

**TWO ASPECTS OF MIDDLE KINGDOM
FUNERARY CULTURE FROM TWO
DIFFERENT MIDDLE EGYPTAIN NOMES**

By

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A thesis submitted to

The University of Birmingham

for the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity

College of Arts and Law

The University of Birmingham

September 2010

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Abstract

This thesis aims to further the understanding of the cultural and social history of the Middle Kingdom nomes. Two different approaches have been taken. The first examines coffin texts unique to individual coffins from the provincial cemetery of El Bersheh in the 15th Upper Egyptian nome. The evidence presented suggests that these texts were products of the Hermopolitan House of Life and were likely to have been created for specific individuals. It is concluded that the provincial elite were the driving force behind this innovation. In the second approach this thesis turns its attention to the pottery of Beni Hasan and the 16th Upper Egyptian nome. It is argued that the pottery corpus of Beni Hasan is reflective of the independence of the provincial administration and that the appearance of the Residence style during the mid 12th Dynasty is reflective of the social changes undertaken during the reign of Sesostri III. In the concluding section both approaches have been brought together, in doing so this thesis has been able to observe the independence and creativity of provincial culture which arose out of the unique power and authority held by the nomarchs.

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Introduction

1. Background and aims

A group of provincial rulers are attested by rock-cut tombs in provincial cemeteries throughout Upper Egypt during the Middle Kingdom.¹ These rulers, known in Egyptological literature as nomarchs, were among some of the most powerful officials during the 11th and 12th Dynasties. Nomarchs are attested from the Old Kingdom (Gestermann 1987:155),² yet during the First Intermediate Period, with the decreased authority of the king, the nomes had become powerful political regions; the autonomy that they had gained from the weakening of the central administration led to an increase in the nomarchs' responsibility, power and ambition (Gomaà 1980:3; Gestermann 1987:157).³ The evidence of these nomarchs from the Middle Kingdom is inconsistent, leading to disagreement among scholars concerning the prevalence of the nomarchs and the role of the province in the Middle Kingdom administrative system.⁴ However, two nomes, the 15th (Hare) Upper Egyptian nome and the 16th (Oryx) Upper Egyptian nome, have been the source of a considerable amount of evidence. Dynastic sequences of nomarchs dating from the 11th Dynasty to the reign of

¹In the academic material and in this thesis the provinces are referred to as nomes. These rulers can be seen in the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th Upper Egyptian nomes, although not all of these provinces have nomarchs attested throughout the Middle Kingdom (Gestermann 1987: 171–190; Favry 2005:27–67; Grajetzki 2006:78–116). While the majority are attested by tombs, others are represented on stelae or statues.

² For literature concerning the nomarchs of the Old Kingdom see: Baer (1960), Fischer (1968), Martin-Pardey (1976) and Kanawati (1977, 1980).

³ Shifts in nomarchal responsibility and authority can be observed in the autobiographies of the time. In those from the First Intermediate Period themes of care and provisioning gain considerable prominence (Lichtheim 1988:21; Franke 2006:159–160).

⁴ It was originally argued that the 11th Dynasty saw a curbing of nomarchal power due to the difficulty in attributing any nomarchs to this dynasty (Gestermann 1987:191). The most recent research, including a recent re-evaluation by Gestermann (2008:1–15), has, however, managed to identify several 11th Dynasty nomarchs (Favry 2005:28–38), while at the same time stressing that the absence of evidence is not necessarily reflective of a decline in nomarchal power (Willems 2008:42–52).

Sesostris III in the 12th Dynasty can be observed in both provinces (Favry 2005:11, 27, 38). The study of these two provinces has therefore been able to provide a considerable insight into the position of the nomarch and the functioning of the province. From the tombs of these nomarchs a picture is painted of powerful provincial rulers presiding over provincial courts based on the monarchic model. However, a fuller understanding of the provinces and those who governed within them is needed. Significantly, after the reign of Sesostris III evidence of these nomarchs almost completely disappears, with an almost complete disappearance of the nomarchal rock-cut tombs. This change in funerary culture, and its implications, has been widely discussed;⁵ it arguably marks a turning point in the Middle Kingdom when the power of the nomarchs was diminished along with the importance of the province.⁶ The focus of this thesis will therefore be on the 11th and 12th Dynasties up to the reign of Sesostris III.

The primary aim of this study is to provide fresh insights into the history of these Middle Kingdom nomes. This will be done through the examination of two sets of evidence of which the ability to inform the understanding of provincial history has been largely ignored. Unfortunately, the scope of the thesis is limited, both by time and by the extent of the evidence and published primary material, but it is hoped that this work will highlight

⁵ The situation was first noted by Meyer (1921:252), who propounded the notion that the nomarchs were deliberately eradicated because their ever-increasing power was threatening the king. Noted in particular was the usurpation of royal prerogatives that are found in 12th Dynasty nomarchal tombs (Baines 1985:238). This view dominated the scholarship until the late 1980s (Hayes 1971:506; Matzker 1986:11; Cruz-Uribe 1987:108). More recent work has, however, tended to note that the usurpation of royal prerogatives was indicative of changes in funerary culture, and that the nomarch did not represent a threat to royal power (Franke 1991:55; Grajetzki 2006:58). Instead of the view of the eradication of the nomarchs, it is generally now argued that the nome was an old administrative system, and that the nomarchs were simply not being replaced when they died. Instead the elite of the provinces were given positions in the central administration (Willems 1988:61–62; Franke 1991: 51–67).

⁶ These changes are noted about the same time as the reorganization of the central administration (Leprohon 1980:231; Quirke 1990:2).

lucrative areas for future study and indicate ways in which it can be applied to increase understanding of Middle Kingdom provincial history.

The thesis will consist of two approaches:

- A study of innovation and developments in the coffin texts from the 15th Upper Egyptian nome through the analysis of texts unique to individual coffins from the provincial cemetery of El Bersheh
- A study of the developments in pottery at the provincial cemetery of Beni Hasan in the 16th Upper Egyptian nome.

These are two approaches to the same problem. They both aim to increase understanding of the culture in the nome, specifically the intellectual, aesthetic and utilitarian realms of human production and society. They have been designed specifically to examine the culture of the provinces and how this was different from the rest of Egypt. Yet as human production is in part bound by social and economic factors (Chartier 1988:48; Eagleton 2000:5), the results of these approaches will hopefully also provide glimpses into the role that these nomes played in the administration of Egypt and the power, authority and influence of the provincial elite.

2. Methodology

The evidence for this study comes from the 15th and 16th Upper Egyptian nomes. They have been chosen for several reasons:

- The main provincial cemeteries of both nomes provide a wealth of evidence for the respective chapters

- They are neighbouring provinces located in the north of Upper Egypt, with both nomes having long-standing traditions of the institution of the nomarch
- The well-preserved rock-cut tombs of these nomarchs from El Bersheh and Beni Hasan have ensured that these are among the best attested provincial rulers from the Middle Kingdom
- Similar titles held by these individuals and the details revealed in their autobiographies mean that we can assert with some confidence that the nomarchs of each province had a similar amount of authority.

These factors make the two nomes ideal for these two adjacent studies. It is important to note that ideally in a study of this type, involving the analysis of two different aspects of funerary culture, one would wish to use evidence from the same province because this would ensure that the evidence was directly comparable. However, due to the nature of the evidence from the Middle Kingdom provinces, this is not possible; no provincial cemetery from the Middle Kingdom has such a unique corpus of funerary texts as El Bersheh, and no provincial cemetery has such a documented corpus of pottery as Beni Hasan. However, the ability of this research to illuminate aspects of provincial history from other nomes should not be dismissed. Unique texts are still found on the coffins from other nomes, including Asyut (CT V 174), Meir (CT V 208–210) and Beni Hasan (CT VI 194j–195), though not to the same extent. This may suggest that it was at least possible that similar activity was occurring in other provinces. Moreover, while it is very unlikely that the pottery corpus of Beni Hasan is representative of other provincial cemeteries, more general conclusions may well be tentatively applied to other nomes.

The first chapter focuses on El Bersheh as this provincial cemetery provides a large body of texts that are only found on the coffins of this region or in some cases are only found on the coffins of one individual in this cemetery (Jürgens 1995:83). Such evidence has led to the suggestion that the Hare nome became actively involved in the production of new texts (Willems 1988:248; 2008:190).⁷ It has been stated that if a spell or a group of spells is unique to an individual site, it may have originated in the area (Lapp 1990:226). While caution must be taken when applying this argument,⁸ such spells of El Bersheh provide a good starting point in examining cultural innovation in the 15th Upper Egyptian nome; it stands to reason that some may have derived from production in the province. This study will focus on those spells that are only found on the coffin of one individual, henceforth referred to as unique spells. An initial attempt will be made to identify where the creation of coffin texts could have taken place in the province. Secondly, these unique spells will be studied in relation to the coffins on which they appear and as a chronology for the coffins of El Bersheh has been established by Willems (1988:68–81), this will enable the placement of the texts in their social and chronological setting. Following this some analysis of the texts themselves will take place but a complete philological commentary is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study. However, this examination will attempt to establish whether these unique texts really were creations of the 15th nome and, if so, the form that this innovation took. An attempt will be made to identify themes that may set these spells apart from other coffin texts and to understand the ways that they may have been created. Ultimately, by examining these texts

⁷ It is generally assumed that a significant proportion of coffin texts were produced throughout the Middle Kingdom (Hays 2004:177). Lapp (1997:56) argues that there was a continual development of such texts throughout the 11th and 12th Dynasties. There is disagreement over where the development of the Coffin Texts tradition first occurred. Whereas Willems (1988:248) sees the Coffin Texts as being intrinsically southern in origin, Jürgens (1995:69) argues that they originated at Memphis and spread to the south. Suffice to say that the origins of the Coffin Texts are of little importance to this thesis; what is significant is that once the tradition was established in the Middle Kingdom province it began to develop and evolve.

⁸ There are indications that the ‘Book of Two Ways’, which is only found at El Bersheh, may have originated in the north, although the argument is far from conclusive (Hoffmeier 1996:50).

and possible innovations in detail, it is intended that this will enable this thesis to establish a picture of provincial culture, and that in the concluding discussions this can then be applied to the social context of the nomes during the Middle Kingdom.

In the second study a different approach is taken. Pottery, and its ability to shed light on the cultural process, has been well documented. Perhaps more so than the philological material it is very firmly grounded in its environment (D.E. Arnold 1988:231), changes to which had a direct impact on pottery production (Rice 1987:449). While it is stated that that it is ‘virtually impossible to correlate ceramic changes one-to-one with significant political, economic, or religious events’ (Rice 1987:468), pottery can be reflective of more general social conditions (D.E. Arnold 1988:231). A model for such interrelations between pottery and society can be found in the work of Seiler (2005). The author interprets changes in the ceramic repertoire in relation to cultural and social changes during the Second Intermediate Period. Chapter two will examine the pottery from the tombs of the middle classes, situated below the large rock-cut tombs of the provincial elite. This will be done primarily through the analysis of shape⁹ but the chapter will also attempt to examine, as far the evidence allows, the fabric of the vessels,¹⁰ providing further evidence for discussion. Particular focus will be on parallels between the Beni Hasan corpus and the styles prevalent in Egypt during the early Middle Kingdom, particularly the 11th Dynasty. The pottery of this period was dominated by First Intermediate Period styles which were characterised by a considerable amount of regional variation (Arnold 1988:144). Further attention will be focused on the appearance of the Residence style, a particular set of forms which originated during the reign of Sesostri I in

⁹ The ability of the analysis of shape to identify cultural change has been noted by D.E. Arnold (1988:234).

¹⁰ When fabric is discussed in chapter two the classification of the Vienna system is used as established in the *Introduction to Ancient Egyptian Pottery* (Bourriau and Nordström 1993).

the Memphite-Faiyum region (Arnold 1988:143–146) and spread throughout Egypt.¹¹ This form has been closely associated with the central administration. An attempt will then be made to interpret the material culture in the light of the social situation of the time.

The approach taken in this thesis is not without pitfalls. It has already been noted that the chapters are not directly comparable. The unique texts of El Bersheh and pottery of Beni Hasan are separately affected by a variety of different individual factors. However, this does not mean that the results from the individual chapters cannot inform one another, or that they cannot be brought together to form informative conclusions about the culture and society of the Middle Kingdom nomes. Ultimately both approaches are grounded in the same historical setting on which they have considerable potential to shed light, although in order to arrive at accurate conclusions, this thesis will be constantly aware of the individual factors affecting each approach. Moreover, the very different nature of both approaches means that they have the potential to produce contradictory results. Yet this should not be a deterrent to this study; it is important that contradictions are uncovered and an attempt is made to understand them. One of the central premises of this thesis is the wish to integrate the philological and archaeological material, with the aim of the two approaches supplementing each other and providing fresh insights into this period of history. Willems (2001a:VI)¹² has stressed the importance of this approach, and the two studies in this thesis have been chosen with this intent. It is hoped that in examining two different elements of cultural development a more inclusive picture will be obtained. The first chapter looks at a cultural phenomenon that is intimately connected with the elite of the province, whereas in the second chapter the cultural developments can be applied to the province as a whole. In addition, while the study of

¹¹ The term Residence style is used here as it denotes the connection between the pottery and its place of origin. In the literature these forms may also be referred to as the Classical Middle Kingdom style.

¹² Bommas (2006:56) has commended the approach and aims of this work.

unique texts will ideally provide a greater understanding of a very distinctive element of provincial culture, the nature of the second chapter means that there is a focus on the cultural connections between the nome and the rest of Egypt. In order for this thesis to obtain a comprehensive picture of provincial culture, both elements should be examined. In the conclusion it is intended that the results from these two studies will be integrated, hopefully enabling this thesis to draw wide-ranging conclusions.

Chapter 1. Developments in Funerary Culture in the Hare Nome as seen through the Coffin Texts from El Bersheh

The tradition of the Coffin Texts is seen throughout the Middle Kingdom provinces yet the evidence from El Bersheh is extensive, and this chapter will attempt to study the unique texts from this province in order to understand the development of this aspect of funerary culture. This study intends to determine whether these texts were being produced in the province, as well as the purposes of these texts and the reasons for their production. In doing so, it is hoped that this thesis will further the understanding of provincial culture. When the results are placed alongside the results of the second chapter, it is hoped that these insights will be able to inform our knowledge of the Middle Kingdom nome and its place in Egyptian history.

1.1 The storage of the coffin texts, the town of Hermopolis and the House of Life

The idea of an ‘archive’ or ‘library’ as a place where pyramid and coffin texts were stored has been suggested by numerous scholars (Hayes 1937:11; Allen 1976:29; Thompson 1990:20; Baines 2004:29) despite minimal evidence of such a place existing in the archaeological or the historical record.¹³ However, scholars have recently gone as far as

¹³ Their conclusions are drawn from the perceived necessity that the Egyptians would have had for the storage and compilation of such texts. Thompson’s (1990:20) argument derives from the fact that the pyramid texts on Saqqara coffins have affinities with numerous Old Kingdom sources, so a place

identifying such a place with the institute of the House of Life (Nordh 1996:172; Willems 2007:99).¹⁴ While the House of Life is attested mainly after the reign of the Ramesses III (Nordh 1996:109), there are several pieces of evidence pointing to its existence from at least the 6th Dynasty onwards (Gardiner 1938:No. 2).¹⁵ Opinions on the roles and functions of the House of Life have developed over time,¹⁶ although the most recent research has tended to see the institution as a scriptorium in which texts were copied and created (Luiselli 2003: 351). Indeed, a quick examination of the evidence reveals that numerous references were made to the production activity of the individual in the institution (Gardiner 1938:Nos.9, 16, 23, 39).¹⁷ However, there is also the possibility that the institution contained a library (Burkard 1980:88–91). Gardiner (1938:No. 46) cites a stela from Akhmin (CG 22017) in which the owner is referred to as being ‘learned in every [papyrus] chest of the House of Life which belongs to the House of Min’.¹⁸ In relation to funerary texts it will be seen in detail below that both the copying of texts and the composition of new ones must have relied

must have existed where all of the manuscripts used in the decorating of the pyramid walls were stored.

¹⁴ Nordh states that the House of Life was where the corpus was ‘stored, preserved and processed’. Willems, on the other hand, simply refers to the funerary texts of Hermopolis. Both individuals place the House of Life in the context of the temple (Nordh 1996:107; Willems 2007:99). At Hermopolis there was a temple of Thoth, the god of wisdom and writing, which both scholars agree may have been a catalyst for the productive activity of the Hermopolitian House of Life.

¹⁵ There is evidence from the 1st Dynasty, with clay seals bearing the stamp of *pr-ḥb*, although Nordh (1996:109) expresses some doubt over whether it has the same connotations as later examples.

¹⁶ Until Gardiner’s (1938) assimilation of the known evidence there had been little study of the topic. He came to the conclusion that it was the place where ‘the most sacred books and inscriptions were composed’ (1938:176) and that it was neither a library (1938:176) nor a place of learning (1938:175). However, Volten (1942:38–39) puts forward the case for interpretation of the role of the House of Life as a university, and there is one attestation from a scarab of a ‘teacher of the House of Life’ (Newberry 1906:Pl. XIII), which certainly supports the assertion. In more recent research Nordh (1996:107–109) comes to the conclusion that all three of the functions mentioned by Gardiner are plausible.

¹⁷ No. 9 is an inscription in TT 111 and reads ‘scribe who wrote the annals of the gods and goddesses in the House of Life’. No. 23 from a Ramesside papyrus (P. Leyden 347, 3, 2) states ‘master of words, of exalted rank in the House of Life, a creator in the Library’. No. 39 (Urk II 151–2) reads ‘the hymns of worship written by the staff of the House of Life...’

¹⁸ Gardiner (1938:176) supposes that this simply refers to the owner’s adeptness in the books stored in his local temple library rather than seeing it as evidence of the House of Life housing a library. However, no conclusive evidence is provided either way.

heavily on access to older versions; it would have surely been impractical for these to have been stored elsewhere.¹⁹

On a religious level the ultimate function of the House of Life has been interpreted as a place through which the life of the king, gods and other individuals was protected and maintained (Gardiner 1938:168; Volten 1942:38–39). However, there may also be a specific link that can be drawn between the House of Life and the funerary cult. Primarily, the name itself ‘House of Life’ can easily be associated with the Egyptians’ views on death, where the deceased achieves life through ritual and texts. Secondly, we learn from Papyrus Salt 825 about the strong link between the House of Life, Osiris and Abydos, as well as other deities, Isis, Nephthys, Horus, Thoth, Geb and Nut, all of whom have strong associations with Egyptian mortuary beliefs and with the Osirian myth. Together with references to the protection of Osiris (P. Salt 825 7, 7, cited in Gardiner 1938:168) and the performance of glorifications (*s3h.w*) (P. Salt 825 7, 3–4, cited in Gardiner 1938:167),²⁰ this would imply that elements of the House of Life are based around the same ideas reflected in Egyptian funerary culture. It is perhaps not impossible to imagine that the institution was conceived in part for the production of funerary texts, especially considering the close associations between the two.²¹

¹⁹ As both Nordh (1996:107) and Willems (2007:99) consider the House of Life to have been a part of temples, whether the texts were stored in the institution itself or in the temple to which it was linked makes little difference. What is significant is that the House of Life played an active role in the transmission and renewal of this textual tradition.

²⁰ Glorifications are mentioned at another point in the text (P. Salt 825 4, 1, cited in Nordh 1996:119), along with the ritual of the Opening of the Mouth (P. Salt 825 3, 8, cited in Nordh 1996:119). Both have connections with Egyptian funerary culture.

²¹ Morenz (2001:81) highlights another possible link between the House of Life and Osiris. He notes a ritual linked with the House of Life which seemingly refers to Osiris or the deceased, although he acknowledges that the translation of this passage is problematic.

Of particular interest is the presence of a House of Life in the Middle Egyptian town of Hermopolis during the Middle Kingdom. An inscription in the tomb of Iha at El Bersheh states that he was ‘...a chieftain while defeating the enemy who sees the pacification of the gods, the overseer of the scribes in the House of Life, to whom all that was secluded was revealed...’ (Willems 2007:67). Whether the preceding or succeeding statements make reference to the roles that Iha played in the institution is contentious (Willems 2007:70–71).²² More important is the reference to the possible existence of the House of Life in the province. The evidence for the existence of such an institution at Hermopolis is not conclusive, considering that Iha also seems to have had a role at the royal court (Willems 2007:98). Iha is the only individual attested in the province who makes specific reference to his role in the institution²³ although the nomarch Djehutyhotep may have held authority over such an institution.²⁴ Significantly, what is seen parallel to this mention of the House of Life is the cultural explosion of Coffin Texts in the cemetery of El Bersheh. Gestermann (2004:201–217) takes this as her point of departure in suggesting that at some point in the history of the Middle Kingdom there was a movement of the corpus of funerary texts from the Memphite region to El Bersheh.²⁷ Her argument rests on the large number of coffin texts found in El

²² Morenz (1996:84–86) believes that the preceding statement makes reference to Iha’s conducting of rituals in connection with the House of Life, while the succeeding phrase refers to his access to the institution, which would have been restricted. Similar associations of ritual and seclusion with the House of Life are also highlighted by him in a later article (2001:77–82). Willems (2007:70–71) disagrees, however, and argues that the conduction of ritual is more likely to be in reference to the temple of Thoth. He cites a similar reference in the autobiography of Ahanakht I (Newberry 1895b:Pl. XIII). He also chooses a more traditional interpretation of the latter section, believing that it refers to access to the royal or nomarchal court. While Willems’s argument seems to hold more weight, it is not doubted that access to the House of Life was restricted, and that this had a close association with the storage of liturgical and ritual texts.

²³ Djehutinakht-ankh, attested from Hatnub Gr. 12–13, holds the titles ‘scribe of the gods’ book’, ‘scribe of the archive’ and ‘lector priest’, perhaps indicating that he was one of those working in the House of Life (Willems 2007:90).

²⁴ Djehutyhotep holds titles including ‘keeper of the secrets of the seeing one [...] in the house of Thoth’ (Urk VII, 45, 9)²⁴ and ‘keeper of the secrets of god’s words’ (Urk VII 45, 14).²⁴ These titles may imply authority over such an institution and would suggest that the nomarch may have had a key role in such an institution, as would be expected.

²⁷ Willems (2008:190) mentions briefly that a parallel set of Hermopolitan texts existed even before the transference of texts from the Memphite region. He has, as yet, provided no evidence for this

Bersheh compared with other provinces. Detailed textual criticism has revealed that despite spells having several variant forms, individual spells at El Bersheh can often be found in their numerous variations (Gestermann 2004:209), thus indicating that the scribes of El Bersheh had access to numerous versions of the same spell, meaning that it was at least likely that the corpus of funerary texts was kept in the Hare nome (Gestermann 2004:209).²⁸ It seems probable that if these texts were stored anywhere, it would be in the House of Life (Nordh 1996:175; Willems 2007:99; 2008:183) or a library closely connected to it, perhaps in the temple of Thoth. Significantly, the date which Gestermann (2004:211) proposes for the transference of texts, the reunification of Egypt in the 11th Dynasty under the reign of Mentuhotep II, corresponds with the date that Willems assigns to Iha (2007:85).²⁹ This has led Willems (2008:183–184) to presume that Iha may have been the person responsible for the transference of the Coffin Texts to the region, although he unfortunately fails to identify how this occurred. He simply states that his connection with the nome and the royal court would have facilitated any such transfer. As has been noted above however, the main purpose of the House of Life was the transmission of texts and the creation of new ones. While the funerary texts may well have been stored in the institution, this was not its primary function. Once it was transferred to the region the corpus of funerary texts must have undergone development. It is this development that this chapter will attempt to observe.

assumption; however, it can be presumed that he is referring to texts which seem of Hermopolitan origin that could conceivably have been composed in the First Intermediate Period. CT sp. 404 is a possible example (Mueller 1972:124).

²⁸ The same conclusion is arrived at by Jürgens (1995:83) and even earlier by Lapp (1989:194). He argues that the number of texts found on coffins could be an indication of the number of texts that were available in the province. The vast number of texts seen on the coffins of El Bersheh compared with other provinces (Lapp 1989:193) would therefore indicate that the province had far greater access than anywhere else.

²⁹ Iha can be dated by the fact that he mentions the nomarch Ahanakht I, next to whom he was entombed, in his inscription (Willems 2007:63–67). The date of Ahanakht I has been contentious (Brovarski 1981:26–28; Willems 1983:81–102), although a date around the reunification of Egypt under the reign of Mentuhotep II is now generally agreed on (Willems 2007:87; Gestermann 2008:11).

1.2 Unique spells and the coffins on which they appear

Tables 1 and 2 give a comprehensive list of spells that are only found on a single coffin and the proportion of the texts on the coffin that they make up. Before discussing the spells themselves it is important to note some trends that can be observed from simply noting on which coffins these unique spells actually appear. By examining these trends, it is possible to discern differences between individual coffins, particularly concerning the quantity of the unique spells. Such information provides a basis for the understanding of these texts and also places them in their immediate social setting.

Table 1: The Coffins of El Bersheh and the Quantity of Unique Spells

Coffin	Coffin group according to Willems	Prospective date of coffin	Owner of the coffin	Status of the owner	Type of coffin	Number of spells on the coffin	Number of spells unique to the coffin	Percentage of the total number of spells that are unique to the coffin
B1Bo	A	End of the 11 th Dynasty/end of the reign of Amenemhat I	Djehutinakht (VI/V? ³⁰)	Nomarch	Outer	152	30	19.7%
B2Bo					Inner	197	1	0.5%
B3Bo	A	End of the 11 th Dynasty/end of the reign of Amenemhat I	Djehutinakht (f.)	Wife of Djehutinakht (IV/V?)	Outer	88	12	13.6%
B4Bo					Inner	121	2	1.7%
B6Bo	A	End of the 11 th Dynasty/end of the reign of Amenemhat I	Satmeket (f.)	Unknown	Outer (Fragment)	20	3	15%
B7Bo					Inner (Fragment)	11	0	0%
B6C	A	End of the reign of Amenemhat I	Kay	Brother of the nomarch Djehutinakht V	Unknown	68	0	0%
B3C	B	Second half of the reign of Sesostri I	Sathedjhetep (f.)	Unknown	Inner	97	0	0%
B4C					Outer	168	15	8.9%
B1Y	B/C?	Sesostri I–Amenemhat II?	Djehutinakht	Treasurer (<i>h̄tm.w bi.t.y</i>)	Unknown	58	0	0%
B9C	C	Amenemhat II	Amenemhat	Nomarch	Middle	168	3	1.8%
B10C					Outer	64	3	4.7%
B15C	C	Amenemhat II	Djehutinakht VI	Nomarch	Middle	39	2	5.1%
B1C	D	Sesostri II–Sesostri III	Sepi	General (<i>imy-r mš'</i>)	Outer	187	9	4.8%
B16C	D	Sesostri II–Sesostri III	Neferi	Steward (<i>imy-r pr wr</i>)	Outer	40	0	0%
B17C					Inner	32	0	0%
B1L	D	Sesostri II–Sesostri III	Gua	Chief Physician	Inner	162	4	2.5%
B2L					Outer	205	21	10.2%

³⁰ Question marks are used in this table when Willems (1988) expresses doubts about the owner or date of the coffin.

				(<i>wr swnw</i>)				
B3L	D	Sesostris II–Sesostris III	Sen	Chief Physician (<i>wr swnw</i>)	Inner	135	4	3%
B4L					Outer	82	0	0%
B5L	D	Sesostris II–Sesostris III	Sepi	General (<i>imy-r mš'</i>)	Inner	1	0	0%
B1P	D	Sesostris II–Sesostris III	Sepi	Steward (<i>imy-r pr</i>)	Outer	121	4	3.3%
B2P					Inner	92	0	0%
B12C	D	Sesostris II–Sesostris III	Iha	Great <i>w'b</i> -priest (<i>w'b</i> 'j)	Inner	64	1	1.6%
B13C					Outer	64	6	9.4%
B14C	D	Sesostris II–Sesostris III	Djehutinakht (reused)	Nomarch	Unknown	1	0	0%
B20C	D	Sesostris II–Sesostris III	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown (Fragment)	3	0	0%
B1Be	D–E?	Sesostris II–III?	Sen	Unknown	Unknown	73	0	0%
B5C	E	Sesostris II–Sesostris III	Djehutihetep	Scribe of the kings document (<i>sš 'ns.w.t</i>)	Inner	86	3	3.5%
B7C					Outer (Fragment)	12	0	0%
B2Be	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown (Fragment)	13	0	0%

Table 2: The Unique Spells of El Bersheh Coffins

Coffins of Willems's Group A					Group B	Group C			Group D							Group E
B1Bo	B2Bo	B3Bo	B4Bo	B6Bo	B4C	B9C	B10C	B15C	B1C	B1L	B2L	B3L	B1P	B12C	B13C	B5C
264	751	446	909	911	735	150	62	693	752	336	320	489	315	59	41	314
305		622	910	912	736	396	728	915	753	419	321	500	477		55	339
311		717		913	737	696	916		754	478	450	713	578		56	886
474		718			738				755	695	471	714	694		57	
525		719			739				756		485				58	
660		720			740				757		615				917	
662		721			741				758		621					
663		722			742				759		698					
664		724			743				760		699					
665		725			744						701					
666		726			745						702					
667		727			746						703					
668					748						704					
669					749						705					
670					750						706					
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An influential factor in the proportion of these texts is the type of coffin. A quick glance at Table 1 reveals that outer coffins are much more likely to be decorated with spells unique to that coffin. This is particularly prominent when both the inner and outer coffins of one individual are examined. For example, the outer coffin of the nomarch Djehutinakht, B1Bo, has thirty of these unique texts, taking up twenty per cent of all of the spells on the coffin, whereas his inner coffin, B2Bo, has only one unique spell out of a total of 197. In fact, the highest number of unique spells attested on an inner coffin is the four found on B3L. The evidence here is of course distorted by the fact that the Book of Two Ways, a very common group of Bersheh spells, generally takes up the majority of the bottoms of inner coffins,³¹ meaning that there was less space for individual spells. However, the differences are still significant enough to come to the conclusion that the inner coffin was reserved for the Book of Two Ways and those spells more popular in the rest of Egypt. On the other hand, the outer coffin provided an outlet for these unique spells. At this point the tentative suggestion may be offered that this was due to the proximity of the spells to the deceased. It is a possibility that the spells believed to be more effective were placed closer to the deceased in order to ensure their effectiveness. Unique and therefore ‘untested’ spells were placed further away, in a supporting role, where they could not be detrimental to the deceased if they were ineffective.³²

It is evident that the elite of the Hare nome were decorating their coffins with unique spells from the end of the 11th Dynasty until at least the reign of Sesostris III; examples can be

³¹ While these texts are often placed on the bottom of the coffin, there are exceptions; both B2Bo and B4Bo have the texts placed on the back (Lesko 1979:18, 21).

³² When the whole corpus of funerary texts is studied across the whole of Egyptian history, it is noted that they gradually get closer to the deceased until with the Book of the Dead texts appear on mummy bandages. It can perhaps be assumed that there was a connection between the proximity of a text and its effectiveness (pers. comm. M. Bommas).

found in all of Willems's (1988) Bersheh coffin groups A–E. This is therefore a feature of the Coffin Texts that is attested throughout their use in this province. Unfortunately, evidence of chronological differences is largely inconclusive. All four of the coffins in group C, dating from the end of the reign of Sesostris I and the reign of Amenemhat II (Willems 1988:75), have few unique spells, particularly compared with B1Bo and B3Bo in group A³³ and B4C in group B, dating from the end of the 11th Dynasty (Willems 1988:74) and the second half of the reign of Sesostris I (Willems 1988:74) respectively. However, it is unlikely that this was due to changes in preference over time as B1C, B2L and, to a lesser extent, B13C, all belonging to Willems's group D fixed to around the time of Sesostris II and III (Willems 1988:77), all have high numbers of unique spells.³⁴ Furthermore, in group D there are coffins attested with high numbers of unique spells, yet in some cases there are those without any spells even on outer coffins (see Table 1). It seems, therefore, that the proportion of unique spells is dependent on other factors.

There is a small amount of evidence that suggests that the proportion of unique texts on a coffin was in part determined by an individual's status and wealth, though this is again inconclusive. As already mentioned, the outer coffins of the nomarch Djehutinakht and his wife of the same name both have high numbers of unique texts, and this is also the case for the outer coffin B4C of Sathedjhetep, the wife of a high-ranking official.³⁵ When compared

³³ Another feature specifically of the coffins B1Bo–B2Bo is a high number of appearances of mitre inscriptions, those texts that decorate the joints of the panels that make up a coffin. The majority of these mitre inscriptions, like our unique texts, are only found on these two coffins (Grallert 2007:45).

³⁴ Lapp (1996:87) does remark on the number of texts that decorate the early group A coffins, B1–4Bo, when compared with later examples. He notes that there is a general decline over time until with the Book of the Dead the number of spells in use has been reduced and the creation of new spells ceases. However, at El Bersheh there are coffins with significantly high numbers of texts in groups A–D (see Table 1). This would indicate that the Coffin Texts were developing at least until the reign of Sesostris III and that the decline did not occur until the end of the 12th Dynasty.

³⁵ Willems originally associated this individual with the wife of the nomarch Nehri II (1983:93–94; 1988:74); however, he has recently dismissed this opinion on the basis that she is not buried in the

with some of the outer coffins of lesser provincial officials from group D, such as B16C belonging to the Steward (*imy-r pr wr*) Neferi, B1P of the Steward (*imy-r pr*) Sepi, and B13C belonging to the Great *wʿb*-priest (*wʿb ʿs*) Iha, the coffins of higher-ranking officials have significantly greater numbers of unique texts. Of course, the provincial officials listed above did not have access to the same wealth or resources as the nomarchs and their wives, perhaps suggesting that they were unable to afford or get access to people who could compose new texts. However, such an idea is contradicted in two ways. Firstly, the coffins of the nomarchs Amenemhat (B9–10C) and Djehutinakht VI (B15C) have very low numbers of original texts. Secondly, there are also officials, in particular the Chief Physician (*wr swnw*) Gua and the General (*imy-r mšʿ*) Sepi, whose coffins, B2L and B1C respectively, have high numbers of unique spells. In the case of these two nomarchs finances clearly played no role in the lack of original texts; these are two of the most powerful nomarchs known from the Middle Kingdom.³⁶ It seems that some sort of personal choice was involved when decorating the coffins. Both B9C and B10C are slightly unusual due to the fact that they are decorated with a large number of pyramid texts (Lesko 1979:31–33) and spell sequences (Lapp 1989:200) found in the form of mortuary liturgies.³⁷ B10C in particular has four different liturgies, some appearing more than once (Assmann 1996:18). Assmann (1996:19) remarks with astonishment that B10C is covered with such liturgies considering the fact that they make up only a small fraction of the corpus of Coffin Texts. As well as this, one of the three unique spells found on B10C, CT sp. 62, has been the focus of considerable attention (Assmann 1996:17–30). The spell appears a total of five times on the coffin; its use in relation to the mortuary liturgies that are found, the frequency with which it is used, and its non-traditional

tomb of her husband (Willems et al 2004:256). The fact that she was the wife of an important official is, however, noted from the size of the shaft tomb in close proximity to her own. This was presumably the tomb of her husband (Willems et al 2004:256).

³⁶ The large provincial courts over which they governed, as well as their roles and responsibilities, are attested in their tombs (Newberry 1895b:Pl. XVIII–XIX/IV–IX).

³⁷ As discussed above, these mortuary liturgies were a group of spells accompanying each another with the purpose of transfiguring the deceased through the act of recitation (Assmann 2005:238–240).

aspects suggest that it was an individual composition for the nomarch Amenemhat (Assmann 1996:20). It is apparent, therefore, that coffin decoration could be governed by personal preferences; presumably Amenemhat made a conscious choice to decorate his coffins in such an individual manner. On the other hand, social rank may still have played a role in the number of unique texts found on coffins. In group D the coffin with the largest number is B2L, with a total of 21 unique spells making up twenty per cent of the texts on this coffin. The owner held the position of Chief Physician. People holding this title had access to the House of Life, which was actively involved in the production of texts for the healing of the sick (Gardiner 1938:No. 1). Therefore, Gua may have had access to the funerary texts stored and produced there. This perhaps indicates why he has so many unique texts. However, another Chief Physician from around the same time, Sen, the owner of coffins B3L and B4L, has fewer of these spells. Presumably he would have had the same access to the House of Life. This is perhaps again indicating the role of personal preference.³⁸

The difficulty in establishing reasons for differences between the coffins is quite evident here. This supports a conclusion that a variety of factors were influencing the number of unique spells appearing on Bersheh coffins. In a proportion of the cases personal preference must have been playing a role, as has already been established. In the context of funerary culture there was little room for individuality, and the choice of texts was one medium through which this could possibly be expressed (Lapp 1989:194; Bommas 2010:57).³⁹ However, this does not rule out other contributing factors, such as social and financial restrictions, and the date of

³⁸ Although it should also be noted that the top of B4L is not inscribed (Lesko 1979:44), which is quite unusual, this perhaps suggests that other factors may have been involved.

³⁹ Lapp highlights that the majority of spells are generally not ordered according to theme. Therefore, when this does occur on the occasional coffin, it is likely to be due to a special wish of the deceased.

the coffin, all of which may have had an intertwined effect on the distribution of these unique spells.

1.3 The spells on the canopic boxes

	B5Bo, Djehutinakht (f.), Wife of Djehutinakht (IV/V?)	B19C, Djehutinakht (f.)	B11C, Amenemhat, Nomarch	B18C, Neferi, Steward (<i>imy-r pr wr</i>)	B2C, Sepi, Steward (<i>imy-r pr</i>)
Coffin Texts spells	520	520	521	520	520
	521	521	524	521	521
	522	522		522	522
	523	523		523	523
	524				
Pyramid Text spells		PT 141–147 [215]	PT 2092–2104 [690]		
		PT 134–137 [213-214]			
		PT 148–150 [215–216]			
		PT 155d–157 [217]			

While there are no unique texts on the canopic boxes of El Bersheh the spells found do help shed light on the innovation occurring within the province. The same group of texts (CT sp. 520–524) is attested on all five of the known examples, although only B5Bo has all five spells and both B19C and B11C are also decorated with pyramid texts (see Table 3). The fact that all of the known canopic boxes are decorated with at least some of these spells suggests that this was an established tradition. The fact that these spells are not generally attested elsewhere may also indicate that this tradition was established within the El Bersheh region

(Lüscher 1990:71).⁴⁰ Significantly even here personal preference seems to have been a factor in the decoration; this is highlighted by the occasional use of pyramid texts. B11C is the canopic box of the nomarch Amenemhat who is mentioned above, it is therefore not surprising to see it featuring part of PT sp. 690 which also decorates both of his coffins (Lesko 1979:31–33). The Coffin Texts spells themselves deal with Horus and his four children.⁴¹ They all conform to the mythology of the children of Horus which was based around the protection of Osiris (Lüscher 1990:72). This was a concept already seen in the Pyramid Texts.⁴² It is noted that the spells display some confusion in their use of suffixes and the insertion of the name of the deceased does not seem to be an original feature of the texts (Faulkner 1977:149; Lüscher 1990:72). This has led Faulkner (1977:149) to the conclusion that the spells were originally mythological texts. This proposition makes it difficult to assess whether these texts are examples of Hermopolitan creativity, but the process in which they appear on the canopic boxes of the province, being transferred from one medium to another, is a cultural development the like of which is seen below in the analysis of the unique texts.⁴³ This is itself indicative of the innovative activity of the Hermopolitan scribes.⁴⁴

1.4 The unique spells of El Bersheh and innovation in the Hermopolitan House of Life

⁴⁰ CT sp. 520–523 are found on the canopic box of Senebi (M6C) from Meir (Lüscher 1990:71), though the spells' predominance in El Bersheh still suggests that they originated within this province.

⁴¹ CT sp. 520, Amset; CT sp. 521, Hapi; CT sp. 522, Duamutef; CT sp. 523, Kebehsenuf; CT sp. 524, Horus the Father.

⁴² In numerous utterances the four children of Horus are seen protecting and helping the deceased (PT 1092/1333/1339). There are also two occasions (PT 1097/1483) in which the deceased is described as being one of the four sons; this is how the Coffin Texts spells begin.

⁴³ Another possible example can be seen below with CT sp. 758–760. These spells deal with the 'Mysteries of Mehen'.

⁴⁴ We should also note that Isis and Nephthys, usually depicted on canopic boxes, are substituted at El Bersheh with Sendjet and Renenutet according to local traditions (Taylor 2001:66).

As the primary aim of this chapter is to examine the cultural developments in the province using the medium of the Coffin Texts, it is important to understand whether these texts were actually innovations of the House of Life in Hermopolis, and what form these developments took if they were indeed occurring in the province. An attempt will be made to answer this through analysis of a selection of these spells, firstly in a more general sense and then in relation to specific features of these texts.

For the most part these unique spells appear separate from each other sandwiched between more well-known texts (Lesko 1979:15–49).⁴⁵ Of those texts listed in Table 2 only CT sp. 41 can be linked with the mortuary liturgies of the Coffin Texts (Willems 2001b:255–256; Assmann and Bommas 2002) and only three with the spell sequences identified by Lapp (1989).⁴⁶ This, and the fact that these spells were not attested again, suggests that they were largely individual compositions independent from the surrounding texts, though it should not be presumed that their placement on the coffin was not meaningful, as is implied by Baines (2004:30).⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Occasionally unique spells are grouped together, particularly if they share a common theme such as those on the coffin B1C with CT sp. 755 and 756, which appear next to one another on the back of the coffin (Lesko 1979:23).

⁴⁶ The work of Lapp managed to identify numerous different spell sequences: groups of spells which generally appear within the same order (1989:172). Several of these are synonymous with mortuary liturgies (Lapp 1989:173–178). Unique texts belonging to such sequences include CT sp. 500, which appears in a possible sequence identified by Lapp (1989:172), CT sp. 41, belonging to Lapp's sequence 2a (1989:175), and CT sp. 664 and 670, which both appear in Lapp's sequence 6a (1989:180). As observed above, CT sp. 41 is part of a mortuary liturgy and is clearly related to the spells with which it is grouped (Willems 2001b:337–344). The fact that the three other texts are found in sequences may suggest that their placement was thoughtfully considered.

⁴⁷ Baines (2004:29–30) suggests when discussing the Pyramid Texts that repositories of mortuary texts would have had large numbers of short manuscripts that could have been assembled together to form longer ones for particular circumstances or for a particular individual, largely on an ad hoc basis. This is contradicted in numerous ways. P. Gardiner II–IV and P. Berlin attest to manuscripts being made up of large numbers of spells. Moreover, the appearance of spell sequences that appear on numerous coffins (Lapp 1989:200–201) confirms that longer manuscripts were stored and perhaps also suggests that the spells were placed in this order for a reason and not, as Baines (2004) suggests, assembled ad hoc. Further evidence against such an assumption can be found when observing mortuary liturgies that are found throughout Egyptian history, for example, one such liturgy can be attested from the Middle Kingdom, in the Coffin Texts, until the Ptolemaic period on papyri

1.4.1 Themes of some of the unique spells from El Bersheh

If one assumes that some of these spells were created in the province of El Bersheh or chosen for a specific Bersheh coffin, then one might expect prominence to be given in these spells to Hermopolitan deities, in particular Thoth.⁴⁸

Table 4: Unique Spells Containing Thoth	
Coffin	Spell
B1Bo	264
	660
	670
	678
	681
	682
B2Bo	751
B3Bo	446
	725
B4Bo	910
B9C	396
B10C	62
B15C	693
B2L	485
B5C	314
	339

However, on close examination only sixteen of the 123 unique spells have any mention of Thoth (see Table 4) and only three make reference to the Chaos gods,⁴⁹ a group of eight

(Assmann 1990:10–11). The majority of our unique texts do not appear in a sequence or a liturgy but the fact that the Egyptians were preoccupied with the placement of texts is clear; therefore, one should not assume the process of pyramid or coffin decoration was conducted in an ad hoc manner.

⁴⁸ The brief study by Hoffmeier (1996:45–54) tried to determine whether spells were changed in different localities to promote regional theological agendas. He comes to the conclusion that this was not a common practice with only a few examples in the Book of Two Ways. There are in fact occasions where the opposite has occurred, with Bersheh coffins changing the deity from Thoth to Re (CT VI 228–229). However, numerous spells from El Bersheh that are found on more than one coffin do give prominence to Thoth, so these could conceivably indicate some theological bias (CT sp. 277, 555, 569). Perhaps these texts were quite common and given more attention, which is why they do not tend to appear in the corpus of unique spells. It should also be noted here that the text which usually decorates the front of the coffin, a *hṭp di nsw* formula addressed to Osiris, is often replaced on Bersheh coffins by a formula addressed to Thoth and displays phraseology unique to Middle Egypt. Willems notes that because of the predominance of Thoth in the region, ‘it is not unreasonable to suppose that the impetus for the spread of text 7 came from Bersheh’ (Willems 1988:197–198).

deities which for a long time have been associated with the Hermopolitan Ogdoad.⁵⁰ Of these sixteen examples the majority only have brief references to the deity, and it would therefore seem that the majority of spells were not chosen or composed specifically with the intention of advancing the regional theological dogma. Occasional glimpses are seen where Thoth is given a prominent place in the text. In CT sp. 693 from B15C Thoth is referred to as the ‘chiefest of the gods’ (CT VI 325j)⁵¹ and in CT sp. 725 from B3Bo the section dealing with Thoth (CT VI 356i–357f) is considerably larger than those of the three other deities mentioned. It is possible to argue that the importance of Thoth in the region led to an elevation of his status in these particular spells, although this was not the case for the majority of our unique texts.

An examination of some of the unique spells from B2L reveals that they generally tend to adhere to traditional themes established in the Coffin Texts.

CT sp.	Theme
698	Protection of the deceased
699	Going forth
701	Anti-scatophagus
702	Provisioning of the deceased
703	Transformation spell
707	Ascension to the sky
708/709	Building a mansion in the West ⁵²

⁴⁹ These are CT sp. 665 and 689 from B1Bo and CT sp. 714 from B3L.

⁵⁰ Such a comparison has been made by several scholars (Zandee 1973:65–66; Altenmüller 1977:1083; Hoffmeier 1996:52) and it was first suggested by Sethe (1929:120). However, doubt over the connection has been expressed and it should be noted that the eight Chaos gods are never explicitly linked with the Hermopolitan Ogdoad (Barta 1992:9).

⁵¹ *hr.y-tp ntr.w*

⁵² Such spells are not common in the Coffin Texts but the theme does appear at numerous points, including CT sp. 119, 188, 484, 571.

This is also the case for the majority of the other texts in our corpus. However, elements that are slightly more unusual are embedded in some of these more common themes. It is apparent from the title that CT sp. 720, on B3Bo, is clearly a transformation spell (Buchberger 1993:125): ‘To transform into a dawn god and live by means of magicians’ (CT VI 347n–o).⁵³ The deity, the ‘Dawn God’, referred to in this passage is an obscure figure. It is in the Coffin Texts that the mention of such a deity is first seen, and the only context in which it is specifically related to the deceased is in this spell (Leitz 2002:603). Another interesting unique spell of B3Bo is CT sp. 722. The text begins with the title ‘To become a Morning Star’ (CT VI 350f),⁵⁴ and this is therefore also a transformation spell.⁵⁵ In the text itself the deceased is said to be different celestial bodies a total of four times (CT VI 350i/n/q). While the morning star is mentioned several times throughout the Coffin Texts (Van der Plas 1998:169), it is only here and on CT sp. 724, also only found on B3Bo, as well as on CT sp. 443, where the deceased is actually invoked as the star itself. Such representations are in fact much more commonly seen in the Pyramid Texts, where the king is several times referred to as either the Morning Star or the Lone Star (Faulkner 1966:159–160).⁵⁶ In this case the influence for CT sp. 722 and 724 seems likely to have come from ideas that were more readily expressed in the Pyramid Texts. A certain individuality in these unique texts based around well-known themes can be observed, in which different concepts were being expressed from those generally being found in the Coffin Texts. Significantly, transformation spells do not appear in the Pyramid Texts as seen in the Coffin Texts corpus (Buchberger 1993:14). CT sp. 722 may therefore provide an example in which a theme from the Pyramid

⁵³ *hpr m Hd-tʿ nḥ m ḥkʿ.w*

⁵⁴ *hpr m ntr-dwʿ.y*

⁵⁵ In his comprehensive study Buchberger (1993) observed the popularity of these spells in the Coffin Texts.

⁵⁶ PT 871/1295/1336/2014/877/1899.

Texts was adapted according to more recently-established traditions.⁵⁷ What can be observed here is independence of thought and perhaps again the personal preference of the deceased.

However, despite what has just been discussed, on the coffin of the General Sepi (B1C) there is an example of a small group of spells which are thematically very different from those which appear throughout the rest of the Coffin Texts. On this coffin the unique spells CT sp. 758–760 are related to a vignette which appears on the coffin (see Figure 1).

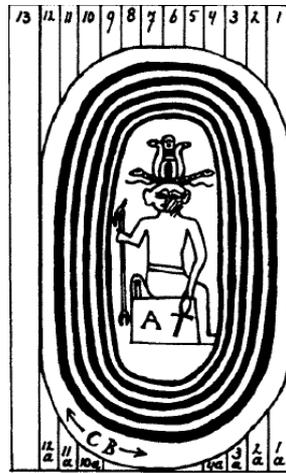


Figure 1: Vignette of CT sp. 758–760 from the Head of B1C (CT VI 386)

The vignette depicts Re enthroned and surrounded by concentric circles, which the text makes clear are four roads of fire depicted in red and five black roads. These roads are guarded by nine gates and protected by Re (CT VI 387a–m). A deity referred to as Mehen⁵⁸ is described as both the roads themselves (CT VI 390k) and the one who sails along them in his barque (CT VI 387c–d). References to this deity are also found in CT sp. 493 and 495, both

⁵⁷ In the Pyramid Texts it was the celestial vision of the afterlife, whereby the deceased would live among the ‘imperishable stars’, which dominated the theme of the corpus (Allen 1989:1). However, this is not the case in the Coffin Texts in which an underworld that was centred on Osiris was promoted (Assmann 1989:143).

⁵⁸ Faulkner translates this as the ‘coiled one’ (1977:291).

only found on B3L (CT VI 73/77).⁵⁹ Both spells refer to the ‘*šṭ.w mḥn*’ (CT VI 73j/77f), translated as the ‘Mysteries of Mehen’,⁶⁰ and the implication of this phrase is that secret knowledge existed concerning this deity. CT sp. 759 in fact deals with the importance of knowledge of the ‘roads of Mehen’, with repeated assertions that the deceased knows particular features of the roads (CT VI 389c–d).⁶¹ CT sp. 758–760 have been interpreted, for the reasons mentioned above, as a part of initiation rituals which were undertaken during life (Piccione 1990:44).⁶² If this is the case, then the texts have been transferred from one context to another.⁶³ Important to this study is that the theme of the ‘roads of Mehen’ is not seen elsewhere, and that the use of the vignette is quite unusual for the Coffin Texts.⁶⁴ These spells were not part of the established Coffin Texts tradition, and even if they were not produced

⁵⁹ Both spells also appear on B3Bo but the lines referring to the ‘Mysteries of Mehen’ are only found in the B3L versions. This is perhaps an example of a later addition to the text by the scribes in the House of Life in Hermopolis.

⁶⁰ Piccione (1990:43) agrees; however, Faulkner (1977:134–135) translates this as the ‘secret affairs of the coiled one’.

⁶¹ Such assertions of knowledge are a common feature of the Coffin Texts, particularly more so than of the Pyramid Texts, although similar phrases are still common in other Old Kingdom writings (Edel 1944:22–26; Baines 1990:11–12; Hays 2004:190). Such concepts are believed by Assmann (1989:143) to have arisen out of the desire to master the ever-increasing complexity of the knowledge of the Netherworld. The formulation of knowledge takes the form of a fictitious science, the like of which Borghouts (1988:12) has observed in CT sp. 366.

⁶² Piccione (1990:44) believes this to be ‘a system of secret and dramatic ritual to reveal hidden aspects of the gods’. Assmann (1989:135–159; 2005:200–208) has demonstrated the importance of initiation in various aspects of Egyptian funerary religion. He cites numerous examples from the Book of the Dead where the deceased is initiated into the mysteries of the Netherworld (2005:200). He believes that such a concept derived out of rites of initiation which took place during life (1989:141, 151), although such an opinion had been expressed prior to Assmann’s article (Federn 1960:241–257) and has been the focus of considerable debate (Wente 1982:161). While the evidence Assmann (1989) presents is convincing, whether it is the case for the majority of funerary texts remains unknown. The fact that Egyptian funerary mythology was based around concepts exhibited in the world of the living and not simply ‘religious speculation’ can be established without suggesting that aspects were specifically taken from worldly initiation rituals as Assmann (1989:141, 151) does. If the conclusion of Piccione (1990:44) can be accepted, we are, however, dealing with an example supporting Assmann’s conclusion.

⁶³ Baines (2004:21) notes that it was likely that mortuary texts were not kept separate from those created for other purposes, and the evidence cited above clearly supports this. Exposure to these texts may well have led individuals in the Hermopolitan House of Life to use them even though they were not traditionally associated with coffin decoration.

⁶⁴ Where they do appear it is usually on Bersheh coffins. For example, it is possible to note that the Book of Two Ways is usually accompanied by a drawing of a map of the Netherworld, and the Field of Hetep spell CT sp. 466, found on eight of the Bersheh coffins (Lesko 1972:90), is accompanied by a plan of the Field of Hetep (CT V 359–362).

specifically for the individual, they are indicative of the ability of the individual to choose unusual spells to be placed on his or her coffin.

1.4.2 Perceived obscurity in the unique spells

When the unique spells are examined in their entirety, it is noted that a proportion are not of the same quality when compared with others of the Coffin Texts. This is partly due to the nature of the material. As the texts are only attested once, errors and omissions of the scribe cannot be corrected by comparing the text with other versions. Therefore, errors that occurred during the process of redaction and transmission have a greater effect on the ability to understand these texts. A significant proportion of these texts have omissions, rendering sentences incomplete.⁶⁷ This may have been the result of a mistake by the scribe, a lack of space on the coffin or a lacuna in the papyrus draft. Significantly, omissions of parts of texts are generally quite common even in non-unique coffin texts, yet unfortunately, unique texts are more sensitive to these omissions, and therefore caution should be taken in suggesting that they were of a lesser quality than texts appearing on more than one coffin. However, in a small but significant number of cases Faulkner (1973, 1977, 1978), in his translations, notes that some of the unique spells are of a very obscure nature (see Table 6).

⁶⁷ In three cases from the unique spells of B2L blank spaces are found in the middle of the text: CT sp. 621 (CT VI 235i/m), 703 (CT VI 334k) and 705 (CT VI 337c). It can be asserted with some confidence that these were the result of lacunas in the scribe's copy. This is clear from the fact that the version of CT Sp. 319 on B2L has a gap, while on B7C the gap is filled with text (CT IV 143a). In the New Kingdom a similar feature can be seen with the copying of Amduat (Wente 1982:164), and this perhaps suggests a concern with the exact wording (Baines 1990:13). However, it must be noted that this is generally at odds with what appears throughout the rest of the Coffin Texts, where the scribe is seemingly free to make adaptations (Jürgens 1995:249; Willems 2001b:257).

Table 6: Unique Spells Described by Faulkner (1973, 1977, 1978) as ‘obscure’	
Coffin	Spell
B1Bo	662
	666
	671
	672
	673
	681
	682
	686
B3Bo	717
	718
B3Bo	720
B9C	150
B2L	321
	702
	704
	707
	711
B1P	578
B13C	917
B5C	314

These are texts with significant omissions, incoherent themes or those we have difficulty in translating. When Table 6 is examined, it is noted that the coffins of B1Bo, B2L and B3Bo have the highest incidences of these ‘obscure’ spells, which is not surprising considering that they have some of the highest numbers of unique texts (see Table 2). However, if Faulkner’s assumptions are correct, then one questions why they have been placed on the coffins in the first place.

An unusual feature of several texts on the coffin B1Bo is that they give the impression that they were compiled from several unrelated excerpts (Faulkner 1977:238), in some cases making the text incomprehensible. One text in particular stands out: CT sp. 682, found on the front of the coffin (Lesko 1979:16), presented Faulkner (1977:249) with a particular challenge in its translation. According to him, there are numerous changes of topic

throughout the text. He identifies these changes at CT VI 310d, 310m and 311h. At one point there is even a reversion to the third person feminine (CT VI 311h), which is completely out of context and has led to the suggestion that it was an extract taken from a spell originally written for a woman and simply not changed (Faulkner 1977:249). All of this leads to what seems to be a largely disjointed text. On further analysis, however, Faulkner's assertion that the excerpts seem unrelated is far from correct. He overlooks the fact that the spell actually derives from two different pyramid texts, PT 1961-1971 (PT sp. 669) and PT 1778-1785 (PT sp. 627), as was first identified by De Buck (1956:308, 310).⁶⁸ In composing CT sp. 682, these two texts have been significantly reworked and placed together. As the following examination shows, while some aspects of the spell are puzzling, the text makes more sense than Faulkner acknowledges.

The spell can be divided into two sections, with CT VI 306k-310j corresponding to PT 1961-1971 and CT VI 310k-312q to PT 1778-1785. The first section of the spell deals with the birth of the deceased and his subsequent protection.⁶⁹ From CT VI 309b onwards it reads:

CT VI 309b	<i>ms.n sw mw.t.f Nw.t</i>	His mother Nut gave birth to him
c	<i>m sh.t-isr hnm.t ntr r.s sš Dḥwty</i>	in the field of tamerisk which nursed the god in the nest of Thoth.
d	<i>šꜥ mw im.y.w Nw</i>	Part the waters which are in the Abyss

⁶⁸ Sethe's (1910) version of both pyramid texts is incomplete. Faulkner (1969a) has translated both texts with the use of Jéquier, G, 1936-1940, *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II*, Vol. 1-3, Cairo. When there are gaps in Sethe's text, Faulkner's translation (1969a) and copy of the hieroglyphs (1969b) have been used.

⁶⁹ The translations of the coffin and pyramid texts in this thesis follow closely those of Faulkner (1969a, 1973, 1977, 1978), although they are more literal representations and there are some points of disagreement.

e	<i>ḥr ḥrw sbḥ [n] mw.t.f Nw.t</i>	at the sound of the cry of his mother Nut
f	<i>ms.s sw</i>	when she gives birth to him,
g	<i>sšr.s sw m nwr pw [ʕ]</i>	when she decorates him as the [great] heron
h	<i>pr(i) m ntr.w</i>	which goes forth from the gods.
i	<i>m iw.t r.f mw.t n.t N pn ʕs.t sn.t.f Nb.t-hy.t</i>	Coming for him, the mother of this N, Isis
	<i>dd.s</i>	and his sister Nephthys, she says,
j	<i>m tr ms n.t (m) iʕr pn</i>	‘Who, pray, is born to you (in) this thicket
k	<i>m nwrw⁷⁰ wr pr(i) m ntr.w</i>	as the great heron which came forth from the
		gods?’
l	<i>in.k[ʕ].t(w) swḥ.t ḥr.t ts m-ḥnw ʕ.w.y.s⁷¹</i>	‘The egg which belongs to him who was knit
		together within her/my arms shall be brought,
m	<i>in.kʕ.t(w) biʕi pw im.y ḥʕ.t ḥnw</i>	the wonderful one who is at the front of the
		<i>ḥnw</i> -barque shall be brought,
n	<i>sw.t ts.f ts m-ḥnw ʕ.w.y.f</i>	and he will knit knitting within his arms.’
o	<i>r m tr (r) rd ʕ.w.y rd.w.y N pn</i>	‘To what purpose, pray?’ ‘(So that) this N’s
		arms and legs may be strong.’
p	<i>pʕ.f ir.f m isš.t</i>	‘By what means will he fly up?’
q	<i>iw sḥs n.f šw.t.y ḥnw</i>	‘The two plumes will hurry to him from the
		<i>ḥnw</i> -barque.’
310a	<i>m tri r n.f</i>	‘Who, pray, will act for him?’
b	<i>ir n mḥy.i wr im.y ntr.w</i>	‘My great guardian who is among the gods
		has made
c	<i>nʕ š[ʕ.w.t] spd.w(.t) ʕw hms m ḥn.t itr.t</i>	these sharp knives. Long is the one seated in
	<i>wr.t</i>	front of the great conclave of Lower Egypt.
d	<i>iw qd mr.w.sn m tp ḥn</i>	The form of their waterways is the head of a
		<i>ḥn</i> -bird.’

Here the birth of the deceased from Nut is described, yet at 309i there is a confusing development with the introduction of Isis, who is also referred to as the mother of N, and

⁷⁰ ‘Heron’ appears differently from above; an extra *w* has been added and it is now determined as an insect. One can only presume, based on the context, that the same meaning is implied.

⁷¹ The feminine suffix *.s* is found here. Faulkner (1977:249), however, suggests that a mistake has been made and proposes that the first person suffix should be inserted. This is perhaps wrong for the reasons expressed below.

Nephthys, identified as his sister.⁷² While Nut is often seen as the mother of the deceased, Isis, as the sister and wife of Osiris, rarely holds this position in the funerary corpus;⁷³ she does, however, fulfil this role in PT sp. 669 (PT 1965a). However, describing both Nut and Isis as mothers of the deceased in the same text causes contradictions. Essentially, the insertion of Nut into this spell seems to have been a later development, as she does not appear in PT 1961–1971. This could quite conceivably have led to the confusion at 309l. The deceased here is described as the one who is knit together, a reference to the creation of the deceased in the womb and a metaphor for the actions of Isis when restoring Osiris.⁷⁴ In this case it would make sense for the mother to be referred to as Isis, and the first person suffix would be expected. However, it seems that the scribe may have been confused by the previous mention of Nut and inserted the third person feminine suffix in relation to her. 309l also presents a challenge in understanding due to the reference to the egg. The egg also appears in PT 1961–1971, although here the king is reborn from within it.⁷⁵ This seems to make more sense than what appears in 309l, and one wonders whether the scribe was confused when reworking the original. Despite this the text does manage to present an image of the birth and the subsequent care provided for the deceased.

Faulkner (1977:249) sees the first change in topic at 310d. This, however, can be attributed to a corruption of the version found in the Pyramid Texts. The corruption in fact begins earlier

⁷² The joint role of Isis and Nephthys in mourning and restoring the deceased is well understood (Bleeker 1958:1-17; Graefe 1982:457-459). However, Nephthys is absent from PT sp. 669 and her appearance here causes some confusion. Nephthys was the sister of Osiris and Isis, yet if, as in this text, Isis is described as the mother of the deceased, then his relationship towards Nephthys becomes problematic. The insertion of Nephthys is clearly a later addition and it seems that the scribe has given it little thought.

⁷³ Isis is described as the mother of the king in PT 2089. This role is exemplified in the Ptolemaic hymns to Isis at Philae (Zabkar 1983:118-122).

⁷⁴ The concept of dismemberment and restoration is discussed by Assmann (2005:23–38).

⁷⁵ PT 1969c reads, ‘behold the king, he has broken the egg’ (*mk N sd.n.f swḥ.t*), a reference to his rebirth.

at 310c. Both lines are partly taken from the pyramid text, but with puzzling changes. PT sp. 669 states that the two guides of the gods are ‘sharp of teeth and long of claws’ (PT 1969a in Faulkner 1969b:50),⁷⁶ and this must have been the basis for 310c, though in CT sp. 682 significant adaptation has occurred. A similar process has occurred at 310d; unfortunately, while a reference to the *hn*-bird is preserved in the pyramid spell, the preceding text is too damaged to provide an adequate translation (PT 1970b in Faulkner 1969b:51). What is apparent is that 310d was taken in part from this text and therefore does not represent a change in topic, but a continuation on the same theme. Significantly, the deceased’s protection is in fact a central part of the next section proposed by Faulkner (CT VI 310d–m).

CT VI 310e	<i>rd(i).n Np(n) rs.w r ʔwt.f</i>	N has placed the south wind towards his ʔwt-nurse
f	<i>iw mh.y.t r mn‘t.f...</i>	and the northern wind towards his mn‘t-nurse...
CT VI 310i	<i>...ir wrd.f dd.f shn(i) hr šw.t.y</i> <i>Gb</i>	...If he grows weary, he will be caused to rest upon the two plumes of Geb.
j	<i>mw.t.f ‘.w(y).s r.f wr.t sʔ thth.t mnd</i>	His mother, her arms (extended) towards him, the one who is great of protection and disordered of breasts.

Both of these extracts have firm parallels with parts of PT sp. 669⁷⁷ and build on the theme of caring and protection. The mention of the nurses is a reference to the deceased’s care, and this is literally expressed through the help and protection which is provided by Geb and the individual’s mother, presumably Isis or Nut. However, it is at 310j that the connection with

⁷⁶ *spd ibh ʔw ‘n.w.t*

⁷⁷ CT VI 310e–f can be linked with PT 1970c–d, and CT VI 310i–j is very similar to PT 1971.

PT sp. 669 ends, and following it we find an adaptation of part of PT sp. 627.⁷⁸ Essentially, both of these pyramid texts are dealing with the same theme, the rebirth of the king, but they do so in a slightly different manner. What is presented in the second section of the text is an image of the deceased after his rebirth.

<p>CT VI 310k <i>p3.n.f itt.n.f m bik pw 3 hr</i></p> <p><i>snb.w.t hw.t Imn rn.f</i></p> <p>l <i>iti hr.t n.t w im n dsr p.t r t3 Nw</i></p> <p>m <i>iw ir.t.y Npn m k3 sm.w</i></p>	<p>He has flown, he has soared as the great falcon upon the rampart of the mansion of Him whose name is hidden, who takes that which belongs to those therein to he who separated the sky from the earth and the Abyss. The eyes of N are the bull of the crouching one...</p>
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The new extract is integrated with the preceding section; the use of the third person suffix rather than the name of the deceased, as seen in PT 1777a–b, is in keeping with the narrative of the preceding section. It is at 310m that Faulkner (1977:249) again suggests that there is another change of topic, yet in PT sp. 627 the very same structure is noted. In the pyramid spell there is a reference to the great falcon and his separating of the sky and the Abyss, and then a description of his anatomy like bulls (PT 1778–1780b). What is seen here is a description of the deceased in his reborn state, so there is no change of theme.⁷⁹

Inconsistencies and problems are still to be seen in the text; the deceased is now described as

⁷⁸ CT VI 310k–l follows PT 1778a–b quite closely, and the rest of CT sp. 682 has links with the rest of the pyramid spell.

⁷⁹ CT VI 309d–e states that the waters of the Abyss are parted at the birth of the deceased. This line is not present in the pyramid text, and therefore one assumes that it is a later addition. The line itself is perhaps a metaphor for childbirth and also the creation from the primeval waters. It also serves as a link between the two sections of CT sp. 682, where in the second half a couple of references to the Abyss are found (CT VI 310l, 311d). This is further evidence that from 310j there is a continuation of the same theme. It also perhaps highlights the engagement of the scribe with literary techniques and shows that clear thought had gone into this adaptation. Similar examples from other spells are discussed below.

the ‘great falcon’ rather than ‘heron’, in keeping with PT sp. 627 (PT 1777a) but causing a contradiction with what has come before. Reference has already been made to what seems to be a change to the third person feminine at 311h–j, and while the reference to the ‘oldest one’ (*smsw*), who also appears in PT sp. 627 (Faulkner 1969a:261), may suggest that this part of the text is still being adapted from the pyramid text, the appearance of this section does seem slightly out of place.

Essentially, what has been observed are two different texts being reworked and joined together; however, while the editing and the unison was not without thought, it does to an extent seem to have caused inconsistencies. While this unique text is clearly not a purely original composition, the reworking and editing of the two pyramid texts could quite conceivably have taken place in the Hermopolitan House of Life. In fact, the coffin, as already noted, has spells with similar obscurities: CT sp. 666, 681 and 686 are three quite obvious examples. While more research is needed, perhaps a similar process is occurring here.⁸⁰

Similar examples of obscurity are not only found on B1Bo. One wonders whether a similar process of editing and transmission caused the corruptions in the spells listed in Table 6. Significantly, another obscure example, CT sp. 720, solely decorates the foot of B3Bo, taking a prominent place on the coffin, so it is possible that the perceived obscurity of the spell was not a problem to the coffin owner.

⁸⁰ While none have specific links with known texts, this is not to suggest that they derive from older compositions. It is generally acknowledged that only part of the corpus of funerary texts has survived (Baines 2004:210).

What is observed above is the difficulty in judging coffin texts by modern standards. These texts were seen to have been of an appropriate standard to place on the coffin walls. The text of CT sp. 682 has provided us with an insight into the nature of some of these unique texts. This spell is not an original composition, but the degree of adaptation and editing is surely indicative of creative activity and thought. This process is discussed in greater detail below; suffice to say that such texts could quite possibly be examples of Hermopolitan innovation. However, imperfections cannot be ignored. In the cases of B1Bo and B3Bo we are dealing with individuals unrivalled in status in the province, and it is quite a surprise that their coffins should be decorated with spells of a lesser standard. It could be assumed that these texts resulted from the inexperience of the scribe. B1Bo and B3Bo are among the earliest attested coffins from El Bersheh, with the earliest proposed date of their production being the end of the 11th Dynasty under Mentuhotep IV (Willems 1988:70). Therefore, their production would presumably have been among the first in the region and may well have occurred before the tradition of coffin text decoration was well established in the nome. However, this is somewhat contradicted by the view of Hermopolis as a centre of wisdom and learning,⁸¹ and by the fact that there are numerous well-written texts that most likely date to the late First Intermediate Period or the early 11th Dynasty (Mueller 1972:124; Lapp 1996:87). It is also possible to note the appearance of ‘obscure’ spells even on later coffins. Conceivably, what is seen is simply a result of the expressed wish of either the deceased or those responsible for the decoration of the coffin to include such spells. Perhaps it was the very obscurity that was attractive; death for the Egyptians held a certain sense of mystery (Assmann 1989:137; 2005:186–208) and they had a particular fondness for the obscure (Mueller 1972:99; Baines

⁸¹ Nordh (1996:177) suggests that Hermopolis may have dominated the composition and editing of Coffin Texts from the Herakleopolitan period. Unfortunately, no conclusive evidence is provided, though Willems (2008:190), as mentioned above, holds similar opinions.

1990:9–10).⁸² Therefore, such texts may well have appealed to this sensibility or at least meant that the inconsistencies did not trouble the deceased.

1.4.3 Unique spells with links to other spells from the Coffin and Pyramid Texts

As has been observed above with CT sp. 682, among the group of texts that are uniquely attested on single coffins there are those that seem to be variations and developments of existing spells, either from the Coffin or the Pyramid Texts. Table 7 provides a list of such texts; however, it is far from comprehensive and we can expect further research to provide more examples. While a full analysis of such spells cannot be achieved within the scope of this study, the following discussion will attempt to gain a greater understanding of this process in light of the innovation occurring in funerary culture in the 15th Upper Egyptian nome.

Coffin	Coffin text	Extract(s) linked to
B1Bo	311	CT sp. 310
	660	CT sp. 191
	682	PT 1961–1971; PT 1778–1785
	689	CT sp. 469
B3Bo	622	PT sp. 254; CT sp. 621
	717	PT 425a–b
B9C	696	CT sp. 427; CT sp. 545
B2L	621	CT sp. 622; PT 276–294
B1P	315	CT sp. 313
B5C	339	CT sp. 337; CT sp. 338
B1C	752	CT sp. 259
	754	PT 1978–1982
	755	PT 1257; CT sp.756
	756	PT 1257; CT sp. 755
B13C	917	PT 1620a–b

⁸²It is possible to note the 13th Dynasty inscription of Neferhotep in which the king is said to be able to read texts that the officials cannot interpret (Helck 1975:21–29, cited in Baines 1990:10).

One example is CT sp. 717 found only on B3Bo (CT VI 346a–g). The first part was identified by De Buck (1956:346) as being adapted from part of PT sp. 284 (PT 425a–b).

Below are the comparable extracts:

PT 425a	<i>dd mdw psh.n Itm mh.n.f r n W</i>	To be recited: Atum has bitten and he has filled the mouth of Wenis
b	<i>'nn.f 'nn</i> ⁸³	and he coils up the coil.
CT VI 346a	<i>tm wnm s.t in hf3.t</i>	A woman is not to be eaten by a snake.
b	<i>psh.n Itm mh.n.f r.f</i>	Atum has bitten, he has filled his mouth,
c	<i>'nn.f 'nn</i>	and he coils up the coil.

Both extracts are strikingly similar, although in the pyramid text it is the deceased's mouth that was filled rather than Atum's.⁸⁴ It is possible that the difference occurred during the process of the transmission; the Coffin Texts version would seemingly make more sense and this was perhaps the reason it was changed. One significant difference, however, is the addition of a title in the coffin text. This is a feature of funerary literature that was developed in the Coffin Texts (Coulon 2004:138; Assmann 2005:248).⁸⁵ The insertion of a title here shows that the text was adapted according to new conventions established in the Coffin

⁸³ Sethe's transcription of this line from the pyramid of Wenis reads '*nn.f 'nn n.t*'. It may be possible to suggest, however, that the *t* is in fact the coil determinative, V1 in Gardiner's sign list (1957:546), rendering the text as it is transliterated above. This would make considerably more sense. In the Coffin Texts version there is a lacuna after '*nn*' (CT VI 346c), which it may be suggested was filled with the same determinative.

⁸⁴ B3Bo belongs to a female and therefore one would expect the feminine suffix if her mouth was being described.

⁸⁵ Titles are seen in the Pyramid Texts; here, however, they play a practical role and are more notations on the conducting of rituals (Grimm 1986:105–106). Assmann (2005:248) highlights the function of titles in the Coffin Texts; unlike the Pyramid Texts they were manuscripts directed at the eye of the reader, providing a permanent store of knowledge. Such titles therefore made it easier for the deceased to access this store of knowledge. The titles in the Coffin Texts tend to describe the purpose of the spell (Coulon 2004:138).

Texts. We should also note that the text continues (CT VI 346d–g), but not as seen in the pyramid text.

PT 425c	<i>ḥw(i) spʿ in ḥw.t.y ḥw(i) ḥw.t.y in spʿ</i>	The centipede is smitten by him of the mansion, him of the mansion is smitten by the centipede.
d	<i>pf rw m ḥnw pn rw</i> ⁸⁶	That lion is within this lion,
e	<i>ḥʿ kʿ.w.y m ḥnw ṯn</i>	fighting the two bulls within the ibis.
CT VI 346d	<i>qb im.y.t niw.t</i>	Cool is she who is in the town,
e	<i>tʿ im.y.t šḥ.t</i>	hot is she who is in the country.
f	<i>m ʿm(m) N tn</i>	Do not seize N!
g	<i>m ʿm(m) iʿm.s</i>	Do not seize or bind her!

Neither text makes much sense considering the previous sentences above. In the case of the coffin text this led De Buck (1956:346) to conclude that the text was actually three separate spells. There is, however, small scope for disagreement. Firstly, it should be noted that both texts are very similar lengths and both have three sets of contrasting statements. This may suggest that this was a conscious piece of editing. Secondly, while CT VI 346d–e seems to be a complete change of topic, CT VI 346f–g could quite conceivably be referring to the snake from which the deceased is being protected. If this is correct, then despite 346d–e, the whole spell would make slightly more sense than the pyramid text. It is also probable that the insertion of lines 346d–e did make sense to the scribe, but the reasoning behind it is lost to us. Ultimately, it is tempting to conclude that CT sp. 717 is an example of a spell taken by the scribe and adapted in order to make it more suitable for the medium of the Coffin Texts.

⁸⁶ There is a mistake here – *pn* should follow the noun.

In the case of B1C four examples are found of unique spells with insertions of lines from other texts.⁸⁷ In CT sp. 755 extracts of PT sp. 532 (PT 1257a–c) are found inserted in the middle of the text (CT VI 384n–q):

PT 1257a	<i>ḥw(i).sn rpw.k ir m.k pw n Inpw</i>	They [Isis and Nephthys] prevent you from rotting in accordance with this your name Anubis.
b	<i>ḥw(i).sn sʒb ḥwʒ.t.k ir tʒ</i>	They prevent your putrefaction from dripping to the ground
c	<i>ir m.k pw n Sʒb šmʿ</i>	in accordance with this your name Jackal of Upper Egypt.
CT VI 384n	... <i>dd</i>	...Say:
o	<i>m gwʒ m m.k pw n Wʒb.w.y m ḥwʒ m m.k pw n Ḥʒ</i>	Do not choke in this your name of Him of Oxyrhynchus. Do not rot in this your name of Ha.
p	<i>m inp m m.k pw n Inpw</i>	Do not decay in this your name of Anubis.
q	<i>m sʒb r tʒ m m.k pw n Sʒb</i>	Do not drip upon the land in this your name of Jackal.

The extract of PT sp. 532 is placed towards the beginning of the spell and seems to have been chosen specifically in relation to the theme of the coffin text, the title of which is, ‘A man is not to rot in the necropolis’ (CT VI 384h).⁸⁸ It seems that the extract has not been copied directly but again adapted to fit in a different context. In PT sp. 532 it is Isis and Nephthys who prevent the deceased from rotting; however, in CT sp. 755, where Isis and Nephthys do not feature so heavily, the words are recited by an unidentified speaker who invokes the deceased through the use of the negative imperative. It also seems that the text has been

⁸⁷ CT sp. 752 and CT VI 381n–o can be linked with CT II 375c–376c and part of CT sp. 160, which also appears on B1C. CT sp. 754 is an adapted version of PT 1978–1982, and CT VI 384o–q is an adapted version of CT sp. 755; CT VI 386a–e and CT sp. 756 are both linked to PT 1257a–c (see Table 7).

⁸⁸ *tm ḥwʒ s m ḥr-ntr*

adapted on a literary basis. It is possible to note the homophones *rpw* and *Inpw*, and *s3b* and *S3b* in the pyramid text. These are both seen in CT sp. 755, although *rpw* is converted to *inp*, making the connection more explicit. The coffin text also elaborates on this concept, and two further homophones can be noted between *gw3* and *W3b.w.y*, and between *hw3* and *H3*. In these cases both of the deities referred to are slightly usual⁸⁹ and it is possible to imagine that they have been placed in the spell specifically for the literary effect rather than for theological reasons. The adaptation of this text was therefore thoughtful and considered, and it illustrates that the scribe had a working knowledge of literary techniques.⁹⁰

While the remainder of the text bears no direct parallels with the pyramid spell, there is one distinguishable thematic link. In PT sp. 532 we read, ‘Isis comes, Nephthys comes, one of them from the west, and one of them from the east’ (PT 1255c).⁹¹ Isis and Nephthys, however, are not explicitly referred to in CT sp. 755; however, allusions to them are made at CT VI 385b/n. They are described as the ‘The two sisterly companions, West and East’.⁹² Their inclusion was probably inspired by PT sp. 532, though in the coffin text their role is expanded as the central depiction of them is as mourners of the deceased (CT VI 385n–r), a role that they do not play in the pyramid text. It is therefore apparent that, as well as adapting elements of the text, the pyramid spell served as a source of reference to the scribe.

As already mentioned, four of the unique spells from B1C contain obvious links to other texts. Among these four CT sp. 753, 755 and 756 seem to share a common idiom, the use of the interjection *hw-3* translated as ‘would that’ (Gardiner 1957:580). It is found in all three

⁸⁹ The desert god Ha appears only a few times in the Coffin Texts (Van der Plas 1998:195), and Him of Oxyrhynchus only seems to appear in CT sp.755 and 756.

⁹⁰ Literary devices such as allegory, metaphors, puns and alliteration all feature in Egyptian literature (Allen 2010:244); a similar device can clearly be seen here.

⁹¹ *ii 3s.t ii Nb.t-hy.t w3.t.sn m inm.t.y w3.t.sn i3b.t.y*

⁹² *r3.t.y sn.t.y inm.t.y hn3 i3b.t.y*

spells (CT VI 382g; 385b; 385m; 386f) despite the fact that it is not commonly used in the Coffin Texts (Van der Plas 1998:198). There may, therefore, be some small indication here that all three texts were composed by the same individual who had a particular liking of the construction. If this can be accepted, it then becomes easy to presume that these texts were created specifically for the coffin of Sepi in a similar way to that in which CT sp. 62 was created for the nomarch Amenemhat (Assmann 1996:20). In support of this conclusion it is possible to note the case of CT sp. 754, another unique text of B1C, and an adaptation of PT 1978–1982, which linguistically shows a degree of modernisation from its pyramid text counterpart (Vernus 1996:156–157).⁹³ Such evidence would agree that adaptations were being undertaken during the Middle Kingdom⁹⁴ and therefore could quite possibly have been contemporary with Sepi.

Along with those spells showing engagement with pyramid texts there are also a few listed in Table 7 that can be linked to other coffin texts. The scribes of Hermopolis were able to edit, adapt and develop at will, and in so doing created new and individual texts. Texts which reference others cover the whole period of coffin production at El Bersheh from the late 11th Dynasty, with the group A coffins, to the reigns of Sesostris II and III, with those of group D. While further research involving a complete analysis of these texts may reveal more specific chronological differences, the appearance of these texts across the chronological time span indicates that this was surely a process in constant use throughout the period of the nomarchal

⁹³ Vernus (1996:171–172) notes that the main linguistic background of the Coffin Texts seems to lie in the First Intermediate Period, although one notes that archaisms are common in Egyptian texts (Vernus 1996:164–168; Willems 1996:198), and therefore this should not be taken as a reliable date for the production of the majority of coffin texts. Significantly, CT sp.754 displays a grammatical form (subject + *hr* + infinitive) only usually found in the Middle Kingdom (Vernus 1996:170).

⁹⁴ Unfortunately, a linguistic analysis of these spells has not been possible in this thesis, though it would be valuable to any future study of the unique texts.

dominance in the Hare nome during the Middle Kingdom.⁹⁵ In studying this process of adaptation one is afforded a very insightful glimpse into the productive activity of the Hermopolitan House of Life and the way in which some of these unique texts were created, perhaps, as mentioned above, specifically for an individual. This process of adaptation provided the text with a link back to older or more established traditions, and therefore perhaps gave the spell a greater sense of legitimacy.⁹⁶ These texts are also evidence of an engagement with the material on an intellectual level, whether it be from the Old Kingdom or possibly spells from a more contemporary setting, and this is a feature of some coffin texts that has already been observed elsewhere (Hays 2004:200).⁹⁷

1.5 Conclusions

While the study presented above is far from a complete analysis of the material, it seems to provide substantial evidence for the productive activity occurring in the Hare nome. All three of the sections dealing with the analysis of the unique spells show that they display elements of creativity, thought and, in certain respects, individuality. This, combined with the evidence for the House of Life in Hermopolis, ultimately leads to the conclusion that these texts derived from the creativity of the scribes of Hermopolis. It has been possible, particularly in the penultimate and final sections, to observe elements of this creative process.

⁹⁵ Any future research should involve a more rigorous search for spells which are adapted from or reference other texts.

⁹⁶ Age and obscurity are closely linked in Egyptian texts. Both it would seem can confer authority on the text, as has partly been observed by Luiselli (2003:349). It is also possible to note here the colophon from CT sp. 577 only found at El Bersheh. The colophon states, 'this book was under the flank of Khnum' (Faulkner 1977:182). This denotes the divine origin of the spell and gives it a degree of authority. Similar authority can arguably be conferred on the spell by linking the text to older traditions.

⁹⁷ Hays has observed the process on a larger scale, dealing with issues of continuity and change of spells concerning the Field of Rushes between the Pyramid Texts and the Coffin Texts. The evidence he presents shows that constructions of the Middle Kingdom were engaging with the earlier texts through a process of development and evolution.

The evidence from coffins attests to this productive activity occurring from the end of the 11th Dynasty to the reign of Sesostris II or III. Attempts to identify any differences between the unique texts of coffins attested to different points in this chronology have been inconclusive. The high number of attestations of these unique spells from coffins of Willems's group A and group D seems to confirm that this productive activity remained constant throughout the aforementioned time span. One is, however, left wondering at the lack of evidence after the reign of Sesostris III, after which no coffins can be attested at El Bersheh. This will be discussed further in the concluding section of this thesis.

What has been seen in the above discussion is a very particular element of the funerary culture of the Hare nome, and in studying it, its nature and the forms that it took have been observed. These unique texts are one element that makes the tradition of the Coffin Texts in El Bersheh so rich and diverse. One is therefore moved to understand its origins and reasons for its development. Firmly embedded in the history of these unique spells must be the coffin owner and the scribe of the House of Life. Numerous pieces of evidence have been cited highlighting the personal preference of the deceased, leading to the possible conclusion that these texts were commissioned or specifically chosen for the coffin. Personal preference is not completely removed from society. The decorating of one's coffin with texts can be seen as an assertion of one's social status (Willems 2008:226–227). It could be possible that the unique texts are an extension of this. As an institution the House of Life could conceivably make money out of the decoration of coffins and the creation of texts (Nordh 1996:131–132). Placing unique texts on the coffin may therefore be a way to assert one's wealth; it has been noted above that the coffins of some of the lower-ranking provincial officials seem to have less unique texts, though this is contradicted by the coffins of the nomarch Amenemhat who also has few. Similarly, they may be representative of an individual's desire to stress his or

her access to ‘restricted knowledge’, and CT sp. 758–760 is perhaps the most obvious indication of this.⁹⁸ Of course, there is also the possibility that these texts have arisen simply out of an individual’s personal inclination for a certain style or theme. Significantly, all three propositions are not mutually exclusive, and when the evidence is observed in full, it is only really possible to conclude that the appearance of unique texts was driven by a multitude of factors. Ultimately, what has been seen in this analysis is that the elite society of the Hare nome, which arose out of the powerful nomarchal court, was a driving force behind cultural innovation in the province; in a wider sense these developments in funerary culture are reflective of the cultural independence of the nome.

⁹⁸ Baines (1990:22) notes that ‘restricted knowledge’ is socially competitive and highlights division between social groups.

Chapter 2. The Pottery of Beni Hasan: Developments in Funerary Culture and their Relationship to Society

The previous chapter has observed developments and innovation occurring in the funerary culture of the 15th Upper Egyptian nome. These developments highlight the independence of provincial culture, which was driven by the socially competitive elite. The study of the ceramic material presents a slightly different perspective of the culture of the nome. Bourriau (1986:47) states that 'Pottery is our most sensitive indicator of cultural variations between regions'. A more chronological approach to cultural development can be taken due to the dateable nature of the evidence and, in particular, significant comparisons can be made between Beni Hasan and other sites in Egypt. Significant emphasis in this chapter will be placed specifically on the influence of the state on the pottery of the 16th Upper Egyptian nome. Firstly, examples will be compared to pottery found throughout Egypt during the early Middle Kingdom which shows little development from the forms seen in the First Intermediate Period. Secondly, attention will be paid to the appearance of Residence style forms in the cemetery. It is intended that this will shed further light on funerary culture in the 16th Upper Egyptian nome and more generally in the provinces during the Middle Kingdom.

2.1 Background: the cemetery of Beni Hasan

The shaft and chamber tombs of Beni Hasan are located below the rock-cut tombs of the nomarchs and the provincial elite. Among these there are shaft tombs, a group dating from the late Old Kingdom and a subsequent group dating to the Middle Kingdom, of which the latter make up the majority of the tombs (Seidlmayer 1990:217). Seidlmayer (1990:217) sees a clear distinction between the Old and Middle Kingdom tombs based on the sequences of pottery. He sees the scale and intensity of the Middle Kingdom tombs as representing a clear break with the Old Kingdom tombs and reflecting the political history of the region.⁹⁹ The rock-cut tombs can be mainly assigned from the 11th Dynasty onwards and therefore are contemporary with the shaft tombs that we deal with. The last rock-cut tomb, that of Khnumhotep II, can be securely dated to at least the reign of Sesostriis II or possibly the beginning of the reign of Sesostriis III. A similar date is put forward for the end of the use of the shaft tombs (Seidlmayer 1990:233); however, as we will see below, this should probably be extended slightly to the later 12th Dynasty.¹⁰⁰

The research conducted on the shaft tombs and the pottery of Beni Hasan is quite limited. The excavated material was published by Garstang (1907), and since then only Williams (1975:36–42),¹⁰¹ Kemp & Merillees (1980:50–53),¹⁰² Seidlmayer (1990:216–233) and Orel (1993:38–217) have discussed the pottery in any detail. Seidlmayer (1990) and Orel (1993) both attempt to form a chronology of the shaft tombs based on ceramic material. Seidlmayer

⁹⁹ This is in contrast to the conclusion made by Garstang (1907:44) that there was no break in the archaeological sequence until the beginning of the 11th Dynasty.

¹⁰⁰ Grajetzki (2006:115) comments that the shaft tomb cemetery continued to be in use from the late 12th into the 13th Dynasty. However, he fails to support this assertion with any evidence. Similar conclusions are, however, arrived at below from the analysis of the pottery.

¹⁰¹ Williams uses the pottery in order to establish Beni Hasan in the wider context of the chronology of the Middle Kingdom.

¹⁰² Kemp uses the pottery of Beni Hasan in a comparison with the corpus of Haraga.

(1990:230), with the use of seriation, concludes that there are three phases of the pottery. The first two phases date to the 11th Dynasty and the very early 12th Dynasty and are made up of First Intermediate forms. The third phase, comparable with the ‘Classic Middle Kingdom’ (1990:Fig. 95), which in this thesis is referred to as the Residence style, dates from the reign of Sesostri I to that of Sesostri II (1990:Fig. 168). Seidlmayer also notes that the necropolis expands to the north while contracting to the south, with the ‘Classic Middle Kingdom’ assemblage focused on the northern area of the site (1990:230–233). However, Seidlmayer’s (1990) work orders the pottery into artificial groups. In these groups are chronological variations of similar forms, thereby limiting the effectiveness of his study.¹⁰³ Furthermore, he relies completely on the inadequate material published by Garstang¹⁰⁴ and does not take into account the reuse of certain tombs. Orel (1993), on the other hand, tried to identify the pottery from the excavations from museum collections and is partially successful. In doing so, she is able to reconstruct a basic history of the necropolis, arguing that the main intensity of use was during the Middle Kingdom up to the middle of the 12th Dynasty, after which we see a downward trend in activity (1993:217). Significantly, Orel did not have access to Seidlmayer’s work, and vice versa, which may have better informed both studies. Willems (1988:62–68) also discusses the shaft tombs; however, this is in the context of the coffins rather than the pottery. His analysis shows the later coffins (Amenemhat II–Sesostri III) occupying the north of the cemetery, thereby partially supporting Seidlmayer’s conclusion about the development of the necropolis. However, while stating that the necropolis expands to the north, Willems (1988:64) observes that while no early burials seem to be found in the

¹⁰³ For examples see Seidlmayer (1990:221) group BH 108.

¹⁰⁴ The problems with Garstang’s publication (1907) are discussed below.

northernmost areas of the necropolis, later burials have been discovered in both the north and the south areas. Seidlmayer (1990:233) excludes such a possibility.¹⁰⁵

2.2 Background: funerary pottery and its limitations

Funerary pottery in the Middle Kingdom can have two purposes; either the vessel has a ritual and magical function or it was placed in the tomb as an offering and therefore has a utilitarian role. Those forms in the former category develop independently of the domestic repertoire and are dictated by funerary traditions, for example, the Ḥs vase shows little development throughout the whole of Egyptian history (Arnold 1977:487). However, with the exception of the Ḥs vases, it is difficult to identify vessels with a specific ritual function in the Beni Hasan corpus. As the majority of vessels in Garstang's corpus come from inside the tomb and are of the medium to large storage type, the latter is the most likely function of the majority of forms. Vessels and their contents were offered in order to provide for the deceased. The Middle Kingdom ideal provided the tomb with vessels which were needed for the storage and consumption of food and drink; their role was to ensure that the deceased had sustenance for the afterlife (Seiler 2005:161). These vessels may not have been made specifically for the cemetery and were possibly reused from the settlement.¹⁰⁶ The pottery dealt with in this thesis therefore largely originates from a domestic setting, and it would be reasonable to expect that these vessels developed in tandem with developments in the settlement corpus, although such an assumption should not be made uncritically. It is, however, reflected by the variety of forms observed by Garstang (1907:Pl. XII-XV). However, it is necessary to consider whether the material is representative of the total ceramic repertoire of the nome. In

¹⁰⁵ The conclusion of Willems is reinforced by the observation made by Orel (1993:216) concerning the reuse of tombs over several generations.

¹⁰⁶ This is supported by the appearance of Marl C in the cemetery, as will be discussed below.

the analysis of Second Intermediate Period pottery from Ballas differences between the settlement and cemetery corpora are noted (Bourriau 1986:53-55). Bourriau (1986:53-55) identifies that some forms are found only from the settlement contexts while all of the cemetery types have parallels with forms found in the settlement, although some types are more heavily represented in the cemetery. While the pottery of Beni Hasan does seem to be linked with the domestic corpus, the results of Bourriau's (1986) study would imply that it cannot be taken as being completely representative of the total ceramic repertoire in use in the province.

Links between the domestic corpus and the pottery of Beni Hasan may be illustrated further in the rock-cut tombs. These portray vessels in use during everyday activities (Paice 1997:1). The depictions work in the same way as the pottery left in the tomb; in depicting scenes of daily life it was intended that the tomb owner would enjoy the benefits of these activities in the afterlife (Paice 1997:1). One would therefore expect the tombs to provide images of those forms in use in the domestic corpus and to find parallels between the pottery depicted and the pottery found at Beni Hasan. If parallels can be found, then conclusions can perhaps be made concerning the date and function of the vessel. Where possible, this evidence will therefore be drawn upon as an additional source of information, though not uncritically. Caution must be taken; the pottery seen on tomb walls is often sketchily depicted (Paice 1997:1). Secondly, the decoration of a tomb was governed in part by decorum, and therefore the scenes may depict traditional vessels rather than those actually in use during domestic activities. The latter concern is partly dismissed by the depiction of different vessels used for similar activities in the tombs of Khety (Newberry 1893b:Pl. XVI) and Amenemhat (Newberry 1893b:Pl. XII) at Beni Hasan.

In order to come to conclusions when dealing with evidence such as pottery, it is important to have a broad understanding of the nature and limitations of the evidence. The first of these is the state of the published material. As with other early publications, only the outline of the pottery is shown on a series of plates (Garstang 1907:Pl. XII–XV). As a result it is difficult, and in most cases impossible, to identify both the fabric and the technology of the pots. The plates also provide only one example of a given type, and while Garstang (1907:194) did suggest that he found little variety among the forms, small changes may indicate chronological developments which can as a result no longer be observed. Garstang (1907) has also ignored the majority of open forms, while the pottery is only listed for about one third of all tombs, and it is therefore possible to presume that a significant proportion of the pottery was not published. The omission of sherds from the corpus provides another problem; it remains impossible to gain an accurate picture of the quantitative distribution of pottery types. To some extent these problems can be eased through the consultation of Orel's (1993) re-examination of those finds now in collections. Along with this, comparisons with other sites may help to confirm areas of doubt in the Beni Hasan corpus. However, for the most part this thesis simply has to make do with the material available and its limitations. An analysis of pottery taken entirely from cemeteries raises other issues. Cemeteries have the ability to provide groups of pottery deposited together at specific points in time (Bourriau 1986:49) and shortly after they were produced. Their study therefore provides a snapshot of cultural data from a specific chronological point. However, such results are often distorted by tomb robbers, who can displace and damage the pottery in the tomb, and by the reuse of the tomb over successive generations; these factors are a particular problem when dealing with shaft tombs (Bourriau 1986:49–50). As Garstang (1907) gives little context to the pottery finds, it makes it particularly difficult to tell whether the tomb has been disturbed or reused.

This in turn could affect the accuracy of the seriation of the material, as has been attempted by Seidlmayer (1990:216–233).

All of the issues discussed in this section must be taken into account in the following analysis of the pottery corpus of Beni Hasan if accurate conclusions are to be arrived at.

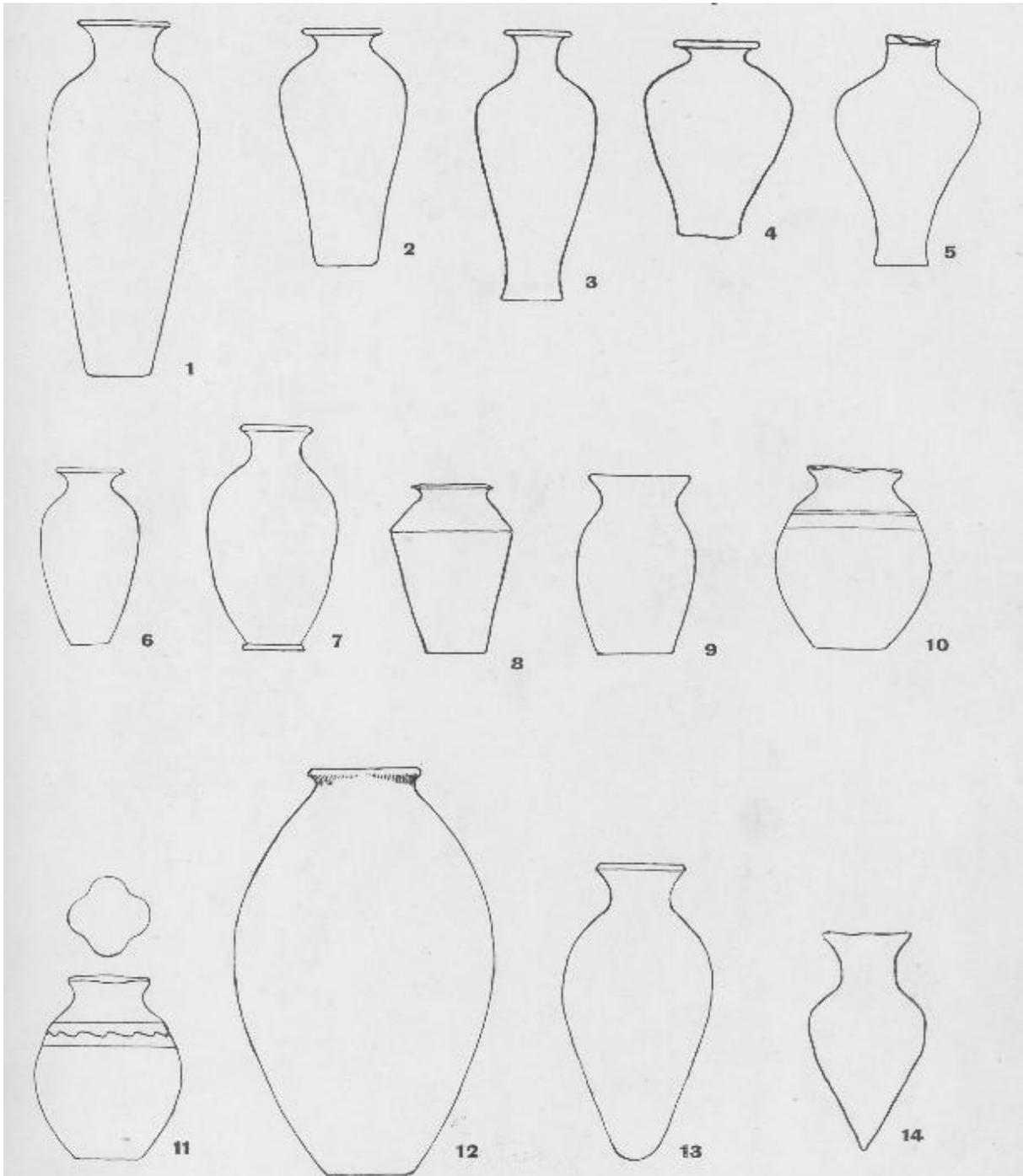


Figure 2: Garstang pottery types 1-14 (Garstang 1907:Pl. XII)

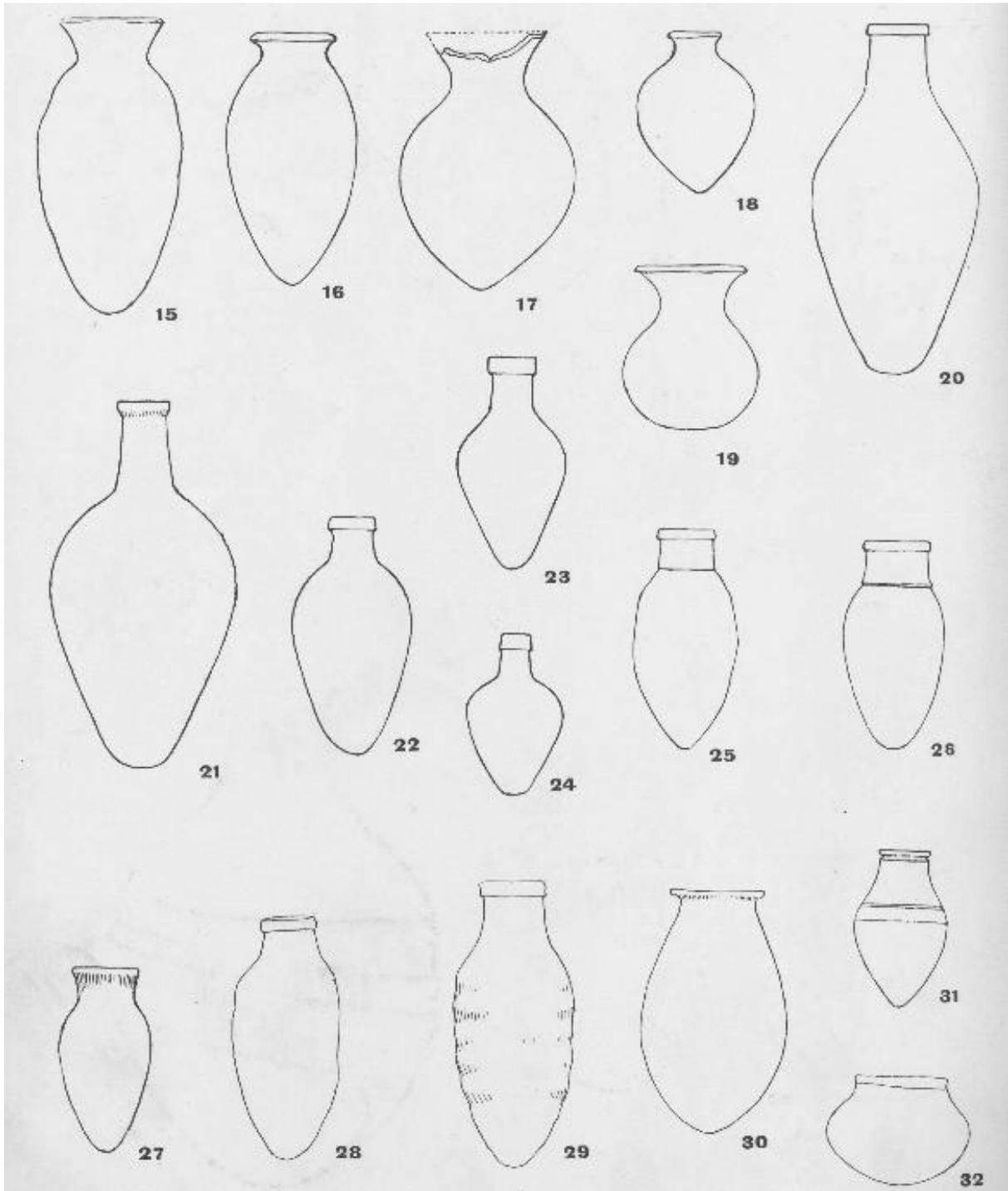


Figure 3: Garstang pottery types 15–32 (Garstang 1907:Pl. XIII)

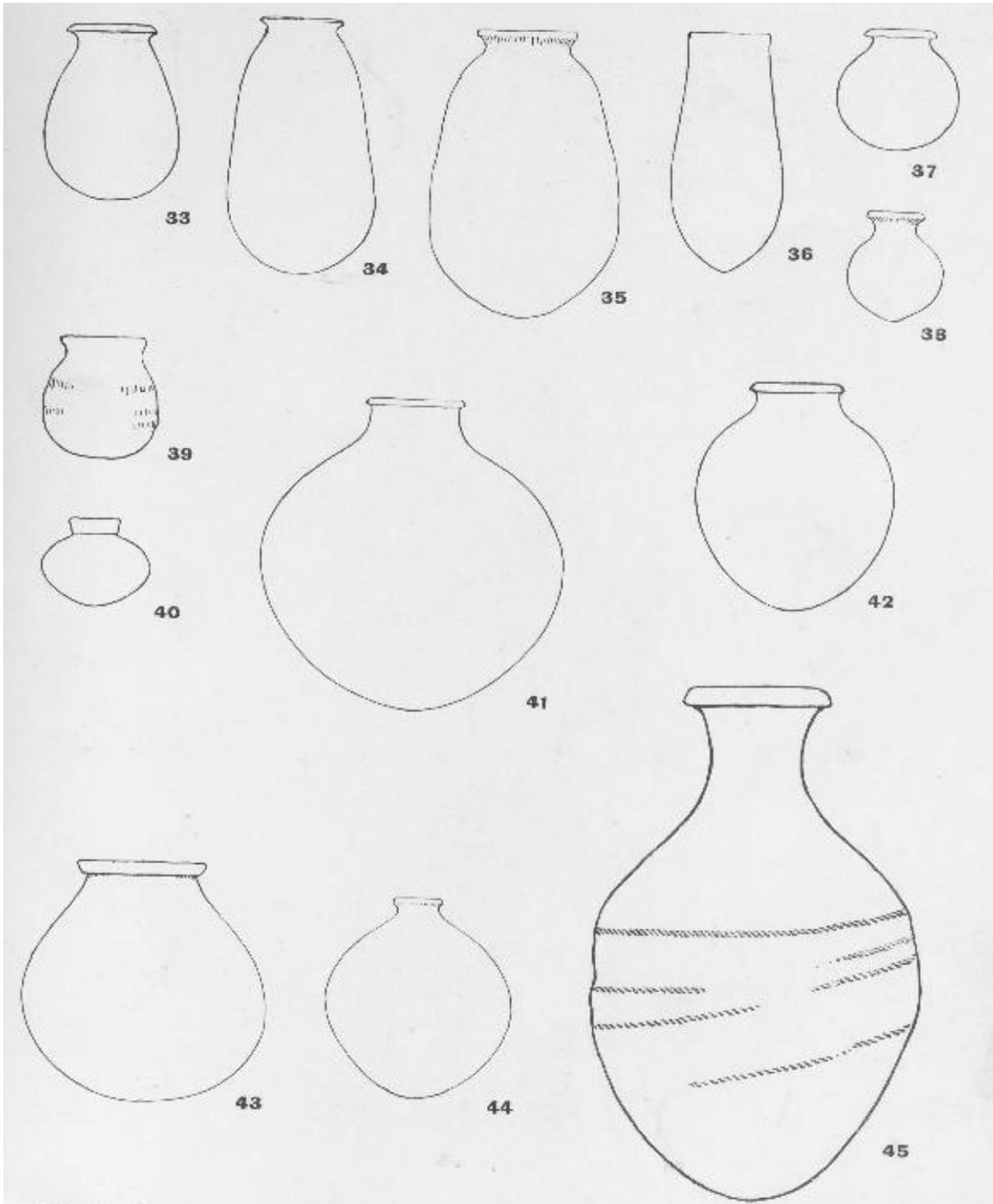


Figure 4: Garstang pottery types 33–45 (Garstang 1907:Pl. XIV)

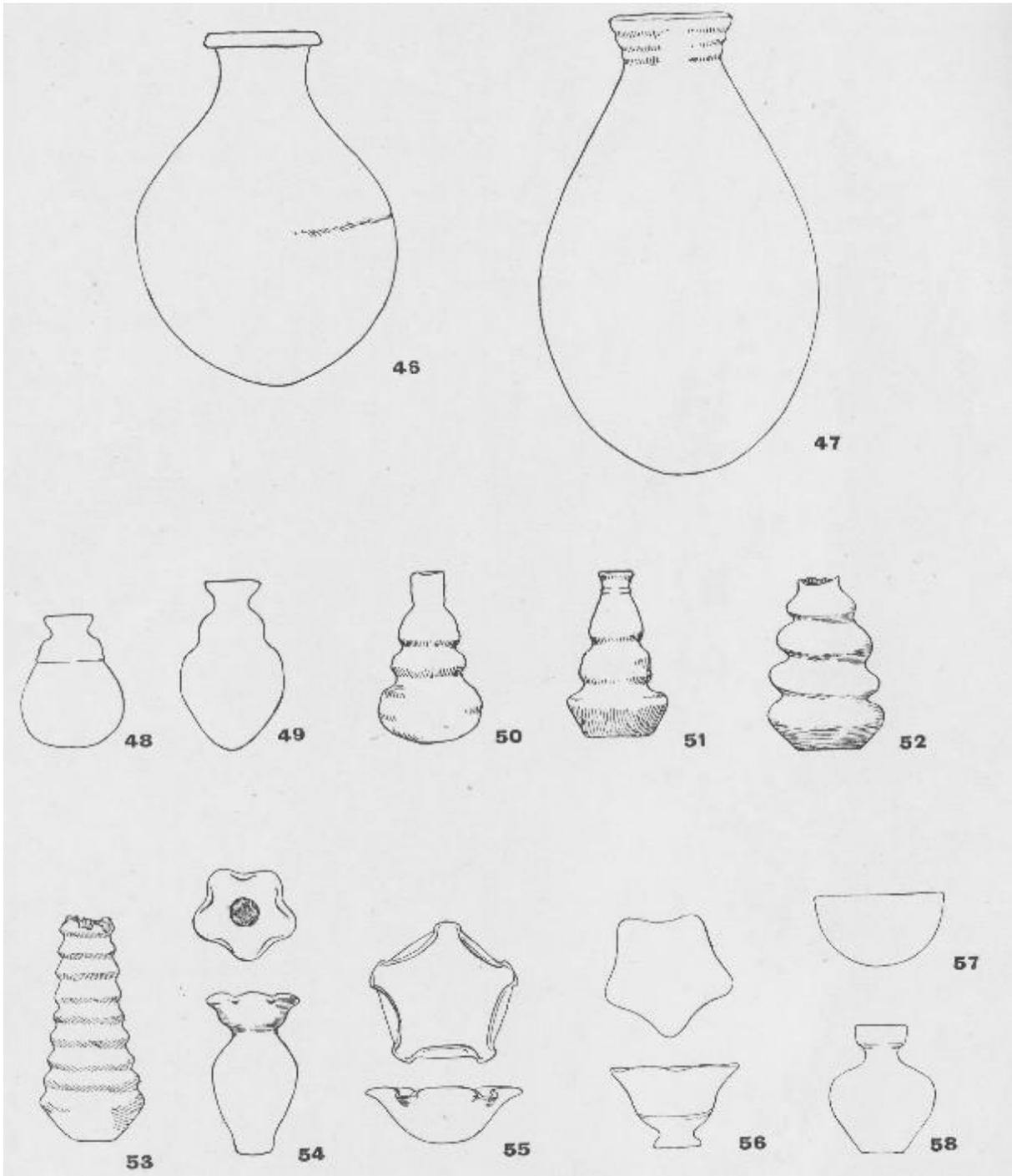


Figure 5: Garstang pottery types 46–58 (Garstang 1907:Pl. XV)

2.3 Pottery with parallels to First Intermediate and early Middle Kingdom types¹⁰⁷

Hs vases (Garstang types 1–7)

The appearance of these forms at Beni Hasan is hardly surprising considering their role in funerary ritual throughout the whole of Egyptian history. This link between the type and the ritual ensured that the form transcended the evolution of different styles, showing very little significant development (Arnold 1977:487), and its presence is noted at the majority of Middle Kingdom cemeteries. It has, however, been noted that the Beni Hasan examples are most similar to those of Upper Egypt from the First Intermediate period to the 12th Dynasty (Orel 1993:63).

Large flared-neck jars with pointed bottoms (Garstang types 13–18/27)

These types are generally restricted to Lower and Middle Egypt (Arnold 1972:44–45).¹⁰⁸ They were usually made from a coarse Nile clay¹⁰⁹ and were among the most popular in the necropolis (Seidlmayer 1990:Tab.65). This form is found in numerous variants at Beni Hasan and elsewhere, attesting to the popularity of the shape over a long period of time. In terms of

¹⁰⁷ Garstang's (1907) plates of the pottery have been reproduced in Figures 2–5. More accurate drawings of a very limited number of items of the Middle Kingdom pottery have been provided by Orel (1993:Fig. 2.7–2.19). However, with the exception of one example they have not been included in this thesis as they provide little benefit to this particular study.

¹⁰⁸ Arnold does note their one attestation from Edfu but states that examples of this type of vessel decline the further south one goes. She also stresses their complete absence from the corpus of El-Tarif and that at Qau el-Kebir they are in the minority compared with the drop-shaped vessels typical of Thebes.

¹⁰⁹ The examples from Beni Hasan studied by Orel (1993:82–91, 105) were apparently all made of Nile C. At Abu Ghalib similar examples to these pots can also be found in Nile C (Bagh 2002:Fig. 3a/6a). Flared-neck jars with pointed bottoms are also found in the foundation deposits of Lisht (Arnold 1988:Fig. 52–54), although in some cases the neck is visibly less flared (Arnold 1988:Fig. 54.9–10). This is perhaps representative of early developments of the potters of the new Residence. These examples are all in Nile B2 (Arnold 1988:107–109). However, similar narrower versions of this type from Sedment and Herakleopolis Magna have been identified as being of Marl C (Bader 2002:35; Op de Beeck 2007:158). The range of materials in which this form is found is a clear indication of the popularity of this shape.

function, they were used for the storage of liquids (Arnold 1972:44).¹¹⁰ An example of this type is depicted in the tomb of the nomarch Khnumhotep II (Newberry 1893b:Pl. XI) in scenes related to the preparation of funerary equipment and the making of the coffin, although its use in this scene is not too clear. However, it does attest to the use of this vessel at least until the reign of Sesostris II. This type disappears at Lisht and other sites nearer the Residence with the ascent of the Residence style. It is replaced by the beer jar discussed below.

Bottle-necked jars (Garstang types 20–24)

These jars generally seem to be restricted to Lower Egypt, with the necropolis of Beni Hasan being the furthest south that they are known to appear. The examples examined by Orel (1993:97–100) were apparently all in Nile C. Arnold (1972:45) links these with the flared-neck jars discussed above.¹¹¹ They are also subject to a considerable amount of regional variation. The types of Beni Hasan are distinct because of their narrow and sometimes elongated necks and strongly pronounced shoulders. A close parallel to type 21 is perhaps found at Abu Ghalib (Larsen 1936:Fig. 10). However, in the early levels of Haraga, Sedment and Herakleopolis Magna these types are found with shorter necks and less pronounced shoulders.¹¹² At Beni Hasan there is also a variety in the size of the vessels generally not found elsewhere. The taller types (Garstang types 20–23) are depicted in the 12th Dynasty tomb of the nomarch Amenemhat (Newberry 1893b:Pl. XII), while the smaller type (Garstang type 24) is found in the earlier tomb of Khety (Newberry 1893a:Pl. XVI).

¹¹⁰ Arnold (1972:44) groups the two types together under the heading ‘Bier-Wasserkrug’.

¹¹¹ Arnold includes this type, along with the flared-neck jars with pointed bottoms, when she states that ‘Krüge dieser Form finden sich in so gut wie allen Nekropolen der ersten Zwischenzeit...’ However, while she gives examples of flared-neck jars appearing in other cemeteries, not one of her examples is of a bottle-necked jar.

¹¹² Haraga types 92–103 (Engelbach 1923:Pl. XXXIII), Sedment type 86 (Petrie 1924:Pl. XXXIV) and Herakleopolis Magna (Bader 2009:Fig. 5).

Both are used for the storage of wine (Paice 1997:11). This may suggest that the smaller version predated the larger.¹¹³ Again, in the north this type disappears with the ascent of the Residence style. At Haraga they no longer appear in the later levels and no examples were found at the southern cemeteries of Lisht.

Bottle-necked jars with a narrow body and wide necks (Garstang types 25/26/28/29)

These are again one of the most common types of the corpus of Beni Hasan and they seem to be related to the bottle-necked jars discussed above.¹¹⁴ Orel (1993:102–107) has again identified all types as being of Nile C. Their large size yet again suggests that they were used for storage. This form can be divided into two sub-types, with types 25 and 26 having a very different style of neck from 28 and 29. While there are no real parallels to be found for types 25 and 26,¹¹⁵ there are similar types to 28 and 29 throughout Lower Egypt¹¹⁶ and Qau, Mostagedda and Matmar¹¹⁷ in Middle Egypt. As with other forms that we have seen, these too disappear at the beginning of the 12th Dynasty at sites in the Memphite-Faiyum region.

Small globular vessels (Garstang types 32/37–40)

¹¹³ This is supported by Seidlmayer (1990:Tab.65), whose seriation attributes the examples of the smaller types to phase I, whereas the larger are only found from phase II onwards. Orel (1993:97–100) attributes all of these forms to the First Intermediate Period, while later acknowledging that First Intermediate types continued to be in use during the Middle Kingdom (1993:217).

¹¹⁴ The two types from Beni Hasan seem to represent the two extremes of those generally found elsewhere. Compare these with Sedment type 86 (Petrie 1924:Pl. XXXIV).

¹¹⁵ A similar example is seen at Sedment, types 92g/h (Petrie 1924:Pl. XXXV), although they are quite clearly different. Qau type 58C (Brunton 1928:Pl. XC) may also be a possible parallel.

¹¹⁶ Sedment type 86b (Petrie 1924:Pl. XXXIV), Saqqara (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 163.42) and Herakleopolis Magna (Bader 2009:Fig. 5.a).

¹¹⁷ Types 58B/C/D/H from Qau (Brunton 1928:Pl. XC) and Seidlmayer K-B40.01 (1990:Fig. 73).

The smaller globular forms apparently appear yet again in Nile C (Orel 1993:112, 123–131),¹¹⁸ and type 37 in particular is an imitation of stone vessels (Orel 1993:123).¹¹⁹ Parallels of the short-necked globular form type 37 and the slightly more flared-neck version type 38 are not restricted to certain specific regions of Egypt (Orel 1993:123–125). The production of the former type is quite clearly depicted in the tomb of Amenemhat (Newberry 1893b:Pl. XI), attesting to its use during the 12th Dynasty. On the other hand, Garstang type 40, with its wide squashed shape and conical rim, has no real parallels. The closest parallels found come from the ointment jars of the First Intermediate Period levels of Qau, types 88M/P/R/S (Brunton 1928:Pl. LXXXI; Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 75.K-B73.02) and are included in Seidlmayer's group of Old Kingdom vessels that disappeared during the First Intermediate Period (1990:434).¹²⁰ This may, therefore, represent continued development of this type of vessel into the Middle Kingdom at Beni Hasan. In the case of type 32 parallels can be found with the First Intermediate period at Elephantine (Seidlmayer 1990:224; Fig. 161:125–2A/8).¹²¹

Drop-shaped vessels (Garstang types 33–35)

Significantly, the dropped-shaped vessels found at Beni Hasan have parallels solely with Upper and Middle Egypt.¹²² No such types seem to be found in the cemeteries further north. In the examples given by Garstang it can be concluded that unlike el-Tarif and Qau, where there is significant development of these drop-shaped vessels over the time span of the

¹¹⁸ Orel (1993:125) does note one example of type 38 in Nile B2.

¹¹⁹ Orel notes that a yellow slip is applied to these vessels with the intention of imitating alabaster.

¹²⁰ Two 12th Dynasty parallels are listed by Orel (1993:129), Riqqeh types 35t₂/35v (Engelbach 1915:Pl. XXIX); it is, however, difficult to see how either can be closely related to type 40.

¹²¹ Orel (1993:114) suggests a possible parallel with Sedment type 94e (Petrie 1924:Pl. XXXV). However, on closer examination this is quite tenuous.

¹²² Such forms are found at Thebes in el-Tarif (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 33; Arnold 1972:Fig. 3.7), at Dendera (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 44.F), Elephantine (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 161.54-1C/7), in the Qau-Matmar series (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 64) and at Deir el-Rifeh (Petrie 1907:Pl. XIII).

cemeteries (Seidlmayer 1990:84–87, 162–164), the Beni Hasan types show a lack of evolution.¹²³ They are representative of only the later examples at el-Tarif and Qau. There are, however, specific differences between the types that appear in these two areas. Significantly, the drop-shaped vessels from Beni Hasan, types 34 and 35 with their shoulders, are more similar to those of el-Tarif, although Qau is much closer in proximity. However, exact parallels are not found at either site.¹²⁴ Arnold (1972:45) sees these drop-shaped vessels as an alternative to the flared-neck and pointed bottom vessels discussed earlier.

Tall barrel-shaped flat-bottomed vessel (Garstang type 12)

Type 12, presumably used for storage because of its size, is found, according to Garstang, in only a total of four tombs. The only clear parallel seems to be in the Qau corpus types 49H (Brunton 1928:Pl. LXXXV) and 64W (Brunton 1928:Pl. LXXXVII) from the end of the First Intermediate Period (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 83). Bader (2001:146) has linked this vessel with tall flat-bottomed jars with a bulging rim in Marl C found at Tell el-Dab'a. However, such a comparison is doubtful as no whole vessel has been found at this site, and from the picture the example from Beni Hasan does not seem to be of Marl C (Garstang 1907:Fig. 197).

Medium to large globular vessels (Garstang types 41/42/44)

The types of globular vessels found at Beni Hasan seem to be reasonably common in the necropolis. Type 42, which has higher shoulders than the other two examples, can perhaps be

¹²³ According to Seidlmayer (1990:Fig. 95), type 33 appears only in his phase I, whereas the others are located in phase III.

¹²⁴ It should also be noted that just south of Beni Hasan at Rifeh the drop-shaped vessel type 120 (Petrie 1907:Pl. XIII) is much more similar to those of the Qau-Matmar series, specifically type 33T (Brunton 1928:Pl. LXXXIX).

linked with type 70 from Haraga (Engelbach 1923:Pl. XXXII) or 74h from Sedment (Petrie 1924:Pl. XXXIII), although neither is a direct parallel. On the other hand, types 41 and 44 are possibly examples of globular jars similar to those of Upper¹²⁵ and Middle Egypt.¹²⁶ Two examples of rims from the necropolis of El Bersheh have also been published (Willems et al 2004:Fig. 5.1002/24, 1003/14). The first of these is similar to Garstang type 41 and the second to type 44. Both vessels are of the material Marl A3, an Upper Egyptian Marl (Bourriau and Nordström 1993:177), leading to the assertion that they were probably Theban imports (Willems et al 2004:255). If the examples from the Beni Hasan corpus are directly comparable, we can expect to come to a similar conclusion. However, according to Orel (1993:137), the one example of type 44 that she observed was made of Nile C.

Other types

Also present at Beni Hasan are numerous other smaller decorative forms. Garstang types 48–53 represent a series of forms common in Lower¹²⁷, Middle¹²⁸ and Upper Egypt¹²⁹ seemingly throughout the Middle Kingdom. This is similar to the case of the wavy rim drinking bowls (types 54–56) with clear parallels in Lower Egypt at Sedment (Petrie 1924:Pl. XXX), the early levels of Haraga (Engelbach 1923:Pl. XXXIV) and Middle Egypt in the Qau, Mostagedda and Matmar series (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 59.K-A05.02). On the other hand, the wavy-rimmed pot types, types 10–11 in Garstang's corpus, are much more rooted

¹²⁵ Dendera types 57 and 61 (Petrie 1900:Pl. XVII).

¹²⁶ Rifeh type 139 (Petrie 1907:Pl. XIII).

¹²⁷ Haraga types 49 (Engelbach 1923:Pl. XXXVIII), Sedment types 79r/s/t/w (Petrie 1924:Pl. XXXIII), Lahun type 49 (Petrie 1923:Pl. LVII). Kemp & Merrillees (1980:51) make direct comparisons between the types of Sedment and Haraga and those of Beni Hasan.

¹²⁸ Rifeh types 115, 121 and 122 (Petrie 1907:Pl. XIII).

¹²⁹ El Kab types 63–64 (Quibell 1898:Pl. XVI), El Tarif (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 35.QA274).

in the Upper and Middle Egyptian ceramic tradition.¹³⁰ The wavy-lined decoration of type 11 is a well-known Middle Egyptian decorative technique (Rzeuska 2005:10). The other significant type that should be mentioned is the hemispherical cups which were popular throughout all sites of the Middle Kingdom. Surprisingly, they are said to only be found in very few Beni Hasan tombs, though they were probably ignored as they are rarely found complete. Work on these forms from Elephantine (Von Pilgrim 1996:186–188) and El Bersheh (Willems et al 2004:255) has revealed that they develop differently in different regions of Egypt.

2.4 Examples of the Residence style at Beni Hasan

Among the pottery corpus of Beni Hasan are the following 12th Dynasty types which are clearly examples of the Residence style. Significantly, they do not dominate the corpus but exist alongside those forms listed above. Of some significance is the fact that none of these examples are depicted on tomb walls (Williams 1975:40).

Medium-sized globular jar (Garstang type 43)

This type, from the picture presented by Garstang (1907:Fig. 200), is seemingly produced in Marl C.¹³¹ This is confirmed from the large number of parallels found throughout Egypt.¹³²

However, the examples observed by Orel (1993:135) are supposedly in Nile C, so one

¹³⁰ Type 181 from the Riqqeh corpus (Petrie 1907:Pl. XIII) has a similar decoration and shape; however, it has a rounded bottom.

¹³¹ In black and white the picture shows that the pot has a greyish-white surface typical of Marl C vessels (Bourriau & Nordstöm 1993:180).

¹³² Parallels are noted from the early 12th and 13th Dynasty levels of Elephantine (Von Pilgrim 1996:Fig. 160h–i/Fig. 155d). Type 194 from Rifeh is perhaps the closest parallel (Petrie 1907:Pl. XIII); this example has a pot mark, the importance of which is discussed below. Similar forms to this are noted from Tell el-Dab'a (Bader 2001:Fig. 24–25) and Dahshur (Arnold 1982:Fig. 19.1). Bader (2001:41) has suggested that these types began to appear from the mid-12th Dynasty.

wonders whether Garstang combined two forms that were not necessarily related.¹³³ The type in Marl C is commonly found in both settlement and funerary contexts, leading to the suggestion that it had a very general purpose (Bader 2001:111).¹³⁴ If they were made of Marl C, this indicates that the vessels were imported from elsewhere and, as will be seen below, this is most likely to be the Faiyum region. Orel (1993:117) also notes that there is a Marl C version of type 33 (see Figure 6).

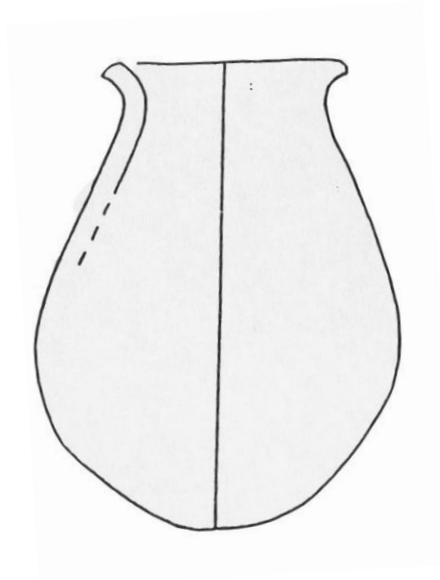


Figure 6: Orel type 33B: Marl C example of the later medium-sized globular jar (Orel 1993:Fig. 2.15)

This vessel should be classified under type 43 and is a later elongated version of the globular form like those found at Tell el-Dab'a (Bader 2001:109–112) and Dahshur (Arnold 1982:62–64).

Beer jars (Garstang types 45–46)

¹³³ It is possible that the examples observed by Orel represent local copies of imported forms.

¹³⁴ Indeed, examples have been found with ash residue on the outside, suggesting they were even used for cooking (Bader 2001:108).

Garstang's type 45 and the smaller type 46 are very typical 12th Dynasty shapes. These distinctive bottle-shaped round-bottomed forms are made from Nile C (Orel 1993:138) and they were used for the storage of liquid (Bourriau & Quirke 1998:70), as their name suggests. Both examples from the corpus seem to have the larger rounded rims. They are the most common Residence style forms that appear at Beni Hasan, with both 45 and 46 appearing a total of eighteen times each in Garstang's tomb inventory (1907:211–244; Orel 1993:138–139). These vessels begin to be found throughout the Memphite-Faiyum region after the reign of Sesostri I and continue to be popular in the region throughout the late Middle Kingdom. However, examples are also found in Upper Egypt¹³⁵ and Nubia (Smith 1995:56). Arnold (1988:141) has been able to show that the neck of the beer jar develops over time. From the pictures presented by Garstang, types 45 and 46 are clearly not comparable with the earlier examples from Lisht but with slightly later types from later Lisht deposits (Arnold 1988:Fig. 70) and the cemeteries of Riqqeh (Engelbach 1915:Pl. XXX)¹³⁶ and Haraga (Engelbach 1923:Pl. XXXVI).¹³⁷

Globular jar with a flared neck (Garstang type 19)

This water jar was only found a total of eight times at Beni Hasan (Garstang 1907:211–244). However, this type is commonly seen throughout the rest of Egypt from the 12th Dynasty onwards, although it is a standard Residence style form and is more commonly found nearer the Faiyum region.

¹³⁵ Examples are known from Elephantine (Von Pilgrim 1996:Fig. 155a), Asasif (Arnold 1972:Fig. 4.9) and Abydos (Wegner 2001:Fig. 10).

¹³⁶ Types 41f/j/k/o.

¹³⁷ Types 41d–f.

Large ovoid bottle with a corrugated neck (Garstang type 47)

Like the medium-sized globular jars these too are found in Marl C. This is again seen in Garstang's photograph (1907:Fig. 200).¹³⁸ Once more it attests to the origin of the vessel in the Memphite-Faiyum region. As far as its distribution is concerned, this vessel is once again mainly found in Lower Egypt (Bader 2002:41). However, examples are also found throughout Nubia (Smith 1995:Fig. 3.6A), Elephantine (Von Pilgrim 1996:Fig. 161c/160j/156b)¹³⁹ and at Abydos (Wegner 2000:Fig. 9.32).¹⁴⁰ These parallels begin to be found from the middle of the 12th Dynasty onwards (Bader 2002:41). The purpose of this vessel was the storage and transportation of liquid, with the corrugated neck serving a functional purpose, allowing the vessel to receive a carrying rope (Arnold 1981:185; Bourriau 2004:84). A representation of the vessel is found on a late Middle Kingdom relief with the inscription 'wine' (CG 20722, cited in Arnold 1981:185), although other inscriptions highlight that they were also used for water (Arnold 1981:185–186), and locally-made variants at Abydos suggest that they were not used specifically for one product (Bader 2002:42). The fact that these vessels originated close to the Residence yet are found throughout Egypt has led to the suggestion that they were used for the distribution of commodities (Bader 2002:42), wine being at least one of these. It is in this way that they must have been transported to Beni Hasan. Supposedly found in only five tombs at Beni Hasan,¹⁴¹ this type was probably not as popular as the beer jars or other non-Residence style storage types. The fact that it was not regionally produced must have been a factor in this, as well as the fact that it appeared towards the end of the use of the necropolis.

¹³⁸ Orel (1993:140) was unable to observe any examples of this type; however, she came to the conclusion that they were produced in Nile C. This is clearly wrong when comparisons with other sites are made.

¹³⁹ In all three of these cases the examples from Elephantine represent a slight variation in the form of this type. This will be discussed below.

¹⁴⁰ This example is in the Upper Egyptian material Marl A4 and shows that the type was being produced at Abydos rather than being imported.

¹⁴¹ It is noted that there were several examples of this form in tomb 67 (Garstang 1907:214).

2.5 Analysis

2.5.1 Chronology

In order to fully understand developments in the Beni Hasan corpus, we must have an understanding of the chronological time frame in which the First Intermediate types and elements of the Residence style appear. It is quite clear that the shaft tombs are largely contemporary with the Middle Kingdom rock-cut tombs of the nomarchs. It is agreed that these date to around the unification of Egypt by the Thebans (Shedid 1994:13–15). The cemeteries below these tombs arose out of the perception that the placing of one's tomb below those of the provincial elite allowed the deceased to share with the cult of the nomarchs above (Garstang 1907:51).¹⁴² Therefore, the main occupation of the cemetery can be dated, like the rock-cut tombs, from the beginning of the 11th Dynasty to the reign of Sesostris II. The life of the necropolis has been divided by Seidlmayer (1990:216–233) into three phases according to his seriation of the pottery. According to this, phases I and II, approximately dated by Seidlmayer from the 11th Dynasty to the beginning of the 12th, contain pottery from the First Intermediate Period, and phase III, dating from the reign of Sesostris I to Sesostris II, sees the emergence of the Residence style.¹⁴³ Significantly, the vast proportion of the First Intermediate types appear in all three phases (Seidlmayer 1990:Tab.65). A similar conclusion is arrived at by Orel (1993:217). She stresses that the high proportion of types from the First Intermediate Period perhaps suggests their continued use until the 12th Dynasty.¹⁴⁴ As far as the end of the use of the necropolis is concerned, the sequence of rock-cut tombs ends with the tomb of Khnumhotep II, dating to the reign of

¹⁴² Notably, the shaft tomb cemetery generally expands to the north (Willems 1988:64; Seidlmayer 1990:224), as do the rock-cut tombs.

¹⁴³ For the dating of the phases see Seidlmayer (1990:Fig. 168).

¹⁴⁴ Orel (1993:216–217) also puts forward the suggestion of the continued reuse of tombs, which would account for the mixed assemblages of both First Intermediate and later types. However, she rightly concludes that if this was completely the case, it would suggest that we have a very high proportion of First Intermediate burials, which is unlikely.

Sesostris II or possibly Sesostris III, and the unfinished tomb of Khnumhotep IV, dating to the same time or very slightly later (Franke 1991:54)¹⁴⁵.

Seidlmayer (1990:233) suggests that the youngest examples of the corpus, for example, those of the Residence style, date from the time of Amenemhat II to Sesostris II, at which point the occupation of the cemetery presumably ended, as with the rock-cut tombs. However, if the examples of the Residence style are closely compared with more easily dated examples, a few discrepancies must be noted. Firstly, a mid-12th Dynasty date has been suggested for the first appearance of the large ovoid jar with the corrugated neck because of its popularity in the late 12th Dynasty (Arnold 1988:77; Bader 2001:129, 2002:41). This would suggest that the example from Beni Hasan is the earliest attestation of this form and that it was appearing at Beni Hasan very soon after it first began to be produced.¹⁴⁶ While possible, when compared with the evidence from beer jars, we could argue that the shaft tomb cemetery continued to be used later into the 12th Dynasty up to the reigns of Sesostris III and Amenemhat III. The beer jar presented in Garstang's corpus, type 45, represents a very typical 12th Dynasty shape. However, at Lisht it is noted that such forms do not appear until approximately the reign of Sesostris III (Arnold 1988:146). The earlier versions of this type

¹⁴⁵ It is possible to date a couple of the later shaft tombs by cross-referencing individuals with officials listed in the rock-cut tombs above. Both tombs 500 and 75 have been identified as belonging to officials of the court of Khnumhotep II (Kemp & Merrillees 1980:51; Willems 1988:66; Seidlmayer 1990:232), and therefore may also easily date to the reign of Sesostris II or Sesostris III. Unfortunately, the pottery from these tombs cannot be dated with certainty because of the reuse and revisiting of ancestral tombs (Orel 1993:216–217). For example, types 45 and 46 appear in tomb 500; they may have been placed in the tomb a while after the burial. The appearance of these two types is quite problematic. Garstang's drawings of the pottery show two chronologically-sensitive types. From these drawings one can conclude, as is done below, that type 45 is later than type 46. Either it must be assumed that type 45 was placed in the tomb a while after type 46 and the burial of the deceased, which is an idea entertained by Orel (1993:216), or the drawings of Garstang are not representative of the full range of these types found.

¹⁴⁶ Bader (2001:130) acknowledges Seidlmayer's dating of phase III and concludes that a date towards the end of this phase during the reign of Sesostris II for the appearance of this form is most likely. It appears, however, that she is unaware of the possibility of a later end date for the use of this necropolis, as will be discussed below.

from Lisht, which are more globular with necks that narrow slightly at the top (Arnold 1988:Fig. 67/68), are pointedly absent from Beni Hasan.¹⁴⁷ Significantly, Orel (1993:138–139), on examining the vessel indices of types in museums in reference to the dating of these vessels by Arnold (1988:142–143), comes to the conclusion that type 46 can be dated to the late reign of Sesostri III or the early reign of Amenemhat III. Type 45, on the other hand, fits well within the clusters of Dahshur, dating these examples to the reign of Amenemhat III. The Marl C example of type 33 (Orel 1993:117) should also be noted as this has clear parallels with later 12th Dynasty medium-sized globular forms found at Tell el-Dab‘a (Bader 2001:109–112) and Dahshur (Arnold 1982:62–64).¹⁴⁸ This one example is likely to be no earlier than the later reign of Sesostri III. All of this evidence points to main forms of the Residence style appearing no earlier than the reign of Sesostri III, when the rock-cut tombs of the nomarchs were no longer being built. In the past it has been assumed that the appearance of the Residence style at Beni Hasan is contemporary with its appearance in the Memphite-Faiyum region (Kemp & Merrillees 1980:51). Arnold (1988:144) expresses caution and has stressed that the ‘Middle Egyptian pottery workshops held onto First Intermediate types longer than the rest of the country’. This seems to be the case at Beni Hasan.

¹⁴⁷ Types 44 and 41 are globular bottles but have a very different style of neck. Type 41 has a short straight neck, whereas type 44 has a very short conical neck.

¹⁴⁸ Arnold notes the development of these vessels. Over time the widest point becomes lower than the midpoint, with the vessel becoming more drop-shaped.

2.5.2 The appearance of the Residence style at Beni Hasan: a comparison with the pottery of Lisht South Cemeteries¹⁴⁹

The date of the appearance of the Residence style at Beni Hasan is significant when the corpus is compared with that of the South Cemeteries of Lisht. It is here, in the latter half of the reign of Sesostri I, that the replacement of the First Intermediate forms with the Residence style (Arnold 1988:146) is first seen. While no intermediary forms between the two styles are noted at Lisht,¹⁵⁰ in her analysis Arnold (1988:144) has been able to identify transitional forms from the cemetery of Sedment,¹⁵¹ dated to around the middle of the reign of Sesostri I (Arnold 1988:145). Despite the fact that there is no break in the archaeological sequence at Beni Hasan during the Middle Kingdom, none of the types displayed in Gartstang's corpus can be said to have features of this intermediary character. This is highlighted in the fact that all of the similar forms (types 13–18) have well-pronounced shoulders.¹⁵² Also significant are the early beer jars that appear with the emergence of the Residence style during the latter part of the reign of Sesostri I. From the Lisht corpus it is noted that these undergo clear development, with the Classic Middle Kingdom form not appearing until around the reign of Sesostri III (Arnold 1988:141–142, 146). From examples of Beni Hasan, no development of this kind can be observed. Both of these examples suggest that the Residence style arrived at the 16th Upper Egyptian nome after it was already established in the Faiyum, towards the mid-12th Dynasty. On closer inspection of the Lisht corpus we also note the absence of the large ovoid bottle with the corrugated neck seen in the

¹⁴⁹ This corpus has been published by Arnold (1988).

¹⁵⁰ The necks of some of the pots have a rudimentary character typical of the Residence style (Arnold 1988:145).

¹⁵¹ These transitional forms display more balanced proportions with higher or more rudimentary necks (Arnold 1988:144).

¹⁵² Compare types 13–18 with the intermediary forms from Sedment, types 66h/m/n/t (Petrie 1924:Pl. XXXIII).

Beni Hasan corpus.¹⁵³ This provides more evidence for the later appearance of the Residence style in Beni Hasan.

In terms of the whole corpus it is very important to note that at Lisht the Residence style completely replaces that of the First Intermediate Period. However, at Beni Hasan the majority of the First Intermediate forms continued to be used in the funerary context along with those of the Residence style. This is a fact that has also been noted elsewhere (Kemp & Merrillees 1980:51; Arnold 1988:144). It is important to observe that numerous elements of the Residence style do not appear; the flat-based beakers found at Lisht and throughout the Memphite-Faiyum region (Arnold 1988:145) are noticeably absent from Beni Hasan. Considering their popularity elsewhere, one can assume that they were not produced in this province. In fact, except the globular flared-neck jar, the three Residence style types are generally related to the storage and transportation of commodities. It seems on first glance that the appearance of the Residence style represents an administrative or economic connection.

2.5.3 The Residence style at Elephantine

In order to gain a fuller understanding of the rise of the appearance of the Residence style in Beni Hasan, a comparison can also be made with Elephantine. The necropolis of Qubbet el-Hawa has unfortunately revealed little in the way of pottery from the Middle Kingdom.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Only one example of the rim of this type is observed at Lisht South (Arnold 1988:Fig. 74.122).

¹⁵⁴ The only examples seemingly from this period include a bottle of some sort, possibly a beer jar (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 162.137E/4), and a storage jar (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 162.64-2/9) with a tall neck and folded rim clearly of the Upper Egyptian tradition (Gallorini, in press), as well as hemispherical cups and footed plates (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 162). Bommas (1999:58) has been able to date one example of a hemispherical cup to the 12th Dynasty and the reign of Sesostri I.

On the other hand, a small but insightful amount of the complete forms from the settlement on the island have been published (Von Pilgrim 1996:321–363; Rzeuska 2005:10–16).¹⁵⁵ It is important to note at this point that the settlement pottery has an entirely different context from that which is seen at Beni Hasan. The pottery would have been used in everyday contexts. There is also the problem of residuality, especially when dealing with such short chronological phases as is done here. Any comparison must therefore be approached with caution. However, what Elephantine does help to establish is the relationship between traditional local forms and the appearance of typical Residence style types in the provincial context.

What is firstly apparent is the large number of identifiable Upper Egyptian types throughout both levels 14 and 13.¹⁵⁶ There are numerous examples of pottery with wavy-line decoration, a uniquely Upper Egyptian tradition (Von Pilgrim 1996:Fig. 153i/157i/159o/160b/d/e),¹⁵⁷ as well as a strong presence of the Upper Egyptian materials Marls A3 and A4 (Rzeuska 2005:10–11).¹⁵⁸ However, along with the standard Residence style types which are found throughout Egypt, including the hemispherical cups and globular jars with flared necks, numerous examples of Marl C vessels are found. There are examples of both the

¹⁵⁵ Significantly, it was only the complete forms that were included in Von Pilgrim's publication (1996). While they give examples of the types that are appearing, the examples are not a true representation of the whole ceramic corpus.

¹⁵⁶ It is also important to be aware that the dated stratigraphy from Elephantine is slightly contentious (pers. comm. C. Gallorini). This is a point which is emphasised by the fact that Rzeuska (2005:10–11) dates level 14 to the early 12th Dynasty and level 13 from the reign of Sesostri I to the end of the 12th Dynasty, whereas Von Pilgrim (1996:15) dates the same phases from the reign of Sesostri I to Sesostri II and the reign of Amenemhat III respectively. Both of these phases, however, clearly date to the 12th Dynasty.

¹⁵⁷ This is different from the only example from Beni Hasan with similar wavy-line decoration (Garstang type 11) in that this example has a single line whereas all of the examples found of such decoration from Elephantine display multiple parallel wavy lines applied with a comb-like tool (Rzeuska 2005:10).

¹⁵⁸ Examples are provided by Von Pilgrim (1996:Fig. 160d/158a/154a) and Rzeuska (2005:4.1/4.2/4.5).

medium-sized ovoid jars (Von Pilgrim 1996:Fig. 160h–i/155c–d) and what seems like an earlier or slightly altered version of the large ovoid bottle with a corrugated neck (Von Pilgrim 1996:Fig. 161c/160j/156b).¹⁵⁹ Examples of Marl C zirs (Von Pilgrim 1996:Fig. 152g; Rzeuska 2005:Fig. 5.10) are also observed. From this evidence it can tentatively be suggested that, as at Beni Hasan, the Residence style seems to appear in the region, but mostly in the form of the large storage jars used for the transportation of commodities. Conclusions concerning the date of the appearance of the Residence style are difficult considering the problems with the stratigraphy. However, unusual examples of Marl C may attest to very early elements of these Residence forms appearing at Elephantine at the beginning of the 12th Dynasty.¹⁶⁰ This is significantly earlier than their appearance at Beni Hasan.

2.6 Conclusions

2.6.1 The cultural and social relationship between the nome and the rest of Egypt as seen through the First Intermediate Period types

From the evidence presented above it is evident that the First Intermediate types have parallels throughout Egypt, although some types generally seem to originate from or be restricted to different areas. In terms of the flared-neck jars, they originated in the Memphite-Herakleopolitan area (Arnold 1972:44) and they are common in Lower and Middle Egypt. However, the popularity of this form declines in cemeteries south of Beni Hasan and Rifeh. This is also the case with the bottle-necked jars. Again their prominence at Beni Hasan is unmatched in any other cemetery in Middle Egypt and they are completely

¹⁵⁹ The difference between the types found at Elephantine and those found elsewhere is discussed by Bader (2001:129–131, 2002:34).

¹⁶⁰ Op de Beeck (2007:160–161) has suggested that vessels represented in the tomb of Sarenput I are Marl C zirs. These found their way this far south because of the strong relationship between Sarenput and the king and because of state tomb builders sent to Elephantine in order to construct his tomb. While zirs are not attested in the archaeological record this early, other early Marl C forms would support this conclusion.

absent from Upper Egypt. On the other hand, however, there are types in the Beni Hasan corpus that are more closely related to elements of the Upper and Middle Egyptian First Intermediate ceramic tradition. This is particularly noted with the drop-shaped vessels, where it seems that Beni Hasan is the furthest north that these forms appear. Along with this the Hs vases and wavy-rim pots with wavy-line decoration are certainly based on the Upper and Middle Egyptian ceramic repertoire.¹⁶¹

However, also to be noted is that there is quite a distinct sense of regionalism, a feature of the pottery that developed in the provinces during the First Intermediate Period (Arnold 1988:144). At Beni Hasan this is shown in the bottle-necked jars with their strongly-pronounced shoulders and tall necks, as well as in the variety in their sizes. In some cases the parallels that can be found are much earlier in date, suggesting that the style died out in other areas of Egypt but continued to be used at Beni Hasan. Type 32 is a particularly good example of this. Ultimately, the corpus as a whole with its variety of different influences is itself unique.

One influential factor on the corpus must have been the geographical position of the 16th nome. Being situated towards the north of Middle Egypt, it has a very central position and it is the closest of the well-known nomarchal courts to the Faiyum and Lower Egypt. The exchange of culture and social and economic interaction could easily occur between the north

¹⁶¹ Significantly, it is noted that the Hs vases and decorated wavy-rim pots, which existed outside the administrative system, are firmly rooted in the Upper and Middle Egyptian pottery styles. It may be possible, therefore, to conclude that the Beni Hasan repertoire was culturally more closely related to the pottery of these areas. This could perhaps be confirmed if Garstang had produced better material relating to the open forms. However, the storage types, which make up the vast proportion of our corpus, are perhaps influenced more heavily by socio-economic interactions.

and the south, and this is confirmed by the nature of the earlier forms at Beni Hasan.¹⁶² During the First Intermediate Period the 16th nome, and as far south as Asyut, was under the control of the Herakleopolitan kings in the north. The well-attested nomarchs of Asyut were vassals of the Herakleopolitan kings, and this was presumably the case with the provincial elite of the 15th and 16th Upper Egyptian nomes, although no nomarchs are dated securely to the First Intermediate Period from Beni Hasan. This may well have increased the interaction between the two regions and it could have influenced the pottery production of the 16th nome, establishing Herakleopolitan pottery traditions in the region. Importantly, it is the large storage types which bear similarities between the regions, suggesting that commodities were being transferred. Perhaps this was as a result of trade or payment for the services of the nomarchs. Ultimately, this transfer would have exposed the province to the forms used to transport commodities and may well have led to their adoption in the province. When compared with the similar types from the First Intermediate and early Middle Kingdom at Herakleopolis Magna (Bader 2009:Fig. 5–6), it is apparent that the types may have common origins but that they have evolved independently. This is perhaps due to a decline in contact between the two regions after the reunification of Egypt and the defeat of the Herakleopolitans. This may have allowed the corpus of Beni Hasan to develop more independently throughout the 11th Dynasty.

As far as connections with the south are concerned, the most significant elements of the corpus are perhaps the drop-shaped vessels similar to those found in the el-Tarif cemetery of Thebes. These forms point to some connection with the Theban court in the Middle Kingdom, most probably in the 11th Dynasty as only the later types of these forms are

¹⁶² This is well illustrated by the decline in the popularity of the flared-neck jars the further south you go. A similar geographical argument is made by Willems et al (2004:255) when discussing the influences on the 12th Dynasty corpus of El Bersheh.

observed (see above). Yet again these vessels were used for storage, and therefore it is possible to suggest that they were used to distribute commodities. This again accounts for the appearance of these forms in the province; the exposure to them may well have encouraged the Beni Hasan potters to adopt the type. However, Seidlmayer (1990:Fig. 95) dates these forms to the same phase as the appearance of the Residence style. If this can be trusted, it would highlight that the 16th Upper Egyptian nome was interacting on a socio-economic level with both the north and the south during the 12th Dynasty. Yet unlike many Residence style types these drop-shaped forms do appear towards the south end of the cemetery (Seidlmayer 1990:Fig. 91), and one can perhaps question his seriation here, especially considering that Orel (1993:115) dates the examples from the First Intermediate Period to the early 12th Dynasty. It seems likely that these forms reached Beni Hasan from Thebes during the 11th Dynasty¹⁶³ and their presence may have influenced the Beni Hasan potters, meaning that they continued to be produced locally during the 12th Dynasty. However, we should note here the presence of Theban imports at El Bersheh securely dated to the reign of Sesostri II (Willems et al 2004:255); this is perhaps another indication of a Theban role in the administration, and therefore the prospect that Thebes continued to play such a role during the 12th Dynasty should not be ruled out. What is significant, however, is that the first appearance of these forms at Beni Hasan is contemporary with the Theban dynasty.

The reasons for the ascent of regionalism in the First Intermediate Period were largely due to the decline of the central administration and the rising power of the nome. This allowed

¹⁶³ Of the First Intermediate Period parallels to type 34–35 listed by Orel, Qau type 32D (Brunton 1928:Pl. LXXXII) is clearly much smaller than our Beni Hasan types, as is observed by Orel herself (1993:116). Qau types 30G/H/J (Brunton 1928:Pl. LXXXIX) have been alternatively dated by Seidlmayer (1990:Fig. 65) to the 11th Dynasty. The nature of the material from Qau means that his dating is perhaps more accurate here. Considering this, the appearance of these forms must surely be dated to the 11th Dynasty at the earliest.

elements of material culture to develop independently from elsewhere in Egypt. In terms of the pottery of Beni Hasan, it seems to have continued throughout the 11th Dynasty. It is possible to assume that the Theban kings and the reunification of the country did little to affect the regional ceramic repertoire, other than perhaps the introduction of the drop-shaped vessel. This is most obviously observed in the high proportion of Herakleopolitan shapes in use. At Beni Hasan the provincial court must have been an influential factor in the pottery production in the nome. The administrative mechanism of the province that would have relied on pottery for the distribution and storage of commodities must have to some extent dictated the forms in use in the area. The pottery perhaps indicates that this provincial administration remained, at least in part, independent from the state.

2.6.2 The appearance of Marl C and the economy of the province

The appearance of the two Marl C types provides almost definitive proof of exchange between the province and the state. Due to the proportions of Marl C spread across sites in Egypt and the rise in its popularity after the move of the Residence to *Itj-t3wy*, it is thought that the material originated and was produced in the Memphite-Faiyum region (Arnold 1981:188–190).¹⁶⁴ Along with this, the high proportion of storage vessels in this material and the frequency with which they occur throughout Egypt has led to the suggestion that they were used by the central administration to distribute commodities (Bader 2002:42). This is supported by Gallorini's (2009:122) tentative interpretation of the pre-firing pot marks which seem to be apparent on a proportion of Marl C vessels. She suggests that they are evidence of

¹⁶⁴ Bader (2002:31) suggests that there may have been another source of this clay supplying Elephantine and Karnak. As has been noted, Elephantine does display early examples of Marl C vessels, some of which are unique to the province. However, as the majority of the types that appear are examples of, or related to, the Residence style, they were obviously produced by the same administration, even if they were possibly not produced in the Memphite-Faiyum region.

the industrial ceramic production of the state and considering that they appear largely on Marl C vessels from sites linked with state activity, it is certainly conceivable that this industrial activity resulted from a need to supply the areas with commodities.¹⁶⁵ Therefore when Marl C storage types appear in the province it is perhaps evidence that commodities were stored within them and transferred to the area by the state. These vessels may well then have later been reused in the province for other purposes. Redistribution, in which the state obtains revenue through taxes, tributes and other methods and then redistributes this among the population, has long been seen as an important element of the Egyptian economy (Haring 2009:11). Recipients of this type of payment would have been those working on state projects at all levels, officials, those involved in administration, and the military (Müller-Wollermann 1985:159–164), although presumably the majority of the population would have been self-sufficient and received nothing from the state (Müller-Wollermann 1985:166). It is important, therefore, to establish whether the Marl C vessels found at Beni Hasan and Elephantine can possibly have come from this state system.

This could quite possibly have been the case with Elephantine; the town was regarded as the gateway to the south and Nubia (Grajetzki 2006:84). The Nubian forts attest to a strong state interest and presence in the area, and the quantities of Marl C and Residence style pottery found at such sites (Smith 1995:51–80) serve to highlight the role of the state in their administration. Elephantine must have played a role in this state system, certainly as a place through which trade was funnelled. Sarenput I states in his autobiography that he was the one ‘to whom the produce (*in.w*) of Medja is reported, namely the tributes (*b3k.w*) of the princes

¹⁶⁵ Gallorini (in press) argues that Marl C vessels found in Pan-graves were used by the administration to pay Pan-grave mercenaries for their services.

[of] the deserts' (Urk VII, 1, 20–2, 1).¹⁶⁶ He also holds the titles 'doorpost of the foreign countries' and 'overseer of the Egyptianised Nubians' (*imy-r ʿw.w*). While the interpretation of the latter title is not agreed upon (Favry 2005:93),¹⁶⁷ it is tempting to come to the conclusion that Sarenput I had some involvement with the Pan-grave communities like those found at Nag el-Qarmila, Aswan. Examples of Marl C are found here and they are interpreted as evidence of state payment for services (Gallorini, in press).¹⁶⁸ Gallorini (in press) states that the point of contact with the Egyptian administration was likely Elephantine, so it is not difficult to speculate that Sarenput I was involved in organising and paying such communities.¹⁶⁹ Even such a brief examination of the involvement of the nomarch in the state administration provides ample evidence of opportunities through which individuals could have received state payment for services. Significantly, House 84 in the town has been identified as a late Middle Kingdom storage and distribution centre (Von Pilgrim 1996:282–284). It seems likely that this was the place from which taxes could be collected and goods redistributed. However, the presence of Marl C perhaps indicates that the revenue received from taxation and other sources was supplemented by goods from the Residence.¹⁷⁰ It should be stressed, however, that there are shapes in the Marl C corpus of Elephantine that are not found elsewhere.¹⁷¹ They also seem to be appearing earlier than other

¹⁶⁶ *smi n.f in.w Md3 m bk.w m hk3.w [nw]h3s.w.t*

¹⁶⁷ Favry sees the title as pertaining to Sarenput's duty over trade and tributes from within Nubia.

¹⁶⁸ It should be noted that Gallorini dates this Pan-grave necropolis from the middle to the late 13th Dynasty.

¹⁶⁹ The nomarch Djefaihapi I held the title 'Overseer of the royal work troop house' (*imy-r gs-pr n nsw*) (Griffith 1889:Pl. 4, 217/Pl. 5, 241). With this comes the suggestion that the nomarch was responsible for workmen associated with state projects (Fischer 1985:54) and therefore maybe directly linked with the very individuals who certainly received commodities from the state. As with Sarenput and the Pan-grave communities at Elephantine it is also tempting to see Djefaihapi holding some responsibility over the distribution of this payment.

¹⁷⁰ Significantly, it should be stressed that one Marl C zir (Von Pilgrim 1996:Fig. 152g) was found in the context of House 84 with pot marks similar to those found in the Memphite-Faiyum region (Gallorini 2009:Fig. 1). This adds some weight to the conclusion that this site was distributing state commodities.

¹⁷¹ The bottles with corrugated necks which are ovoid and less egg-shaped than those of the rest of Egypt have already been observed.

examples, perhaps dating to the 11th and early 12th Dynasties (Von Pilgrim 1996:Fig. 160d/158a/154a).¹⁷² If these early forms could be attributed to the early 12th Dynasty, during the reign of Amenemhat I, a solution could possibly be found in the fact that Elephantine was receiving attention from the state from the very beginning of the 12th Dynasty, with the unique ovoid jars with corrugated necks of Elephantine perhaps being an early development of this type specifically produced for state distribution in Elephantine. There are, however, too many unanswered questions that need to be answered in order to substantiate this conclusion.

Whereas Elephantine seems to have been provided with commodities from the Residence, at least from the reign of Sesostris I, the evidence from Beni Hasan is much less convincing. The relationship between the nomarchs of Beni Hasan and the king is arguably not as close as that stated by Sarenput I in his autobiography (Gardiner 1908:123), yet involvement in the administrative system of the state is still noted. First and foremost are the titles and functions of the nomarchs that suggest that they had responsibility for aspects of the central administration in their province. One such title is ‘Overseer of the eastern deserts’¹⁷³ held by the nomarch Nekht, his second successor Khnumhotep II, and Netjernakht.¹⁷⁴ This presumably meant that the individuals held some administrative responsibility over the eastern deserts similar to that held by Sarenput I over Nubia.¹⁷⁵ In the autobiography of the

¹⁷² These come from levels 15–14, tentatively dated to the 11th Dynasty and the early 12th Dynasty (Von Pilgrim 1996:15).

¹⁷³ *imy-r smy.w.t i}bty.w.t*

¹⁷⁴ The inscription in the tomb of Netjernakht says that it was built by Khnumhotep II for his ancestor. Little else is known about this provincial official (Newberry 1893b:Pl. XXIV).

¹⁷⁵ It should be noted that the early nomarch Ahanakht of El Bersheh bears the title ‘Overseer of the western desert’ (Newberry 1895b:Pl. XIII). There is a well-known scene in his tomb of Khnumhotep receiving the produce of his estate, among which are tributes bought by people of the eastern desert (Newberry 1893b:Pl. XXX–XXXI).

nomarch Amenemhat, the predecessor of Khnumhotep II, there is the suggestion that he was responsible for the collection and delivery of the cattle tribute/tax destined for the palace:

‘All the taxes for the house of the king came into my hand. Behold, the overseer of the work-gangs of the domain of the herdsmen of the Oryx nome gave me 3,000 of their cattle. I was praised for it in the house of the king on every occasion of the cattle tax. I presented all their revenues to the house of the king, no arrears exist with regard to me in any of his offices’ (Newberry 1893a:Pl. VIII).¹⁷⁶

The exact implication of this statement for the role of Amenemhat and the taxation for the provinces is debatable (Favry 2005:350).¹⁷⁷ However, what is significant is that the nomarch and his court may have played some role in the economic system of the central administration. Along with this, it is also seen in the autobiography that Amenemhat, as great overseer of troops of the Oryx nome,¹⁷⁸ along with the soldiers of his nome, accompanied the king on three expeditions (Newberry 1893a:Pl. VIII). While the army was most likely that of the nome, in participating in the king’s campaigns one may well have expected them to receive state rations, at least while in Nubia.

Again it seems that services were rendered by the nomarch of the 16th nome and his court, which may have justified payment by the central administration. However, it is apparent that the nomes governed by these feudal leaders had their own redistributive system,¹⁷⁹ and it should be restated that the presence of Marl C is limited to two types: the corrugated-neck jar is most likely dated to the reign of Sesostri III and the late globular form perhaps dates

¹⁷⁶ *B3k.w nb.(w) n pr-nsw hr hrpr m-Ꞁ.i
 ꞀꞀ.n rdi n.i imy-r tsw.t n gs.w-pr nw mniw nw M3-Ꞁd k3(w) 3000 m nꞀbw.sn
 Ꞁs.kwi hr.s m pr-nsw r-tnw rnp.t n.t ir.w
 f3i.n.i b3k.w.sn nb(w) n pr-nsw nn hrwt-Ꞁ r.i m Ꞁ3.f nb*

¹⁷⁷ Favry asserts that three thousand cattle would have been too high an annual tax for a single province. She then suggests that it is possible that Amenemhat simply inspected the tax.

¹⁷⁸ *imy-r mšꞀ wr n M3-Ꞁd*

¹⁷⁹ Parts of this system are observed in the contracts of Djefaihapi (Spalinger 1985).

slightly later still. Of course, it should be stressed that the pottery from Beni Hasan is not necessarily reflective of the extent of Marl C present and in use in the region of the 16th nome.¹⁸⁰ Its appearance in the cemetery may, however, point to an increase in the popularity or quantity of these vessels being distributed around the nome. At Beni Hasan the appearance of Marl C is considerably later than at Elephantine, and while the two sites should be compared with caution, it is tempting to come to the conclusion that whereas Elephantine was involved with this state system from the beginning of the 12th Dynasty, the Middle Egyptian provinces may not have been significantly involved in the state distributive system until later. It is under the reigns of Sesostri II and III that well-known sociological changes are noted in the nomes, namely the disappearance of the large rock-cut tombs, and with that, changes in the administration of the nome (Leprohon 1980:231; Quirke 1990:2; Franke 1991:51–55).¹⁸¹ The appearance of Marl C may therefore be symptomatic of increased state involvement in these areas, which may have ultimately resulted in the sociological changes that are seen to occur.¹⁸²

2.6.3 The relationship with the state during the 12th Dynasty

As has been observed with the First Intermediate forms, the pottery of Beni Hasan is able to shed some light on the funerary culture of Beni Hasan and the interactions of the province. Seiler (2005:185–200) has shown in her publication on the pottery from Theban cemeteries

¹⁸⁰ The Marl C zir is absent from the corpus, yet it is attested by the tombs of the nomarch Djehutyhotep around the reign of Sesostri II or III from El Bersheh (Willems et al 2004:Fig. 5). The suggestion has also been made that representations of this vessel appear on two later type coffins from Beni Hasan (Op de Beeck 2007:162–163). If this is the case, why this vessel is absent from our corpus is interesting. Perhaps an explanation can be found in the fact that at this time the zirs were the preserve of the richest of the elite, those who could afford coffins, and the nomarchs. This would again highlight the limited role of the state in the economy of the province at the time.

¹⁸¹ The topic has been the focus of a great deal of scholarship, as discussed in the introduction. Franke's discussion and interpretation is, however, the most reflective of current opinions.

¹⁸² A theoretical model for this centre-province exchange would have been valuable for this thesis; however, it has unfortunately not been possible due to constraints on time.

of the Second Intermediate Period how changes in pottery can be reflective of certain sociological and cultural developments.¹⁸³ A corpus completely dominated by the Residence style would show the cultural homogeneity between the state and the province. This is, however, not the case. The retention of elements of the First Intermediate style shows the independence of provincial funerary culture. The institution of the nomarch must surely have acted as a buffer against the total adoption of the Residence style; the established traditions of its administration which had developed over time meant that it did not need to adopt these forms. It seems that besides the globular flared-neck jar, a type like the hemispherical cup that is common throughout Egypt, the appearance of the Residence style may be specifically related to the administration. The examples of Marl C have already been discussed and they were clearly imported into the region. The beer jars, however, usually found in Nile C, may well have been made in the province, especially considering their popularity in the necropolis. In this case it seems unlikely that they were used in the distribution of commodities from the state. Liquids, including water and beer, did not need to be imported. They could possibly, however, have been imposed on the province in an attempt to standardise elements of state administration in the province.¹⁸⁴ In this case it was the actual pottery form that was being specifically transferred to the province. The late date of these types, like the Marl C vessels, may well be representative of changes that were occurring in the provinces. As the power and authority of the provincial rulers decreased, the state may have been required to fill the vacuum. Seiler (2005:185–186) notes that the appearance of Residence style forms at Thebes in the 13th Dynasty is reflective of the decreasing power of the state. At Beni Hasan the opposite is perhaps the case. The state possibly had to play a

¹⁸³ The pottery is shown to be reflective of the collapse of centralised government and the increasing regionalism at the beginning of the Second Intermediate Period. It is also reflective of cultural change, including changes in funerary beliefs and funerary practices.

¹⁸⁴ While standardisation does not seem to have been a concern of the Egyptians in terms of vessel size and capacity (Kemp 2006:175), it is the case in a more general sense in that the liquid storage jars of the Residence style always take this familiar shape.

greater role in administrating these regions, and this is reflective of the pottery seen in the cemetery.

Conclusion

It was stated in the introduction that the aim of this thesis was to provide fresh insights into the history of the Middle Kingdom nomes. The thesis was to focus on the culture in the nome, specifically the intellectual, aesthetic and utilitarian realms of human production and society. In doing this, it was hoped that the study would inform our understanding of provincial culture in Upper Egypt and shed fresh light on the role that these nomes played in the administration of Egypt and the power, authority and influence of the provincial elite. A dual approach has been taken using two very different forms of evidence; it was intended that this would provide the widest possible picture from which more encompassing conclusions could be formed. In this concluding discussion these two approaches will be brought together and an attempt will be made to interpret the results of these studies in the light of the social situation in the province.

3.1 The 11th Dynasty

The 11th Dynasty sees the reunification of Egypt under Mentuhotep II. It was previously thought that this reunification was followed by administrative reforms which promoted the town as an administrative unit at the expense of the nome (Gestermann 1987:138–140). In support of this was the difficulty in attributing any nomarchs to the 11th Dynasty (Gestermann 1987:171–172). However, this conclusion is now largely dismissed (Willems 2008:42–52). While the absence of any evidence of nomarchs from the southernmost nomes and the rise of

a central administration, some of the officials of which seem to have held responsibility for the provinces, does suggest the abolition of the administrative class of nomarchs to the south (Willems 2008:41–42, 48), revised dating of the nomarchs from Beni Hasan and El Bersheh, as well as new evidence from Asyut, suggests that the institution of the nomarch and his nome in these areas was not interrupted after the reunification of Egypt (Willems 2008:52).

The evidence from the 11th Dynasty should be considered in this historical setting. Both chapters highlight the cultural independence of the Hare and Oryx nomes during the 11th Dynasty. The 16th Upper Egyptian nome, for the most part, retained its own ceramic tradition, noted particularly in the large flared-neck jars with pointed bottoms. At the same time evidence from the late 11th Dynasty at El Bersheh reveals the extent to which cultural creativity was able to flourish in the province. It is clear from this evidence that the Theban dynasty made little or no attempt to homogenise provincial culture after the reunification of Egypt.

However, the evidence from the pottery of Beni Hasan, in particular the drop-shaped vessels, does suggest that Theban culture was filtering through to the 16th Upper Egyptian nome, and a similar conclusion has been made by Willems in his examination of the limited amount of pottery from El Bersheh (Willems 2008:91). The presence of these vessels is also a possible indication of the presence of the Theban administrative system in the Oryx nome. In fact, the evidence from the nomes pertaining to the 11th Dynasty does imply a strong relationship between the nomarch and the royal court. Ahanakht I, the nomarch dated to the reunification of Egypt, from the Hare nome bears the title vizier (Newberry 1895b:Pl. XIII, 11). His contemporary in the province, Iha, who is discussed in chapter one, had strong links with the

royal court, and it is not difficult to conclude as Willems (2007:98) has that he acted as an intermediary between the King and the nome. It was the strong links between the royal court and the nomarch that arguably led to the appearance of the Coffin Texts in the provinces (Willems 2008:183). Significantly, the evidence of the unique texts does not appear until the late 11th Dynasty. Unfortunately, no coffins are attested before this point, yet the popularity of the unique texts among the earliest attested coffins, such as B1Bo and B3Bo, may indicate that these texts were a new innovation. If this is the case, it would suggest that this aspect of provincial culture took a while to develop in the province, and one wonders whether the close relationship between the state and the province acted as a barrier to this innovation. The appearance of these texts may therefore represent an increase in the independence of the nome during the later 11th Dynasty. It is representative of an increase in the intellectual authority. This intellectual authority would have first been obtained through a relationship with the state, but it would then have gone on to develop of its own accord.

3.2 The 12th Dynasty

The evidence that has been observed in this thesis shows few changes occurring from the 11th to the early 12th Dynasties. The thesis has demonstrated that there was a continuation in the production of unique texts and that little changed in the pottery corpus of Beni Hasan until the reign of Sesostri III. Perhaps the most significant element identified in the second study is the absence of the Residence style. It has long been understood that pottery workshops of Middle Egypt held onto the First Intermediate forms much longer than those of Lower Egypt (Arnold 1988:144). This has been demonstrated in the examination of the Beni Hasan corpus. This thesis suggests that this was largely due to the continued autonomy of the nomarchal administration. It was this that also ensured the continued creativity of the unique texts. The

study also reveals the prevalence of personal choice concerning the decoration of coffins in El Bersheh. This, along with the fact that the unique texts display a variety of themes and do not seem to focus on Hermopolitan deities or concepts, indicates that these texts were not the product of a concerted centralised attempt to promote a regional theological dogma, but developed to fulfil the needs of a socially competitive provincial elite.

If the coffin texts of Beni Hasan from the 12th Dynasty are compared with those of El Bersheh, significant differences are noted. Despite Beni Hasan's proximity to the 15th Upper Egyptian nome, Lesko (1979:42) has noted that the spells on the Beni Hasan coffins show a general dependence on the Saqqara texts, as well as a certain predilection for pyramid text ascension spells. Whereas in the 11th Dynasty links between the coffin texts of the provinces can be noted,¹⁸⁵ by the 12th Dynasty this is no longer the case. Beni Hasan was no longer being influenced by the rich innovative tradition of El Bersheh and it had developed its own tradition. This highlights the independence of these nomes even from one another. If Hermopolis was such an important centre for coffin text storage as is claimed (Gestermann 2004:209), the dependence on the Saqqara texts may represent a deliberate avoidance of the Hermopolitan scribes. The fact that the two traditions diverge during the 12th Dynasty may therefore indicate provincial rivalry between the two centres. This provincial rivalry is perhaps also reflective of further increases in the prestige of the individual nomes during the early 12th Dynasty. Further research looking at the unique texts from throughout Egypt would shed more light on this proposition; it would also be valuable once the pottery of both nomes is understood more fully to see whether this potential rivalry is reflected in the pottery corpus of both nomes.

¹⁸⁵ Some early coffins from Beni Hasan display links with El Bersheh, in particular with the texts on the coffin B1Bo.

Ultimately, what has been observed is perhaps symptomatic of provinces with their own creative environments independent from the state. However, it is well documented that at the beginning of the 12th Dynasty new individuals loyal to the king were placed as rulers of specific provinces (Franke 1994:12; Grajetzki 2005:59).¹⁸⁶ In particular, it should be noted that there was a revival of the nomarchal administration in Elephantine. Further evidence also implies that strong relationships existed between the nomarch and the royal court.¹⁸⁷ However, these relationships have not been apparent in the evidence discussed in this thesis.

The impact of a close relationship between the nome and the state can be further understood through a brief examination of Sarenput I. This individual was installed by Sesostris I as the nomarch of Elephantine (Franke 1994:13; Favry 2005:302). He made a concerted attempt to stress the strong relationship between him and the king (Gardiner 1908:Pl. VI, 13–14, 18/Pl. VIII A; Habachi 1985:Fig. 4). Yet in the evidence observed Sarenput I attempted to legitimise his position in a different way from simply asserting that he was appointed by the king. During his governance Sarenput erected a sanctuary to Heqaib. Heqaib was a governor of Elephantine during the second half of the reign of Pepi II, to whom a cult seemingly arose after his death. There are several ideological reasons for the building of the sanctuary (Franke

¹⁸⁶ This can be observed in Beni Hasan where Khnumhotep I remarked that he was installed as nomarch by Amenemhat I (Newberry 1893a:Pl. XLIV). At Meir the tombs of provincial rulers of the Middle Kingdom begin during the reign of Amenemhat I (Willems 1988:86) and in Qau el-Kebir they are attested from the reign of Amenemhat II (Grajetzki 1997:62), indicating that similar appointments may have taken place in the 10th and 14th Upper Egyptian nomes. Willems (1988:86) does highlight that other cemeteries may have been used prior to the establishment of these tombs, maybe suggesting that these provincial rulers have predecessors otherwise not known from the archaeological record. The evidence from Beni Hasan and Elephantine, which clearly indicates that the king appointed officials from new families to positions of provincial power, supports the point that these individuals were appointed as rulers by the king.

¹⁸⁷ Evidence from El Bersheh and Beni Hasan suggests that the children of the nomarchs were educated at the royal court (Newberry 1893a:Pl. XXXII; Newberry 1895a:12). Nomarchs also undertook military campaigns for the king (Newberry 1893a:Pl. VIII).

1994:25–27); one reason, however, falls under the realm of filial responsibility. Assmann (2005:41) has noted the social responsibility of the son in preserving his father’s mortuary cult and in so doing, reintegrating him into society. In the very act of building the sanctuary Sarenput is claiming that Heqaib is his ancestor. Similarly, Sarenput’s name literally translates as the ‘Son of (many) years’ (*Sj-mpw.t*). In this name we have an allusion to Sarenput’s deified predecessor (Habachi 1985:45)¹⁸⁸ with the suggestion that he was an ancestor of Heqaib; this is further emphasised in the sanctuary itself when he refers to himself as Heqaib’s son (Habachi 1985:Fig. 3e/No. 7).¹⁸⁹ While it is stated that society in Egypt was not ordered along lines of kinship but determined through rank and status (Franke 1995:247), kinship, especially at the provincial level, seems to have played a significant role in relation to the nomarch. In claiming the deified governor Heqaib as his ancestor he establishes himself as an individual with a distinguished heritage. The fact that this was occurring in the nome indicates that the nomarch was not simply an administrative role but it was an institution in its own right. This provides some indication as to why these nomes retained such cultural independence. While ultimate authority resided with the king, the nomarchal courts in Upper Egypt during the 12th Dynasty represented self-contained administrative units of which the authority came in part from the tradition of the nomarch itself. This sets the nomarchs apart from other officials in Egypt and provided the spark from which the independence of provincial culture emerged during the First Intermediate Period, but also significantly continued to develop throughout the early 12th Dynasty. This was seemingly

¹⁸⁸ Franke (1994:209–210) disagrees, suggesting the name instead means ‘son of the rejuvenated year’. However, there is no conclusive proof that this name is not in relation to Heqaib. Furthermore, he clearly claims that he is the son of Heqaib, which supports Habachi’s conclusion.

¹⁸⁹ Sarenput I’s wife Sattjenj can also be considered in this light; the name can be translated as ‘daughter of the aged man’ (*Sj.t-tnj*), again most likely in relation to Heqaib (Habachi 1985:45; Franke 1994:209). It is possible to argue that either Sattjenj was herself claiming ancestry from Heqaib, and that their marriage represents a political union between two elite provincial families, or that Sattjenj changed her name on marrying Sarenput with the specific intention of embodying the ideal of being descended from Heqaib; there is evidence that this took place in Egypt, especially in the First Cataract (pers. comm. M. Bommas).

embraced by the early 12th Dynasty kings as the tool used for the administration of Upper Egypt.

3.3 Sesostris III and the later Middle Kingdom

It is during the reign of Sesostris III that an almost complete disappearance of the rock-cut tombs from the provincial cemeteries is seen (Franke 1991:54)¹⁹⁰. While in Egyptological literature this was traditionally associated with the eradication of nomarchs,¹⁹¹ more recent research has suggested that the disappearance of the rock-cut tombs reflects changes in the funerary culture (Franke 1991:55; Grajetzki 2009:118–119). Provincial governors are in fact still attested by a variety of nomes in the later 12th Dynasty, including those at Elephantine,¹⁹² Qau el-Kebir¹⁹³ and El Bersheh,¹⁹⁴ though they are known from other sources rather than their tombs. Whether these individuals held the same power as their predecessors is unlikely; these provincial officials seem to hold considerably fewer titles. Grajetzki (2009:119) has suggested that this reduction in the responsibilities of the provincial governors led to a decrease in their income, meaning that they were no longer able to build the monumental tombs. Franke (1991:52) has a similar argument but he suggests that the responsibilities of the provincial governors underwent a steady decline before the reign of Sesostris III, leaving only the ‘living fossils’ remaining during his reign (1991:55). At the heart of Franke’s argument lies the fact that while the rock-cut tombs remain until the reign of Sesostris III,

¹⁹⁰ There is one rock-cut tomb that attested to the reign of Amenemhat III of the provincial governor Wachka II (Steckeweh 1936:7).

¹⁹¹ Meyer (1921:252), Hayes (1971:506), Matzker (1986:11) and Cruz-Uribe (1987:108).

¹⁹² A total of five governors are attested at Elephantine after the reign of Sesostris III (Grajetzki 2006:86–87).

¹⁹³ Wachka II from Qau el-Kebir is dated to the reign of Amenemhat III; he held the title *hꜣty-ꜥ imy-rꜣ hmw-ntr* (Steckeweh 1936:7).

¹⁹⁴ Seals of two later governors from the 15th Upper Egyptian nome are attested at El Bersheh. Djehutinakht holds the title *hꜣty-ꜥ hrp nsty imy-rꜣ hmw-ntr* (Martin 1971:No. 1773) and Wepwawethotep holds the title *hꜣty-ꜥ (n) Wnt hrp nsty* (Martin 1971:No. 406); both are dated to the end of the 12th Dynasty (Grajetzki 2006:111).

there are very few provincial officials with the title *ḥry-tp* ʿꜣ (+ nome), traditionally seen as the marker of a nomarch.¹⁹⁵

The evidence observed in the two approaches can be used jointly in an attempt to further our understanding of these changes in the province. Looking firstly at the pottery of Beni Hasan, evidence is seen that may be suggestive of changes in the administration of the province through the appearance of the Residence style. As has been discussed, the appearance of this style in the cemetery is perhaps reflective of an increased presence of the state in the nome. This may have been the result of the decrease in power of the provincial governors, in which the state must have had some involvement. It seems plausible to suggest that the state actively reduced the power of the provincial rulers in a reorganisation of the central administration. The later governors in the province would then have had a closer relationship with the central administration, resulting in an increase in the centre-province exchange. The appearance of the Residence style in Beni Hasan may therefore represent the disappearance of the provincial courts and with it the autonomy of provincial culture. It has long been understood that changes occurred in the provincial administration during the 12th Dynasty (Leprohon 1980:231; Quirke 1990:2). The evidence from the material culture of Beni Hasan suggests that in the 16th Upper Egyptian nome these changes were occurring at the same time as the disappearance of the rock-cut tombs, roughly during the reign of Sesostri III. This somewhat contradicts Franke's (1991:53) assumption that there was a gradual contraction of nomarchal power. Khnumhotep II of Beni Hasan does not hold the traditional title *ḥry-tp* ʿꜣ (+ nome),

¹⁹⁵ Two nomarchs are attested with this title during the reign of Sesostri III: Sarenput II from Elephantine (Gardiner 1908:137) and Djehutihotep from El Bersheh (Newberry 1895a:Pl. XVI).

yet his tomb still attests to a sizable provincial court (Newberry 1893a:Pl. XXIX–XXX),¹⁹⁶ and the pottery corpus of Beni Hasan would imply that changes in the administration were occurring after Khnumhotep II's death. Whether the lack of the nomarchal title actually indicates a reduction of authority for these provincial elites is therefore doubtful.

The study of unique texts may shed further light on this. After the reign of Sesostri III no coffins can be attested at El Bersheh as they, like the rock-cut tombs, disappear. Yet this absence of evidence may in itself inform our knowledge of the social changes. The disappearance of the coffins and their texts is perhaps again rooted in the social changes occurring during the later 12th Dynasty. The provincial elite were the driving force behind the decoration of coffins with texts. The decline of these elites during the reign of Sesostri III must have seen a decline in the demand for the Coffin Texts. One can postulate that the production of funerary texts in the Hermopolitan House of Life went into decline and that this element of provincial funerary culture died out. It is difficult to see the impetus for cultural creativity surviving once the power of the nomarchal courts was diminished. Significantly, the largest body of evidence for coffins and their texts after the reign of Sesostri III does not come from a provincial setting but from the coffins of Lisht (Allen 1996:1–15). It is noted that on the coffins dated to the reign of Sesostri III and Amenemhat III texts on coffins disappear completely (Allen 1996:15). A revival is then seen from the middle of the reign of Amenemhat III and extending into the 13th Dynasty, though it takes the form of a new style with new texts (Allen 1996:15). It may be possible to see the disappearance of the Coffin Texts at Lisht in the light of this situation. Hermopolis has been linked to the dissemination of the Coffin Texts (Gestermann 2004:201–217), and the process of coffin decoration at Lisht

¹⁹⁶ Willems (2008:64) discusses the differences in the titles of the provincial rulers; he states: 'Tout semble indiquer qu'on se trouve en face d'un groupe peut-être hétérogène titulature, mais homogène en statut'.

may have been disrupted as a result of the social changes occurring in the Hare nome at the time. When texts on coffins re-enter the funerary tradition of the Middle Kingdom, they have taken a new form, perhaps indicating the influence of a different intellectual centre. If this conclusion can be accepted, it provides tentative hints that the changes occurring during the reign of Sesostri III may have also involved the House of Life at Hermopolis, perhaps even a removal of these funerary texts from the province.

While the scope of this thesis is limited, the evidence provided by both case studies would imply that during the reign of Sesostri III the provinces underwent a cultural shift. While the absence of the Coffin Texts and rock-cut tombs could have been the result of changing burial customs, administrative reforms seen during the later Middle Kingdom and the pottery from Beni Hasan imply that these cultural shifts were the result of social changes. While more recent Egyptological literature has tended to move away from the idea of concerted action taken by Sesostri III to remove the nomarchs, the presence of this cultural shift during his reign does imply that there may have been some attempt to reduce provincial authority. It is the effects of this that are observed in this thesis. Kemp (1995:38), when referring to the Middle Kingdom nomes of Upper Egypt, once stated: ‘...continuity in style of local governance and in cemetery archaeology outweighs dynastic discontinuities and really deserves its own historical label’. The label he used was ‘nomarchy’ (1995:38). It is the ‘nomarchy’ that has been observed in this thesis. The two studies have shown the independence and creativity of provincial culture which developed from society that was formed around these powerful nomarchs. This ‘nomarchy’ is what ended during the reign of Sesostri III, yet not without leaving a considerable impression on the history of Middle Kingdom Egypt.

3.4 Final statements

The two chapters have studied two elements of provincial culture from two adjacent Middle Kingdom nomes. While these are both in themselves valid studies, this conclusion has attempted to bring them together, placing the observations in their historical setting, in an attempt to shed greater light on Middle Kingdom provincial history. The success of this study has been limited by the constraints on this thesis. Conclusions can only be firmly applied to the 15th and 16th Upper Egyptian nomes, although these have tentatively been seen as being representative of the Upper Egyptian province. However, it is hoped that the study of unique texts and pottery has highlighted the potential historical value of the study of these areas. A complete analysis and fuller understanding of the pottery of the nomes will not be possible until further excavations have taken place at both cemetery and settlement sites. However, the study of the unique texts should be extended to those found at other provincial centres. This would inform the study of the Coffin Texts tradition, in particular the innovation occurring in the nomes of Egypt.

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