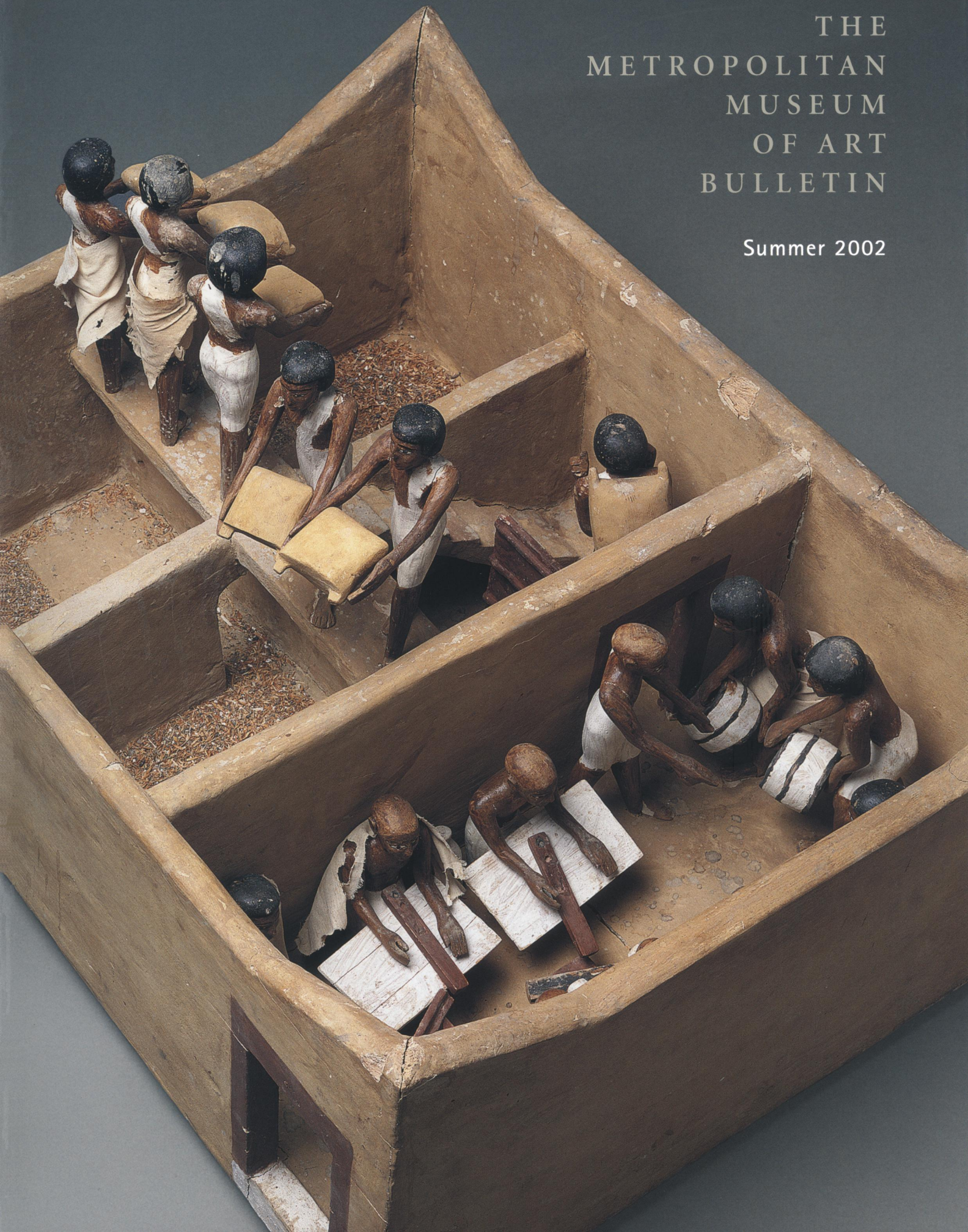


THE
METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM
OF ART
BULLETIN

Summer 2002





L I F E A L O N G T H E N I L E

Three Egyptians of Ancient Thebes

CATHARINE H. ROEHRIG

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

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On the front cover: **Meketre's model granary**. Plastered and painted wood; linen; ancient grain and straw. Maximum h. of walls 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (36.5 cm). Rogers Fund, 1920 (20.3.11). Back cover: **Eye panel on Wah's coffin** (detail; see p. 23, fig. 28)

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM is privileged to possess one of the world's premier collections of art from ancient Egypt. A quick tour of the Egyptian galleries reveals numerous statues, reliefs, paintings, amulets and other jewelry, ceramics, pieces of furniture, and even architectural monuments that are among the great masterpieces of the Egyptian culture. Moreover, anyone who has wandered at a more leisurely pace through the galleries, which contain more than 35,000 objects, knows that unexpected treasures await the visitor who chooses to explore more thoroughly the wealth of material produced by accomplished artists working in all media over more than five thousand years.

Nearly thirty years ago, when preparations were well under way for the installation of the Temple of Dendur under a new glass enclosure in the Sackler Wing, the Museum published an issue of the *Bulletin* dedicated to the subject of daily life in ancient Egypt. As was popular at the time, the booklet was organized according to categories such as "Housekeeping," "Dress," "Tableware," "Recreation," and so on, and the objects used to illustrate each section included the sumptuous possessions of kings, queens, and wealthy officials. Since that time, our understanding of the Egyptian culture has progressed, and in this issue of the *Bulletin*, Catharine H. Roehrig, curator in the Department of Egyptian Art, has chosen to present the subject of daily life from a different perspective by drawing on the Museum's rich concentration of excavated material to reconstruct the lives of three Egyptians who did *not* belong to Egypt's elite ruling classes.

These individuals—the manager of a wealthy man's estate, the mother of an architect, and a skilled craftsman—are all known to us simply by the good fortune that their tombs lay hidden, undisturbed, for thousands of years. The contents of the

tombs, which included funerary equipment, religious texts, and, above all, personal effects, give us intriguing images of these three people. More generally, we can see how fully the arts were integrated into the day-to-day lives of all Egyptians, not just those of the royal family and the ruling elite.

The illustrations in this *Bulletin* also provide a closer look at some of the best-known works in the collection—the models that belonged to the Middle Kingdom nobleman Meketre, the employer of the estate manager mentioned above. Usually seen within the context of the crowded miniature workshops and boats that they populate, groups of bakers, brewers, hunters, and musicians have been photographed separately for this publication, allowing us to admire the great skill of the creators of these small, vital figures.

I hope that this issue of the *Bulletin* will encourage you to revisit our Egyptian galleries and discover the rich variety of artworks that offer glimpses into a civilization that flourished so many centuries ago and continues to fascinate us today.

Philippe de Montebello
Director



Figure 1 View showing Senenmut's offering chapel (Theban Tomb [TT] 71) near the top of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna hill, with the tomb of his mother, Hatnofer, visible at center right, next to the man in white

I N T R O D U C T I O N

First Unification of Egypt	3100 B.C.	3100		
Archaic Period	3100–2649 B.C.	3000		Dynasties 0–2
		2900		
		2800		
		2700		
Old Kingdom	2649–2150 B.C.	2600		Dynasties 3–6
		2500		
		2400		
		2300		
First Intermediate Period	2150–2030 B.C.	2200		Dynasty 8–mid-Dynasty 11
		2100		
Middle Kingdom	2030–1640 B.C.	2000		Mid-Dynasty 11–Dynasty 13
		1900		
		1800		
		1700		
Second Intermediate Period	1640–1550 B.C.	1600		Dynasties 14–17
		1500		
New Kingdom	1550–1070 B.C.	1400		Dynasties 18–20
		1300		
		1200		
		1100		
		1000		
Third Intermediate Period	1070–712 B.C.	900		Dynasties 21–24
		800		
		700		
Late Period	712–343 B.C.	600		Dynasties 25–30
		500		
		400		
Persian Period	343–332 B.C.	300		
Macedonian Period	332–304 B.C.	200		
Ptolemaic Period	304–30 B.C.	100		
		0		
Roman Period	30 B.C.–A.D. 364	100		
		200		
		300		
Byzantine Period	A.D. 364–476	400		

FROM 1906 TO 1936, the Egyptian Expedition of the Metropolitan Museum's Department of Egyptian Art conducted excavations at several sites in Egypt. During these three decades, while working in the cemeteries of western Thebes, across the Nile River from the modern city of Luxor, the Museum's archaeologists uncovered a number of intact tombs belonging to nonroyal individuals. By the terms of the Museum's contract with the Egyptian Antiquities Service, the finds from these tombs were divided, with approximately half going to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and half coming to New York. The burials contained personal possessions of the deceased and funerary gifts left by family members. They also contained mummified bodies, the examination of which has given us some idea of the appearance of the living individuals, as well as their physical condition and age at death.

Two of these tombs, which provide us with invaluable information about the lives of the ancient Egyptians, are highlighted in this *Bulletin*. The earlier of the two dates to the Middle Kingdom and belonged to a man named Wah; it was discovered on March 24, 1920, beneath the causeway leading to the destroyed tomb of an important official, Meketre, who was Wah's employer. The second, the early New Kingdom tomb of a woman named Hatnofer, was uncovered on January 11, 1936, beneath the man-made terrace of the offering chapel belonging to her son Senenmut, the chief architect.

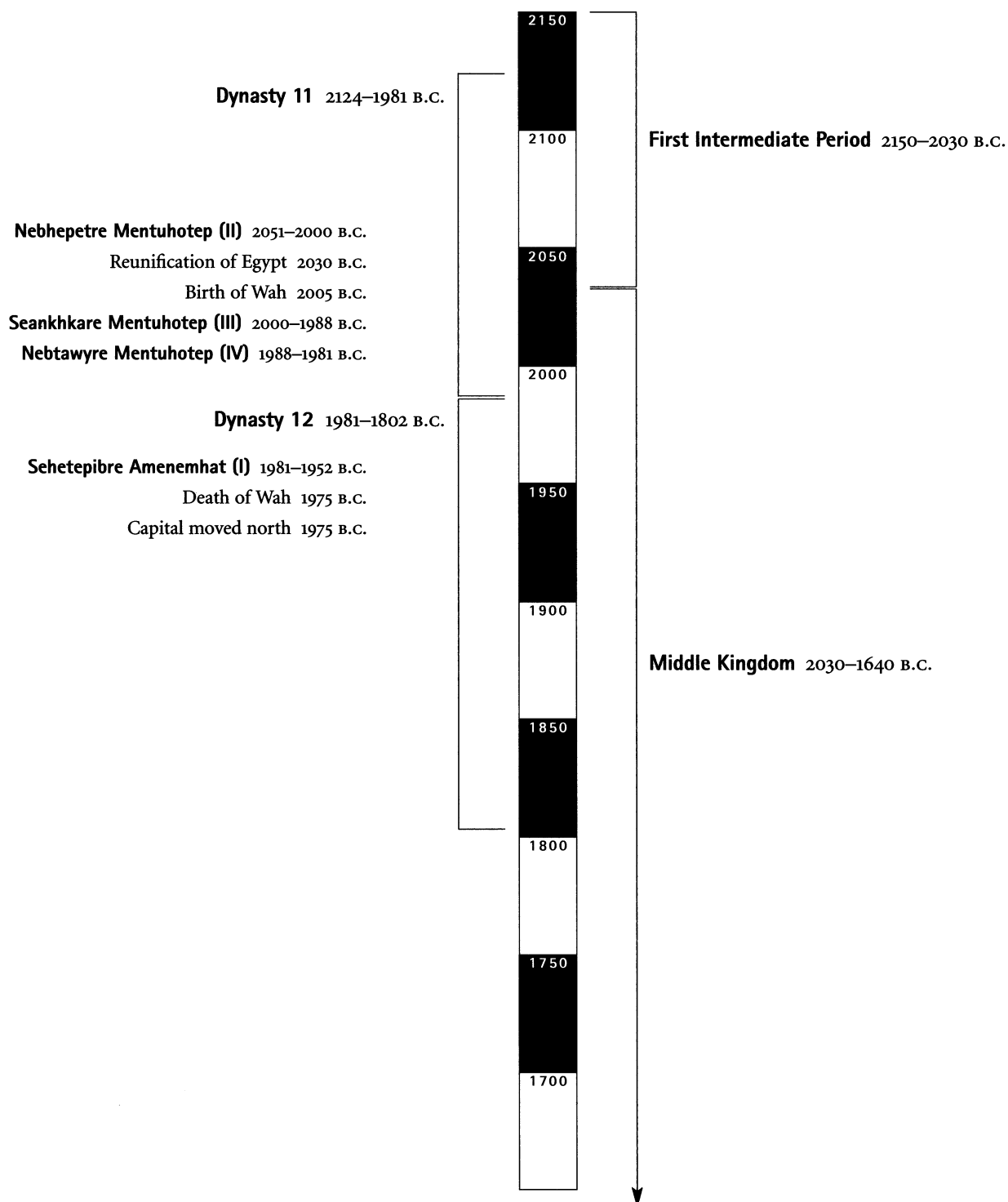
The third and latest assemblage that will be discussed here belonged to a man named Khonsu, who lived at about the midpoint of the New Kingdom. Khonsu was buried with several generations of his family in a tomb that was discovered by members of the Egyptian Antiquities Service in 1886. Because the funerary furniture within the crypt was all quite similar in style, the Egyptian government generously allowed the Metropolitan Museum to purchase a group of objects from the tomb—an acquisition that represented a significant addition to the fledgling collection of Egyptian art, nearly twenty years before the Museum began its own excavations.

Wah, Hatnofer, and Khonsu each lived at an extraordinary time in Egypt's history. Wah was born in the early Middle Kingdom at the end of the reign of one of Egypt's greatest kings, Nebhepetre Mentuhotep, and he lived through the transitional period in which power passed from the Eleventh Dynasty to the Twelfth. Hatnofer was born late in the reign of Nebpehtyre Ahmose, another of Egypt's most renowned rulers, and lived to see the great female pharaoh Maatkare Hatshepsut become the principal ruler of Egypt. Khonsu, who was probably born at the very end of the Eighteenth Dynasty, nearly two centuries after Hatnofer, lived most of his long life under a single pharaoh, Usermaatre Ramesses, called the Great—the most illustrious ruler of Dynasty 19.

The majority of the illustrations in this *Bulletin* are of objects that were found in the tombs of Wah, Hatnofer, and Khonsu, but supplementary material from the same periods has also been included. The black-and-white photographs are from the archives of the Egyptian Expedition and were taken by Harry Burton (1879–1940), the expedition's photographer. The line drawings are based on those made in the field by the expedition's archaeologists and draftsmen.

Egyptian chronology is an ongoing area of study that is constantly being updated. The B.C. dates that appear in the text of this *Bulletin* are based on the chronology currently in use in the galleries of the Department of Egyptian Art. These dates should be understood as approximate, although the prefix *circa* has been dropped except in the captions for the illustrations.

THE MANAGER OF THE STOREHOUSE



Just over four thousand years ago, in about 2005 B.C., a boy named Wah was born in the Upper Egyptian province of Waset, which took its name from the city better known today by its ancient Greek name—Thebes. At that time, Thebes was the capital of all Egypt, and Nebhepetre Mentuhotep, founder of the Middle Kingdom, was nearing the end of his long reign. Nebhepetre was a member of the Theban family that had controlled a large part of Upper Egypt for several generations. Early in the third decade of his reign, about twenty-five years before Wah’s birth, the king had reunited Upper and Lower Egypt after a period of civil war and had taken the Horus name Sematawy—Uniter of the Two Lands. For his accomplishment, Nebhepetre was forever honored by the Egyptians as one of their greatest pharaohs.

While growing up, Wah undoubtedly heard tales of the difficult time when there had been no supreme leader ruling over the two lands of Egypt and Thebes was cut off from trade with the foreign lands to the northeast. He must have been told countless times of the heroic deeds of Nebhepetre and his supporters, who had fought to reunite the Nile Valley in the south with the delta in the north. But in Wah’s lifetime there was peace, and prosperity was returning to the land.

Early in his life, probably when he was six or seven, Wah began studying to become a scribe. Learning the art of writing was a long, painstaking process accomplished primarily by copying standard religious texts, famous literary works, songs, and poetry. Wah may have mastered both the formal hieroglyphic and the cursive hieratic scripts, memorizing hundreds of signs and learning which had specific meanings in themselves; which represented sounds and could be used to spell out words; which were determinatives, or signs that give clues as to the meaning of a word; and which could be used in more than one of

these ways. He would have practiced forming the signs, learning their correct size and spacing in relation to one another. He would also have learned to mix ink and to make brushes from reeds, for Egyptian handwriting was a form of painting, and the finest scribes developed personal hands that were calligraphic in style.

Sometime in his youth, perhaps quite early in his scribal training, Wah went to work on the estate of Meketre, a wealthy Theban who had begun his career as a government official during the reign of Nebhepetre and eventually rose to the exalted position of “seal bearer,” or treasurer—one of the most powerful positions at court. A man of Meketre’s importance probably owned a great deal of land, and his private domain would have been virtually self-sufficient, with tenant farmers, artisans and other specialized laborers, scribes, administrators, and servants all living and working on the estate. Wah probably began his service as one of the lower-level scribes, keeping accounts and writing letters. Ultimately, he became an overseer, or manager, of the storerooms on the estate.

We can speculate about some of Wah’s duties thanks to a set of wooden models that were probably made during his lifetime as part of the burial equipment of his employer, Meketre (see pp. 12–13). These small scenes, which form one of the finest and most complete sets of Middle Kingdom funerary models ever discovered, can be interpreted on more than one level. All of them have symbolic meanings connected with Egyptian funerary beliefs, but they also provide a picture of the day-to-day tasks that were performed on an ancient Egyptian estate. The basis of Egypt’s economy was agriculture, and the grains, fresh fruits, and vegetables raised on Meketre’s lands would have been his most important assets. A large portion of the crops would have been dried or processed into oil and wine, stored, and used throughout the year in the estate’s



Figure 2
Relief depicting Nebhepetre Mentuhotep (detail)
From western Thebes (Deir el-Bahri, temple of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep). Dynasty 11. Painted limestone. H. 14¹/₈ in. (36 cm). Rogers Fund, 1907 (07.230.2)

The ancient Egyptians considered Nebhepetre Mentuhotep one of their greatest kings because he reunited Upper and Lower Egypt after a period of conflict. His Horus name, Uniter of the Two Lands, appears in the rectangular device at the upper left of this detail, and his personal name, Mentuhotep, is written in the oval-shaped cartouche beside it.

kitchens. Some of the produce was set aside for taxes and salaries. Anything left over could be traded for raw materials or luxury items not available on the estate.

Bread and beer, the staples of the Egyptian diet, were made from the same ingredients and would have been produced in a bakery and a brewery that were probably side by side. The baking of bread was a fairly straightforward process: the grain was pounded, ground into flour, formed into loaves, and baked. Brewing was a longer process requiring several extra steps. The bakery supplied loaves of coarse barley flour that were only partially baked, so as not to kill the leavening agent. These loaves were broken up and mixed with water and crushed dates, which provided sugar to promote fermentation. When the resulting brew was ready, the thick liquid was strained through a sieve and decanted into jars that were sealed for later use.

Meketre probably also employed fowling to catch wild birds and fishermen to net or harpoon the abundant fish in the Nile. Bees were raised for their honey, and domestic ducks and geese for their eggs and meat. There would have been herdsmen for the estate's goats and cattle, which

provided both milk and meat. Cattle designated for slaughter were fattened and even force-fed—a practice recorded in numerous models, wall paintings, and reliefs

from all periods (see fig. 13). After the animals were killed, the meat that was not to be used immediately was dried, and the hides were processed into leather for stool seats, drum covers, sandals, shields, quivers (see fig. 3), and certain types of protective clothing, such as archers' wrist guards. Leather thongs were also needed for tools and weapons.

In addition, artisans on the estate produced ceramic vessels in which to store beer and wine; carpenters made and repaired furniture, doors, windows, and perhaps even coffins and other funerary equipment, when necessary; weavers wove the hundreds of yards of linen used in every aspect of life and for wrapping mummies after death. In his adult years, Wah probably oversaw the output of all of the artisanal shops, as well as the storage of agricultural produce, the paying of taxes, and the doling out of wages in grain, cloth, and other products for work done on the estate.

As a young man, Wah must have been an imposing individual; at nearly six feet, his height far exceeded that of most of his contemporaries. However, at some point he seems to have injured both of his feet, and his duties as a scribe and overseer probably allowed him to maintain quite a sedentary lifestyle. Perhaps as a result of these circumstances, by his mid-twenties Wah had become obese—a sign of great prosperity, but also perhaps of poor health, for he died before he was thirty.

Figure 3
Fragment of a quiver (?)
From western Thebes (el-Khokha, MMA tomb 830). Dynasty 11.
Dyed leather. W. 5 7/8 in. (13 cm).
Rogers Fund, 1928 (28.3.5)

This fragment was probably part of a decorative border that was attached around the top of a quiver or spear case. The craftsman who made it sewed together wide strips of red and green dyed leather, then wove narrower strips of red, green, yellow, and black through slits in the surface to form the decorative pattern.

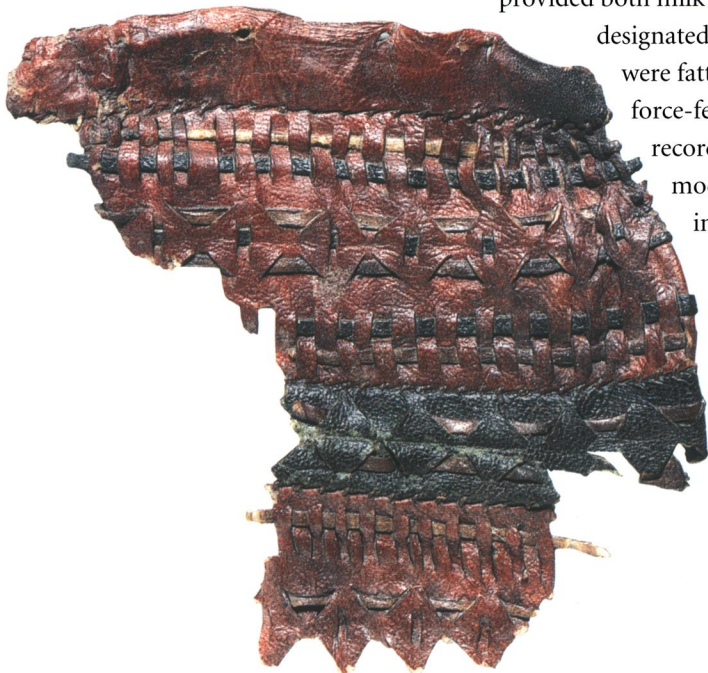




Figure 4

Statuette of Wah

Plastered and painted wood;
linen. H. 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (32.2 cm).

Rogers Fund and Edward S.
Harkness Gift, 1920 (20.3.210)

This statuette, intended to serve as a home for Wah's spirit, depicts a young man in the prime of life. Full of vigor, the little figure has the imposing presence of a much larger statue. The linen wrap may imitate the type of long skirt worn by Middle Kingdom officials. Beneath this, the figure wears the more typical short kilt, carved into the wood and painted white.



Figure 5
Scribes from Meketre's model granary
 Plastered and painted wood. H. of right-hand figure 6 1/8 in. (15.5 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920 (20.3.11)

Early in his career, Wah was probably responsible for recording the goods brought to Meketre's granaries and other storerooms. A variety of writing surfaces were available to Egyptian scribes. One of the figures shown here writes on a whitewashed board, while the other uses a roll of papyrus.



Figure 6
Writing board of an apprentice scribe
 Provenance unknown. Dynasty 11 or earlier. Whitewashed wood and ink. H. 8 5/8 in. (22 cm). Gift of Edward S. Harkness, 1928 (28.9.5)

It is clear from the awkwardly formed hieroglyphs and their uneven spacing that this is the work of an inexperienced scribe who was practicing his penmanship. The board could be used again and again by wiping off the ink and adding a new coat of whitewash.

Figure 7
Scribe's palette and brushes
 From Thebes. Dynasty 21 (ca. 1000 B.C.). Wood, ink, and reed. L. of palette 19 1/8 in. (48.6 cm). Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1947 (47.123)

Although this writing equipment belonged to a man who lived about a thousand years after Wah, palettes and reed brushes changed little during that time. The two depressions at one end of the palette hold remnants of red and black ink, and the brushes could be stored in the slot carved in the center.

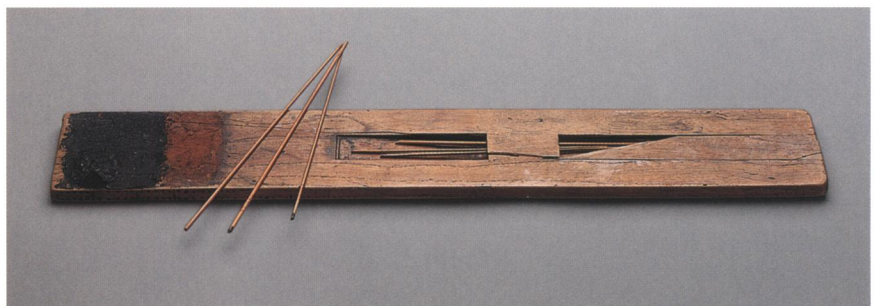


Figure 8

Facsimile of a scene depicting an estate

By Charles K. Wilkinson, Graphic Section, Egyptian Expedition of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Ca. 1930. Tempera on paper. H. 39 in. (99 cm). Rogers Fund, 1930 (30.4.57)

This scene, copied from a wall in a New Kingdom tomb, shows some of the activities that might have taken place on a private estate. In the center of the top register, men gather grapes, which are being processed into wine in the register below. At the far right is a two-story house with date palms growing in its courtyard. In the bottom register, cattle are being branded at the far left, while a kneeling scribe records the various proceedings.

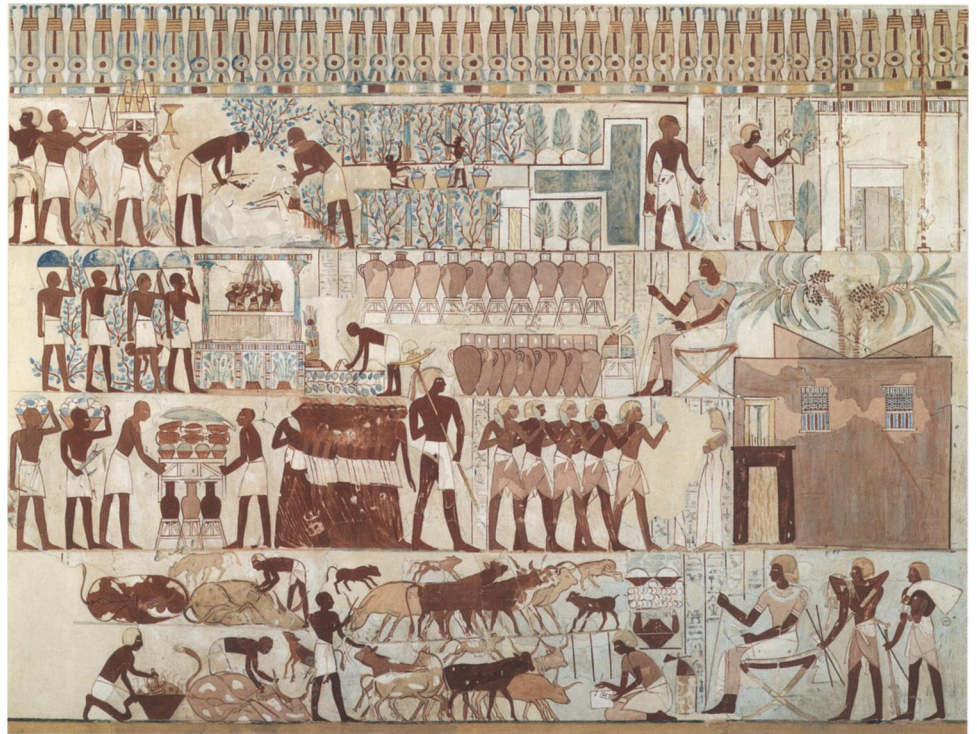


Figure 9

Account ostrakon

From the causeway of Meketre's tomb. Limestone and ink.

W. 8 1/4 in. (21 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920 (20.3.161)

This limestone chip, called an ostrakon, was used by a scribe to record the payment handed out by a steward named Intef to the artisans working on the construc-

tion of a tomb, probably that of Meketre. The overseers received five times what the ordinary quarrymen were paid.

Figure 10

Bakers from Meketre's model bakery

Plastered and painted wood. H. of tallest figure 7 1/8 in. (18 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920 (20.3.12)

The figures in Meketre's models, especially those from the combined bakery and brewery, are small works of art in their own right. Although several figures in a given model may be performing the same task, each is a distinct individual, and each has a slightly different pose.

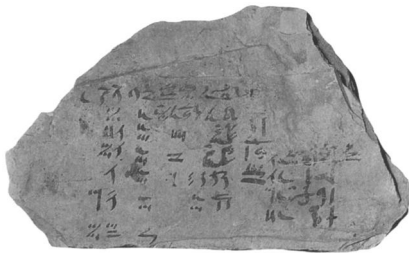




Figure 11
Brewers from Meketre's model brewery
 Plastered and painted wood.
 H. of tallest figure 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (20 cm).
 Rogers Fund and Edward S.
 Harkness Gift, 1920 (20.3.12)

The most striking aspect of Meketre's brewers is their arms, which were specially crafted for each figure according to the task he performs. These figures and those in Meketre's other models convey a feeling of motion that was seldom achieved, or desired, in more formal Egyptian statuary. Note particularly the pose of the man decanting beer at the right.

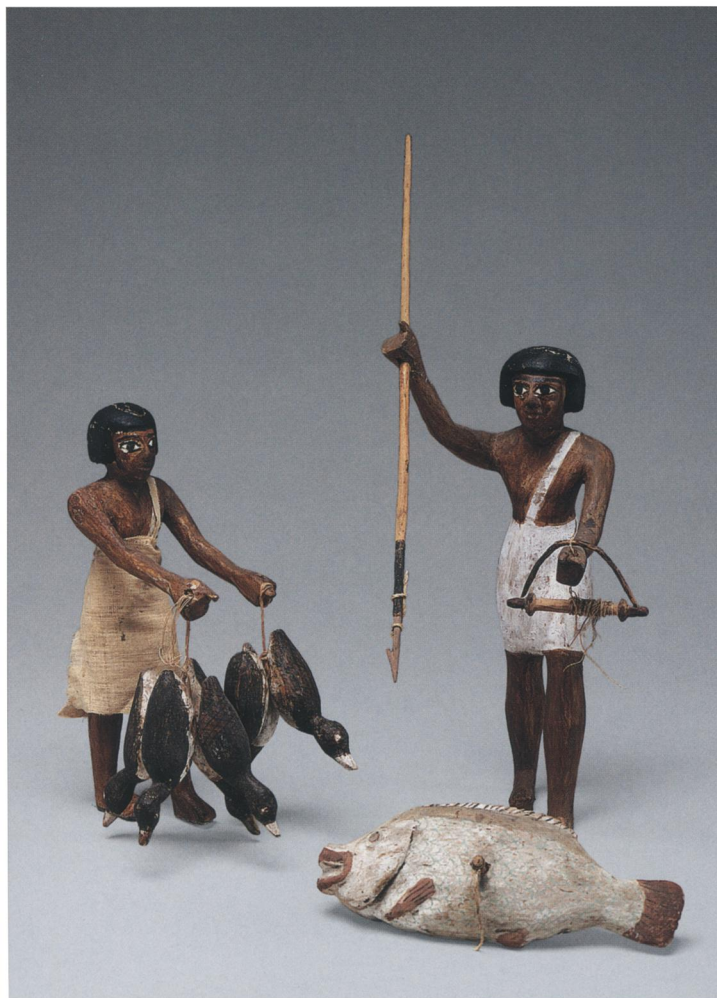


Figure 12
Duck hunter and man harpooning a fish, from Meketre's model sporting boat
 Plastered and painted wood;
 linen; linen twine; copper.
 H. of taller figure 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (24.5 cm).
 Rogers Fund and Edward S.
 Harkness Gift, 1920 (20.3.6)

Figure 13

Meketre's model stable

Plastered and painted wood.
H. 11 in. (28 cm). Rogers Fund
and Edward S. Harkness Gift,
1920 (20.3.9)

In the back of the stable, cattle
are feeding at a trough. In the
front room, two men are force-
feeding two animals, one of
which is crouching on the
ground.



Figure 14

Meketre's model slaughterhouse

Plastered and painted wood;
linen. Maximum h. of walls 20 1/4
in. (51.5 cm). Rogers Fund and
Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920
(20.3.10)

On the upper level of the slaugh-
terhouse, meat has been hung up
to dry, while the butchering of
cattle takes place below.





By the time of Wah's death—probably before Year 6 in the reign of Sehetepibre Amenemhat, the first king of Dynasty 12—Meketre was in the process of preparing his own impressive tomb in the cliffs of western Thebes, facing the valley where a funerary complex was being built for the king. Several subsidiary tombs were included in Meketre's burial complex, and Wah was assigned a small corridor cut into the rather friable bedrock just below the terrace in front of his employer's tomb.

After his funeral, the entrance to Wah's tomb was buried beneath the rubble fill used to build up the causeway leading to the porticoed entrance of Meketre's decorated offering chapel. While Meketre's tomb was plundered and his beautiful chapel destroyed by earthquakes and reuse of its building materials, Wah's little tomb remained hidden for nearly four thousand years, until it was uncovered by the Museum's Egyptian Expedition in 1920. Finding only a few desiccated food offerings and a coffin in the rather crudely cut, undecorated corridor, the archaeologists were deceived into thinking that they had found the tomb of a poor man. But Wah was by no means poor, and his burial suggests that he was one of Meketre's most valued retainers.

In preparation for his funeral, Wah had been very carefully mummified. In the early Twelfth Dynasty, bodies were preserved in a solution of natron, a type of salt that was mined in certain areas of the vast deserts that border the Nile Valley. First, Wah's embalmers removed his liver and intestines. In many other cases, these organs, as well as the lungs and the stomach, were removed from the body, mummified, and placed in four separate vessels called canopic jars; but no such containers were found in Wah's tomb.

After being treated with natron, Wah was wrapped in hundreds of yards of linen sheets, pads, and bandages. While wrapping

the mummy, the embalmers placed amulets and various pieces of jewelry in Wah's hands, on his chest, and around his neck. Among these ornaments, quite close to the body, was a beautiful broad-collar necklace made of brilliant blue faience beads. Several layers above this, three large scarabs were placed over the area of the right wrist and hand. Two of the scarabs were silver, one was of lapis lazuli, and each was strung on linen twine with two beads of glazed steatite or carnelian.

In the early Twelfth Dynasty, the scarab was a relatively new invention, but it was already very popular as an amuletic device. The beetle itself had long been associated with the rising sun, and the word for "beetle" was similar in sound to the word for "become," or "come into being." Thus, the simple oval scarab, often with a magical pattern or inscription carved into its base, was a powerful symbol of rebirth and continued existence after death. Cast in three sections that were soldered together, the larger of Wah's silver scarabs is a superb example of Egyptian metalwork (see figs. 15a, 15b). A linen cord passes through a gold tube that runs lengthwise through the scarab. Details of its body and the pattern on the base were chased into the surface, and the wing cases were inlaid with gold hieroglyphs giving the names and titles of Wah and his employer, Meketre.

After the scarabs had been covered with half a dozen layers of bandages, three necklaces were placed around the neck of the mummy—one of faience, one of gold, and one of silver. Then the wrapping process began in earnest, and according to a set pattern. First, pads of folded linen fabric were placed on the chest and down the front and sides of the body. Next, a large sheet was folded around the mummy and secured by a long strip of linen wound in a figure eight around the shoulders, across the chest, and around the feet. Finally, half a dozen or more bandages ripped from a long sheet were wrapped



Figure 15a
Wah's scarab bracelet
Silver, gold, glazed steatite, and
linen cord. L. of scarab 1½ in.
(3.9 cm). Rogers Fund and
Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920
(40.3.12)



Figure 15b
Underside of scarab

around the mummy in several layers. This entire process was repeated again, and again, and again.

About a third of the way through the wrapping, the head and chest of the mummy were covered with a mask (see fig. 19) made of cartonnage, a material consisting of linen and plaster that could be modeled into the desired shape and decorated after it dried. A thin sheet of gold foil was applied to the face of the mask, and a short beard of painted wood was attached to the chin. Side-whiskers and a mustache were added in paint, as were eyebrows and eyes, shown as if outlined in kohl. A striped headcloth was painted in blue and green and a broad-collar necklace in red, blue, and green to represent beads of faience and carnelian. After the mask was put in place, the wrapping continued until the mummy had become a huge cylinder about sixty inches in circumference, with only the face of the mask left visible.

Wah's coffin was made of cedar, a wood that had to be imported from Lebanon; the lapis lazuli for one of his scarabs may have come from Afghanistan; and the silver in his jewelry is of a purity that suggests that it was mined in lands bordering the Aegean Sea, not in Egypt. The presence of these luxury materials in a tomb at Thebes indicates not only the prosperity of the tomb owner but also the extent to which southern Egypt had become reconnected with the eastern Mediterranean since the end of the First Intermediate Period, during which Upper Egypt had been unable to acquire goods from Anatolia, the Near East, and central Asia.

When the mummy was ready, a procession of mourners accompanied Wah on his final journey. Depending on where Meketre's estate was located—on the east or west bank of the Nile—the cortege would have crossed over the river, passed through a wide strip of cultivated land on the floodplain, and followed the desert path to the tomb. The coffin was probably

transported on a wooden sledge and was protected with a linen pall, tied in place with three strips of cloth. After being lowered down the steep ramp at the entrance to the tomb, the coffin was carried to the back of the corridor, the linen strips were untied, and the pall was discarded on the floor (see fig. 18). A huge sheet of heavy linen was folded and placed in the bottom of the empty coffin, along with a wooden headrest, to form a bed for the mummy. Next, Wah's mummy was laid on its left side in the coffin, with the head directly behind the eye panel painted on the outside. A copper mirror disk with no handle was placed near the mummy's face, and a pair of wooden sandals, never intended to be used in life, were set at its feet. A fine statuette carved from wood and wrapped in a piece of fringed linen cloth (see fig. 4) was also enclosed as insurance that Wah's spirit would have a home if the body did not survive.

If Wah was married and had children, they would have been very young, and his burial ceremony may have been carried out by a brother or another male relative rather than by his eldest son, as was customary. At some point in this ceremony, priests would have filled the air with incense, made libations and offerings of food to the mummy and the statuette, and read offering texts that would guarantee a limitless supply of "bread and beer, cattle and fowl, and all good and pure things upon which a spirit lives."

After Wah's mummy and the other equipment were placed inside, the coffin was packed with more than thirty folded sheets; three thick wooden staffs, perhaps an indication of his office, were laid near the top; and warm resin was poured on the uppermost layer of linen. Finally, the coffin was closed. Pegs were driven into predrilled holes at the head and foot to secure the lid, and the large, cylindrical boss that had served as a handle for lifting the lid was sawn off and discarded on the

floor of the tomb. Bread, beer, and a shoulder of beef—the choicest cut, used for ceremonial occasions and in offerings to the gods—were arranged in front of the eye panel of the coffin. The entrance to the

small tomb was sealed with mud brick, and Wah was left to begin his journey to the netherworld with all of the provisions necessary to assure the survival of his ka, or life force, in the afterlife.



Figure 16
The tomb of Meketre was carved into the edge of the cliffs at the top of a steep slope that was later evened out with rubble to form the causeway, bordered by thick mud-brick walls, that is its most recognizable feature. The entrance to Wah's tomb is below the terrace, at the top of the causeway, barely visible inside the right-hand enclosure wall. Another small opening, just outside the enclosure wall, marks a cache of embalming materials.

Opposite, top
Figure 17
View of the blocked entrance to Wah's tomb as it appeared on March 24, 1920

Opposite, bottom
Figure 18
The interior of Wah's tomb, shown with his coffin at the back, is smaller than it appears. The priests performing the funerary ritual undoubtedly would have found the corridor quite constricting. The low ceiling required a person even of average height, five and a half feet tall, to duck his head, and an adult standing in the center of the corridor with arms outstretched could have easily touched the side walls.





Figure 19
Wah's funerary mask
Cartonnage, gold foil, and wood.
H. 26³/₈ in. (67 cm). Rogers Fund
and Edward S. Harkness Gift,
1920 (40.3.54)

Clockwise from top left

Figure 20

Rings and necklace

Carnelian and linen thread; blue-glazed steatite and linen thread; carnelian, turquoise, moss agate, amethyst, milky quartz, green-glazed steatite, and twisted linen cord. L. of scarab 1 in. (2.6 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920 (40.3.1, .11, .16)

The single barrel bead of high-quality carnelian and the scarab of blue-glazed steatite were both

found in the palm of Wah's left hand. The small length of linen thread attached to each suggests that they were intended as rings, but they probably served as funerary amulets, not as jewelry worn during life. The lovely, asymmetrical beaded necklace, though perhaps a piece of personal jewelry, seems to have been restrung for the funeral, since the linen cord shows no sign of wear.

Figure 21

Funerary broad-collar necklace
Faience and linen thread.

W. 15³/₈ in. (39 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920 (40.3.2)

Wah's faience broad collar is one of the finest examples of this type of funerary necklace from the early Middle Kingdom. Although a few areas required reinforcing with modern thread, the stringing is almost entirely original.

Figure 22

Bracelet and necklace

Gold and twisted linen cord; lapis lazuli, carnelian, and twisted linen cord. L. of scarab 1¹/₂ in. (3.8 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920 (40.3.14, .17)

Wah's gold necklace consists of hollow beads of gold foil, made in two sections and soldered together at the middle.



Figure 23

Wah's necklace

Faience and twisted linen cord. L. 20¹/₂ in. (52 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920 (40.3.15)

Figure 24

Figures from one of Meketre's
model funerary boats

Plastered and painted wood.

H. of taller figure 8 1/4 in. (21 cm).

Rogers Fund and Edward S.

Harkness Gift, 1920 (20.3.4)

Compared with other figures from Meketre's models, these two statuettes stand out for their stillness and for the care with which they were carved and painted. The formal pose of the figure at the left indicates that it should be understood as a statue of Meketre, not as the living person. The crouching figure at the right, carved with the same care, may represent Meketre's son, but it may equally well be his principal retainer, Wah, accompanying the statue of his employer on the ceremonial journey to Abydos, the cult center of Osiris.



Figure 25

Meketre's model funerary procession

Plastered and painted wood;
linen. H. of right-hand figure
9 1/2 in. (24 cm). Rogers Fund and
Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920
(20.3.8)

A priest carrying a censer and an elongated jar for libations leads a procession of three offering bearers. The first supports a board on his head that is piled with linen sheets, including one that has been dyed red like the shawl that was found wrapped around Wah's mummy. The next figure balances a basket on her head containing baguette-shaped loaves of bread and two sealed beer jars, while in her right hand she clutches a duck. The last figure carries another duck and a basket filled with flat, square-shaped bread. Together, the members of the procession bring all that is needed to sustain Meketre's spirit in the afterlife. Similar offerings would have been made at the actual funerals of Meketre and Wah.



Figure 26

Workmen carrying Meketre's
models from his tomb to the dig
house in March 1920



PLAN

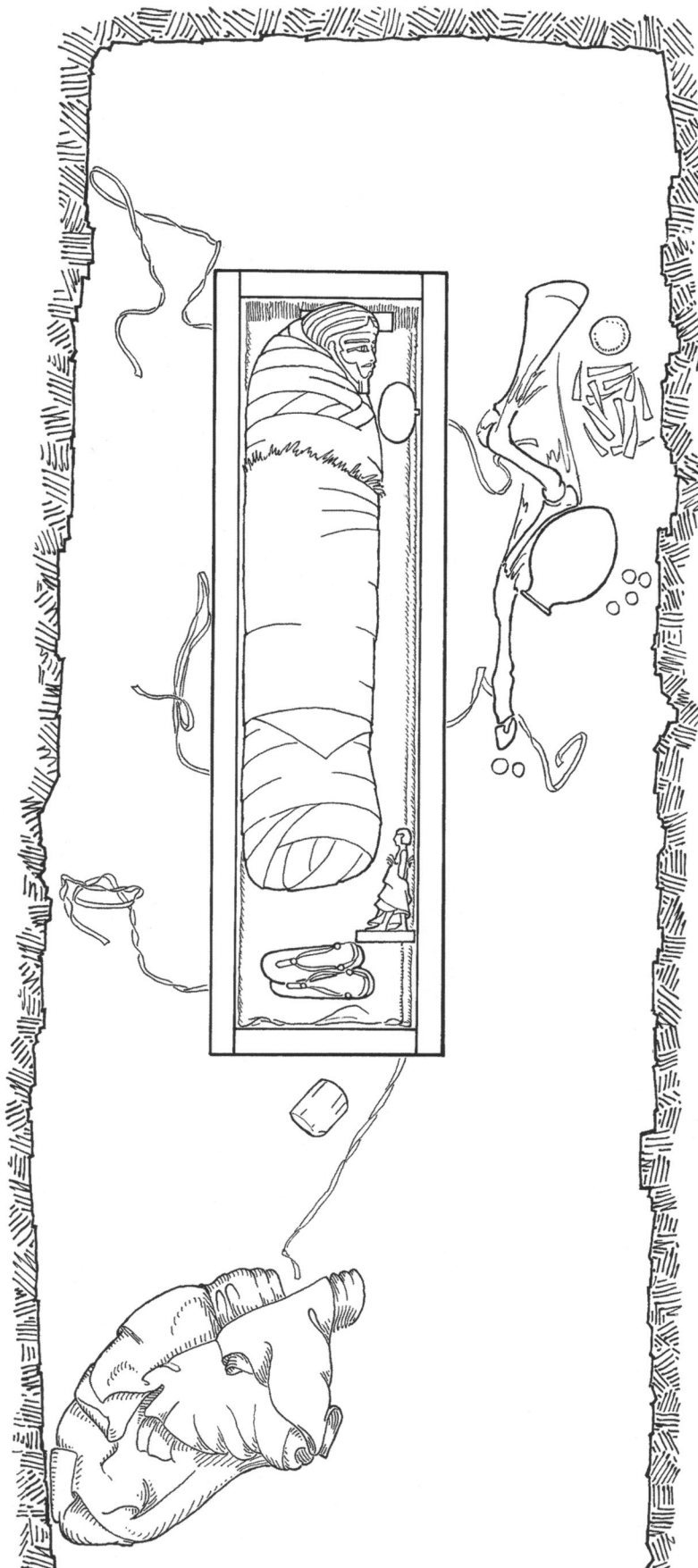


Figure 27
Plan of Wah's tomb
showing its contents as
found by the Museum's
archaeologists

Figure 28

Eye panel on Wah's coffin

Painted cedar. Overall w. of eye motif 15 1/2 in. (39.5 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920 (20.3.202a)

Wah's coffin was built of cedar and painted yellow. Offering texts were written on the lid and around the upper edge of the box. A pair of eyes was also painted at the head end of the coffin's proper left side, as was customary in the Middle Kingdom.



Figure 29

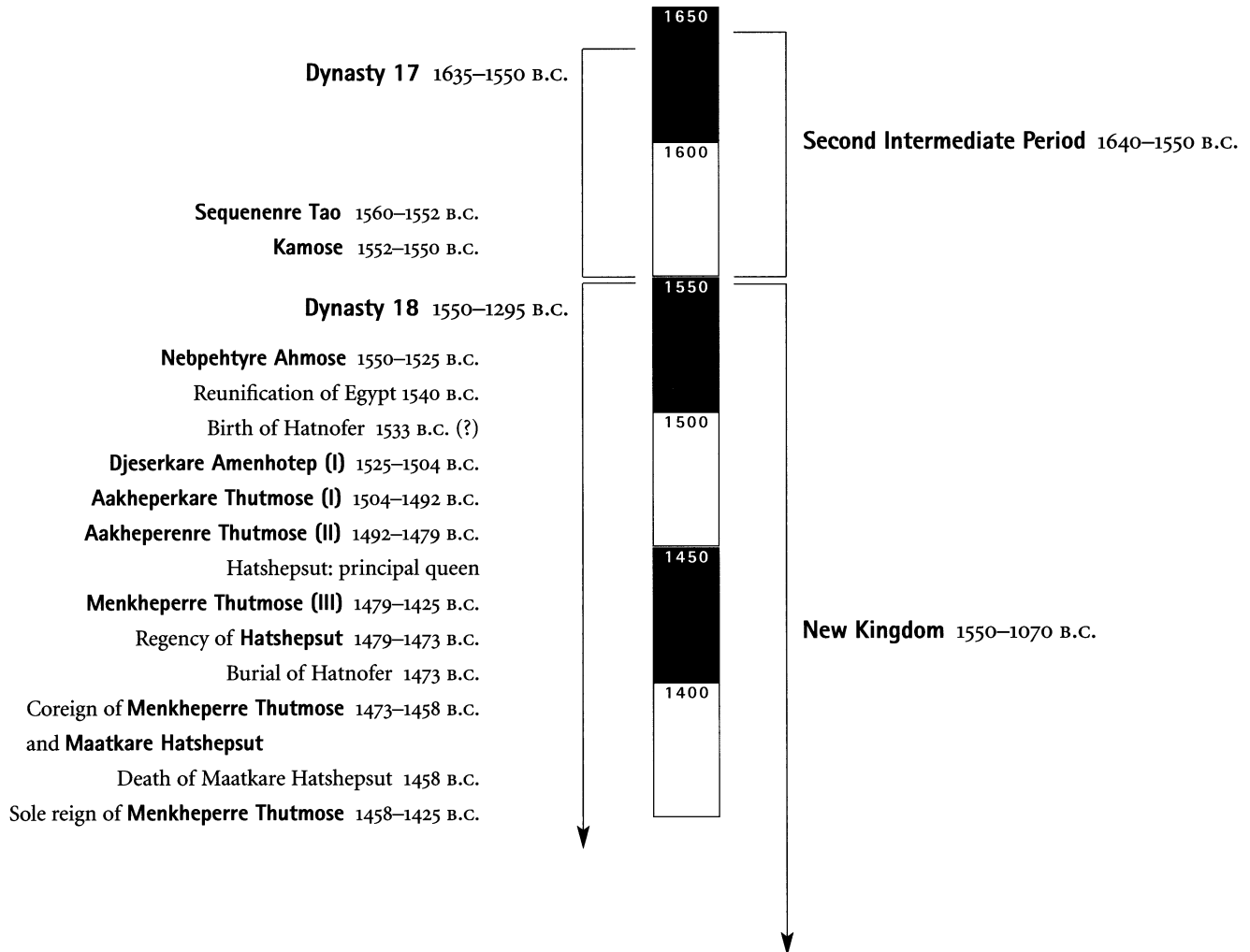
Priests from one of Meketre's model funerary boats

Plastered and painted wood. H. of tallest figure 9 1/4 in. (23.5 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920 (20.3.4)

These three priest figures provide offerings for Meketre's spirit. The priest at the left presents a censer shaped like a forearm, the hand clasping a bowl for the burning incense. The priest at the right offers a foreleg of beef, and the one in the center reads from a scroll of papyrus inscribed with an essential part of the standard offering text: "1,000 bread and beer, 1,000 cattle and fowl."



THE HOUSEMISTRESS



Sometime in 1473 B.C., an elderly woman named Hatnofer was laid to rest in the Theban necropolis in a small rock-cut tomb that had been prepared for her by her son Senenmut. Hatnofer had lived through an extraordinary time in Egypt's history. She was born late in the reign of Nebpehtyre Ahmose in the vicinity of Armant, a town some ten miles south of Thebes. In about 1540 B.C., less than a decade before Hatnofer's birth, Ahmose had reunited the two lands of Egypt by defeating the Hyksos, descendants of migrants from western Asia who had settled in the eastern delta and controlled Lower Egypt and part of the Nile Valley to the north of Thebes for about a century.

Identified by historians as the founder of the New Kingdom and the first ruler of the Eighteenth Dynasty, Ahmose was the brother of Kamose, the last king of the Seventeenth Dynasty, whose family had ruled Thebes and part of southern Egypt during what we now call the Second Intermediate Period. Since Hatnofer's hometown was part of the Theban province, one or more of her close male relatives

almost certainly would have fought alongside these Theban kings in the battles that eventually drove the Hyksos back into western Asia and secured the throne of a united Egypt for Ahmose.

When we consider that she lived in the middle of the second millennium B.C., Hatnofer was fortunate to have been born into a culture that recognized a woman as an individual, not merely as the possession of her male relatives. In Egypt, a woman could inherit, buy, and sell property in her own right. Any material goods or land that she brought to her marriage remained hers, and she could make a will to distribute her property as she wished. She could take grievances before a judge, be a witness in a court case, and even sit on a jury. Although Egyptian society was essentially patriarchal and men generally held all positions of power, both on the local level and at the royal court, a wife could carry out at least some of her husband's official duties when he was absent. Indeed, during Hatnofer's lifetime, circumstances arose that allowed a woman to claim the most powerful position in the land.

This exceptional event occurred when Hatnofer was already in her fifties, in 1479 B.C., when Aakheperenre Thutmose "went forth to the sky and joined the gods." Thutmose had no sons with his principal queen (and half sister), Hatshepsut. Therefore, the king was succeeded by the son of Isis, a secondary queen. This boy, who was also named Thutmose, took the throne name Menkheperre. Since the new king was too young to rule by himself, Hatshepsut became regent for her nephew. The arrangement is commemorated in the biographical text in the offering chapel of the venerable official Ineni, who had served every Eighteenth Dynasty king since Djoserkare Amenhotep:

The god's wife Hatshepsut was managing the affairs of the land, the Two Lands being under her direction. Egypt in compliance worked for her—the effective seed of the

Figure 30
Bowl
Faience. Diam. 7 1/8 in. (18 cm).
Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.3.8)

This faience bowl was among the objects found in Hatnofer's tomb. The color and decoration evoke the image of lotus blossoms growing in a pond.



god, who came forth from him; the prow rope of Upper Egypt, the mooring stake of the South, the efficient stern rope of Lower Egypt; mistress of governance, whose direction was efficient; the one at whose speech the Two Lands become peaceful.

Hatshepsut was not the first Eighteenth Dynasty queen to wield significant political power. She was, however, the first to claim for herself the prerogatives and titles of a king, adopting Maatkare as her throne name and becoming, in essence, the senior coruler of Egypt until Year 21 of her nephew's reign. She appears to have made the transition from regent to king in Year 7, and it seems to have been shortly thereafter that Hatnofer died.

At the time of her death, Hatnofer was a short, rather stout grandmother of about sixty—a “good old age” in Egyptian terms. At some point, perhaps as a child in the house of her mother, Sit-Djehuty, Hatnofer acquired the nickname Tju-Tju. Just over five feet tall, with a delicate bone structure, she must have been quite attractive as a young woman. On special occasions, she probably wore her dark brown, naturally curly hair in braids similar to those seen on a statuette of one of her contemporaries that is now in the Museum's collection (see figs. 33a, 33b). In order to achieve the volume necessary for this hairstyle, Hatnofer would have augmented her own hair with supplementary braids of the same color. Even after her death, when her mummy was being prepared for burial, scores of dark brown supplementary braids were woven into her white hair in an imitation of the style of her youth.

Like all Egyptians, the men as well as the women, Hatnofer would have used various kinds of cosmetics, including oils and unguents to protect her skin from the dryness of the Upper Egyptian climate. She also would have outlined her eyes with kohl, a blue, green, or black powder of ground minerals that was thought to enhance the eyes' beauty while protecting

them from the sun's glare. In order to apply her makeup and admire her handiwork, Hatnofer had several mirrors made of highly polished bronze or silver set into wood or metal handles. She also owned a bronze razor, which was found with other cosmetic implements inside a basket in her tomb.

Hatnofer probably married before the age of twenty, moving into the household of her husband, Ramose. We know nothing of Ramose's background, but he seems to have been a man of modest means—anything from a tenant farmer to an artisan or even a small landowner. He probably brought his wife into the house of his parents rather than to an establishment that was exclusively his own. Egyptian households often comprised a number of generations, including parents, elderly grandparents, and unmarried and married siblings and their children. Prosperous households would also have included servants. In the early years of her marriage, Hatnofer was probably subordinate to her mother-in-law and may have shared housekeeping duties with her husband's unmarried sisters. Eventually, however, she became the head of her own household and was given the honorific title *nebet per*, meaning “housemistress.”

Although their contributions are largely unrecorded, women performed important functions in nearly every aspect of ancient Egypt's society and economy. As the mistress of a household, Hatnofer cared for the family's material goods and oversaw the storage and preparation of food, including the grinding of grain to produce flour for bread. If her husband was a farmer, she would have helped him with the harvest. Hatnofer probably also made and mended the clothing, and she may even have plied flax fibers into thread and woven the linen cloth that was needed for clothing and many other essential items. In the New Kingdom most linen was still woven on horizontal looms that could be set up with pegs driven into the ground,



Figure 31
Seated statue of Hatshepsut
(detail)

From western Thebes (Deir el-Bahri). Indurated limestone.
Overall h. 77 in. (195.6 cm).
Rogers Fund, 1929 (29.3.2)

This lifesize statue of Maatkare
Hatshepsut once stood in her
mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri.

and this type of loom seems to have been employed almost exclusively by women. Because of its durability and multitude of uses in life as well as in death, linen was one of the most valuable commodities in the Egyptian economy, which was based on the barter system; any woman capable of weaving high-quality cloth was thus a substantial asset to her household.

Linen was produced in a variety of weaves and a wide range of qualities, from coarse to superfine. Whole sheets of coarser cloth, some more than sixty feet long, were folded to form mattresses, cushions, and blankets. Pieces of softer fabric were made into loincloths, shirts, shifts, kilts, and tunics. Lengths of sheer linen were pleated and worn as fashionable outer garments. Old linen was used for cleaning and for wrapping and storing food, and small strips of cloth were tied around the mouths of jars to secure stoppers and lids. Worn linen was also saved for later use in mummification or as grave goods. Three wooden chests containing a total of seventy-six long, fringed sheets of linen were found in Hatnofer's tomb. Ranging from fourteen to fifty-four feet in length, the sheets had seen much wear, and some had been mended. Before being placed in the chests, the individual pieces of fabric had been laundered, pressed, and carefully folded into neat rectangles.

Among the other objects associated with Hatnofer's tomb is a leather tambourine that was found just outside the entrance. Although it may have been used in the funerary ritual performed at her burial, the instrument was probably one of Hatnofer's personal possessions. In ancient Egypt, just as today, music enriched all spheres of life, from the family home to the temples of the gods. Musical ensembles included different combinations of flutes, harps, lutes, and percussion instruments, as well as vocalists and dancers. Professional musicians, both male and female, performed at public festivals and were

probably employed in the homes of the wealthy and at the royal court. In Hatnofer's time, women of some status in the community also served as musicians in temple rituals. Since she was probably not a professional musician and had no title connecting her with a divine cult, Hatnofer probably played this tambourine in her own home or at the homes of friends, where she and fellow amateur musicians would have accompanied impromptu singing, dancing, storytelling, and other informal entertainments.

In a seemingly bizarre act for which the reason can only be guessed, Hatnofer's tambourine had been damaged before it was laid in front of the tomb, where it was covered with debris. The red leather cover had been slit and sections of a chair—the only piece of household furniture associated with Hatnofer's burial (see fig. 42)—had been stuffed inside. This type of low chair was usually used by women. The craftsman who made it employed light and dark woods to advantage in the decorative scheme, alternating colors in the open-worked design on the back panels and in the border strips of the braces. The openwork includes a figure of the household god Bes, in the center, flanked by *tyet* amulets and *djed* pillars, both of which would have ensured the well-being of the chair's owner. The seat was made of linen cord, plaited into a herringbone mesh that miraculously survived its rough treatment when the chair was dismantled.

Overleaf

Figure 32

The entrance to Hatnofer's tomb, with contents shown in place



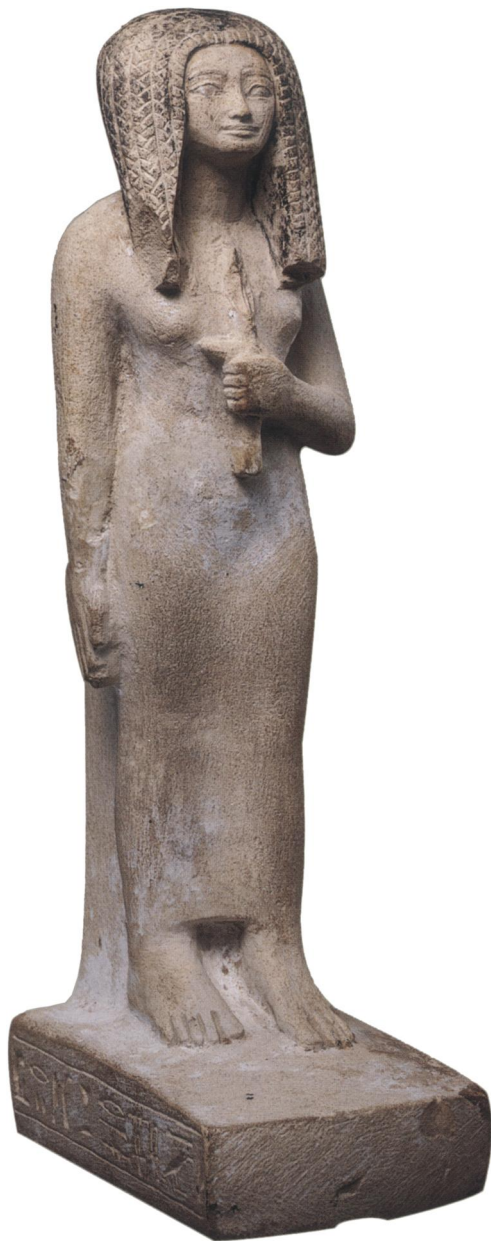


Figure 33a
Statuette of Taweret
 From western Thebes (Asasif).
 New Kingdom, early Dynasty 18.
 Limestone with traces of paint.
 H. 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (17.5 cm). Purchase,
 Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1926
 (26.7.1404)

The housemistress Taweret lived at about the same time as Hatnofer. Here, Taweret's hair is dressed in a style that was fashionable at Thebes during the early New Kingdom: two large lappets of smaller braids hang in front, with three thicker braids down her back. She also wears a type of simple sheath dress that was common at the time.



Figure 33b
Back of Taweret's head

Figure 34
Basket and toilet articles
 From western Thebes (Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, below TT 71). New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, early co-reign of Menkheperre Thutmose and Maatkare Hatshepsut. Halfa grass and linen cord; Egyptian alabaster, linen, linen cord, and ebony; boxwood and cypress. H. of basket (without cover) 5 in. (12.8 cm). Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.3.189, .190, .199)

The objects shown here were discovered with the burial of an unnamed woman who lived at about the same time as Hatnofer. The basket contains a mass of fine braids of dark brown human hair

and three bundles of loose, wavy locks. These tresses would have been used to augment the owner's own hair in order to create the fashionable hairstyle of the period. The lid of the small alabaster jar has been covered with a scrap of cloth bound with linen cord to keep the contents—the powdery eye makeup known as kohl—from spilling out. When found inside the basket, the sticklike kohl applicator of polished ebony was stuck through a fold in the linen. The small wooden box has two compartments, each with a sliding lid, and was probably used for jewelry.





Figure 35

Razor and mirror

Bronze and wood; bronze. H. of mirror $6\frac{3}{4}$ in. (17 cm). Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.3.69, .13)

This bronze mirror was actually found in one of the other coffins in Hatnofer's tomb (see fig. 54) but probably belonged to Hatnofer. It was cast in two pieces; the mirror disk has a tang that fits into a hole in the handle and is held in place by a small bronze peg. The handle depicts a woman's face with cow's ears and a curled wig—the emblem of Hathor, the goddess of love and beauty.



Figure 36

Two pairs of sandals

From western Thebes (Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, below TT 71). New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, early co-reign of Menkheperre Thutmose and Maatkare Hatshepsut.

Papyrus, palm leaf, and grass; calfskin, stained red. L. of red sandals (each) $7\frac{3}{4}$ in. (19.8 cm). Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.3.159, .234)

These sandals were found in tombs of the same period as Hatnofer's. Although Egyptians often went barefoot, they also fashioned sandals out of leather and from various grasses. The palm-leaf sandals were made for a child.

Figure 37

Basket of food

Halfa grass, palm leaf, and linen cord; ceramic; desiccated raisins, dates, dom palm nuts, and bread. H. of basket with lid $10\frac{1}{4}$ in. (26 cm). Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.3.57; .64–.66; foodstuffs unaccessioned)

The large, oval storage basket (see also fig. 54) was made with coils of halfa grass sewn together with strips of the same material, some of which were dyed red or black to create the pattern of chevrons and rectangles. Inside the rim, a flange to support the lid was attached to the side of the basket with palm-leaf strips. Similar strips were used to reinforce the bottom of the basket and several of the lowest coils. The basket was filled with bread and fruit to sustain Hatnofer's spirit in the afterlife.



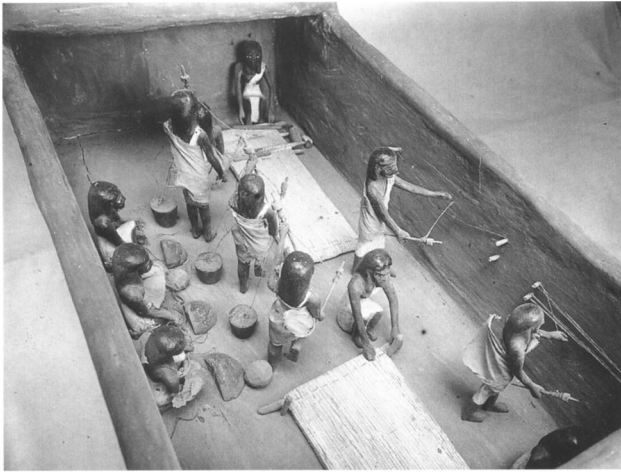


Figure 38
This model of a weavers' shed found in the Middle Kingdom tomb of Meketre (see p. 7) shows some women weaving cloth on horizontal looms while others prepare thread. The women standing by the wall are measuring out the warp threads. The model itself, excavated in 1920 by the Metropolitan's Egyptian Expedition, is now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.



Figure 39
The photograph at left illustrates the different qualities of linen found in the tomb of Hatnofer. Each sheet contains inlaid weaver's marks, and each also bears a brief ink inscription indicating either the quality of the fabric or its source.

Figure 40
Facsimile of an offering scene (detail)
By Norman de Garis Davies, Graphic Section, Egyptian Expedition of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Ca. 1930. Tempera on paper. Overall 54 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 64 in. (138 x 162.5 cm). Rogers Fund, 1930 (30.4.33)

In the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Dynasties, both men and women wore elaborately pleated outer garments on formal occasions. The sheer quality of the finest linen is suggested in wall paintings of the period, such as this from the Theban tomb of Userhat (New Kingdom, early Dynasty 19, ca. 1290 B.C.), in which the muted color of flesh is visible through the fabric covering the arms of the figures.

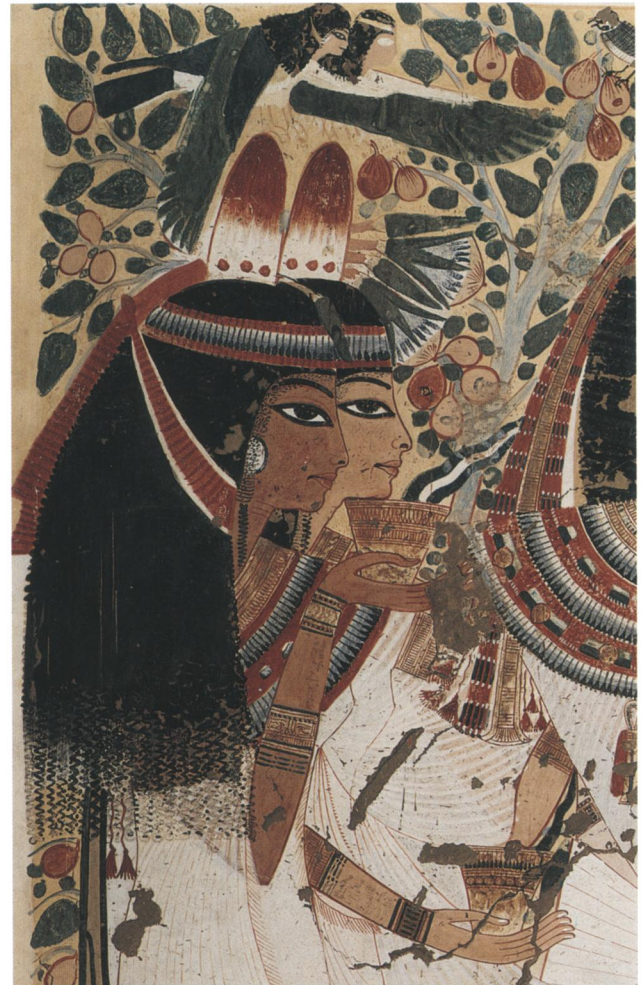




Figure 41

Gable-topped chest and linens

Whitewashed wood; linen. H. of chest 17³/₈ in. (44 cm). Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.3.56, .54, .111, .140)

This whitewashed chest (see also fig. 54) was one of three found in Hatnofer's tomb. Two of the chests, including this one, were probably made especially for Hatnofer's burial. They were filled with linen sheets of various qualities and weaves. Shown here with the chest are a shirt of fine linen; a sheet of superfine weave, probably used as an outer garment; and a sheet of coarser weave more than seventeen yards long, which may have served as a mattress. After it was packed with linen, the chest was tied shut with a piece of linen cord that was secured with a mud seal.

Figure 42

Chair

Boxwood, cypress, ebony, and linen cord. H. 20⁷/₈ in. (53 cm). Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.3.152)

Skillfully carved and finished, Hatnofer's chair is a fine example of Egyptian woodworking. The various elements were assembled with mortise-and-tenon joinery, with pegs to hold the tenons in place. Pegs also fasten the braces to the back and to the seat. The joins were reinforced with a resinous glue.



Figure 43

This photograph shows the entrance to Hatnofer's tomb as it was discovered. A rectangular tambourine of red-stained leather stretched over a wood frame had been placed in front of the tomb's entrance before the area was covered with debris. Hatnofer's tambourine, almost thirty inches long, is one of the only examples of its type that has been found largely intact. It is now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

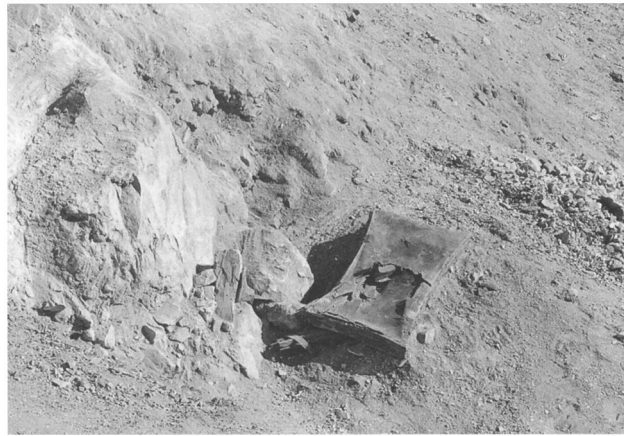


Figure 44

Figures from a model traveling boat

From western Thebes (tomb of Meketre). Middle Kingdom, early Dynasty 12, reign of Sehetepibre Amenemhat. Plastered and painted wood. H. of harp 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (16 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1920 (20.3.1)

These beautifully crafted figures, one playing the harp and the other singing, bring to mind a form of Egyptian poetry known as the harper's song, in which the singer encourages his listeners to enjoy life. Here, the harper's eyes appear to be closed in concentration on his music; however, in Egyptian art, the convention of partially closed eyes was generally used to indicate blindness.

Figure 45

In this drawing of female musicians from the tomb of Rekhmire, who served as vizier to Menkheperre Thutmose, one woman plays a tambourine similar to Hatnofer's.

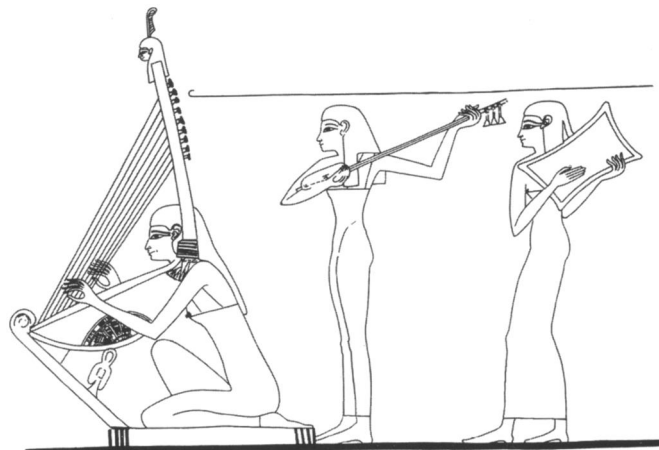




Figure 46
Artist's sketches of Senenmut
From western Thebes (Sheikh
Abd el-Qurna, below TT 71).
Limestone. W. 6¾ in. (17 cm).
Rogers Fund, 1931 (31.4.2)

Although Hatnofer performed or oversaw many tasks within her household, her primary responsibility was to bear and rear children. The names of six children belonging to Hatnofer and Ramose have been preserved for us: two daughters, Nefrethor and Ahhotep, and four sons, Senenmut, Amenemhat, Pa-iry, and Minhotep. Senenmut is by far the best-known member of the family; his likeness is represented on several surviving ostraca, or limestone chips used as sketch pads (see fig. 46). As a child, he must have studied to become a scribe, and that training enabled him to pursue a career that was to prove beneficial to his family in the coming years. Having risen to the high position of steward of the estates of Amun, Senenmut also became tutor to Princess Neferure, the daughter of Aakheperenne Thutmose and Hatshepsut. Later, as overseer of all works of the king, he directed the construction of, and may even have designed, the mortuary temple of Maatkare Hatshepsut, one of the greatest achievements of ancient Egyptian architecture.

Unfortunately for Hatnofer, her husband died when he was only in his mid-thirties, leaving her a widow probably with young children to support. It is possible that Senenmut, who may have been the eldest son, had reached his late teens when his father died and thus became head of the household, taking on the responsibility for his mother and younger brothers and sisters. In ancient Egypt, family ties were strong, and the debt children owed to their parents was stressed in a form of writing known as wisdom literature. The texts were often composed as instructions from a father to his son. Senenmut seems to have taken to heart a passage from one of these compositions, the *Instructions of Any*, which might easily have been addressed by Ramose to Senenmut himself:

Double the food your mother gave to you, support her as she supported you; she had a heavy burden in you, but she did not

abandon you. When you were born after your months, she was yoked to you still, breast-feeding you for three years. . . . When she sent you to school, and you were taught to write, she kept watching over you daily, with bread and beer in her house.

Senenmut certainly repaid his mother at the end of her life by excavating a tomb for her on the eastern slope of the hill that is now called Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, just below the location he had chosen for his own offering chapel (see fig. 1). He began to excavate his chapel in mid-March of 1473 B.C., by which time he was already chief architect to Maatkare Hatshepsut. With his connections at court, and the personal wealth they must have brought, he was able to provide his mother with a well-appointed burial. Many of the goods in Hatnofer's tomb were drawn from the royal storehouses, including much of the linen and the jars of oil. Some of these items bore ink inscriptions naming the God's Wife Hatshepsut—her designation as queen. Others displayed the seal of Maatkare—Hatshepsut's throne name, taken when she became king (see p. 26). The presence of both titularies in Hatnofer's tomb suggests that she was buried at about the time of Hatshepsut's transition from regent to senior coruler with her nephew Menkheperre.

When she died, Hatnofer was mummified in the standard fashion of a well-to-do Egyptian of the early New Kingdom. Four of her internal organs—her liver, lungs, intestines, and stomach—were removed, preserved, individually wrapped, and placed in four separate pottery jars that were stored in a canopic chest made of wood. Her brain was also removed, but, unlike the other organs, it was discarded as something of no importance. Her heart was left in place, since it was considered the seat of the intellect and had to remain with the body. The body itself was completely covered with solid natron and left for eight to ten weeks to dry out. Then, the natron was

removed, the skin was rubbed with oils, and the hair was dressed with Hatnofer's supplementary braids. Next, a number of rings were placed on her left hand, and the wrapping was begun. First, the arms and legs were wrapped separately, then the whole body was enveloped in hundreds of yards of sheets, pads, and bandages.

To honor his mother, Senenmut purchased a well-crafted anthropoid coffin made of wood and accented with gilding, as well as a cartonnage mummy mask covered with gold foil. The most valuable of Hatnofer's funerary gifts was her heart scarab (see figs. 52a, 52b). Made of serpentine, this amulet was beautifully carved with considerable detail, much of which has been obscured by the gold mounting bands. The underside was incised with tiny hieroglyphs of a clarity seldom matched on contemporary heart scarabs. The simple mount of beaten gold was glued to the stone with a dark, resinous gum, and a loop of gold wire was soldered to the head end of the mount. The tour de force, however, is the flexible chain, woven of minute, interlocking links of fine gold wire, with every link soldered separately.

After Hatnofer's mummy was wrapped, it was enveloped in a sheet that was neatly sewn up the side. Her heart scarab was laid over the chest, along with a small silver mirror with a wooden handle. Then, the mask was arranged over the head and chest, and the mummy was placed in the coffin on its back. Three scrolls, two of papyrus and one of leather, were then set on the mummy's chest (see fig. 47). The scrolls were inscribed with chapters from the Book of the Dead, a collection of texts intended to help Hatnofer's spirit in its journey to the afterworld.

As a final act of filial piety, Senenmut returned to the cemetery where his father and several other family members had been buried, probably near Armant. The mummies of Ramose, three young women, and three children—perhaps daughters, or in-laws and grandchildren, of Hatnofer—were brought to Thebes, provided with coffins, and reinterred in Hatnofer's tomb. This was Senenmut's greatest gift, for it allowed the spirits of his father and relatives, all of whom had been buried when the family was less prosperous, to partake in the abundance of Hatnofer's burial.

Figure 47

This detail of Hatnofer's leather scroll shows the bark of the sun god, Re, with Isis standing at the front, followed by Thoth, the god of wisdom. At the center is Khepri, the sun god in his manifestation at dawn. Behind him is Maat, the goddess of truth, followed by Hatnofer herself.

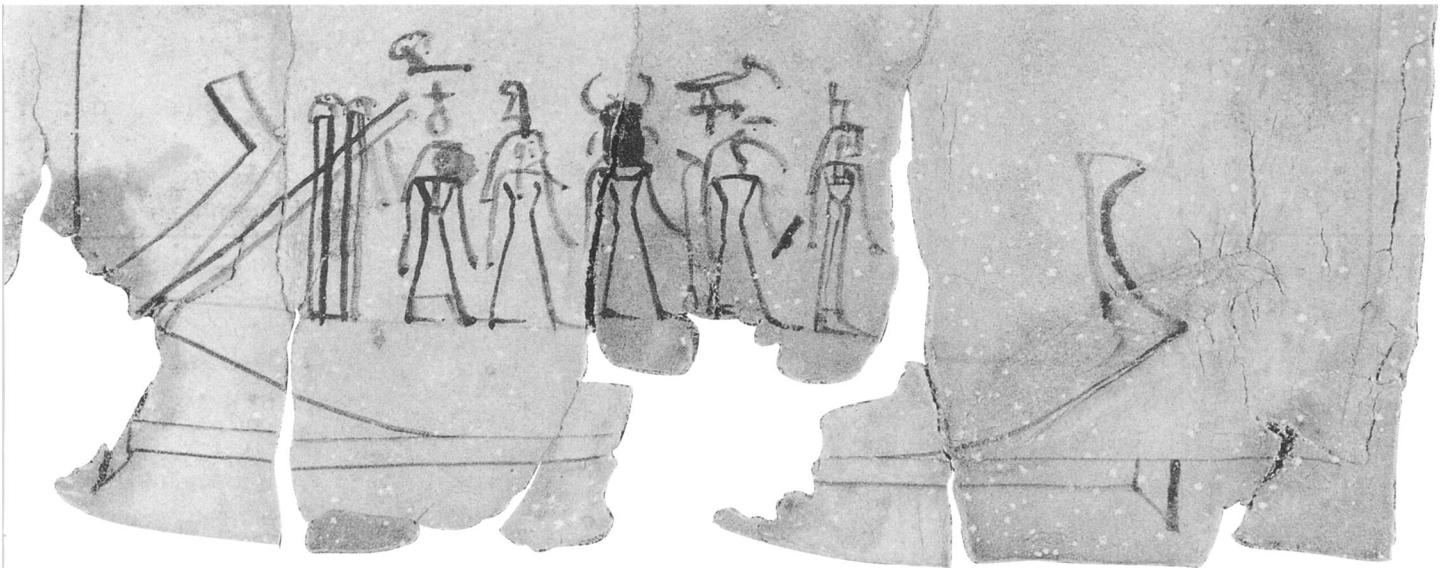




Figure 48
Facsimile of a funerary scene
(detail)
By Charles K. Wilkinson, Graphic
Section, Egyptian Expedition of
The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Ca. 1930. Tempera on paper.
Overall 14⁵/₈ x 31⁷/₈ in. (37 x 81 cm).
Rogers Fund, 1930 (30.4.108)

In this scene from the New Kingdom tomb of Nebamun and Ipuky (late Dynasty 18, ca. 1360 B.C.), a woman mourns the death of her husband. Crouched in front of his coffin, she bares her breasts and throws dust into her hair while tears stream from her eyes.



Figure 49

A knotted pot sling found in Hatnofer's tomb (and now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo) consists of an open-worked net of multiply linen cord, with the cords plaited in large loops at the top for suspension. At the bottom is a ring of halfa grass whipped with linen cord. The sling was found in a basket tray (see fig. 54) that also held a tufted linen seat cushion. Here, it has been photographed surrounding one of the pottery amphoras found in the tomb.

Figure 50

Storage jar and amphora
Egyptian alabaster and linen;
ceramic and mud. H. of amphora
25 1/4 in. (64 cm). Rogers Fund,
1936 (36.3.82, .83)

The storage jar on the left (see also fig. 54) contains a viscous, dark-amber-colored liquid constituted of some sort of animal fat. The amphora (see fig. 54) was sealed with Nile mud and stamped with an oval device that reads "God's Wife of every land, Hatshepsut." The ink inscription, in hieratic script, reads "Year 7, setjwy oil . . ."; the type of oil meant by *setjwy* cannot be determined.



Figure 51

Scaraboid rings and scarabs

Glazed steatite and silver; blue-glazed steatite; blue-glazed steatite; glazed steatite and gold. L. of largest scarab 1 in. (2.5 cm). Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.3.3–6)

These rings and scarabs were found on the fingers of Hatnofer's left hand when her mummy was unwrapped. The scarabs and scaraboid seals, one set in gold and the other in silver, were all skillfully carved from soft steatite and then glazed. The smaller blue scarab is inscribed with the name Hatshepsut and "God's Wife," the title she held before becoming coruler with Menkheperre Thutmose. The scaraboid at the far right is inscribed with the image of a scorpion; the other, at far left, has an enigmatic design.

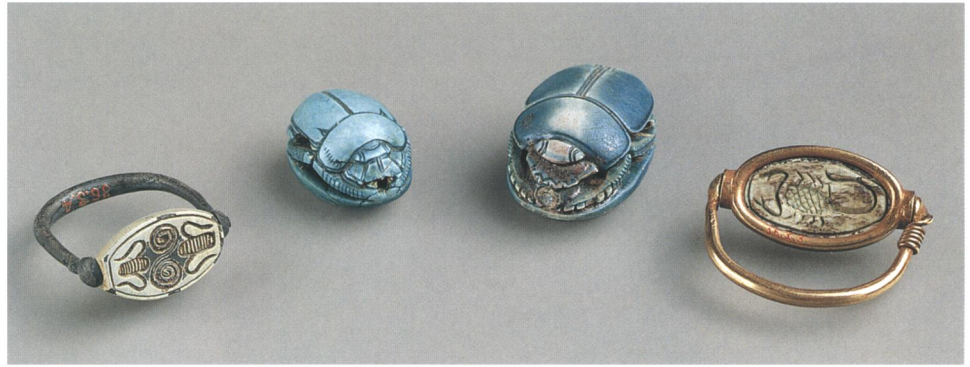


Figure 52a

Heart scarab

Serpentine and gold. L. of scarab (including mount) $2\frac{5}{8}$ in. (6.6 cm); l. of chain $31\frac{1}{8}$ in. (79 cm). Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.3.2)

Hatnofer's heart scarab was made of green stone, as stipulated in the collection of texts known as the Book of the Dead. The underside was inscribed with chapter 30B, which exhorts the heart not to bear witness against its owner at the moment of judgment in the afterlife. The flexible chain is a masterpiece of goldwork. Each segment of the chain is composed of six double links.

Figure 52b

Inscribed underside of Hatnofer's heart scarab

Figure 53

Funerary mask

Cartonnage, gold foil, Egyptian alabaster, obsidian, and ebony. H. 18 in. (45.8 cm). Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.3.1)

Hatnofer's gilded funerary mask is a good indication of how prosperous her family had become, thanks to the position of her son Senenmut. Formed of cartonnage—linen and plaster worked in a fashion similar to papier-mâché—and then gilded, it represents a woman wearing a heavy lappet wig covered with a striated cloth. The inlaid eyes of Egyptian alabaster and polished obsidian were set into sockets of ebony. Around the chest and shoulders, the surface of the mask was incised with a pattern depicting a beaded necklace with teardrop-shaped beads along the lower edge.



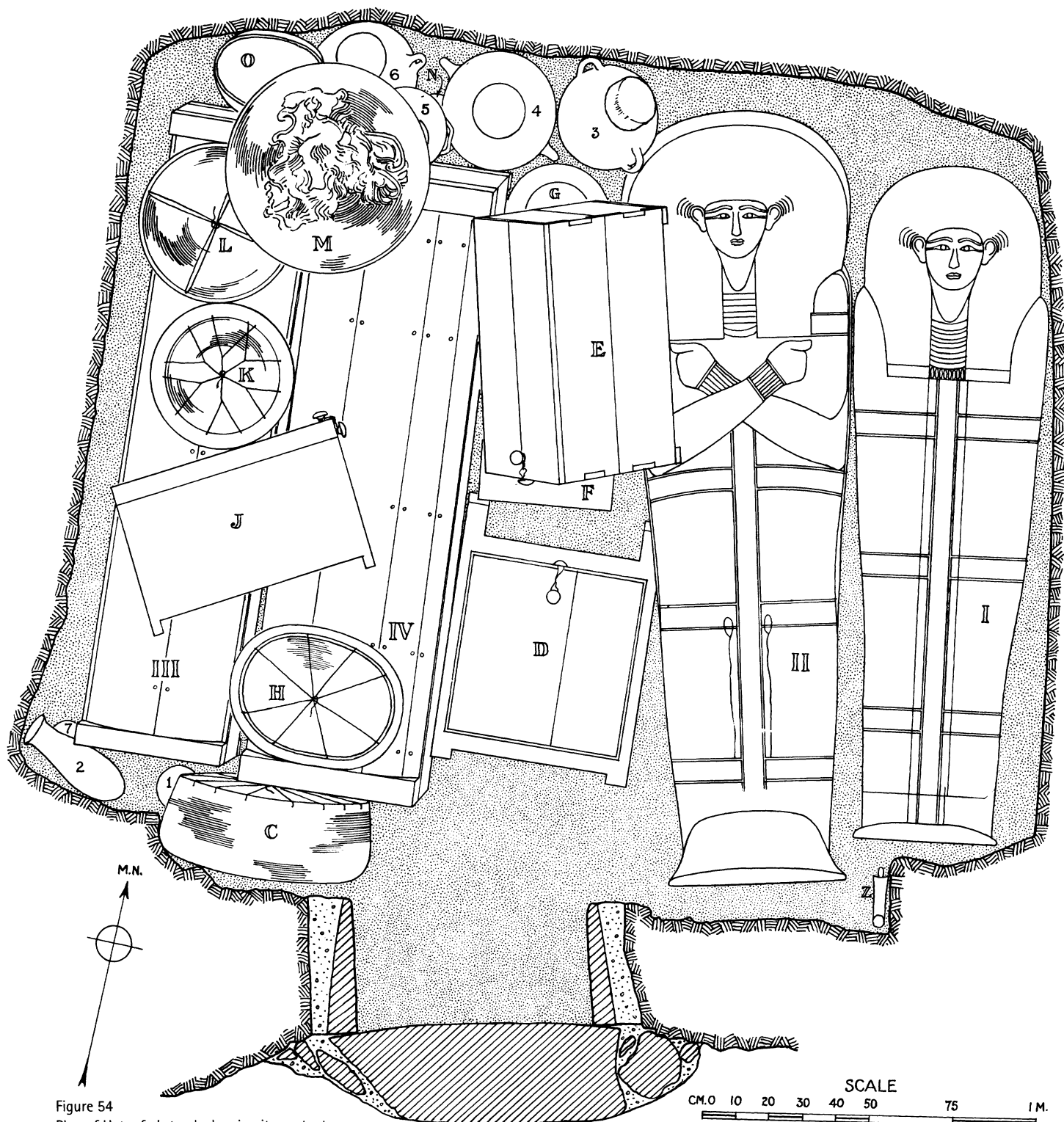
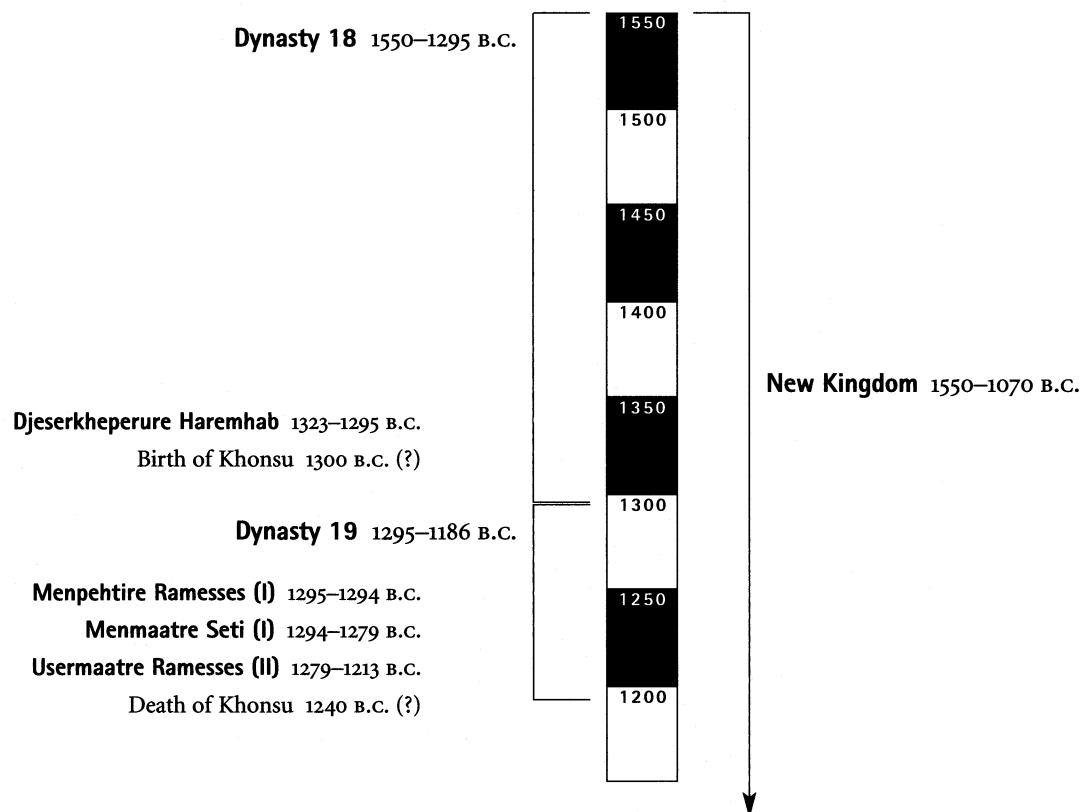
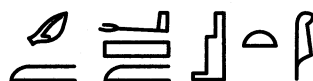


Figure 54
Plan of Hatnofer's tomb showing its contents as
found by the Museum's archaeologists

- I Ramose's coffin
- II Hatnofer's coffin
- D Hatnofer's canopic box
- III coffin containing the bronze mirror (fig. 35)
and the faience bowl (fig. 30)
- J gable-topped chest filled with linen (fig. 41)
- C basket of food (fig. 37)
- 4, G pottery amphora and alabaster jar (fig. 50)
- M basket containing the pot sling (fig. 49)
- L basket containing the razor (fig. 35)

THE SERVANT IN THE PLACE OF TRUTH



Close to thirty-three centuries ago, a young man named Khonsu became a “servant in the Place of Truth”—a designation that identified members of the crew of artisans who carved and decorated the royal tombs of the New Kingdom. These artisans included quarrymen, scribes, draftsmen, sculptors, painters, and carpenters. The entire crew, which usually numbered no more than sixty, lived with their families in a walled community known to its residents simply as the Village. Situated in a small desert valley on the west bank of the Nile, at the edge of the Theban cliffs, the Village was within easy reach of the two principal royal cemeteries: the Great Place,

now called the Valley of the Kings; and the Place of Beauty, or the Valley of the Queens. More than 1,500 years after Khonsu’s time, a Christian monastery (*deir* in Arabic) was built near the long-abandoned town (*medina* in Arabic), and this monastic establishment eventually gave the area its modern name, Deir el-Medina—“the monastery of the town.”

Most Egyptian villages, and even most royal palaces, were built of mud brick, a mixture of mud and straw that was shaped in molds and dried in the sun. The Village, however, was located some distance away from the source of these materials, and thus it was built largely of stones that were collected from the surrounding hills. As a

result, the walls of many of the houses are still preserved to a height of three or four feet, and it is possible to see the remains of living rooms, household shrines honoring local deities and ancestors, kitchens, underground storage areas, and staircases that once led to roofs that could be used for drying food and as work spaces or gathering places on warm summer evenings.

Khonsu was the fourth son in a large family, and like most members of the royal work crew, he and at least one of his brothers had followed in the footsteps of their father, Sennedjem, who was also a servant in the Place of Truth. Sennedjem was an active member of the crew in the time of Menmaatre Seti, the son of a former general named Ramesses who had ascended the throne of Egypt as Menpehtire and founded a new dynasty. Sennedjem had probably begun his career under Menpehtire's predecessor, Djoserkheperure Haremhaf, during whose reign the Village had been restored and expanded. After one of the expansions, Sennedjem and his wife, Ineferti, were assigned a large house at the southwestern corner of the walled town. This must have happened after some of their children were grown, because their eldest son, Khabekhnet, had already joined the crew and was assigned the house next door. Probably about ten years younger than his brother, Khonsu may still have been a child, and he seems to have remained at home even after becoming a member of the royal workforce and to have eventually inherited the house from his father.

By carefully observing the night sky, the ancient Egyptians had developed a very accurate calendar based on recurring astronomical events, such as the heliacal rising of the Dog Star, Sothis, which predicted the coming of the yearly flood. The year itself was divided into three seasons of four months apiece, and each month included three ten-day weeks. The standard workweek lasted eight days, followed by

two rest days. When a king's tomb was in progress, Khonsu and his fellow artisans would begin their week by climbing the ridge behind the Village on a trail that still exists today. They would walk northeast along the cliff path to a second trail, which leads up sharply to the top of a ridge and then down into the steep-sided desert valley that forms the Great Place. The first part of this journey would have offered them a spectacular view of the Nile Valley, with its lush green fields ending abruptly at the edge of the desert. Here, the workers would have been able to see the cemeteries of their ancestors, including the impressive ruins of Meketre's tomb, where the storehouse manager Wah had already lain buried for seven centuries (see pp. 6–23). Instead of making this trip each day, the men would sleep in stone huts located near the royal tomb or up on the ridge, returning to the Village at the end of their eight-day shift.

During rest periods in their long workdays, the artisans would sometimes pick up the smooth limestone chips that were a by-product of the quarrymen's work. Some of these chips were employed by scribes for record keeping and some by the chief draftsmen for the small-scale preparatory drawings that would then be copied onto the walls of the tombs. Still others were used by members of the crew to practice their skills, offer prayers to their favorite deities, or just amuse themselves by sketching, drawing cartoons, or making caricatures of each other, their superiors, and even the king. These drawings are usually freer in style than the beautiful, but very formal, paintings and painted reliefs found in the royal tombs, and they lend a spark of individuality to these otherwise anonymous artists.

On one particularly fine ostrakon (see fig. 55), an unidentified king, accompanied by his faithful hunting dog, is shown spearing a lion. The fierce creature has been wounded by four arrows but

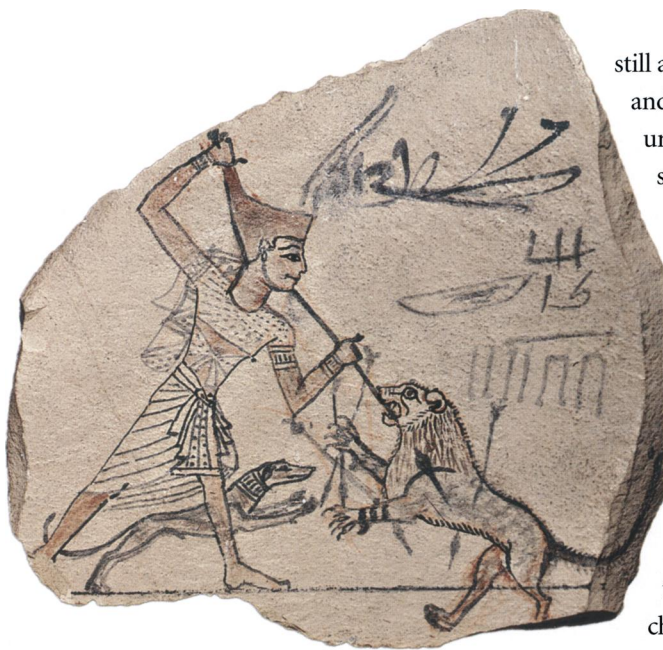


Figure 55
Drawing of a king slaying a lion
From western Thebes (Valley
of the Kings). New Kingdom,
Dynasties 19–20 (ca. 1295–
1070 B.C.). Limestone and ink.
W. 4 ⁷/₈ in. (12.5 cm). Purchase,
Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1926
(26.7.1453)

still attacks, with its claws and teeth bared. The figures are drawn in the spare, confident style of an artist who requires no grid lines to guide his hand. The king—understood by Egyptians as the one who maintained order in a chaotic world—stands on a ground-line, while the lion—the embodiment of chaos—is ungrounded.

The hieratic inscription above the lion reads, “The slaughter of every foreign land; the Pharaoh—may he live, prosper, and be healthy.” There is no scene of this type in any royal tomb, nor do standard hunting scenes show the king in near hand-to-hand combat with animals. In this elegant sketch, the artist seems to have expressed his personal hope that the current ruler would dominate the enemies of Egypt and be victorious over the shadowy powers of chaos that constantly threatened the ordered, peaceful life of the Nile Valley. By leaving the ostracon in the royal cemetery, a place made sacred by the proximity of deceased rulers who had successfully completed the journey to the next world and were themselves considered divine, the artist was making a plea directly to the gods.

Sennedjem and his sons were fortunate to live during a period of great prosperity for the Village. At the height of Sennedjem’s career, in the first sixteen years of the new dynasty, two royal tombs were required. Menpehtire was an elderly man when he became king, and he ruled for less than two years. As a result, his tomb had been only partially excavated when he died, and the small room on which the quarrymen were working at the time of his death became the burial chamber. Only this small chamber was ever decorated

with the scenes and texts that were considered essential guides for the king’s spirit on its perilous journey to the afterworld. Because time was short, the decoration was simply painted on the walls, instead of first being carved in relief, and the colors are particularly well preserved. Egyptian painters used natural pigments to create a limited palette that included red (made from red ocher), yellow (either yellow ocher or orpiment, a form of arsenic), blue (copper), green (malachite or copper), black (carbon), and white (chalk). To cover larger areas, the painters probably used brushes made of palm fiber and mixed their colors in large bowls. For small-scale and detail work, an artist might use his own painter’s palette and a brush similar to those employed by scribes. Working by the light of oil lamps deep beneath the ground, these artists were able to give life not only to the figures of the king and the gods but also to the hieroglyphs of birds and plants and animals that were used to record the magical texts on the walls.

Sennedjem probably worked on Menpehtire’s relatively small tomb and certainly helped to create the monumental sepulchre of the next king, Menmaatre Seti, which today, after more than three millennia, is considered the finest example of royal funerary architecture preserved from the New Kingdom. Khabekhnnet and Khonsu were among the artisans who carved and decorated the tomb of Menmaatre’s son Ramesses, known as Usermaatre, who was the most prolific builder of his time. In the Great Place, along with his own large tomb—which must have rivaled his father’s in the beauty of its relief decoration—Usermaatre commissioned a monument in memory of his sons, at least twelve of whom predeceased him. This rock-cut structure, the full extent of which is not yet known, is a warren of tunnels containing more than 150 rooms, and it alone could have kept the

entire crew of royal artisans at work for a decade or more. Usermaatre Ramesses also commissioned a number of monuments for his female relatives in the Place of

Beauty, firmly establishing it as a burial place of queens. The tomb the king had prepared for his beloved wife, Nefertari, is one of Egypt's great national treasures.



Figure 56

In this photograph of Deir el-Medina taken from the cliffs looking south, the ruins of the walled workmen's village are visible on the left, and the terraced cemetery is at the right.

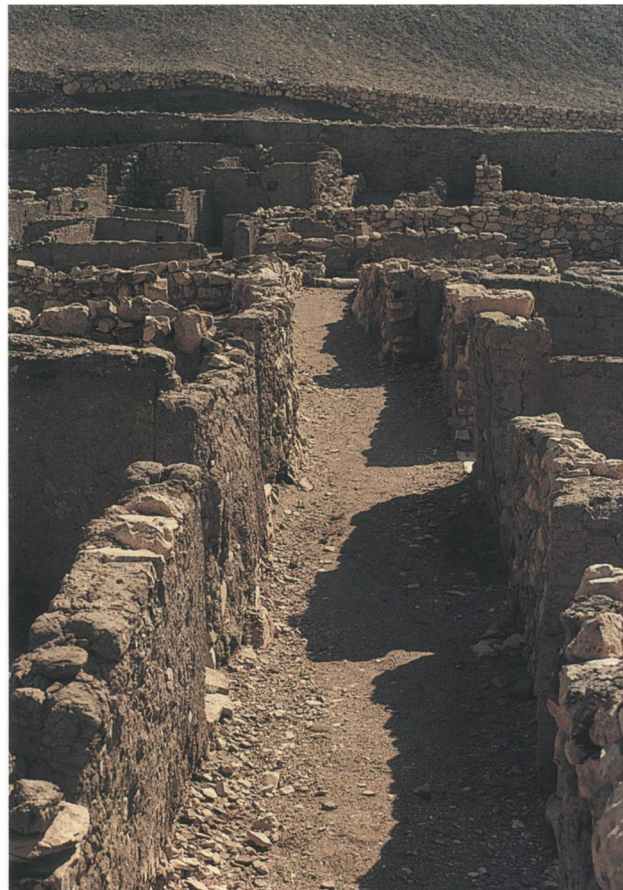


Figure 57

View of the Village from the west gate looking east



Figure 58
Drawing of a bullfight
 Probably from western Thebes.
 New Kingdom, Dynasties 19–20
 (ca. 1295–1070 B.C.). Limestone
 and ink. W. 7¼ in. (18.5 cm).
 Rogers Fund, 1924 (24.3.27)

Bullfights were encouraged by Egyptian herders in order to select the strongest and most aggressive animals for breeding. Images of fighting bulls are never found in royal funerary monuments of the New Kingdom, so this is not a trial sketch intended for copying onto the walls of a king's tomb. The artist may have made the drawing to practice his skills, as a votive offering to help bring about the king's defeat of Egypt's enemies, or simply to amuse himself in a quiet hour of relaxation.

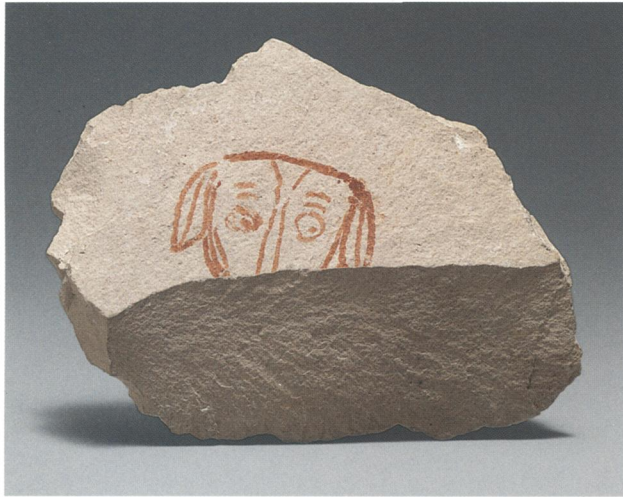
Figure 59
 In the scene reproduced below from a wall of the burial chamber of Menpehtire Ramesses, the king, identified by the two cartouches above him, kneels between two figures symbolizing the ancestors of Upper and Lower Egypt. Because of the brevity of his reign, the decoration in Menpehtire's tomb was not carved in relief. Instead, the figures and texts were simply painted on the carefully smoothed and plastered surface of the wall, which allows us to appreciate fully the grace and detail of the two-dimensional image.



Figure 60

Sketch of a dog

From western Thebes (Valley of the Kings). New Kingdom. Limestone and ink. W. $3\frac{7}{8}$ in. (10 cm). Gift of Theodore M. Davis, 1914 (14.6.245)



This well-used artist's palette belonged to Amenemopet, who served as vizier in the mid-Eighteenth Dynasty. It contains the six basic colors of the Egyptian palette, plus two extras:

reddish brown, a mixture of red ocher and carbon; and orange, a mixture of orpiment (yellow) and red ocher. The painter could also

vary his colors by applying a thicker or thinner layer of paint or by adding white or black to achieve a lighter or darker shade.

Figure 61

Painter's palette

Probably from Thebes. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, reign of Aakheperure Amenhotep (ca. 1472–1400 B.C.). Wood and pigment. L. $8\frac{1}{4}$ in. (21 cm). Rogers Fund, 1948 (48.72)

Figure 62

In the decoration of the tomb of Nefertari, wife of the second Ramesses, the talents of the relief sculptor and those of the painter merge to create what the Egyptians would have regarded as a living image of the queen.





Figure 63
Jar from the tomb of Sennedjem
Painted red pottery. H. 12 in.
(30.5 cm). Funds from various
donors, 1886 (86.1.10)

The amount of time it took the crew to complete a royal tomb depended on the length of a king's reign, and work was sometimes cut short by the pharaoh's death, as discussed previously in relation to the elderly Menpehtire (see p. 42). Because of the length of time required for mummification, the team would have up to three months to finish its work, and then the process would begin all over again for the new pharaoh. Even before the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty, the principal features of a royal tomb had become standardized. Although the dimensions varied from reign to reign—usually becoming noticeably larger—the same series of corridors and chambers would be carved deep into the bedrock, culminating in the pillared hall that was the last resting place of the king.

After the site for a new tomb had been chosen and its dimensions and exact floor plan decided upon, the quarrying work would begin. The art of cutting a tomb into bedrock had been perfected over generations and was accomplished with awe-inspiring precision by the skilled quarrymen of the Village, who most likely included Khonsu and his relatives. Using bronze chisels, wooden hammers, and simple tools for measuring and leveling, they were able to tunnel more than three hundred feet into the bedrock while dropping eighty feet in elevation and changing the tomb's axis up to three times without deviating by more than an inch or two from the intended orientation of the burial chamber. To achieve such accuracy, trained surveyors must have been on hand to check and correct the excavation of each room. Khonsu's father, Sennedjem, may have been one of these surveyors, for his burial equipment included a set of inscribed measuring and leveling tools.

While Sennedjem and his colleagues were at work on Menmaatre Seti's tomb, a number of innovations were introduced, including a wonderful vaulted ceiling in

the burial chamber and several side rooms, one with high benches around the walls. This was also the first royal tomb in which every chamber along the axis was decorated, not just the rooms close to the burial chamber. Accordingly, decoration of the tomb seems to have commenced before the quarrying work was entirely finished. Before the decoration could be executed, the walls had to be carefully smoothed. Then, a string soaked in red paint was pulled tight and snapped against the walls to provide guidelines for the draftsmen (see fig. 65), who sketched the outlines of the figures and the hieroglyphs. More elaborate grids were sometimes drawn in areas where complicated scenes or large figures were to be placed, but experienced artists needed nothing more than a groundline for the figures and borders for the columns of hieroglyphs in order to transfer the decorative scheme from a small-scale drawing onto the walls. After the master scribe had reviewed the work of the draftsmen, sculptors carved away the background, leaving the hieroglyphs and figures in relief. Any errors were corrected with the application of fine plaster, and then the painters added color and detail.

As compensation for their meticulous work, the royal artisans were paid in food, firewood, pottery, and clothing. They were also provided with the services of laundrymen, and women were on hand to grind a family's grain. In addition to the two rest days in every week, the workers of the Village enjoyed numerous religious festivals and feast days throughout the year. During this free time, they used their skills to augment their income and bartered for goods that were often made by other members of the community. A wooden box and a decorated pottery jar (see fig. 63) that belonged to Khonsu's family may have been acquired in this fashion.

The same talents that created a spectacular sepulchre for the ruling king were

also put to use in the more modest burial places of the workers themselves. Located in a terraced cemetery on the hillside adjacent to the Village, their funerary monuments included small, vaulted, above-ground offering chapels that were topped by miniature, steep-sided pyramids. In or near the chapels, shafts cut deep into the bedrock led to groupings of corridors and vaulted rooms that were often used by many generations of the same family. One of the finest of these tombs belonged to Sennedjem and his descendants. Built at the southern end of the cemetery, the family crypt was just a stone's throw away from its owners' house. The upper level of the complex had offering chapels for both Sennedjem and Khonsu, and the decorated burial chamber contained the mummies of Sennedjem and Ineferti; Khonsu and his wife, Tameket; Khonsu's younger brother Ramesses; and four other named members of the family, as well as eleven unidentified mummies. Khabekhnet and his family owned a second tomb, which was cut into the terrace just above and slightly to the south of his father's.

When Sennedjem and Ineferti died, after their long, productive lives in the Village (Ineferti was over sixty at her death), Khonsu shared responsibility for their funeral rites with his siblings, and vignettes painted on Ineferti's coffin lid show Khonsu and his brother Ramesses honoring their parents. In preparation for his own journey to the afterworld, Khonsu commissioned a pair of nesting anthropoid coffins made of wood (see fig. 72). The lid of each depicts Khonsu in the form of a mummy, with arms crossed over his chest and hands clutching the *tyet* amulet and *djed* pillar, the same magical symbols that were used some two hundred years earlier on Hatnofer's chair to ensure the owner's well-being (see fig. 42). The coffins are covered with magical texts and vignettes featuring deities as well as Khonsu and Tameket. A mask of painted

wood and cartonnage completed the ensemble. Khonsu had also obtained a painted canopic box to hold his internal organs and several shawabtis, little figurines that were intended to substitute for the deceased owner if he were called upon to perform any kind of manual labor in the next life.

When he finally began his own journey to the afterworld, Khonsu was about sixty-five years of age and had seen two generations of his descendants enter the work crew. He was placed in the family tomb along with his parents, and the funeral rites were probably performed by his sons Nakhemmut and Nakhtmin, who spoke the words of the offering texts and repeated the names of those who had passed on to the next world, thus giving them renewed life. After being used by many generations of Khonsu's descendants, the family crypt was sealed at last and remained undisturbed until February 1, 1886, when it was uncovered by agents of the Egyptian Antiquities Service.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, thousands of records relating to the Village and its residents have been discovered. Written on ostraca of limestone or pottery, these lists, letters, contracts, and accounts were of no intrinsic value to their users after having served their purpose, and they were simply discarded. The ostraca, supplemented by information gleaned from inscribed objects found in the houses and tombs, provide intriguing glimpses into the lives of the artisans and their families. From these sources, it is possible to piece together the names, titles, and relationships of dozens of members of Khonsu's extended family, who inhabited the Village over a period of about two centuries. The family tree begins with Khonsu's paternal grandparents, Khabekhnet and Tahenu, and can be traced forward to his own great-great-great-great-great-grandson, another Khonsu, who was a foreman of the crew during the reign of the eleventh

Ramesses, the last king to initiate a tomb in the Great Place and the final ruler of the New Kingdom. By this time, most of the residents had moved away from the Village to dwellings located at the edge of the floodplain, but the family chapels and

tombs were still in use, and it is possible that some of the unidentified mummies found buried with Sennedjem and his son Khonsu date to this much less prosperous time in the family's history.



Figure 64
Writing board with an architectural drawing
From western Thebes. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18. Plastered and painted wood. W. 13⁷/₈ in. (35.2 cm). Gift of Norman de Garis Davies, 1914 (14.108)

This fragmentary architectural drawing shows part of a small shrine (at upper right, in red) facing a body of water (at far left) and surrounded by trees within an enclosure wall of mud brick (in

black). An orchard, also enclosed, runs parallel to the water. The measurements of the walls are written from right to left, and each begins with a hieroglyph in the shape of a forearm, which means "cubit," the Egyptian unit of length. This symbol is followed, in each case, by a number: an elongated semicircle stands for ten, and a stroke stands for one. Thus, the width of the orchard is thirty-two cubits.



Figure 65
Artist's reel and cord
 From western Thebes. Middle Kingdom, Dynasty 12, reign of Sehetepibre Amenemhat (ca. 1981–1952 B.C.). Wood and twisted linen cord. L. of reel $14\frac{1}{8}$ in. (36 cm). Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, 1922 (22.3.72)

Although it dates to the time of Wah, some seven centuries before Sennedjem and his son Khonsu were working in the Valley of the Kings, this reel of linen cord is similar to the tool that would have been used to make the guidelines in the tombs of Menpehtire and his successors of Dynasty 19. A trace of red paint is still visible on the cord.

Figure 66
Artist's gridded sketch
 From western Thebes (Deir el-Bahri). New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, reign of Hatshepsut (ca. 1479–1458 B.C.). Limestone and ink. W. $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. (14 cm). Rogers Fund, 1923 (23.3.4)

This small sketch depicts a frequently occurring group of hieroglyphs meaning "life, prosperity, and dominion." The grid lines allowed the artist to draw the hieroglyphs at whatever scale was needed.

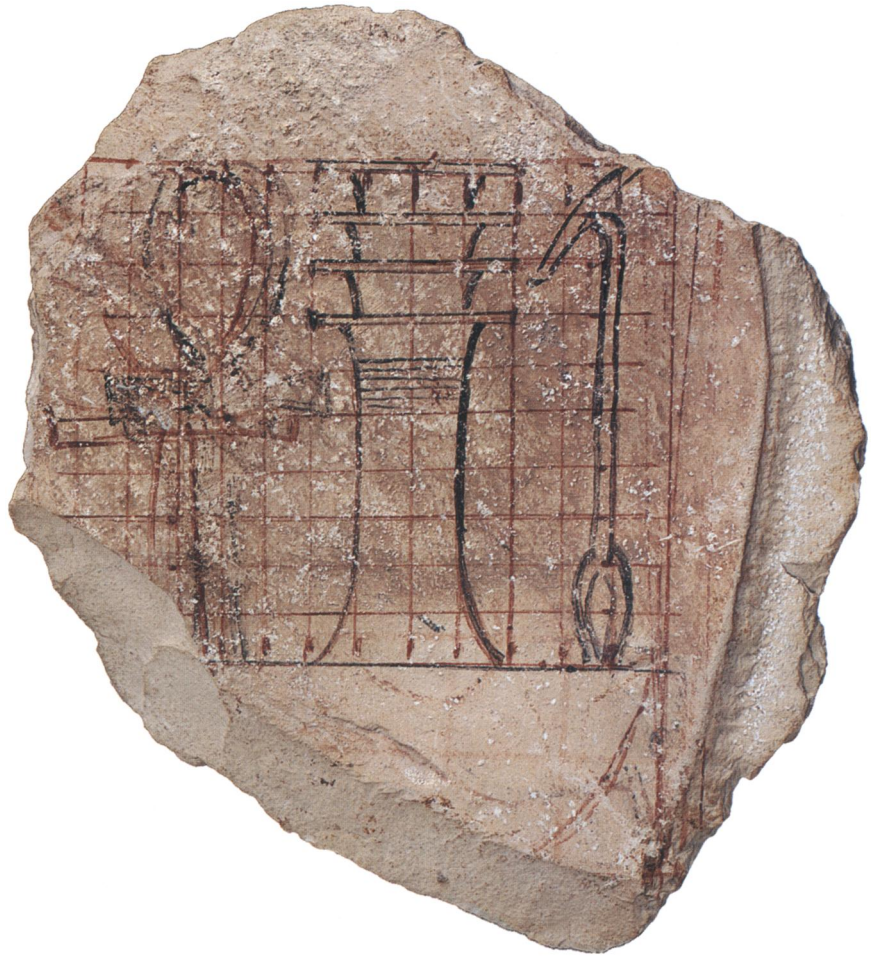




Figure 67

On this partially completed relief decoration in the tomb of Menmaatre Seti, two columns of text were drawn by the draftsmen. In the lower half of each column, a sculptor has carved away the background, leaving the hieroglyphs in relief.

Figure 68

Box from the tomb of Sennedjem

Gessoed and painted wood.
H. 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (16 cm). Funds from various donors, 1886 (86.1.8)

The lid of this box, which is attached at the back with horizontal pivots, opens to reveal four compartments for cosmetics. The box could be secured by winding a piece of twine around the two knobs at the front. Its elaborate decoration was intended to imitate more expensive boxes inlaid with ebony, ivory, and perhaps cedar or mahogany.



Figure 69

The east wall of Sennedjem's vaulted crypt is decorated with a vignette that illustrates spell number 110 in the Book of the Dead. Here, in a photograph taken at the site, Sennedjem and Ineferti are shown harvesting grain, sowing seeds, and pulling flax in the abundant fields of the next world.





Figure 70
Vignette on lineferti's coffin lid
Gessoed and painted wood. H. of
Khonsu 4⁷/₈ in. (12.5 cm). Funds
from various donors, 1886
(86.1.5a)

In this vignette, Khonsu stands before his mother and recites from an open papyrus scroll. The inscription on the scroll reads "the Osiris, the housemistress, lineferti," indicating Khonsu's belief that his mother's spirit has become one with Osiris, the great god of the underworld.



Figure 71
Vignette on lineferti's coffin lid
Gessoed and painted wood. H. of
Ramesses 5¹/₈ in. (13 cm). Funds
from various donors, 1886 (86.1.5a)

Here, Khonsu's brother Ramesses offers a libation to their father, Sennedjem.

Figure 72
Khonsu's anthropoid coffins
Gessoed and painted wood.
H. of taller coffin 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
(200 cm). Funds from various
donors, 1886 (86.1.1, .2)



Figure 73
Khonsu's funerary mask
Painted wood and cartonnage.
H. 18 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (48 cm). Funds from
various donors, 1886 (86.1.4)



Figure 74
Shawabti box and shawabtis
Painted wood; limestone and ink.
H. of box 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (28.5 cm). Funds
from various donors, 1886
(86.1.14, .18, .21). Gift of J.
Lionberger Davis, 1967 (67.80).
Funds from various donors, 1886
(86.1.28)

The wooden shawabti box is
inscribed for Paraemhab, a
servant in the Place of Truth
who was a son or grandson of

Sennedjem and lineferti. The
shawabti figures, from left to
right, are inscribed for lineferti
and her eldest son, Khabekhnet;
for Khonsu; for Khabekhnet alone;
and for a woman named Mesu.
Although Khabekhnet had a sepa-
rate tomb complex near that of
Sennedjem, he is depicted with
his siblings in the decoration of
Sennedjem's burial chamber, and
objects inscribed with his name
were buried in the family tomb.





Figure 75
Vignette on Khonsu's inner
coffin lid
Gessoed and painted wood.
H. of Khonsu 6 in. (15.3 cm).
Funds from various donors, 1886
(86.1.2a)

This kneeling figure is identified by the two columns of hieroglyphs in front of him as "the Osiris, the servant in the Place of Truth, Khonsu, justified." The image and its text are a graphic expression of Khonsu's hope that his spirit will pass successfully through the trial of judgment in the afterlife and become one with Osiris.

Notes

- p. 4 *Dynasty 8–mid-Dynasty 11* There is no longer considered to have been a Dynasty 7.
- p. 5 *Egyptian Antiquities Service* The Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, now known as the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt, was founded in 1863.
- p. 7 *Horus name Sematawy* Egyptian kings usually had five names in their titularies. The Horus name was written in a rectangular device with the god Horus, in his guise as a falcon, perched on top. The two most commonly used names, the personal name that was given at birth and the throne name that was taken upon accession to kingship, were each written inside a cartouche.
- p. 8 *kill the leavening agent* A type of wild yeast was discovered in the dregs of beer contained in a jar found in Wah's tomb. This yeast was subsequently named *Saccharomyces winlocki* after Herbert E. Winlock, who was the director of the Metropolitan Museum's excavations at that time.
- p. 8 *at nearly six feet* X rays of Wah's mummy were taken in 1936, and the group of doctors who analyzed them reported that Wah had been a "tall young adult male of large frame." In his own notes on the X rays, Herbert Winlock estimated Wah's height at five feet three or four inches, stating that X rays exaggerate size. In light of a more recent examination of the skeleton, however, Ken Mowbray of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, has suggested a much greater height.
- p. 14 *as an amuletic device* Scarabs first appear in large numbers at sites around Badari, in Middle Egypt, during the First Intermediate Period, probably only a century before Wah's birth.
- p. 25 *laid to rest* We cannot know exactly when Hatnofer was buried, but inscribed material from the Museum's excavations suggests that her tomb was sealed sometime in Year 7 of the joint reign of Menkheperre Thutmose (III) and Maatkare Hatshepsut.
- p. 25 *in the vicinity of Armant* Hatnofer's son Senenmut held a title that suggests that his family came from this town. Since the majority of Egyptians probably married within their own communities, it seems likely that both of his parents were born in or near Armant.
- p. 25 *even sit on a jury* For more information on the legal status of women, see Janet H. Johnson, "The Legal Status of Women in Ancient Egypt," in *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt*, edited by Anne K. Capel and Glen E. Markoe (New York, 1996).
- p. 25 *"joined the gods"* From the biography of Ineni, a Theban official, found in his offering chapel (TT 81). Translation by James P. Allen.
- p. 26 *"Two Lands became peaceful"* Ibid.
- p. 26 *to wield significant political power* Hatshepsut was not the first queen in Egyptian history to take kingly titles. That distinction belongs to Nefrusobek, who ruled for about three years at the end of Dynasty 12.
- p. 26 *"good old age" in Egyptian terms* This estimate of Hatnofer's age at death was made when her mummy was unwrapped by Herbert Winlock in 1936.
- p. 26 *siblings and their children* In ancient Egypt, although the king often had more than one wife—partly to ensure the succession and partly to form alliances with foreign rulers—monogamy was the rule among the population as a whole. Likewise, while the king might marry his sister or half sister, this type of consanguineous marriage was seldom, if ever, practiced outside the royal family.
- p. 26 *meaning "housemistress"* While similar to our honorific title Mrs. (which has come to denote a married woman but is in fact an abbreviation for "mistress"), the ancient Egyptian title *nebet per* actually denoted a woman's oversight of the family's domestic affairs.
- p. 27 *almost exclusively by women* By the Eighteenth Dynasty, the upright loom had been introduced into Egypt from Asia, but most Egyptians continued to use horizontal looms. See Catharine H. Roehrig, "Women's Work: Some Occupations of Nonroyal Women As Depicted in Ancient Egyptian Art," in *Mistress of the House*.
- p. 34 *beneficial to his family in the coming years* It is highly unlikely that Senenmut could have attained the high administrative positions that he held later in life

had he not learned to read and write—something he probably would have done as a child. Some scholars believe that he spent time in the military as a young man, a supposition based on very fragmentary texts in his Sheikh Abd el-Qurna offering chapel (TT 71). However, no military titles are preserved on any of his existing monuments.

- p. 34 *only in his mid-thirties* Previous estimates put Ramose's age at death at fifty-five or sixty, but a more recent examination of his remains suggests that he was, in fact, a much younger man. See the abstract for a paper given at the twenty-fourth annual meeting of the Paleopathology Association, held in Saint Louis on April 1 and 2, 1997. R. Walker, M. F. Gaballah, and Z. Gadawy, "The Human Remains from the Tomb of Hatnufer at Luxor," *PPA Newsletter* (1997), p. 13.
- p. 34 *"bread and beer in her house"* *Instructions of Any* 7.17–8.1. Adapted from the translation by Miriam Lichtheim in *The New Kingdom*, vol. 2 of *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings* (Berkeley, 1976), p. 141.
- p. 34 *already chief architect to Maatkare Hatshepsut* Work on Senenmut's offering chapel was begun on the second day of the fourth month of the growing season in Year 7 of the reign of Menkheperre Thutmose (III)—about March 13, 1473 B.C. Since Hatnofer's tomb was situated beneath the man-made terrace of Senenmut's chapel, it is likely that she was buried not long after this work was begun.
- p. 41 *Menpehtire's predecessor, Djoserkheperure Haremhab* Haremhab, also a former general, had served during the reign of Tutankhamun and ascended the throne after the ruling family died out. Having no heirs himself, Haremhab did not establish a new dynasty and is usually considered the last king of Dynasty 18.
- p. 41 *inherited the house from his father* The names of both Sennedjem and Khonsu have been found on architectural features preserved in the house, and it seems to have been customary for dwellings to remain in the same family for generations. Sennedjem and Khonsu also shared ownership of a family tomb in the cemetery adjacent to the Village.
- p. 41 *three ten-day weeks* Twelve thirty-day months equal 360 days, and five days were added at the end of the year to make 365. Because it made no allowances for leap year, the civil calendar shifted one day every fourth year. However, the calendar used to determine when to celebrate religious festivals was begun each year at the rising of Sothis, which the Egyptians identified with their goddess Sepdet.
- p. 42 *a plea directly to the gods* Cathleen A. Keller has written on the practice of depositing votives in the Valley of the Kings in "Private Votives in Royal Cemeteries: The Case of KV 9," in *Iubilate Conlegae: Studies in Memory of Abdel Aziz Sadik*, pt. 1, *Varia Aegyptiaca* 10:2–3 (1995), pp. 139–56.
- p. 42 *Menpehtire's relatively small tomb* The tomb of Menpehtire Ramesses (I) is KV [Kings Valley] 16.
- p. 42 *mixed their colors in large bowls* The Metropolitan Museum owns a palm-fiber brush soaked with red paint and a broken bowl used to mix blue paint. These are on display in Gallery 15a of Egyptian Art.
- p. 42 *preserved from the New Kingdom* The tomb of Menmaatre Seti (I) is KV 17.
- p. 42 *a monument in memory of his sons* Usermaatre Ramesses was succeeded by his thirteenth son, Merneptah. The tomb of the sons of Ramesses, KV 5, is currently being excavated by Kent R. Weeks of the American University in Cairo.
- p. 43 *one of Egypt's great national treasures* Nefertari's tomb is QV [Queens Valley] 66.
- p. 47 *they were simply discarded* Translations of many of these documents may be found in Edward F. Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt* (Atlanta, 1990), and A. G. McDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt: Laundry Lists and Love Songs* (Oxford and New York, 1999). They also form the basis of studies by Morris Bierbrier, *The Tomb-Builders of the Pharaohs* (London, 1982), and John Romer, *Ancient Lives: Daily Life in Egypt of the Pharaohs* (New York, 1984). All of these sources have been consulted in writing the section on Khonsu.

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin Index

Summer 2002–Spring 2003 New Series, Volume LX

B

Bayer, Andrea, *see* North of the Apennines

C

Chinese Export Porcelain, No. 3, 1–60

Adams, John, 55
"Arbor" design, 26, 27
armorial design, 17–20, 24–26, 38–40
beaker, covered, and saucer, presumably Dutch market (1690–1700), 21
Beert, Osias, 8
Birch, William, 50
bottle, Venetian *latticino* design (ca. 1715–25), 11
Boudinot, Elias, 52
bowl: market, classical design (ca. 1811), 56; Imari (ca. 1715), 16; detail, coat of arms, 16; "hong," 48; *kraak* porcelain (Ming dynasty), 9
Bulfinch, Charles, 41
Bull family of Charleston, 23, 38
Cantonese factories, 28, 33, 34, 57
Chantilly porcelain factory, 16
Chase, Samuel and Hannah Kilty Giles, 38
Chew Wilcocks, Benjamin, 56, 57
"chinamania," 13
Clinton, DeWitt and Maria Franklin, 48, 50, 51
cloisonné, 22
copper engraving, 27
cup: covered, Chinese with English mounts (ca. 1565–70), 7; interior, 7; standing covered, European market (ca. 1690–1700), 10
cup and saucer, Declaration of Independence signing (1840–75), 60
Delfos, Abraham, 22
Delft pottery, 28
Derby, Elias Hasket, 46, 49
dinner, tea, and coffee service, American market (1785–90), 38
dish: Dutch market, 29; detail, 29; English market (ca. 1715), 18; detail of Harrison and Bray arms, 18; famille rose pattern (ca. 1735), 20; German ceramic style (1770–75), 33; detail of cartouche, 33; Imari motifs (18th cen.), 16; Italian market (ca. 1698), 19; *kraak* porcelain (early 17th cen.), 9; Scottish market (ca. 1735–40), 24
Doccia factory, Florence, 19
Dresden manner, 33
Du Paquier, Claudius, 26, 27
Dutch East India Company (VOC), 8–13, 26–28, 29, 32–33, 37, 53
Dutch embroidery patterns, 9
Edwin, David, 52
Empress of China, 40–44, 49
English East India Company, 15, 32, 38
Entrecolles, Father Xavier de, 26
Erie Canal, 50, 51
ewer: famille verte (ca. 1725–30), 17; French silver pattern (ca. 1715–25), 17; Kangxi porcelain, Dutch market (late 17th–early 18th cen.), 13; Portuguese market (Ming dynasty, Zhengde period), 6
Eyre, Benjamin G., 48
famille rose pattern, 20, 26, 58–59
famille verte pattern, 15, 16, 17
fan, American market (ca. 1800–1810), 41
Feuille, Daniel de la, 33
Florentine Medici designs, 19
Franklin, Benjamin, 55
Fungmanhe, 50
Fürstenberg design, 33
Giles, James H., 40
Ginori, Carlo, 19
Grand Turk, 46, 47
Grant, Ulysses S., 57, 59
Green, John, 40, 42, 49
grisaille, 27, 52
Guillot, Elias, 29
Gustav III, king of Sweden, 22

Habermann, Francis Xavier, 33
Harrison, Edward and Frances Bray, 18
Horsemanden family, 40
Houckgeest, A. E. van Braam, 53
Imari design, 15, 16, 28
James, fifth duke of Hamilton, 20
Japan trade, 11
Japanese Arita, 26–27
Jesuits, 20, 22, 26
Jingdezhen kilns, 13, 26, 27, 28
Johnson, Sir Henry and Martha Lovelace, 15
jug, Washington bust in grisaille (1800–1815), 52
Kakiemon style, 15
Kangxi period, 13, 22, 27
kinrande ("gold brocade") painting, 7
Kirk, Samuel, 57
kraak ware, 8, 9, 17
Lamb, John, 47
Lambert, Sir John, 22
Lee, Henry, 42
Leyland, Frederick, 13
line painting after print sources, 26
Lobkowitz, Prince Wenzel Ferdinand, 19
Low, Abiel Abbot, 56
Meissen porcelain factory, 16, 28
Mendes da Fonseca, Francisco Antonio da Silva, 35
Ming dynasty, 13
Monnoyer, Jean-Baptiste, 24
Morgan family, 46
Netherlandish glass designs, 10, 11
New York market, 49–51
Okeover, Leake and Mary Nichol, 32
Opium Wars, 57
Osgood, John, 41
pagoda (ca. 1785–92), 41
Paine, Daniel and Louisa Thurber, 59
partial service, famille rose design (ca. 1860–66), 58–59
Pater Patriae (memorial to George Washington, ca. 1800–1818), 55
plant tub, armorial porcelain (ca. 1693–97), 15
plaque, Dutch design (mid-18th cen.), 22
plate: American market: Angel of Fame (ca. 1784–85), 42; detail, emblem of Society of the Cincinnati, 42; Boudinot arms (ca. 1785–90), 52; Chase arms (1785–90), 38; landscape and Chinese immortals (ca. 1796–1805), 48; Morgan arms (ca. 1785–90), 46; Vaughan arms (ca. 1750–55), 37; Verplanck service (ca. 1765), 36; "Arbor" design (ca. 1740), 26; detail, 26; "Clemency" (ca. 1740), 21; Dutch market (ca. 1692), 21; Guillot arms (ca. 1740–45), 29; English market, Okeover arms (ca. 1739–43), 32; French market, Orry arms (ca. 1745–50), 25; Portuguese market (ca. 1820), 35; Swedish market (ca. 1750), 25
platter: Swedish market (ca. 1755–60), 25; Washington's tomb (ca. 1800–1810), 54; detail, 54
polychrome wares, 15, 17, 18
Portuguese trade routes, 7–8, 19
Precht, Christian, 25
Pronk, Cornelis, 26, 27, 28, 33
punch bowl: American market (ca. 1785–90), 48; details, 4, 48; badge of Society of the Cincinnati (ca. 1788), 43; certificate, Society of the Cincinnati (ca. 1786–90), 44, 45; coverd, with platter, Swedish market (ca. 1745), 23; detail, Château de Läckö, 23; Empress of China (ca. 1784–90), 47; detail of interior, 47; New York City (1812), interior, 50; exterior, 51; detail of arms of city of New York, 51
Putnams, Hans, 9
Qianlong emperor, 28
Qing dynasty, 13
Queen's Ware (Wedgwood), 34
reverse painting on glass, 55, 57
Rijsselbergh, Ary, 28
Ripa, Father Matteo, 27

salad bowl, Portuguese colonial market (ca. 1800), 35; detail of Silveira arms, 35
 Saldanha e Albuquerque, Dom Gaspar de, 31
 sauceboat, European market (ca. 1715–20), 28
 saucer: American market, Rogers arms (ca. 1785–88), 40; detail, 40; Martha Washington's initials (ca. 1795), 53
 sauce tureen and stand: Bruce arms (ca. 1785), 34; Wedgwood (ca. 1770), 34
 sauce tureen and underplate, American market (ca. 1786), 46
 Sèvres factory, 25
 Seymour, Samuel, 50
 Shaw, Samuel, 40, 41, 42–44
 Silveira e Lorena, Dom Bernardo José Maria da, 35
 Society of the Cincinnati, 42, 43, 44–45
 Stevens, Ebenezer, 44–45
 sugar bowl, New York State arms (1770–1800), 49
 Swedish East India Company, 25, 32
 table service, Portuguese market (ca. 1760–65), 31
 taperstick, Dutch market (ca. 1700–1710), 10; detail, 12
 tazza, Continental market (ca. 1700), 12; top view and detail, 12
 teapot, Swedish market (ca. 1755), 22
 tea service, partial, Dutch market (Pronk), 27
 textiles as design source, 33
 Tilghman, Edward, 52
 transfer printing, 28
 Treaty of Wanghia, 57
 Tros, Willem, 33
 Trumbull, John, 60
 tureen: covered, American market, Fitzburgh pattern (early 19th cen.), 53; Hoaching (ca. 1843), 56
 U.S. Centennial Exhibition, 57, 60
 van der My, Hieronymus, 22
 van Dijck, Floris, 8
 Varick, Richard, 44
 Vaughan, Samuel, 37, 40
 Venetian *lattice* design, 11
 Verplanck family, 36, 38
Vung Tau (Chinese junk), 10, 15, 17
 Wanli period (1573–1620), 8, 26
 Washington, George, 42, 48, 52, 54, 55
 Washington, Martha, 53, 55
 Wedgwood, Josiah, 34
 Whistler, James McNeill, Peacock Room, 13
Witte Leeuw (Dutch ship), 9
 yu “jade” mark, 13
 Yuan dynasty, 8

F

Frelinghuysen, Alice Cooney, *see* **Chinese Export Porcelain**

L

Le Corbeiller, Clare, *see* **Chinese Export Porcelain**
Life Along the Nile: Three Egyptians of Ancient Thebes, No. 1, 1–56
 Aakheperenre Thutmose, 25, 34
 account ostrakon, 11
 artist's gridded sketch, 49
 artist's reel and cord, 46, 49
 bakers from Meketre's model bakery, 11
 basket and toilet articles, 29
 basket of food, 30
 basket tray, 37
 Bonghi, Bartolommeo, 36, 37
 Book of the Dead, 35, 38, 51
 bowl, 25
 bracelet and necklace, 19
 Brewers from Meketre's model brewery, 12
 burial ceremony, 15–16
 calendar, 41
 canopic jars, 14
 chair, 27, 32
 coffins of, 53
 Davies, Norman de Garis, 31
 Deir el-Medina, 40, 43
 Djoserkare Amenhotep, 25–26
 Djoserkheperure Haremhab, 41
 drawing of a bullfight, 44

duck hunter and man harpooning fish, from Meketre's model sporting boat, 12
 eyes partially closed in Egyptian art, 33
 facsimile of a scene depicting an estate, 11
 facsimile of offering scene (Davies), 31
 family ties, 34
 first Intermediate Period, 15
 funerary broad-collar necklace, 19
 funerary masks, 15, 18, 38, 54
 funerary rituals, 27, 34–35, 36, 47
 gable-topped chest and linens, 32
 harper's song, 33
 Hatnofer, 25–27, 34; chair of, 27, 32, 47; children of, 34; death of, 26; funerary mask, 38; funerary ritual of, 27, 34–35; heart scarab amulet, 35, 38; knotted pot sling, 37; leather scroll, 35; mummification of, 34–35; nickname Tju-Tju of, 26; tambourine of, 27, 33; tomb of, 3, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39
 Hatshepsut, 25–26, 34; statue (detail), 26; throne name of, 34, 38
 heart scarab, 38
 hieroglyphs, 49, 50
 Ineferti, 41, 47, 51; coffin of, 52
 Ineni, 25
Instructions of Any, 34
 ka (life force), 16
 Kamose, 25
 Khabekhnet, 41, 42, 54
 Khonsu, 40–41, 42, 46, 47; coffin of, 55; family tree of, 47–48, 54; funeral rites for, 47; funerary mask of, 54; in vignette on mother's coffin, 52
 linen, 27, 31, 32, 34
 Maatkare Hatshepsut, 26, 29, 30, 34
 Meketre, 7–13; burial complex of, 11, 14, 16, 41; estate of, 15; models by, 7–8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20, 21, 23, 31, 33
 Meketre's model funerary boats, 20, 23
 Meketre's model funerary procession, 21
 Meketre's model slaughterhouse, 13
 Meketre's model stable, 8, 13
 Meketre's model traveling boat, 33
 Meketre's model weaver's shed, 31
 Menkheperre Thutmose, 25, 29, 30, 33, 34, 38
 Menmaatre Seti, 41, 42; tomb of, 46, 50
 Menpehtire Ramesses, 41, 42; burial chamber, 44, 49
 mummification, 14–15, 34–35, 46
 musical ensembles, 27
 nebamun and Ipuky, tomb of, 36
 Nebhepetre Mentuhotep, 7; relief (detail), 7
 Nebpehtyre Ahmose, 25
 Necklaces, 19
 Nefertari, 43; tomb of, 45
 New Kingdom, royal tombs, 40
 ostraca, 11, 34, 41, 42, 44, 45
 painter's palette, 45
 Paraemhab, 54
 place of Beauty, 43
 Princess Neferure, 34
 Quiver fragment, 8
 Ramose, 26, 34, 35
 razor and mirror, 30
 rings and necklace, 19
 royal tombs, 46, 49
 sandals, 30
 scarabs, 14, 15, 38
 scribes from Meketre's model granary, 10
 scribe's palette and brushes, 10
 Sehetepibre Amenemhat, 14, 33
 Senenmut, 34, 38, 48; artist's sketches, 34; and mother's funeral, 34–35; offering chapel, 3
 Sennedjem, 41, 42, 47, 52; box from tomb of, 50; burial chamber, 54; east wall of vaulted crypt, 51; jar from tomb of, 46
 Shawabti box and shawabtis, 54
 Sheikh Abd el-Qurna hill, 34
 sketch of a dog, 45
 storage jar and amphora, 37
 Tameket, 47
 Taweret: hair style of, 29; statuette of, 26, 29
 Userhat's tomb, 31
 Usermaatre Ramesses, 42–43

Valley of the Kings, 40
 Valley of the Queens, 40
 Village, 40–41, 43, 46, 47
 Wah, 8, 41; birth of, 7; coffin of, 15–16, 23; death of, 14; funeral of, 15; jewelry of, 14, 15, 19; mask of, 15, 18; mummification of, 14–15; statuette of, 9, 15; tomb of, 14, 16, 17, 22
 wisdom literature, 34
 women's cosmetics, 29
 women's roles and property, 25, 26–27, 34
 writing board of apprentice scribe, 10
 writing board with architectural drawing, 48

N

North of the Apennines: Sixteenth-Century Italian Painting in Lombardy and Emilia-Romagna, No. 4, 1–64

Alfonso I, duke d'Este, 48–49, 53
 Altdorfer, Albrecht, 26
 Anguissola, Sofonisba, 47
 Ariosto, Ludovico, *Orlando furioso*, 49
 Baiardo, Francesco, 62
 Bedoli, Girolamo Mazzola, *The Annunciation*, 59, 61–62
 Bellini, Jacopo, 48; *The Feast of the Gods*, 49
 Benci, Ginevra de', 18
 Bentivoglio, Giovanni II, 39, 40
 Berenson, Bernard, 16, 55
 Bergognone (Ambrogio di Stefano da Fossano), 11. Works: *The Assumption of the Virgin*, 21, 22, 23; *The Assumption of the Virgin* (Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan), 22; *Christ*, 13
 Bologna, 39–48
 Boltraffio, Giovanni Antonio, 14. Works: *Girl with Cherries* (poss. attrib.), 16, 17, 18–19; *Pala Casio*, 42–43; *Youth Crowned with a Garland*, 19
 Bouts, Dieric, *Virgin and Child*, 9
 Bramante, Donato, 7, 10
 Bramantino (Bartolomeo Suardi), 29; *Madonna and Child*, 10–11
 Caraglio, Giovanni Jacopo. Works: *Diana*, 21; *Juno*, 21; *Minerva*, 21; *Venus*, 21
 Caravaggio (Michelangelo Merisi), 23; *The Flagellation of Christ*, 26
 Carpi, Girolamo da, 55
 Carracci, Ludovico and Annibale, 55
 Correggio (Antonio Allegri). Works: Ashburton altarpiece, 59; *Madonna and Child with Saints Francis, Anthony of Padua, Catherine of Siena, and John the Baptist*, 56, 58; *Saints Peter, Martha, Mary Magdalen, and Leonard*, 55–59; detail, 39
 Council of Trent, 30
 distemper, 23
 Dosso Dossi (Giovanni de Lutero): *Three Ages of Man*, 49, 50–51, 53
 Eastlake, Sir Charles, 27, 30
 Emilia-Romagna, 39–63
 Ercole II d'Este, 48–49
 Este family, 48–49
 Fassi, Melchiorre, 55–56
 Ferrara, 48–55
 Fontana, Lavinia. Works: *Portrait of a Prelate*, 47–48; *Self-Portrait in a Study*, 47
 Fontana, Prospero, 47, 48, 62
 Foppa, Vincenzo. Works: *The Justice of Trajan*, 23; *Madonna and Child* (Cambrai Madonna) (ca. 1480), 7, 8, 9–10; infrared photograph, 9
 Francia, Francesco (Francesco di Marco di Giacomo Raibolini), 40–47. Works: *Federigo Gonzaga*, 42, 43–44; *Madonna and Child*, 44, 45, 47; *Madonna and Child with Saints Francis and Jerome*, 44, 46, 47; *Nativity*, 40; *Saint Roch*, 40, 41, 42
 Gallerani, Cecelia, 18
 Gambara, Veronica, 55
 Garofalo (Benvenuto Tisi). Works: *Saint Nicholas of Tolentino Reviving a Child*, 52, 53; *Saint Nicholas of Tolentino Reviving the Birds*, 52, 53, 54–55
 Garofalo and Dosso. Works: *The Mass of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino*, 53; *The Miracle of Bread Converted into Roses*, 53
 Gentileschi, Artemisia, 47
 Giampietrino (Giovanni Pietro Rizzoli). Works: *Diana the Huntress*, 19, 20, 21; *Diana with a Stag*, 21
 Giovio, Paolo, 49
 Gregory XIII, Pope (Ugo Boncompagni), 47
 Grien, Hans Baldung, 26
History of Painting, A (Crowe and Cavalcaselle), 27

Isabella d'Este, 39, 43–44, 49, 55
 Julius II, Pope (Giuliano della Rovere), 39, 49
 Juste, Antoine (Antonio di Giusto Betti), 13
justis operibus vs. *parerga*, 49, 53
 Leonardo da Vinci, 7, 14–19, 21, 23, 40. Works: *Lady with an Ermine*, 18, 19; *The Last Supper*, 14; *Leda and the Swan*, 15; *Standing Leda*, 21; *Study of Arms and Hands*, 19; *The Virgin of the Rocks*, 14, 33, 59
 Lippi, Filippino, 42
 Lombardi, Alfonso: *Saint Nicholas of Tolentino* (attrib.), 53
 Lombardy, 7–37
 Longhi, Roberto, 33
 Lotto, Lorenzo, 27, 33; *Venus and Cupid*, 16
 Luther, Martin, 30
 Mannerism, 21, 63
 Mantegna, Andrea, 40, 48; *The Madonna della Vittoria*, 56, 58
 Mastelletta (Giovanni Andrea Donducci), 62
 Michelangelo, 39, 40, 49
 Milan, 7–23
 Monterrubbiano, Pietro di, 53
 Morelli, Giovanni, 55
 Moretto da Brescia (Alessandro Bonvicino), 26–32. Works: *Christ in the Wilderness*, 28; before restoration, 28; *The Entombment*, 30; *Portrait of a Man*, 28, 29, 30
 Moroni, Giovanni Battista: *Abess Lucrezia Agliardi Vertova*, 34, 35, 36; *Bartolommeo Bonghi*, 36, 37
 Mündler, Otto, 27
 Nicholas of Tolentino, Saint, 52, 53–54
 Oggiono, Marco d', 14
 L'Ortolano (Giovanni Battista Benvenuti): *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, 54, 55; *The Nativity with Saints John the Baptist, Francis, and Mary Magdalen*, 55
 Parma, 55–63
 Parmigianino (Girolamo Francesco Maria Mazzola), 55. Works: *The Annunciation* (attrib.), 59–63; detail of X-radiograph, 61, 62; *Entombment*, 62
 Perugino (Pietro di Cristoforo Vannucci): *Madonna in Glory with Saints*, 42
 Pino, Paolo, 32
 Pliny, 53
 Poitiers, Diane de, 21
 Predis, Giovanni Ambrogio de, 17, 18
 Raphael, 23, 27; *Saint Cecelia*, 39–40
 Roberti, Ercole de', 48
 Romanino, Girolamo: *The Flagellation*, 23, 24, 25, 26; *The Madonna of Mercy*, 23, 25; *Saint Matthew*, 33
 Rosso Fiorentino, 21
 Savoldo, Giovanni Girolamo, 30. Works: *Nativity*, 34; *Saint Matthew and the Angel*, 32–34; X radiograph of, 33, 34
 Sesto, Cesare da: *Baptism of Christ*, 33
 Sigonio, Carlo, 47, 48
 Sixtus V, Pope, 47
 Solari, Cristoforo, 16
 Solario, Andrea. Works: *Christ Blessing*, 11, 12, 13, 14; *Head of a Bearded Man*, 13; *Salome with the Head of Saint John the Baptist*, 14–16, 33; detail, 7
 Studius, 53
 Titian, 27, 36; *Bacchus and Ariadne*, 49
 Tura, Cosimo, 48
 Urbino, duke of (Francesco Maria della Rovere), 44
 van Winghe, Joss, 62
 Vasari, Giorgio, 27, 33, 40, 49
 Venturi, Lionello, 36
 Vertova, Abess Lucrezia Agliardi, 34, 35, 36
 Western Veneto, 23–37
 Weyden, Rogier van der, 48

R

Recent Acquisitions: A Selection: 2001–2002, No. 2, 1–64

“Africa, Oceania, and the Americas,” 48–51
 ancestor figure (*korwar*) (New Guinea, Irian Jaya, Cenderawasih Bay, late 19th–early 20th cen.), 50
 duct flute (Mexico, Veracruz peoples, 7th–10th cen.), 48
Female Figure (Alaska, Old Bering Sea, 2nd cen. B.C.–1st cen. A.D.), 48
 Keita, Seydou. *Untitled #313 (Portrait Woman Seated on a Chair)*, 51

- necklace beads (Colombia, Taírona, 10th–16th cen.), 48–49
 two headrests (South Africa or Zimbabwe, Tsonga and Shona peoples, 19th–20th cen.), 50–51
 woman's grave marker (sunduk) (Sulu Archipelago, probably Bajau people, 19th–20th cen.), 49
- "Ancient World," 6–9
 bowl: deep (Greek, Calenian, 3rd–early 2nd cen. B.C.), 8, 9;
 spouted (early Cycladic II, ca. 2700–2200 B.C.), 6
 Head of a Ptolemaic Queen (Greek, Hellenistic period, 3rd cen. B.C.), 8
Kushite Pharaoh (Egyptian, Dynasty 25, ca. 713–664 B.C.), 7
 Recumbent Lion (Egyptian, Dynasty 4, ca. 2575–2465 B.C.), 6
 Standing Bull (South Arabian, late 1st millennium B.C.), 9
- "Asia," 52–62
 belt buckle (Central Asia, 1st cen. B.C.), 52
 belt plaque (northwestern China, 4th cen. B.C.), 52
 belt plaque with confronted bovines, (southern Siberia, 2nd–1st cen. B.C.), 52
 bowl: (Chinese, Ming dynasty), 56; with inlaid and stamped design (Korean, Chosŏn dynasty, 2nd half of 15th cen.), 60
 box (Chinese, Ming dynasty), 55
 cup: large, with ring handle (Eastern Central Asian or northwestern Chinese, period of Tibetan rule, 8th–9th cen.), 53;
 stem (Eastern Central Asian or northwestern Chinese, period of Tibetan rule, late 7th–8th cen.), 53
 dish, octagonal, with scenes of children at play (Chinese, Song dynasty), 55
 garment ornament (Kazakhstan, 6th–5th cen. B.C.), 52
Kamishimo (Japanese, early 20th cen.), 59
Madonna (Sino-Spanish, 18th cen.), 56–57
Maharana Amar Singh II of Mewar Riding a Horse (Indian [Rajasthan, Mewar], ca. 1700–1710), 60–61
 piece from a Noh costume (Japanese, Edo period), 59
Posthumous Portrait of a Queen as Parvati (Indonesian, Eastern Javanese period, Majapahit kingdom, 14th cen.), 62
 Sōyū, Maejima, *Chinese Warrior Zhang Qian Crossing the Yellow River*, 58
Tara, the Buddhist Savioreess, Dispensing Boons (page from a dispersed Prajnaparamita manuscript, Indian [West Bengal] or Bangladeshi, early 12th cen.), 60
 Tomotsugu, Bamen, armor of the *Gusoku* type, 58–59
 vase (Chinese, Song dynasty), 54
Emperor Guan (Chinese, unidentified artist, active early 18th cen.), 57
- "Europe 1700–1900," 23–33
 Carriera, Rosalba, *Gustavus Hamilton, Second Viscount Boyne, in Masquerade Costume*, 23
 center table (Russian, Tula, Imperial Armory, ca. 1780–85), 25
 Cézanne, Paul, *The Fishermen (Fantastic Scene)*, 31
 Courtois Frères, *Cornet à pistons*, 28
 Dresser, Christopher (designer), *Wave Bowl*, 32
 Gérard, Baron François-Pascal-Simon, *Madame Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, Princesse de Bénévent...*, 27
 Gericault, Théodore, *The Rescue of a Drowned Man, Surrounded by Other Figure Studies* (recto), 28
 Linthorpe Art Pottery, *Wave Bowl*, 32
 Meissonier, Jean-Louis-Ernest, *Mounted Hussar*, 29
 Mestral, O., *Angel of the Passion, Sainte-Chapelle, Paris*, 29
 Moll, Balthasar Ferdinand, *Faith, Charity, and Hope*, 24
 Monet, Claude, *Camille Monet on a Garden Bench*, 30
 Renoir, Pierre-Auguste, *Nini in the Garden (Nini Lopez)*, 32
 Rysbrack, Michael, *Portrait of a Lady*, 24–25
 Seurat, Georges, *Gray Weather, Grande Jatte*, 33
 Volpato, Giovanni, *The River Nile*, 26
 Wyon, William, *Pattern Crown of George III: The "Three Graces" Crown*, 26–27
- "Islam," 10
 Nidhā, Mal, *Prince and Ladies in a Garden* (attrib.), 10
 oil lamp (Khorasan, late 12th–early 13th cen.), 10
- "Medieval Europe," 11–13
 bracteate (Scandinavian, 5th–6th cen.), 12–13
Plaque with Censing Angels (French, Limoges, ca. 1170–80), 11;
 detail, 11
 psalter (Byzantine, late 12th cen.), 13
 reliquary cross (French, Limoges?, ca. 1180), 12
 "Modern," 39–47
- Arbus, Diane, *Child with a Toy Hand Grenade in Central Park, N.Y.C.*, 42–43
Assassinat de Madame Veuve Bol, Projection sur un plan horizontal (French, Paris police photograph, 1904), 39
 Beckmann, Max, *The Last Ones*, 40–41
 Cavalli, Roberto, *Man's Ensemble*, 47
 Coper, Hans: *Cyladic Form*, 42; *Thistle Form*, 42
 Diebenkorn, Richard, *Reclining Nude—Pink Stripe*, 43
 Gaultier, Jean Paul, *Evening Ensemble*, 47
 Gilot, Françoise, *Claude with a Banana II*, 42
 Gorky, Arshile, *Self-Portrait at the Age of Nine*, 41
 Kentridge, William, *Casspirs Full of Love*, 44
 Kiefer, Anselm, *Let a Thousand Flowers Bloom*, 44–45
 Oud, Jacobus Johannes Pieter, "Giso 404" piano lamp, 41
 Rauschenberg, Robert, *Ruminations, topher*, 45
 Rie, Dame Lucie, bowl, 42
 Rohlf, Christian, *Death as Juggler*, 40
 Struth, Thomas, *National Museum of Art, Tokyo*, 46–47
 Süe, Louis, *Claude Terrasse*, 39
 Viola, Bill, *The Quintet of Remembrance*, 46
 Witek, Joan, *The Trickster*, 44
- "North America 1700–1900," 34–38
 Burroughs and Mountford (manufacturer); unknown decorator, exhibition vase, 37
 Chase, Anne, sampler, 34
 Homer, Winslow, *Boys in a Dory*, 38
 Meeks, Joseph, and Sons, pier table, 34–35
 Rush, William, *Eagle*, 36
 Saint-Gaudens, Augustus, *Hiawatha*, 37
 serpentine-front chest (American, Massachusetts, 1770–80), 35
 Townsend, John, dining table, 34
 West, Benjamin, *Maternity*, 36, 37
- "Renaissance and Baroque Europe," 14–22
 Bellange, Jacques, *Samson*, 18
 Benedetto da Maiano, *Saint Jerome in the Wilderness*, 14
 Brueghel, Jan the Elder, *Castle Merxem, near Antwerp*, 16, 17
 Buytewech, Willem Pietersz., *Poultry Market in a Dutch Town*, 18–19
 Carracci, Ludovico, *Conversion of Saint Paul*, 16
 cuirassier armor (Italian, Milan or Brescia, ca. 1610–20), 17
 Poussin, Nicolas, *Study of a Palm Tree* (recto); *Mountain Landscape* (verso), 20–21
 Rubens, Peter Paul, *The Virgin Adored by Saints* (recto), 19
 Salviati, Francesco, *Saint John the Evangelist* (recto), 15
 Stoskopff, Sébastien, *Still Life with a Nautilus, Panther Shell, and Chip-Wood Box*, 20
 Sweerts, Michiel, *Man Holding a Jug*, 22
 Witte, Emanuel de, *Interior of the Old Church in Delft*, 21
 Roehrig, Catharine H., see **Life Along the Nile**

