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Towards a 'Social Art History': Ancient Egyptian Metalworkers in Context(s) and the Creation of Value

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Abstract: In this paper, I argue for a 'social art history' that embraces all protagonists of ancient Egyptian artistic production and integrates them into the global process of creating prestige through art. The *raison d'être* of artists is to translate their skills into material and immaterial media using culturally embedded codes and ideological trends of their time. In the process, artists—or at least top artists who accessed restricted knowledge—created value and prestige as a means of competition between rival elites (and the sub-elite emulating them). This paper aims to address the question of defining social value embedded in material artifacts, especially when owned by intermediary social categories such as the New Kingdom metalworkers. It will touch upon what was seen as valuable and prestigious from the Egyptians' perspective by looking at the iconography of New Kingdom metalworkers. The paper will examine 18th–20th dynasty goldsmiths' self-depictions as they were in charge of creating artifacts in gold, a metal connected with solar symbolism and intertwined with the divine, kingship, and membership in the high elite. Ultimately, the paper aims to tackle the question of self-presentation for people who were not part of the elite *per se*, i.e., the sub-elite illustrated here by the metalworkers. In so doing, it uses, in a preliminary attempt, some concepts inherited from the Chicago School of Sociology.

Keywords: New Kingdom; metalworkers; goldsmiths; artists and craftsmen; art and craft; identity; self-presentation; value; prestige; social art history

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1. Introduction

Historical disciplines have long been studying ancient societies through the exclusive lens of its elite, i.e., rulers and their close circle of high officials. However, in the mid-20th century, many have issued a wake-up call to redirect attention to other social categories[1]. In this context, and from the 1980s onward, Egyptology has developed new socioeconomic rubrics that still structure ancient Egyptian society largely vertically under the king and his elite at its utmost top (e.g., Baines and Yoffee 1998; Moreno Garcia 2009–2010; Chollier 2023). These models have progressively shifted Egyptologists' focus to the so-called 'sub-elite', i.e., intermediate and elusive social categories[2] that were neither part of the royal family (e.g., king's siblings, royal children, …) nor of Pharaoh's closest intermediaries (e.g., viziers, treasurers, high priests, …), and attention has been newly directed primarily to their material culture.

Most of the studies on people at the margins of the elite have focused on Old and Middle Kingdom Egypt (e.g., Moreno Garcia 2016; Richards 2005). However, the major societal changes that occurred at later periods from the New Kingdom onward led to the emergence, in the still-preserved documentation, of an even greater diversity of sub-elite

categories[3], like low-ranked temple staff members or military officers[4]. During this social process, these sub-elite people created a specific iconographic repertoire in reaction to the elite culture, a repertoire that they borrowed in the act of creating their own self-visualization. This paper aims to gain perspective on the mechanisms underlying sub-elite self-presentation which they set in motion using material and immaterial leverage sanctioned and determined as valuable by the people who mattered, i.e., the elite who sanctioned taste and trends[5]. In so doing, the sub-elite reconfigured elite's cultural space[6].

In this paper, I will focus on New Kingdom visual attestations of a specific sub-elite category, namely the people involved in the processing of metal. After a general overview of the dataset related to New Kingdom metalworkers, two case studies will be used to illustrate in more detail the process of self-commemoration and value creation. The case studies touch upon two people who belonged to the same gold industry in charge of the transformation of this metal into crafted artifacts. The interest in these two individuals resides in their differences in social standing and power. Indeed, once they reached the opportunity to self-commemorate and translate their skills into material media using culturally embedded codes and ideological trends of their time, they did not make the same choices. In their quest for social display and eternal remembrance, they manufactured their own self-(re)presentation with the means they had at hand. In so doing, they both commissioned art objects to create value and prestige as means of competition within their respective communities.

In the case studies developed in this paper, some components seem to be intertwined recurrently, by various degrees, in conferring 'value' to a specific object. As a preliminary attempt to pinpoint the mechanisms underlying the making of 'value', the following grid (Table 1) has been developed and built on criteria created by Egyptologists Janet Richards (2005) and Kathlyn M. Cooney (2007). Thought of as complementary, this rubric has a different goal, which is not to evaluate the value of artifacts in economic terms (i.e., their 'price'), but rather to unfold the different layers of emic evaluation and to explore New Kingdom creation and different perceptions of 'value' depending on one's social standing. I distinguish three main components that produce value: 'material', 'symbolism', and 'craftsmanship'. Each of them can be subdivided into other sub-categories, and they are closely related to one another. Although any sample shows only a partial aspect of reality, other kinds of sources on value creation and perception—from other Pharaonic periods[7], but also from other past societies, namely the ancient Near East[8], Greece[9], and Rome[10]-corroborate the different 'value' components developed below.

Table 1. The three main generators of value explored in this paper and their interconnections.

	Material	**Symbolism**	**Craftsmanship**
i.e.,	Scarcity, rarity, color, foreign origin, …	Mythologically grounded, signifier of a specific entity or country (tributes), …	Time-consuming, hardship of the manufacture, skills, and apprenticeship required, specific tools, …
Linked to	**Symbolism**: by its physical properties; **Craftsmanship**: it takes skills and technological knowledge to work specific material	**Material**: physical properties of a material could make it work as a symbol (color, light reverberation, veins, …); **Craftsmanship**: it might require that craftsmen were made aware of restricted knowledge via initiation	**Material**: physical properties of a material requires specific technology (hard/soft stone, playing with visual properties of the item, …); **Symbolism**: the creation of ritually effective items requires the learning of specific (restrict) and symbolic knowledge

After presenting a more comprehensive view of this system of values, supported by the two above-mentioned case studies, the paper will question concepts such as 'value' and 'prestige' to grasp the economic and symbolic value of sub-elite artifacts and better frame their use among Egypt's society. In so doing, and in a preliminary attempt, I will adopt some anthropological and sociological tools on identity, prestige, and value. I will especially draw from the second Chicago school's theories on self-presentation and identity creation (especially Goffman 1959), as well as Bourdieu's social distinction (Bourdieu 1979), and Duplouy's concept of "social modes of recognition" (Duplouy 2006). On the creation of value, I will use avenues of reflection drawn from the sociology of value and the theoretical framework applied to ancient societies developed in the collective volume edited by Papadopoulos and Urton (2012).

2. New Kingdom Metalwork and Metalworkers

Jewelry production reached a peak during the New Kingdom in terms of quality of craftsmanship and diversity of employed technologies and materials with the "pronounced use of granulation" and the introduction of 'pink' gold, the exact recipe of which still remains obscure (Guerra 2023b, p. 361). The New Kingdom provides the researcher with high-quality artifacts crafted in various metals, the most famous being Tutankhamun's burial equipment[11]. At that time, Egypt had expanded its territory and trade routes, gaining access to precious resources such as Nubian gold placed in palace and temple treasuries. The progressive decline of gold-mining throughout the Ramesside period, at least partly due to unfavorable environmental conditions (Davies 2020, p. 209, note 113), did not prevent ancient Egyptian metalworkers from creating temple or palace furniture and burial items in gold and other metals, such as the one discovered in the royal necropolis of Tanis[12].

Metals, and especially gold, were early on imbued with solar, divine[13], and thus royal, symbolic connections[14]. The increasing input of gold during the New Kingdom, and thus its (relatively) easier access, provided the high elite with material means to self-commemorate[15]. They commissioned skilled craftsmen and artists who played with alloys, used advanced technologies, and incorporated other materials perceived as valuable into precious artifacts. Metal-procurers and workers (and especially people entrusted with the work of gold) were therefore part of one element of (if not the) New Kingdom craft industry that produced some of the most sought-after means for elite self-display.

2.1. Metalworkers Attestations

The production of metal objects required an extensive *chaîne opératoire*[16]. It is therefore difficult to particularize what a specific metalworking title encompassed, practically speaking. These categories were certainly fluid, case-specific, with in-group identity and distinction criteria that remain thus obscure today for the modern observer of Egyptian titles.

In the case of gold-working, the Egyptian term *nby* (usually translated as 'goldsmith') appeared quite late in Egyptian history since it seems only attested from the Middle Kingdom onward (Wb 2, 241.1-7; TLA Lemma ID 82540), placed alongside the first occurrences of workshop scenes in private tomb-chapels displaying gold processing explicitly (Figure 1)[17]. This is likely because metallurgists of the earliest Egyptian periods were working both copper and gold, probably using the same crucibles and furnaces for both metals (Guerra 2023a, p. 11; Odler 2023, p. 94)[18]. Therefore, unspecified New Kingdom metalworkers (*ḥmty.w* and *ṯ3y.w-bsn.t*) and goldsmiths (*nby.w*) had strong ties to one another and once belonged to a united skill group. The specialization of metalworkers experts in gold processing was therefore progressive and only began to be distinguished in the documentation by the Middle Kingdom.

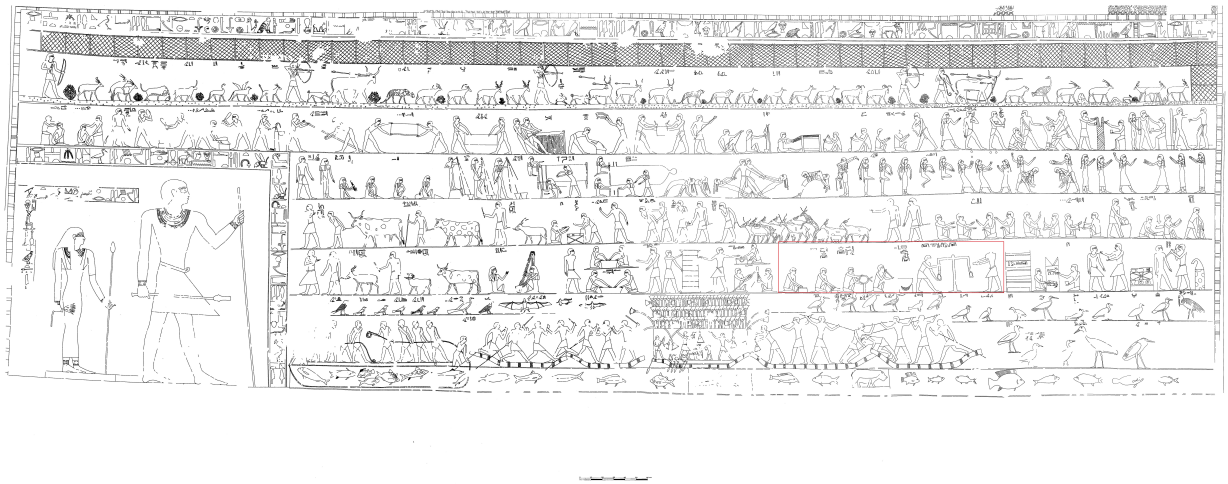

Figure 1. One of the earliest representations of gold-working (in the red box) in workshop scenes, in the tomb of Baqet III in Beni Hasan (Kanawati-Evans 2018, detail from pl. 60; Courtesy of Prof. Dr. Kanawati).

Gold-workers, copper-workers, *etc.* therefore processed from a common socio-professional milieu, which is why I have opted, in the first part of the paper, for a general overview of the New Kingdom title-holders *ḥmty.w* (Wb 3, 99; TLA Lemma ID 600034), *ṯ3y.w-bsn.t* (Wb 1, 477, 6; TLA Lemma ID 174370), *nby.w* and *nšdy.w* (Wb 2, 342.18; TLA Lemma ID 88940) (who were designated according to the manufactured metal product, while other titles rather point to specific metal-related technologies).

In the following section, I will thus review the different visual attestations of metal-workers for the New Kingdom, i.e., the time period when they (particularly the goldsmiths) emerge in our documentation in striking numbers compared to other artistic and craft categories (Devillers unpublished, Figure 2). Rather than being documented on a third party's monument, these metalworkers increasingly became the main beneficiaries (i.e., the owners) of their own funerary and votive artifacts. This overview will serve as an introduction for the two case studies developed below since it gives a general vision of what was possible (and perceived as legit) in terms of self-commemoration for members of New Kingdom metalworkers' socio-professional milieu. Examining first this documentation will allow us to better assess their specificities[19].

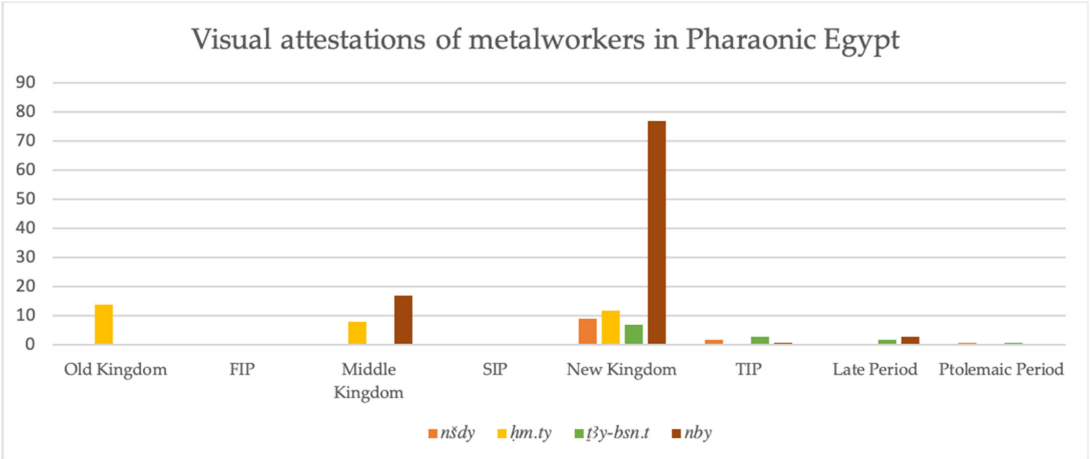

Figure 2. Graph recording the metalworkers' visual attestations for the Pharaonic period (Devillers unpublished).

2.1.1. *nšdy.w*-Jewelers

Contrary to the *ḥmty.w*, *ṯȝy.w-bsn.t* or *nby.w* discussed below, the *nšdy.w* did not seem to process the metallic material directly. Instead, the *nšdy.w*-jewelers (Wb 2, 342.18; TLA Lemma ID 88940) likely produced crafted products made of (semi)precious stones, like beads, ornaments, or little figurines (Steinmann 1980, p. 155). Nevertheless, the *nšdy.w*-jewelers proceed from the same socio-professional world since they were often displayed in the direct vicinity of the workers at the forge in workshop scenes. The *Onomasticon of Amenemipet* (p. Pushkin MFA Moscow 169; Steinmann 1980, p. 155) where the word *nšdy* appears next to *nby*, is another witness of their socio-professional connections.

nšdy.w-Jewelers in Workshop Scenes

Jewelers were among the first craftsmen to appear on private tombs walls in workshop scenes. They are shown working on finished products, namely the beads and small artifacts made out of (semi)-precious stones (Figure 3). When depicted anonymously in workshop scenes, they could take the appearance of dwarves, who were stereotypically attached to such craft (Dasen 1993, pp. 118–22). Except for one of the very first potential visual attestations of a named craftsman, (namely the early dynastic stela of a necklace-maker (title unsecured) who seemed to be a dwarf according to his body proportions), the jewelers, when named in their representations, do not show any dwarfism features.

Figure 3. Workshop scene from the tomb chapel of the Scribe of the Treasury Neferrenpet/Kenro, el-Khokha (TT 178, Dynasty 19) (© Courtesy of Dr. Gema Ménendez Gomez).

nšdy.w-Jewelers and Their Commemorative Material

During the New Kingdom, among nine documented *nšdy.w*, two of these jewelers commissioned a statue, one is depicted in his superior's tomb, another on his supervisor's stela, one owned his own tomb-chapel and four others were depicted as secondary characters in the former's chapel (Table 2).

Table 2. List of *nšdy.w*-jewelers's visual attestations.

Name	Title	Date	Provenance	Type of Medium	Material
Wesy	*mr nšdy n ḥm.f*	D. 18—A.III	Memphis	Tomb (SC)	
Huy	*nšdy n imn*	D. 18	Unknown (Abydos, Thebes?)	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Wahib	*nšdy n imn*	D. 18	Unknown	Statue	Sandstone
Tery	*nšdy n imn*	D. 18–D. 19?	Unknown	Block-statue	Sandstone
Ptahhotep	*ḥry nšdy n ḥw.t-nbw*	Late D. 19	Memphis?	Tomb (M?)	
Amenemheb	*ḥry nšdy n ḥw.t-nbw*	Late D. 19	Memphis?	Tomb (M?)	
[…]emuaset	*nšdy n ḥw.t-nbw*	Late D. 19	Memphis?	Tomb (SC)	
Perinefer?	*nšdy n ḥw.t-nbw*	Late D. 19	Memphis?	Tomb (SC)	
Khai[…]	*nšdy n ḥw.t-nbw*	Late D. 19	Memphis?	Tomb (SC)	

M = main beneficiary. SC = secondary character.

The two statues were finely carved with proper proportions and precise cuts, and both were crafted of sandstone, which is worth noticing since most commemorative statues were carved from limestone for the sub-elite[20]. Contrary to the block-statue of Tery (Athens 4), the group-statue of Wahib (ÄS 9233, Figure 4) still shows partially preserved painting that might have enhanced the delicate modeling of Wahib's bust and what remains of his wife's face.

Figure 4. Group-statue of Wahib, sandstone, 53 × 32 × 30 cm (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. ÄS 9233; © KHM-Museumsverband).[21]

Two jewelers appeared on monuments owned by their supervisors. The Supervisor of the Jewelers of His Majesty (*mr nšdy n ḥm.f*) Wesy appeared in the Memphite chapel of his superior, the Treasurer Merymery, among the network of dependents displayed alongside the deceased to serve him for eternity (RMO AP 6-a). He was depicted at the entrance of the chapel, performing a libation in front of the deceased and wearing the *usekh* and *shebyu* collars. On the remaining part of this wall, he stands out from the other dependents by his position, function, proportions, and features. As for the Goldsmith of Amun Huy, he was represented in front of his supervisor, the Treasurer Hormes, on a finely carved stela now in the Museum of Fine Arts of Budapest (inv. 51.2147).

A family of Chiefs of the Jewelers from the Golden House owned a tomb-chapel that has been preserved to us by one single block (Figure 5). Since the chapel is only attested by this piece now in Bologna's Museo Archaeologico (Bologna MCABo EG 1945), as far as I know, there is no clear evidence whether it was owned by the son, Amenemheb, or the father, Ptahhotep. In the scene, the *ḥry nšdy n ḥw.t-nbw* Amenemheb is shown offering to his parents, Ptahhotep, holder of the same title, and his wife Tausret, a musician of Hathor. Behind Amenemheb, his siblings are seated in two registers. All women are named as musicians of Hathor, while the three other sons were called *nšdy.w n ḥw.t-nbw* and therefore had not (yet) reached the social standing of their (older?) brother and their father. The limestone block was finely carved. The inscriptions are carefully positioned and written, except for some signs at the end of the daughter's inscriptions. The depiction of the different protagonists follows the same fine precision of line, with a balanced composition using precise detailing to enhance the whole scene.

Figure 5. Block from the tomb-chapel of the family of the Chiefs of the Jewelers from the Golden House Amenemheb and Ptahhotep, limestone, 66 × 125 cm (Bologna Museo Civico Archaeologico, inv. no. MCABo EG 1945,) (Courtesy of the Museum).

Observations

The variability of social standing among the *nšdy.w* is visible, even if their attestations are restricted in number (and in time: mid-Dynasty 18–Dynasty 19). The regular *nšdj* could afford middle-range monuments (statues), and two goldsmiths, Wesy and Huy, likely struck a deal[22] with their superiors, who were part of the royal first circle, to be commemorated alongside the higher-ranked official's other dependents. They both appear in a

rather prominent position. The family of the Chiefs of the Jewelers from the Golden House (*ḥry.w nšdy n ḥw.t-nbw*) could afford a tomb-chapel where other family members, including some 'simple' jewelers (*nšdy.w*), were also displayed.

This last example demonstrates the possibility of the hereditary transmission of a title, apparently accompanied by a necessary progression into the upper hierarchy from a regular *nšdy* to the supervisory position of *ḥry nšdy.w*. In this case, at least, it seems that the sons would not have reached the supervisory position before having really produced jewelry material[23]. The documentation indicates that the *nšdy.w* could work in all the main institutions that stored metal: the temple (maybe Amun's temple in Karnak, though the artifacts discussed above are mainly unprovenanced), the Palace, and the Golden House.

2.1.2. *ḥmty.w*-Metalworkers

According to recent research, the *ḥmty.w* were originally in charge of the working of both copper and gold and specialized later in copper processing (Guerra 2023a, p. 11), although the term can also describe workers of other unspecified ores (Wb 3, 99; TLA Lemma ID 600034). The alternative reading of the sign-group as *bi3* (Wb I, 436–437) has been previously refuted (e.g., Steinmann 1980, p. 147; on other readings or graphic variations, especially bDtj, found in the literature for the Old Kingdom, see Drenkhahn 1976, pp. 38–42). More recently, Odler suggested the reading *bḏ3.ty* (Odler 2023, pp. 89ff). This paper is not the place to develop further on the different readings of the crucible-sign, and therefore I am here using the conventional scholarly way to refer to New Kingdom metalworkers, i.e., *ḥm.ty*. What one can certainly deduce from the spelling of the word is at least its clear connection to craftwork since it is composed with the sign of the crucible, the tool at the core of metalworkers' craft.

ḥmty.w-Metalworkers in Workshop Scenes

In New Kingdom workshop scenes, the metalworkers are usually not labeled with a title, but they instead use conventional scenes of metalworking from the Old Kingdom[24]. These men were depicted in all regular scenes suggesting the work of metal: hammering metal sheets, blowing in pipes to sustain the fire placed under a crucible, and working on (i.e., often polishing) finished products, usually metal vases. As for their superiors, they are regularly depicted supervising the weighing of metal. This category of metalworkers is also the only one connected with the humorous discourses of the *Reden und Rufe* repertoire, as seen in Old Kingdom tomb scenes. These dialogues played on puns and religious references that give insight into the symbolism of metal and, therefore, might suggest that some metalworkers had access to a certain kind of restricted knowledge or at least used a "restricted metal-working code" (Quirke 2023, pp. 64, 68 with promising comparisons with other African cultures)[25]. Already in the Old Kingdom, we see that the depiction of metal-working was associated with the god Min (e.g., Mehu's chapel, Unas Cemetery, Dynasty 6) (Figure 6), who will later on be clearly connected with the mining expedition set under the supervision of the clergy of Coptos, especially in the New Kingdom with specific royal investment for the main cultic center of the town (Chollier 2023, pp. 67–72). Attesting to the passage of time over a thousand-year-old repertoire, the unlabeled workers in New Kingdom tomb scenes display technologies not yet developed in the Old Kingdom, like the bellows used in replacement of blow-pipes (Quirke 2023, p. 60). The New Kingdom scenes also add more variations to the repertoire of finished products on which craftsmen are working, with a greater diversity of steps shown in the production and treatment of metallic vessels.

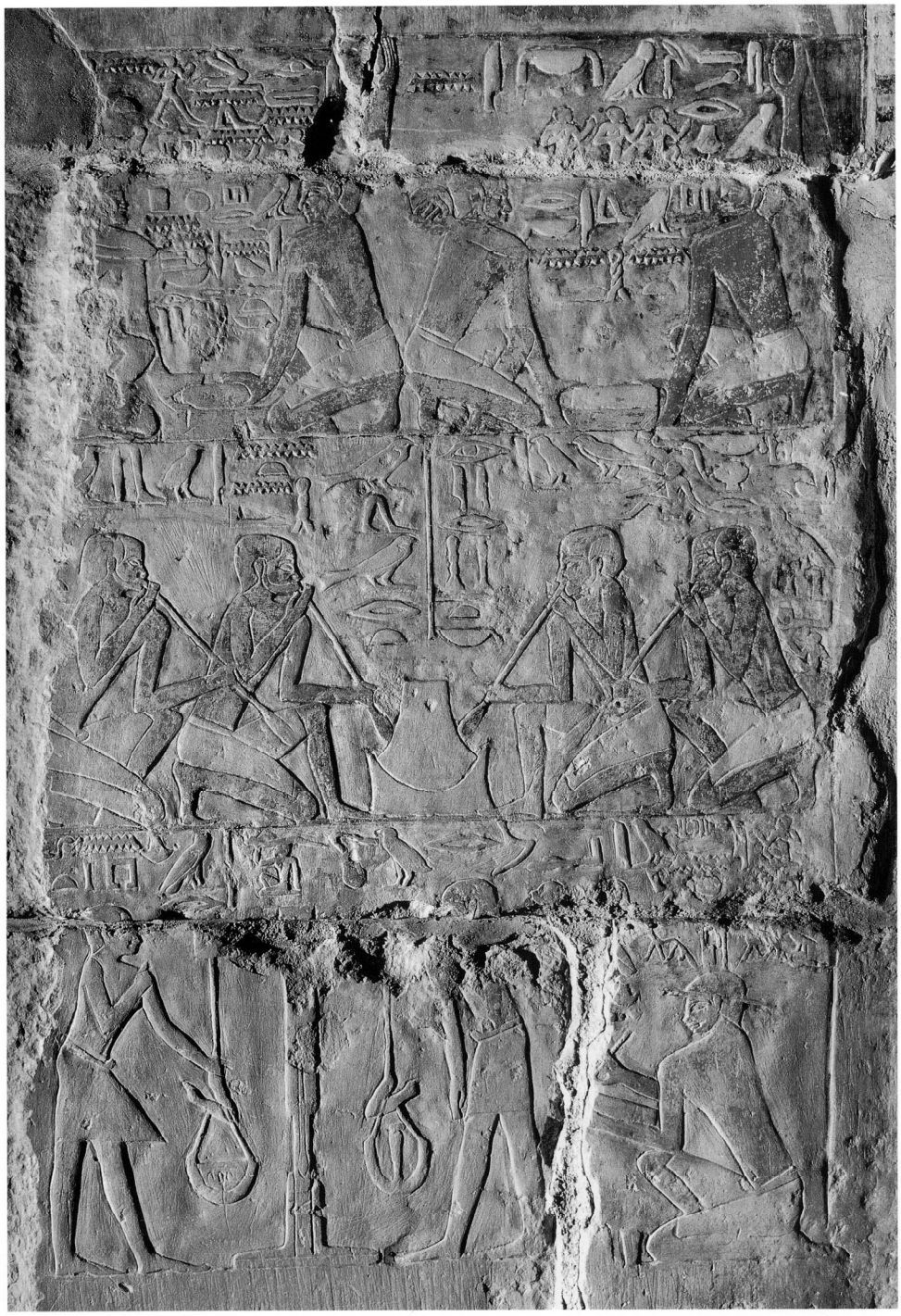

Figure 6. Metalworkers shown in the tomb-chapel of Mehu in Saqqara (Dynasty 6) (Altenmüller 1998, Tafel 42; Courtesy of Prof. Dr. Altenmüller).

ḥmty.w-Metalworkers and Their Commemorative Material[26]

If metalworkers were usually not labeled in New Kingdom workshop scenes, in other visual contexts they were given the title *ḥmty.w*. Thirteen *ḥmty.w* appeared in the New Kingdom visual documentation (Table 3). Eight of them were depicted on stelae[27] (for which they were mostly the main beneficiaries), three are known by their ushebtis, one by a naophorous statue in steatite, and another one by his canopic jar made out of clay.

Table 3. List of *ḥmty.w*-metalworkers's visual attestations.

Name	Title	Date	Provenance	Type of Medium	Material
Ahmose	*ḥry ḥmty?*	D. 18	Thebes?	Canopic jar	Ceramic
Amenmose	*ḥry ḥmty*	D. 18	Unknown	Ushebti	Wood
Huy	*ḥmty n imn*	D. 18	Abydos	Stela (M)	Limestone
Pashedu	*ḥmty n imn*	D. 18	Abydos	Stela (M)	Limestone
Userhat	*ḥmty?*	D. 18—T.I?	Thebes?	Naophorous statue	Steatite
Ahmose	*ḥry ḥmty*	D. 18—T.II-T.IV?	Unknown	Stela (M)	Limestone
[…]	*ḥmty*	D. 18—A.III	Unknown	Stela (M)	
Neb(i)emra	*ꜥ3 ḥmty*	Mid-D. 18	Unknown	Stela (M)	Limestone
Neb	*ḥmty*	Mid-D. 18	Abydos?	Stela (M)	Limestone
Nefermesu	*ḥmty n ini ḥr.t* (*?*)	Mid-D. 18	Unknown	Stela (M)	
Nebra	*ḥmty m iwnw*	D. 18—A.IV	Heliopolis	Stela (M)	Limestone
Huy	*ḥmty wꜥb*	D. 19–20	Saqqara	Ushebti	Faience
Nefer	*ḥmty n imn*	D. 19–21	Unknown	Ushebti	Wood

* M = main beneficiary. * SC = secondary character.

The provenance of the objects is mostly unknown, except for Huy's ushebti found in the Serapeum of Saqqara (Louvre N 775) (Figure 7), his stela in Abydos (Cairo CG 34072), and the stela of Nebra from Heliopolis (Cairo RT 05-06-76-02)[28]. Neb's stela could also be from Abydos (NMS 1905.286), and the canopic jar (Czartoyski Museum, MNK XI-647) and naophorous statue (Walters Art Museum, 22.17) might come from the Theban region.

Figure 7. Ushebti of the Metalworker Huy found in the Serapeum, faience, 11 × 4 × 3 cm (© Musée du Louvre/Département des Antiquités égyptiennes, inv. no. N 775; Courtesy of the Museum).

Observations

The title is well attested through the whole Dynasty 18, with two Ramesside occurrences: Nefer's two ushebtis (Louvre N 2684-68 and -76), and the one owned by Huy (mentioned above).

These artifacts show a great diversity of quality in their execution, from the carefully detailed face of Ahmose's canopic jar[29] to Nefer's roughly made wooden ushebtis. The materials used are usually not costly, and we observe without surprise that the objects made out of the more expensive materials (like cedar-wood), display a greater quality of execution/composition and/or correspond to more costly categories of objects belonging to superiors of the trade: namely the familial stela of the *ḫry ḥmty.w* Ahmose (MFA 1981.2), the naophorous statue of the *imi-r ḥmty.w* (?) Userhat, the canopic jar of the *imi-r ḥmwty.w* Ahmose[30], and the ushebti carved out of cedar-wood of the *ḫry ḥmty.w* Amenmose (University of Zürich, 990) (Figure 8). The only exception to this non-surprising rule is the comparatively plain stela owned by the *ꜥ3 ḥmty* Nebiemra (Cairo CG 34150), although it must still be confirmed whether *ꜥ3* refers to a supervisory role or if it was an epithet without hierarchical meaning.

Figure 8. Ushebti carved out of cedar-wood for the Metalworker in Chief Amenmose, 27.5 × 8.5 cm) (© Archaeological Collection, University of Zürich, inv. no. 990. Photo: Frank Tomio; Courtesy of the Museum).

The stela dedicated by Pashedu to his father Huy (Cairo CG 34072) suggests the familial transmission of the office, while the stela of Neb (NMS, 1905.286) demonstrates a

possible diversity of craft skills within the same family since Neb's father was a royal sandalmaker (*ṯbw nsw.t*: TLA Lemma ID 175130, Wb 5, 363.11-15).

In these monuments, we see no clear connection with any theological dimension that could be attached to the metallurgists' craft, a dimension that was suggested as early as the Old Kingdom *Reden und Rufe*. The only exception might be the stela dedicated to Nebiemra by his son with a formula addressed to Ptah, Sokar, Osiris, Nefertem, and Anubis, Ptah and Sokar being well-known deities attached to art and craft (Odler 2023, pp. 214–15). We might also see the reference to Hathor as a connection to mining sites. On one stela of a *ḥmty* whose name was not preserved, the beneficiary is shown worshipping Osiris and Hathor. The goddess Hathor is also mentioned on the block statue Bologna MCABo EG 1945 discussed in the previous section (Figure 5). The connection to Hathor will be further developed with the second case study.

We also notice that the 'simple' *ḥmty.w* were often attached to Amun's cult, except for Nebra who was connected to Heliopolis, and maybe Nefermesu, who might have been attached to Onuris' cult.

2.1.3. *ṯ3y.w-bsn.t*-Metalworkers

The title *ṯ3y-bsn.t* (Wb 1, 477.6; TLA Lemma ID 174370) appeared in the Ramesside documentation and occurred until the Ptolemaic Period. It is the least attested title in the visual documentation left by the ancient Egyptian metalworkers. The compound title designated craftsmen holding a specific tool, the bsn.t, a punch or chisel used to engrave the surface of objects made of metal (Steinmann 1980, p. 153, sct. 2.2.4.4.3).

ṯ3y.w-bsn.t-Metalworkers in Workshop Scenes

Only two attestations of *ṯ3y-bsn.t* depicted at work in a workshop scene are preserved.

In the central chapel of the tomb of Meryneith/Meryre, the *ṯ3y-bsn.t* Khay is sitting on a three-leg stool. With a burin, he engraves some décor on the surface of a metal vase on a stand[31]. From the two workshop scenes developed in Meryneith/Meryre's chapel, he is the only artist named. The inscription was finely carved and is framed by two lines[32].

In the vizier Paser's chapel in Thebes (TT 106) (Figure 9), a *ṯ3y-bsn.t* is squatting on the floor, legs uplifted before him and holding an elongated tool he applies to the surface of a shaft of a column or a pedestal. It is highly likely that the artist was named (which is far from being mundane in workshop scenes)[33], but his label, as well as the rest of his body, is unfortunately badly damaged.

Figure 9. A metalworker *ṯ3y-bsn.t* at work in the tomb-chapel of the Vizier Paser (el-Khokha, TT 106, Dynasty 19) (© Courtesy of Dr. Gema Ménendez Gomez).

ṯ3y.w-bsn.t-Metalworkers and Their Commemorative Monuments

Five New Kingdom visual attestations of *ṯ3y.w-bsn.t* date from the Ramesside period (Table 4) and occurred on round-topped stelae with one exception, namely the craftsman depicted in the chapel of Paser (TT 106). On a statue (now headless) of Renenutet, which might be stylistically dated to Dynasty 18 (Cairo CG 42138; Legrain 1906, p. 88), the wab-priest in Karnak who was head of the *ṯ3y(.w)-bsn.t* in Amun's Estate is depicted kneeling on the side(s?) of Renenutet's seat; his name, Ashatkhet, might suggest a foreign origin[34].

Table 4. List of *ṯ3y.w-bsn.t*-metalworkers visual attestations.

Name	Title	Date	Provenance	Type of Medium	Material
Ashatkhet	*ḥry ṯ3y-bsn.t*	D. 18?	Karnak	Statue	Limestone
Khonsu	*ḥry ṯ3y-bsn.t*	D. 18?	Karnak	Statue	Limestone
Khay	*ṯ3y-bsn.t*	D. 18—A.IV-TAA	Saqqara	Tomb (SC)	
Djehuty	*ṯ3y-bsn.t n imn pr*	D. 19	Unknown	Stela (M)	Limestone
[…]	*ṯ3y-bsn.t*	D. 19—R.I-II	Thebes	Tomb (SC)	
Hurhatef	*ṯ3y-bsn.t n p3 š-mḥ.tit n imn*	Early D. 19	Unknown	Stela (M)	
Tunnekhebukhonsu	*ṯ3y-bsn.t wʿb n imn b3k pr-ḥḏ?*	D. 19–20	Unknown	Stela (M)	Limestone
Parennefer	*ṯ3y-bsn.t* […] *wdḥw n imn?*	D. 19–20	Unknown	Stela (M)	Granite

* M = main beneficiary. * SC = secondary character.

Observations

In addition to Ashatkhet, other *ṯ3y.w-bsn.t* were also affiliated with Karnak temple with some variations in the title, like the *ṯ3y-bsn.t* of Amun's North Lake or the *ṯ3y-bsn.t* of Amun's divine offerings. These monuments were all made of non-expensive, more common materials, except for the stela of Parennefer (Cairo JE 46783) that was carved out of granite, a very unusual material for any artists' monuments. The stela of Djehuty (Toulouse, Museum Georges Labit, 49.275), though apparently quickly made and left unfinished, displays good quality carving as well as an overall balanced composition with well-proportioned bodies (Figure 10). The Toulouse stela shows some traces of abrasion that might hint towards possible reuse (Ramond 1977, pp. 27–31, pl. VII)[35]. Ashatkhet and his father Khonsu are the only named supervisors (*ḥry.w*) of *ṯ3y.w-bsn.t* attested in our documentation.

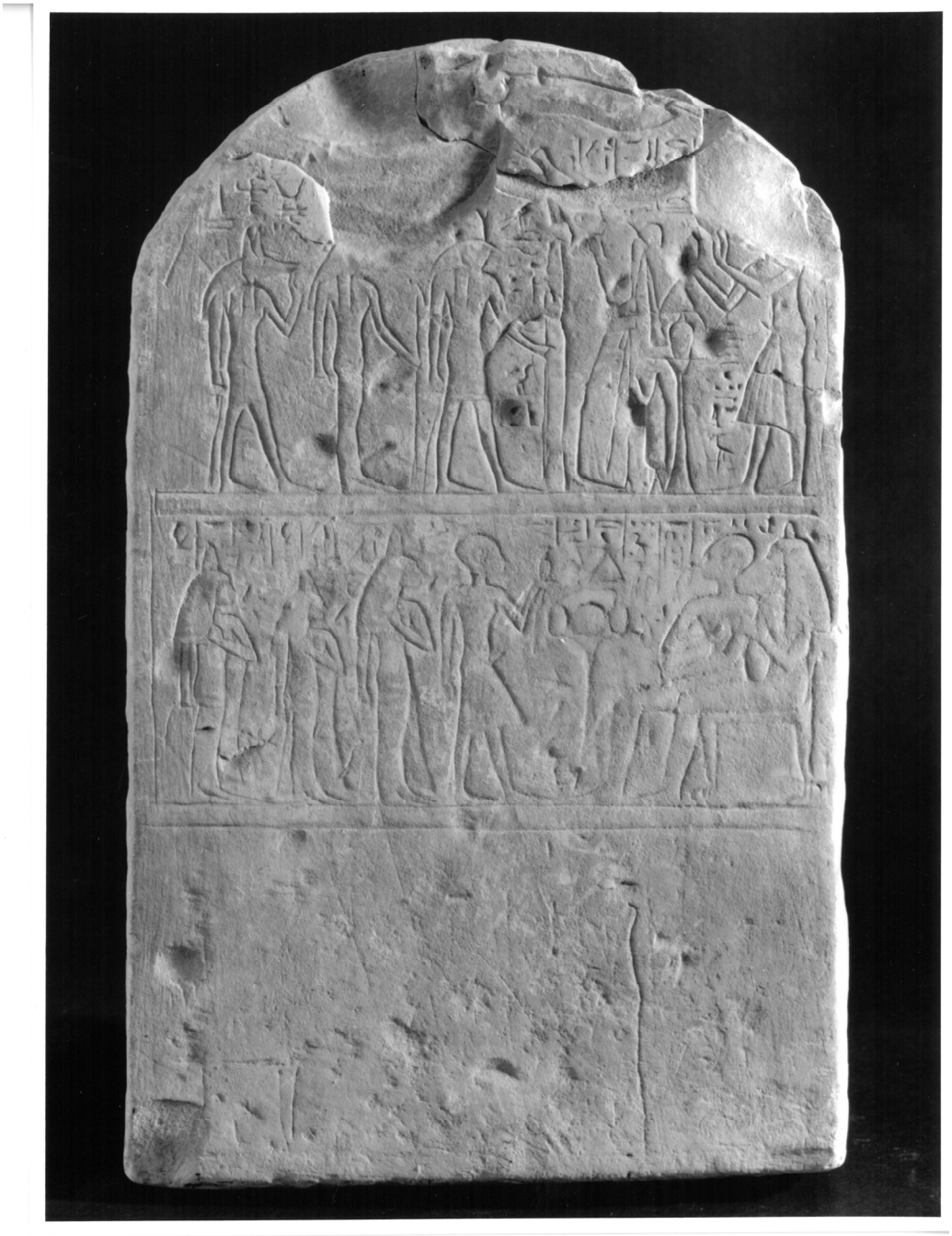

Figure 10. Stela of Djehuty, limestone, 46 × 28 cm (Mairie de Toulouse, Museum Georges-Labit, inv. no. 49.275; Courtesy of the Museum).

2.1.4. *nby.w*-Goldsmiths

Contrasting with other New Kingdom metalworkers whose occurrences are restricted in number, the goldsmiths' attestations are plentiful (Table 5). They are clustered in the Memphite and the Theban areas, with some examples coming from sites connected to mining activities (in Nubia or in Bir Menih in the eastern desert, for instance)[36]. The *nby.w* are attested through the whole New Kingdom from the beginning of Dynasty 18 to the Ramesside period. 'Simple' goldsmiths are represented as much as their supervisors in the documentation: we count 43 *nby.w*, 10 *imi.w-r nby.w*, 35 *ḫry.w nby.w*, and 1 *mr nby.w* visually depicted on a wide range of commemorative artifacts[37].

Table 5. List of *nby.w*-goldsmiths' visual attestations.

Name	Title	Date	Provenance	Type of Medium	Material
Amenmose	*nby*	D. 17–D. 18?	Abydos	Stela (M)	Limestone
Ahmose	*nby*	D. 17–D. 18?	Abydos	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Pediamun	*nby*	NK	Thebes?	Door lintel	
Nebsen	*nby*	Early D. 18?	Miam	Stela (M)	Limestone
Meryptah	*nby n nb tȝ.wy*	D. 18	Saqqara	Stela (M)	Limestone
Khay	*nby*	D. 18	Miam	Tomb (M); Stela; 2 bronze vase holders; Coffin	
Sa-aset	*nby n imn*	D. 18	West Thebes	Stelophore statue	Limestone
Samut	*nby n ȝs.t n mnw*	D. 18	West cemetery?, Gurnet Murai (Thebes)	Stelophore statue	Limestone
Tetiemra	*nby n psḏ.t*	D. 18	Unknown	Stela (M)	Limestone
Qenamun	*ḥry nby*	D. 18	Unknown	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Paray	*ḥry nby*	D. 18	Unknown	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Amenemheb	*imi-r nby n imn*	D. 18	Thebes?	Stela (M)	Limestone
Ituta	*nby n imn*	D. 18	Abydos	Stela (M)	Limestone
Neb	*nby*	D. 18	Abydos	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Aametjeni	*ḥry nby n pr imn, n pr ḥnsw, n ȝbḏw*	D. 18	Abydos	Stela (M)	Limestone
[…]	*ḥry nby n imn*	D. 18	Abydos	Stela (SC)	Limestone
[…]	*ḥry nby n ḥnsw?*	D. 18	Abydos	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Neb[…]	*ḥry nby n ḏḥwty (pr?)*	D. 18	Unknown	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Khonsu	*ḥry nby n nb tȝ.wy*	D. 18	Abydos	Stela (M)	Limestone
Reti	*ḥry nby*	Mid-D. 18	Unknown	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Amenemipet	*nby*	Mid-D. 18	Unknown	Stela (M)	Limestone
Hat	*ḥry nby ḫrd n kȝp*	Mid-D. 18	Thebes	Ushebti	Wood
Mery	*imi-r nby*	2nd half D. 18	Unknown	Pyramidion	Limestone
Neferrenpet/Qefya	*ḳsty nby?*	D. 18 (T.III-A.II)	Dra Abu el-Naga (Thebes)	Tomb (M) (TT 140)	
Nebseny	*imi-r nby.w n imn*	D. 18 (T.III-A.II)	Dra Abu el-Naga (Thebes)	Tomb (M) (TT 401)	
Senna	*ḥry nby n imn*	D. 18 (A.II)	Dra Abu el-Naga (Thebes)	Tomb (M) (TT 169)	
Hatra	*it nṯr ni itmw, it nṯr ni iwnw, mr nbw ni pr rˁw, ḥry sšt3 rȝ-prw*	D. 18 (A.II)	Tell Hebua; Tell Nebecheh (Delta)	Block statue	Quartzite
Amenemhat	*ḥry nby*	D. 18 (before A. IV)	Saqqara?	Stela (M)	Limestone
Nehemauay	*sˁnḫ nby*	D. 18 (T.IV-A.III)	Dra Abu el-Naga (Thebes)	Tomb (M) (TT 165)	
Qenamun	*ḥry nby*	D. 18 (A.III)	Saqqara or Abydos?	Tomb (SC)	

Table 5. *Cont.*

Name	Title	Date	Provenance	Type of Medium	Material
Amenemheb	*ḥry nby imi-r kꜣ.t m pr nbw*	D. 18 (A.III)	Unknown	Ushebti	Wood
Neferhotep	*nby*	D. 18 (A.III?)	Unknown	Stela (M)	Limestone
Ahmose	*nby*	D. 18 (A.III?)	Unknown	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Ptahmay	*ḥry irw nbw pꜣk* (*m pr itn*)	D. 18 (A.III-A.IV)	Teti Pyramid Cemetery, Saqqara	Tomb (M) (309/TPC)	
Apuia	*imi-r ḫmw.t ḥry nby.w n nb tꜣ.wy*	D. 18 (post-Amarna)	Teti Pyramid Cemetery, Saqqara	Tomb (M) (212/TPC)	
Parrenefer	*imi-r ḫmw.t ḥry nby.w n nb tꜣ.wy*	D. 18 (post-Amarna)	Teti Pyramid Cemetery, Saqqara	Tomb (SC) (212/TPC)	
Huy	*imi-r ḫmw.t ḥry nby.w n nb tꜣ.wy*	D. 18 (post-Amarna)	Teti Pyramid Cemetery, Saqqara	Tomb (SC) (212/TPC)	
Pakharu	*ḥry nby.w*	D. 18 (T.)	Teti Pyramid Cemetery, Saqqara	Tomb (M) (216/TPC)	
Kenna	*sʿnḫ n imn wʿb imi-r nby.w ḥry sšt*ꜣ *m ḫw.t-nbw n imn*	D. 18 (H.)	Gurnah (Thebes)	Tomb (SC) (TT 50)	
Amenemone	*imi-r ḫmw.t n.t nb tꜣ.wy ḥry nby.w n*(*.w*) *nb tꜣ.wy* (*n.w nṯr nfr*)	Late D. 18	Teti Pyramid Cemetery, Saqqara	Tomb (M) (213/TPC)	
Amenemheb	*ḥry nby*	Late D. 18	Teti Pyramid Cemetery, Saqqara	Tomb (SC) (213/TPC)	
Nebmehyt	*nby*	Late D. 18	Teti Pyramid Cemetery, Saqqara	Tomb (SC) (213/TPC)	
Amenemheb	*imi-r nby*	Late D. 18?	Memphis	Stela (M)	Limestone
Amenemheb	*ḥry nby n nb tꜣ.wy*	Late D. 18?	Sabu	Stela	Limestone
Amenemheb	*ḥry nby n nb tꜣ.wy*	D. 18–D. 19	Saqqara	Door-jamb (137/USC)	
Ptahemheb	*ḥry nby n nb tꜣ.wy*	D. 18–D. 19	Saqqara	Door-jamb (137/USC)	
Iny	*imi-r ḫmw.t m mḫw, rḫ sšt*ꜣ *m ḫw.t-nbw, imi-r nby.w*	D. 18–D. 19	Saqqara	Stela	Limestone
Paser	*nby n imn*	D. 18–D. 19?	Abydos	Stela (M)	Limestone
Sobekmose	*nby n imn*	D. 18–D. 19?	Thebes?	Book of the Dead	
Neferrenpet Kartana	*ḥry nby*	D. 18–D. 19?	Thebes?	Book of the Dead	
Panehesy	*ḥry nby n pr nbw*	Early D. 19	Unknown	Stela (M)	Limestone
Paraemheb	*ḥry nby n pr nbw*	Early D. 19	Unknown	Stela (M)	Limestone
Iny	*ḥry nby n pr nbw*	Early D. 19	Unknown	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Amenrakhau	*nby n pr nbw*	Early D. 19	Unknown	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Khonsuhotep Sutaa	*ḥry nby* *nby n pr nbw*	Early D. 19 Early D. 19	Unknown Unknown	Stela (SC) Stela (SC)	Limestone Limestone
Ptahmose	*nby wʿb*	Early D. 19	Unknown	Stela (SC)	Limestone
Ramose	*nby*	D. 19	Memphis	Stela (M)	Limestone
Amenemheb	*ḥry nby n nb tꜣ.wy*	D. 19	Saqqara	Stela (M)	Limestone

Table 5. *Cont.*

Name	Title	Date	Provenance	Type of Medium	Material
Tatja	imi-r *nby.w n ptḥ*	D. 19	Saqqara	Tomb (SC)	
Mahu	*nby n imn*	D. 19	Unknown (Thebes?)	Stela (M)	Sandstone
Sayempeteriref	*ḫry nby ḥw.t-nṯr mn-mꜣʿt-rʿ, n nb tꜣ.wy*	D. 19	Saqqara	Tomb (M)	
Nebinefer	*ḫry (?) nby*	D. 19	el-Khokha (Thebes)	Coffin (M)	
Bakenurenra	*nby*	D. 19	Miam	Naos (SC)	Limestone
Nakhtdjehuty	*mr ḥmww n pꜣ š-mḥ.ti n imn ḫry nby.w m pr-imn*	D. 19 (R.II)	el-Assassif (Thebes)	Tomb (M) (TT 189)	
Khonsuemheb	*ḫry nby n imn*	D. 19 (R.II)	el-Assassif (Thebes)	Tomb (SC) (TT 189)	
Neferhor	*nby n ḥw.t wʿb*	D. 19 (R.II)	Saqqara	Ushebti	Faience
Khonsumes	*imi-r nby*	D. 19 (late R.II)	Wadi Halfa	Stela (SC)	Sandstone
Pay	*imi-r ḥmwt ḫry nby*	D. 19–D. 20?	Unknown	Ushebti	Faience
Amenemipet	*ḫry nby m s.t mꜣʿ.t*	D. 18–D. 20	Saqqara?	Ushebti	Faience
Khensmosi	*nby*	D. 19–D. 20	Coptos	Stela (M)	Limestone
Ta	*nby*	D. 19–D. 20	Saqqara	Ushebti	Faience
[…]	*nby n ptḥ*	D. 19–D. 20	Saqqara	Ushebti	Faience
[…]	*ḫry nby n pr imn*	D. 20	Gurnah (Thebes)	Tomb (M) (TT 114)	
Shednakhtwahyhotepsu	*nby*	D. 20	Cemetery of the singers, Abydos	Naos (M)	Clay
Horseankh	*nby*	D. 20	Cemetery of the singers, Abydos	Naos (M)	Clay
Nedjem	*nby n imn*	D. 20	Abydos	Tomb (M); Ushebti; Funerary Model; Funerary cone; Door lintel	
Djehutyemheb	*imi-r nby n imn wʿb ḫry-sšṯꜣ n imn*	D. 20 (R.III-R.IV)	el-Khokha (Thebes)	Tomb (SC) (TT 372)	

* M = main beneficiary. * SC = secondary character.

The Cultic Affiliation of the *nby.w*-Goldsmiths

When connected to a specific cult, most of them attached '*n imn*', "of Amun", to their title, though we also find one goldsmith attached to the cult of Isis and Min (statue Louvre A 59), another to the Ennead (stela Louvre E 17403), and a goldsmith named Aametjen who served (simultaneously?) for Amun, Khonsu, and the Abydene cult. Another *ḫry nby.w* whose name is lost might also have been attached to Khonsu's cult on the same stela (stela Marseille, 233). The Head of Goldsmiths Neb[…] served under Thoth and appeared as a secondary character on the stela of Paser, a *wʿb* priest of the same god, along with other servitors of the cult (stela Louvre E 11344) who were essentially connected to the main beneficiary, in contrast to Neb[…] who is not textually related to Paser. In the Memphite tomb-chapel of Mose, the *imi-r nby.w* Tatja worked for Ptah's cult[38], like another goldsmith whose name is lost but who apparently also worked in the Memphite area (ushebti Louvre N 775-34). We also know of one Head of Goldsmiths, Imenemipet, who was attached to a certain 'Place of Truth'. His ushebti, whose provenance is not secure, might attest

to the existence of several 'Places of Truth' across Egypt, following official working sites (Haring 2017). The faience ushebti crafted for Neferhor does not name for which temple (*ḥw.t*) he might have served, though its discovery in the tomb G-H of the Serapeum in Saqqara points towards the Apis' temple. Some gold workers also stated their connections to the king by adding to their title '*n nb t3.wy*', "of the Lord of the Two Lands". This is the case for the overseer of goldsmiths displayed in Apuia's chapel (Saqqara, S2730) who also served as *imi.w-r* Hmw.t or "overseer of the art production". We notice the same pattern for Amenemone who was *imi-r ḥmw.t n*(*.t*) *nb t3.wy ḥry nby.w n*(*.w*) *nb t3.wy* (*n.w nṯr nfr*), i.e., Overseer of the Artistic Production of the King and Goldsmith in Chief of the King (of the Great God). Saiempeteref, whose tomb was dismantled, worked for the royal cult of Seti I and Ramesses II, probably in Abydos (Block 1932, p. 81; Scheurleer 1940, p. 551) (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Block from the tomb-chapel of the Supervisor of the Goldsmiths from the Funerary Temples of Seti I and Ramses II Saiempeteref, limestone, 57 × 76 cm (Allard Pierson, University of Amsterdam, inv. no. APM08851; Courtesy of the Museum).

When cumulating clerical offices, goldsmiths could also mention their attachment to a specific cult, but it is usually not clear whether they served under the god they worshiped as craftsmen too (for instance, as on the offering table Cairo CG 23138 of the Goldsmith, First Prophet of Atum, Lord of Heliopolis, Priest of the Second Phyle […] of Ra's Estate

Hatra). The quartzite block-statue of Hatra (Louvre E 25550) (Figure 12) lists the functions he held in Heliopolis and mentions his service to the cult of Ra, as well as the work he did. The Golden House is, without surprise, also mentioned as one of the possible affiliated institutions for goldsmiths (for instance, see the communalized stela BM EA141).

Figure 12. Quartzite block-statue of the Overseer of the Goldsmiths from the Temple of Ra in Heliopolis Hatra, 46.9 × 27.3 × 27.1 cm (© Musée du Louvre/Dist. GrandPalaisRmn/Christian Décamps, inv. no. E 25550; Courtesy of the Museum).

nby.w-Goldsmiths Bearing Other Titles

Some goldsmiths were apparently engaged in two craft industries. On a rectangular stela, the depiction of a sphinx is accompanied by the inscription ir n *nby* sanx imn-nb, i.e., "made by the Goldsmith, the Sculptor Amenemheb". The stela was found in Giza and was likely an offering to the Great Sphinx of Giza. It has been pointed out that this kind of votive stelae might have been offered by officials on professional trips to Giza (Zivie 1976, pp. 326–27). Amenneb might have been a goldsmith and sculptor touring the region, maybe to get inspired by ancient ruins since this practice is attested by graffiti left by artists on 'touristic' sites (see e.g., Navratilova 2015, esp. pp. 223, 301–5).

Neferrenpet called Kefya, owner of the chapel TT 140 in Dra Abu el-Naga, might have presented the same association of titles; unfortunately, his chapel was never published and was already badly damaged in the 19th century (Porter and Moss 1960, PM I, p. 254).

This was also the case for Nehemauy, owner of another chapel (TT 165) located in Dra Abu el-Naga and built slightly later than TT 140. The single-room chapel presents preliminary drawings in red with traditional decoration. At the end of Dynasty 18, Neferhotep displayed his family, including his paternal grandfather Kenna who was *sˁnḫ n imn*

wˁb imi-r nby.w ḫry sšt3 m ḫw.t-nbw n imn, i.e., Sculptor of Amun, Wab-priest, Overseer of the Goldsmiths, Privy to the Secret(s) of the Golden House of Amun.

Though *sˁnḫ* might be interpreted in different ways, it is usually translated as 'sculptor' for artists (TLA Lemma ID 128920, Wb 4, 47.14-16; see Rizzo 2015). Mastering both sculpting and gold-working skills was apparently not an exception. This makes sense given the nature of the work on gold objects at the end of the production line, which encompassed several techniques that might be affiliated with sculpture. The word *sˁnḫ*, literally 'to cause life', might also point towards these goldsmith's perceived ability to magically animate artifacts (Derchain 1990; Von Lieven 2007).

Other goldsmiths were more commonly mentioned as wab-priests. Additionally, the title of overseer of goldsmiths was often linked with the title of *imi-r ḥmw.t*, especially from mid-Dynasty 18 onward. We count two overseers of goldsmiths who were also in charge of royal works: Nebesny, owner of TT C.1, and Amenemheb, known by his ushebti particularly well-carved (Zürich University, inv. no. 989).

The Visualization of *nby.w*-Goldsmiths' Craft

Most goldsmith's visual attestations were built on the conventional iconographic repertoire without adding specific elements that might point towards their craft. Some of them, however, used the opportunity to make some adjustments to the standard repertoire and made choices to push forward socially with explicit reference to their profession.

For instance, the Book of the Dead owned by the *ḫry nby* Qerten called Neferrenpet (BM EA 9940) displays the application of gold leaf on some of the depicted jewelry. Owning such an object was already far from mundane for an individual of this socio-professional standing (for a supervisor indeed, but such was unusual for a gold worker without any additional title to showcase, suggesting he was operating from within some kind of local hierarchy). The ability to adorn a Book of the Dead with gold leaf, given the rarity of this material in preserved Books of the Dead overall (Quirke 2023, pp. 56–57), suggests Qerten got access to the material thanks to his professional network.

The personalization could also be tied to the goldsmith's institutional affiliation that he stated visually. This is, for instance, one of the most likely interpretations for the Goldsmith Ramose who owned a round-topped stela (Cairo RT 16.3.25.12) found in the enclosure of the Memphite temple of Ptah. It depicts the pylons of this same temple on its surface (Figure 13). Other goldsmiths decided to encode this in their prayers on their stelae, making them specifically to Ptah and/or Sokar, well-known divine protectors of metalworkers (Odler 2023, pp. 214–15). To cite but one other example of a goldsmith who might refer to his craft, the stela of the Goldsmith of Amun W[…] (MRAH E.6252) displays, a large, winged scarab framed by two uraei and holding the sun disk above a hymn to the sun god Ra (Figure 14). It has been suggested convincingly that this whole motif refers to the iconographic repertoire so commonly used in metal jewelry, especially on bracelets and pectorals (Limme 1979, p. 27).

Figure 13. Stela of the Goldsmith Ramose, limestone (Cairo Egyptian Museum, inv. no. RT 16.3.25.12) (© IFAO/Bruyère 1929, figure 30; Courtesy of the IFAO).

Figure 14. Stela of a Goldsmith whose name is lost, sandstone, 34 × 26 cm (Museum of Fine Arts, Brussels, inv. no. E.06252) (CC BY—KMKG/© ImageStudio KMKG Brussel; Courtesy of the Museum).

The *nby.w*-Goldsmiths and Their Commemorative Monuments

Most of the visual appearances of New Kingdom goldsmiths themselves occur on stelae (either round-topped or rectangular in shape). Some men were depicted in the company of several other *nby.w*, but stelae were mainly owned by one single (supervisor of)

goldsmith(s) who presented other *nby.w* from his family and/or professional networks next to his person.

Sixteen goldsmiths, at least, managed to build a decorated tomb-chapel for themselves, a high figure which is unprecedented in the documentation related to artists, all periods combined: never was a group of craftsmen so much attested as tomb owners (Devillers unpublished) (Table 6)[39]. Adding to these object types, we also record eight ushebtis and three funerary cones owned by goldsmiths, which might add to the general number of goldsmiths who were also tomb owners[40].

Table 6. Number of artists owners of a tomb-chapel in Pharaonic Egypt.

	Artists as Owners of a Tomb-Chapel
Old Kingdom	18
FIP	1
Middle Kingdom	1
SIP	0
New Kingdom	41
TIP	0
Late Period	1
Ptolemaic Period	0

Given the state of preservation of most of these tombs and/or the fact that they were never published, it is unfortunately difficult to go further in the analysis of their iconographic and textual program. I would like to highlight here two exceptions, i.e., two well-known tomb-chapels of gold-related workers who accessed the most expensive support of funerary commemoration, namely the tomb-chapel[41], and who displayed more explicitly the specificities of their professional duties on their tomb walls.

For the following case studies, I consciously use two edges of the same *chaîne opératoire*, both in terms of processing the metal and in terms of hierarchy[42]. The first example is the now scattered tomb of the Goldsmith in Chief Amenemone (late Dynasty 18) who certainly belonged to the upper part of his socio-professional category. However, even if his tomb displays a great level of wealth relative to his peers (see above), he was not part of the first circle of elites (or "inner elite", to use Baines and Yoffee's terminology) in direct connection with the king[43], but was more likely under the supervision of the Overseer of All the Royal Craftsmen (*imi-r ḥmw.w nb.w n.w nsw.t*) Maya (Staring 2021, p. 33)[44]. The second case is that of a Washer of Gold in Chief (Late Dynasty 19-Dynasty 20), thus located at the very beginning of the metal's *chaîne opératoire*. He was also Head of the Traders and therefore belonged to two different, though closely related, occupational activities. Both sets of titles placed him fully into the sub-elite we are discussing here.

2.2. The Chief Goldsmith Amenemone (tomb 213/TPC)

The tomb of the Chief Goldsmith Amenemone (213/TPC) is located 'on the west of Memphis', in the Teti Pyramid Cemetery (Figure 15). There, among a wide range of tomb structures[45], the chapel of Amenemone[46] is comprised of a courtyard, a portico, a central chapel composed of an antechapel, and an inner sanctuary, flanked by two side-chapels (Ockinga 2004, pl. 53–54).[47] Only the central chapel was decorated with reliefs[48]. Additional reliefs adorned the portico, on the exterior walls of the three chapels and on top of the papyrus-bundle columns. The tomb-chapel has been dated to the end of Dynasty 18 (reign of Tutankhamun, maybe Akhenaten) on stylistic grounds[49].

Figure 15. Map of the northern part of Teti Pyramid Cemetery in the late Dynasty 18, Amarna and immediate post-Amarna period, with the tomb-chapel of Amenemone highlighted (Courtesy of Dr. Nico Staring).

Amenemone's chapel is part of a cluster of tombs owned by medium-ranked people related to the *ḥmw.t* (art/craft)-production located in the northern part of the cemetery gathered around the pyramid of the Old Kingdom king Teti[50]. This cluster gathered itself from mid-Dynasty 18 onward[51], and its location might have been strategically chosen for its proximity to an ancient (processional?) avenue covered over by the later paving stones leading to the Serapeum[52]. It is highly likely that these medium-ranked officials did take part in the artistic emulation of the time and place and participated actively in the emergence of a large web of interconnected tombs by their iconographic ('intericonicity') and textual ('intertextuality') programs[53].

In his tomb-chapel, Amenemone is described as the Overseer of Craftsmen (of the Lord of the Two Lands) and the Chief Goldsmith of the Lord of the Two Lands (of the Good God) (*imi-r ḥmw.t* (*n.t nb t3.wy*) *ḥry nby.w n*(*.w*) *nb t3.wy* (*n.w nṯr nfr*))[54]. The still-preserved decorative program of his monument presents apparently unspecified scenes, stemming from the repertoire of funerary scenes traditionally displayed in tomb contexts[55]. Amenemone and his wife are represented adoring different deities and their relatives are shown in procession paying their respect to the deceased couple.

However, some implicit elements hint at Amenemone's specialized craft. On the focal wall (block Cairo JdE 11975) of the central chapel, Amenemone and his family are shown adoring Sekhmet (Figure 16), the consort of Ptah, whose adoration has been safely replaced on the missing section of the block at the right of the stela. On the left block flanking the

stela, this is an adoration to Sekhmet. The choice of Ptah and his consort was certainly done on purpose to point to Amenemone's office since the god was the patron of Memphis, and, more relevant for our case, of craftsmen (Ockinga 2004, p. 37). Similarly, the offering formula on the left jamb of this stela is dedicated to Ptah-Sokar-Osiris (Ockinga 2004, p. 41, text 5), and, on the right, to Hathor, Lady of the Sycamore (Ockinga 2004, p. 42, text 8). Other offering formulae were addressed to Re-Harakhte-Atum, Lord of Heliopolis, anchoring Amenemone further into the Memphite area (and its attached social network and institution(s) for which he might have worked). The main offering recitation made by Amenemone's son, the Scribe of the Treasury Ptahmose, is also addressed to Ptah and Sokar (block Munich Gl 298; Ockinga 2004, text 21)[56]. Another prayer is addressed to Ptah-Sokar-Osiris on the east wall north of the central chapel (block Cairo TN 17/6/25/1 (f), Ockinga 2004, text 22, p. 58). Even with the scattered state of preservation of the tomb, we still notice the attention drawn to present a coherent textual program, for instance with the two remaining blocks replaced in the antechamber inscribed on top with two vignettes from the Book of the Dead that complement each other with "the provisioning of the deceased in the afterlife" (Ockinga 2004, p. 58). Another example shows how the theological and mythical symbolism were efficiently conveyed in the composition of the text on the lower register of the west wall south in the antechapel (block Munich Gl 298, outer face; Ockinga 2004, text 25, p. 63). In the same vein, the visual association of a sycamore tree with a palm tree, which is also found in Saiempeteref's chapel, might be understood as the fusion of chapters 58 and 59 of the Book of the Dead (Ockinga 2004, pp. 63–64). The text written on the north wall at the west end of the courtyard is also an "interesting combination of genres—a hymn, a transfiguration text and epithets of a biographical nature" (Ockinga 2004, text 40, pp. 84ff).

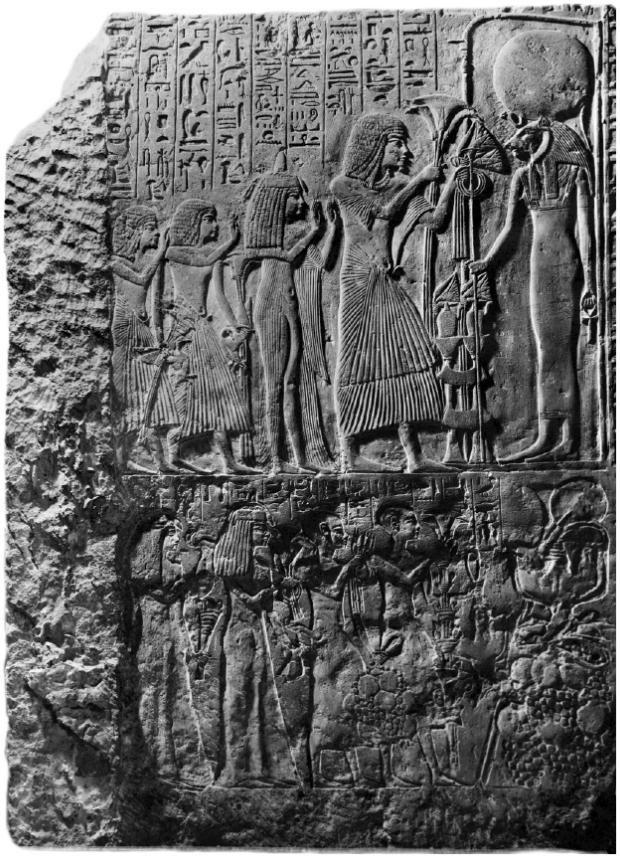

Figure 16. Relief showing Amenemone and his family worshipping Sekhmet (Cairo Egyptian Museum, inv. no. JdE 11975) (Ockinga 2004, pl. 8; Courtesy of Prof. Dr. Ockinga).

On a visual note, one might wonder if the gazelles and calves (as a reference to the Hathoric cow) frequently shown in the processions of the central chapel[57] refer to the goddess of the desert where gold was mined[58]. The presence of gold rings among the offerings brought to Amenemone (see e.g., stela Cairo TN 10-6-24-8, second register, on the table in front of the couple and in the hands of the second offering bearer of the last sub-register, Figure 17) also refer to the raw and valuable material Amenemone was in charge of and manipulated on a daily basis.

Figure 17. Detail of the stela from Amenemone's main chapel (Cairo Egyptian Museum, inv. no. TN 10-6-28) (Ockinga 2004, pl. 6b; Courtesy of Prof. Dr. Ockinga).

Adding to the overall quality of carving, the reliefs show specific attention drawn to the depiction of the deceased's real world with the depiction of the actual façade of the tomb on top of the block Munich Gl 298 (Ockinga 2004, p. 56). Further attention was drawn to details, like in the variation of the iconography of the procession of women holding ducks on the north wall of the antechapel (block TNE 94: F105 and 106; Ockinga 2004, p. 66). The most explicit reference to his gold working trade might be the representation of the Dynasty 5 king Menkauhor which was presumably on the engaged pilaster at the northern end of the portico (block Louvre B 48, Figure 18) (Ockinga 2004, pp. 73ff, figure 19). If Berlandini-Grenier's hypothesis holds true, Amenemone might have been in charge of the elaboration of such statues during the post-Amarna restoration (Berlandini-Grenier 1976)[59]. He could have supervised its creation as the *imi-r ḥmw.t* (*n.t nb t3.wy*) but might also have adorned the statue himself since it displays a lot of accessories probably made of gold.

Figure 18. Block showing the 5th Dynasty-king Menkauhor, limestone, 82.5 × 37.5 × 22 cm (© Musée du Louvre/Dist. GrandPalaisRmn/Christian Décamps, inv. no. B 48; Courtesy of the Museum).

Overall, the jewelry depicted in Amenemone's chapel shows a specific attention in their execution, that is not necessarily found in the most important tomb-monuments for the period, in Saqqara[60]. It is highly likely related to Amenemone's field of expertise and "personal interest in this type of object" (Ockinga 2004, p. 36). Unfortunately, Amenemone's burial complex was plundered and reused. Therefore, few objects remain that could be linked with the primary burial. Nevertheless, the excavator noted the presence of "scraps of gold leaf left behind by tomb robbers, evidently from objects or coffins" (TNE 96: 152 and 166; Sowada in Ockinga 2004, p. 126). One might be tempted to imagine that Amenemone managed to derive gold leaf and a working force attached to his office to work both on his chapel and on his funerary equipment.

Additionally, the monument was adorned with other kinds of artifacts. The above-mentioned stela Cairo TN 10/6/24/8 (SR 11732) was located in the center of the west wall of the central chapel. A limestone pair statue representing the deceased couple (Cairo TN 8/6/24/10, max. height: 69 cm) was found by Loret, presumably in its original position, "in the shelter of the portico, between the outer row of four papyriform columns and the inner pair of columns, in the axis of the chapel, i.e., directly in front of the entrance of the central chapel, thus obstructing direct access to this more private part of the tomb" (Ockinga 2004, p. 88). It would have been thought as "greeting" the visitors (Ockinga 2004, p. 88).

Contrasting to the reliefs found in Amenemone's monument, his statue does not present any special care in its elaboration[61]. The statue bears an offering formula addressed to Ptah, Osiris, Anubis, Wennefer, Horus, Sokar, Nefertem, and the Ennead, i.e., all the

gods addressed in the formulae written in the tomb (Ockinga 2004, text 43). The whole inscription consists of "an unusual combination of text genres": invocations spoken by the deceased, a transfiguration text, and lastly biographical epithets, name and affiliation of the tomb owner (Ockinga 2004, pp. 91–92). The inscription parallels some other formulations found in the tomb (Ockinga 2004, p. 92)[62] and makes the whole funerary system coherent. A limestone pyramidion was also found (Cairo JE 41665, current height: ca. 39 cm) inscribed with a hymn to Ra. It was apparently a composition in "its own right", combining different sources, and for which Ockinga could not find any other parallels (Ockinga 2004, p. 101, note 182). A shabti with a possible variation of the title of Amenemone, *imi-r nby.w*, was also discovered in the highly disturbed burial chambers[63].

It has been suggested that Amenemone might also be depicted in the chapel of the high official Maya in charge of the Treasury and of royal craftsmen (Tomb Lepsius 27) (Helck 1958, p. 188; Berlandini-Grenier 1976, p. 312). The tomb-chapel of Maya, one of the largest in the New Kingdom necropolis of Memphis (Staring 2021, p. 29), records on its walls an important number of people related to art and craft production, especially on the south pillars of the courtyard. This monument gives us a wonderful glimpse into the socio-professional network gravitating around Maya. These people, stemming from different fields of expertise, act as witnesses of the intense and dynamic atmosphere that might have taken place in the Treasury workshops[64]. Amenemone is here labeled with a title not attested in his own chapel, 'Deputy of these Craftsmen of the Treasury of Pharaoh' (*idnw n3 n.y ḥmw.t pr-ḥḏ n.w pr-ʿ3 ʿnḫ wḏ3 snb*) and is depicted in the sixth position of a procession of offering bearers appearing on the upper register of the east wall of the south 'wing' in the inner courtyard (Martin 2012, p. 33 [36], pl. 1B [36], pl. 26, 28, 30) (Figure 19). He is surrounded by: in front of him, the Royal Scribe, Steward Nahu(her), ['his brother', the Overseer of] Horses Parennefer, 'his brother', Scribe of the Treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands Nakht, the Deputy of the Treasury User, the Deputy of the Treasury Meryre; and behind him: the Deputy of the Craftsmen of the Treasury of Pharaoh, l.p.h. Ramose and the Scribe of the Treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands Nebre.

If the identification with our Amenemone holds true, what might have led Amenemone (or was it Maya and/or the creators of his tomb?) to not record the title that linked him more directly to Maya in his own tomb? I wonder whether the title idnw might have denoted in this context a specific connotation that emphasized the loyalty of Amenemone to his superior. This variation of title might therefore be understood as a way for Amenemone to present himself specifically as a loyal servant among Maya's dependents. It is also worth noticing that Amenemone is recorded among other staff members of the Treasury department, and not with the cluster of craftsmen mainly mentioned on the south wall of the same courtyard (Martin 2012, p. 36 [42–43], pl. 1B[42–43], pl. 32–33) where Maya acknowledged their work in a four-column inscription on the west pilaster (Martin 2012, p. 37 [45]).

Combining all the above-mentioned elements, Amenemone was part of an ill-defined upper part of the Memphite intermediate elite, located on the margins of the top elite under which he served, in the person of the Treasurer Maya[65]. The dimensions of his chapel position him in the lower size range of New Kingdom elite tombs in the necropolis. However, his chapel was one of the biggest among others owned by the middle-range officials who seemed to have gathered in this area. This further corroborates our understanding of his socio-professional status. Furthermore, he did not reach any prominent office, unlike other *imi.w-r* Hmw.t of his time who managed to access upper administrative positions. Nevertheless, through his control of the production of golden artifacts, and therefore his links to the Treasury, Amenemone managed to hire skillful sculptors to create his own decorative program, along with skilled scribes (or/and *sš.w-ḳdw.t*) sufficiently knowledgeable of the

different literary repertoires to compose a coherent and enjoyable textual program playing on genres and referring to specific elements of the funerary literature and cosmological order. Through the gods chosen to be addressed and displayed in his chapel, Amenemone anchored himself and his family into the sacred landscape of Memphis, referring both to the institution(s) who hired him and the gods who protected his trade. In so doing, he ensured frequent visits by passers-by who were certainly attracted by the possibility to worship local deities along with deified kings whose cults were popular at the time, if the block displaying the Old Kingdom king Menkauhor indeed belonged to his chapel (Figure 18). This latter representation would be the most explicit reference to his trade. Additionally, the textual program of Amenemone's tomb might also refer to the secret knowledge into which he was initiated[66] and his acknowledgment by the king himself, both topoi known from other (artists') biographies (Stauder 2018).

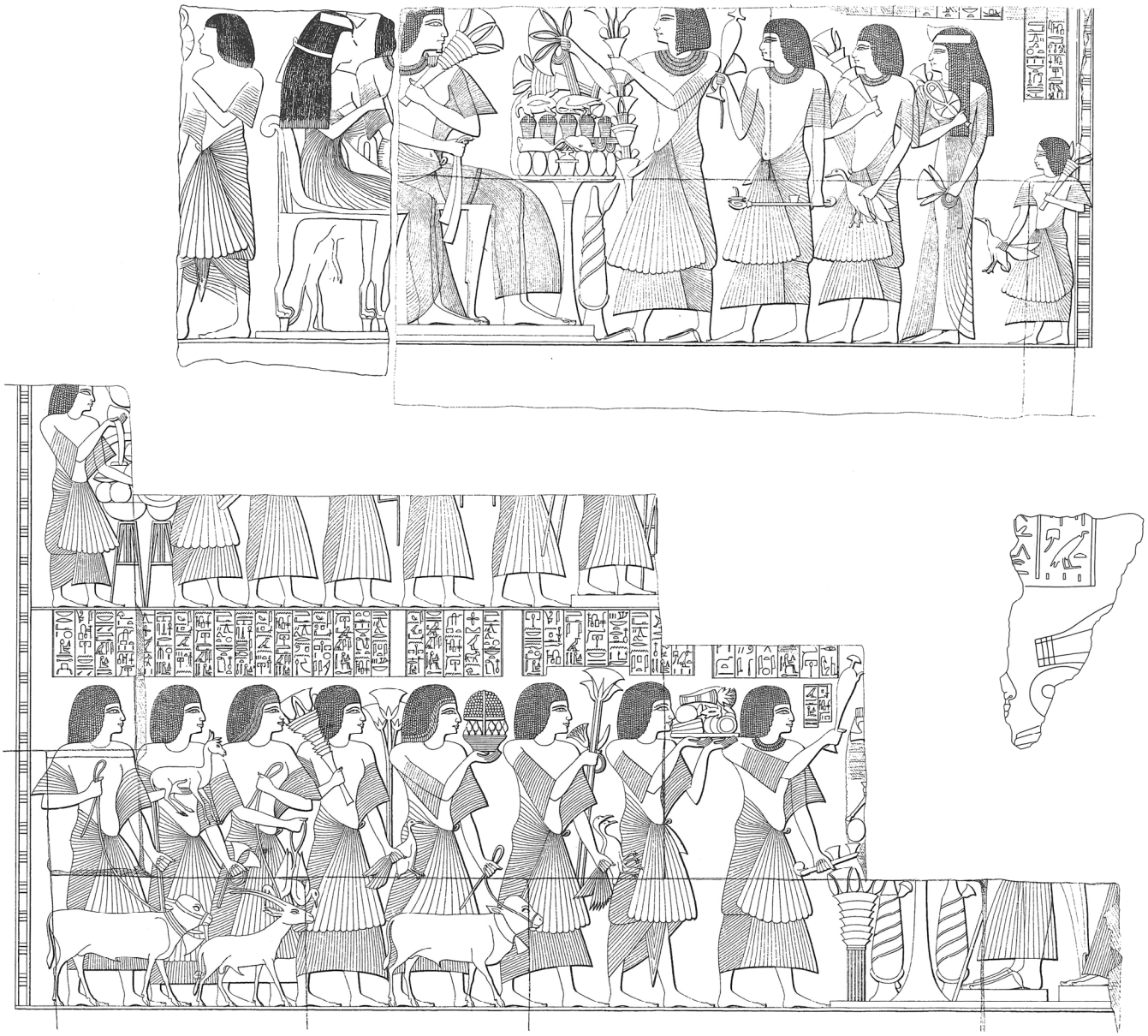

Figure 19. Offering scene from the tomb-chapel of the Treasurer Maya where Amenemone might have been represented (Martin 2012, pl. 28; Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society).

What system of social value did Amenemone (and the workforce of his tomb) belong to? Overall, Amenemone seemed to play on mimicking the elite, while adding implicit pointers to his profession. Therefore, he addressed both audiences, his professional network who visited his tomb-chapel[67], and the elite-group he was not properly part of[68]. Amenemone chose not to stress his lineage[69] but instead stated that he was recognized by the king himself, following a well-known topos. His sons, contrastingly, are shown as continuing their father's career, at least for the Chief of Goldsmiths (*ḫry nby.w*) Amenemheb[70] and the Goldsmith (*nby*) Nebmehyt[71]. His son Ptahmose became Scribe of the Treasury (*sš pr.wy-ḥḏ*) and, if he was indeed depicted in Maya's tomb, he actually became his personal secretary (*sš šˁ.t n(.y) pȝ imi-rȝ pr.wy-ḥḏ*), anchoring his family' loyal ties to the court[72].

As Staring reminds us, it was a common practice for superiors in trade to use their professional network, i.e., the material and workforce they supervised, to craft their own commissioned monuments (Staring 2021, pp. 27–28). It was certainly the case for the *imi-r ḥmw.t* Amenemone who managed to 'hire' (or used in their free time in exchange for unrecorded services or favors) the best craftsmen in his circle[73].

The following case explores another strategy for self-promotion, as we will see.

2.3. The Washer of Gold (in Chief?) Khay (tomb 050/USC)

Khay was a Gold Washer and Troop Commander of Merchants of the Treasury of the King, l.p.h. (*jˁw nbw*[74] *ḫry pḏ.t*[75] *n.y šw(t)yw*[76] *n.y pr-ḥḏ* [*n.y*] *pr-ˁȝ ˁn.w wḏȝ.w snb.w*) (Staring 2021, p. 60). He operated at the end of Dynasty 19, and probably at the beginning of Dynasty 20 too (Martin et al. 2001, p. 25). His tomb-chapel is located in the Unas South Cemetery at Saqqara (050/USC), close to Horemheb's monument (Figure 20). The location of this tomb and others in Unas South Cemetery might have been motivated by the nearby presence of royal Temples of Millions of Years, now lost (Staring 2021, pp. 15–16). It is made of an antechapel supported by a column, and two chapels at the rear. The whole superstructure measured ca. 2.25 × 2 m (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 47) (Figure 21).

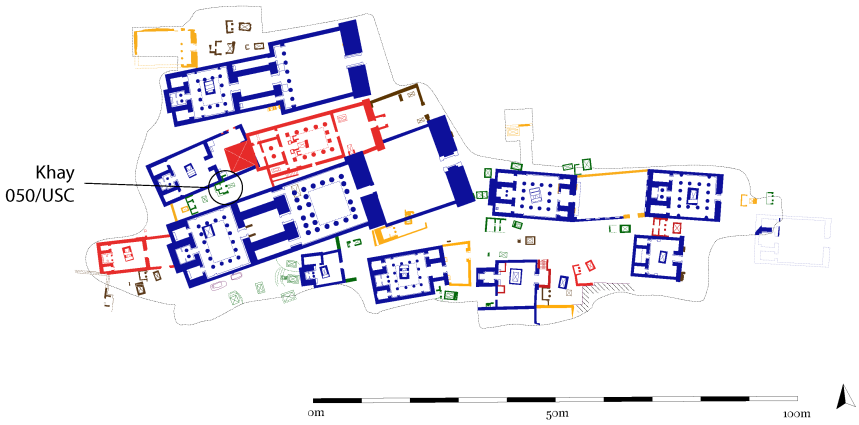

Figure 20. Map of the southern part of the Unas South Cemetery at the end of the New Kingdom with the tomb-chapel of Khay highlighted (Courtesy of Dr. Nico Staring).

Figure 21. The now-ruined tomb-chapel of Khay viewed from the southwest and the south (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 47; Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society).

The chapel is constructed of limestone blocks carved with scenes in the formal style of the period. The general quality of the carving is good, though it does not display the attention to detail of Amenemone's chapel discussed above. Overall, the compositions are well balanced, the proportions mastered (even though some characters could be slightly clumsily drawn), and all the necessary scenes for ensuring a good burial are present. In the antechapel, two adorations to a deity (Osiris on the north wall, maybe the same god of the opposite one) are depicted above an offering scene to the deceased couple, each time executed by their sons (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 7, 51, 14, 58). The northern chapel displays the proper funerary content of the program. The back wall (west wall) is adorned with a rectangular stela with a corniche (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 9 and 53). On the central part of the stela, Khay adores Osiris (on the left) and Ra Horakhty (on the right). Below, his wife and he receive the offering made by their son Amenkhau[77] and an unnamed woman (probably the latter's wife). The upper register of the north wall is almost completely destroyed (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 8, 52) but still shows the standing Isis and Nephtys, the seated Osiris, and, in front, an offering table with Horus' four sons. Below, the mummy of Khay is standing upright before his chapel, supported by an unnamed priest. His wife is crying at his feet and is followed by their son Neferabu[78] and four unnamed mourners. Opposite this scene, the south wall is topped with an unusual variant of chapter 100 of the Book of the Dead above a traditional offering scene to the deceased couple (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 5, 54). The southern chapel enshrined the most interesting scene for our purpose, a workshop scene displayed on the north wall (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 11, 55)[79]. Opposite this scene, on the south wall, (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 13, 57), the deceased couple is seated near an unnamed boy receiving the offering made by one of their sons wearing a leopard skin. Underneath, two registers display the relatives and dependents of Khay. None of them is clearly linked to the deceased. On the last register, the fourth man is titled "the builder (*ikdw*) of the temple of Ptah, Sul (*swr*)" and wears the same so-called 'military' garment as one of Khay's son on the south wall of the antechapel. Similar to the northern chapel, the back wall of the southern chapel is adorned with a rectangular stela (Berlin ÄM 7314, 77 × 53 × 8.5 cm).

It displays Khay adoring Osiris (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 12, 56), and only Khay's figure is here carved in raised relief (Martin et al. 2001, pp. 15–16).

By its iconographic program, the southern chapel seems to anchor Khay in his social world, while the northern chapel is mostly dedicated to the proper funerary content of the décor[80]. This is corroborated by the workshop scene developed on the north wall of the southern chapel (Figure 22). The scene is divided into three registers. The upper register shows an adoration to Osiris and Ra Horakhty. Below, Khay adores Hathor, represented as an enshrined statue of a cow put on a sledge and richly adorned. He is offering her a bowl similar to those depicted on the lower register. The last scene has been understood as "a scene of gold-washing with what appears to be grinding (*?*), a sloping washing- table, and melting" (Ogden 2000, p. 162, quoted in Quirke 2023, p. 66). Here, Khay might be represented twice[81]. He might be first seated on a zoomorphic-legged chair, on the left of the scene. The figure is shown taller than the other protagonists of the scene and holds a tool, a kind of pliers, in his right hand. He is labeled '*ḥry ḥmw*', and his name is written in the middle of the register, serving for both left and right inscriptions. Three smaller individuals are working before him: a man is activating a furnace with two bellows (i.e., a New Kingdom innovation discussed above), while two other characters are working on a tripartite (?) anvil. One of them holds an unspecified (at least for us) object circular in shape (maybe a piece of ore), and the other man seems to work on something placed on the upper part of the anvil. This specific scene segment has been interpreted as the decanting of the contents of the bowl "onto a gold-washing table which, although rendered by no more than a single carved line, can easily be recognized as such by its long flat surface and the sloping end of the left-hand side" (Martin et al. 2001, p. 27). The right part of the scene is inscribed with two columns that join with Khay's name in the middle: "made by the Gold Washer of the Treasury of Pharaoh may he live, prosper and be well! Khay" (Martin et al. 2001, p. 15; Quirke 2023, p. 66). Khay is shown supervising two men, one (the smaller) shown above the other. They are both leaning forward, a bowl in hand similar to the one held by Khay on the above register. The upper one picks something out of a pile (of pulverized ore, according to Martin et al. 2001, p. 27) while the other grabs something on a trapezoidal hip that might recall the field used for sorting gold (on gold-washing structures, see Vercoutter 1959). If this holds true, then he was collecting specks of gold and filling the bowl with them (Martin et al. 2001, p. 27). In this scene, Khay (and the artisan(s) who created these reliefs) is not depicted according to the usual track for workshop scenes related to metalworking (discussed above)[82]. Never was such an iconography developed for recording this stage of gold processing. The scene is actually rather extensive, though not exhaustive, in comparison with the restricted number of scenes usually selected to show the work of metal.

As stated above, both the northern and the southern chapels worked in a complementary way. The northern chapel focused further on funerary themes in the hereafter, while the southern one seems to attach more importance to Khay's social world in the here and now with the depiction of his relatives and the workshop scene. Additionally, it has also been pointed out that the repartition of Khay's titles within the chapels clearly delineates the dual aspect of his functions[83]. On the one hand, the northern chapel refers to his security and trade-related office, and on the other hand, the southern one connects with his craft-related tasks (Martin et al. 2001, pp. 25–26). Indeed, in the antechapel and on the chapel jambs, he is called 'Gold Washer of the Lord of the Two Lands, Washer of the Lord of the Two Lands, and Gold Washer'; the title is abbreviated for 'Washer' in the main adoration scene on the rear wall of the southern chapel (Quirke 2023, p. 66). But in the northern chapel and the antechapel: he is called 'Troop Commander of Merchants of the Treasury

of Pharaoh, Head Merchant, Merchant of the Treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands, and […] of Ptah' (Martin et al. 2001, pp. 12–14; Quirke 2023, p. 66).

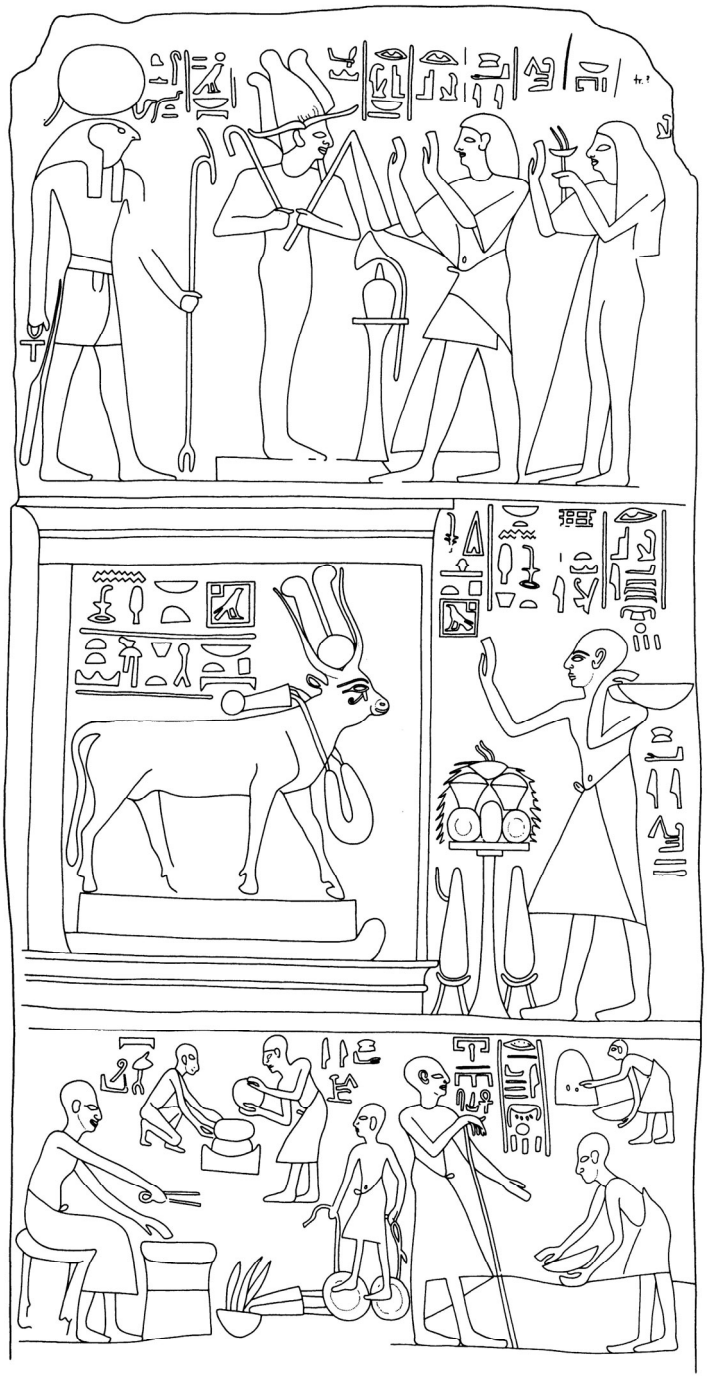

Figure 22. Workshop scene in the tomb-chapel of Khay (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 11; Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society).

Additionally, Khay likely took inspiration from his surroundings with a royal iconographic motif, namely the deceased leaning on his staff, previously translated into private tombs owned by the upper elite and reused here too (Staring 2021, pp. 60ff). Khay's relatively tiny chapel was located in a part of the necropolis that displayed some of the most massive monuments of the time, but Khay did not shy away and borrowed from his neighbors a motif that belonged originally to the royal sphere[84]. Furthermore, some intriguing objects were found in the five burial chambers of Khay's chapel: a mummy plank with

gold leaf inscribed for a certain lady Tabuu and another mummy plank unique in style for Saqqarah, recovered with gold foil and now split into fifteen fragments (Martin et al. 2001, p. 27). It would be tempting to connect the presence of the expensive gold foil to Khay's occupational activities and the well-known ability of trade supervisors to detach some (human and material) resources they were in charge of for their own sake (see above)[85].

Next to Khay's chapel, the tomb of his son Pabes can be understood as continuing and developing Khay's self-presentation further[86]. Pabes was also a troop-commander, and his tomb is nowadays almost completely destroyed. Since Pabes is never mentioned in his father's chapel, it seems both tombs were built (almost) simultaneously and were therefore conceived as a familial memorial (Martin et al. 2001, p. 24). Furthermore, Pabes appears quite a few times on the reliefs of his own chapel (or at least on what remains of it), suggesting the focus was mainly drawn to his family members and their general valorization and commemoration (Martin et al. 2001, p. 24)[87]. One trade-related scene still remains on the lower register of the central chapel's north wall: the unloading of boats and the weighing of goods operated "presumably in Memphis". The first man carrying ingots is labeled "the [Deputy?] of the Troop of the Traders Neferher", and, in front of the ships, an inscription refers to a certain "Chief Artisan Penan[uk]et" (Martin et al. 2001, pl. 17, 64). Another inscription below states that the True Scribe of the Lord of the Two Lands Pabes said: "I grew up to be a young man [acting under the supervision of my father](?)[88] while being a scribe of the council of the Thirty. I robbed no one, nor did I mislead another" (Martin et al. 2001, p. 20). Pabes is also shown worshipping the goddess Hathor, which may be a further reference to his father's occupational realm. From what remains of the decoration, the program of the chapel might also have been personalized to fit the owner's occupational activities.

Thus, the whole structure described below refers perfectly to both aspects of Khay's occupation, since his son Pabes was (partially) part of the same professional network. Indeed, Khay was affiliated with gold-working through different channels: trade, security, and providing material[89]. He was in charge of both time- and effort-consuming tasks: managing the supply of water in an arid environment[90] and securing the transport of a material certainly endangered by thieves and Egypt's enemies (Martin et al. 2001, pp. 26–27). Khay was responsible for the caravans that ventured into the desert for mining purposes. He likely worked both as a head of gold-washers[91] and a supervisor of trading activities surrounding the gold-extraction (at a local level, at least)[92]. The job certainly had a defensive (and negotiating) aspect too, notably when encountering Bedouin tribes[93]. It was also certainly tiresome and not a sought-after job *per se*: in ancient Rome, forced laborers were in charge of working in the desert, for instance (Bernard 2017, p. 68). Still, working in connection with one of the most sought-after goods, gold, might have allowed one to enjoy satisfactory wealth (even at the end scale of his hierarchy) and created handy socio-professional networks (especially with officials of the Treasury). Khay very likely benefited from such connections to afford the building of his (relatively small) chapel along with the tomb of his son, Pabes. Therefore, and despite his relatively lower-ranked office and the scarce space of his chapel, Khay developed his own means of self-depiction with great individualization. The most striking depictions are certainly found in the extensive workshop scene and the carefully planned program of the chapels, each dedicated to one specific aspect of his profession, combined with either the hereafter scenes or the human realm content. The creation of a familial memorial encapsulating both his chapel and his son's[94] was made affordable thanks to his socio-professional network made of (second-rate?) artists[95].

What system of value was at work in Khay's chapel and, more generally, in the complex it formed with his son's tomb? Khay (and the artisans in charge of his tomb's decoration and familial complex) used the standardized, elite repertoire for displaying both

aspects of his professional activity. Judging from the size of his chapel and the quality of its carving work, we get the feeling they are mimicking elite codes, rather than copying them neatly. Khay obviously played on a different level than Amenemone (for obvious reasons, since Amenemone was clearly at the top end of his hierarchical scale). Nevertheless, with his extended version workshop scene, Khay expanded on a specific theme closely linked to his professional skills and environment. This might be tentatively understood as an attempt to reach another kind of audience, illiterate and non-elite, whereas the reference to the dual aspect of his profession, with their attached dedicated spaces and the display of specific titles, was intended for elite and sub-elite categories who formed the pool of regular visitors to other tombs in the area[96]. However, the fact that they developed the workshop scene specifically might seem surprising given the decreasing gold production of the period (Martin et al. 2001, p. 26). Or maybe, on the contrary, such scenes were key to allowing the emergence of a less-controlled, new iconographic motif, in connection with a socio-professional category rarely attested until then? We will get back to the question of audiences and use audience-specific means of self-presentation at the end of this paper.

3. 'Value' Theories: A Modern Perspective

Based on what we have seen, we will, in a preliminary attempt, address the question of value creation in ancient Egypt. Since 'value' is a term heavily connoted, I will first briefly touch on our modern biases and conceptions of this notion before reverting back to New Kingdom Egypt and approaching tentatively its system of evaluation.

Theories on value could fill a library. Moreover, they reveal specific developments depending on each discipline. I mean here to discuss briefly what might be interesting and inspiring from an Egyptological perspective, and how Egyptologists and/or other specialists of Antiquity have been using and adapting these concepts to past societies. Following their lead, I consciously choose not to limit the concept to one field, but rather to use the theories developed in different disciplines, though I will mainly pull theories from Sociology and Economics since I am speaking of material goods, and I am questioning their social functioning within specific social circles[97]. Two major western theories of 'value' were developed from the 19th century onward (if not earlier): the 'intrinsic theory of value' (the term was coined by Adam Smith)[98] and the 'subjective theory of value' (connected to Carl Menger's name)[99]. Both theories are the results of long-lasting debates that began as early as late Antiquity (as far as we know) and have benefited from their own discipline-specific developments. Behind the rigid framework set by theoreticians of 'classical economics' and following the developments of the 'modern economy', it has been concluded that value cannot be defined by a single factor, but rather by a conjunction of factors determined by the culture[100] where value is produced. Value is now more usually understood as a cultural and social product defined by the co-existence of several parameters that embed a specific artifact with a specific value—which in part touches upon Menger's 'subjective theory of value'—and the existence of some common sense regarding 'valuables' like gold, which connects with Smith's 'intrinsic theory of value'. These theories, previously seen as contradictory, are actually complementary. Therefore, no rigid or strict theoretical framework with a ready-made criteria grid can be applied regardless of the culture studied. Depending on the "cultural matrix" (Parry and Bloch 1989, p. 1 quoted by Papadopoulos and Urton 2012, p. 1) under study, 'value'–and its related concept of 'prestige'–may encompass a great diversity of meanings. Flexibility is key to understanding value creation in a specific cultural setting.

The connected term of 'prestige', often associated with 'value' as its direct result, has its own etymological, ontological, and epistemological history that will drive us too far, especially since 'prestige' is clearly polysemic. In this paper, I speak specifically of 'prestige

goods' and define 'prestige' as the manufactured respect and admiration that emanates from something (a specific item) because of its accordance with a set of value(s) (determined both subjectively and intrinsically) in a given culture. In that respect, 'prestige goods' are performative within the social dimension they belong to and draw distinctions between members of the same society. They act upon social hierarchy by maintaining and reinforcing power ideologies and conferring a strong sense of belonging to their owners.

4. Ancient Egyptian Documentation on the Perception of 'Value'

After having drawn a brief and very condensed background on western theories of evaluation, is there a way for us to work with 'value' in ancient Egypt without applying our modern conceptual framework (or at least to reduce our modern biases to a minimum)? In a preliminary attempt to explore this notion in the New Kingdom documentation from an emic vantage point, what does our overview of metalworkers' methods of self-presentation suggest? In other words, what do these commemorative materials say about 'value' creation and perception? First of all, we must understand that this paper develops on only a very select sample of the documentation and operates within only a short timeframe. It is therefore by nature exploratory, non-exhaustive, and I am clearly aware of its limitations. As a reminder, the sample has been chosen specifically because of the identity of the people involved in the discussed self-presentation attempts. The selected material offers an interesting basis to think about how one, specifically someone involved in craft and art, displayed themselves in New Kingdom Egypt.

As stated above, I will build on grids of criteria developed by Egyptologists such as Richards (2005) and Cooney (2007), in an attempt to reach the different layers of emic evaluation for the New Kingdom, as well as the mechanisms underlying the creation and perception of 'value' and 'prestige'. I distinguish three main generators of 'value', i.e., 'material'-'symbolism'-'craftsmanship', which are closely interconnected (Table 1).

4.1. Three Main Generators of 'Value'

4.1.1. Material

The material out of which a specific artifact is made relates to its 'intrinsic value' in our western categories and is certainly the more straightforward criterion when discussing the creation of value. This specific component has been extensively discussed in connection with value in Egyptological studies (e.g., Delvaux 2000, table p. 91; Richards 2005; Cooney 2007; Mazé 2018). Some characteristics of a material could enhance its value: its scarcity, its difficult access that required trading, exchange, or costly transportation, and/or its physical characteristics, including its color, brightness, *etc*., but also its difficulty to work, which is linked to the component 'craftsmanship'. Additionally, these physical characteristics might encompass the material with a specific symbolic value.

Several textual sources attest to the attention attached to the artifact's material. Literary sources and administrative documentation[101] could attest to the higher value (and then, the price) attached to a specific material: records of commissions, royal edicts about some official construction works, private statements in tombs referring to royal rewards or specific ceremonies that included the display of 'valuables', etc. To mention but a few, we can point to the record of Deir el-Medineh's informal workshop network (Cooney 2007) or the boasting claims of primary protagonists of literary tales like Sinuhe (Allen 2015, p. 151; pBerlin 3022 and pAmherst n-q, 300–310)[102]. Archaeological 'treasures' like those found in the tombs of Tutankhamun and in Tanis illustrate the favorite use of bright materials like gold and (semi-)precious stones in the constitution of royal funerary equipment. This is further corroborated by official texts such as the record of construction and decoration work carried out under Amenhotep III (stela Cairo CG 34025)[103] or Ramses III (P.

BM 9999; P. Harris I)[104], for instance. The same holds true for the objects displayed among private tomb scenes: in the workshop scenes (e.g., the encyclopedic version of Rekhmire, TT 100)[105], the "presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony" (Wang 2022, pp. 41–42 with table; for gift exchanges in the private sphere, see the scene of the chapel of Akhethetep in Saqqara: recently, Mazé 2018, p. 126) or the presentation of the New Year gifts (see e.g., Qenamun's chapel, TT 93)[106]. Furthermore, for the modern observer, listing what was plundered from the royal tombs presents in negative what was seen as valuable and was sought-after (notably for reuse purposes).

Across our overview of metalworkers' monuments, we notice that sandstone, cedarwood, granite, and quartzite could be used by metalworkers for crafting their commemorative monuments. Limestone remains the most used–because it was the most affordable–stone (along with faience which was also a cheaper, more accessible option). In the two case studies discussed above, the nature of the materials used for commemorating Amenemone and Khay was not specifically noteworthy, except for the tiny fragments of gold foil found in their (disturbed) burial chambers. Since their burials were reused and then plundered in the distant past, we cannot be sure whether some of these golden remains belonged to their funerary equipment specifically, although, as stated above, one would be tempted to see here the derivation of some of their professional resources. In what remains of their tomb superstructures, no architectural element was made of any remarkable material.

4.1.2. Symbolism

Symbolism, understood here as a specific meaning attached metaphorically to a specific entity[107], is par excellence culturally defined and is extensively used by the ruling elite in the elaboration of its "apparat iconique" (Glassner 2014, p. 32)[108]. Embedding an artifact with time and space-specific symbolism can be achieved by different means, some of which have been encountered for in ancient Egypt in our overview of New Kingdom metalworkers' self-presentations. Symbolism is closely tied to the first component of our grid, the material.

Indeed, the material of an artifact could work as a symbol of one's occupational activities, like a synecdoche (e. g. the gold leaf found in Khay and Amenemone's burial chambers). A similar play on symbols referring to the professional realm of the monument's owner can be tracked in specific iconographic motifs (e.g., Khay's workshop scene or the stela MRAH E.6252 with the adorned scarab) and textual formulae (e.g., the praises addressed to certain divine patrons of the deceased's trade). These elements worked as signifiers for a particular group or individual's socio-professional identity. It might additionally point towards their professionally derived privileges, e.g., when a dignitary could benefit from 'exotic' material brought back from royal diplomatic travels he took part in. Some materials could connect to the cosmic order as well, when it is mythologically grounded (which is often the case, at least in the funerary and votive contexts discussed above).

Materials could also be embedded symbolically with healing power and were therefore key in ancient Egyptian medical practice. Using expensive material was however not a condition *sine qua non*, since one sufficiently knowledgeable of basic healing practice and the system of symbolism could certainly replace expensive (or non-accessible) material with (more or less efficient) substitutes working similarly, symbolically speaking. Small clay figurines (presumably prophylactic) might have played such a role.

Symbolism could also be attached to the functionality of specific pieces (or sets) of furniture that bridged different spheres. This is well attested within Deir el-Medineh's coffin production[109]. As Cooney stated: "Value is not the same thing as quality. (…) There were some inherently valued elements, but the functional, ritual, and socioeconomic values of coffins were subjective and often competing" (Cooney 2007, p. 258).

In the context of New Kingdom Egypt which extended its borders as never before, items could reach even higher values by their circulation into a vast network of power bridging Pharaoh and his vassals. Symbolism, then, could be encapsulated into the very act of exchanging (or looting) goods too (Mazé 2018, pp. 123–29; more generally see e.g., Appadurai [1986] 2011; and the classic Mauss [1925] 2007; Malinowski 1922's works on the matter).

The preserved remains of our two case studies do not allow us to observe an extensive use of a specific material to symbolize their professional activities[110], but they certainly used symbolic texts and images to craft an efficient and individualized, self-referring, funerary program, and such extensive reference to occupational activities is not necessarily reached (and not necessarily sought after, see below) in tombs owned by upper social categories. Other cases attest to symbolic references to metal-related gods such as Ptah, Sokar, or Hathor (e.g., stela Cairo CG 34150, stela Cairo RT 16.3.25.12, or the Chiddingstone Castle stela).

4.1.3. Craftsmanship

The value of an artifact might arise from the conjunction of the quality of the raw material and the technologies used upon it, its attached 'aesthetic' properties, and the time dedicated to crafting it (Mazé 2018, pp. 118, 122). All these aspects refer to the skills of the people involved in the physical elaboration of the object, i.e., the artisans/artists/craftsmen. This notion comes rather under the umbrella of our western 'subjective value'.

This is for instance clear when looking at the constantly negotiable agreement passed between Deir el-Medineh artisans and their commissioners in the administrative records of the village's informal market recorded by Cooney (Cooney 2007). Several factors were taken into consideration: the object type, size and material, and its craft quality and techniques. As Cooney has demonstrated, it is clear that there were some sought-after craftsmen whose work was in highly demand. Given the average amount of funerary items produced annually in Deir el-Medineh's parallel market, there was not enough work for every worker. Therefore, only those who managed to attract customers were able to sell within a competitive environment with limited job opportunities. We can imagine different scenarios to explain one artist's attractiveness: some might have worked for lower economic categories who could only afford the furniture crafted in a very basic-but efficient-style by highly prolific artisans. On the contrary, Deir el-Medineh higher-ranked officials likely hired only the top artisans and scribes of their community, whose knowledge was put on display on their funerary equipment. As Angevin noted: "(…) les artisans du prestige deviennent alors producteurs d'idéologie. (…) l'artisan (…) devient l'un des vecteurs essentiels de l'acceptation du pouvoir" (Angevin 2014, p. 234). The textual records of craftsmen sent to the foreign vassals of the Egyptian state (or the latter requests for their venue)[111] further attest to the perception of craftsmanship as valuable.

In Amenemone's chapel, the carving of the reliefs is particularly detailed and finely executed, which was certainly perceived by the ancient passerby as a direct result of the deceased's professional network. In the same vein, the artifacts owned by the supervisors of the different metal-related trades we came across were usually carved with greater care. In Khay's tomb, the skills of the artisans he hired are seen in the elaboration of the unusual workshop scene and the textual program of the chapels that referred to both aspects of his activity. The recorded names of craft-related people in the memorial of Khay and his son Pabes might point towards its real operators: the builder (*ikd*) of Ptah's temple Sul (*swr*) might have helped to construct the tomb and derived some of the workforce under his command. In his task, he might have been helped by the chief artist Penanuket depicted in Pabes' chapel. Their unspecified titles might also explain the rather average (even low)

carving quality of the reliefs, since it might be tempting to ask whether they were carved by *ikd.w* like Sur rather than sculptors (*ḳsty.w*), i.e., by artisans whose prime field of expertise was not reliefs carving, suggesting they were the only ones at hand to create Khay's memorial. Khay was apparently not acquainted with experts in the relevant fields. He resorted then to focusing on symbolism and the display of one specific scene, namely the workshop scene. In so doing, he emulated the higher elite who used such scenes to commemorate the apex of their career within their chapels[112], often with fewer details though and usually deriving closely from a standardized set of scenes. By its novelty, Khay's workshop scene surely caught the attention of the chapel's visitors. Amenemone's means of manufacturing prestige are in that sense more conventional, but he still plays with motifs and refers subtly to his work with the means he had.

4.2. Practical Application to the Case Studies

In our two case studies, the three components of value emerged with different levels of strength, which is likely due to the different social standing of Amenemone and Khay. The tomb superstructures, in their current state of preservation, do not display any specific material that might refer to the deceased's trade, except for the scarce golden foil found in their highly disturbed burial chambers. The superstructures were adorned with limestone blocks, and further analysis is needed to assess any possible specific characteristics of the limestone vein from which it was carved. The first component discussed here, the material, was certainly the most expensive–and thus the least accessible–to add in Amenemone and Khay's funerary equation since gold would have been the most effective and direct reference to their trade. Nevertheless, playing on craftsmanship and symbolism, the two other components of our grid, were importantly due to the professional network of both owners. However, given their respective positions within Egypt's hierarchies, they did not hire the same level of artisans, which likely explains the difference in carving quality between both tombs. In both cases, though, they used symbolic means to refer to their trade, like the prayers addressed to specific gods. Amenemone played with elite codes in a more standardized way, while Khay managed to squeeze in the major visual focal point of the monument, the highly personalized workshop scene, within his tiny tomb space. The presence in both tombs of named artisans is a further indication of the use of their professional network.

One might therefore ask: did their social backgrounds lead them to make use of one component more than the other? Amenemone and Khay's modes of self-(re)presentation are similar in their restricted use of the 'material component', but their self-presentations diverge in the way they played with elite repertoire indeed. Amenemone used the standardized iconographic repertoire and pushed the personification of his program a bit further via specific textual compositions. Contrastingly, Khay used both visual and written means to curate what looked like a more personalized funerary program. How can we explain this? Does this reflect Khay's lack of knowledge of what was authorized or not within the elite sphere? Was it a question of 'taste' (like the kitsch used by modern sub-elite)? Since both chapels were not strictly contemporary, are their differences explained by their respective *Zeitgeist*?[113] This was highly likely due to a combination of several additional factors, and I wish to develop a bit further about one of them, the question of 'audience'[114].

4.3. Audience, Display and Prestige

The question of 'display', and therefore of 'audience', works hand in hand with the above-mentioned components. The matter has been addressed by several Egyptologists (to mention but a few, see e.g., Baines 2006; Navratilova 2020; Den Doncker 2023), and

I wish here to briefly articulate my thoughts on the matter in relation to the three components mentioned above when applied to sub-elite material illustrated by our two case studies[115]. The whole structure of Egyptian official monuments and festivities played on the seen and the unseen, i.e., the spaces made accessible or restricted; this was a constant "tension between display and concealment" (Baines 2006, p. 278). On a different scale, private tombs could play on the visual nature of their program deemed to be effective for illiterate audiences while amplifying their memory with written program accessible to the literate audience and their possible (less) (il)literate companions to whom they could repeat this content orally. These different "modes of social recognition"[116] were modulated depending on the targeted (and reachable) audience of one's funerary content.

'Prestige', then, emerges from the spectators' view and their understanding of the compilation of the three components 'material', 'symbolism', and 'craftsmanship'. This combination needed to be seen, and acknowledged, by an audience for them to work effectively and sustain one's memory. Multiple variations of these combinations existed, depending on one's social status. The more the three components overlapped, the more 'prestigious' an artifact was perceived to be. In ancient Egypt, the addition of these three main generators of value led to the eternal commemoration of one's life, which is the ultimate goal pursued by individuals and groups in funerary contexts. The nobles' autobiographies are good illustrations of this[117]. Moreover, 'prestige' was seen as the natural result of one's loyal service to the king (Mazé 2018, pp. 123ff). It created a 'virtuous circle' where prestige was given by the king to someone who gifted him with his loyalty (and possibly material gifts too).

Regarding our two case studies, due to the fragmentary nature of the Memphite documentation, it might be difficult to evaluate their specificities in comparison with the tombs of their peers. Fortunately, recent studies (such as the ones conducted by Staring) allow us to get a more comprehensive vision of the logic of clustering and copying, and therefore the circulation patterns, within this specific spatial setting. The chapels of Amenemone (213/TPC, late Dynasty 18) and Khay (050/USC, late Dynasty 19-Dynasty 20) are "exemplary for the spatial pattering of tombs" of craftsmen in the Memphite necropolis that "wedged" in between much bigger monuments that belonged to the highest ranking officials of the period (Staring, forthcoming). Amenemone's chapel, first, bears witness to the emergent clustering of people engaged in art and craft who chose to be buried in the Teti Pyramid Cemetery during and slightly after the Amarna episode (Staring 2021, p. 23). Later, the tombs of art producers operated a c. 1 km translation from north to south and set place in the Unas South Cemetery (Staring, forthcoming). To analyze them in terms of audience and display, the spatial setting of both tombs has to be born in mind. Their owner's difference of positioning within their own socio-professional hierarchy is another factor to take into account.

Amenemone was part of the top elite of his socio-professional category, and it was considered proper for him to borrow and mimic elite standards as much as possible (i.e., as accurately as possible). He was expected and, maybe authorized, to produce a blended iconographic and textual composition derived from the elite codes. This blend was more or less successful (i.e., it looked like elite production) due to many factors, mainly the personal connection of the tomb owner in a position similar to Amenemone's, which might assure that he was commemorated following elite rules[118].

Contrastingly, since Khay belonged to a lower stratum of the hierarchy, his chapel's program was not so much about catching the highest elite's attention, but rather aimed to position him visually stand on top of his own sub-elite socio-professional category, via opportunistic means, and addressing his discourse to sub-elite and even nonliterate people who might have been part of his daily working environment. It was among his direct

work colleagues and possibly his superiors that he sought an audience. His art production was then conceived for an audience made of insiders of his craft. His tomb is rather small and, even though it was carved (which is expected to have cost more than a decoration only painted), his tomb reliefs do not display great quality in their execution. However, Khay was able to order a specific scene fitting his own professional reality. In so doing, he innovated and created a completely new composition (as far as the documentation can still tell). The degree of iconographic innovation is therefore higher in Khay's chapel than in Amenemone's complex. This is not the only case of a highly personalized iconographic program for members of lower social strata (see e.g., the tombs TT A4 of the scribe accountant Wensu or TT 52 of the gardener Nakht)[119]. Was it not the case that the higher elite produced innovative and new designs while sticking to expected standards (or 'stock motifs') by subtly referring to their knowledge and literacy, while the lower elite could innovate and play more with the repertoire? Surely, the expectations for different social categories were not the same[120]. This is corroborated by our two case studies. Both tomb owners sought prestige, but given their difference in background and therefore the social expectations of their audience, their use (and access) to the three components of material-symbolism-craftsmanship varied.

5. Self-(Re)Presentation

Ultimately, this research aims to discuss the question of self-(re)presentation by people who were not part of the elite *per se* but who nonetheless managed to reach the eternal remembrance of their name by channeling efficiently parallel resources to the official stream of wealth. These social categories are called here sub-elite and still await further nuanced definitions. I believe that by accumulating case studies of liminal socio-professional groups, such as the metalworkers discussed in this piece, definitions will arise. One element sustaining their distinction—from both the elite and other sub-elite categories—might be their means of self-(re)presentation. This involves the choices they made to self-present, but also the underlying system of values at work in the act of presentation of self to their audience(s). In this regard, the social worlds framework developed by the so-called Chicago school of sociology (that confusingly actually left the city of Chicago in the late 50s; Clarke and Star 2008, p. 114) offers promising avenues to discuss our material under this specific lens, with its discussion of 'human ecology' divided into social worlds[121] (that might be divided into segments, subdivisions or sub-worlds) and arenas[122]. The 'grounded theory' developed by Strauss and Glaser (Clarke and Star 2008, pp. 114ff) might also be of help.

Of particular interest is the easily understandable framework developed by Ervin Goffman (Goffman 1959)[123]. He uses an array of concepts pertaining to the language of theatre and compares social interactions to a show set by a team of performers in front of a given audience (that is also a team in itself). The performers or actors make conscious and unconscious choices to present themselves (or foster "impressions") to their audience and to gain the answers expected from the audience. In so doing, they need to keep coherent the definition of each "situation" they are presenting/playing. By doing so, they can gain as much information as possible (or "all the relevant social data") regarding the people they are interacting with. They should also take into account what the audience(s) already know(s) about them. The driving force behind each performance is that everyone holds on to their social masks, keeping disturbance (or "collusion", "aggression", in Goffman's words) at bay. Both audience and performers pertain to a specific area (or "region") of the stage: stereotypically, the audience occupies the front stage, where the play is set into motion, and the performers keep their secrets backstage. In other words, the front region offers the time and place for displaying a body, of which props and parts have been assem-

bled and fixed in the back region. The access to this last region is supposedly controlled, and both audience members and actors agree tacitly on keeping and respecting their given role and position, each team displaying an important "in-group solidarity". However, disturbance can occur, notably when some protagonists secretly partake in both teams and/or refuse to keep to their roles. In that case, some "realigning actions" are required to maintain the performance and reach back to a certain *status quo*. Therefore, loyalty (to one's team), discipline (by respecting and making respected the rules of the play), and circumspection (by finding the apt reply promptly in case of disturbance) are key to save the show and for actors to be able to perform safely. In Goffman's theory, social masks are metaphors of social status that he defined as "a position, a social place (that) is not a material thing, to be possessed and then displayed; it is a pattern of appropriate conduct, coherent, embellished, and well articulated" (Goffman 1959, p. 75).

How does this relate to our case studies? How can this framework help us understand and theorize the mechanisms underlying the sub-elite self-presentation? The New Kingdom metallurgists, mainly pertaining to intermediate social strata or sub-elite categories, made conscious choices by borrowing and adapting elite funerary codes in their self-commemorative monuments. In this pharaoh-and-elite-centric world where less than 1% of the population reached monumental commemoration[124], these metalworkers needed to master the ability to control their audiences' response via apt "impressions". Via the efficient choice of specific visual and textual features, they make the audiences reply the way they want to their funerary performance. This required what Goffman called "stage-management" or "stage-craft" skills to make their well-oiled "machinery of self-production" into motion (Goffman 1959, p. 253). For their self-representation to be received aptly, this requires the teamwork of several individuals: their colleagues to whom some particular parts of the funerary message were dedicated (think for instance of the workshop scene of Khay's chapel), but also the direct neighbors in the commemorative places where they set their monuments, i.e., the elite.

As Goffman states: "(…) when an individual projects a definition of the situation and thereby makes an implicit or explicit claim to be a person of a particular kind, he automatically exerts a moral demand upon the others, obliging them to value and treat him in the manner that persons of his kind have a right to expect" (Goffman 1959, p. 13). For so doing, the illusion of being someone else needs to be perceived as legit by both audiences, their peers and their superiors. Therefore, how did the metallurgists "save their show"? How did they avoid giving an "unflattering performance", reducing to a minimum the risks of collusions between teams (especially for the elite to not invade the "backstage" of the identity-making of the sub-elite)? In their "upward idealization", i.e., they made a "parade" where they self-presented in a more flattering way than what they really were, they curated their funerary memorial by addressing both audiences while sustaining a coherent "definition of the situation". By using texts that required mastery of writing and reading, the metallurgists addressed mainly the elite since these skills were not necessarily mastered by their peers. For the people belonging to their social sphere or world, their colleagues who may not be all literate, retaining specific iconographic motifs from the repertoire and innovating with new composition was certainly seen as the most suitable or effective "carriers" to their self-expression. In the same way that all their peers might not understand the textual program of their monuments, the chosen iconography might encompass several layers of meanings that only their colleagues could understand (e.g., in Khay's workshop, it might be the new activities displayed in the scene which meaning was only fully accessible to people who processed gold).

As stated before, metallurgists (gold-workers essentially) emerged suddenly in our New Kingdom documentation. One may wonder how this requisition of monuments for-

merly restricted to the use of high dignitaries could have been perceived as aggression and required "realigning actions" from the elite. While some goldsmiths borrowed codes outside of their social worlds, they pushed the elite to reshape their cultural space. High officials needed to set new standards now that the former ones had been debased by the "lowering of barriers" process set into motion by groups such as the ones under discussion in this paper. This process was designated by Goffman as "a natural phase in the social change which transforms one team into another" (Goffman 1959, p. 205). This was made easier by individuals who acted as "defectors", like Amenemone, a goldsmith in chief who had sufficient power to claim to be part of the elite (even if it meant being part of its margins) who was apparently seen as entitled to use elite codes. Eventually, this percolated to lower strata connected to his office. Amenemone would then act as a "shill", following Goffman's terminology (a term he borrowed from the entertainment industry), "someone who acts as though he were an ordinary member of the audience (the elite) but is in fact in league with the performers (other metallurgists)" (Goffman 1959, p. 146). In this framework, we can understand craftsmen in charge of the formulation of one's self-presentation (be they elite or sub-elite members) as key figures, what Goffman called the "service specialists", i.e., "the individuals who specialize in the construction, repair, and maintenance of the show their clients maintain before other people" (Goffman 1959, p. 153).

The question of the reconfiguration of the elite space by non-elite people needs further study and Bourdieu's "stratégie de reconversion, classement/déclassement/reclassement" (Bourdieu 1979, pp. 145ff) might be of interest in this regard. The mechanisms underlying the judgment of the audience would also require more development and might be analyzed via the three parameters raised by Heinich, i.e., the resources of the judging audience ("leur équipement axiologique"), the characteristics or properties of the discussed objects, and the specifics of the evaluation context (Heinich 2017, p. 103).

As an ending note, I wish to pinpoint that, since sociologists and anthropologists do not usually study societies from the distant past, it is often said in social sciences that members of pre-modern (for whatever it can mean, given the problematic use of such terms) societies never reached a sense of self or any kind of individual feeling (!). At best, they would only have access to a collective sense of identity, when the matters of individual and collective identity are not simply seen as not relevant before the post-Industrial Revolution era (see e.g., Kaufmann 2010). By using, as an example, Goffman's theories to help conceptualize the way New Kingdom metallurgists self-display, it sounds to me that such claims can be easily invalidated and nuanced. Goffman, by studying common interactions between common people (which was not a given at that time), aimed to find a form of universality in social interactions. Even though "universality" has long been applied to post-modern societies only, it seems that his approach is actually valid for other societies from Antiquity onwards.

6. Conclusions

All the monuments discussed above are the results of specific behaviors adopted by sub-elite people who played, transformed, and diverted elite codes in a general attitude of appropriation of the social world as conceptualized by the upper part of their society[125]. Mechanisms of such resistance still need to be further developed in their singularity by compiling and analyzing more case studies. In this regard, the use of social sciences tools seems relevant to better frame the mechanisms underlying such phenomenon.

With this paper, I aim to advocate for a 'social history of art' that takes into account both the materiality of the studied artifacts and their social context of emanation to understand the social formulation of self and diversify our understanding of self-presentation. It aims to continue to shift our conclusions while humanizing our study material, too of-

ten seen as monolithic categories, especially when addressing material culture owned by sub-elite strata[126]. Art is socially effective and could transform one's social standing, at least for the viewer, when skillfully orchestrated. Maybe, it is at this precise conjunction of the material-symbolism-craftsmanship components that our modern conception of 'art' appears, here used to craft efficiently one's social (and funerary) identity, even if it means creating the illusion of belonging to the elite…. Depending on these three generators of 'value', and their interaction, different kinds of 'social modes of recognition' could co-exist, which leads to a very fluid definition of 'value' that encompasses different aspects of self-presentation depending on the socioeconomic status of the people who are experiencing it. For the sub-elite who accessed funerary commemoration, the correct handling of these three components, different depending on their financial and human resources, was vital. In essence, the normative set of values was set by the Egyptian elite for the rest of society. Thereafter, sub-elite resistance within this pre-set system of evaluation was set in motion when one sub-elite member managed to use several components even though they were not part of those who were morally accepted as the main owners of prestige. Value was therefore unstable and constantly reformulated in tension between elites and sub-elites through time and (social) space(s).

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Notes

1 This general trend has notably been led by movements such as the 'material turn' or the 'history from below' (coined by E.P. Thompson), derived partly from Weberist and Marxist theories (for a historical perspective on these theories and their more recent developments, see Bouffartigue 2015).

2 These 'intermediate' socio-professional categories are still waiting for a precise and time-specific definition that would frame them better within their own socio-cultural and historical context. As for now, they are indeed only defined negatively, in terms of what/who they were not. Starting from an etic perspective, since these groups are certainly elusive to the modern observer, this on-going research aims to contribute to their specification during the New Kingdom using an emic approach that identifies and describes their visual means of social recognition.

3 For one of the few papers on post-Middle Kingdom intermediate social categories, see (Katary 2009–2010).

4 To give but some examples of intermediary occupations rarely attested before as main beneficiaries of a commemorative medium, see the stelae of the shield-bearer Kuki (Cairo RT 16/3/64/1), of an arrow-bearer (Louvre E 12685), a lyre player (Cairo JE 85647), of the singer Djedkhonsuiufankh (Louvre N 3657) and of the door-keeper of Neith Irefaaenneith (Athens 32), or the ushebtis-box of the manufacturer of ushebtis Padiamun (Cairo SR 7723).

5 This research draws from an on-going project that aims to gain insight into the means of self-visualization used by sub-elite socio-professional categories in the New Kingdom (especially the Late New Kingdom, c. 1319–1078 BCE). The project began first at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Kathlyn M. Cooney and with the financial support of a postdoctoral fellowship from the Belgian-American Educational Foundation (B.A.E.F.). It is now conducted at the Netherlands Institute for the Near East (NINO, Leiden University), thanks to a NINO postdoctoral fellowship (2023–2025). I

wish to thank here both institutions, the B.A.E.F and the NINO, as well and their respective directors, Prof. Dr. Emile Boulpaep and Prof. Dr. Willemijn Waal, for having supported this research.

6 On that topic, see (Alexanian 2006; Cannon 1989).

7 See for instance Mazé (2018) or Richards (2005).

8 Some interesting avenues are explored in Gunter (2019), for example.

9 e.g., the highly inspiring study of Duplouy explores the notion of "modes de reconnaissance sociale" by studying different case studies in Greece between the 10th and the 5th centuries BC (Duplouy 2006).

10 For instance, see Thomas (2014) on the manufacture of political prestige that offers interesting material to compare with ancient Egyptian's autobiography formulae and statements related to one's relation to the king (or sometimes, by ricochet, via his close circle, like "l'hommage au patron" crafted by the Scribe Accountant of Grain Amenemhat in his chapel TT 82, see Ragazzoli 2017).

11 For other case studies, see (Guerra et al. 2023, pp. 359ff). Unfortunately, most of the Egyptian metal production had been melted away from the Antiquity onward.

12 For a general overview of the gold pieces found in Tanis necropolis, see e.g., (Yoyotte 1987).

13 As Staring reminds us, "the ancient Egyptians believed the flesh of gods was made of gold, and therefore, statues or coffins covered in gold effected their divinity" (Staring, forthcoming). I warmly thank Nico Staring for having shared with me the draft of this paper that covers the Memphite data on the makers of gold leaf.

14 On the solar connotation of gold and red colors, see Arbuckle in this volume with further bibliography.

15 Although the specifics of such agreements remain opaque to us, it is indeed well attested through all Pharaonic Egypt that monopolized, precious goods or raw material were made available for the elite by Pharaoh (and his central administration). That access could be made possible (informally?) through professional networks and/or as an occupational benefit for people working in connected departments, like the Treasury. See for instance the lavish tomb of Senusret-ankh at Lisht likely created by the builders, craftsmen, and scribes who worked under his supervision on Pharaoh's funerary complex (Maystre 1992, p. 36; on the monument see Lansing and Hayes 1933; Hayes 1937; Arnold 2008, pp. 13–24). Precious metal could also be a formal gift issued by Pharaoh, see e.g., the 'autobiographies' of high-officials who listed the funerary equipment received from the Residence, like Weni (Urk. I, 99, 10–17 and 100, 1–4; for a translation see Alexanian 2006, p. 2). This finds also an echo in literary compositions, such as the last part of Sinuhe's tale enumarating all that has been done for him on royal order (for a translation, see Simpson [1972] 2003, p. 66).

16 See for instance the processing steps required for gold ore in the Roman mines of Três Minas detailed by (Quirke 2023, Figure 2.1).

17 One of the first attestations seems to occur in the rock-cut tomb of Baqet III in Beni Hasan (Figure 1) (Guerra 2023a, pp. 4, 11).

18 Additionally, as it was noted by an anonymous peer-reviewer, the Middle Kingdom is also the period when Egypt extended its influence over Nubia and gained direct access to gold. Socio-political changes operated at that time might thus have resulted in an increasing need for goldworkers and fostered a (more) distinct division among metalworkers. As a direct consequence then, the motif of working gold appeared in workshop scenes in private tombs of the time.

19 While preparing this paper with data drawn from my PhD dissertation, I came across the extensive paper of (Quirke 2023) on gold-working and goldsmiths. I hope this article might be read as complementary to his, with a different, art historical, perspective on the data. The attestations of metalworkers discussed in this paper are visual but also supported by an identifying label. Since there is no 'classical' or archetypal way to depict them (especially in workshop scenes), they cannot be recognized for sure without the explicit mention of their title.

20 As an anonymous reviewer pointed out, this holds true for elite members of the ancient Egyptian society too. See for instance the uppermost elite in Saqqara, like Horemheb and Maya's statues. One might expect for the top elite to use high-quality veins of limestone to craft their monuments, though.

21 I thank Prof. Dr. Kathlyn Cooney and UCLA Egyptology for having funded the purchase of this image's copyrights.

22 The exact nature of such a deal remains unclear.

23 This case suggests that some superiors in craft production could be closely connected to the practicalities of the activity they were supervising and were not necessarily appointed to a position without any knowledge of the work, as it could be expected when one was benefiting from his father's professional progression without having practiced and mastered the skills for himself.

24 In these Old Kingdom scenes, the title attached to metalworkers is usually translated *bḏtj* and written with the crucible (hieroglyph N34). However, modern works have translated the labels of New Kingdom metalworkers as '*ḥmty.w*'. In his book on the metalworking data recorded up to the Second Intermediate Period, Odler dismissed this reading and argued instead for '*bḏ3.ty*', no matter what the period under discussion (Odler 2023, pp. 89ff).

25 For examples of Old Kingdom metallurgists who might refer to their involvement in funerary ceremonies, see (Brovarski 1977, pp. 111ff). I wish to thank Aurore Motte for having drawn this paper to my attention. For further development on the connection of metalworkers (as well as other craftsmen) and their tools with the religious and funerary realm, see (Odler 2023, pp. 368–70, 386–90).

[26] See (Odler 2023, pp. 213–48) for a general overview of the metalworkers he called *bḏ3.tyw*.
[27] With the exception of a stela now in Lacock Abbey for which I was not able to obtain a picture, all these stelae were round-topped.
[28] This stela might be an *unicum* among other Heliopolitan stelae since the wife is shown seated before the man. Furthermore, the male musician from Ra's Estate might also be a unique occurrence for Heliopolis (Raue 1999, pp. 212–13).
[29] I thank the Czartoyski Museum, in particular Dr. Dorota Gorzelany-Nowak, for having provided me with a copy of Joachim Śliwa's description of the object (Śliwa 1982, p. 46, cat. 49).
[30] In this case, we observe the conglomeration of a likely more expensive category of funerary equipment, namely the canopic jar, with a material usually less associated with elite objects, i.e., ceramic. This might be a kind of compromise for someone who could access funerary commemoration but who did not have the appropriate resources to have it crafted out of a more precious material, like alabaster.
[31] (Raven and van Walsem 2014, p. 138), figures on pp. 138–39.
[32] When artists' labels were later additions to workshop scenes, they usually display inconsistency with the main inscriptions and show signs of haste. Here, the finely carved caption points more towards the initial implementation of the tiny inscription in the initial program.
[33] In 129 tomb-chapels displaying workshop scenes on their walls, eight named artists in the New Kingdom (68 craftsmen are named in about thirty workshop scenes for all Pharaonic Egypt).
[34] However, his father, who hold the same titles, bore the common name of Khonsu.
[35] I do not agree with Ramond's suggestion that the whole last register had been erased. From what can be seen in the picture provided by the museum, I rather think the lower part of the stela was left unfinished and was, therefore, good material for an opportunistic reuse.
[36] These examples are usually peripheral to the main objects of this study, since they are mainly graffiti without depiction.
[37] For the Memphite tomb-chapels, I use the new tomb numbering system introduced in (Staring 2023, pp. 78–79).
[38] In this case, the service to Ptah is only attached to his office of goldsmith, not of wab priest, making one wonder if he served as such for (an)other cult(s).
[39] All categories combined, less than twenty artists owned a tomb in the Old Kingdom, and less than five are recorded for the Middle Kingdom. Although this might be partially related to the state of preservation of the material, this is still a reflection of the increasing social importance of a specific category of artists, namely the goldsmiths, at a specific period of time, the New Kingdom.
[40] For the ushebtis, though, some were found in the Serapeum, attesting rather to a pilgrimage act rather than a burial place. Liz Frood noted they might belong to craftsmen who were involved in the building process of the tomb G-H (Frood 2016).
[41] Although some of the unprovenanced stelae mentioned above might have been part of now-lost tombs, it is likely, in comparison with other provenanced stelae owned by craft producers, that a majority of them might have come from cenotaphs set on processional routes or placed in temples as devotional offerings.
[42] According to Guerra's division of goldworking, Khay worked on level 1 of goldworking, in "prospecting and mining (…) alluvial and reef gold followed by (its) transportation to centralized sites", while Amenemone supervised levels 2 and 3 of the process, i.e., the "metallurgical processing of gold grains and production of ingots" as well as the "production of objects (forming, mounting, decorating, finishing)" (Guerra 2023a, p. 10).
[43] Some have suspected him of being the mastermind behind Tutankhamun's treasure, but this remains hypothesis (Ockinga 2004, p. 20).
[44] It is worth pointing out that, in comparison with some other *imi-r ḥmw.t* recorded for the New Kingdom, Amenemone did not mention, at least in his own tomb, any more prominent charges such as Treasurer or Head of the Golden/Silver House for instance. Therefore, he seemed to not share the same social standing and remained in a 'grey zone', the upper part of the intermediate elite.
[45] The tombs built during the New Kingdom in Memphis ranged from the single-room chapel to the so-called "temple-tombs" (Staring 2021, p. 16).
[46] The whole monument was ca. 10 m wide and 15 m long.
[47] The chapel was published in (Ockinga 2004).
[48] This is not unusual for the Memphite New Kingdom tombs (I thank the anonymous reviewer who made me aware of this). The north and south chapels might have been adorned with painted scenes on plaster (Ockinga 2004, p. 67).
[49] (Ockinga 2004, p. 22). According to Ockinga, there are "clear stylistic parallels between the relief carving in the tomb of Amenemone and the tombs of Horemheb and Maya in Saqqara South". He concluded that for "many factors" Amenemone should have been "a contemporary of Horemheb and Maya and thus (have) served under Tutankhamun and quite possibly Akhenaten".
[50] (Staring 2021, p. 23). The now-lost tomb of the Head of Makers of Gold Foil of the Temple of Aten (*ḥry irw nbw p3ḳ ny pr itn*), Ptahmay was possibly also located in this cluster. Its workshop scene is a relevant case study and has been recently discussed by (Staring 2021, pp. 37ff).
[51] A similar cluster seems to appear to a lesser extent at Dra Abu el-Naga and el-Khokha in the Theban necropolis (see above).

[52] (Staring 2021, p. 23). If this hypothesis holds true, then the tombs located in this cluster would have been in a very high-traffic area (Staring 2021, p. 24) which was therefore a sought-after burial spot for people who could not afford the most visible spots such as the Bubasteion cliff where the mid-Dynasty 18 high officials were buried (Staring 2021, p. 23).

[53] On some examples of intericonicity in the Memphite necropolis, see (Staring 2021, 2023).

[54] (Ockinga 2004, p. 18). His title varies on his ushebti from 'chief' (*ḥry*) to 'overseer' (*imi-r*) of goldsmiths.

[55] The limestone blocks that were once deposited in Amenemone's chapel are now scattered across the museums of the globe and much of the chapel's structural material has been reused as a modern quarry by the local inhabitants of nearby villages. Therefore, we only have access to part of its original program. On the relocation of the blocks from the tomb, see the chapter co-written by Ockinga and van Dijk in (Ockinga 2004, pp. 28ff). Before its dismantlement, the chapel of Amenemone was reused and shows apparent care drawn to the restoration of his decoration, with patches found on blocks, like in the central chapel (block Munich Gl 298, Ockinga 2004, p. 53).

[56] The whole representation of Ptahmose might be understood as a hieroglyph for 'making an invokation' with his right hand raised similarly to the determinative of the verb nis, 'to call out', which is found in the columns 6 and 8 of the text (Ockinga 2004, p. 54).

[57] E.g. on block Cairo JE 11913 re-located on the south wall of the central chapel (Ockinga 2004, p. 50), and on its north wall on block Cairo TN 17/6/25/1 (Ockinga 2004, p. 51).

[58] The connection of the gazelle with the desert is indeed well attested, and the animal could be connected to quarrying activities. See (Strandberg 2009, pp. 190ff). I thank the anonymous reviewer who recommended this reference. This might also be the case with the mention of the Rosetau, a desert area ruled by Sokar, though it first conveyed the idea of the netherworld (see Ockinga 2004, p. 47, text 19, note (b)), eventhough the toponym was also closely associated with the Memphite necropolis, as an anonymous reviewer has pointed out. Both hypotheses are not mutually exclusive, though.

[59] The choice of Menkauhor might have been motivated by different reasons, and his insertion in Amenemone's decorative program might have been seen as a viable way to encourage passers-by to visit his monument, see (Ockinga 2004, pp. 75–76). An anonymous reviewer remarked that, in Amenemone's tomb, the image of Menkauhor looked out towards the pyramid of this king.

[60] Ockinga noted "this attention to detail is especially obvious when contrasted with the representation of jewelry worn by deities in reliefs from the tombs of Horemheb and Maya—because of their very high quality, one might expect to find these details, but in fact they are not present. Compare, for example, the deities in the lunette of Horemheb's stelae (Martin, *Memphite Tomb of Horemheb*, pls. 21–22, 24–25) and Osiris in a relief of Maya's (Martin, *Hidden Tombs*, Figure 109)" (Ockinga 2004, p. 20). An anonymous reviewer nuanced Ockinga's statement since, for instance, golden artifacts such as the gold of honor were depicted in an excessive manner in Maya and Horemheb's iconographic programs. Nevertheless, the part left to the representation of jewelry in the tomb of Amenemone, who was closely connected to jewelry-making, was likely not coincidental.

[61] Ockinga suggested that it might have been carved after Amenemone's death, hence its apparent unfinished state (Ockinga 2004, p. 20).

[62] Some of them might stem from an older tradition, see Karl Jansen-Winckeln's on the Tradition of the Transfiguration Text and Autobiographical Epithets quoted by (Ockinga 2004, pp. 92–94).

[63] TNE 96: 123, reddish-brown wood with resin layer, max. height: 12 cm.

[64] This specific dynamic setting finds a perfect visual attestation in the Theban chapel of Neferrenpet called Kenro, in el-Khokha (TT 178) (see Hofmann 1995, Tf. XXXIX and XL).

[65] Staring suggested that Amenemone "may have been the head of the workshop(s) that produced the cult statues of fine gold mentioned in Maya's autobiography and in Tutankhamun's restoration text", and he might also have been commissioned to provide Tutankhamun's burial with golden artifacts, although this remains a hypothesis (Staring 2021, p. 33). Ockinga noted that "The details of the corslet of Re-Harakhte-Atum on the stele call to mind the very elaborate corslet from the tomb of Tutankhamun (see Saleh and Sourouzian, *Ägyptisches Museum Kairo*, no. 191)" (Ockinga 2004, p. 20)". If this holds true, Amenemone was indeed an originator of the royal ideological discourse of his time.

[66] On the initiation of goldsmiths, see (Derchain 1990; Von Lieven 2007).

[67] We might be tempted to imagine that the story of Amenemone was also reported orally to less literate goldsmiths or craft-related people.

[68] Some of these mechanisms recall Pahery of Elkab's case, explored in an upcoming book (Devillers In preparation).

[69] Indeed, Amenemone only referred to his father Kheruef as a *s3b*. However, it has been proven that secondary characters labeled as such in tombs might have actually held other (more important) charges (Ockinga 2004, p. 19). Therefore, he might have consciously avoided associating himself with a specific lineage, preferring to present his tale of a self-made man.

[70] Amenemheb may additionally be represented on a Memphite stela (Cairo JE 18925) and on two blocks from a door-jamb (Cairo JE 46190).

[71] It is possible that another of his sons, Ptahemheb, later became a Chief of Goldsmiths as well, if he is the individual shown with a certain Amenemheb, holder of the same title, on two blocks from a door-jamb found in Saqqara (Cairo JdE 46190; Ockinga 2004, p. 21).

[72] However, Amenemone's sons never seemed to have reached the social position of their father, given the quality of the monuments where they might be attested and the fact that they are not further attested in other monuments. From what we know, none of Amenemone's sons inherited his charge of *imi-r ḥmw.t*.

[73] Or a specific workshop. This artist or workshop's 'stylistic touch' might be found in the double hemline sculpted in male kilts that Berlandini-Grenier observed (Berlandini-Grenier 1976, p. 311). This would add to the prestige held by Amenemone and his acknowledged access to artists/workshops 'en vogue'.

[74] *jʿw nbw*: Wb 1, 39.19, TLA Lemma ID 21590.

[75] *pḏ.t*: Wb 1, 570.10-571.6, TLA Lemma ID 63290.

[76] *šwy.tj.w*: Wb 4, 434.5-6, TLA Lemma ID 153090.

[77] He holds the title of 'trader' in the chapel of his brother, Pabes (Martin et al. 2001, p. 27).

[78] Martin identified him with the *nšdy*-Jeweler Neferabu recorded in Pap. Boulaq 19 (Cairo CG 58096) in charge of working in the temple of Ramesses II in Ptah's Estate in year 43 of Ramesses II (Martin et al. 2001, p. 29). Without additional evidence other than the fact that both individuals shared the same name and were somehow contemporaneous, it is challenging to identify them as a same person.

[79] It will be further discussed below.

[80] Another layer of understanding will supplement this reading below.

[81] Here, my interpretation differs from (Martin et al. 2001, p. 15; Quirke 2023, p. 66), since they understand the man seated on the left side as an unnamed *imi-r ḥmw.t*. I suggest this man could also represent Khay for several reasons. First, the figure is shown with similar proportions to the supervisor identified as Khay. Furthermore, he is seated on a zoomorphic-legged chair which is usually not depicted in workshop scenes, at least for artisans to sit upon, as they tend to be used instead by the main protagonists of a scene. Finally, the fact that Khay's name is centered in the middle of the register corroborates this suggestion since it may therefore serve both inscriptions in order to gain space on this tiny wall surface.

[82] Although the title of 'gold washer' is rare, this is not an unicum. See for instance (Martin et al. 2001, p. 26).

[83] The dual aspect of his occupation is well attested, notably in the Ramesside corpus of inscriptions referring to the mining and transport of gold in the desert (Quirke 2023, p. 56).

[84] On a more humble level, Khay might have tried to connect with his own socio-professional categories, for instance with "a rare variant" of the vignette 100 of the Book of the Dead, of which the closest parallel is found in Ptahmose's Book of the Dead (pCracow MNK IX-752/11-4, Dynasty 19), who was also a goldsmith (Martin et al. 2001, p. 14).

[85] Such a phenomenon has been observed elsewhere: e.g., in Deir el-Medineh (Cooney 2007), for the gardener Nakht (TT 52) (Laboury 1997) or the scribe accountant of grain Wensu (Devillers 2018).

[86] Or maybe a prelude, since Martin suggested Pabes might have predeceased his father who then finished the building of both chapels, which might in part explain his absence in Khay's chapel even though Khay is mentioned several times in his son's chapel (Martin et al. 2001, p. 27). For further chronological considerations, see (Martin et al. 2001, p. 25).

[87] The only element of Pabes' chapel that focuses mainly on him might have been his group statue now in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (AM 108).

[88] Martin stated: "Traces still visible after excavation of the wall, but which had disappeared by the time the facsimile tracing was made, suggest the reading of *ir*(*w*) *ḫr*-ʿ *n it.it*" (Martin et al. 2001, p. 20, fn 3).

[89] On that note, the *ms.w*-ʿ*ȝ.t* consist of another intermediary category that could have been integrated here since it was connected to production of metal-artifacts. The *ms*-ʿ*ȝ.t* were purveyors of (semi-)precious stones that could be used to enhance metal objects. To my knowledge, they are only visually attested three times, once among the dependents of the nomarch of Aswan Pepynakht Heqaib II (which makes sense given the strategic position of Aswan in trades of diverse kinds with southern African lands), twice on Middle Kingdom monuments: a table of offering(?) (Cairo CG 20731) and a door-lintel (Cairo CG 20630). Both were found in Abydos.

[90] Under these conditions, water was certainly as precious as gold (Quirke 2023, p. 27).

[91] He is not titled as head of gold washers, but the workshop scene suggests it, all the more so if we understand him as the *imi-r ḥmw.t* depicted there.

[92] The fact that such gold-related workers could operate on a local hierarchy is notably attested in the tomb of Pahery of Elkab (Martin et al. 2001, p. 26).

[93] The Bedouin tribes and the danger they shouldered for gold transportation are, for instance, mentioned in a letter written by the High-Priest of Amon-Ra Ramsessesnakht (reign of Ramsesses IX) (Davies 2020, fn 25).

[94] Pabes was also part of this network, as Troop-Commander of the Traders and Scribe of the Treasury of Ptah's Temple.

95 These artists might have been second-rate or maybe we should see in the average quality of the carving the work of goldsmiths and metalworkers with carving abilities (see section "*nby.w*-Goldsmiths holding other titles") hired by their direct supervisors; in other words, craftsmen employed to work in peripherical spheres to their main specialization.

96 I do not agree with Martin's assumption that Khay was illiterate, which is not grounded in any strong evidence (Martin et al. 2001, p. 27).

97 My understanding of this matter owes a lot to Papadopoulos and Urton 2012 (especially their introduction) and associated references. The following lines are a summary of the theoretical framework they developed in their book.

98 See (e.g., Smith [1776] 1994 quoted in Papadopoulos and Urton 2012, pp. 5–7).

99 See (Menger [1871] 1950 quoted in Papadopoulos and Urton 2012, pp. 5, 10).

100 'Culture' is here understood in Marxist terms, i.e., "within the context of institutions, beliefs, values, and patterns of behavior inherited from the past" (Papadopoulos and Urton 2012, p. 12).

101 We can find the same kind of documentation for the ancient Near East, for instance. See e.g., (Gunter 1990; Sasson 1990), or the communication of Michaël Guichard, "Religion, royauté, art, artefacts et artisans d'après les archives palatiales paléo-babyloniennes de Mari", for the conference Digir II (Lille, 15 avril 2024) for some of administrative texts. For an example of literary texts mentioning the building process of a temple, see the communication of Valek, "(Re)Building Temple of Ba'al: Tracking the Networks of Craftsmanship" at the same conference.

102 By expanding on the topos "There was no commoner for whom the like had ever been done" (translation by Simpson [1972] 2003, p. 66), Sinuhe gives a definition of what is a respectable man, a good Egyptian courtier acknowledged by his king.

103 For a translation of this text, see (Lichtheim 1976, pp. 43–48).

104 For the translation and the commentary of the text, see (Grandet 1994).

105 (De Garis Davies 1943, p. 48–54, pl. LII–LV).

106 (De Garis Davies 1930, p. 23–32, pl. XV–XXIV).

107 'Symbolism' and 'symbol' have several discipline-specific uses. They are always time and space-specific too. I refer here to the general definition given by Preziosi in his anthology of art history: "(…) the most common (use) in art history has been the notion that an art object may have a double meaning–one that is more literal, and one that is more conventional or allusory: the use of a certain color, for example, referring both to an actual material property of something represented, as well as to a certain religious or political belief" (Preziosi 2009, p. 578).

108 This is also corroborated in studies on much more modern societies such as Bourdieu's and de Certeau' surveys (Bourdieu 1979; de Certeau 1990). I wish to thank Prof. Dr. Chloé Ragazzoli for having provided me with the last reference.

109 For other examples, see e.g., Arbuckle in this volume.

110 Quite logically because gold would have been the most symbolic material to display in their case and its use was obviously restricted to top elite and the royal sphere. The recurrent use of yellow or reddish color might have been another more affordable option, but the state of preservation of the monuments does not allow further development on the matter.

111 See e.g., the letter of Pharaoh Merneptah to a king of Ugarit (likely either Niqmaddu III or Ammurapi) who asked that was sent to his court an Egyptian sculptor who would have crafted a statue of the Egyptian king to be displayed in Baal's temple in Ugarit (letter RS 88.2158) (Morris 2015). On other cases of craftsmen exchanges between Egypt and its Near Eastern neighbors, see (Zaccagnini 1983).

112 Indeed, displaying scenes more closely connected to one's profession was part of a more general phenomenon in the Saqqara necropolis from the Late Dynasty 18 onwards. It likely touched all social strata represented in the necropoleis. See for instance the now-lost chapel of the Head of Makers of Gold Leaf Ptahmay (309/TPC) or the chapel of the high-official Meryneith (032/USC) (Staring, forthcoming).

113 It is worth noticing that displaying scenes more closely connected to one's profession was part of a more general phenomenon in the Saqqara necropolis from the Late Dynasty 18 onwards. See for instance the now-lost chapel of the Head of Makers of Gold Leaf Ptahmay (309/TPC) (Staring, forthcoming). This is also seen in tombs of the top elite such as the chapel of Meryneith (Staring, forthcoming).

114 I wish to thank Niv Allon for having drawn to my attention this last question during my presentation at the ARCE Annual Meeting in 2023.

115 This specific point would deserve a study on its own when it comes to sub-elite display and their expected audience.

116 In the sense Duplouy gave to this expression (Duplouy 2006).

117 To give but one example, see the Old Kingdom autobiographies of Djau (Urk. I, 146, 16 and 147, 1–56; translation in Kanawati 2013, pp. 55–56).

118 In this perspective, Pahery of Elkab offers an interesting comparison (Devillers In preparation).

119 On tomb TT A4, see (Manniche 1988, pp. 62ff; and on tomb TT 52, see Laboury 1997).

120 The concept of "socio-professional visualities" developed by Den Doncker (2023) aptly describes these differences of expectations depending on one's social world.

[121] See the chapter « A social world perspective » in (Strauss 1991).

[122] I wish to thank Prof. Dr. Chloé Ragazzoli for having introduced me to the symbolic interactionism framework, and the fruitful conversations we had on this matter.

[123] For a revisited version of Goffman's theories, its limitations and some developments with more modern examples, see the recorded class of Prof. Dr. Daniel Krier (Iowa State University): "Sociological Theory: Skeleton Key 1 to Goffman's Presentation of Self in Everyday Life", URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wr5MM9_kd8E (accessed on 1 February 2023).

[124] By "monumental commemoration", I mean any kind of monuments (stelae, statues, Books of the Dead, tombs, etc.) that eternalize one's memory.

[125] In this regard, the works of the Chicago second school (incl. Goffman, discussed above) and Michel de Certeau's *L'inventon du quotidien* offer promising avenues to discuss such phenomena.

[126] For another case study, here of even lower social stratus, see the 21th-Dynasty burials in the Saqqara cache studied by (Cooney 2007, p. 277).

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