what is thought to be the oldest manuscript including the BTC (pC I; fig. 8 –pC I– and fig. 10 –pC I–).⁷³ This gesture is commonly found in common mourners and was called in Egyptian as *wj r hr* “arms against the face”, *hbs hnt* or *hbs hr* and *βm hr* “covering the face”.⁷⁴

The second pose consists of grasping a hair lock with one or both hands. This gesture is also found only twice in the sources⁷⁵ (fig. 9, –pC I and sC–), but it seems to be quite usual in the representations of professional mourners and it may be expressed as *nwn m sm3* “pulling the hair”.⁷⁶ It can also be found in other cosmographies, such as the Book of Caverns. In its second register of the second section a group of nine mourner deities, who are forms of Osiris, are depicted grasping their hair locks

with both hands.⁷⁷ The text related with these deities reads as follows:

O these nine gods, in mourning for Osiris, who weep over “He at the head of the Netherworld”. Behold, I pass near to you, I pass through your caverns. I call you, answer me! “He of the Netherworld” is satisfied with your voice, afflicted ones in the Netherworld, of hidden countenances, who wear the locks of hair, your voice addresses me while I call you, and I am satisfied with your invocations. It is you whom I enlighten, afflicted ones, and I render you satisfied with your sustenance. If you acclaim me you will live. If you rejoice on account of me, you will be exalted, and if you invoke “He at the head of the Netherworld”, and if you call “He whose name is hidden”, and if you conduct me in a way that I may pass near to you, then your souls will be protected, and I will cause you to be powerful by my rays after I have dispersed the darkness which weighs on you.

O these [nine] gods in mourning who are in the Netherworld, who are in the place of mystery, I pass through your caves to see the “One whose name is hidden”, to command the West, to pass through the mysterious Netherworld. May your souls come out, may your souls be exalted when I call them, for you are the weepers and the invokers who are in the Netherworld... in the West, who weep for Osiris, he at the head of the Netherworld, great in tears, Lords of Sustenance who guard the locks of hair in the Lands of the West. I have entered into the earth from which I came forth (at my first birth).⁷⁸

72 The vignettes from the third and the eighth group of the 12th cavern also show also a horizontal god surrounded by a serpent: in pBM I, pHab and pV they are facing downwards and in pC I, teO and sC facing upwards.

73 Group 3 from the 8th Cavern and group 10 from the 11th Cavern.

74 Dominicus 1994: 67, 70-71, 75.

75 This is the way the fifth group from the 8th Cavern is depicted in pC I and sC.

76 Dominicus 1994: 67, 72, 75.

77 Piankoff 1944: pl. X; Piankoff and Rambova 1954: 54 fig. 11, 59 fig. 11a; Hornung 1999 [1997]: 85, fig. 48; Werning 2011: pl. VIII.

78 Piankoff and Rambova 1954: 59-60.

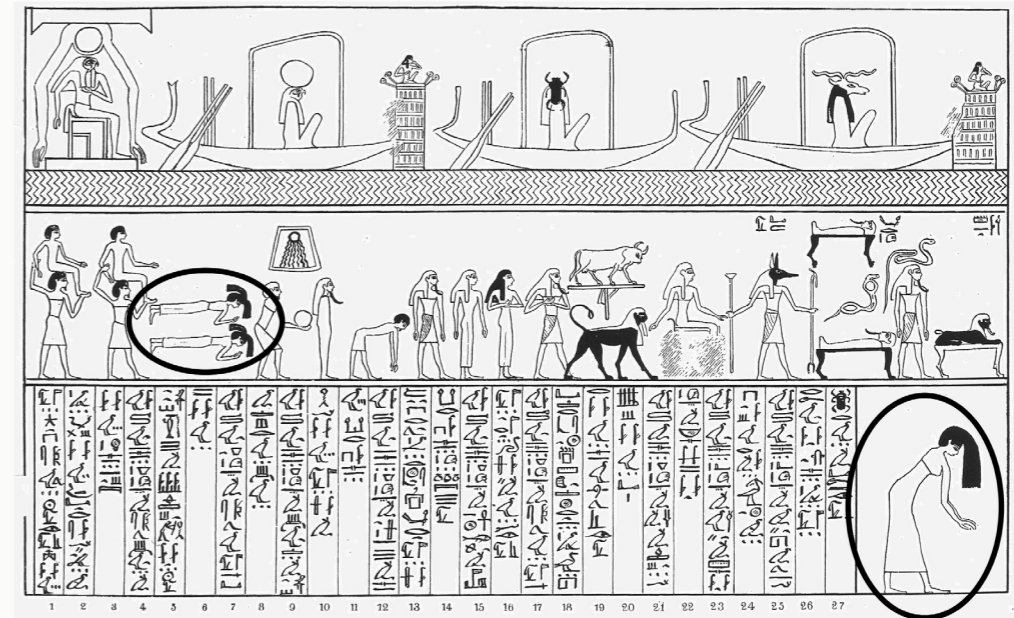


Figure 11. pLondon BM EA 10010 (pBM II; Naville 1886: pl. CLXXXV, modified by the author).

These mourners from the Book of Caverns weep for Osiris and satisfy him with their voices while they also summon and guide Re through the Netherworld. The solar deity in return protects, empowers, enlightens and provides life to them.

The third pose is called the *nwn* gesture.⁷⁹ It generally consists of leaning the body and covering the face with the hair or a lock of hair (fig. 8 –pBM I, pBM II, teO, pH, pM, pBe I, pBe II–; fig. 9 –teO, pBM I, pBM II, pH, pM, pBe I, pBe II(?)–; fig. 10 –teO, pBM I, pHab, pV, pH, pBM III–). Palms may be generally facing upwards almost touching the hair. However, some variability is shown in the vignettes from the BTC and palms may be depicted outwards (as an adoration gesture) or with out-

stretched arms facing downwards (as a reverence gesture). Caution is needed here as these iconographic variations may be due to the extent of the pose. In other words, vignettes may display independent poses (simple), or sequential gestures (complex) as a part of a series of movements performing different gestures. Further research is needed at this point. Similarly to the third variation of this pose, vignettes from some sources (pBe I and pM) illustrate the sixth group from the 8th Cavern called *hf(3)yw* or *hf(3)ywt* “Those (masc./fem.) who render homage” as leaning divinities with outstretched arms facing downwards, in which the hair may play a significant role (fig. 12).

Valdesogo (2003) focuses on hair ritual symbolism and points out that the *nwn* ges-

79 Valdesogo 2003, 2005.



Figure 12. Group 6, 8th Cavern in pBe I (left) and pM (right).



Figure 13. Group 3 from the 8th Cavern (teDe). Photograph: Daniel M. Méndez-Rodríguez.

ture in mourning contexts may be related to two different aspects. A negative connotation is shown linked to professional mourners. Their hair disorder was a symbol of chaos caused by the despair due to the deceased death. Chaotic darkness was also involved as sight absence caused by the hair covering their faces. However, divine mourners such as Isis and Nephthys had a positive implication as their performance allowed the resurrection of the deceased. In this sense, hair was linked to certain vital elements as water, vegetal elements, breath of life, copulation and motherhood and thus, with regeneration.

Mourning was in this divine sphere related to regeneration and resurrection displayed through wails and specific gestures. Furthermore, hair played a significant role in this context. A passage from the Book of Venerating Re in the West, also known as the Litany of Re, states that:

The mourners pull their hair because of you... that is your ba rejoices, is when they scream with the result that your corpse becomes effective.⁸⁰

A fourth pose is exhibited in some other vignettes, which may recall an adoration gesture (fig. 8, teDe -W1-; fig. 10 sC -E- and sC -W-).⁸¹ However, as Dominicus⁸² points out, one or two bent arms with outwards palms may signify appeal or invocation but also lament.⁸³ Both sources (sC and teDe) omit the *nwn* gesture and present this kind of pose in which the hair has no relevance at all.⁸⁴

Similarity, the pose between teDe and sC may be due to a chronological proximity or to a shared master-copy from which both sources depended. However, it may also be a decision taken independently by the scribes transmitting the composition. Some other analogies are present in both sources, so a close master-copy may explain this phenomenon.

⁸⁰ Hornung 1976: vol. I, 122-123.

⁸¹ Group 10 from the 11th Cavern (sC) and group 3 from the 8th Cavern (teDe).

⁸² Dominicus 1994: 67-69.

⁸³ This hand position may be recorded in combination with the *nwn* gesture in pBM II: figs. 8-9.

⁸⁴ The only exception is sC, in which the fifth group from the 8th Cavern is depicted as a goddess grasping her hair lock with both hands (fig. 9, sC -E- and sC -W-).

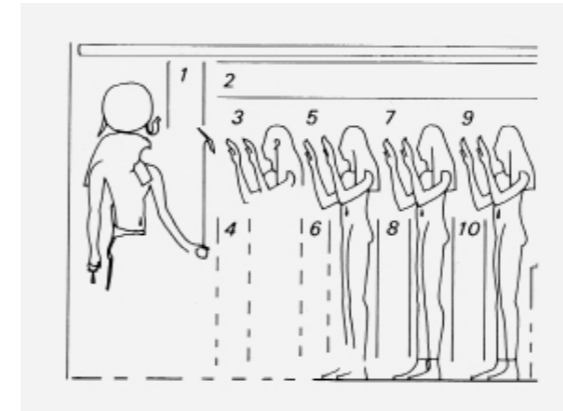


Figure 14. Drawing of the group 3 from the 8th Cavern (teDe) (Dendara X 155).

While the Late Period / Early Ptolemaic sarcophagus version (sC) does not provide any further information beyond a list of the cavern gods, an additional element in the Osirian chapels of the Hathor temple at Dendara (teDe) is included. In the first western chapel the third group from the 8th Cavern is called *4 h(3)ywt hr r^c* “4 [deities]: Those (fem.) who mourn for Re”. This group is portrayed in this context as four goddesses facing the solar-god Re-Horakhty (figs. 13 and 14). This is remarkable as the sun god is almost always absent from the illustrations of the composition.⁸⁵ The depicted ambivalent gesture usually linked to invocation and mourning may be explained within its context in Dendara. Perhaps this variation in the vignette is due not only to the explicit presence of Re-Horakhty in the same scene,

but also to the role of the first western chapel within the Osirian Khoiak festival. In this place several rites at the end of the festival were performed related to the resurrection of Osiris. One of these liturgies is the rising of the djed-pillar celebrated in the 30th of Khoiak, which is represented in the scene over the aforementioned cavern deities.⁸⁶ Perhaps other more traditional mourning gestures may not fit in this cult context of divine regeneration.⁸⁷

Conclusions

Mourning manifestations have been attested in the BTC mainly associated with some groups of cavern deities: the third and fifth groups from the 8th Cavern and the tenth group from the 11th Cavern. Mourning is exhibited through their names, the gestures depicted in their representations in the vignettes, and through their actions described by the textual information.

Their names relate them with grieving over the solar deity, such as “Those who mourn for Re” (third group of the 8th Cavern) or “The enead of mourners” (tenth group of the 11th Cavern). Following Diamond-Reed’s interpretation of the verb *h3j*⁸⁸ which is here used in the name “Those who mourn for Re”, it may not only mean mourning in this context but also imply a connotation of transformation and revivification. A variation of one of the names associating them with actions performed by mourners, as

⁸⁵ One exception is pLondon BM EA 10010, where the solar god is portrayed in different forms in the upper register (fig. 11).

⁸⁶ Dendara X/2 148, 155, 159, 172.

⁸⁷ Indeed other more explicit mourning gestures are shown in several occasions in the third eastern chapel. In the third register many different illustrations of Osiris lying on ritual beds representing different parts of the country are depicted. The goddess Isis, sometimes accompanied by Nephthys, is shown next to some of these Osirian manifestations. In some cases they perform mourning gestures, such as covering their faces with one or both hands in a manner on weeping (Dendara X/2 87-90).

⁸⁸ Diamond-Reed 2008: 180.

“Those who strike (themselves for) Re” (third group of the 8th Cavern), shows emotional violence as exhibited sometimes by bereaved individuals. Other actions may be the production of high-pitched shrieks and loud voices (fifth group of the 8th Cavern), which may recall those emitted by professional mourners. These voices may be used to guide Re (and the deceased) through the caverns of the *Duat* and to mourn him after his passing.

Gestures shown in the vignettes emphasise their bewailing attitude in a certain variety of poses, which may function approximately within the same range of meaning. These poses include the classic gesture depicted from the earliest times with one or both hands raised before the face (as if covering it while weeping), but also some more complex ones in which hair played a significant role. Some variations show deities pulling their locks of hair while others depict the *nwn* gesture, ritual poses linked in the divine world to regeneration.

As a cosmographic composition, mourning portrayed in the names, actions and gestures of these deities benefits the solar god enabling his regeneration during his nightly journey and also appeasing the rest of cavern-dwellers. As a funerary book, these mourning deities may similarly profit the deceased. His/her bewail as that of Osiris will regenerate him/her allowing justification in the Broad Hall of the Two Maats and resurrection, enabling him/her to become a member in the following of Re eternally.

Abbreviations of the sources

pBe I	pBerlin 3006
pBe II	pBerlin P. 5509
pBM I	pLondon BM EA 10478
pBM II	pLondon BM EA 10010
pBM III	pLondon BM EA 9966
pBM IV	pLondon BM EA 10569
pBM V	pLondon BM EA 9992

pBr	pNew York Brooklyn 47.218.50
pC I	pCairo CG 24742 (J.E. 34001)
pH	pSaint Petersburg Hermitage 1113 + pOdessa Nr. 52974
pHab	pHabana
pM	pNew York MMA 35.9.19
pV	pVatican 38583
sC	CG Cairo 29301 (J.E. 17429)
staC	Cairo 624 (J.E. 27585)
steC I	CG Cairo 22018
steC II	CG Cairo 22050
teDe	Dendara (Osirian Chapels)
teO	Osireion (Abydos)

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pBe I and pBe II: Ägyptisches Museum and Papyrussammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; pBM I-III: British Museum; pC I and sC: Cairo Museum; pH: The State Hermitage Museum; pHab: Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (La Habana, Cuba); pM: Metropolitan Museum of Art; pV: Vatican Museums; teO: I thank Dr. Mary-Ann Pouls Wegner, Mr. Ayman Damarany and Mr. Saad Bakhit Abd el-Hafez for the pictures.

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Prefacio

A Covadonga le gustaba conducir, le apasionaba estar al volante de su coche. “Pareces una chica del futurismo italiano”, le decía un amigo, aunque su primer automóvil fuera pequeño, blanco con un techo amarillo y a veces le costase llegar a su destino. Estuvimos años riendo cuando nos acordábamos del nombre con que habíamos bautizado aquella máquina. En nuestro recuerdo, ella sigue siendo la joven radiante y activa que conocimos a sus veinte años. Y su personalidad permanece entre nosotros como un perfume indeleble, retomando los versos del poeta alejandrino que tanto le gustaba. Quienes asistieron a sus conferencias conocieron la calidez de su voz; sus clases en la universidad crearon vocaciones; son, sin embargo, los que compartieron con ella su amistad quienes disfrutaron de los rasgos más sobresalientes de su personalidad: la generosidad, la entrega desinteresada a los demás. Cova tenía una capacidad excepcional para la empatía hacia los que se le acercaban. Eso le hizo ganar afectos en todos los ámbitos de su vida y conservarlos, desde los compañeros del colegio de la infancia y la pandilla de la juventud a los colegas de la madurez. Este tributo pretende también transmitir a las generaciones futuras el legado de una persona excepcional y la huella que dejó en su generación.

Un grupo de amigos que vivimos con ella sus labores de docencia, investigación o proyectos arqueológicos, decidimos rendirle un homenaje particular, uno más entre los que se le han dedicado desde el momento en que su *ka* voló al cielo. Este volumen es el resultado de esa voluntad de crear nuestro monumento a su memoria, por tantas experiencias inolvidables compartidas. El homenaje ha querido ser un caleidoscopio de miradas desde las que reflejar la personalidad de Covadonga y hemos preferido romper el formato académico tradicional. Los artículos se entrelazan con fotografías, dibujos, semblanzas o poemas que pretenden dejar constancia de la huella que ella legó a sus autores. Es nuestra ofrenda para que su *ba* siga regresando desde donde esté hasta nosotros, cada vez que la nombremos y en cada ocasión en que su recuerdo tome forma en nuestro corazón.

Foreword

Covadonga enjoyed driving; she loved being behind the wheel of her car. A friend used to tell her “you look like a woman of the Italian Futurism,” although her first car was small and white with a yellow roof, and sometimes had difficulties reaching its destination. We laughed for years remembering the name with which we baptized that machine. In our memories, she is still the radiant and active young woman we met in her twenties, and her personality remains among us as an indelible scent, to draw upon the verse of an Alexandrian poet that she loved so much. Those who attended her lectures knew the warmth of her voice, her classes at the university created vocations, however, it is those who shared her friendship who enjoyed the most outstanding features of her personality: generosity, and selfless dedication to others. Cova had an exceptional capacity for empathy toward those who approached her. This allowed her to win affection in all aspects of her life and to retain it, from the classmates of her early schooldays, to the circles of her youth, to the colleagues of her adult years. This tribute will surely be transmitted to future generations as the legacy of an exceptional individual, and the mark she left on her generation.

As a group of friends who lived with her through teaching, research, or archaeological projects, we have decided to pay her a particular tribute; one more among the many that have been dedicated to her from the moment her ka flew to heaven. This volume is the result of our desire to create for her a monument to so many unforgettable shared experiences. We decided that this tribute should be a kaleidoscope, to reflect Covadonga’s personality, and we have thus preferred to break from the traditional academic format. The articles are intertwined with photographs, drawings, sketches, or poems that are intended to record the traces she left with their authors. It is our offering so that her ba keeps coming back to us from where she now is, every time that her memory takes shape in our hearts.

Carta a una hermana en la luz

Son los hermanos y las hermanas quienes le hablan a su hermana en la luz, como el hijo que le habla a su padre, como la hija que le habla a su madre.

¡O Senet, Senet Meret! Que Osiris-Khentamentiú te otorgue millones de años respirando aliento en tu nariz, dándote pan y cerveza junto a Hathor, Señora de la Tierra de Luz.

Tu condición es como la vida millones de veces, por orden de los dioses que están en el cielo y la tierra. Que Ha, Señor de Occidente, actúe en tu favor de acuerdo a sus deseos, que Anubis, Señor del Buen Entierro actúe para ti como él lo quiera. Que pueda levantar una barrera contra los enemigos, hombres y mujeres malvados que se oponen a tu casa, tus hermanos, tus padres, tu memoria y tus obras.

Fuiste excelente en la tierra, por lo que también serás capaz y eficiente en el Más Allá. Que se te hagan ofrendas, que se realice la fiesta Haker para ti, que hagan la fiesta del Wag, que te den pan y cerveza del altar de Khentamentiú. Que puedas viajar río abajo en la Barca del Ocaso y que navegues río arriba en la Barca de la Mañana. Que estés justificada junto a cada dios. Que te conviertas en alguien elogiado por nuestros espíritus masculinos y femeninos.

¿Has visto estos lamentos ahora que estás allí en el Más Allá?

¡Oh, gran dolor! Útil es una queja para hablar de lo que se hace contra nosotros de una manera tan injusta. Aunque no hay nada que hayamos hecho contra los dioses, y aunque no hemos comido de sus ofrendas, ¡sin embargo nos han privado de ti!

Te han traído aquí a la Ciudad de la Eternidad, sin que albergues ira contra nosotros. Pero si hubiera un reproche en tu corazón, olvídale por el bien de tus hermanas y hermanos. Sé misericordiosa, sé misericordiosa, y así todos los dioses del nomo de This serán misericordiosos contigo.

Mantén alejadas todas las aflicciones dirigidas a nosotros, tus hermanas y hermanos, porque tú sabes que tenemos una gran necesidad de esto. Que vivas para nosotros y así el Grande te elogie. Que la cara del gran dios sea gozosa para ti, y que él te dé pan puro con ambas manos.

Todos los sacrificios funerarios se han realizado para la que está en la luz, a fin de que pueda interceder por nosotros, los sobrevivientes en la tierra que han quedado atrás. Por lo tanto, busca que el que causó aquello de lo que estamos sufriendo ahora te dé una explicación, porque necesitamos entender y queremos también ser justificados delante de los dioses como lo eres ahora, entendiendo todo, justificada y transfigurada.

Son los hermanos y hermanas quienes le hablan a su hermana, para quien la luz ya nunca se oscurecerá.

Letter to an enlightened sister

It is the brothers and sisters who are speaking to their sister like the son who is speaking to his father, like the daughter who is speaking to her mother.

O Senet, Senet Meret! May Osiris-Khentamentiu make millions of years for you by breathing breath into your nose, by giving bread and beer beside Hathor, Lady of the Land-of-Light.

Your condition is like life millions of time, by command of the gods who are in heaven and earth. May Ha, Lord of the West, act on your behalf as he wishes, may Anubis, Lord of the Good Burial act for you as he wishes. May you erect a barrier against male and female enemies, male and female evil ones who oppose your house, your brother, your mother, your memory, your deeds.

You are one who was excellent on earth, therefore you will also be capable in the hereafter. May one make offerings to you, may one make the Haker-feast for you, may one make the Wag-feast for you, may one give you bread and beer from the altar of Khentamentiu. You will travel downstream in the Bark-of-the-Evening and sail upstream in the Bark-of-the-Morning. May you be given justification at the side of every god. Make yourself into someone praised by our male and female ghosts.

Have you seen this lamentation now that you are there in the hereafter?

O, great grief! Useful is a complaint to speaking concerning this which is done against us in such an unjust way, although there is nothing that we have done against the gods, and although we have not eaten of his offerings, nevertheless they have deprived us of you!

You have been brought here to the City of Eternity, without you harbouring anger against us. But if there is a reproach in your heart, forget it for the sake of your sisters and brothers. Be merciful, be merciful, then all the gods of the Thinite nome will be merciful towards you.

Keep away all afflictions directed at us, your sisters and brothers, for you know we have a need for this. May you live for us in order for the Great One to praise you. May the face of the great god be joyous because of you, so that he will give you pure bread with both his hands.

All mortuary sacrifices are made for the enlightened one in order to intercede on behalf of the inhabitants of earth. Therefore seek an explanation from him who caused that of which we are suffering now, for we want to be justified in front of the gods same as you are now.

It is the brothers and sisters who are speaking to their sister, she for whom the light will never darken.