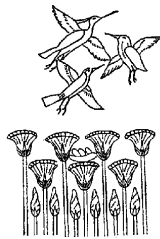


Uppsala Studies in Egyptology

- 6 -

Department of Archaeology and Ancient History

Uppsala University



For my parents

Dorrit and Hindrik

Åsa Strandberg

The Gazelle
in
Ancient Egyptian Art
Image and Meaning

Uppsala 2009



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UNIVERSITET

Dissertation presented at Uppsala University to be publicly examined in the Auditorium Minus of the Museum Gustavianum, Uppsala, Friday, October 2, 2009 at 09:15 for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The examination will be conducted in English.

Abstract

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This thesis establishes the basic images of the gazelle in ancient Egyptian art and their meaning. A chronological overview of the categories of material featuring gazelle images is presented as a background to an interpretation.

An introduction and review of the characteristics of the gazelle in the wild are presented in Chapters 1-2. The images of gazelle in the Predynastic material are reviewed in Chapter 3, identifying the desert hunt as the main setting for gazelle imagery.

Chapter 4 reviews the images of the gazelle in the desert hunt scenes from tombs and temples. The majority of the motifs characteristic for the gazelle are found in this context. Chapter 5 gives a typological analysis of the images of the gazelle from offering processions scenes. In this material the image of the nursing gazelle is given particular importance.

Similar images are also found on objects, where symbolic connotations can be discerned (Chapter 6). References to healing and regeneration are found, particularly in relationship to the context of the objects.

The gazelle is found in a divine context in a limited material (Chapter 7). A discussion of these sources sees a focus on the gazelle as representative for the desert mountains as the setting for death and rebirth. This relates to the gazelle as a feminine image with a connection to the models of female divinity (Chapter 8).

Keywords: gazelle, Egyptian art, Egyptian religion, hunt, offering, desert fauna, Heb Sed, Hathor, Solar Eye

*Åsa Strandberg, Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University,
Box 626, SE-751 26 Uppsala, Sweden.*

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Chronology (adapted from Shaw 2000: 479-483)

Predynastic Period c. 5300-3000 B.C.

Early Dynastic Period c. 3000-2686 B.C.

1st Dynasty	3000-2890 B.C.
Den	c. 2950 B.C.
2nd Dynasty	2890-2686 B.C.
Old Kingdom c. 2686-2125 B.C.	
3rd Dynasty	2686-2613 B.C.
Huni	2637-2613 B.C.
4 th Dynasty	2613-2494 B.C.
Sneferu	2613-2489 B.C.
Khufu	2589-2558 B.C.
Khaefre	2558-2532 B.C.
5 th Dynasty	2494-2345 B.C.
Userkaf	2494-2487 B.C.
Sahure	2487-2475 B.C.
Niuserre	2445-2421 B.C.
6 th Dynasty	2345-2181 B.C.
Pepi I	2321-2287 B.C.
Merenre	2287-2278 B.C.
Pepi II	2278-2184 B.C.
7-8 th Dynasties	2181-2160 B.C.

First Intermediate Period (FIP) c. 2160-2055 B.C.

9-10 th Dynasties	2160-2025 B.C.
11 th Dynasty (in Thebes)	2125-2055 B.C.

Middle Kingdom c. 2055-1650 B.C.

11 th Dynasty	2055-1985 B.C.
Mentuhotep II	2055-2004 B.C.
Mentuhotep IV	1992-1985 B.C.
12 th Dynasty	1985-1773 B.C.
Amenemhet I	1985-1955 B.C.
Sesostris I	1965-1920 B.C.
Sesostris III	1874-1855 B.C.

13-14 th Dynasties	1773-1650 B.C
Neferhotep	-

Second Intermediate Period (SIP) c. 1650-1550 B.C.

15 th Dynasty (Hyksos)	1650-1550 B.C.
16 th Dynasty (Thebes)	1650-1580 B.C.
17 th Dynasty (Thebes)	1580-1550 B.C.

New Kingdom c. 1550-1069 B.C.

18 th Dynasty	1550-1295 B.C.
Amosis	1550-1525 B.C.
Amenhotep I	1525-1504 B.C.
Tuthmosis III	1479-1425 B.C.
Hatshepsut	1473-1458 B.C.
Amenhotep II	1427-1400 B.C.
Tuthmosis IV	1400-1390 B.C.
Amenhotep III	1390-1352 B.C.
Akhenaton	1352-1336 B.C.
Tutankhamun	1336-1327 B.C.
19 th Dynasty	1295-1186 B.C.
Seti I	1294-1279 B.C.
Ramses II	1279-1213 B.C.
20 th Dynasty	1186-1069 B.C.
Ramses V	1147-1143 B.C.

Third Intermediate Period c. 1069-664 B.C.

21 st Dynasty	1069-945 B.C.
Pinudjem II	
22 nd Dynasty	945-715 B.C.
Osorkon II	
23 rd Dynasty	818-715 B.C.
24 th Dynasty	727-715 B.C.
25 th Dynasty	747-656 B.C.

Late Period 664-332 B.C.

26 th Dynasty	664-525 B.C.
Psamtek I	664-610 B.C.
Psamtek II	595-589 B.C.

27 th Dynasty (1 st Persian Period)	525-404 B.C.
28 th Dynasty	404-399 B.C.
29 th Dynasty	399-380 B.C.
30 th Dynasty	380-343 B.C.

Second Persian Period 343-332 B.C.

Ptolemaic Period 332-30 B.C.

Roman Period 30 B.C. – A. D. 395

Abbreviations in the text

CT	Coffin Texts	OK	Old Kingdom
FIP	First Intermediate Period	PT	Pyramid Texts
MK	Middle Kingdom	SIP	Second Intermediate Period
NK	New Kingdom		

Preface

It is hard to believe that these words are finally being written. While my goal has been unwavering, the path has been rocky at times. There are several people who have contributed to the completion of this dissertation; the following represents merely a small but vital part.

A visit to the Griffith Institute Archive in the Fall of 2003 was very important for my research. I'll never forget the professional and warm welcome that I received from Jaromir Malek, Elizabeth Fleming and Alison Hobby. With their help I was able to finish the collection of source material. I gratefully acknowledge the financial support that made that visit possible furnished by grants from Gernandts, S. V. Wängstedts and V. Ekmans (Uplands nation) funds.

I believe my adviser Professor Lana Troy has had a trial in endurance. Her infallible guidance during the process has been far more than I've ever had the right to ask for. Our numerous discussions have been most gratifying for me, and I hope that I've managed to transform their essence into this work; it symbolizes my appreciation, gratitude and respect for such continuous support. It goes without saying that I am also grateful for her help in making sure that the English text is readable, as well as for editorial assistance.

Professor Lars Karlsson has functioned as my associate adviser and in this role has had the task of reading the manuscript in the last stages of its completion. His comments have been useful in improving the text and his willingness and enthusiasm has been gratifying.

The majority of the 83 figures in this volume are reproduced with the permission of the Egypt Exploration Society (EES), the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Further permissions have been granted by Othmar Keel, the Methuen & Co Ltd and Medelhavsmuseet in Stockholm. The generosity with which this permission was granted is greatly appreciated.

Some of the figures are the result of Alicja Grenberger's skill in drawing ancient objects. Although this was an unusual challenge for her, she delivered remarkable illustrations. The credit is all yours Alicja, nonetheless I am proud of them!

I have been lucky to have numerous supportive friends in both Finland and Sweden, who by not being a part of this field, have shown me

that there is a world outside. Thank you for all the fun and silly parties...! It goes without saying that some, closer to home, have had more than their fair share of my frustration over the years, in particular Gabriella Jönsson and Eva-Lena Wahlberg. Thank you for listening without judging and adjusting my occasional blurry focus, on the truly important matters in life.

The task of writing a dissertation requires a practice in patience for the researcher. My grandfather lost his nearly finished thesis in the bombings of Helsinki during WWII. This has given me perspective and generated great motivation for finishing what I started long ago. I feel sincerely privileged to have had this opportunity.

There are no words that are sufficient to even begin to describe the gratitude I feel for the never-ending patience my parents have shown me. Their genuine interest in my strivings has been inspiring, not to mention all our visits to various museums around Europe. Without their significant financial contributions throughout these years, this work would simply not exist. It is dedicated to you. *Tack mamma och pappa!*

Åsa Strandberg
Uppsala in August 2009

*Auch in der Ägyptologie ist es höchste Zeit, die
Bilder mit gleicher Genauigkeit zu lesen wie die
Texte. (Hornung 1973: 37)*

1 Introduction

Ancient Egyptian art and particularly its animal imagery has been a source of fascination since Greco-Roman times. Animal motifs can be found in virtually all aspects of this art, in more or less imaginative compositions. In this way it is an integral part of the multifaceted interaction between ancient Egyptian art, its context and religious beliefs. What we term “art” was, for the Egyptians, a way of formulating ideas, with the most comprehensive expression being given priority over realistic depiction. Concept and “message” shaped Egyptian art. This made static canonical motifs a viable mode of expression (Gaballa 1976: 1ff.). Animal images formed a substantial part of the catalogue of these motifs.

Central ideas are often illustrated in ancient Egyptian art with animal imagery with some animals appearing more frequently than others, suggesting some kind of conceptual hierarchy. This may relate to a level of recognition that allows the same image to embody multiple connotations. Species connected to the pharaoh and to the main deities have a well defined status in the iconography. The falcon represents the ruling king at the very beginning of the kingship. The domestic cow is another animal that has strong iconic power with a connection to the idea of divine motherhood, later developed in the roles of Isis and Hathor, both of whom can appear as nurturers of a divine calf. The gazelle can not be compared to falcon or the cow in terms of distinctive correspondences, yet it is represented in well defined images that function on several levels.

The gazelle belongs to that group of animals that, although they are found repeatedly in an ancient Egyptian context, has not received in depth attention. The lack of a conspicuously divinity may have contributed to this neglect, or perhaps there is a fixed idea regarding which animals fall into the category “symbolic” that has led to the assumption that there is nothing behind the image. The simple fact that the gazelle does not have a given place in the modern world may contribute to our classification of its representation as “naturalistic”. A closer look at the representations of less well researched animals contributes however to a broader understanding of

the complexity of the Egyptian worldview. This study of the imagery of the gazelle is an attempt to add insights into that worldview, and into the multitude of ways in which it was expressed.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to present a comprehensive overview of the depiction of the gazelle in ancient Egyptian art and to define its status as a cultural expression. This is achieved by reviewing the distinctive images of the gazelle, referred to here as “motifs” and the contexts in which they occur. Depictions of the gazelle are found throughout ancient Egyptian civilization. It is portrayed with a consistency in form over the thousands of years covered by this study. Specific images of the gazelle are often exclusive for this species, indicating that there are important conceptions associated with its representation. One of the main questions is why the gazelle, an animal found on the geographic margins of the culture zone, was selected to connote certain ideas and associations. In order to understand the background to the way the gazelle is represented, it is necessary to have a rudimentary understanding of its ‘zoology’ (Chapter 2). Knowledge of the behaviour of the gazelle in its natural surroundings facilitates a comprehensive of its presentation in pictorial form.

A ‘two fold’ pattern emerges when tracing the representation of the gazelle in Egyptian art. The depiction of the gazelle, while naturalistic both in form and context, is also aligned with concepts that give it the role of “symbol”. With the emergence of this double trajectory follows another main question, namely what distinguishes the different depictions of the gazelle and what do they convey. This work aims to delineate the role of the gazelle as a naturalistic bearer of meaning.

1.2 Source material

The most important source for the depiction of the gazelle is the two-dimensional representation found primarily on wall surfaces but also on objects. There are also a variety of three-dimensional representations, these are mainly in the form of adornments on objects and only exceptionally as sculpture. A chronological review within the different categories of sources provides the reoccurring motifs. The basic motifs established by this review are further clarified in textual references often originating in the so-called religious text corpus. This combination of source material comprises a diversity in terms of form, chronology and geography, while confirming a thematic complex.

1.2.1 A representative selection

The source material discussed in Chapters 3 through 7 is divided up in terms of chronology with regard to Chapter 3, discussing the Predynastic material; scene type, with regards to Chapters 4 and 5, treating hunt and offering scenes from temple and tomb; and form in Chapter 6, which examines various categories of objects. Chapter 7 that deals primarily, but not exclusively, with the written sources that give an insight into the way in which the gazelle was associated with divine imagery, also has a chronological structure. All in all the material covers approximately 4,000 years, beginning with rock drawings and animal motifs on combs and knife handles and ending with Demotic text references.

By dividing the material into these groups, it has, in some instances, been possible to be as thorough as possible, such as with the discussion of some of the objects groups in Chapter 6. Other material, such as the offering procession scenes discussed in Chapter 5, is so abundant that another form of presentation, with a typological slant, has been chosen. In spite of the diversity of the material, it has been possible to identify specific motifs that are both incorporated in a narrative framework and isolated for use as decorative motifs.

Some individual representations of the gazelle have been omitted, mostly because they are unique and not part of a larger category. However, even these random examples reflect the gazelle compositions otherwise utilized in the more representative categories. One example of this is the bronze weight in the shape of a recumbent gazelle (New York, MMA 68.139.1; Arnold 1995: 11, cat. no. 4) that corresponds to one of the basic motifs of the gazelle (cf. 4.1.4, Figure 19). The broad collar of Ahhotep (Cairo, CG 52672; Aldred 1971: 202, Pl. 55) has pendants showing fleeing gazelles with their head turned back, referring to a typical gazelle motif (cf. 4.1.2, Figure 18). These two examples illustrate the broad use of gazelle motifs and the need to establish basic forms in order to deal with the diversity of contexts in which they are found.

1.3 Approach

This is an empirical study based on the compilation, classification and analysis of primary material. The motifs that have results from the analysis have the character of icons that are bearers of meaning within the context that they are found (Hornung 1973: 40).

The large majority of gazelle images do not give the immediate impression of being anything other than naturalistic representations of the

animal life of the desert. However, even though the various gazelle motifs can be related to real behaviour, it would be too simple to dismiss them as pictorial reproductions: "Die ägyptische Kunst hat niemals Konkretes abstrakt dargestellt, sie entfaltet ihre Meisterschaft in der Darstellung des Abstrakten durch konkrete Bilder..." (Hornung 1973: 36).

Art and written sources refer to similar concepts (Assmann 2001: 112). There is thus no reason to distinguish between the two as sources for cultural understanding. This similarity between image and text has not however been actualized in terms of a theoretical approach. While the field of semiotics is well established (e.g. Goldwasser 1995), pictorial semiotics is at an initial stage of development, with an emphasis on the impact of imagery on modern society (Sonesson 1989). This discrepancy is also reflected in the general view of the weight of text contra image. The written word is generally treated as reflecting the "real world", with pictorial representations seen as allowing a freedom of expression that can extend beyond reality. The nexus between image and word, as means of expressing an idea, which is a particular characteristic of the ancient Egyptian mode of communication, is only beginning to be understood and placed within a theoretical framework.

One of the ways of approaching the question of the relationship between image and word in Egyptian art is through the identification of repeated "motifs", a term used here to represent isolated representations of the gazelle, often found within larger compositions. These motifs display minimal development within these compositions, indicating that they had become "canonical" (Tefnin 1984: 56-57), with a fixed relationship to a concept. The transference of isolated motifs to 'new' contexts further underline that the basic gazelle images were expressions of vital notions that were in turn informed by an original context.

The form of repeated, and thus selected, motifs clarifies the field within which the concept embodied by the motifs is to be found. The specific preference shown for relating the gazelle to divine feminine imagery is further explicated in the textual sources. This material, it should be noted, is used as support for the implications of the pictorial material, articulating the implicit message of the motifs.

The process of analysis, applied here to the imagery of the gazelle, can be described as identifying the basic and often reproduced images, describing what they show and finally tracing the evidence that leads to understanding its meaning (Hornung 1973: 40).

1.4 Previous research

Only a small number of species, among the many found in ancient Egyptian art, have been the subject of in depth study. These include the hedgehog (von Droste zu Hülshoff 1980), birds (Houlihan 1986) and fish (Brewer and Friedman 1989, Gamer-Wallert 1970). While these general works provide an interesting overview, they only touch upon the question of why these animals are repeatedly represented. One example of the difficulty involved in studying animal imagery in terms of species is illustrated by the work of Stolberg-Stolberg (2003) that attempts to review the occurrence of antelope imagery, however without a well defined structure or aim.

The vast majority of the images of the gazelle are found embedded in the well established scenes found in private tombs from the Old, Middle and New Kingdoms. The standard iconography of the tomb has been the subject of several studies (e.g. Klebs 1915-1934, Vandier 1964, 1969 and Decker and Herb 1994). These publications present a thorough examination of the different categories of scenes in the private tombs. The focus is on the chronological development of the different scenes and those compositional changes that take place. These works have provided a framework for an overview of the hunt and offering procession scenes.

Harpur's *Decoration in Egyptian Tombs of the Old Kingdom. Studies in Orientation and Scene Content* from 1987 illustrates the complexity of analyzing tomb iconography. The size and architecture of the tomb clearly dictated the selection of scenes, which is further reflected by the tomb owner's status and the times; this is illustrated by the visible difference in the scene content from the earlier part of the Old Kingdom and the later part of the period. Each type of scene followed a schema of basic and established rules. This includes the desert hunt, although it is not cited as a category of its own in Harpur's study, but only mentioned in passing (Harpur 1987: 82). Harpur demonstrates that the location of each scene is specific. This supports the idea that these scenes are more than decoration, but rather reflect an intent and purpose.

The independent existence of motifs is illustrated by Ikram's article *Hunting Hyenas in the Middle Kingdom: the Appropriation of a Royal Image?* (Ikram 2003b: 141-147) that traces the origin and reoccurrence of the depiction of a hyena with an arrow piercing its muzzle, found first in a royal context in the 5th dynasty. This study demonstrates the specificity of the motifs found within the larger hunt narrative. Ikram touches on the issue of "iconicity" when she suggests that the hyena motif was popular due to the connotations it represented, describing the hyena as similar to the lion in

terms of “ferocity” (Ikram 2003b: 142). Ikram thus provides an example of not only material but also method similar to that applied in this study.

Closer in detailed discussion is Quaegebeur’s article from 1999, “La Naine et le Bouquetin ou l’Énigme de la Barque en Albâtre de Toutankhamoun”. This is an attempt to interpret the well known calcite boat (JE 62120). This discussion of the imagery of the boat, with an ibex head at both prow and stern (cf. Osborn 1987: 244), exemplifies the difficulties involved in dealing with the “antelopes” (gazelle, ibex and oryx) of the desert, all of which appear on objects, temple and tomb walls as well as being found in textual references. Quaegebeur (1999: 21-22) however tends to underestimate the importance of the distinction between the gazelle and the ibex. His discussion demonstrates the problem caused by treating different species as “interchangeables”. This not only results in confusion in terms of description, but also undermines the possibility of an analysis based on the meaning conveyed in the choice of the specific animal.

On a more general level, the emergence of a preference for feminine attributes in the image of the gazelle, also reflected in the textual material, requires a more overarching understanding of feminine imagery. The applicability of the “feminine prototype” outlined in Troy’s study *Patterns of Queenship* (1986: esp. 43-50, cf. also Troy 1997) was an unexpected surprise in the progression of this study. A model that encompassed both the parallels with the cow and the references to the solar eye provided a needed framework for understanding the subtle interconnections found in this multifaceted material.

1.5 Imagery as cultural expression

There are few cultures that display the same vast range of imagery found with the ancient Egyptians (Hornung 1973: 35). It plays an important role in the aesthetics of the culture but above all the imagery of Egyptian art is a conveyer of concepts. The relationship of image and meaning is a thread that connects this imagery to the hieroglyphic writing system (Houlihan 2002: 100). Goldwasser (1995: 12) has described hieroglyphs as functioning as “the pictorial representation of a metaphor”. Similarly static iconic motifs, such as those identified for the gazelle, express concepts that are integral to the ancient Egyptian culture.

The selection of specific motifs at an early stage in the development of Egyptian art suggests that the individual images did not acquire meaning as the result of later perceived associations but rather that it was the perception of meaning that determined the choice of image (Lévi-Strauss

1963: 13, Goldwasser 1995: 26, Mullin 1999: 209). Using the world of animals to express concepts relating to human experience represents the 'arena' within which the pictorial representation became an image with meaning (Lévi-Strauss 1963: 61). The famous words of Lévi-Strauss (1963: 89) are well suited to the ancient Egyptian's choice of animal imagery: "... natural species are chosen not because they are "good to eat" but because they are "good to think" ". The extensive, consistent and specific use of this imagery is a feature that characterizes ancient Egypt (Schäfer 1974: 14).

2 The Gazelle

Observation in the wild is the most likely origin of the attributes given the gazelle in Egyptian art. The earliest images of the gazelle are found in a naturalistic context, as a prey animal hunted by men and dogs (cf. Chapters 3 and 4 below). The desert context is an important element in its depiction as well as in its textual characterisation. Other animals occur together with the gazelle in this environment. The modern lack of familiarity with diversity of desert fauna has on occasion made it difficult for Egyptology to deal with the gazelle as a distinctive image. A review of the life of the gazelle in the wild, as well as descriptions of the animals with which it is commonly associated, reveals characteristics transferred to its depiction in Egyptian art.

2.1 Description

The gazelle is represented in ancient Egyptian art with specific and distinct characteristics.¹ The identity of the animal is also often confirmed with accompanying labels reading “gazelle” (*ghs*), commonly written phonetically. Although some artistic and philological mistakes are found, identification of the gazelle rarely poses a problem when the details of the depiction and context are taken into account. The gazelle is often found together with the ibex and the oryx. Egyptologists, lacking the expertise of the ancient Egyptians, tend to apply the term gazelle to all three. Similarly the term “antelope” is used loosely as descriptive of these three, even though only the gazelle is a member of the subfamily *Antilopini*. Found together in numerous scenes as desert game (cf. e.g. Mereruka, Duell 1938: Pls 24-25), as well as occurring separately in other contexts, not least as individual motifs, the three animals, the gazelle, ibex and oryx, are distinctively depicted.

The gazelle, ibex and oryx are members of different subfamilies of the *Bovidae* family. Each of the three species represents a separate *genus* and *subgenus* (Estes 1992: 63, 115, Kingdon 1997: 445).

¹ The descriptions of the different species have been adapted from Osborn (1998), with special reference to the ancient Egyptian material. Additional information concerning anatomical features and behavioural details has been found in Estes (1992). For an understanding of the original distribution of these three species The Mammals of Africa (1971) has been consulted. Kingdon (1997) has provided additional insight.

2.1.1 Gazelle (*Antilopinae gazella*) 𐏧𐏧𐏧, 𐏧𐏧𐏧𐏧 *ghs, ghst*

The gazelle is “by far the most widely distributed genus of the subfamily of antelopes, ranging from South Africa across Asia and China” (Estes 1992: 63, cf. Kingdon 1997: 409). There are several species of the gazelle represented in Egyptian art: *Gazella dama*, *Gazella dorcas*, *Gazella leptoceros*, *Gazella rufifrons*, and *Gazella subgutturosa* (Osborn 1998: 175-180). All of these appear to have been grouped under the heading *ghs*, the generic term for gazelle (*Wb* V: 191, 1-9), although given individual traits when depicted. The only to be given a different name is Soemmerring’s gazelle (*Gazella soemmerringii*), labelled *gs3* (Osborn 1998: 179).² Among the various species of gazelle, the dorcas gazelle is by far the one most commonly depicted in Egyptian art (Brunner-Traut 1977: 426), although other members of the gazelle genus are also found in some number, such as *Gazella subgutturosa*, “Persian Gazelle” (Osborn 1998: 180), found in the so-called Botanical garden of Tuthmosis III in Karnak (PM II: 120 (407), cf. Osborn 1998: 177-180 for the other gazelle species in ancient Egyptian iconography).

a. Dorcas gazelle (*Gazella dorcas*)

The dorcas gazelle is the species that is most frequently depicted in ancient Egyptian art. It is one of the smallest gazelles (Osborn 1998: 176, Kingdon 1997: 410), measuring c. 60 cm at the shoulder, with a length of c. 1 m. An adult animal can weigh up to 20 kg. Although small, it has proportionally the longest legs (Kingdon 1997: 410). This characteristic can be exaggerated in its depiction (e.g. mastaba of Ptahshepshes, Verner 1977: Pl. 41; mastaba of Sekhemka, G 1029, Simpson 1980: Pl. IVc). The tail is short, not more than 20 cm long (Estes 1992: 63, Kingdon 1997: 410) and is occasionally portrayed curled upward (e.g. gazelle statuette, MMA 26.7.1292, Arnold 1995: 10, cat. no. 3).

The most distinctive characteristic of the gazelle is its horns, found in both male and female. They are ridged and lyre-shaped, bending backwards in a slightly S-shape. The horn’s curve is sharper in the males than the females (cf. Ansell 1971: 58). The horns of the female are occasionally represented with only the tip curved inward (Boessneck 1988:



Figure 1.
Two dorcas gazelles

² Cf. the rock drawing at el-Hagandia, north of Aswan (Červíček 1974: 36, Fig. 136), possibly of Predynastic date, for individual depictions of the dorcas and Soemmerring’s gazelle.

Fig 79; cf. e.g. Beni Hassan, tomb of Khety, BH 17, Newberry 1894: Pl. 14 and the gazelle headed diadem, MMA 26.8.99, cf. below 6.2.1). The horns of the male can grow to c. 30 cm, while those of the female, with fewer ridges, are shorter, measuring c. 20 cm at most (cf. Estes 1992: 63). These can be exaggerated in length in the Egyptian depictions (Osborn 1998: 175, cf. e.g. the tomb chapel of Meru at Naga el-Deir, Dunham 1937: Pl. XIV/N 3737 and the mastaba of Nefer-seshem-ptah, Capart 1907: Pl. LXXX). The young gazelle does not have fully grown horns (Estes 1992: 63), even though depictions of young animals can feature typical horns, most likely as a way to emphasize the identity of the species (cf. e.g. young gazelles in baskets in the tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 34).

The coat of the dorcas gazelle can be anything “from pale fawn to dark plum, and is individually and geographically variable (desert forms lightest); white under-parts and rump patch, a dark flank stripe present or absent ...” (Estes 1992: 63). The Egyptian artist has often reproduced this colouring. This is particularly evident in the Theban tombs (cf. e.g. the tombs of Menna TT 69, Mekhitarian 1978: 87; Amenemhat, TT 82, Mekhitarian 1978: 41 and Ineni, TT 81, Dziobek 1992: Pl. 16). The dorcas has a white eye ring, and white and brown stripes between the eye and the mouth. The eyes of the gazelle are usually depicted as very large (e.g. Amenemhat, TT 82, Mekhitarian 1978: 41) and almost out of proportion, as are the ears. This emphasis may reflect the importance of hearing and sight for detecting danger (Kingdon 1997: 409-410).

b. Soemmerring's gazelle (*Nanger soemmerringii*) **gs3**



Figure 2.
Soemmerring's gazelle

The distinction between the dorcas and Soemmerring's gazelle is indicated in the 5th dynasty mastaba tomb of Princess Idut, of Saqqara, where each animal is carefully labelled (Macramallah 1935: Pl. XX), giving the distinctive term **gs3** for the Soemmerring's gazelle (cf. *Wb* V: 206, 2). The dorcas and Soemmerring's gazelle are found paired in a number of desert hunt scenes³. Although size distinguishes these two in real life, they are

3 Cf. e.g. the mortuary temple of Sahure (4.2.1/a). There are also depictions of both the dorcas and Soemmerring's giving birth in Niuserre's temple (4.2.1/b). The only example of a mating scene with the Soemmerring's is found in the mastaba of Nimaatre (4.3.1/c2).

depicted as similar in size. The Soemmerring's gazelle, in reality, is larger than the dorcas, measuring c. 90 cm at the shoulder, compared to the c. 60 cm of the dorcas. It also weighs approximately twice as much as the dorcas at c. 40 kg. Its coat is a darker brown-red than the lighter colouring of the dorcas and it has a black tuft at the end of its tail. Its horns are also more than twice as long as the dorcas, with the horns of the male growing up to 58 cm in length. Like the dorcas, the horns are "lyre-shaped".

2.1.2 Ibex (*Capra ibex nubiana*)

The ibex, sometimes referred to as an "antelope", belongs to the *Caprini* subfamily that includes sheep and goats. Kingdon (1997: 443) describes it as "an advanced type of goat". The species found in North Africa and modern Israel is *Capra ibex nubiana* or the Nubian ibex (Kingdon 1997: 445).

The Nubian ibex is small in comparison to other ibex. It measures c. 70 cm at the shoulder, with a length of 1.0-1.25 m. It has a maximum weight of 70 kg. The horns of the ibex have a distinctive circular curve (Ansell 1971: 70), going first upward, then back and down. Both male and female have horns, with the male's horns being much longer, at up to 120 cm, in comparison with those of the female that grow to a mere 35 cm. The horns are heavily ridged with pronounced knobs on the outer curve. The Nubian ibex also has a short tail, of c. 20 cm. The body is compact compared to the slender form of the gazelle.



Figure 3. Ibex

The coat of the Nubian ibex is light brown, with lighter hindquarters. The underbelly is lighter, almost white. The males have a dark stripe along their back as well as on their front legs. Like other members of this subfamily, the male ibex has a beard that is often darker than the main colour of its coat. The female only grows a beard when older (Osborn 1998: 180).

The ibex is not only depicted as a prey animal in the desert hunt⁴ and in offering lists, but is also found in 3-dimensional representations. One example of this is the ibex-shaped milk jar for which the curved horns could function as handles (cf. e.g. Louvre E 12659, Paris 1981: 226-227). Its form

4 E.g. in the tombs of Raemka, (Hayes 1953: 99, Fig. 56, below 4.3.1/b.1), Senbi (Blackman 1914: Pl. VI, below 4.3.2/b.1), Rekhmire, TT 100 (Davies 1943: Pl. XLIII).

also appears as cosmetic dishes (e.g. Louvre E 11124, Paris 1993: 30 (top)). The ibex appears to be the preferred animal, followed by the oryx, for scarab decoration (cf. 6.8 below), perhaps because the horns were easily carved on a small scale.

There are two terms associated with the ibex. The most specific is *ni3w* (alt. *nr3w*, *Wb* IV: 202, 1-4). In addition, the word *im3t* is found (cf. *Wb* I: 79, 1-2). Used for male as well as female, this term has a broader meaning, covering wild game in general (Hannig 1997: 69).

2.1.3 Oryx (*Oryx dammah*, *Oryx beisa*) *m3 hq*

The oryx, also included among the “antelopes” of Egyptian art, belongs to the subfamily *Hippotraginae* (literally horse-goats). The animals of this family are large, with heavy bodies and thick necks (Kingdon 1997: 435, 439; Estes 1992: 117). The two *geni* represented in ancient Egyptian art are *Oryx dammah* (Scimitar-horned oryx) and *Oryx beisa* (Estes 1992: 115). The *oryx dammah* is the larger of the two animals, measuring c 120 cm at the shoulder, being close to 2 m long and weighing as much as 200 kg. The *oryx beisa* is only slightly

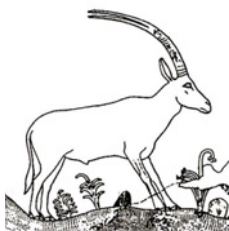


Figure 4. Oryx

smaller.

Both male and female have long, narrow and essentially parallel horns that can be straight or curve slightly backward (Ansell 1971: 48). Ridges are found on the lower part of the horns, which occur in both male and female. They can grow to be over 1 m long. The tail of the oryx is also much longer than that of either the gazelle or ibex, measuring about 60 cm. Its coat is white with a reddish chest. The distinctive facial markings include vertical stripes of colour.

The ancient Egyptian name for the oryx is *m3 hq*, literally “seeing white” (*Wb* II: 11, 4-8; cf. Kees 1941: 26, n. 2), apparently referring to the colouring of the animal, as mainly white (Ansell 1971: 48). The name for the oryx provides the opportunity for a pun in one version of Chapter 112 of the Book of the Dead.

(*Re speaking to Horus*) ‘Look at that black stroke with your hand covering up the sound eye which is there.’ Horus looked at that stroke and said: ‘Behold, I am seeing it as altogether white.’ And that is how the oryx came into being. (cited in Faulkner 1990: 108)

The distinction between the depiction of the gazelle and the oryx can be noted in Sethe's transcription of the Pyramid Texts, where the horns of each animal are given their distinctive forms (PT § 806c for *m3 hq*, and cf. e.g. PT § 972c, N, PT §1799b, N for *ghs*).

The oryx also has a place in religious iconography. It is found as the prow ornament of the Henu bark of the Sokar Festival (Graindorge-Héreil 1994: 17-18, 62-63). The ibex and the gazelle are also documented as prow ornaments during Predynastic times, the ibex with a few examples (Berger 1992: Fig. 12.73⁵) and the gazelle only once (Berger 1992: 113, Fig. 8.17), suggesting a connection between desert game and ceremonial barks. The design of the Henu bark, incorporating the oryx head, is documented no later than the Old Kingdom (Brovarski 1984: 1066-1067), with perhaps the best example that found on the walls of the late New Kingdom temple at Medinet Habu (Epigraphic Survey 1940: Pls 196 C, 221-223; PM II: 498, (93)-(95)). The form of the oryx also occurs as cosmetic dishes (cf. EGA 1982: cat. nos 254-256).

There are singular examples of the oryx as a royal offering, perhaps as early as the end of the Old Kingdom, with reference to a heavily reconstructed scene from the vestibule of the mortuary temple of Pepi II at Saqqara (cf. Jéquier 1938: Pl. 41⁶). A more certain example of this motif is dated to the reign of Amenhotep III and is located in the hypostyle in the Luxor temple (PM II: 318, (102), 3). In this scene the animal is positioned as a defeated enemy as the king raises a weapon to dispatch it (Derchain 1962: 9, Fig. 1), suggesting, that the oryx, perhaps representing desert game generically, is associated with powers to be controlled (cf. below 4.2.3/a, Tutankhamun's painted chest). This is further indicated by what Kákosy (1998: 136) describes as the oryx's role in the Late Period as the enemy of the Sound Eye, as well as of the moon as Eye (cf. cited works in Derchain 1962: 28-30 and Germond 1989: 54).

2.1.4 Other animals of the desert

The gazelle, ibex and oryx were not the only species hunted in the desert scenes. Other common animals include the hartebeest, aurochs and occasionally the addax and fallow deer. The hyena, wild ass and ostrich also appear from time to time in the desert hunt scene. Small animals, such as the

⁵ Berger (1992: 117) refers to Červíček's (1974) publication of rock drawings; while most of his references are correct, the rock drawing with an ibex headed prow is not accurately cited.

⁶ This scene in the vestibule of the mortuary monument of Pepi II (PM III/2: 427 (27)) is very fragmentary and its interpretation should be treated as with caution.

hare and hedgehog, add to the multitude of desert species. The variation of animals, although seemingly endless, was partially determined by the trend of the different periods and whether it was a royal or private desert scene. In addition, the combination of desert animals does not always reflect reality (Osborn 1998: 11), with some being distinct desert species and others inhabitants of the savannah.

a. Hartebeest (*Alcelaphus buselaphus*) — **ss3w**

The (bubal) hartebeest is one of the most common species featured in the desert hunt (e.g. Sahure, 4.2.1/a below; Senbi, 4.3.2/b.1 below; Amenemhat, TT 82, Davies and Gardiner 1915: Pl. IX) and occur in the majority of these scenes. The hartebeest figures in the offering scenes as well, though not to the same extent as in the desert hunt (cf. e.g. Akhetotep, Davies 1901: Pl. XIX).

The species belongs to the medium to large sized antelopes (Estes 1992: 133) with a shoulder height measuring 107-150 cm, body length c. 160-215 cm (Kingdon 1997: 429). The most recognizable feature in ancient Egyptian iconography is its horns, generally portrayed in a frontal view, while the rest of the animal is in profile.

The horns are U-shaped, with the tips curving ‘sharply’ outward (‘recurved’). They are ridged at the base and the length of them varies from 40 to 75 cm (Estes 1992: 138). The hartebeest muzzle is long and narrow, which is a distinctive feature of its depiction. The tail measures between 30 to 70 cm; this variation is reflected in the representations where the tail length varies greatly (Osborn 1998: 172). The colouring of the coat differs, depending on region and even individual variations within a herd can be observed (Kingdon 1997: 429); “light yellowish- to dark reddish-brown” (Osborn 1998: 172). The belly and hind quarters are lighter in colour than the body.

An early depiction of the hartebeest is found on the Narmer macehead from the main deposit in Hierakonpolis. This object features a scene that includes three animals in an enclosure (Quibell 1900: Pl. XXVI, B), all of these can be identified as hartebeest (Osborn 1998: 171) by the shape of the horns and the narrow muzzle.

The term **ss3w** (*Wb* IV: 543, 5-6) for the hartebeest is found e.g. in the OK mastaba of Sekhemankhpath (Simpson 1976: Pl. D).



Figure 5. Hartebeests in an enclosure

b. Aurochs (*Bos primigenus*) e.g.  **tw3**,  **ng3w**,  **sm3**

The aurochs is also referred to as the “wild bull”, in contrast to the domesticated cattle (*Bos taurus*). The aurochs, like the domesticated cattle, belong to the *Bovinae* family. The aurochs has a dark coat and long and lyre-shaped horns with a quite broad span. It is the largest animal of the hunted desert species and this is reflected in its depiction. Apart from the lion, the aurochs is found as one of the ‘large’ animals hunted by the king (cf. Tutankhamun’s unguent jar, discussed below at 4.2.3/a.4).

In several examples⁷ of the desert hunt an aurochs is attacked by a lion, displaying a conflict between two majestic creatures. The lion targets either the muzzle or the neck creating a naturalistic antithetical composition.



Figure 6. Lion attacking aurochs

It has been pointed out by Otto (1950: 170) that the aurochs is regularly depicted confronting its hunter, which could also include human hunters equipped with bow and arrow (cf. e.g. Khnumhotep III, Newberry 1893: Pl. XXX).

The aurochs occurs seldom in the offering rows, (the bulls there are generally labelled **tw3**, ‘cattle’), but is represented by the **hps**-foreleg. Consequently Otto (1950: 170-173) regarded the hunt of the aurochs as a part of the ritual of the Opening the Mouth (cf. also Eyre 2002: 193).

The term “cattle”, referring to both domesticated and wild animals, is represented by a variety of Egyptian words. The term **k3** (*Wb* V: 94-98) is used in a wide sense, while **tw3** refers more neutrally to domesticated cattle (Ikram 1995: 14, *Wb* I: 49, 10-11) and is perhaps the most common in the offering scenes and lists. The term **ih** (*Wb* I: 119-120) is similarly a general term. The aurochs that was to be slaughtered and offered was termed **sm3** (Eyre 2002: 192, cf. *Wb* IV: 124-5). The long-horned bull or ox was called **ng3w** (*Wb* II: 349, 1; cf. Ikram 1995: 8-15 for the various names for cattle).

c. Addax (*Addax nasomaculatus*)  **nwdw**

The addax belongs to the subfamily *Hippotraginae*, i.e. the same as the oryx, being somewhat smaller, at c. 110 cm tall, with a length of about 160 cm. The most recognizable feature of the addax is its horns. They are exceptionally long and twisted in a spiral (“corkscrew”, Estes 1992: 115). The addax is quite stocky and the fur is white (cf. the oryx), the head and

⁷ E.g. In the OK, Seshemnefer (4.3.1/c.1 below), Ptahhotep (4.3.1/b.3 below) and Mereruka (Duell 1938: Pls 24-24), and MK, Senbi (4.3.2/b.1 below).

muzzle have different shades of brown (Kingdon 1997: 442). Compared to other *Hippotragini*, the addax has short legs and a stocky body, making it a slow runner and easily captured, which may explain the comment that they are apparently “easily tamed in captivity” (Osborn 1998: 159). This may also provide a reason why the addax is more commonly found in the offering rows than as desert prey.



Figure 7. Addax

The horns are generally depicted in profile, with however one example of a frontal view in the Middle Kingdom desert scene of Djehutihotep at el-Bersheh (Newberry 1895: Pl. VII, right section, c. center row). The addax is most commonly depicted during the Old Kingdom (Osborn 1998: 160) and is sometime identified with the label *nwdw* (*Wb* II: 226, 15-16).

d. Fallow deer (*Dama mesopotamica*) [□] *hnn*

There are few but distinctive examples of fallow deer in the desert hunt scenes. The fallow deer belongs to the *Cervidae* family and is distinguishable by its characteristic antlers. Only the male animals grow the branched horns, which “are shed each year”⁸ (Kingdon 1997: 338). The coat is yellow-brown with light spots, the belly and the tail is partially white; this can be observed in the tomb of Intef (TT 155, Säve-Söderbergh 1957: Pl. XVI). The examples of representations of fallow deer decreased over time (as do those of the addax), which may reflect the limited number of this animal in North Africa (Kingdon 1997: 338). It is thought to have become extinct in the region by the New Kingdom due to loss of habitat and to “overhunting” (Osborn 1998: 154, cf. also Ikram 1995: 21).



Figure 8. Fallow deer

The ancient Egyptian term for the fallow deer was *hnn* (*Wb* II: 495,

8 Cf. the example in the tomb of Puimre (TT 39, Davies 1922: Pl. VII) where the nursing female is shown with antlers, most likely in order to specify the species. This may however be a ‘mistake’ as it is the gazelle that generally occurs in this motif. An association between the two animals is also possible. Cf. the combination of the gazelle and fallow deer found on the electrum diadem (MMA 68.1361) discussed below as 6.2.2.

19) which is used with consistency. One discrepancy is however found in the Old Kingdom tomb of Ibi at Deir el-Gebrawi (Davis 1902 a: Pl. XI), where a pair of mating roan antelopes (Osborn 1998: 169) has been labelled as *hnn* and *hnt*.

e. Roan antelope (*Hippotragus equinus*) *hnn*, *hnt*

The roan antelope is only infrequently found in the desert hunt scenes or in the offering rows. This is most likely explained by the fact that it does not occur naturally in the Egyptian desert, but is found primarily south of the Sahara (cf. map in Estes 1992: 120). It is tall and robust, with a thick neck. Its horns are curved (Kingdon 1997: 436), although they are not as long and prominent as the ibex (Estes 1992: 120). It seems that there is no specific ancient Egyptian word related to this animal, which may explain the use of the term *hnn*, fem. *hnt* (*Wb* II: 495, 19) that more properly refers to the fallow deer (cf. tomb of Ti, Wild 1966: Pl. CLXVI).

f. Barbary goat (*Ammotragus lervia*) *ib*

The barbary goat can be observed in a few desert hunt and offering scenes.



Figure 9. Barbary goat

Like the domestic goat (*Capra hircus*), and the domestic sheep (*Ovis aries*), the barbary goat is a member of the *Caprini* family. It is heavily built, with short legs and is described as “intermediate between a sheep and goat” (Kingdon 1997: 444). Again, the shape of the horns, arching outward and then inward, are the best detail to identify this species, commonly portrayed in frontal view. The barbary goat is called *ib* in ancient Egyptian (*Wb* I:

61, 7). This distinguishes it from the domestic goat, for which the term *wndw* (*Wb* I: 326, 3) is used.

g. Wild ass (*Equus asinus africanus*) *ʿ*

The wild ass appears in a few desert hunt scenes, while the domesticated donkey (*Equus asinus asinus*) is primarily found in scenes relating to agriculture. Both species are a part of the *Equidae* family and the wild ass is the ancestor of “all domestic donkeys and asses” (Estes 1992: 235). The wild ass has a grey or fawn coloured coat, with white belly and legs. The mane is short and black and its ears are long and “leaf-shaped” (Kingdon 1997: 310). There is a large number of textual references to the domestic donkey as *ʿ* (*Wb* I: 165, 6) and this term appears to apply to the wild ass as well.

Examples of the wild ass in private scenes are rare. When found, the

most characteristic motif is foaling. Examples can be observed e.g. in the Middle Kingdom tombs of Ukhhotep (Blackman 1915a: Pl. VII) and Senbi at Meir (Blackman 1914: Pl. VI) and in the New Kingdom tombs of Montuherkpeshef (TT 20, Davies 1913: Pl. XII) and Kenamun (TT 93, Davies 1930: Pl. XLVIII). The wild ass is not included among the animals of the offering scenes or lists, nor is there direct evidence that the donkey was one of the animals kept for its meat, although this may have been the case (cf. Ikram 1995: 5).

At least two examples of hunt scenes where wild ass are the prey can be found. One is on Tutankhamun's painted chest (cf. discussed below 4.2.3/a.2) and the other is on the south wall of the first pylon in Medinet Habu (Epigraphic Survey 1932: Pls 116-117, cf. 4.2.3/b), both examples of the royal hunt. Even though the wild ass appears as early as the Predynastic period in rock drawings (e.g. Červíček 1974: Fig. 255) and on palettes (Cairo 14238 ('Town's Palette'), Asselberghs 1961: Pl. XCII, Fig. 165; cf. also Pl. LXXXIV), hunting this species does not seem to have been common.

h. Hyena (*Hyena hyena*)  **hnt**

One of the perhaps most unlikely animals to be hunted in the desert is the striped hyena, known as **hnt** (*Wb* III: 203, 16-17). The hyena skull is massive, with powerful jaws and a "blunt muzzle" (Kingdon 1997: 258). The ears are fairly large and pointed. The shoulders are higher than the hind part (Estes 1992: 323), creating a sloping posture. The crest that goes from neck to tail is bushy and spiky, as is the tail. The hunted hyena in the desert scenes are generally seen either fleeing from the arrows or with an arrow piercing its muzzle; this latter composition appears as a motif in Sahure desert scene and was "appropriated" in the private tombs of Middle and New Kingdom (cf. Ikram 2003b, with an extensive discussion on this particular motif).



Figure 10.
A hyena with arrows

The striped hyena does not only appear in the desert hunt scenes, but also in some of the offering rows (Murray 1905: Pl. VII) and occasionally in the offering list as well (e.g. Seshat-hotep, Junker 1934: 187, Fig. 33). There are a few depictions of attempts to domesticate the hyena (e.g. the Old Kingdom tombs of Kagemni, von Bissing 1905: Pl. XI and Mereruka, Duell 1938: Pl. 153); however such experiments seem to have been restricted to the Old Kingdom and were not very successful (Ikram 1995: 22-23).

i. Red Fox⁹ (*Vulpes vulpes*) 𐩧𐩢𐩣 *s3b* (?)

The red fox occurs in the desert hunt scenes, in differing depictions. The most recognizable features of the fox are the pointed ears and muzzle and the long bushy tail. The colouring of the coat varies from red to sand to grey according to season (Kingdon 1997: 221). The fox can be mistaken for the jackal; however, the fox is considerably smaller (both fox and jackals are part of the *Canidae* family, Estes 1992: 384). The role of the fox is also



Figure 11.

Fox sniffing an ass foal

remarkably varied. It is found attacked by a dog (e.g. tombs of Nefermaat and Rahotep, cf. 4.3.1/a.1-2 below), mating (e.g. Ptahhotep, 4.3.1/b.3 below) or hiding (e.g. tomb of User, TT 21, Davies 1913: Pl. XXII). The most common composition shows a fox sniffing a young animal as it is

being born (cf. Montuherkhepeshef, TT 20, 4.3.3/b below).

In contrast to the hyena, the fox cannot be found in any offering scenes or lists, nor does there seem to have been any attempts at domestication. Ikram (1995: 22-23) does not mention the fox among those hunted for its meat, and may thus be included in the desert hunt as an attribute of desert topography or as a reminder of the dangers in the desert. There does not seem to be a specific term recorded for the fox and the suggested *s3b* is primarily applied to the so-called jackal (*Wb* III: 420, 5 - 421, 5).

j. Cape hare (*Lepus capensis*) 𐩧𐩢𐩣 *sh3t*

The cape or brown hare is a common feature of the desert hunt scenes. It is easily recognized by its long ears, measuring close to a third of the length of head and body, and its long legs and short tail. The colour of the fur varies greatly, from yellow to grey to brown (Kingdon 1997: 153). This variation is also found in the way it is represented (Osborn 1998: 43). The cape hare is well adapted to the desert environment, which is also reflected in the iconography. The hare would have been a common sight in the Egyptian landscape. This may be the background to its occurrence as the bilateral hieroglyphic sign 𐩧𐩢𐩣 read as *wn*. (Gardiner Sign List E 34, for *sh3t*, *Wb* IV: 268, 11).

The hare is depicted fleeing among the other hunted animals and in

⁹ The other species of fox possibly found in ancient Egypt are the sand or desert fox (*Vulpes rueppelli*) and the fennec (*Fennecus zerda*) (cf. Osborn 1998: 73-74).

the so-called inserts where it is seen hiding and escaping the hunt, in the same way as the young gazelle. The hare only occurs infrequently in the offering rows, being carried in baskets (e.g. Nebemakhet, Keel 1980: 73, Fig. 32 and Khnumhotep III, Newberry 1983: Pl. XXXV) or grasped by their ears (especially during the New Kingdom, e.g. Amenemhat, TT 53, Wreszinski 1923: Pl. 53 and Nebamun, TT 90, Davies 1923: Pl. XXIII). It is likely that the hare was commonly hunted for food rather than as an offering (Ikram 1995: 22).

k. Hedgehog (*Paraechinus aethiopicus*¹⁰)  **hnti**,  **hnt3**

The hedgehog is one of the so-called small animals that are included as prey in the desert hunt scenes. The desert hedgehog has long ears, long limbs, a short tail and spikes that are shorter than those on species found south of the Sahara (Kingdon 1997: 141-142). The hedgehog is depicted striding calmly among the frenzy of fleeing animals. It is also found in the so-called inserts, most likely hiding in the same way as the hare and the gazelle. Two probably related terms are used for the hedgehog, **hnti** and **hnt3** (*Wb* III: 121, 15, 122, 7),

While the hedgehog hardly formed a part of the ancient Egyptian diet (Ikram 1995: 22), it is still occasionally included in the offering rows, carried in baskets (e.g. tombs of Pehenuka, Harpur 1987: 530, Fig. 188 and Mereruka, Duell 1938: Pl. 191). This is more common during the Old Kingdom, with the occurrence of the hedgehog as offering declining during the succeeding periods.

l. Ostrich (*Struthio camelus*)  **ntw**

In contrast to the other hunted animals in the desert scenes, the ostrich represents the only species that is not a mammal but is rather a member of the *avifauna* group. The ostrich is easily spotted with its long neck and long legs. In the desert scenes, it is shown trying to escape the hunters, generally striding with wings outstretched. Its depiction seems to have been most popular during the Predynastic Period and the New Kingdom (Houlihan 1986: 3). The ostrich egg in particular appears to have been eaten (Ikram 1995: 25). The ostrich is also one of the tributes that Ramses II received from the Nubians (e.g. the Beit el-Wali temple, Roeder 1938: Pl. 9b), possibly

10 Cf. Osborn 1998: 19-20 for the discussion of which species the ancient Egyptian hedgehog belongs to (i.e. either *Paraechinus deserti*, *Paraechinus dorsalis* or *Paraechinus aethiopicus*). See also the extensive study of the hedgehog in ancient Egypt by von Droste zu Hülshoff (1980).

suggesting that it was regarded to be an ‘exotic’ animal. It is called *ntw* (*Wb* II: 202, 8-11).

Mentioned in the Pyramid Texts as an animal that can “open the way” for the dead (§469a, W, N), the ostrich is among those animals that may have had an earlier, now lost, religious significance. Finds of ostrich feathers¹¹ as well as the role that these play as symbol of both the divinity of kingship, as elements of divine and royal crowns, and of the principle of justice, Maat, indicate iconographic significance. The ostrich feather is also found as a common hieroglyph (cf. Gardiner sign list H 8) used generically to mean “feather”.

2.1.5 Ancient and modern problems of identification

Many of the animals found in desert hunt scenes are easily distinguishable and drawn with attention to anatomical details. This is not always the case however and the attributes of similar but different species can be combined in one animal. This is particularly true of those animals grouped together as antelopes. There are examples of animals labelled *ghs* “gazelle” drawn with the horns of the ibex (e.g. tomb of Pehenuka, Harpur 1987: 530, Fig. 188) or the long tail of the oryx, but with the horns of a gazelle (mastaba of Idu, G 7102, Simpson 1976: Pl. XXVII). In the Beni Hassan tomb of Khnumhotep III (Newberry 1893: Pl. XXXV), a fattened gazelle (*rn n ghs*)¹² is depicted with rather straight horns, more like those of an oryx (Newberry 1893: Pl. XXXV), although similar horns may also be found on some gazelle species (Gentry 1971: 90). The addition of details, properly belonging to another animal, is also found in the depictions of the ibex and oryx. The length of the tail, in particular, can be incorrect. Even with the occasional mix-up in term of details, the identification of individual animals is clear in the majority of the cases, much due to contextual standardisation.

The spelling of the word *ghs* rarely posed any difficulties for the ancient Egyptians, with only rare examples where mistakes have been made. One such example is found in the tomb of Wernu at Saqqara (PM III: 519), where the hieroglyph  (*g*) was shifted to the end of the word, so that the word above the gazelle reads *hsg* (Saad 1943: Pl. XLIII).

The word ‘gazelle’ has often been used incorrectly in Egyptological works. Helck (1963: 502) for example translated *m3 hq* as gazelle and *ghs* as

11 Ostrich feathers have been found at Hierakonpolis (Friedman 1999: 103) and are mentioned as offerings in the ritual relating to the return of the “Distant” goddess (e.g. Verhoeven and Derchain 1985: 22-23. Cf. Darnell 1995: 70-73 for alternative translation of this section of the Mut Ritual, P. Berlin 3014 + 3053, XVI 6 – XVII 1).

12 Cf. the discussion in Chapter 5.1.

antelope. Another frequently repeated error is found in the translation of the name of the 16th Upper Egyptian nome. It is often referred to as the ‘Gazelle nome’ (e.g. Helck 1977: 391). However, the horns of the animal on the standard clearly indicate that it is an oryx, making the correct name of the nome the ‘Oryx (*m3 ḥd*) nome’. The word *m3 ḥd* is not spelled out in the name of the nome, only with the animal occurring on a standard. The same animal is often featured however in the Beni Hassan hunting and offering scenes, where it is specifically referred to as *m3 ḥd* (Khnumhotep III, BH 3, Newberry 1893: Pls XVII, XXXV; Baqt III, BH 15, Newberry 1894: Pl. IV). As Beni Hassan is located in the 16th Upper Egyptian nome, the occurrence of the oryx in these scenes is significant.

Similarly, the term ‘oryx’ (*m3 ḥd*) is read as “antelope” by Störck, although he refers mainly to *Oryx gazella*, and points out (correctly) the use of the term gazelle as “summarisch” (Störck 1973: 319-323). The idea that the term gazelle (*ghs*) is “a generic term used for smaller antelope rather than any specific species” (Ikram 1995: 21) is not reflected in the ancient Egyptian material.

There are occasions on which the more general use of the term ‘antelope’¹³ is justified, for example when it is intended as a rudimentary description of a poorly preserved image where an accurate identification is uncertain. Less distinct images, such as those found in rock drawings, present some problems in the interpretation of species and there it is more correct to label an archaic picture of a four-legged, horned animal as an ‘antelope’ than to use specific terminology such as gazelle, ibex or oryx. It is also used here as a collective term for a mixed group of members of the *bovidae* family. The term antelope does not imply however the classification *antilopini*.¹⁴

Quaegebeur (1999: 21) describes the ambivalence of the imagery with regard to the gazelle and ibex using the term “interchangeables”. This discussion is immediately followed by a quotation from an inscription from the small temple of Hathor at Philae, reading *ḥst n ḏw* (‘the female gazelle of the mountain’, Quaegebeur 1999: 21-22). Quaegebeur concludes from this

13 “Antelope” is defined by Estes (1992: 8) in the following way: “Technically, it is the name of the Indian blackbuck, *Antilope cervicapra*, and applies to the members of its tribe, the Antilopini. In practice, bovids of all tribes apart from cattle (Bovini), sheep and goats (Caprini), and goat-antelopes (Rupicaprini) are called antelopes”.

14 Červíček (1974) identifies several drawings as gazelles, some of which are questionable (e.g. Figs 112, 124, 159). Where the identification is uncertain, this is pointed out. He also uses the description “gazellenähnliche” (1974: 174). Another label is “Antilopen” (1974: 169-170). Cf. Osborn (1998: 185) on Červíček’s use of antelope for ibex.

citation that there is a distinctive connection between the ibex and Hathor. He further refers to several examples of the gazelle headed crowns worn by the royal women (cf. below 6.2), first correctly describing them as gazelles and then later in the same text referring to the species as ibex “... le motif de la tête de bouquetin ornant le front des épouses royales en Egypte...” (Quaegebeur 1999: 40). There are no known examples of ibex protomes adorning the forehead of any royal woman in ancient Egyptian art, this role is reserved for gazelle (cf. Lilyquist 2003: 347-348, Appendix 4), along side the cobra (uraeus) and vulture.¹⁵

It is clear from the primary sources that the ancient Egyptians knew the difference between the gazelle, oryx and ibex, as there were separate names for them, and distinctive representational details to indicate species. This seems to have been the case from the very beginning, as can be seen on a Naqada vase in Brussels (E.2631, de Meulenaere and Limme 1988: 12) where the three animals have been incised with their particular features, i.e. shape of horns, body and tail. The depictions and designations of these animals do not alter with time. A gazelle is rendered with the same anatomical details throughout the life of ancient Egyptian art. The depictions in the tomb of Petosiris (c. 350 B.C.), for example, display clear distinctions between the dorcas gazelle and Soemmerring’s gazelle, and the ibex and oryx (Lefebvre 1924: Pl. XXXV).

2.1.6 Description – concluding remarks

Three species, the gazelle, ibex and oryx, are part of a group of animals depicted as desert game that also includes, among others, hartebeest, addax, aurochs, hedgehog, hyena and hare. The gazelle, ibex and oryx are commonly grouped together and regularly represented as desert animals in the offering rows, both in private tombs (e.g. Mereruka, Duell 1938: Pl. 25; Sabi Ibebi, wall fragment (CG 1419), Quaegebeur 1999: 15, Fig. 6) and on temple walls (e.g. Kom Ombo; Quaegebeur 1999: 15, Fig. 7 and below 5.1). This does not mean however that by being grouped, their identities as members of different species is ignored “... since animal icons carry strong iconic power, it is probable that no prototypical member could be generalized to the extent of representing the whole category” (Goldwasser 1995: 87). It is clear that although the three are often found together and even on occasion overlap in depiction, they each had their own distinct iconic identity.

¹⁵ One of the gazelle headed diadems has a stag as centre protome, nonetheless flanked by gazelles. Cf. below 6.2.1/a, describing MMA 68.1361.

2.2 Habitat and subsistence

The gazelle is depicted as a desert animal in Egyptian art. This is the environment for which it is ideally adapted (Kingdon 1997: 411). The dorcas gazelle is found on savannas and in semi-desert and desert environments.¹⁶ These are areas with extreme heat, making the gazelle's ability to subsist only on the water from the vegetation that makes up their diet (Estes 1992: 9, cf. 65, Table 5.1) of great importance, as is their ability to "store" water, drinking as much as 10% of their body mass per day when water is available. An important food and water source is the various species of acacia, of which they eat the leaves, flowers and pods. There is a correlation between the number of acacia trees and the density of gazelle population, with a large number of trees supporting as many as five individuals per km. They sometimes feed on trees while standing on their hind legs.

A study of the dorcas gazelle in the southern Negev (Mendelssohn et al 1995: 4) shows that they spend between two to eight hours a day grazing, travelling over an area of 12 km. There is a migration pattern from winter desert to a summer water source where necessary. When the climate is extreme, the dorcas gazelle live in pairs. Otherwise the herds consist of family groups with one adult male and several female. Herds of five to 12 individuals are common in areas such as wadis that are geographically limited. When the herd migrates however they gather into larger groups. Herds of dorcas gazelle live mainly in the Eastern Desert of Upper Egypt today (Boessneck 1988: 37-38, cf. Gentry 1971: 89, Kingdon 1997: 410), migrating to the Red Sea coastal area in the summer months.

2.3 Natural behaviour

The presentation of the gazelle in ancient Egyptian art is based on observation of the animal in its natural surroundings and when in captivity. The most iconic images derive from the Pre- and Early Dynastic Periods and thus date to a time when hunting may still have been a part of a subsistence strategy. As the gazelle was a prominent game animal, close observation of its behaviour would have been of benefit. Consequently most of the characteristic gazelle motifs relate to the animal's behaviour in the context of the hunt. Many different stages of the life of this animal are represented in the hunt scenes.

¹⁶ This section relies on Mendelssohn et al 1995, which provides a detailed description of the attributes and behaviour of the dorcas gazelle.

2.3.1 Mating

Gazelles mate sometime between September and November. During this time the male is territorial, marking boundaries with piles of dung. The mating ceremony is described as ritualized, with the male lowering his head, stretching out his neck, as he follows the female with a characteristic pace, lifting a foreleg, and making noises. After circling around, the female responds by lifting her tail.

Depictions of mating gazelles are limited, with only four examples found in this material.¹⁷ The rarity of the mating motif, with the exception of those involving cattle, has been observed by Ikram (1991: 51). Images of copulating wild animals are limited to desert hunt scenes, where the natural environment for this activity is depicted. All four examples of mating gazelles are similar in their composition; the female stands on all four legs as she is mounted by the male, who supports himself on two hind legs, corresponding to a realistic mating posture (Estes 1992: 68-69).

The accuracy with which the mating gazelles are depicted can be compared with other examples of mating motifs found on tomb walls. Felines, for example, are shown copulating in the highly unlikely standing position (cf. Ikram 1991: 62-63, Tables I-II), whereas the recumbent position is the natural one (Estes 1992: 356, Fig. 21.9). Ikram (1991: 59) offered the following explanation for this discrepancy: "It is possible that the Egyptians had neither the opportunity, nor the inclination to observe these animals in the wild as they are quite dangerous, especially when thus engaged."

2.3.2 Giving birth

Gazelles carry their young for about six months. The mother alternates between standing and lying down during labour. The fawn stands up to nurse after about 20 minutes. When not feeding, the young hides in the grass. A different place is chosen to hide the fawn after each feeding, with the mother keeping watch from a distance. When food is plentiful, gazelles can reproduce twice a year.

Depictions of gazelles giving birth appear to be limited during the Old Kingdom to the royal mortuary temples of Niuserre (PM III/1: 319-324, von Bissing 1956: Pls XI, XII) and Unas¹⁸ (PM III/2: 419, Hassan 1938: Pl.

17 In the tombs of Seshemnefer (Junker 1953: Fig. 63), Nimaatre (Roth 1995: Pl. 95b), Ukhhotep, (Blackman 1915a: Pl. VII) and on a silver jar (CG 53262/JE 39867, Edgar 1925: Pl. I, Fig. 1). Cf. Appendix III.

18 The blocks from the causeway of Unas show hartebeest and roan antelope foaling (Osborn 1998: 169). The two gazelles (dorcass and Soemmerring's) found in this group are most likely giving birth as well, unfortunately only the head of these two animals remain.

CXVII A). The gazelles are seen foaling standing, corresponding to natural behaviour.

A single example of a gazelle giving birth in a recumbent position is included in the Middle Kingdom tomb of Khnumhotep III at Beni Hassan (PM IV: 145, (7)-(11); Newberry 1893: Pl. XXX). The foaling takes place in a so-called insert, separate from the register of the desert hunt. The mother has her head turned back, as if watching for danger. This image of a gazelle giving birth while lying down is unique.¹⁹

2.3.3 Nursing the young

The motif of a nursing gazelle in the desert hunt scenes appears in several of the Old Kingdom private tombs, followed by three examples dating to the Middle and New Kingdom²⁰ as well. The composition of mother and young is located among the chaos of fleeing animals, creating a contrast to the hunting frenzy. The act of nursing is also observable in several Old Kingdom offering scenes (e.g. Rawer II, G 5470, Junker 1938: 233, Fig. 48; Kadua, Hassan 1951: Pl. XLVI and Kagemni, von Bissing 1905: Pl. VII). This image is thus found in two different contexts: the hunt scene and the offering procession.

The gazelle is the only wild animal depicted nursing, with the exception of the (Persian) fallow deer (*dama dama mesopotamica*, Osborn 1998: 154) in the New Kingdom tomb of Puimre (TT 39, Davies 1922: Pl. VII, cf. discussion above). Otherwise, it is only a small number of domesticated animals (e.g. cow, goat, donkey) that are shown nursing their young.

The image of the nursing gazelle, when found in an offering row (cf. Chapter 5) has certain similarities to that of the domesticated cow nursing its calf. Both the cow and the gazelle are shown with the head turned back while nursing in some examples. Another shared detail is the depiction of the mother raising a hind leg to scratch an ear or muzzle (cf. Smith 1949: 327, Fig. 205; 363, Fig. 237; Vandier 1969: 67, Fig. 44; 71, Fig. 48). Common details are mainly found in material from the Old Kingdom. The nursing

19 Compare the imagery of the Wadi Hammamat inscription known as the Miracle of the Gazelle, where the mother is described as having her head turned back (Couyat and Montet 1913: 77-78) and below at 7.3.

20 The Middle Kingdom example of a nursing gazelle in a desert hunt scene is located in the tomb of Senbi at Meir (cf. below 4.3.2/b.1). The New Kingdom desert hunt scene of Montuherkhepeshef (TT 20) also features a nursing gazelle among the hunting frenzy (cf. below 4.3.3/a). The third example is found on the embroidered tunic of Tutankhamun (cf. below 4.2.3/a.3). Cf. Appendix III.

gazelle with raised hind leg is, for example, observable in the desert hunting scene of Ptahhotep (PM III/2: 601 (17), Davies 1900: Pl. XXI). Alongside that of the hunted gazelle, the picture of a nursing gazelle is used as an individual motif found e.g. on minor objects (cf. below 6.4 and 6.5).

In a few of the nursing scenes the gazelle mother grazes or nibbles on a small bush. This variation on grazing developed into the so-called palmette motif, where two gazelles stand on either side of the palmette, nibbling on the stylized tree (cf. below 6.4) providing an example of its adaptation to the arid environment with sparse vegetation (Estes 1992: 64, Kingdon 1997: 411).

2.3.4 Protecting the young

The antelope family has a specific strategy that optimizes the survival of their young. It hides the fawns from predators. The antelope family is thus labelled as “hidlers” (Estes 1992: 17). Once the fawn has been born, it lies still, hidden in crevices, behind bushes and small trees and remains in hiding most of the time (depending on species). This hiding behaviour is limited to the period when the animal is young (Kingdon 1997: 410). The mother stays away from the hiding place to avoid drawing attention to it. The young leaves the hiding place when the mother calls, either for suckling or when the herd moves to new grazing areas. In addition to concealment, this behaviour has the additional benefit of containing the smell of the fawn “during the concealment stage” (Estes 1992: 17).

This natural behaviour is observable in the desert hunt scenes, where the young gazelle is seen recumbent. The gazelle fawn can have its head turned back, a posture corresponding to the natural behaviour of a hider. The young animals in the grass provide an isolated motif often represented in the so-called insert,²¹ a small image with its own ground line placed in the middle of a register (cf. below 4.1.4). The gazelle is much more frequently depicted in the inserts than the ibex and oryx.²² Other common desert species such as the hare, hedgehog and jerboa, all small nocturnal animals living in burrows (Kingdon 1997: 153, 142, 191), are also found in inserts.

Even though young animals generally escape predators by hiding, they are easily located if one searches. A gazelle mother, standing at some distance away to divert attention from her fawn, starts prancing if she senses danger (Osborn 1998: 176, Estes 1992: 13, cf. also 24, Table 2.4). This

²¹ The term is adapted from Osborn 1998: 61, 70, 103 and *passim*. Cf. below 4.1.4.

²² Cf. the tombs of Mereruka (Duell 1938: Pl. 25), Merytet (Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CXL (J 40) and Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep (Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 40) where the young of what is most likely ibex and oryx are included in the inserts.

makes it simple to find and collect a fawn, even with its mother looking on. The tendency for the mother to keep close to her young also makes her vulnerable. The collection of young gazelles is thought to be represented in the so-called basket motif (Osborn 1998: 176, cf. 5.1.1/b.3). A man in a hunting scene (below 4.3.1/b.5), as well as an offer bearer in an offering scene (below 5.1.1/b.3), can be found carrying a pole across the shoulders, with baskets hanging from either end, containing young gazelles. While the gazelle is one of the most common animals portrayed in this motif, hares and hedgehogs, also found in the inserts, are also among the animals carried in such baskets.

2.3.5 Fleeing the predator

The oldest gazelle motif features it as a prey animal (cf. Chapter 3). In the wild, the gazelle is common prey for most of the large felines (e.g. lion, leopard and cheetah). In the desert hunt scenes the role of predator is commonly played by the hunting dog. The speed of the gazelle, up to 80 km an hour (Mendelssohn et al 1995: 4), is its primary strength when facing a predator. Its slender limbs are said to be an adaptation for “greater mobility and speed” (Kingdon 1997: 409). Only the cheetah, among the feline predators, can outrun it (Estes 1992: 70). Furthermore, the gazelle can change direction when running at full speed, which is not possible for the lion that has a wide turning circle.²³ The combination of stamina and being able to change direction swiftly works in the gazelle’s favour, increasing the odds for surviving an attack (Estes 1992: 70).

When a predator catches up with the gazelle, it knocks down the fleeing animal by seizing its hind leg. This is frequently shown in the desert hunt scenes. Commonly, a hunting dog is depicted lunging at the gazelle’s hind leg, bringing it to a halt, and causing it to somersault, with the gazelle ending up on its back. In the tomb of Ibi (4.3.1/d.1 cf. below), the verb *ndrw* “to grasp, hold fast” (cf. Faulkner 1962: 145) is used to describe the downing of the gazelle. It is then killed by strangulation as the jaws of the predator grip its neck. This moment is transformed into an iconic motif.

The gazelle uses both its sight and hearing to detect danger, with its sense of smell being of secondary importance. The gazelle is “exceptionally alert to both sound and movement” (Kingdon 1997: 409). It is however their vision that is especially important. Their eyes are “laterally placed with

²³ Cf. the occurrence of a dog in the upper register in the tomb of Puimre, TT 39 (Davies 1922: Pl.VII) as an example of circling in the chase.

horizontally elongated pupils (providing good rear view)” (Estes 1992: 7). Their good vision may have developed in connection with a shift to a semi-desert habitat with its open landscape (Kingdon 1997: 410) and it is said that they can see a waving arm from one kilometre away (Mendelssohn et al 1995: 3). With such exceptional vision, turning the head to see the pursuing predator, is an effective strategy and explains the choice of the motif of the fleeing gazelle with its head turned back. Although this behaviour is not limited to the gazelle, it becomes a common image of that animal.

The gazelle as a game animal pursued by a predator, produced four basic images that reoccur as standard motifs: 1) fleeing in high speed, 2) fleeing looking back, 3) being knocked down, caught by hind leg and 4) downed and choked by throat. These images reflect a realistic hunt sequence, with one exception. The gazelle is rarely portrayed as escaping its pursuer, whereas in reality its speed and agility gives it a fair chance to elude both the animal and human hunter.

The motif of the hunting dog chasing a fleeing gazelle, first seen in the Predynastic Period, is used as an ‘abbreviated’ version of a desert hunting scene, embodying a sequence that resulted in the predetermined fate of the gazelle as prey. The iconic nature of this image is illustrated by its use in the love poetry of the New Kingdom. In the second group of poems from Papyrus Chester Beatty I (verso G 2, 1-5, stanza 3; cf. Mathieu 1996: 31-32, Pl. 6, and Lichtheim 1976: 186-187), the theme is the lover’s hurried pursuit of his beloved. He is compared first with a messenger, then a horse and finally a gazelle. Each stanza begins with the refrain “O that you might come to the sister quickly” (*hl n=i tw<t> n=k snt 3s.tw*). The flight of the gazelle is described in the following terms.

<i>hl n=i tw<t> n=k snt 3s.tw</i>	O, that you might come to the sister quickly
<i>ml ghst hpw hr mrrw</i>	Like a gazelle leaping in the desert
<i>rdwy=f (hr) sm h't=f gh'y</i>	Its legs running though its limbs are weary
<i>hryt 'k.tl m h't=f</i>	Terror enters its limbs
<i>nw m s3=f tsm r hn'c=f</i>	A hunter is after him, and dogs are with him
<i>bw ptr=w p3y=f hmyw</i>	(Still) they do not see its dust
Stanza 3 (2,1 - 2,5)	

2.3.6 Natural behaviour - concluding remarks

The natural behaviour of the gazelle, as observed by the Egyptian artist was analyzed into a number of key motifs. The variation displayed in the depictions of the gazelle suggests that its association with the desert hunt is

central, with the dog-attacking-gazelle surviving as one of the most durable images in ancient Egyptian iconography. The regeneration cycle, beginning with mating, followed by giving birth, is only exceptionally represented. The motif of the young gazelle is, on the other hand, frequently found, either nursing or hiding on the insert. The young gazelles in baskets functioned as a further extension of this focus on the fawn. Used in contexts other than the desert hunt, the motifs of nursing and hiding gazelle appear to carry specific connotations.

2.4 Domestication

Although there may have been attempts to maintain captive gazelle herds during the Predynastic Period (Flores 1999: 37, 83-84), this did not result in true domestication, which is defined as not only the survival of the individual animals in captivity, but also breeding over several generations. There are several reasons why domestication would have been difficult. Among these is the structure of the herd in the wild, where it is divided into various groups, depending on season, gender and age, with the male and female being separated for most of the time (Estes 1992: 66, cf. 65, Table 5.1), a pattern which would have been difficult to achieve in captivity. Furthermore, with the Egyptians' protein supply derived mainly from cattle, sheep and goats (Ikram 1995: 8-19), a domestication of the gazelle as a food animal was not necessary.

As game, the animals, especially those injured or killed, would have been "dealt with on the spot" (Ikram 1995: 54). Slaughtering would also have taken place in the desert. Some of the desert hunt scenes feature a slaughtering scene where an animal hangs from a tree, being gutted by a butcher (e.g. Niuserre, von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI b). In the instances where the animals are captured for later use, the depictions show them being fattened prior to slaughter, after which they were either offered or eaten.

Other than as food, individual gazelles may have been kept as "pets", albeit infrequently. There is a depiction of possibly two gazelle pets on the eastern wall in the tomb of Meryre II at Amarna (Davies 1905: Pl. XXXVII). All six princesses stand behind (or next to) the seated pharaoh, who receives tribute. According to Davies, two of the six daughters of Akhenaton and Nefertiti are portrayed carrying a small animal: "Nefer-neferu-aten seems to be holding up a tiny gazelle, and her sister behind has a similar pet on her right arm..." (Davies 1905: 39). Due to damage it is difficult to say anything about the first animal, while the second animal has its head turned back; a posture common for the gazelle. The identification of this second gazelle is

established in the drawing of Lepsius (LD III: Pl. 99b), where one can observe that the short tail is curled upward, in a manner typical for a gazelle (this is not visible in the drawing of Davies). The small size of the animals suggests that they were young. The posture of the second gazelle would further confirm the idea of a fawn.

Private tomb iconography does not indicate a widespread habit of keeping gazelles as pets. The owners of the New Kingdom tombs have sometime included images of animals interpreted as pets, such as monkeys and cats, under their chairs (cf. e.g. Anen, TT 120, Malek 1993: 60, Fig. 34; Menkheperasesneb, TT 112, Davies 1933: Pl. XXIV; Ipuy, TT 217, Davies 1927: Pl. XXV). It is first in the Saite tombs of Pabasa (TT 279, Steindorff and Wolf 1936: Pl. 17) and Ibi (TT 36: MMA photo 965) at 'Asâsif, that a gazelle is found in this context, suggesting that it might have been kept as a pet of the tomb owners (Houlihan 1996: 108-111).

Other evidence for the occurrence of the gazelle as a pet is found in two gazelle mummies, both belonging to female owners; i.e. Isetemkheb D and Ankhshepenwepet (Ikram 2003a: 79). Isetemkheb D (cf. Dodson and Hilton 2004: 206) was the wife of Pinudjem II, who was the high priest of Amun and ruled during the theocracy of the 21st dynasty in Thebes. Among the objects found in the Deir el-Bahri cachette (Bab el-Gasus, TT 320, PM I/2: 663-664, no. 7) was a wooden coffin in the form of a 'standing' gazelle (Cairo, JE 26227). Only the horns place this identification in question (Maspero 1889: Pl. XXI B). While the curve of the horns is reminiscent of an ibex, the small size of the coffin is more appropriate for a gazelle. Inside the coffin was the mummy of a dorcas gazelle, embalmed in the same style as human mummies of this period (Ikram 2003a: 80).

The second gazelle mummy is associated with a woman called Ankhshepenwepet, a singer of Amun from the 23rd dynasty (PM I/2: 628). A gazelle mummy was recovered from her Deir el-Bahari tomb (no. 56, cf. PM I/2: Plan VIII; Winlock 1924: 30, Fig. 35). The gazelle mummy had been buried at the foot of her coffin, alongside the canopic jars and two boxes of ushebtis (Winlock 1924: 30). These two examples of gazelle mummies buried together with their female owners would indicate a special status for these individual gazelles.²⁴

The examples of gazelle pets are few but distinctive. A common denominator is that the owners are female. The gazelle appears to have had

24 These two examples of gazelle 'pets' may be compared to the baboon mummy (CG 61088a sic) associated with Maatkare (Ikram and Dodson 1998: 126, Fig. 132), also buried with its female owner. Again, the exact nature of this individual mummy is difficult to establish.

an iconographic association with women of subordinate rank during the New Kingdom (Troy 1986: 129), and the few occurrences of gazelles as pets may be examples of this association. These individual examples of gazelle pets are unique and the two burials give further indications of the importance ascribed to the gazelle.

2.5 The gazelle - concluding remarks

The depiction of the gazelle indicates that its natural behaviour was well known to those who developed the imagery of ancient Egyptian art. The animal was important as desert game, as well as for being the object of later slaughter. Its meat may have been part of the diet of the elite, and as an offering it was food for the gods. The fawns could also be collected separately for the same purpose, and exceptionally to become pets.

The natural behaviour of the gazelle, particularly in the context of the hunt, was analyzed in a series of motifs, such as the fleeing gazelle, the nursing gazelle and the recumbent fawn in hiding. These images take on an iconic character and are abstracted from the hunting scene and transferred to other contexts. The manner in which this occurred is described in the following chapters.

3 The Initial Images – Pre- and Early Dynastic Sources

The Predynastic Period, and more specifically the Naqada Period (Naqada IA-IIIC1, c. 3900 – 3100 B.C., cf. Hendrickx 1996: 64) sees the development of a material culture that served as the foundation for the cultural identity of a unified Egypt. This unification, interpreted as the product of a southern cultural, and later political, incursion into the north (cf. e.g. Bard 2000: 62-63) was facilitated by the spread of images, artefacts and techniques (cf. Wengrow 2006: 72) from primarily Middle and Upper Egypt to the north. The images emanated from a limited number of narratives, two of which stand out in particular, the journey by water and the hunt. The former is represented in rock art by numerous depictions of boats, with similar images being found on ceramics. The hunt and the related activity of animal domestication have a broader decorative use, occurring on a large variety of surfaces and with individual motifs also sculpted in three-dimensional forms.

The images of the hunt characteristically depict one or more hunters and the wild game found on the margins of the Nile Valley. This landscape, the hunt, and the game animals that were its primary targets, are characterized by the term “desert”, an area in sharp contrast to the fertile valley. Created by the gradual reduction of seasonal rain, the desert area found just beyond the margins of the valley had limited vegetation and water resources, bringing game closer in to the valley and the human settlements there (Roubet and el-Hadidi 1981: 462-463, Midant-Reynes 2000: 232). Although the population of the Predynastic Period was largely oriented towards agriculture and pastoralism, the proximity of this game encouraged hunting as a secondary subsistence strategy (Brewer 1991: 288). The gazelle became an important game animal, particularly because of its large population: “Les genres de vie pratiqués montrent une bonne adaption à un milieu plutôt favorable aux gazelles...” (Roubet and el-Hadidi 1981: 464). This landscape and its animal life, including the gazelle, took on an iconic character in Egyptian art, with a special funerary association, particularly with regard to the depiction of the desert hunt.

The representations of the gazelle vary greatly in terms of medium of expression. In rock art and on the surface of pottery, the images are two-dimensional. Gazelle and other animal motifs are also found in three-dimensions on objects such as combs and hairpins. Knife handles and ceremonial palettes, carved in raised relief, are covered with an abundance of

game animals, as if to stress an access to ‘herds’ of animals. Common for these different forms of depiction is the focus on desert game with the activities of the hunt only occasionally included as a theme. The desert landscape is implied by the representation of the characteristic animal life.

3.1 Rock drawings

The hunt dominates the themes represented in rock drawings (cf. Muzzolini 1986: 80). The hunter in these scenes can be a dog or a lion, as well as a man. Animals belonging to the *bovidae* family, including the gazelle (cf. Chapter 2), are the most commonly depicted game (cf. Červíček 1974: 174, Midant-Reynes 2000: 151), other animals, such as giraffes, ostriches, hippopotami and elephants are found less frequently. The most common depiction of the gazelle shows it striding (e.g. Červíček 1974: Figs 112, 115, 116, 124, 131, 134, 135, 136 and *passim*). Scenes in which a hunting dog attacks the gazelle (e.g. Červíček 1974: Figs 129, 228) also occur. This is a motif that becomes standardized and established in dynastic art.

The majority of rock drawings are found in what is today desert or border areas just beyond the cultivated land. In the Nile Valley, they are found from approximately Luxor south to Khartoum (Midant-Reynes 1994: 229, Wengrow 2006: 111-114, cf. also map in Muzzolini 1986: 22). This area is also known for traces of Predynastic settlements (cf. Friedman 1994, Wengrow 2006: 75).

It is not possible to classify the rock drawings as belonging to either a domestic or ritual context. The boat motif (Berger 1992: 107) can be found, however, with standing human figures with upraised hands, commonly interpreted as mourners, dancers or as in positions of adoration (Berger 1992: 116, Midant-Reynes 1994: 230), implying religious significance.

The dating of rock drawings is notoriously difficult (cf. e.g. Midant-Reynes 2000: 151, Muzzolini 1986: 24). The patina of the rock has been used as a tentative criterion for the chronology of the rock drawings (Wengrow 2006: 111). This is regarded as haphazard, with a sequential date treated as more ‘accurate’ (Muzzolini 1986: 23). Attempts to date these representations by comparing them with those on Predynastic pottery (C- and D-ware) have also been made. This is difficult however as the same range of motifs is not found in both rock art and on ceramics (Midant-Reynes 1994: 230, 232). The similarity of the motifs on C- and D-ware (cf. below 3.2) to those in rock drawings does suggest a chronological correlation (Midant-Reynes 1994: 234), indicating that at least some the rock drawings are of Predynastic date.

3.2 Ceramics

Two categories of funerary ceramics of the Naqada Periods I and II²⁵ (c. 3900-3300 B.C.) are commonly decorated. These are known as C-ware and D-ware. The term C-ware is used for the earlier (Naqada I) red polished ware with white crossed-lined decoration (Petrie 1901: 14, Gaballa 1976: 9). The D-ware (“decorated ware”, Naqada II) has the reverse colouring, with the marl clay giving a cream coloured background on which dark red paint is used (e.g. Petrie 1901: 15, Pls XIV-XVI; Friedman 1994: 195). The C-ware is mainly decorated with geometrical designs, such as zigzags, wavy lines and so forth, possibly imitating basketry (Gaballa 1976: 10, Needler 1984: 183). The motif of the hunt, as well as images of individual animals, occurs only sporadically on the C-ware and thus it is difficult to treat these images as representing separate categories (Wengrow 2006: 103-104).

It is the D-ware, (Naqada II, c. 3650-3300 B.C., cf. Hendrickx 1996: 64) that has a fixed, and easily recognizable thematic decoration. A common motif is the boat with multiple oars, human figures with upraised arms (Gaballa 1976: 11, Wengrow 2006: 109). These scenes are similar to those found as rock drawings.²⁶ The gazelle, along with other animals classified as desert game, are also found in these scenes.

The choice of animals for the D-ware scenes indicates a conscious reference to the desert landscape, although the hunting theme is notably absent. With the boat as one of the central images (cf. Monnet Saleh 1983: 275), the animal imagery, that includes the gazelle, provokes a number of possible interpretations. A pragmatic interpretation sees these animals as food for the dead (Wengrow 2006: 107, cf. also Friedman 1994: 250). It should however be pointed out that these artefacts originate from a farming and pastoral culture, with domesticates rather than desert game serving as the primary food animals (cf. Friedman 1994: 861, McArdle 1992: 56, Ikram 1995: 5-39 and Brewer 2002). A more cosmologi-

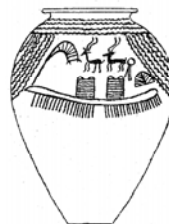


Figure 12. Desert game on D-ware

25 Nagada I – IIB dates approximately to 3900 – 3650 B.C., while Nagada IIC-IID2 is tentatively dated to 3650 – 3300 B.C. (Hendrickx 1996: 64, cf. also Wengrow 2006: 93).

26 Needler (1984: 202) writes “The far greater number of “D” vessels that have survived might misleadingly suggest greater diversity of pictorial motifs than the “C” ware exhibits; actually, the “D” vessels appear to have had a comparatively limited repertory, and even in the case of human figures, which like the boats show some variation in disposition and detail there seems to have been little incentive to improvise”. Cf. also Friedman 1994: 860.

cal perspective sees the desert as a region apart from an ordered world that is perhaps represented by the boat on the Nile (cf. e.g. Berger 1982: 64).

With the absence of the hunting motif, the animals depicted on the vessels can also be interpreted as primarily an environmental element, seen either in relationship to the boat or as part of the topography of a landscape that may be intended as the destination of the immortal dead.²⁷

The gazelle in this context is best described as an indicator of desert topography.

3.3 Knife handles

Decorated handles, carved in bone or ivory, are fitted on flint knives and occur as funerary gifts during the Naqada II-III Periods (c. 3650-2900 B.C., Midant-Reynes 1987: 212, Whitehouse 2002: 425, Wengrow 2006: 184). The representations found on the knife handles are almost entirely of game animals. These are often arranged in registers, as a series of identical striding figures. Prominent examples of this composition are found on the Brooklyn knife handle, (no. 09.889.118, Needler 1984: Pl. 68; Asselberghs 1961: Pls XXIX-XXX) and the Carnarvon knife handle (MMA 26.7.1281, Bénédite 1918: Pls 1-2; Asselberghs 1961: Pl. XXXII).

The gazelle occurs sporadically among those animals represented. A striding gazelle is distinguishable on the knife handle from the Pitt-Rivers' collection (Petrie and Quibell 1896: 51, Pl. 77; Asselberghs 1961: Pl. XXXI), while the Gebel el-Arak handle (Louvre E11517, Asselberghs 1961: Pls XXXVIII-XXXIX) and the Gebel Tarif handle (Cairo 14265, Asselberghs 1961: Pl. XXXIII) have antelopes that might be gazelles. The majority of published handles do not, however, include a gazelle in their decoration. This may be attributed to the emphasis on what might be interpreted as a herd motif.

3.3.1 The Petrie Museum Knife handle

(UC 16295, Petrie 1920: Pl. XLVIII, 6)

There are, however, some examples that display the hunt motif, such as the knife handle found in the Petrie Museum, depicting a canine²⁸ attacking a

27 Friedman 1994: 251 writes "Not only may the funerary function differ from the original purpose of the vessel because the vessel is simply being reused, but also the funerary ritual may dictate its own specific shapes for specific funerary functions".

28 Although it is difficult to definitely identify the attacking animal as more than a "canine", given the most common version of this motif, it may be safe to say that the hunter is a dog (cf.

gazelle. The gazelle is shown with its head turned back, a pose that will be frequently used in the later tomb art (cf. 2.3.5 and 4.1.2, Fig. 18), with this being a very early example of this motif. The reverse side of the handle has another version of the hunt that includes a figure that is similar to that of the goddess Taweret, depicted as a pregnant woman with the tail of a crocodile along her back (Petrie 1920: 13, Pl. XLVIII, 5). The image of a crocodile is also found.²⁹ These two elements suggest an abbreviated marsh hunt scene,

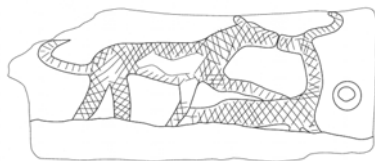


Figure 13. Petrie Museum knife handle

another theme that has an early expression here. This interpretation of the knife handle's decoration sees the desert hunt on one side with the marsh hunt on the other, providing an early version of the combination of these complementary landscapes.

The decoration on the knife handles seems to have concentrated on the animals of the desert as the main theme (Wengrow 2006: 181. Cf. also Whitehouse 2002: 444-445, Tables I-II; Midant-Reynes 1987: 209). They also display an unusually uniform choice of motif, excluding other contemporary themes such as boats or human figures (Whitehouse 2002: 432). The rather limited number of motifs is possibly the result of the lack of space (cf. the discussion of scarabs in 6.8 below). It may also be noted that the images on these ivory pieces are in raised relief, indicating that considerable effort was devoted to the decoration of these handles, thus suggesting the significance of the decoration. The function of the knife in slaughtering and the cutting of meat may have influenced the choice of themes, while ensuring that the knife, as a funerary gift, would come to such 'use' in the next life, even though many of them "had been systematically deconstructed before deposition" (Whitehouse 2002: 432).

3.4 Combs and hairpins

Combs and hairpins are also often of bone or ivory and decorated with zoomorphic motifs (e.g. Petrie 1920: Pls VIII, XXIX; Martín Del Río Álvarez and Almenara 2004: 881-889). Although infrequent, a few examples

Osborn 1998: 59 who cites it as a "saluki"). The dorcas gazelle is on the other hand clearly the intended animal.

²⁹ Cf. Stockholm palette EM 6000, discussed below, with representations of both hippopotamus and gazelle.

of the gazelle as part of a comb handle can be found (Ashmolean Museum 1895.943, from Naqada grave no. 1687 and no. 1895.935 from Naqada grave 1497, cf. Wengrow 2006: 100, Fig. 5.1, second from right). Hair pins are most commonly decorated with the bird motif (Petrie 1920: 30). Again, however, a few examples featuring the gazelle can be identified (Petrie 1920: Pl. VIII, 1, cf. UC 15459 unpublished).



Figure 14.
Predynastic
comb

In contrast to the other Predynastic sources discussed above, the decoration of combs and hair pins, rather than relating to the hunt, consists of simple single representations.

3.5 Palettes

The cosmetic palette provided the surface on which eye paint could be ground (Davis 1992: 74-75, O'Connor 2002: 8). It is found as a common part of the elite burial equipment of the Naqada culture. It is also found in a temple context where it appears to have had a ceremonial function. Both groups of palettes, funerary and those related to temple ceremonies, are relevant to this discussion.

The majority of palettes are funerary objects. These palettes have either a geometric form, with the rhomboid shape being most prominent and the rectangle as its last expression, or are in the shape of animals, primarily fish, birds and turtles but also rams and dogs (cf. e.g. Petrie 1921: Pls LII-LIX, Asselberghs 1961: Pls XLIV-XCI). The top of a palette fragment now in the British Museum (BM 32074, Asselberghs 1961: Pls LXVIII-LXIX) has, unusually, the shape of a reclined gazelle. The surface of this type of palette rarely has more than a simple decoration, often related to its shape.

The 'ceremonial' or possibly 'votive' palettes have elaborate, iconographic compositions carved in raised relief (O'Connor 2002: 5, 9). Even though it is unlikely that these palettes were intended for practical use, many have a circular indented grinding surface, some of which are incorporated into the decoration of the surface. Palettes decorated with raised relief were, according to Spencer (1993: 51), "never destined for funerary use but were votive objects kept in the temples" (cf. also Millet 1990: 53). Both of the ceremonial palettes found in situ, the Narmer Palette and the Two Dogs Palette, come from the temple at Hierakonpolis (Quibell and Green 1902: Pl. XXVIII, Kemp 2006: 84, 94).

The gazelle is found among the animals included in detailed raised reliefs of "ceremonial" palettes that depict the hunt of wild game. Once again

a preference for desert animals can be observed. In addition, mythological creatures such as griffins and serpopards are also found. Human figures are only exceptionally depicted. The identification of the different species of animals seldom poses any difficulty. On the contrary, the artists appear to have put great effort into the anatomically distinctive details of each individual animal.

3.5.1 The Hunters Palette

(BM 20790, BM 20792; Louvre E 11254; Asselberghs 1961: Pls LXV - LXVII)

The palette known as the Hunters Palette (also called the Lion Hunt Palette³⁰), is broken into pieces, currently divided between the British Museum and the Louvre. Shaped like an elongated triangle with rounded corners, there is a round recess for grinding eye paint in the centre. The hunters, 16 in all on the preserved pieces, are found standing along the two edges of the palette, with a wounded lion, arrows protruding from the shoulder and head, found at either end. The inner space, between the two lines of hunters, is filled with other fleeing animals. Two gazelles can be distinguished in this group that also include a fox, fallow deer, hartebeest, ostrich and a hare. The pose of the animal identified as a fox by Osborn (1998: 3), is that of the hunting dog (or lion), as it seizes a fleeing animal by the hind leg, here a fallow deer. The gazelle is represented by the image of an adult female and its fawn (cf. Osborn 1998: 3), a relationship that is frequently emphasized during later periods. Both the adult and the young gazelle are shown with their heads turned back, yet another feature characteristic of later dynastic iconography. With the gazelle pair, this palette introduces a variation of the “gazelle as prey” motif into the hunting narrative.

The elaborate composition of the relief on this palette has encouraged Tefnin (1979: 218-244) to discuss what he sees as the highly intentional arrangement of figures. He proposes a division of the palette into a ‘spatial’ and ‘mental’ perspective; both showing a pattern of “d’opposition binaire” (Tefnin 1979: 229) and creating themes that are “au plan cosmique et

30 There is a large variety of names for the palettes. The palette here labelled as the Hunters Palette is referred to as the ‘Lion Hunt Palette’ in other publications (e.g. Osborn 1998: 2, Tefnin 1979: 221). The palette labelled here as the ‘Two Dogs Palette’ (discussed below) has also several different names: ‘Votive palette in Oxford’, ‘Big Animals Palette’, ‘Hierakonpolis Palette’, ‘Wild Dogs Palette’ (Asselberghs 1961, Osborn 1998). According to Osborn (1998: 2) the most correct labelling for this palette would be ‘Hyena Dogs Palette’ even though he refers to it later on the same page as the ‘Hierakonpolis Palette’.

constituer déjà un système de significations symboliques.” He concludes that the palette relief does not narrate a specific event but is composed of images of the opposing themes of life and death (chased/captured versus living).

3.5.2 The ‘Two Dogs Palette’

(Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, E.3924; Asselbergs 1961: Pls LXX, LXXI)

The ‘Two Dogs Palette’ has approximately the same shape as the Hunters Palette. Both sides are decorated with hunting scenes, one of which is less realistic than the other. Two dogs frame the upper part of the palette. On one side the oryx, goat and hartebeest are attacked by a serpopard (a combination of serpent and leopard), a leopard and a griffin. A hyena is also seen in this group, with its head turned back rather than being in an attacking ‘mode’. Beneath them are a wildebeest³¹ (Osborn 1998: 2), ibex, giraffe and a donkey-headed man playing a flute. On the upper part of the palette, two lions are nose to nose with two gazelles. On the other side, the serpent-like necks of the serpopards stretch along either side of the central grinding surface. A group of three hunting dogs, wearing collars, attack the same combination of animals on the lower part of the palette (oryx, ibex, gazelle and hartebeest). On the upper part, three dogs, of a different breed (‘hyena dog’), are distributed on either side and under the grinding surface. The opposing serpopards lick the gazelle found between them. Above the gazelle is a large bird, possibly an ostrich.

There are a number of features that stand out in the composition of these scenes. The combination of gazelle, ibex, oryx and hartebeest found here will later become a frequent grouping in hunt scenes (Asselberghs 1961: Pls LXX - LXXI). The four species are distinctly portrayed with specific anatomical features. The consistency with which the different species are used suggests an intentional differentiation with regard to these animals, indicating that these artistic distinctions were established as early as the Predynastic Period. The animals cast in the role of hunter (dog, leopard, lion, griffin and serpopard) are as diverse as the animals found as prey. Three of the figures in one of the scenes, the griffin, the serpopard and the donkey-headed flute player, are imaginary, categorizing the scene as “mythical”.

31 According to Osborn (1998: 173), this is the only example of a wildebeest in ancient Egyptian art (also called “brindled gnu” *Connochaetes taurinus*, Kingdon 1997: 431).

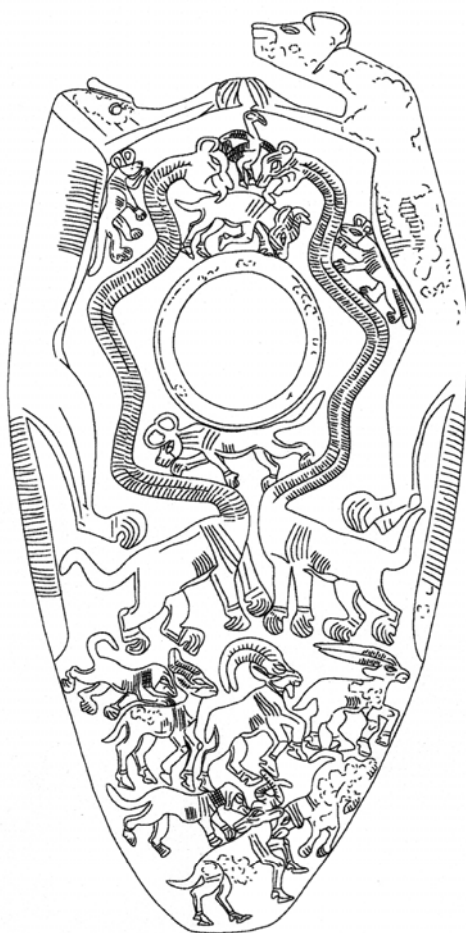


Figure 15. The Two Dogs Palette

Finally, there is a focus on the gazelle on both sides of the palette. On one side, two gazelles are placed in opposition to two lions, creating two opposing pairs and providing an early example of this compositional form. On the other, the gazelle is a central figure, being licked by the two serpopards. It is thus part of a “triad” schema, as it is flanked by the mythical beasts. Both of these scenes are found on the upper part of the palette, crowning the other hunting sequences, suggesting a relationship between what may be the contrasting roles of the lions and the serpopards. The two lion and gazelle pairs are set up as complimentary elements, perhaps in the roles of hunter and prey. In contrast, the triad of the two serpopards and the gazelle has a “generative” quality, comparable to a family triad. This theme is also suggested by the licking of the gazelle, recalling later references to licking as part of the bond between a cow and her calf (Ritner 1993: 93). This cursory interpretation suggests that while one side emphasizes the confrontation between hunter and prey, resulting in the death of the gazelle, the other bears an early expression of regeneration.

There have been other attempts at analysing these scenes. At one extreme there is Emery (1961: 167) who dismisses these complex compositions as a “confused mass of natural life”. At the other extreme, the full import of the solar myth is called upon, as Westendorf (1968: 18-19) interprets the two serpopards as feline guardians of the sun, represented by the cosmetic grinding circle. The antelopes are then the enemies that are “attacked”, all of this implying the existence of a well-developed solar mythology as early as the late Predynastic Period.

3.5.3 The Stockholm Palette

(Stockholm, Medelhavsmuseet, EM 6000; Asselberghs 1961: Pl. XLVI)

Another highly interesting palette is found in Stockholm. Rhomboid in form, it has two crudely incised scenes. One of them shows a male figure standing in a boat, harpooning a hippopotamus. This is an early version of the well known “hippopotamus hunt” (cf. Säve-Söderbergh 1953), documented as part of a royal festival as early as the reign of the first dynasty king Den (Dreyer et al 1998: 163, Pl. 12d) and surviving as a motif of the marsh hunt, well documented in private tombs, such as those of Ti of the Old Kingdom (Steindorff 1913: Pl. 113) and Intef of the New Kingdom (TT 155, Säve-Söderbergh 1957: Pls XIV-XV).

The second group on the palette consists of a canine (dog or hyena) attacking a dorcas gazelle. The dog-attacking-gazelle composition appears to have achieved iconic status early on, appearing in several variations, as seen

in the discussion above. A third figure, another hippopotamus, is found positioned vertically on the opposite end of the palette's surface.

The combination of the hippopotamus hunt and the dog attacking a gazelle juxtaposes two hunter-prey compositions commonly placed in contrasting marsh and desert environments. Found together here, a topographic complementarity is created. Another example of the combination of gazelle and hippopotamus is described above in the discussion of the knife handle in the collection of the Petrie Museum (cf. 3.3.1, describing UC 16295, Petrie 1920: Pl. XLVIII, 5-6).

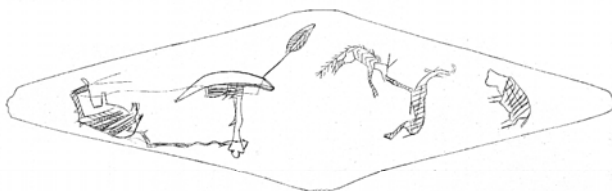


Figure 16. The Stockholm palette

The two hunter-prey pairs, man-hippopotamus and canine-gazelle, may thus represent two variations of the theme of the defeat of “wild” forces by “order”, with the gazelle and the hippopotamus both referring to uncontrolled natural forces, one found in the desert and the other in the marsh (cf. Säve-Söderbergh 1953 for this interpretation of the hippopotamus hunt).

3.5.4 The Gazelle Palette

(BM 32074, PM V: 105; Asselberghs 1961: Pls LXVIII-LXIX)

Another palette places the gazelle in a primary position. The top of a palette fragment displays a recumbent gazelle. Beneath it is the circular grinding space. The lower section of the palette has two opposing birds (suggested to be geese by Petrie 1953: 10-11, Pl. C, 10-11; cf. Asselberghs 1961: 329, for a commentary). The reverse lacks raised relief decoration, with only traces of animals, thus tentatively forming a pair of opposing figures, parallel to the figures of the birds. There are no hunters, and the pose of the gazelle is that of repose. Although the head of this reclining animal is missing, the anatomical details that have been preserved (shape of legs, length of tail) supports the identification as a gazelle. The recumbent position, almost exclusively reserved for the gazelle during the Old Kingdom, also contributes to the identification. This could then be an early example of the recumbent gazelle, a familiar image in later Pharaonic representations.

3.6 Hierakonpolis Tomb 100

The earliest known example of the desert hunt scene in a tomb was found on the walls of the well known Hierakonpolis tomb no. 100, dated to Naqada IIC (c. 3650 – 3300 B.C., Wengrow 2006: 38, 114). This tomb is also the earliest known decorated tomb (Adams 1996: 1) and the only one among the 150 that were excavated at this site to have painted walls. The reproduction used for the study of this tomb shows the fragmentary condition of the wall painting, with some sections missing. This has led to hypothetical reconstructions of the scenes (Asselberghs 1961: Pl. XXV). A number of the details preserved indicate however that the wall painting represents an important precursor to later tomb art. Among the early occurrences of later elements is a so-called insert, a subordinate scene, with its own ground line ‘inserted’ into the main scene. Four ibexes are shown reclined on a straight ground line that is elevated above that of the main action, indicating that this miniature scene is part of the background of the depicted event. The use of the insert is found primarily in the hunting scenes of Old Kingdom tombs (see below 4.1.4).

In this tomb, the hunting scene consists of a group of bowmen and dogs chasing various antelopes, found in the upper right hand section. The gazelle is found in a few different contexts. An unusual depiction is the ‘animal trap’ scene (Asselberghs 1961: 273). Otherwise there are some scattered images of antelopes, of which only one above the animal trap can be identified with certainty as a gazelle. The narrative that included these ‘fragmented’ motifs is difficult to reconstruct. That the animals are within the enclosure presuppose however the hunt and their capture. Even though the gazelle motif is of a very general character in this tomb, it is worth noting its inclusion in this unique composition.

The scene depicting a man slaying three kneeling enemies contributes to an understanding of the larger composition. It is often discussed as the predecessor of the traditional smiting the enemy motif (e.g. Asselberghs 1961: 273, Swan Hall 1986: 4, Midant-Reynes 2000: 208, Wengrow 2006: 115). During Pharaonic times this depiction represented royal protection of the country against its enemies. The motifs of “conquest” and “domination” have been interpreted as reflecting “kingship” (cf. Hassan 1992: 316). Given the uniqueness of this tomb, this proposal may be close to the truth as the tomb owner was most likely a person with a high status (Kemp 2006: 81). The meaning of the Hierakonpolis tomb scenes might never be fully understood, it is worth noting the choice of subjects to decorate the walls. The motifs of both the hunt and the boat journey continued to be a part of the funeral iconography until the demise of the ancient Egyptian tomb decoration, and the gazelle was a part of this tradition.

3.7 The Early Dynastic Period and Hemaka's disc

The Early Dynastic Period (c. 3000 - 2686 B.C., dynasties 1 – 2) is one of social and political change as the central state takes form. There is little evidence of the gazelle motif from this period, possibly reflecting the poor survival of grave goods, as well as a shift in the media of expression from e.g. small objects and ceramics to pictorial representations that appear mainly on temple and tomb walls in the surviving material (Wengrow 2006: 140-141, 151-154).

One theme familiar from earlier objects is found on a black steatite disc (Cairo JE 70104) from the Saqqara tomb of the 1st dynasty high official Hemaka (Mastaba S 3035, PM III/2: 440; Emery 1938; frontispiece and Pl. 12b). The raised relief scene features *tym*-dogs (Osborn 1998: 60) chasing and attacking gazelles. The composition consists of two pairs, with one



Figure 17. Disc of Hemaka

consisting of a light coloured dog chasing a gazelle and the other a black dog attacking a second gazelle by biting its throat. The two combinations of dog and gazelle may represent a sequence of events. Several other discs were found in this tomb and some of them, like the one here, have a hole in the centre. This has led to the hypothesis that they were gaming discs that could be spun by placing a stick through the hole (Emery 1938: 28). Whatever its function, this object

represents a link between the Predynastic Period and the Old Kingdom in terms of the motif of the gazelle.

An interesting contrast to the desert hunting motif of dog-attacking-gazelle is found on another of the discs from the tomb of Hemaka, depicting two birds trapped in a hexagonal net (JE 70165, Emery 1938: Pl. 12c). This image demonstrates the use of such nets to hunt birds (Henein 2001). Depictions of this net can be observed on tomb walls, where clap-nets with entrapped birds are seen in lakes or basins (cf. Houlihan 1986 for extensive pictorial references of the use of clap-net). This disc of Hemaka may represent one of the earliest versions of the theme of fowling in the marsh, otherwise well attested in the dynastic art (e.g. Harpur 1987: 140-144, 176-204; Decker and Herb 1994: 382-532, Pls CCVII-CCC). The 'relationship' between the themes of these two discs, while being difficult to establish, does include the combination of the contrasting landscapes of desert and marsh.

3.8 Initial images - concluding remarks

The motif of the gazelle in material from the Pre- and Early Dynastic Periods focuses mainly on the image of dog/lion-attacking-gazelle, while offering some interesting compositions, such as the lion-gazelle combinations found on the Two Dogs palette. The composition of the dog-gazelle motif became canonical and does not alter to any great extent during succeeding millennia. The fixed style of the motif and the narrative setting, i.e. 'hunt in desert' as it appeared later on, suggests that the connotations of the composition may have carried over to the Old Kingdom and later, with elaborations and additional associations being added. The stability of the form given the gazelle suggests that it conveyed a specific "message" that carried significance over time.

The dog-attacking-gazelle is one of the most enduring motifs featuring the gazelle. The Predynastic material appears to have provided a foundation from which further iconographic expressions developed. "The key to understanding formal Egyptian visual culture – architecture as well as art – and its remarkable homogeneity through three thousand years lies in the concept of the ideal type" (Kemp 2006: 135).

4 The Desert Hunt

The desert hunt scene is found in private tombs and to a certain degree in royal temples, of the Old, Middle and New Kingdoms. The scene also occurs on a small number of New Kingdom royal objects and in a few Saite private tombs. It depicts the hunter, human or animal, subduing the multitude of creatures that inhabit the desert landscape.³² On one level these scenes relate to life on earth, with these animals providing food for the living, and on another to life in the next world, as they become offering gifts that contribute to the hunter's immortality. The gazelle, one of the primary prey in the hunt narrative in Predynastic art, reoccurs in the later hunt scenes. This chapter begins by outlining the normative elements of the desert hunt and then continues by tracing the occurrence of the various forms of, and themes conveyed by, the gazelle motif in selected examples of the hunt scene, from the Old Kingdom to the Saite Period.

4.1 The components of the desert hunt

The desert hunt scene is characterized by a combination of standardized components and individualized compositions.

4.1.1 Desert topography

The desert in the iconography of the Old Kingdom and later is represented using topographical details such as an undulating ground line with hills and small mounds and by including the wild species that characterize life in this habitat. In addition, sandy hills, small bushes and branches are used to suggest desert. These topographical details identify the landscape and provide a background for the combination of hunter and prey.

4.1.2 The hunters

The hunter is either a man or men or animal, dog or lion. Human hunters can be equipped with either bows and arrows or lassos. These are not innovations of the Old Kingdom, being represented in the Predynastic material in the scene from the so-called Hunters Palette (cf. above 3.5.1). The detail of the

³² A parallel, in a complementary landscape, is the marsh hunt, often found juxtaposed with the desert hunt. There is however no clear relationship between the marsh hunt and offering gifts.

presence of a human hunter differs from period to period and site to site. Even when absent, the hunter can be indicated by hunting dogs (cf. Davis 1992: 81-83, 91) that often wear collars, emphasising the connection to the present or absent hunter (e.g. desert scene of Mereruka, bottom register, Duell 1938: Pls 24-25). In some cases, the hunter is seen at the edge of the scene observing rather than participating (e.g. top register in desert scene of Raemka, Hayes 1953: 99, Fig. 56).

The dog is the most common animal depicted in the role of hunter and the composition in which a hunting dog attacks a gazelle is one of the oldest and most durable motifs (cf. Chapter 3). The collared hunting dog is generally depicted running loose but there are examples of dogs held on leashes, controlled by a hunter (cf. e.g. Nefermaat, Petrie 1892: Pl. XXVII; Ptahhotep [II], Davies 1900: Pl. XXII; Kapi, Roth 1995, Fig. 189; Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 40). The dog is commonly shown chasing various game animals, such as the gazelle, ibex and oryx. When attacking, it can bite the hind leg of the fleeing animal. Another variation shows the dog holding the neck of the animal in its mouth, choking it.



Figure 18.

Dog grasping a gazelle's hind leg

In contrast to the hunting dog, the lion is depicted as a wild animal, hunting on its own behalf and not for a human owner.³³ The lion is more selective in its prey than the dog and is found attacking either a gazelle (e.g. Thefu, Hassan 1975b: Pl. LXXXVI, C; Meryteti, Smith 1949: 239, Fig. 92b) or an aurochs (e.g. Mereruka, Duell 1938: Pl. 25; Seshemnefer, Junker 1953, Fig. 63). When seizing a gazelle, the lion, like the dog, is shown biting the neck, which is typical behaviour for a lion killing its prey. It is however the dog that is depicted most frequently attacking the gazelle.

4.1.3 The prey

The gazelle, ibex and oryx are the most common prey in the desert hunt

³³ On the Golden Shrine from the tomb of Tutankhamun (JE 61481, Eaton-Krauss and Graefe 1985: Pl. XV), a lion cub accompanies him in a marsh scene. The seated pharaoh shoots fowl, assisted by his wife, while the lion cub is stands next to him. The animal has a collar around its neck, indicating that it belonged to the king rather than being wild, yet it does not seem to be an "active hunter" in the fowling scene.

scenes, followed by the hartebeest. Occasionally the addax, and the fallow deer make their way into the desert scene as well (e.g. Djehutihotep, Newberry 1895: Pl. VII; Intefiker, TT 60, Davies and Gardiner 1920: Pl. VI). Smaller animals, such as the hedgehog and the hare can also be included among the game animals (e.g. Rekhmire, TT 100, Davies 1943: Pl. XLIII; Ankhtifi, Vandier 1950: 95, Fig. 46. Cf. above 2.1.1-2.1.4).

The greatest variety of desert animals can be observed in the sources from the Old Kingdom. The Middle and New Kingdom scenes show a stricter and more conservative selection and combination. The gazelle, ibex, oryx and hartebeest are retained as prominent game animals, with fewer examples of various felines (see Khnumhotep III at Beni Hassan that includes caracal and serval, cf. Osborn 1998: 14; also Pehenuka where a “jungle cat” is found, cited in Osborn 1998: 53), red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*, family *Canidae*) or jerboas (desert rats, *Jaculus jaculus* of the *Dipodidae* family) occurring in the later examples of the desert hunt.

Individualized motifs that characterize each species are used. These can be combined in different ways with almost no duplication of the same combination of elements.³⁴ The standardised motifs indicate the specific wounds caused by the hunters. The hunting dog kills its prey by grasping the neck, thereby choking the animal to death (e.g. Mereruka, Duell 1938: Pls 24-25). The human hunter uses the bow and arrow to kill its target; the arrow either piercing the neck, the eye or the body (e.g. Intef, TT 386, Jaroš-Deckert 1984: Pl. 21). A combination of these two killing ‘methods’ could also be used, i.e. a hunting dog choking an animal that already is pierced by an arrow (e.g. Puimre, TT 39, Davies 1922: Pl. VII).

The desert hunt scene, although including naturalistic details, is not a photographic representation. Species from different habitats that would never be together in real life are combined in the same landscape (cf. Osborn 1998: 11). True desert animals, such as oryx and gazelle (Estes 1992: 128, 64) are found together with those from semi-arid and savannah environments, such as hartebeest and aurochs (Kingdon 1997: 429, Estes 1992: 193). The presence of a species with an association with the desert functions however to identify the landscape.

34 There is at least one exception to this, the desert hunt scene of Ibi in TT 36, dated to the 26th dynasty (4.3.4/a) that is strikingly similar to, and perhaps a copy of, that of another Ibi found in his tomb in Deir el-Gebrawi and dated to the 6th dynasty (4.3.1/d.1).

4.1.4 Hiding from the predator: the insert

A special compositional element was created to depict animals in the background of the main action of the hunt, hiding in the vegetation. This miniature scene is called an insert³⁵ and is typical for the desert hunt scenes of the Old Kingdom. It is characterized by a short ground line, placed within a register, creating a separate scene above the main depiction of the hunt. Its use dates back to the late Predynastic Period when it can be found in the scene



Figure 19.

Recumbent gazelle in an insert

from Hierakonpolis tomb no. 100 (Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CXXXI and above 3.6). In that scene, a minimum of four recumbent ibexes are found above one of the central boat images. This small scene appears to be an extension of the hunt episode depicted to the right of it.

Most inserts include environmental details such as bushes, branches, small trees and hills that locate them in the desert landscape. Gazelles, hares and hedgehogs are all found in these abbreviated, registers.³⁶ The pictorial elements and the range of animals depicted in these inserts are limited and the selection gives the impression that the inserts are only used for ‘small’ burrow-living animals such as the hare, the hedgehog and the jerboa (Osborn 1998: 52). Although the gazelle, in comparison, is not as ‘small’ in size (nor does it live in a burrow), those found in the inserts are most likely fawns and not adults, despite the almost ever-present horns that may have served to identify the animal as a gazelle.

The animals in the inserts are generally portrayed as if hiding in the bushes, next to or behind a hill. Young gazelles hide in the vegetation away from the mother as a protective strategy (cf. above 2.3.4) and it is that the insert most likely depicts (cf. Estes 1992: 17). The gazelle is always recumbent, often with the head turned back. The animals found in the inserts are not actively pursued rather they seem to function as a counterpoint to the chaotic atmosphere in the hunting registers.

The decline in the occurrence of inserts in the hunting scenes during

³⁵ The term “insert” has been taken from Osborn (1998: 61, 70, 103 and passim, cf. above 2.3.4), and is used here in a descriptive sense.

³⁶ E.g. the OK tombs of Fetekta (PM III/1: 351 (6)), Seshemnefer (PM III/1: 224 (6)), Raemka (PM III/2: 487 (3)), Pehenuka (PM III/2: 491 (4)), Mereruka (PM III/2: 528 (18)), Ptahhotep (PM III/2: 601 (17)), Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep (PM III/2: 642 (10)).

both Middle and New Kingdoms³⁷ suggests that this was a narrative and not an aesthetic component.

4.1.5 The hunt and its implications

The desert hunt scene depicts a hunter (or hunters) pursuing and eventually killing prey. The funerary context for this scene indicates a relationship with the tomb as a place where life after death is maintained. This implies that the death of the animals is in some way connected with the continued life of the hunter. On one level this relationship is found when seeing the realm of the desert as a correlate to the “chaos” brought about by death and the hunt as an expression of the control and defeat of this chaos. That the hunt belongs to the chaos-order paradigm is seen in the way desert game and foreign enemies are treated as parallel in New Kingdom material (see below 4.2.3/a.3). On another level, the game animals are also clearly represented as potential food, to be slaughtered for meat on the spot or captured and later presented as live offerings (cf. below Chapter 5). This in turn indicates that their death is not only an assertion of “control” over the chaos of the desert, but also contributes to the life of the hunter and to the cult that sustains his immortality.

4.2 The royal desert hunt

Royal hunting scenes, that include the gazelle as prey, are preserved from the Old, Middle and New Kingdoms. The scene from Sahure’s mortuary temple from the 5th dynasty (c. 2487-2475 B.C., cf. below 4.2.1/a) is the oldest known royal example, postdating by about 100 years however the earliest known private tomb examples of the scene (cf. below. 4.3.1/a). The possibility that older royal examples existed and provided the source for the desert hunt composition later found in private tombs, remains, particularly considering the paucity of surviving royal reliefs from this time.³⁸ The

37 There are, as always, a few exceptions, such as the hunting scene of Khnumhotep III at Beni Hassan (BH 3, PM IV: 145; Newberry 1893: Pl. XXX) where an insert can be observed on the third row. Another exception is the desert scene in the New Kingdom tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100, PM I/1: 210 (11); Davies 1943: Pl. XLIII) where a genet (Osborn 1998: 91) and a hare hide in bush-like inserts.

38 The earliest known relief fragments have only survived as reused blocks, far from their origin. Cf. e.g. the blocks from Khufu’s mortuary temple found in Lisht, depicting the titulary of Khufu, bringing offerings from the estates and traces of a papyrus boat (Goedicke 1971: 11-23), however there are some blocks with gazelles, unfortunately the origin of these fragments cannot be established (Goedicke 1971: 135). Cf. the blocks found in Bubastis inscribed with

surviving images from the Painted Tomb from Hierakonpolis (cf. above 3.6) certainly supports this possibility.

4.2.1 The royal desert hunt: Old Kingdom (c. 2686-2125 B.C.)

The desert hunt belongs to the general category of scenes of everyday life.³⁹ These are more common in private tomb contexts than in the surviving evidence for royal monuments. It is first with the 5th dynasty that pictorial reliefs have been preserved to any great extent from an Old Kingdom royal context. Some of the preserved reliefs and blocks do however display detailed images of the desert hunt.

There is a distinct relationship between the Old Kingdom royal desert hunt scenes and those found in private tombs. The royal scenes stand out however with the expansion of the motif catalogue of the hunt narrative to include birth-giving motifs. These do not find their way into the private tomb scenes until the Middle Kingdom (cf. below, with e.g. Khnumhotep III, foaling gazelle, Newberry 1893: Pl. XXX and Intefiker, TT 60, foaling oryx, Davies and Gardiner 1920: Pl. VI and New Kingdom, Montuherkepeshef, TT 20, foaling wild ass, Davies 1913: Pl. XII).

a. Mortuary temple of Sahure (South passage), Abusir, 5th dyn. (c. 2487-2475 B.C.) (South wall, Berlin 21783; PM III/1: 327 (5); Borchardt 1913: Pl. 17)

The desert hunt scene is found in the mortuary temple of Sahure's pyramid complex (PM III/1: 326-335) in the passage surrounding the columned hall. It is on the south wall in the south passage. On the other side of the hall, in the north passage, is a marsh scene depicting the king fowling and spearing fish from a canoe (PM III/1: 328 (9-10), Borchardt 1913: Pl. 16).

The Sahure scene is the oldest known royal example of the desert hunt and has been treated as a 'prototype' (e.g. Schweitzer 1948: 53, Vandier 1964: 791, Altenmüller, 1967: 13, Hoffmeier 1975: 8) for later private versions, in its use of several distinctive details. The most easily recognized is the hyena with the arrow in its muzzle, a detail that is used through to the New Kingdom (discussion in Ikram 2003b: 141-147). Similarly, some of the gazelle motifs, such as arrow through neck, the pair of gazelles and the recumbent gazelle hiding in insert, common in later desert scenes, are first

the names of Khufu and Khaefre (Neville 1891: 5, Pls VIII, XXXII, A (Khufu), XXXII, B (Khaefre)).

39 Cf. however Harpur (1987: 175) where the desert hunt is not included among that author's eight basic themes in Old Kingdom private tombs.

found in the Sahure composition.

The reconstruction of the Sahure hunt scene extends over as many as four registers. Next to the depiction of the desert landscape, stands the king, before the registers⁴⁰ (Borchardt 1913: Pl. 17, here Fig. 20) wearing the ceremonial beard and an unidentifiable crown. His ka is behind him. Sahure is the main hunter and the only one equipped with a bow and arrows. He is aided by hunting dogs and three men with lassos and one with a stick at the far right, outside the enclosure (excluded in Fig. 20). There is a large variety of prey animals: gazelle, oryx, fallow deer, aurochs, barbary goat, addax, hyena, hartebeest and ibex. Most of the wild animals depicted in the three surviving registers have at least one arrow piercing their bodies.

There are several gazelles in this scene. Four are found in the upper register. To the far left, one is seen attacked by a hunting dog, who wears a collar. The gazelle is pierced by an arrow and the dog goes in for the kill by seizing it by the neck. Next to this stands another gazelle, body facing right but head turned to the left, facing the dog. Its front legs are lifted off of the ground as if it is fleeing. It too has an arrow through its neck. To the right, on the same register, in front of a fallow deer and two oryx, all with arrows in their bodies, stand a pair of unharmed gazelles facing left, observing the flight of the other animals that are wounded and running (?) in their direction. An insert in the register below shows a reclining gazelle, its head turned back. In the bottom register, a dorcas gazelle and a Soemmerring's gazelle are pierced by multiple arrows. They are facing left, away from the king.

The Sahure scene provides the earliest known example of a gazelle wounded by an arrow, here in the animal's neck, an area that seems to be the hunter's preferred target, with regard to the gazelle. This can be compared to the two examples of the oryx (upper and lower registers) with arrows piercing their eyes, a placement that may relate to the Egyptian name of this animal *m3 ḥd* "seeing white" (cf. above 2.1.3). The hyena, by contrast has an arrow in its muzzle (cf. Ikram 2003b). This, like the depiction of the hunting dog seizing the gazelle by its neck (cf. e.g. 3.3 above), is an iconic motif.

40 The large-scale tomb owner with bow and arrow that flanks the hunting scenes in private tombs is more frequently preserved in Middle Kingdom contexts (but cf. Pepy-nakht Hekaib at Qubbet el-Hawa from the late 6th dynasty - FIP, Decker and Herb 1994: 313-314, Pl. CXLII (J 48)), e.g. Ukhhotep, Senbi, Khnumhotep etc., suggesting a popularising of royal motifs. The problem of survival however makes this conclusion tenuous. The occurrence of "hunting from a chariot" in the tomb of Userhat (TT 56, PM I/1: 113 (13-15)), a contemporary of Amenhotep II predates the royal version also found on the painted chest of Tutankhamun (below 4.2.3/a.2). The discovery, however, of a previously unknown royal chariot scene dated to Amosis at Abydos (Harvey 2001: 52-55) illustrates how tentative these conclusions are.

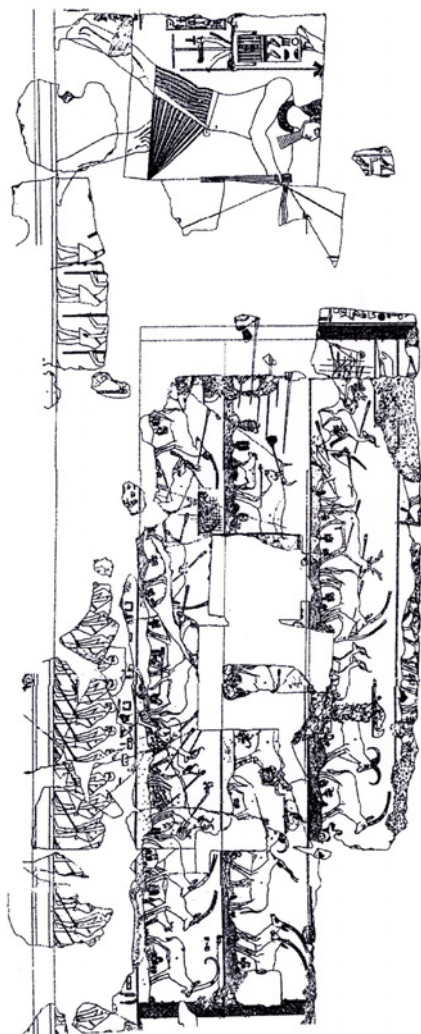


Figure 20 Sahure: desert hunt scene

Typical for the gazelle during the Old Kingdom is also the recumbent animal in an insert with its head turned back. The other inserts are taken up by a hedgehog, jerboa and badger (cf. Osborn 1998: 85 on identifying the species as a 'ratel' or honey badger⁴¹), all small animals that live hidden away. Another feature worth noting is the occurrence of gazelles two by two. As noted above (cf. 2.2), female gazelles pair up, rather than living in larger groups, when resources are restricted. This grouping may reflect an observation. However, given that one of the pairs consists of dorcas and a Soemmerring's gazelle, it also indicates that there is interest in depicting pairs of gazelles,⁴² and there is a greater general tendency for gazelles to appear in pairs than for other animals. Oryx, hartebeest and aurochs are found with equal frequency alone, in pairs or in larger groups. The grouping of gazelles into pairs is repeated in both royal and private desert hunt scenes.

The Sahure desert scene is flanked by fencing, suggesting that the hunt took place within an enclosure, with the animals inside and the king outside.⁴³ This implies that the animals were collected to facilitate the hunt. The depiction of the hunt within a fenced area is a variation found from the Middle Kingdom and onward in private tombs (e.g. Amenemhat at Beni Hassan, Newberry 1893: Pl. XIII; Djehutihotep at el-Bersheh, Newberry 1895: Pl. VII; Amenemhat, TT 53, Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CLXII (J 97)).

On the wall opposite the desert hunt, there is a series of offering processions (cf. Chapter 5). The fattened animals in the offering rows suggest that they were captured then kept alive for some time, perhaps within such enclosures, before slaughtering.⁴⁴

41 A ratel or honey badger (*Mellivora capensis*) belongs to the Mustelidae family, i.e. the same as weasel and otter (Estes 1992: 419, Kingdon 1997: 228, 232-233).

42 One of the pair consisted of a dorcas gazelle and a Soemmerring's gazelle (*gs3*). This 'combination' is common during the Old Kingdom, cf. Idut (Macramallah 1935: Pl. XX), Fetekta (LD II: Pl. 96), Nimaatre (Roth 1995: Fig. 189), and also Niuserre (von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI a) and Unas (Hassan 1938: Pl. XCVII A).

43 Reference to the earliest use of an enclosure could be in the Painted Tomb at Hierakonpolis, if the animal trap is interpreted as an enclosure. The Narmer macehead has a motif that can be interpreted with greater certainty as animals within an enclosure, in front of the Heb Sed booth (Quibell 1900: Pl. XXVI, B).

44 Cf. the use of the word *ḥt* or *ihṯ*, "enclosure", from *ḥ* "to entrap" (Faulkner 1962: 46) in tomb of Rahotep (Petrie 1892: Pl. IX).

b. Sun Temple of Niuserre (Room of Seasons), Abu Ghurob, 5th dyn. (c. 2445-2421 B.C.) (Harvest, west wall, Berlin 20036; PM III/1: 319; von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI a-b)

The original location of the naturalistic reliefs that include a hunt scene was the Room of Seasons, on the west wall, in the section understood as the harvest episode (*šmw*) (Smith 1965a: xxi). On the opposite east wall were representations of the inundation (*šht*, PM III/1: 321), with birds hovering over the marshes, a scene depicting the harvesting of honey and an array of domestic animals mating (Smith 1965a: Fig. 178b). The scene is fragmentary with several sections missing, making a complete reconstruction impossible. Yet, the motif of the gazelle can be distinguished several times from the remaining blocks of the harvest episode.

Two of the Niuserre blocks provide a striking contrast in their choice of motifs to that of Sahure with its focus on the hunt itself. The Niuserre blocks are decorated with a desert landscape that includes depictions of birth-giving scenes (von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI a-b). Nevertheless, two hunting dogs can be distinguished, stalking their prey on the far right on one of the blocks (von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI a). These dogs provide a certain contextual frame, possibly functioning both as a reminder of the vulnerability of the animal in giving birth, as well setting up an opposition to that event. Unfortunately the block breaks off here, making any further reading of the scene impossible.

Some of the other, even more fragmentary, pieces do indicate however that the hunting motif was originally included in the iconography of the Niuserre sun temple walls (von Bissing 1956: Pls XXI, XXIII; contra Vandier 1964: 788). These blocks are too damaged to present a comprehensive picture of the wall decoration, other than to indicate that the opposing themes, the birth of the young and the death-bringing hunt, seem to have originally been a part of the composition. Depictions of foaling wild game are found on both blocks (Edel and Wenig 1974: Pl. 14, Z. 250-252). The first block (von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI a, Edel and Wenig 1974: Pl. 14, Z. 251-252) preserves fragments of three registers. Mulletts swimming in the river are shown on the uppermost register (excluded in Fig. 21 below). The middle register consists of an array of animals, all facing right: these include (from right to left) the remains of an ostrich, followed by an addax, a foaling oryx, a gazelle and two Soemmerring's gazelles. The bottom row is composed of (from right to left), a dorcas gazelle nibbling on a bush, a dorcas and Soemmerring's gazelle giving birth side by side, a recumbent gazelle

(facing left) hiding behind a tree,⁴⁵ two oryx, two hunting dogs wearing a collar and a gazelle in a basket. The variety of motifs that include the gazelle is notable, perhaps suggesting its position as desirable prey.

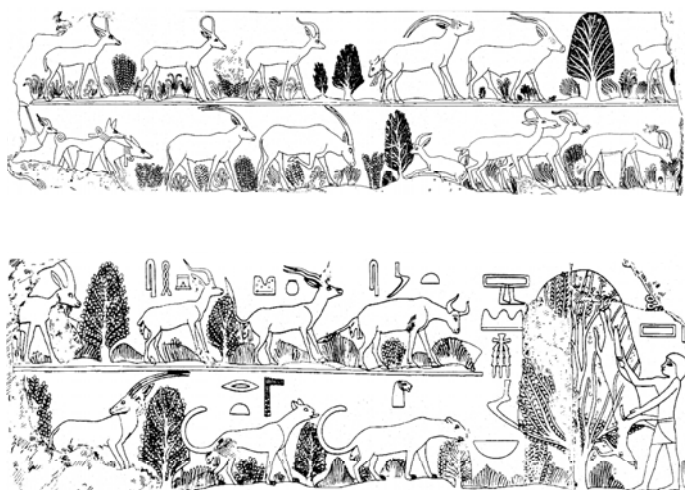


Figure 21. Blocks from Niuserre's sun temple

The second block also has three registers (von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI b, Edel and Wenig 1974: Pl. 14, Z. 250), with the top row depicting water (without fish, not shown in Fig. 21). The second register, from right to left, shows an aurochs, addax and gazelle, all giving birth. On the far left, remains of another gazelle can be observed. The bottom register continued the motif of giving birth, with a lioness and a panther, followed by an oryx looking back (facing left). The foaling animals are identified with a text; above the gazelle it reads *ghs*. One would have expected the feminine form *ghst* for the foaling female gazelle, although the label perhaps refers to a male fawn. The inscriptions above the other birth-giving animals are also somewhat inconsistent with regard to gender, with the only feminine form found referring to the panther.

⁴⁵ The recumbent gazelle in a 'traditional' insert is present on one of the fragments from this temple (von Bissing 1956: Pl. XXIII b). A ratel and a hare are also included, corresponding to Sahure's choice of species in this particular motif.

Another inscription written in a vertical column to the right of this second block, extending over two registers reads *šm ḥꜣst ms mꜣ nb*, ‘setting out (for) the hill country, giving birth, renewing all (things)’.⁴⁶ This line confirms birth-giving as an integral theme in the desert narrative. The Niuserre blocks are unique in the diversity of wild animals giving birth, as well as in the inclusion of such specific descriptions.

There are several gazelle motifs on the Niuserre blocks. Apart from introducing that of a birth-giving gazelle, it may also be noted that the combination of a dorcas and Soemmerring’s gazelle appears here as well as in the Sahure scene (von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI a), although here both are giving birth. This is the only example in this material of two foaling animals seen directly side by side, creating a ‘double’ birth that contrasts with the other foaling animals that are portrayed individually.

Another new feature is the gazelle nibbling on a bush. The motif of the bush-eating gazelle develops into a composition involving two opposing gazelles eating from a bush/palmette (cf. e.g. a jar stand in Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago (no. 30177), EGA: 119-120, cat. no. 106, and the chests of Perpaouty, below as 6.4.1). In the example of Niuserre, the grazing gazelle is found together with the recumbent gazelle and the foaling pair, suggesting that these images of the gazelle could all be considered as ‘naturalistic’. This variation in poses appears to be exclusive for the gazelle. Some of the other animals are similarly depicted, but no other is found with the same range of variation.

A ‘new’ motif specifically related to the gazelle, is the use of a basket as a carrier (cf. below 5.2.2/c.1). To the far left in the same register, there are traces of what can be interpreted as a basket containing gazelles. Although broken off here, parallels from private tombs⁴⁷ suggest that this would have been hanging from a yoke. Additionally the version found on the Niuserre block was most likely that where the two gazelles appear with head and neck protruding from either side of a basket, forming a pair (cf. Hetepherakhti, Mohr 1943: 41, Fig. 9).

46 Von Bissing 1956: 329: “Marcher dans le désert en donnant naissance, renouvelant tout”.

47 Cf. e.g. Ptahhotep (PM III/2: 602 (18), Davies 1900: Pl. XXI), Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep (PM III/2: 642 (9)), Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 34), Merytet (PM III/2: 536 (112)), Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CXL, J 40), Idut (PM III/2: 619 (13)), Macramallah 135: Pl. X).

c. Pyramid complex of Unas (Causeway⁴⁸), Saqqara 5th dyn. (c. 2375-2345 B.C.) (Harvest sequence, north wall; PM III/2: 419; Hassan 1938: Pl. XCVII A)

The desert hunt scene of Unas was originally found on the north wall of the causeway leading to his pyramid complex. The blocks decorated with desert scenes are part of the harvest season similar to the context for the same scene on the Niuserre blocks. The motif of netting fowl was located on adjoining blocks (PM III/2: 419). Once again multiple loose blocks make a complete reconstruction of the original layout of the desert hunt scenes impossible. The publication of Labrousse and Moussa (2002: 147-152, Figs 42-59) gives an idea however of the extent of the representation of game on these blocks

On the single block published by Hassan (1938: Pl. XCVII A, Labrousse and Moussa 2002: 151, Fig. 57, Doc. 43), several gazelle motifs can be observed. The register contains (from right to left) an oryx licking its young and a gazelle being attacked by a hunting dog that grasps its hind leg. The gazelle turns its head back, facing left. This group is followed by a foaling oryx and a hartebeest. The heads of a dorcas gazelle and a Soemmerring's gazelle at the end of the block are discernable before the block breaks off. Two inserts are also included; the one to the left contains a hare and a jerboa, while other one features a recumbent gazelle with its head turned back. This insert is located above the dog-attacking-gazelle motif.

This single register combines the themes of birth-giving and the hunt. The insert with a single recumbent gazelle with head turned back is similar to that from Sahure, as is the dog-attacking-gazelle motif (albeit expressed slightly differently). Its positioning among birth-giving animals creates a contrast as well as a balance in the hunting theme. The use of foaling animals can be traced to the Niuserre blocks that had the same imagery, including the presence of hunting dogs, although there they appear as implicit threats, without actually attacking.

One of many blocks with the desert motif contains a nursing scene (Labrousse and Moussa 2002: 151, Fig. 55, Doc. 41); unfortunately the upper part of the mother is missing making it impossible to definitely identify the species. However, the remaining anatomical details suggests that it was a gazelle nursing its fawn, especially when compared to the example in the contemporary tomb of Ptahhotep (Davies 1900: Pl. XXI), where the young is also depicted standing on its hind legs, forelegs off of the ground in order to reach the mother's teats ("... se dresse sur ses pattes de derrière pour téter les mamelles de sa mère"; Labrousse and Moussa 2002: 45).

48 This part of the Unas' pyramid and temple complex was called the "valley temple" in PM III/2: 417.

From the Unas block fragments published by Labrousse and Moussa (2002: 148-152, Figs 45, 52, 54, 59), it is evident that the motif of mating animals is common. An example of copulating gazelles may be among these animal pairs. This is, however, speculative as only the hind part of the animals remains (Labrousse and Moussa 2002: 150, Fig. 52 (Doc. 38)).

The frequent use of inserts and recumbent animals, among them the gazelle, is also a dominating feature of the Unas blocks (Labrousse and Moussa 2002: Figs 42, 47, 48, 53, 54, 56). Finally, it may be pointed out that the motif of striding gazelles, two by two, is also found on a few of these blocks (Labrousse and Moussa 2002: 149, Fig. 51 (Doc. 37), 148, Fig. 47, (Doc. 33, Soemmerring's gazelle)).

Several of the blocks show traces of men with lassoes, a hunting technique depicted on the Sahure relief (e.g. Labrousse and Moussa 2002: 150, Fig. 54 (Doc. 40 A), also 152, Fig. 58 (Doc. 44)). A hunting dog with a collar is also found (Labrousse and Moussa 2002: 151, Fig. 57 (Doc. 43)). There are no animals shown pierced by arrows however, suggesting that this might be a variation of the desert hunt in which the king did not participate with bow and arrow.

d. Mortuary Temple of Pepi II (Vestibule), Saqqara, 6th dyn. (c. 2278-2184 B.C.) (North wall, PM III/2: 427 (27); Jéquier 1938: Pls 41-43)

The blocks from the temple of Pepi II come from the vestibule of his mortuary temple. The desert scene was located on the north wall and a fowling scene was located on the same wall, but on the other side of the doorway in this vestibule (PM III/2: 427 (26)).

The remains of the desert relief consist of a single fragmentary register (Jéquier 1938: Pls 41-43). The composition shows a group of striding animals, some of them facing left, some of them right. No particular activity can be distinguished within this row. There are no hunting, copulating or birth giving motifs preserved. The motif of striding animals is not per se out of place, yet the lack of more specific activity is slightly surprising, especially when compared to the earlier royal hunting and desert scenes, which seem to have been particularly dynamic.

The gazelle motif is however included in the scene from Pepi II's temple. A pair of striding dorcas gazelles, facing right, comprises the third 'group' from the left. Other striding animals included oryx (four adults, two young), two ibexes (facing left), followed by two foxes, a Barbary goat, a hyena with young and two hartebeests with young (cf. Osborn 1998: 70 for identification of the various species). In the far upper right of the register, a

recumbent young animal can be observed, possibly a gazelle, although its identification is uncertain. Osborn (1998: 70) suggests that this is a gazelle eating from the small bush in front of it.

The scene above the desert register is to a large extent missing; the front hooves of an unspecified antelope can nonetheless be distinguished. This fragment led Jéquier to suggest that the motif was of the pharaoh, i.e. Pepi II, smiting an oryx with a mace head (1938: Pl. 41; “Reconstruction de l’ensemble”). This corresponds to the “smiting the enemy” iconography, familiar for the king (cf. e.g. Swan Hall 1986). There are some reasons for scepticism with regard to this reconstruction. In later examples where an animal is found in this type of scene, a knife is used to slaughter it, rather than the animal being clubbed by a macehead (e.g. Derchain 1962: 9, Fig. 1, type II, Pl. I, type I). More importantly, the king is accompanied by his ka in this example (seen to the left, Jéquier 1938: Pls 41-42), a feature corresponding to the inclusion of the ka that accompanies Sahure on his desert hunt. It also indicates that the royal cult is the setting for this motif.

Beyond the actual remains from this scene, further description would be speculative. What may be noted however is the omission on the surviving blocks of the distinctive hunting and life-giving themes. The motif of the gazelle appears as a recumbent young animal, familiar as the form used for the insert, and as a striding pair. The striding animals, as well as the inclusion of the (reconstructed) smiting scene above this register, makes it an unusual example of the desert scene.

e. The royal desert hunt: Old Kingdom – concluding remarks

The gazelle occurs in the royal desert hunt in numerous forms. As prey, it is depicted pierced with arrows and attacked by the hunting dog. The young animal is found recumbent in the insert, possibly hiding from attack. The gazelle also occurs within the framework of life-giving imagery, including possible copulation, giving birth and nursing. The gazelle at rest, eating from a bush is found as well as being carried in a basket. Furthermore, the gazelle is often shown two and two, especially when striding or fleeing from the hunters, forming a pair. The animal landscape of the hunt is used to convey the ideas of death and life as two intertwined processes. The reoccurring use of pairs is suggestive of the Egyptian interest in this constellation found in other contexts. It is a composition seen in the Predynastic material as well, on the palettes in particular (Davis 1992: 80, 84-85, cf. above 3.5).

The comparatively few surviving examples of the royal hunt scene differ from one another in their internal composition. The focus on the hunt is evident in the Sahure reliefs, while the surviving blocks dating to Niuserre

and Unas illustrate the theme of regeneration as they appear within the context of the harvest season. The narrative of Pepi II remains enigmatically static, lacking, in the surviving representations, the narrative elements of both the hunt and life-giving activities. Two aspects of these scenes do however stand out. The first of these is the inclusion of the king's ka, either in the desert scene (Sahure, accompanying the king as archer) or adjacent to it (Pepi II, accompanying the king as the possible smiter of the oryx). This suggests that the hunt in some way benefited the king's ka, and thus had an element of ritual. The other aspect is the association of the live-giving motifs (copulation, birth, nursing) with the harvest (Niuserre, Unas), indicating a parallelism between the events. It is also worth noting that the original location of the desert hunt suggests an element of juxtaposition with the marsh scenes, possibly reflecting a theme carried over from the Predynastic (cf. above 3.2, 3.3 and 3.7) combining the two landscapes as complementary.

4.2.2 The royal desert hunt: Middle Kingdom (c. 2055–1773 B.C.)

Documentation for the royal desert hunt in the Middle Kingdom is limited to the temple of Mentuhotep II (c. 2055 – 2004 B.C.) at Deir el-Bahari. Although, the remaining relief is very fragmentary, there are some details that confirm the continuation of the royal use of the hunt scene.

a. Mortuary temple of Mentuhotep II (Upper colonnade), Deir el-Bahari, 11th dyn. (Hall, south wall(?), Brussels Musée Royaux E.4989; PM II: 385; Naville, Hall and Ayrton 1907: Pl. XVI)

The temple itself no longer stands; however, some of the published fragments indicate that its decoration included reliefs devoted to hunting in both the desert and the marshes (Naville, Hall and Ayrton 1907: Pl. XVI). The exact location and internal relationship between the fragments cannot be reconstructed. Commenting on original location of these blocks, the excavators write: "...These were found in the Southern Court, into which they must have fallen from the platform above. They therefore probably belong to the south wall of the ambulatory surrounding the pyramid" (Naville et al 1907: 69).⁴⁹



Figure 22.
Deir el-Bahari: hunted gazelle

⁴⁹ This statement included the fragments of marsh related motifs as well, i.e. both the desert and marsh hunting scenes could have been located on the same wall or direction.

Three of these fragments depict gazelles, and furthermore, three of the four gazelles had their head turned back (cf. Naville et al 1907: Pl. XVI C, F, H) which is a common pose for the attacked and fleeing gazelle. One of the gazelles has an arrow piercing its neck (Naville et al 1907: Pl. XVI F), and is an almost exact copy of the wounded gazelle from the Sahure reliefs. This suggests that Mentuhotep II was included in the composition as the hunter and, in parallel with Sahure, he may have been depicted oversized outside the hunting area, possibly accompanied by his ka. In addition, one of the fragments shows the head of an aurochs (Naville et al 1907: Pl. XVI E), while four of the slabs show motifs associated with marsh iconography (Naville et al 1907: Pl. XVI A, B, D, G).

Although lacking the internal composition of the desert scene, the remaining fragments indicate that both the desert and marsh scenes followed the model of the Old Kingdom. It is worth noting that the image of the gazelle dominates the preserved depictions. This combined with the position given the gazelle in the royal hunt scenes from the Old Kingdom,⁵⁰ makes it likely that the gazelle had a similar prominence in the imagery from the temple of Mentuhotep II.

b. The royal desert hunt: Middle Kingdom - concluding remarks

The evidence suggests that the desert hunt scene in the temple of Mentuhotep II was similar in content and composition to those from an Old Kingdom royal context and to contemporary, private, hunting scenes (cf. below 4.3.2).

4.2.3 The royal desert hunt: New Kingdom (c. 1550-1069 B.C.)

Images of the pharaoh hunting in the desert dating to the New Kingdom are relatively scarce (Hoffmeier 1980: 199). None are known to have survived from the earlier 18th dynasty, rather it is the textual material that deals with this theme. The royal hunt is combined with the king's military activities as part of the presentation of his role. Biographical accounts of his officials refer to the king's hunting exploits. Amenemheb (TT 85) refers for example to the capture of 120 elephants by Tuthmosis III in Syria (Urk. IV: 893, 14-15). The Armant stela describes the same king killing seven lions and 12 aurochs with arrows (Urk. IV: 1245, 14-15). The well-known commemorative scarab texts of Amenhotep III record "wild bull" (aurochs) and lion hunts (Urk. IV: 1739-

50 Note that all of the royal desert scenes of the Old Kingdom are fragmentary, making a reconstruction in all its details impossible, as well as determining the exact numbers of the species involved. The gazelle however is well represented in all the surviving examples, indicating that it had a significance presence in the original scenes.

1740). The hunts were spectacularly successful with 102 lions reported as the result (Altenmüller 1967: 10). These hunts do not have the character of a 'leisure' activity but were rather of a ritual nature, with the pharaoh demonstrating his power and thus fitness to rule.

Although the textual narrative of the king as hunter appears to have had a significant place in the presentation of the role of the king, the earliest known surviving examples of the pictorial version date to the late 18th dynasty.

a. Tomb of Tutankhamun, KV 62, Thebes, 18th dyn. (c. 1336-1327 B.C.)

Four objects from the Valley of the Kings tomb of Tutankhamun display variations on the royal desert hunt theme that include the gazelle: a bow case, a painted chest, an embroidered tunic and an unguent jar. The bow case and the painted chest have scenes that include the king in an explicit desert hunt context, while the embroidered tunic omits the king, yet presenting the hunting motif with images of attacking dogs and lions. The tunic with its embroidered panels is unique in its juxtaposition of hunting and life-giving motifs. The unguent jar, with a lion decorating its lid, bearing the cartouche of the king, implies an identity between the animal and royal hunter.

a.1 Bow case, KV 62 (Treasury)

(Cairo JE 61502, PM I/2: 581; McLeod 1982: Pls VI-XVI)

The bow case is made of "thin light wood" covered with a tripartite scene depicting the desert hunt (McLeod 1982: 26). Two scenes with identical animals being hunted are found on the lid and base, fitted into the frame of the elongated triangle of the bow case (cf. McLeod 1982: 45-48 for the list of wild animals on bow case).

On the lid, in the centre, the king is shown in a chariot, shooting an arrow at two fleeing animals, an oryx and a hartebeest. Two dogs, one at the side of the chariot and the other biting at the hartebeest from beneath its belly, are also included in the scene. This image is flanked by two scenes depicting the game of the desert. To the right, in front of the king, a hartebeest is shown in a twisted position, followed by a hartebeest and an ibex that face each other, with a hare found crouched at the narrow end of the panel. All of the animals, with the exception of the hare, are pierced with arrows. To the left, behind the king, four antelopes are lined up according to size ('somersaulting' hartebeest, oryx, ibex and a dorcas gazelle) facing away from the king, towards a hyena. These too are pierced with arrows, with that of the hyena found in its muzzle, like that found in the Sahure scene. The tips

of the panel have additional scenes, to the right the king is depicted as a lion trampling an African foe and to the left he has the same guise and is trampling both an Asian and an African enemy.

The base of the case (McLeod 1982: Pl. XV) differs in the inclusion of a single grazing gazelle, reminiscent of the motif from the Niuserre block. It stands out, as it does not seem to be either fleeing or wounded.

Although these are hunt scenes, the military subtext is found both in the images of the king as a lion destroying foreigners and in the accompanying text (McLeod 1982: 28-38) that contains references to trampling the foreigners (*ptpt ḥ3styw*) and to shooting with a “victorious” bow (*stwt m pḏt nḥtw*) (McLeod 1982: Pl. XXVIII). There is a coherence between the scene and the bow case itself, intended to contain the bow referred to in the text.

Many of the elements found here are known from earlier contexts, with only the chariot representing a “modernization” of the scene. The gazelle appears to play a specific role in its appearance on the reverse version of the scene, occurring as the only animal at ease, as opposed to the main theme of fleeing and wounded animals.⁵¹

a.2 Painted chest, KV 62 (Antechamber)

(Cairo, JE 61467; PM I/2: 577; Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CLXXV)

The painted chest was found in the tomb’s antechamber and is referred to as “one of the greatest artistic treasures of the tomb” (Carter and Mace 1923: 110, Pls XXI, L-LIV). It is decorated with four different scenes, all depicting the king shooting from his chariot. On the two long sides of the box, the “prey” is comprised of the enemies of the king, African on one side and Asian on the other. The two scenes found on the vaulted lid of the box show the king hunting lions on one side, and on the other a mixed group of desert prey: gazelle, bubals and wild ass, each species distinctively grouped. The ends of the box are decorated with the image of the king as a lion trampling the enemy, with two figures flanking a cartouche. The combination of hunting and military themes, understated in the bow case, is explicit here, as the two groups of prey, foreign enemies and desert animals, are interchangeable.

There are several characteristic traits in the scenes of Medinet Habu (cf. 4.2.3/b), among them the grouping of antelopes and lions.

51 Cf. similar images in tombs of e.g. Ptahhotep (4.3.1/b.3, Davies 1900: Pl. XXI), Senbi (4.3.2/b.1, Blackman 1914: Pl. VI) and Montherkhepeshef (4.3.3/a, Davies 1913: Pl. XII).

a.3 Embroidered tunic, KV 62 (Annex⁵²)

(Tunic 367j, Cairo, JE 62626; PM I/2: 582; Crowfoot and Davies 1941: Pl. XXII)

The embroidered tunic found in the annex is “a sleeved robe of fine plain linen decorated with applied bands” (Crowfoot and Davies 1941: 115). The embroidered panels are sewn on the lower edge of this garment, while woven bands with ‘geometric’ design are on the side borders. The front band has 12 panels, while there are eight panels in the back band. The front panels differs from those on the back, with both sharing elements of the desert hunt.



Figure 23. Back panel 1:
nursing and fleeing gazelles

The theme of the desert hunt occurs on five of the 12 front panels (front panels 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, Crowfoot and Davies 1941: Pl. XX) where dogs hunt wild game. Of the eight back panels, six have representations of dogs and lions chasing desert game (back panels 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, Crowfoot and Davies 1941: Pl. XXII). These scenes are punctuated by panels decorated with elaborate palmettes. In the front panels winged female sphinxes and griffins are also part of the decoration.

Front panels 1, 2 and 3 form a group of two female winged sphinxes facing an elaborate palmette, of the kind that decorates the neck of the tunic. An additional grouping of this kind is integrated into a hunt scene on front panels seven, eight and nine. An additional triad is formed with panels 10, 11 and 12 where a palmette separates two opposing lions. Another unusual feature consists of the two opposing griffins that occupy the lower part of panel six. Palmettes are also found bordering hunt scenes on the back panels, found on panels two and seven. The hunt scenes found on the front panels are incorporated with the decorative palmettes, female sphinx and griffin. There are two possible examples of the gazelle chased by a hunting dog, in panels seven and nine. The back panels however provide more varied gazelle motifs.

BACK PANEL 1

The first back panel, to the left, includes a combination of hunting and nursing motifs. The upper part of the panel shows a dog chasing two calves and a lion running in the opposite direction. The bottom section of this panel is decorated with a gazelle nursing a young; there is another young gazelle

⁵² The annex is referred to as “the store-room of the tomb” by Crowfoot and Davies (1941: 114).

prancing in front of this mother-fawn group. Behind the suckling gazelle two other individuals can be discerned, one of them is probably yet another young gazelle as the animal seen in the left bottom corner is running, with its head turned back, facing right. Interspersed among all these animals are six circles intersected with a cross. This design can be identified as a stylized flower by comparing it to a similar one on the front panels. The nursing gazelle can be compared to that from the Unas blocks (cf. 4.2.1/c).

BACK PANELS 3 – 6

The back panels 3, 4 and 5 are treated as one by Crowfoot and Davies (1941: 130), as the squares originally made up a single piece of cloth. Back panel 6 differs in colouring but not in motif. To the left we have once again a fleeing gazelle with its head turned back. A greater part of the panel was devoted to a nursing animal, surrounded by two other young animals. The nursing motif as such, the length of tail and the shape of horns would all indicate an



Figure 24. Back panels 3-6

identification as gazelle, although the size of body, the shape and length of neck do not support this identification. Another gazelle, this time recumbent, is located in the upper section of this panel. The positioning of the motif above the 'chaos' correlates with earlier examples of recumbent gazelles in desert hunt scenes, as seen in the Old Kingdom reliefs of Sahure, Niuserre, Unas and Pepi II (cf. above 4.2.1). The stylized circular flowers are repeated here as well. The differentiation between back panels 3 and 4 is not clear cut, nor is the transition from panel 4 to 5. In panels 4 and 5, the hunting theme continues with a fleeing aurochs in the upper part and a hunting dog running in the opposite direction, possibly to catch the animal's leg. The lower sections of back panels 4 and 5 appear to show another aurochs downed by a hunting dog. In the centre of back panel 5 a gazelle is attacked by a hunting dog grasping its neck while another hunting dog confronts this group. A fleeing ibex fills the space below the attacked gazelle.

Back panel 6 continues the hunting motif. The upper pair consists of a lion attacking a gazelle by grasping a hind leg and the lower part of the square contained the motif of a hunting dog attacking an ibex.

The last back panel 8 to the far right is only partially preserved with a hunting dog chasing an unidentified animal and a lion (?) attacking an aurochs.

In the scenes from the back panels, the gazelle representations are varied, being shown fleeing and attacked as well as nursing and in a recumbent pose. It is worth noting that the nursing motif is only found with the gazelle as in other desert hunt scenes.

In treating the tunic, Crowfoot and Davies note several traits that they found to be “Syrian” or inspired by Syrian influences, among them the bands that edged the tunic and in the panels, the use of the winged female sphinx, the griffins and the palmette. They also found the composition of the hunt scenes unconventional describing the motifs on the back panels as follows: “The cantering legs of the ibex, the frequent appearance of the lion and his violent action, the unreal position of the tail between the legs in attack, the interspersed flowers without stem or leaf, the alternation of excerpts from the hunt with the palmette design, and the absence of any hunter, though his dogs, slipped from the leash (as the collars show), are so prominent, are all un-Egyptian” (Crowfoot and Davies 1941: 127). They also see a “latent symbolism of victory” referring to it as a feature of Mesopotamian art. Although this particular use of the hunt scene may invite some Syrian interpretation, the scenes are derived from a tradition that can be traced back to the Predynastic Period. Found on a piece of clothing intended to be used by an Egyptian pharaoh, the role of hunter is given the lion and the collared dogs. By wearing this tunic, Tutankhamun would, in a sense, have become the royal hunter, outside the scene.

a.4 Unguent jar, KV 62 (Burial chamber)

(Inside great outer shrine, facing door, Jar 211, Cairo JE 62119; PM I/2: 580; Carter 1927: Pls L, LI)

A number of calcite cosmetic jars, crafted in various elaborate shapes, were found in the tomb of Tutankhamun. One of the unguent jars features the desert hunt on a cylinder shaped body. The lid is formed as a recumbent lion and the jar is flanked by two papyrus columns, each surmounted by a Bes head. The vessel stands on four bound foreigners (two Nubians, two Western Asians). Upon discovery, the jar still contained some kind of cosmetic substance (Carter 1927: 35), most likely a mixture of animal fat and

unidentified resin or balsam (Scott 1927: 210). The height of the container is reported to be 26.8 cm (Reeves 1990: 198f), which is fairly tall for this kind of object. The unguent jar was found in the eastern end of the burial chamber, between the first and second shrines enclosing the sarcophagi with the mummified body of the pharaoh (Reeves 1990: 84f).

The hunt scene covers the body of the cylinder and is divided into two sections. The front scene, under the facing reclined lion, includes an aurochs attacked by a lion and a dog. To the left, an ibex is attacked by two dogs. Branches referring to the desert environment are interspersed between these two groups. The back of the unguent jar has a similar scene, although here a gazelle is included. An aurochs is attacked by a lion and a hunting dog chases a fleeing gazelle, with its head turned back. This back section is even more densely decorated with desert vegetation. Branches, a small desert bush and a palmette like composition are found below the gazelle, as if to stress the desert landscape.

While the motif of the gazelle repeated a pattern that can be traced back to the Predynastic Period, the context of the hunt scene is unusual. The gazelle alone is however connected to other cosmetic containers, albeit without the hunting reference (cf. 6.7). Even though the king is missing in the hunting scene, his presence is represented by the lion on the lid; the cartouche of Tutankhamun is inscribed on the shoulder of the lion. Therefore it could be interpreted that the lions in the hunt scene attacking the aurochs are in fact the king (cf. Ritner 1993: 129).

b. Temple of Ramses III (First Pylon), Medinet Habu, 20th dyn. (c. 1184 - 1153 B.C. (Outer face, PM II: 516 (185); Epigraphic Survey 1932: Pls 116-117)

Ramses III is depicted hunting from his chariot on the south wall of the first pylon at Medinet Habu. The fleeing desert game are divided into several registers, grouped according to species including gazelles, oryx, hartebeests, as well as wild asses and hares on the upper level of the pylon. Aurochs are found on the lower half as part of a separate hunting sequence. The group of fleeing gazelles is separated into the two top registers while the other species are found apart on individual rows as well.

This separation of the different species is also found in the scene from Tutankhamun's painted chest (above 4.2.3/a.2) and in some of the private tombs in the Theban necropolis as well (cf. e.g. Userhat, TT 56, Wreszinski 1923: Pl. 26; Mentu-iwiw, TT 172, Wreszinski 1923: Pl. 353).

The sole hunter in this scene is the pharaoh. This contrasts with the Tutankhamun scene, where a hunting party is depicted in side registers. The

weapon used is the bow and arrow. This scene appears to fall into the category “pharaoh hunts from the chariot”.

c. The royal desert hunt: New Kingdom – concluding remarks

The New Kingdom documentation of the royal desert hunt is very sparse, undoubtedly representing only the smallest fragment of what may have once existed, particularly on royal objects, given its occurrence among the items from Tutankhamun’s tomb. As it stands, it is the textual material that confirms the desert hunt theme as one of importance in royal iconography. In the surviving pictorial material, the chariot, a New Kingdom innovation, is incorporated into the representation of the hunt, enabling easy parallels to be drawn with military activity. This is exploited in the compositions on the Tutankhamun bow case and box where clear parallels are drawn between hunting desert (*ḥ3st*) game and defeating foreign (*ḥ3st*) enemies.

Another paradigm appears to be set up with contrasting scenes where the game includes aurochs and lions (cf. Tutankhamun’s painted chest, and the scene from Medinet Habu described above), possibly with these two animals representing a higher order of enemy, as they have a close relationship to the king’s own iconography. These animals are “big game”, with the aurochs (“wild bull”) in particular having an aggressive nature that makes it a dangerous animal to hunt, sometimes turning to attack the hunter (Otto 1950: 170, however, cf. Ramses II at Abydos, Mariette 1869: Pl. 53). This may also explain why they were sometimes depicted separately, even in private tombs (e.g. Djehutihotep at el-Bersheh, Newberry 1895: Pl. VII). The distinction made between the hunt of lions and aurochs and that of the gazelle, oryx and ibex suggests that the two groups had different associations.

The gazelle is represented in this material by the motifs that relate to the hunt: fleeing, hiding in wait, as well as nursing. These images became codified representations of this animal in the hunt context, indicating the long tradition that lay behind the transmission of the components that make up the desert hunt scene.

4.2.4 The royal desert hunt - concluding remarks

The earliest known example of the royal desert hunt scene is from the 5th dynasty mortuary temple of Sahure and the latest example in this corpus, is from the 20th dynasty funerary temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu. These two share a number of attributes. The king is depicted as the central figure, and distinguished by his superior size. He hunts with bow and arrow and the fleeing gazelle is among the many species that is the target of the hunt.

The 5th dynasty material also depicts the gazelle in various life

generating motifs. These are specific for the gazelle, with no other wild species used with such variety. The fragmentary early Middle Kingdom example dated to Mentuhotep II merely confirms the notion of the central position of the motif of the gazelle being hunted by bow and arrow in the desert. The New Kingdom adds the chariot to the hunt of desert game.

The desert hunt scenes from the objects found in Tutankhamun's tomb include both a version where the hunt itself is the focus (the painted chest, the unguent jar) and one where life affirming motifs such as the grazing gazelle (the bow case) and the nursing gazelle and the reclined gazelle (the embroidered tunic) occur. The gazelle motif in the royal desert hunt scenes refer to both the death of the animal and its regeneration, a combination that is more notable during the Old Kingdom, but that is still reflected in e.g. the Tutankhamun objects.

With the desert hunt being an important element of private tomb decor, the similarities between royal and private trends confirm the view that the differentiation between the pharaoh and the private man can be partially bridged over when it comes to funerary iconography.

“... Dieser Zusammenstoß zweier Sphären⁵³, die in der Natur des Königtums begründet liegen, spiegelt sich auch im Bereich der Privatgräber, wenngleich dort die Akzentuierung etwas anders gelagert ist. Während beim König die beiden Konstanten in seiner Natur eingebettet liegen und dadurch simultan sind, treten sie beim Privatmann in einer Aufeinanderfolge ein, da erst durch den Tod der Eintritt in die transzendente Sphäre gegeben ist. In der Grabdekoration spiegelt sich dieser Umstand in der Tatsache, daß den rein herrscherlichen Szenen die des Totenkultes entsprechen” (Goedicke 1957: 63).

4.3 The desert hunt in private tombs

There are numerous private tombs that contain a desert hunt scene. Those examined here come primarily from the classic cemetery sites of the Old, Middle and New Kingdoms. They are chosen as representative of the trends in the image of the gazelle in the desert hunt of the private tomb.

⁵³ I.e. the “irdischen” and the “transzendenten” (Goedicke 1957: 62).

4.3.1 The desert hunt in Old Kingdom private tombs

The Old Kingdom was a period in which a variety of themes represented “daily life” in private tomb decoration. Harpur (1987: 175)⁵⁴ identifies “eight basic themes” for this period. While the marsh hunt was common enough to constitute as a ‘basic theme’, the desert hunt is not included in this list. Still, in the Memphite necropolis, where a majority of the preserved private tombs of the period are found, the desert hunt is well represented, with some 25 examples, covering the 3rd to the 6th dynasties (see Appendix II).⁵⁵

The desert hunt scene of Sahure has been treated as a ‘prototype’ for this type of scene (Schweitzer 1948: 53, Vandier 1964: 791, Altenmüller 1967: 13, Ikram 2003b: 143). This composition is not however the invention of the 5th dynasty. The Predynastic material displays a number of variations on the theme of the wild game hunt and some of the gazelle motifs can be traced back to that period. In addition there are a few examples from private tombs that antedate the scene from Sahure’s temple. The fragmentary character of the material from both royal and private contexts makes the issue of the original source(s) for the Old Kingdom desert hunt scene an open question.

a. Meidum, 3rd and 4th dyn. (c. 2686-2494 B.C.)

The earliest documented private desert hunt scenes come from the Meidum double mastaba of Nefermaat and Atet and the mastaba of Rahotep (Petrie 1892). These tombs have been dated to the transition between 3rd and 4th dynasties, narrowed down to the reigns of Huni and Sneferu (Huni, c. 2637-2613 B.C., Sneferu c. 2613-2589 B.C.). Both Nefermaat and Rahotep were said to be princes (Nefermaat was *s3 smsw*, eldest son and Rahotep was *s3 nsw n ht=f*, king’s son of his body) but the inscriptions do not include the name of the pharaoh (Harpur 2001: 26-27). The tomb walls were fragmentary when published by Petrie in 1892 and since that time several wall sections have been spread to various museums (e.g. fragments in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, no. 1910.635 and in Ny Carlsbergs Glyptotek, Copenhagen, ÆIN 1133; cf. Harpur 2001: Pls 1-80 for the list of the current locations of these fragments). The Meidum scenes provide a link between the Pre- and Early Dynastic material and the later Old Kingdom representations.

54 These eight basic themes are “marsh pursuits, agriculture, pastoral activities, horticulture, workshop pursuits, banqueting, the funerary meal, and the funeral ceremonies of the deceased, including his ‘journey to the West’” (Harpur 1987: 175).

55 The discussion of accessibility to the royal funerary temple complexes is not dealt with here. Some motifs indicate a mutual use in both royal and private context (cf. Ikram 2003b: 141).

a.1 Mastaba of Nefermaat and Atet (Hall), no. 16a-b, 3rd-4th dyn.
(North wall, Cairo 43809 (Nefermaat); Pennsylvania University Museum E.16141 (Atet); PM IV: 93-94, Petrie 1892: Pls XVII; XXVII)

There are only glimpses of the desert hunt scene in this mastaba. The scene in Nefermaat's part of the tomb probably extended over several registers, involving the usual hunting dogs and various antelopes (Petrie 1892: Pl. XVII). On the opposite south wall of the hall was an unusual scene of boat building (PM IV: 94, Petrie 1892: Pl. XXV), with fishing and fowling found on the lintel of the side of the façade (PM IV: 93, Petrie 1892: Pl. XXIV).

In Atet's section (no. 16 b) the desert hunt took up three registers (PM IV: 94, Petrie 1892: Pl. XXVII). Nefermaat is shown oversized holding a leash in his hand, which is attached to the hunting dogs in two of the registers, Atet stands next to her husband, considerably smaller in size. The top register shows a hunting dog grasping a large hare by its neck. The middle register consists of two striding animals, facing right, an ibex and a fallow deer (?).⁵⁶ The third register features another hunting dog on a leash grasping the hind leg of a gazelle. Immediately below this scene, the bringing of desert game (cf. Chapter 5) can be observed, all facing left. This image of a dog attacking a gazelle, familiar from earlier source material, is the earliest known from a private tomb.

a.2 Mastaba of Rahotep (Passage), no. 6, 3rd-4th dynasty
(South wall, Cairo T19.11.24.3G; PM IV: 91, Petrie 1892: Pl. IX)

The desert hunt of Rahotep is divided into two registers on the south wall in the passage. Remains of fowling and fishing scenes are located on the opposite north side (PM IV: 91, Petrie 1892: Pl. X). The scene breaks off on the left side. The upper row has five striding foxes, all facing right. The fox to the far left is shown under attack by a hunting dog that

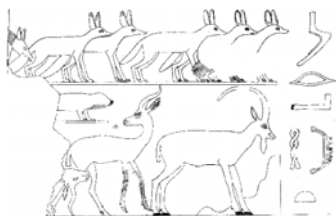


Figure 25. Rahotep: Gazelle head turned

⁵⁶ This tentative suggestion is based on the white muzzle and the white area around the eyes, which is found on the fallow deer (cf. colour drawing in Kingdon 1997: 338). Further, a fallow deer (with antlers) is shown on the bottom register, as a part of bringing offerings. Cf. Harpur 2001: 89 "brown antelope".

grasps the tail in its mouth.⁵⁷

The lower register shows, from right to left, an ibex, followed by two gazelles. One of the gazelles has both front hooves off the ground, with its head turned back, apparently vigilant and fleeing. The gazelle behind it is represented by a head upside down. The original image most likely was that of an attack by a hunting dog, parallel to the one in the register above. The ibex, in contrast, is shown striding. A badger is found on an insert above the gazelle. Its identification is unsure, with Osborn (1998: 84) suggesting an African badger *Mellivora capensis*. A discreet reference to the desert environment can also be noted with the small undulating hill. To the right of these two registers, the laconic inscription read *m33 ḥt*, ‘inspecting the catch’. The tomb owner stands to the right of these registers, looking at the desert game. Rahotep is shown oversized, holding a staff and a *shm* scepter. He is followed by his wife Nofret, who is considerably smaller in size.

The two motifs of the downed and fleeing gazelle, head turned in vigilance, are two fundamental images familiar from earlier material and later included in the Sahure desert hunting scene.

b. Saqqara, 4th – 6th dyn. (c. 2613 – 2181 B.C.)

A large number of the hunt scenes dating to the Old Kingdom are located in mastabas at Saqqara. The published material gives one example dated to the 4th dynasty, c. nine from the 5th dynasty and six from the 6th dynasty (cf. Appendix II). The 4th dynasty example represents a continuation of earlier compositions, displaying examples of hunting dogs grasping the hind leg of fleeing animals (Methen, Smith 1949: 152, Fig. 60).

The composition of the 5th dynasty scenes is more varied and has greater individuality in their layout. Yet it is clear that the gazelle motif is treated as canonical, as the images are restricted to a few poses: the dog/lion attacking gazelle, the fleeing gazelle, with head turned, the nursing gazelle, gazelle on inserts and in addition the combination of two gazelles. The use of specific motifs for the gazelle, as well as for other species, indicates that the elements that made up the composition of the hunting scenes had become standardised.

⁵⁷ An almost identical scene is seen in the tomb of Nefermaat as well (Petrie 1892: Pl. XVII). A hunting dog was grasping the tail of a red fox (Osborn 1998: 69) among a group of three.

b.1 Mastaba of Raemka (Chapel), no. 80 (D3, S 903), 5th dyn.
(South wall, (D3, S 903); PM III/2: 487 (3) = MMA 1908.201.1, Hayes 1953: 99, Fig. 56)

On the blocks that once made up the south wall of the chapel of Raemka, at least two registers are devoted to the desert hunt. The upper register focuses on the gazelle and the lower row on the ibex. From the left to right, in the upper register, a man leans on a staff watching dogs attack desert game. The man is labelled *nw*, 'hunter' (Faulkner 1962: 127), even if not active in the hunt. In front of him, a hunting dog (*tzm*) attacks a red fox by biting its neck (Osborn 1998: 70). In the middle of the row another grasps the hind leg of a gazelle, which has its head turned back to the left toward its attacker. The register ends with a pair of striding gazelles (*ghs*). Two inserts are included, the left one containing a crouching hare and the second insert a recumbent gazelle. This animal has also been provided with a caption reading *ghs*. The animals on this upper register are facing right, away from the man on the far left.

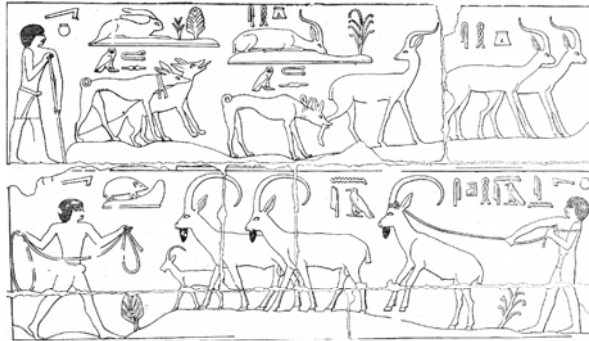


Figure 26. Blocks of Raemka

The lower register, featuring ibexes as the game, includes two hunters (*nw*) using lassoes. There is a group of three ibex (two adults, one young), identified as *nb*, 'ibex'. At the lower right, an ibex has been caught, with the heading reading *sph nb in nw*, 'lassoing ibex by hunter'. An insert with a hedgehog is found on the top left section of the row.

The separation of the gazelle and ibex into two different registers exemplifies the intentional use of the different species as a compositional device that is otherwise rather unusual (cf. above e.g. Tutankhamun 4.2.3/a.2). It is notable that it is the dog that hunts the gazelle and fox, while

the ibexes are captured by men using a lasso. In the desert hunt scenes of private tombs, the gazelle is rarely seized by a human hunter, but more generally by a dog or lion (e.g. Thefu, Hassan 1975b: Pl. LXXXVI, C). The differentiation between species in the separate registers is further stressed by the direction of the animals, with the gazelles facing left to right and the ibexes right to left. All three motifs featuring the gazelle are typical: the gazelle attacked by dog, the pair of animals and the recumbent gazelle in an insert.

b.2 Mastaba of Pehenuka (Room I), D 70 (LS 15), mid 5th dyn. or later
(West wall, Berlin 1132; PM III/2: 491 (4), Harpur 1987: 530, Fig. 188)

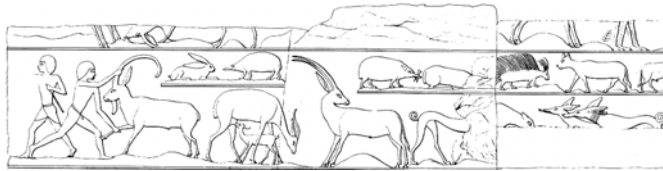


Figure 27. Pehenuka: gazelle nursing within desert hunt

The desert hunt scene, preserved on a block now in Berlin, was accompanied by a fowling and fishing scene on the lower section of the same wall. The desert hunt scene is fragmentary, with the documentation of Lepsius (LD II: Pl. 46, reproduced as Harpur 1987: 530, Fig. 188) indicating that it originally included at least two registers. The lower and better preserved register has typical desert hunt elements. To the left a man controls an ibex by grasping its foreleg and horns. This is accompanied by a nursing gazelle to the right. Next to this group is a fleeing oryx with its head turned back. The remains of two hunting dogs, face to face, can be distinguished on the right end of the block, one is attacking a leopard⁵⁸ and the second bites the neck of a fox (Osborn 1998: 53). The motif of the gazelle mother suckling her fawn is found in the midst of the hunting. It provides a contrast to the hunt of the desert animals. The species that can be identified in the fragmentary inserts are from left to right, hare, two hedgehogs, gazelle (?), porcupine and jungle cat (cf. Osborn 1998: 53).

⁵⁸ This is a tentative identification as there are no characteristic spots; the suggestion is based on the position of the head: "Leopards are usually shown with their heads lowered..." (Osborn 1998: 119).

The inclusion of a nursing gazelle, with its implication of birth giving, can be observed in the approximately contemporary scenes from the monuments of Niuserre and Unas (cf. above 4.2.1/b-c). The fragmentary state of the Pehenuka scene makes it impossible to establish if it included a gazelle attacked by dog.

b.3 Mastaba of Ptahhotep [II] (Offering room), D 64b, late 5th dyn.
(East wall, PM III/2: 601 (17) IV; Davies 1900: Pl. XXI)

The desert hunt scene in the tomb of Ptahhotep is located on the eastern wall of the offering room. The netting of fowl is found on the same wall, a few registers down (PM III/2: 601 (17) IV).

The scene extends over two registers, and despite the limited space, there is a generous variety of motifs, including not only the hunt of wild game but also images of mating and nursing animals (Davies 1900: Pl. XXI).



Figure 28. Desert hunt of Ptahhotep

The upper register contains the motif of a nursing gazelle among the hunting action. To the left an oryx is bitten on the throat by a dog and to the right a hunting dog tugs at the hind leg of an ibex. This creates an interesting “triad”, with the nursing gazelle between an oryx and ibex, both attacked by dogs. The placement of a suckling gazelle in the middle of the hunting activity is similar to the arrangement of elements in the tomb of Pehenuka discussed above. To the far right in the upper register, two pairs of leopards and red foxes (Osborn 1998: 61) mate.

In the lower register a kneeling hunter holds two hunting dogs on leashes, pointing at the many animals in the scene, including a lion confronting an aurochs and a hunting dog downing a gazelle by biting the neck, the gazelle has its head turned (cf. above Nefermaat). This is followed by another oryx attacked by a hunting dog and at the right end of the scene is a man with a lasso, capturing two aurochs and a hartebeest. Four inserts are included (from left to right), one with a recumbent gazelle, facing left, followed by an ichneumon (Osborn 1998: 61), jerboa and two hedgehogs.

The gazelle occurs in three contexts, as prey downed by the hunting dog, nursing its young, and in the insert, as a young animal, hiding from the hunters.

b.4 Mastaba of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep (Vestibule), 5th dyn. (Above doorway, west wall; PM III/2: 642 (10, III-V); Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pls 38, 40)

The desert hunt scene in the joint tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep is fairly detailed and extensive, distributed over three registers (Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 40). The fishing and fowling scene is located in two different places in the tomb; on the south wall of the forecourt (PM III/2: 642 (4) a-b) and on the south wall of the vestibule (PM III/2: 642 (9)). The tomb has been dated to the reign of Niuserre (Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: 44).

The horizontal edges of the blocks are damaged, breaking up parts of the reliefs. The desert scene contains some unexpected elements. Fences flank the registers depicting the hunt, possibly one of the earliest uses of this feature in a private tomb. Also, there is an unusually large number and diversity of species in the inserts, including, uncommonly, young hartebeest and addax. The gazelle can be identified with certainty, using the shape of the horns as the criterion, three times, while the other antelope young are found in the inserts, lacking horns, they are designated as 'kid' (*ḥw*) confirming that this space could be used for young animals, hiding from danger.⁵⁹

No actively hunted gazelle is found. This is an anomaly, as in this rich variation of motifs, a 'hunting dog attacking gazelle' would be expected. In the midst of the hunting activity is however a gazelle nursing its young (upper register, left section), a feature which corresponded to the components of the scenes from Pehenuka and Ptahhotep, discussed above.

b.5 Mastaba of Meryteti (Room I), Tomb C, 6th dyn.

(Above doorway, west wall; PM III/2: 536 (112), Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CXL)

The documentation of more or less complete desert hunt scenes from the 6th dynasty in the Saqqara necropolis appears to be limited to those of Mereruka and his son Meryteti in their large family mastaba complex. The larger part of the mastaba belongs to Mereruka, while his wife and son each have a smaller section (for the plan see PM III/2: Pl. LVI). Of the two desert hunt

⁵⁹ An unusually frequent use of inserts can be discerned, containing the 'traditional' animals such as hedgehog (4 times) and hare (once). The colour photograph in Moussa and Altenmüller (1977: 'frontispiece') suggests an identification of some of the fawns as addax (white-grey) and hartebeest (yellowish); the colour of the one gazelle in insert is red-brown.

scenes found in this complex, that of Meryteti is the more interesting with its large variety of animals and choice of more complex motifs.

Meryteti's desert hunt scene is located on the west wall above the doorway leading to the first room (Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CXL). It differs from a similar scene found in his father's section of the mastaba.⁶⁰ There are no marsh scenes in the Meryteti's section of the mastaba.

Five registers are allotted to Meryteti's desert hunt scene. There are no 'anomalies' in its composition. The gazelle is found in traditional motifs; both striding and attacked by a lion and a hunting dog. There is an extensive use of inserts, which include not only the traditional gazelle, hedgehog and hare, but also two ibex and one oryx.⁶¹ The gazelle is found most frequently of the animals with at least six examples that can be identified with certainty. The unusually large number of young gazelles in the inserts suggests that the collection of young gazelles is a significant component of the scene's composition.

This observation is strengthened with the inclusion in this desert hunt scene of a man carrying baskets from a yoke, containing young animals (the photograph is too grainy to determine species, other than an ibex). The man stands among the desert game (centre of the upper row) suggesting that here is a "man collecting desert young" (cf. Osborn 1998: 176). A similar depiction is found on the Niuserre blocks (cf. above 4.2.1/b). The 'gazelle in basket' motif is discussed below (5.1.1/b.3).

c. Giza, 4th – 6th dyn. (c. 2613 – 2181 B.C.)

Only four examples of desert hunt scenes have been documented at Giza (cf. Appendix II). The tombs of Seshemnefer (IV) (LG 53, PM III/1: 224 (6)) and Nimaatre⁶² (G 2097, PM III/1: 70) include examples of a rather unique motif for the gazelle.

c.1 Mastaba of Nimaatre (Chapel), G 2097, late 5th dyn.

(East wall, PM III/1: 70; Roth 1995: Fig. 189)

The mastaba of Nimaatre has been tentatively dated to the late 5th dynasty

60 With one common motif; a wild animal being torn apart by several dogs. The composition of this motif is unique as the prey is depicted as if seen from above, and the hunting dogs are gathered around, reaching from two separate registers.

61 The register with ibex and oryx is carved larger in proportion to the 'true' inserts. The other inserts on the tomb wall of Meryteti are of conventional size.

62 Ikram. (1991: 52) refers to the tomb owner as 'Isesimernetjer' and Roth (1995: 127-134) uses the name 'Nimaatre'

reign of Unas (Roth 1995: 129). The hunt is located on the east wall, while the marsh scene is on the north (Roth 1995: 130-132). Agricultural activities are next to the desert hunt ('harvest') (Roth 1995: 133).

The desert hunt scene in the tomb of Nimaatre is divided into three



Figure 29. Nimaatre: mating dorcas and Soemmerring's gazelles

registers, with two of the rows showing traditional hunt motifs.

In the lower register "an astonishing variety of animals are engaged in copulation" (Roth 1995: 132, Fig. 189). This entire register is a long sequence of mating animals; at least twelve different species can be identified, including wild asses, ichneumons and foxes.⁶³ With

an unusually intense focus on the mating motif, this version of the desert hunt is reminiscent of the earlier royal scenes of Niuserre and Unas, where a special attention was given to foaling and mating, rather than to hunting and the capture of wild game.⁶⁴

Despite the poor condition of the reliefs, two pairs of mating gazelles can be observed. One is an unusual example of the mating of dorcas gazelles, while the other is the single known example of mating Soemmerring's gazelles.⁶⁵ The side by side depiction of these two gazelle species is a parallel to the composition found in the royal desert hunting scenes.⁶⁶

c.2 Mastaba of Seshemnefer [IV] (Vestibule), LG 53, late 5th - early 6th dyn. (West wall, PM III/1: 224 (6), Junker 1953: 152-153, Fig. 63)

While the registers with the desert hunt scene are located on the west wall of the vestibule, the deceased spearing fish from a canoe is on the north wall of the forecourt (PM III/1: 224 (5)).

The tomb wall is decorated with three registers of 'traditional' desert hunt motifs. There are numerous participants in the hunt, ranging from men

63 Cf. Ikram 1991: Table 1.

64 The mastaba of Nimaatre is the only Old Kingdom private tomb where the ostrich occurs. There is an interesting comparison with the Niuserre reliefs in that there too the ostrich is found together with life giving motifs (cf. 4.2.1/b above), suggesting that this composition may have been influenced by a royal model.

65 Roth (1995: 132) incorrectly identifies the mating Soemmerring's gazelles as "bubalis".

66 Sahure (Borchardt 1913: Pl. 17), Niuserre (von Bissing 1956: Pls XI, XII) and Unas (Hassan 1938: Pl. XCVII A).

with lassoes to hunting dogs and a lion. The gazelle is notable in the middle and lower registers. In the centre row, the familiar motif of a recumbent gazelle in an insert is found. At the far right on the same register another gazelle is being held by a man with a rope.

On the lower register is yet another insert featuring a recumbent

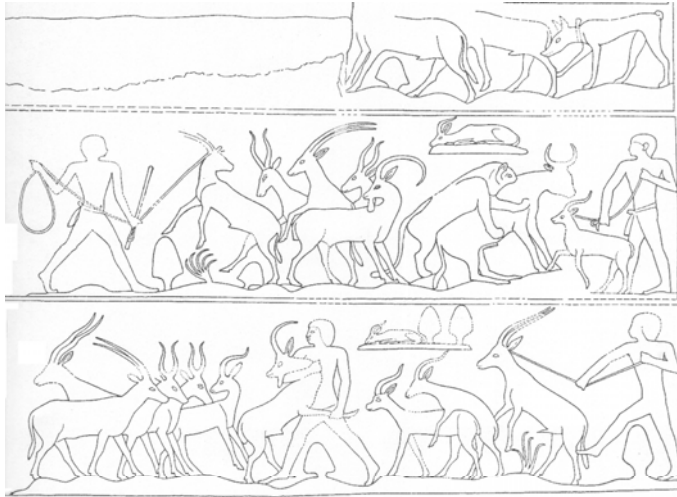


Figure 30.

Seshemnefer: mating gazelles in desert hunt

gazelle, next to two bushes. Here, only the gazelle is found in the inserts. To the left various species have been grouped together, these include (from right to left) the gazelle, two hartebeests, an oryx and an addax (facing left). The gazelle is shown with its head turned back, facing left and its front feet off of the ground. To the right of this group an ibex is seized by a hunter, followed by a pair of mating gazelles. To the far right an oryx is seized by another hunter holding the lasso tightly.

These examples from two Giza mastaba, represent the earliest known examples of mating gazelles.

d. Deir el-Gebrawi, 6th dyn. (c. 2345-2181 B.C.)

Deir el-Gebrawi is located on the eastern bank in middle Egypt, between Amarna and Assiut, a considerable distance from the Memphite necropolis. Some 15 rock cut tombs dated to the Old Kingdom are found here. Two of

these tombs feature a desert hunt scene: Ibi (Davies 1902a: Pl. XI) and Djau (not strictly a desert hunt scene, tomb no. 12, Davies 1902b: Pl. IX). That belonging to Ibi is discussed below.

d.1 Rock-cut tomb of Ibi (Hall), no. 8, 6th dyn.
(North wall, PM IV: 244 (11); Davies 1902a: Pl. XI)

The desert hunt scene of Ibi is located on the north wall in the hall, and on the opposite south wall the marsh scene is found (PM IV: 244 (3)-(4)). A harvest scene is found next to the hunt (Davies 1902a: Pls II, XII). The desert scene in the tomb of Ibi is divided into two registers; unfortunately its condition is very fragmentary (Davies 1902a: Pl. XI).

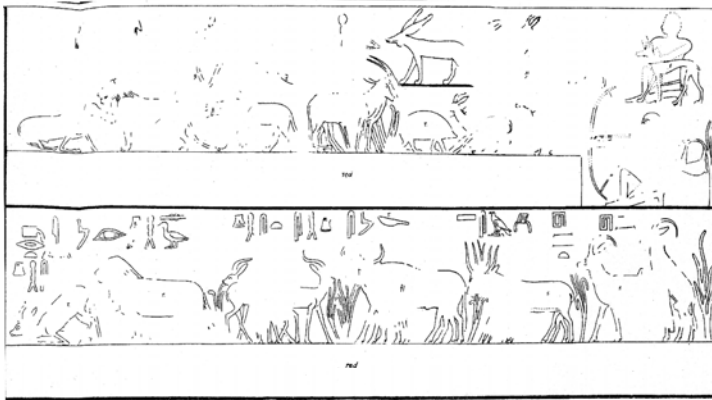


Figure 31. Ibi: desert hunt scene

The upper register is devoted to the hunt of desert game; to the right are some faint traces of a pair of hunters. One man kneels and holds a bow and arrow, the other has a hunting dog, ready to stalk its prey. This is one of a few examples of a hunter with bow and arrow in an Old Kingdom private tomb.⁶⁷ Unfortunately the condition of the scene does not allow further description of the upper register. In contrast to the upper register, the lower depicts the daily life of the desert game. To the far left, a lion downs a

⁶⁷ One of two examples of the use of bow and arrow in a private tomb dating to the Old Kingdom. The second example is from the tomb of Pepy-nakht Hekaib at Qubbet el-Hawa, that is broadly dated between the 6th dynasty and the Middle Kingdom (Decker and Herb 1994: 313, Pl. CXLII (J 49)).

gazelle. This is accompanied by an inscription reading *(n)ḡr.t(w) ḡhs in m3l ḡs3*, ‘catching a gazelle by a wild lion’.⁶⁸ Next to this image is a group of gazelles striding in different directions. The inscription once again provides additional information, reading *ḡhst* and *ḡhs*, i.e. female gazelle and male gazelle. This kind of distinction between female and male gazelle is unusual, while indicating that specific terminology for the male and female was current.

The Ibi example is the only known desert hunt scene to be copied and used in another tomb. The upper register of this scene is found in the tomb of another Ibi, dated to the 26th dynasty, located at Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (TT 36, PM I/1: 67 (20), cf. 4.3.4).

Some of the individual components of this scene are found in the Middle Kingdom tombs at Beni Hassan. The hieroglyphic inscription referring to the attack of a lion, the distinction between male and female gazelle and the group of gazelles with animals striding in opposite direction are found in the Middle Kingdom tombs of Baqt [III] and Khety (Newberry 1894: Pls IV, XIII, below 4.3.2/a.2).

e. Old Kingdom private tombs – concluding remarks

Evidence points to a relationship between private tomb iconography and that found in the royal examples of the desert hunt scenes. The narrative of the hunt was enhanced by adding the nursing and mating gazelle in the repertoire of desert hunt scenes. Thus motifs representing the entire life cycle of the gazelle are represented: the mating gazelle (private), the foaling gazelle (royal), the nursing gazelle (royal, private), gazelle fawns in inserts (royal, private), the grazing gazelle (royal, private) and finally the attacked gazelle (royal, private).

The motifs found in the funerary iconography of the Middle and New Kingdoms are more limited, with the use of the gazelle motifs on tomb walls decreasing, without however ever disappearing completely. Even though the Middle and New Kingdom private desert hunt scenes are almost as numerous as those from the Old Kingdom, their composition is less varied.

4.3.2 The desert hunt in Middle Kingdom private tombs

The images of the gazelle used during the Middle Kingdom are found in the

68 Cf. *Wb* III: 161 for translation of *m3l ḡs3* as ‘wild lion’. Two of the Middle Kingdom tombs at Beni Hassan have the same motif and narrative; i.e. a wild lion seizing an animal, where the verb was spelled *nḡr* instead of *(n)ḡr.t*, thus translated as “grasp, hold fast, catch” in Faulkner 1962: 145.

same contexts as in the Old Kingdom, mainly in the hunting and offering scenes (cf. Chapter 5) on the walls of private tombs. The motifs used are however restricted almost solely to the hunt, with life generating images being found in only a few examples.

In contrast to the older scenes, which are concentrated to the tombs of the Memphite necropolis, the Middle Kingdom examples are found spread along the Nile Valley: el-Bersheh, Beni Hassan, Meir, Thebes, Qubbet el-Hawa, el-Mo'alla, el-Kab, Hawawish, el-Saff etc. (cf. Appendix II). The composition of the scenes found on the tomb walls varies from site to site. The hunt scene however represents earlier traditions. Since there is a limited variation in the use of the gazelle motifs in these scenes, only a small selection is discussed below, with a focus on the continuity from the Old Kingdom and noting the importance given the hunter during this period.

a. Beni Hassan, 11th – 12th dyn. (c. 2055 – 1773 B.C.)

The necropolis of Beni Hassan lies on the eastern bank in Middle Egypt. This site served as the provincial cemetery for the nomarchs of the 16th Upper Egypt nome during the Middle Kingdom. Although Beni Hassan provides good examples of local art, the themes chosen for the tombs correspond to the standard selection. Typical for Beni Hassan is the use of a single register for the desert hunt, in contrast to other older and contemporary compositions that tended to occupy two or more registers. Desert hunt scenes are present in several of the rock cut tombs. Few however have survived completely intact.

a.1 Tomb of Khnumhotep [III] (Hall), BH 3, 12th dyn., Sesostri II
(North wall, PM IV: 145 (7)-(11); Newberry 1893: Pl. XXX)

The hunt scene in the tomb of Khnumhotep III is located on the north wall of the hall, while marsh scenes are found on the east wall (PM IV: 147 (12)-(14)). Harvesting and ploughing took place on the west wall (PM IV: 145 (6)). The depiction of the desert hunt is divided between two main registers instead of the one usually found in other tombs at this necropolis. Each of these includes a longer insert, corresponding to those found in Old Kingdom scenes, with the addition of unusually detailed representations of different feline species, such as caracal, serval, lynx and cheetah/leopard (Osborn 1998: 14) not seen elsewhere in ancient Egyptian art.

Khnumhotep is portrayed oversized, assisted by four bowmen and several hunting dogs. These hunters are positioned at the left of the desert hunt scene. The use of bow and arrows is extensive, which is consistent with the Old Kingdom royal material and the reliefs of Mentuhotep II at Deir el-

Bahari, indicating that this manner of hunting is also appropriate for non-royal high-ranking individuals, such as the nomarch. Khnumhotep, found to the left of the scene drawing his bow, is positioned where the tomb owner is normally found overseeing agricultural activities. His active participation as an oversized hunter in that position is noteworthy.



Figure 32. Khnumhotep desert hunt, with foaling gazelle

The top register features, from right to left, a group of three gazelles, one of them has its head turned back facing left. An arrow is penetrating one of the hind legs. The next animal is an aurochs facing the arrows shot from the left. Otto (1950: 170) has remarked that the aurochs is the only animal that faces its attacker, the other animals are generally seen fleeing. Facing the aurochs in this scene is a lion that also appears to be a prey animal here as two arrows are aimed at it. Behind the aurochs is a group of hartebeest, two adults and one young. A hunting dog grasps the hind leg of the young. One of the assisting hunters is close to the dog. Behind him, a second aurochs confronts another bowman, who is also accompanied by a hunting dog. The top register ends with a third aurochs. All three aurochs are facing left, while the other animals on this row flee in the opposite direction. The long insert includes from right to left, a hare, a serval, a jerboa, a winged chimera, a hedgehog, a cheetah/leopard, a fox (?) and finally a genet (cf. Osborn 1998: 14 for comments on the discrepancies in identifications). All of these animals are facing right, i.e. same direction as the hunted animals. The inclusion of a mythical animal emphasizes the funerary character of this scene.

The bottom register (from right to left) includes two scribes, one of them is guiding an oryx. They seem to stand on a straight ground line and are therefore probably not a part of the desert hunt scene proper. A foaling oryx follows. A fox sniffs the young as it is about to be born. This life giving motif is contrasted by that to the left, where two ibexes are standing side by side, one of them has its head turned back, looking at the hunting dog tugging at its hind leg. The same fate is in store for the oryx behind them who is also attacked by a dog. A third man has drawn his bow to shoot at the animals in front of him. Behind him, yet another two oryxes were under the attack from

arrows shot by the fourth bowman. This register also ends with an aurochs, larger than those on the upper row. It seems that Khnumhotep himself is responsible for shooting the arrow that penetrates the aurochs.

The insert in the lower register includes (from right to left), a genet (?), a hedgehog, a foaling gazelle, a fox (?)⁶⁹ and two lynxes (Osborn 1998: 14). The gazelle gives birth in a reclined position, with its head turned back facing left. This composition differs from those seen on the royal temple reliefs of the Old Kingdom, where foaling takes place standing and on the main ground line. This is the only example, in this documentation, of a foaling gazelle in a private tomb.

a.2 Tomb of Khety (Hall), BH 17, 11th dyn.

(North wall, PM IV: 155 (2-3), 156 (5); Newberry 1894: Pl. XIII)

There are two desert hunt scenes on separate registers on the north wall in the hall of Khety's tomb, a feature that is not found elsewhere. The scene located on the western half of the wall, typical for Beni Hassan, shows various striding animals (Newberry 1894: Pl. XIII). This can be divided into two narratives; the left part focuses on the wild life while the right emphasises the hunt. The wild life motifs include hartebeests mating, a lion knocking down an ibex, described with the heading *ndrt nr3w m3t hs3* "grasping an ibex (by) a lion". This is a comment similar to that found in the Old Kingdom tomb of Ibi discussed above (4.3.1/d.1). The gazelle to the left of this group is identified as *ghs*, while another individual further to the right on the row was labelled with the feminine form *ghst*. Furthermore, another short comment reads *ndr wnš ghs*, "jackal grasps gazelle". The similarity in both compositions, as well as the similarity to the hieroglyphic inscriptions of the tomb of Ibi at Deir el-Gebrawi, strongly suggests a common source.



Figure 33. Khety: hunting aurochs and gazelles

The second desert scene is more concise in its composition. The use

⁶⁹ Osborn (1998: 14) tentatively suggests either "fox or genet (?)".

of fences to trap the prey can be observed, with the hunters being found within the enclosure. Aurochs and gazelles are pursued by the hunters. Both bow and arrow and the lasso are employed to capture the aurochs. Of the four gazelles, one is caught by the lasso, while another looks back at the hunter. Two hunting dogs seize the other gazelles, with one on its back while being choked, and the other trying to escape the dog that is tugging at its hind leg.⁷⁰

These two desert hunt scenes have analysed the hunt as consisting of scenes in the wild and of the containment of the prey, perhaps referring to a two-step process that reflects the chaos and order paradigm. The life-giving motifs have been excluded in the second scene.

b. Meir, 12th dyn. (c. 1985-1773 B.C.)

Meir is situated on the western bank, some 60 km south of Beni Hassan. The cemetery there contains the tombs of the nomarchs of the 14th Upper Egyptian nome. There are only two desert hunt scenes found in the Middle Kingdom tombs of that cemetery. One is in the tomb of Senbi and the other is found in the tomb of Ukhhotep, son of Senbi.

b.1 Tomb of Senbi (Hall), B 1, 12th dyn., Amenemhet I

(East wall, PM IV: 249 (1); Blackman 1914: Pl. VI)

The hunt scene in the chapel of Senbi is located on the east wall, next to the entrance. A marsh scene is situated on the lower section of the north wall.

The composition of Senbi's desert hunt is reminiscent of that of Sahure as it includes a fenced off area, with Senbi standing outside, oversized and ready to shoot an arrow. He is followed by a smaller figure, standing behind him, in the place where in the royal scene the king's ka is found. Even though there are no formal registers, the original layout seems to have been divided into three 'main rows', with additional undulating lines forming their individual space. It is difficult to ascertain the intended division. A hyena, in the middle of the lower row, with one arrow piercing its muzzle and another in its lower abdomen is that found in the Sahure reliefs (Ikram 2003b: 143).

The gazelle is depicted in three different motifs. A hunting dog grasping the neck of a fleeing gazelle is to the far left on the middle 'row'. On the opposite side, in the upper right section of the scene, a nursing gazelle can be spotted. The mother is eating from the bush. Included behind this

70 The choice of aurochs and gazelles to illustrate a desert hunt scene is reminiscent of the scene in the tomb of Djau at Deir el-Gebrawi (Davies 1902b: Pl. IX), where these two specific species represent wild game. Furthermore, the captions in the other desert scene of Khety are similar to those found in the tomb of Ibi, also at Deir el-Gebrawi.



Figure 34 Senbi: desert hunt scene

group is a pair of mating leopards, and above them a wild ass is foaling (Osborn 1998: 62). These three life affirming motifs appear to form a group separate from the hunt, even though they are located within the enclosure. This differs from other desert hunt scenes that prefer to position the enclosure within the chaos of the hunt.

The insert-like motif in the middle of the uppermost ‘row’ is also worth noting. There are three reclining gazelles with two of the animals tail to tail, facing in opposite directions, while the central gazelle has its head turned back. This variation indicates an awareness of composition that extends beyond naturalistic representation.

b.2 Tomb of Ukhhotep (Hall), B 2, 12th dyn., Sesostri I
(South wall, PM IV: 250 (2)-(3); Blackman 1915a: Pls VII-VIII)

The hunting scene of Ukhhotep (*wh htp*, son of Senbi) is located on the south wall of the hall. There are no scenes depicting the marsh hunt in this tomb. The desert hunt composition is uncharacteristically spread out, functioning as individual images separated by open spaces (Blackman 1915a: Pl. VII). There are no details of the desert environment. The deceased, shown oversized to the left of the scene, participates in the hunt. He is assisted by a man, similar to the one seen in his father Senbi’s tomb. There are no fences defining an enclosed hunting area. Each of the prey animals is pierced with arrows *and* seized by dogs, illustrating the two hunting methods used. The prey includes gazelle, ibex, oryx and hare.

The mating motif found in the composition features a pair of lions, oryxes and gazelles. The regenerative circle is completed with birth-giving scenes featuring a monkey and wild ass (Blackman 1915a: Pls VII, VIII).



Figure 35. Ukhhotep:
gazelle seized by dogs
and pierced by arrow

4.3.2/c Thebes, 11th – 12th dyn. (c. 2055 – 1773 B.C.)

There are five examples of desert hunt scenes that can be dated to the Middle Kingdom in the Theban necropolis. These are found in the tombs of Intefiker (TT 60), Dagi (TT 103), Khety (TT 311), Djar (TT 366) and Intef (TT 386). The general condition of these scenes is poor. Their remains conform to the general composition of the Middle Kingdom desert scenes. The layout of these painted reliefs is typical for the Theban tombs of the New Kingdom.

c.1 Tomb of Intefiker (Passage), TT 60, 12th dyn., Sesostris I
(North wall, PM I/1: 122 (9); Davies and Gardiner 1920: Pl. VI)

The hunt scene of Intefiker is situated on the north wall of the passage, next to the fishing and fowling scene found on the same wall (including a sub-scene with “ploughing, sowing and hacking”; PM I/1: 122 (8)).

The Intefiker tomb wall was in poor condition when it was documented. Still a general impression of the scenes is possible (Davies and Gardiner 1920: Pl. VI).

The desert hunt scene is divided into five registers, with fences flanking either side. Intefiker stands outside the enclosure, to the left. He is shown oversized, holding bow and arrow. Behind him stands an assistant, similar to those seen in Meir tombs. These details can be traced back to the Sahure prototype.

In the top register, to the far right, the standard motif of hunting dog attacking gazelle, grasping its neck, is included. The gazelle is lying on its back. In the register below, the main focus for the hunt, the aurochs, is located. It has two arrows piercing its body and a hunting dog tugging at its hind leg. Another aurochs and its calf are fleeing in the opposite direction.

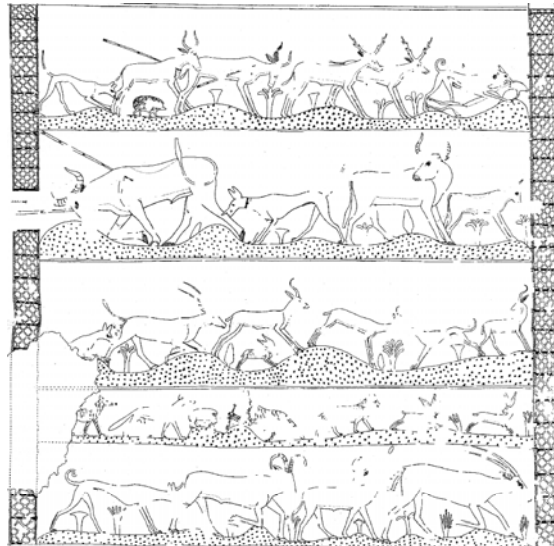


Figure 36. Desert hunt of Intefiker (TT 60)

The third register from the top featured, yet again, gazelles fleeing facing right. Underneath the belly of the one of the gazelles is a hare, the second is confronted by a dog and the third gazelle at right end of the register has its head turned back, facing left. A foaling oryx has been included on the left end as well, standing on its knees (forelegs) and being attacked by a greyhound (Osborn 1998: 64). On the fourth register down, in the centre, the motif of hyena⁷¹ with arrow in muzzle can be spotted, another detail that can be traced back to the Sahure prototype (Ikram 2003b: 143). The other species featured on this row are, from right to left, two hares, a wild cat, hedgehog (?), red fox and jackal (Osborn 1998: 64).

The bottom register consists of two Barbary goats trying to escape a hunting dog. At the right end of the row yet another oryx is foaling.

The gazelles found in this scene are hunted and seized by the dog. The life giving aspect is represented by the oryx giving birth.

d. El-Saff, 11th dyn. (c. 2055-1985 B.C.)

El-Saff is located on the east bank, across from Lisht, approximately 50 km south from Memphis. The location is best known for a cluster of Predynastic burials of the Maadi culture (Habachi and Kaiser 1985: 43-46).

The 11th dynasty tomb of Ip was only published by chance. Fischer had purchased a set of photographs from an unknown tomb. He showed them to Habachi who identified the tomb as that of Ip at el-Saff; Habachi had cleared the tomb of Ip in 1936 (Fischer 1996: 1).

d.1 Tomb of Ip (South (?) ⁷²), 11th dyn., Mentuhotep (II?) (Right wall, left end; Fischer 1996: Pl. A, 3a)

A rather damaged desert hunt scene is found in the tomb of Ip (Fischer 1996: Pls A, D; 3a). It is located next to or above a marsh hunt scene that has far more space devoted to it.

The remains of the desert hunt include the motif of opposing gazelles with most of the upper register devoted to this image. They are separated by a small hill and bush. The animal to the right is clearly identifiable as a dorcas gazelle, while the one to the left is most likely a Soemmerring's gazelle (*gs3*,

71 Osborn (1998: 64) suggests an identification as a "jackal (?)". Considering the earlier compositions, the tradition and appropriation, it is more likely to be a hyena (cf. Ikram 2003b).

72 Fischer's publication of this tomb does not provide a plan or layout of the tomb, which is divided into left, right and rear wall, leading to the burial chamber. The suggestion made by Fischer (1996: 5) compares it with contemporary tombs at Beni Hassan: "This may be the most opportune place to note that the right-hand (presumably southern) wall....".

cf. e.g. the Soemmerring's gazelle in the tomb of Ptahhotep, Davies 1900: Pl. XXII). Fischer (1996: 14) suggests that the two are male and a female. The slightly larger size of the left gazelle and the indication of a scrotum indicate that Fischer's observation is most likely correct. The combination of the dorcas and Soemmerring's can be traced back to the Old Kingdom when it is found in the royal desert hunt scenes as well as in private tombs (Sahure, Borchardt 1913: Pl. 17; Niuserre, von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI a; Unas, Hassan 1938: Pl. XCVII A). An added element here is the hunting dog tugging at the hind leg of the Soemmerring's gazelle. The rest of the scene was in poor condition when documented.

The motif of opposing gazelles, sometimes separated by vegetation (palmette), is also found in contexts other than the hunt scene in the New Kingdom. This motif has been interpreted (Montet 1937: 144-145, Crowfoot and Davies 1941: 127-128, Kozloff 1992: 286) as reflecting influences from Western Asia, as the majority of the examples come from a period when the contacts between Egypt and its neighbours are intense. The occurrence of this motif in the tomb of Ip, dated to the 11th dynasty (Fischer 1996: 29-32), suggests that this is not necessarily the case. Furthermore, the motif of gazelle eating from a bush can also be traced back to the 5th dynasty, in both royal and private desert hunt scenes (i.e. Niuserre, Niankhnum and Khnumhotep and Pehenuka). Although the tomb of Ip provides the earliest documentation of the opposing gazelles separated by vegetation, it becomes a more common motif on objects later on (cf. below 6.4).

e. Middle Kingdom private tombs – concluding remarks

The geographical diversity of the Middle Kingdom private tombs decorated with desert hunt scenes does not appear to have affected the choice of gazelle motifs. They instead reflect those developed during the Old Kingdom, and found in the mastabas of the Memphite necropoli. There is however some narrowing of focus, as there is an emphasis on the hunt, found in several variations, dogs, arrows, lassos, with a minimizing of life giving motifs (mating, giving birth, nursing).

4.3.3 The desert hunt in New Kingdom private tombs

Desert hunt scenes from New Kingdom private tombs are found in the Theban necropolis. The composition of the New Kingdom scenes appears to be related to that of similar scenes in the Middle Kingdom tombs nearby (e.g. Intefiker, TT 60, Davies and Gardiner 1920: Pl. VI; Intef, TT 386, Jaroš-Deckert 1984: Pl. 21). The tendency to limit or exclude life affirming motifs,

found in the Middle Kingdom, continues in the New Kingdom versions of the desert hunt. There are as always exceptions where life affirming motifs occur, albeit strikingly few.⁷³

Twenty-seven examples of the desert hunt scene from New Kingdom tombs of the Theban necropolis have been included (cf. Appendix II). The condition of most of these is poor. There is little variation with regard to narrative features, yet no two are identical. All of the New Kingdom examples from private tombs are dated to the middle of the 18th dynasty (Manniche 1988: 38-39), coinciding with the reigns of Hatshepsut-Thutmosis III and Amenhotep II (c. 1479-1400 BC). This corresponds to the period of interest in the royal hunt as an aspect of kingship and predates the survival of royal hunt scenes (cf. above 4.2.3).

The decoration of the 19th dynasty tombs in the same necropolis changes direction, replacing scenes of “daily life” with motifs featuring deities (Robins 1997: 192, 200). Although the desert hunt was no longer a standard element, the gazelle continues to be depicted in these tombs as part of the offering theme (cf. Chapter 5), but not to same extent, or with the same variation, as during the Old and Middle Kingdoms.

The focus on the pursuit of wild game continued in the New Kingdom scenes, with the composition giving an even greater impression of chaos. The deceased is generally seen outside the fenced off area, oversized and equipped with bow and arrows. One specific detail is worthy of mention: the fleeing gazelles are generally depicted two by two.⁷⁴ Many of these scenes are reminiscent of the later painted chest of Tutankhamun (cf. above 4.2.3/a.2), indicating there is a convergence of private and royal use of these motifs.

a. Tomb of Montuherkhepeshef (Passage), TT 20, Dra' Abû el-Naga', 18th dyn, Tuthmosis III (?), (East wall, PM I/1: 35 (7); Davies 1913: Pl. XII)

The fragmentary desert hunt scene in the tomb of Montuherkhepeshef is found on the east wall in the passage. There are no marsh scenes or agricultural activities indicated by the remains.

⁷³ Two exceptions: suckling gazelle in the tomb of Montuherkhepeshef and suckling fallow deer in the tomb of Puimre, see discussion below. No mating scenes preserved. A wild ass giving birth in the tomb of Montuherkhepeshef can be distinguished (Davies 1913: Pl. XII); the motif of nursing gazelle and foaling ass on the same tomb wall is probably intentional.

⁷⁴ Cf. e.g. Amenipet, TT 276 (PM I/1: 353 (11), Wilkinson 1878: 92, Fig. 357); Rekhmire, TT 100 (PM I/1: 210 (11), Davies 1943: Pl. XLIII); Mentuiwiw, TT 172 (PM I/1: 280 (7), Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CLXVIII); Userhat, TT 56 (PM I/1: 113 (13)-(15), Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CLXIX).

It can be concluded from the fragments that the scene originally consisted of at least four registers, flanked by fences. The tomb owner is seen hunting with bow and arrow, standing outside the enclosure and accompanied by assistants. These details correspond well to the earlier material. In the upper right section, a nursing gazelle, now fragmentary, has been added among the chaos of fleeing wild game (Davies 1913: Pl. XII). This represents one of the three New Kingdom examples of the nursing gazelle in a private tomb.⁷⁵ A wild ass gives birth. Although limited in number, it appears that the desert hunt in the New Kingdom can also include life affirming motifs (i.e. mating, foaling, and nursing).

Remains of three fleeing gazelles, depicted with three superimposed profiles, can be distinguished in the lower register.

b. Tomb of Amenipet (Inner room) TT 276, Qurnet Mura'i, 18th dyn., Tuthmosis IV (North wall, (PM I/1: 353 (11); Wilkinson 1878: 92, Fig. 357)

The desert hunt scene of Amenipet is located on the northern wall of the inner room. There are traces of a scene with the netting of fowl on the western wall of the hall (PM I/1: 353 (8)), but there are no reported marsh hunt or agricultural scenes.

The deceased hunts desert game, shooting from a chariot. Again, the prey is within an enclosure. The fragmentary scene gives the impression of an intense chase, divided into three registers. There is a chaos of fleeing animals, running from left to right, with no sign of either mating or birthing motifs. This scene provides good examples of the pairing of fleeing gazelles. This combination is found in each of the registers, but in particular in the upper, with three pairs. One of these gazelles is running with its head turned back, facing left, confirming a continual use of the turned head as an attribute of the gazelle (also on the bottom row). The other animals include hyena, ibex, ostrich, oryx and hartebeest (Osborn 1998: 11). This depiction of two gazelles side by side can be traced back to the Sahure hunt scene. It is explicit in most of the New Kingdom private tombs, suggesting that there is an interest in presenting the gazelle in pairs (cf. Chapter 6 below).

⁷⁵ Another example of a nursing wild animal is found in the tomb of Puimre (TT 39, PM I/1: 72 (10); Davies 1922: Pl. VII), where a fallow deer suckles its young. This motif is identical in its composition and context as that for the gazelle among the fleeing game. A second example of a nursing gazelle can be identified in tomb of Neferhotep (Ramesside), however, it is not a desert hunt scene (TT 216, PM I/1: 313 (6)). Cf. also the tunic of Tutankhamun, above 4.2.3/a.3 and Appendix III.

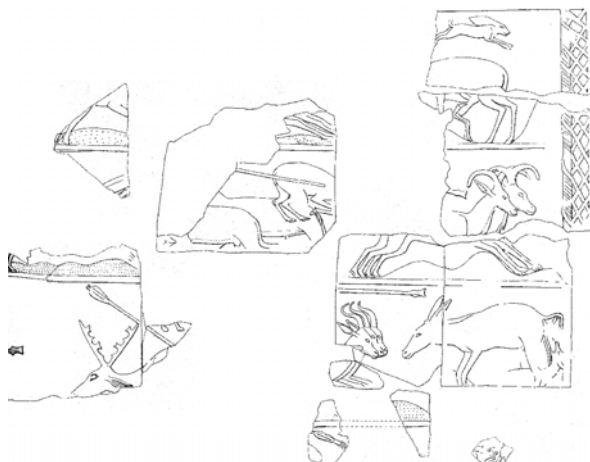


Figure 37. Gazelle nursing in desert. Montuherkepeshef (TT 20)



Figure 38. Desert hunt, Amenipet (TT 276)

c. New Kingdom private tombs – concluding remarks

Despite the individuality of the desert hunt scenes, the New Kingdom material does not offer any innovation in the gazelle motifs in a hunting context. With few exceptions, the narrative is focused on the hunt itself, with the life affirming motifs of mating, nursing and giving birth generally minimized or lacking. This is the same pattern found in the royal iconography. This trend is also seen in the Middle Kingdom material. The New Kingdom material displays continuity in motif that can be traced back to the Old Kingdom when the basic patterns are established.

4.3.4 Final examples of the desert hunt in private tombs

There are two examples of desert hunt scenes dating to the Saite period (664-525 B.C.). One is found in the Theban tomb of Ibi and the other on a block from the Saqqara tomb of Nesu-su-djehuty.⁷⁶ The “revival” of the desert hunt scene as private tomb decoration is in line with the tendency of this period to copy earlier traditions (Schäfer 1974: 67-68), particularly those visible in nearby monuments.

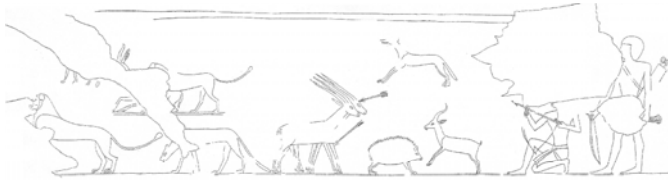


Figure 39. Ibi: desert hunt from Saite Period

a. Tomb of Ibi (Court), TT 36, ‘Asāsif, 26th dyn., Psamtek I
(East wall, PM I/1: 67 (20); Scheil 1894: 647, Fig. 8)

The desert hunt scene from the tomb of Ibi is located on the east wall of the court. The marsh scene is not included in the tomb decoration. Agricultural scenes are however found next to the desert hunt register (PM I/1: 67 (20) II). This desert hunt scene is interesting as it appears to be a copy of an older

⁷⁶ The block of Nesu-su-djehuty (also dated to Psamtek I) was found in the chapel (PM III/2: 669; currently in Egyptian Museum, no. 17.6.24.11). The original composition of the desert hunt scene is lost, however the remaining motifs include a pair of gazelles, a hedgehog and most likely a hunting dog (Quibell 1912: Pl. LXII,1). The motif of two gazelles continues to be used. Note that Quibell cites the block as 17.6.26.11, not found in PM III/2: 669 that refers to 17.6.24.11.

scene, displaying remarkable similarity to that of Ibi at Deir el-Gebrawi from the 6th dynasty (cf. above 4.3.1/d.1). The kneeling bowman who aims in the direction of a lion attacking a gazelle and another gazelle fleeing from the hunting dog appear to have been inspired by the older tomb decoration located c. 200 km to the north. The name similarity may have encouraged this ambitious borrowing.

This example does not contribute to a further understanding of the gazelle motif, but perhaps to a more general appreciation of the value of the desert scene. Disappearing rather abruptly sometime toward the end of the 18th dynasty, its reappearance in the 26th dynasty pairs it with an equally traditional agricultural scene. These two themes, the agriculture of the valley and the hunt of the desert have both contrasting and comparable elements. Regeneration and food production can be seen as a common thread. In the desert hunt scene this is represented by both life affirming motifs (mating, nursing, birth giving) and the fleeing and dying animals, all placed in the “chaos” of the desert (Ikram 1991: 57).

4.4 The desert hunt scenes – concluding remarks

Examples of the desert hunt scene are found on the walls of royal temples and in private tombs during the Old, Middle and New Kingdoms. The gazelle motifs featured in the desert hunt scenes were well established and integrated into this narrative early on in the development of dynastic iconography. The forms given the different motifs are consistent and chronologically durable. This is also true of the depiction of other desert animals. A combination of these well-established motifs provides the core of the scene’s composition, with some variation available primarily in choice of motif. A study of the gazelle motif in this context reveals a pattern of use and provides the opportunity for a further understanding of its value.

The Old Kingdom desert hunt scenes present the most variation in composition, a tendency that can be observed in both the royal and private material. The scene of the 5th dynasty temple of Sahure has been treated as the model used for later compositions (e.g. Hoffmeier 1975: 8, Ikram 2003b: 143). Although the Sahure scene was fragmentary when documented by Borchardt (1913: Pl. 17), four different gazelle motifs can be discerned, all of which are continually repeated in the later material and some of which can be traced back to the Predynastic material as well.

The oldest and most frequently used motif is that of a dog/lion attacking a fleeing gazelle, either grasping the gazelle’s hind leg or using its powerful jaws to choke the gazelle. The form given this motif in the

Predynastic Period, although not significantly altered in later examples, does occur in new combinations, such as in the triad of two opposing hunting dogs attacking a gazelle as a central figure (e.g. Ukhhotep, cf. above 4.3.2/b.2; Tutankhamun's tunic, cf. above 4.2.3/a.3; Puimre, TT 39, Davies 1922: Pl. VII). It was, in many ways, the most succinct of the hunting images, representing the hunt in its quintessence, the successful hunter versus the defeated prey. With the gazelle by far the most common animal found in this composition, it could include other animals as well.

The pose in which the gazelle looks back is frequently found with the fleeing gazelle, the striding gazelle and the recumbent gazelle in an insert. This particular position of the head is found in images from the Predynastic Period and onward. Suggesting vigilance and perhaps fear, this focus on the vision of the gazelle corresponds to its situation in the wild where that sense is its most important warning mechanism (Kingdon 1997: 409-410, Estes 1992: 66). Here too the gazelle is the most common animal to be depicted with this pose, but not the only one.

Another feature typical for the gazelle in the desert hunt scenes is the grouping into pairs. The two-gazelle motif can be located in both the royal and private material. This composition is first found in the mortuary temple of Sahure (above 4.2.1/a), and occurs on a regular basis in the private tombs from the 5th dynasty onward (cf. above 4.3.1/b.1, tomb of Raemka). It is found in a number of variations. Mating gazelles form one kind of pair, as do the mother nursing her fawn.⁷⁷ The pairing is sometimes implied by spacing, when 'combining' the motifs of an attacked gazelle and a young hiding in an insert. The Middle Kingdom desert hunt scenes contain few examples of the two-gazelle motif, while in the New Kingdom examples, the motif of pairs of fleeing gazelles is common (cf. 4.3.3/b, Amenipet), more or less excluding all the other variations. Another typical pairing entails combining the dorcas and Soemmerring's gazelle, as shown in both the royal (above 4.2.1/a-c, Sahure, Niuserre and Unas) and private material (e.g. 4.3.1/c.2, Nimaatre or 4.3.2/d.1, Ip). The idea of the dual gazelles appears to be basic and reoccurs in other contexts as well (cf. 6.1.2, 6.2, 6.4 and 7.2 below).

The gazelle was hunted by a variety of means. The bow and arrow is the primary weapon. It is originally seen on the Predynastic ceremonial palette (cf. 3.5). It is found in the Sahure desert hunt scene (cf. 4.2.1/a) and is used by the overlarge owner of the private tomb, with Senbi as an example

⁷⁷ Cf. 3.5.1, the Hunters Palette where a mother and her fawn are fleeing. These, however, are shown as part of a group rather than as a pair.

(above 4.3.2/b.1, Montuherkepeshef, above 4.3.3/a) as well as by hunters integrated into the scene (especially observable in Beni Hassan, e.g. Baqt [III], Newberry 1894: Pl. IV). The successful shot is represented by the many arrows depicted piercing the wounded animals. For the gazelle, these arrows are most commonly found lodged in the neck (e.g. Sahure, above 4.2.1/a; Mentuhotep II, above 4.2.2/a), but also in the belly (e.g. Ukhhotep, above 4.3.2/b.2). The object of the hunt was not always to kill the animal during the chase. The lasso is not commonly used to capture the gazelle, there are however a few examples of its use (e.g. Seshemnefer, above 4.3.1/c.1 and Khety, above 4.3.2/a.2). The image of the enclosure, within which the animals were kept as easy targets, reoccurs.

The young, hiding in bushes, represented in inserts (e.g. Sahure, above 4.2.1/a; Unas, above 4.2.1/c; Raemka, above 4.3.1/b.1; Seshemnefer, above 4.3.1/c.1), were also collected, as is indicated in the image of a gazelle in a basket (Niuserre, above 4.2.1/b; Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, above 4.3.1/b.4; Merytet, above 4.3.1/b.5). The insert occurs primarily during the Old Kingdom and is used to represent a number of small animals, ranging from the hedgehog to hare to jerboas, as additional features of the desert landscape. The gazelle, always represented in a recumbent position, often with the head turned back, is by far the most common of the antelopes to be found in an insert where it sometimes can be found nibbling on a bush. The recumbent gazelle is a common motif also on objects (cf. 6.6.1, 6.6.2 and 6.6.3).

The mating, birth giving and nursing motifs provide the life affirming element of the desert hunt, while also implying a continual replenishment of the animals killed in the hunt. The mating motif (cf. Ikram 1991), involving a gazelle pair, is represented by four examples (Seshemnefer, Junker 1953, Fig. 63; Nimaatre, Roth 1995: Pl. 95b; Ukhhotep, Blackman 1915a, Pl. VII; silver jar (CG 53262/JE 39867), Edgar 1925: Pl. I, Fig. 1). Similarly there are a few surviving examples of depictions of foaling gazelles (Niuserre, von Bissing 1956: Pls XI-XII; Khnumhotep, Newberry 1893: Pl. XXX). The most important of the life affirming motifs is the nursing gazelle. The role of nursing mother is only found for the gazelle among the desert animals and can be traced throughout dynastic iconography. These life affirming motifs suggests that the image of the gazelle is integrated into the notion of regeneration, emphasized in the images of pairs, and of mother and young.

The imagery of the gazelle is incorporated into different aspects of the desert hunt scene. It conveyed the defeat of the inhabitants of a landscape of chaos. This is explicit in the comparison between wild game and enemies

in the hunt/battle scene found on the painted chest of Tutankhamun (above 4.2.3/a.2). It also expressed the creative potential of that landscape with mating, giving birth and nursing its young. The funerary framework of these scenes transformed the collected, captured and slaughtered animal into an eternal source of food for the tomb owner.

5 The Gazelle as Offering

The representation of offering is central to ancient Egyptian iconography and is found in varying forms on most objects relating to the funerary cult (Vandier 1964: 114). The items offered reconstituted the living existence of the deceased, with an emphasis on the meal as sustenance for the ka, the life force (Junker 1938: 98, Spencer 1982: 60, 63). There is a link between the desert hunt scenes and the offering scenes, both in terms of location and theme. In private tombs the desert hunt scene is often found together with an offering procession, suggesting that the two, desert hunt and offering, represent a narrative sequence. The desert game pursued in the hunt scenes by the tomb owner in his role of hunter is largely the same found as living animals in the procession of offering bearers. The gazelle, as one of these animals, facilitates the immortality of the tomb owner.

Confirmation of the role of the gazelle as an offering gift is found in offering lists (5.2 below) and in the early compilation of offerings on the offering tables depicted on false doors and stelae (5.3 below). The images of the hunt, together with the offering procession, bring together the natural world and ritual (cf. Robins 1990: 48, Boessneck 1988: 8). The iconography of the tomb aligns the real world with the needs of the next (Ikram 1995: 42).

5.1 Offering scenes

The procession of offerings is the standard form given offering scenes. The procession can be represented by a single figure or it can extend to multiple registers with numerous figures. Male and/or female offering bearers bring forth food items and other goods. The figures can represent the estates⁷⁸ supplying the offerings, otherwise the offering bearers are often unnamed but on occasion they can be identified as a member of the tomb owner's family or as someone of clerical rank, traditionally the funerary priest known as the *hm k3*.⁷⁹ Live domesticated and wild animals can be found among the offerings, with the understanding that they will provide nourishment for the deceased's ka.

⁷⁸ For the role of the estates with references, see Moreno García 2008.

⁷⁹ Cf. e.g. Tjetu/Kaninesut G 2001, where the brother participates (Simpson 1980: Pl. XXVIIb) and Neb-kau-her (Hassan 1975a: 49, Fig. 20) and Ankhmahor (Badawy 1978: Fig. 35) where funerary priests are found.

The gazelle is a common offering in the procession and can be found in the 4th dynasty tombs at Meidum (Nefermaat, Petrie 1892: Pl XXVII) and Saqqara (Methen, LD II: Pl. 4) as well as in the Late Period tomb of Petosiris (Lefebvre 1924: Pls XX, XXXV, XLVI). There is no clear differentiation in the composition of these scenes, or in the gazelle motifs occurring in them, either geographically or chronologically. This suggests that the motifs were well established, with little interest in changing or developing them. One trend however is clear and that is towards less diversity in motif choice. This is the same pattern seen in the desert hunt scenes.

Offering processions are by far more common in private tombs than in royal contexts (Klebs 1915: 119-121). The earliest known royal example is found in the temple of the 4th dynasty king Sneferu (Fakhry 1961: Pls XIII-XV). Some of the reused Khufu blocks from Lisht (Goedicke 1971: 13-19) also show offerings from the estates. This puts a natural emphasis on the private material. The gazelle is found in an offering context in close to 100 different private tombs during the Old Kingdom alone.⁸⁰ In contrast to the hunt scenes, the tombs with offering scenes are evenly distributed between the two main Old Kingdom cemeteries of Giza and Saqqara, as well as being found in other contemporary cemetery sites. The offering scene is an important feature of the tomb and is found not only on tomb walls but also on stelae⁸¹ and false doors (e.g. Iteti, PM III/1: 193 (1); Curto 1963: Pl. VII).

The number of offering processions featuring a gazelle is far greater than the number of desert hunt scenes. The inclusion of desert animals in the offering procession may have functioned as an allusion the hunt.⁸² In a smaller tomb, this would have saved space (Ikram 1991: 60).

In contrast to the desert hunt scenes⁸³ or the marsh fowling scenes, the deceased is passive as the recipient of offerings. Analogous to the desert hunt scenes, the deceased is portrayed as oversized when receiving the gifts, signalling the status of the tomb owner.

80 This is the number of tombs in which the gazelle occurs, it can however be found several times in the offering rows of a single tomb. Given that many tombs are still unpublished, this number is of course, tentative. Cf. the list in Vandier 1969: 2-5.

81 Most of the stelae date to the FIP and the MK, e.g. Meru (N 3737), Dunham 1937: Pl. XIV and Amenemhat-Nebwia (Garstang 1901: Pl. VI).

82 Some interpretations of these scenes have drawn a sharp distinction between the “daily life” character of the hunt and the ritual aspect of the offering procession (e.g. Klebs 1915: 68, 119; Vandier 1964: 787, but cf. Altenmüller 1977: 231, Decker and Herb 1994: 265).

83 The deceased does not appear to have taken an active part in the desert hunt scenes of the Old Kingdom, in comparison to the Middle and New Kingdom examples where he is an ‘acteur’. The fowling scenes, on the other hand, featured the deceased and his family in the Old Kingdom examples. Cf. Vandier’s use of the terms ‘acteur’ and ‘spectateur’ (1964: 58).

Three distinctive groups of animals can be noted in the offering scenes: birds, cattle (including bull, oxen, cow and calf) and wild game (Klebs 1915: 120). Although there is the implication that the animals will be killed, there are only a few scenes that show a gazelle about to be slaughtered (Sema-ankh, Hassan 1951: 168, Fig. 161; Sabu, Borchardt 1937: 229 (no. 1530), Pl. 46; Hesi, Kanawti and Abder-Raziq 1999: Pl. 58). It is the slaughter of cattle⁸⁴ (including the aurochs or “wild bull”) that is the most common. This most likely relates to the role of the *hps*-foreleg in funerary ritual (Ikram 1995: 43, Vandier 1964: 110, Otto 1950: 164-165).

The question of whether the animals were collected as young and raised for later slaughter is brought up by the occurrence of a heading using the term *rn* or *rnn* combined with the name of the animal, such as *rnn ghs* found as a description of a walking gazelle, in the mastaba of Nefer-seshem-ptah (Capart 1907: Pl. LXXX, also Idut, Macramallah 1935: Pl. XX and Ankhmahor, Badway 1978: Fig. 35, discussed below). The alphabetic spellings *rn* and *rnn* seem to be used interchangeably, indicating that they represent the same word. One way to resolve this ambiguity is to see this as a genitive construction in which the second *n* is the genitive adjective (Gardiner 1957: 66, §85B, also 77, §95), so that it can read *rn* + the genitive *n(y)*. Otherwise, there are two distinct solutions to how *rn (n)* should be understood. In one case the translation “young one” (cf. Faulkner 1962: 150) has been chosen, so that the phrase *rn (n) ghs*, would read “young one of the gazelle” (e.g. Simpson 1980: 3, Badawy 1978: 27, Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: 161) ignoring the related images of fat, and apparently adult, animals. If instead *rn* is read as the verb “to nurture, raise, bring up” (cf. Faulkner 1962: 150), the phrase can be read as “the nurtured one of the gazelle”. This has been interpreted to mean “fattening” (Boessneck 1988: 44) for slaughter. This reading does not however ‘fit’ the context of the small gazelle being brought forth in an offering procession. In the one example where the force feeding of gazelles is depicted, from the Old Kingdom (Djaty, LD II: Pl. 102b), the heading reads *wš3 ghs*, with the term *wš3* understood as “to fatten” (Faulkner 1962: 70). From the same scene, the heading *wš3 rn m3 hq*, “fattening the young of the oryx....” is found, indicating that if the meaning “fattening” had been intended, there was an alternative word to choose. Different authors have opted for one or the other translation without any further discussion (cf. discussion in Osborn 1998: 8). Although, not entirely satisfactory, *rn (n)* is translated as “fattened” here and treated as a description

84 The ancient Egyptians seem to have preferred ox meat (Ikram 1995: 44).

of the animal as suitable of offering, so that *mn (n) ghs* is read as “fatted gazelle”.

In the offering procession scenes, the gazelle is depicted using variations of specific motifs, some of which correspond to those found in the desert hunt scenes. This suggests a standardisation similar to that found in the motifs of the desert hunt.

5.1.1 A typology of gazelle images

There are a vast number of examples of the gazelle in offering procession scenes. As the gazelle motif is the focus of this study, a typological approach has been chosen to provide an overview of the variation in presentation. A distinction has been made between two types of procession, that in which the estates are personified by female offering bearers and that where the offering bearers are primarily male, representing the immediate family and associates of the deceased. The tombs used as examples in this discussion are primarily from the cemeteries of Giza and Saqqara, dated to the Old Kingdom. This reflects the diversity of imagery during this period as well as the Old Kingdom origin of the motifs found in later tombs. A short description of comparative material from Middle and New Kingdom tombs highlights the stability of form for this type of scene.

a. Bringing the gazelle from the estates

One version of the offering procession consists of female offering bearers who are personifications of the estates. They carry baskets filled with a variety of food stuffs on their heads. The basket is held in place by one hand, while the other carries birds or calves and young gazelles, or holds a leash. They can also carry flowers. The name of the estate is found either in front of the woman or above her. The oldest known example of bringing offerings from the estates is from the 4th dynasty temple of Snefru at Dahshur (van de Walle 1957: 290, Fakhry 1961: Pls XIII-XV, Harpur 1987: 82-83). The procession of the estates continues in its use as a tomb scene throughout the Old Kingdom, but is not found in later periods (Vandier 1964: 134-135).

A majority of the estates represented in these scenes are linked to a funerary cult, with both royal and private estates being represented, and to the related economic institutions (Jacquet-Gordon 1962: 1). When found in private tombs, it has been suggested that this was yet another motif appropriated from the royal funerary temples of the Old Kingdom (van de

Walle 1957: 296, Vandier 1964: 129).⁸⁵ The presence of the so-called ‘défilés des domaines’ demonstrated the social rank of the deceased as well as affirming the wealth he would enjoy in the Netherworld (Jacquet-Gordon 1962: 14-15).

a.1 Gazelle on leash

Tomb of Seshemnefer [IV] (Outer hall), LG 53, Giza, late 5th – early 6th dyn. (East wall, Berlin 1128; PM III/1: 225 (15); Junker 1953: 197, Fig. 76)

The procession of the estates fills two lower registers in the outer hall in the tomb of Seshemnefer. Among the 18 female offering bearers, seven have an animal on a leash; four calves, one oryx and one gazelle. Female offering bearers leading this series of animals on leashes is a standard feature in the procession of the estates. The animals are depicted striding in front of the offering bearer rather than being pulled. The leash itself could be depicted as either strained or loose. The animals are often drawn in smaller than correct proportions in relation to the women holding the leash. According to Harpur (1987: 83), this is “to make way for the estate names.”



Figure 40.
Gazelle on leash

The offering bearer leading the gazelle in this scene carries a full basket on her head, secured by her left hand. The right hand grasps a bird by its wings as well as holding the leash, with the end looped. The gazelle strides in front of her, the leash is somewhat taut. This example is close but not identical to Posture 2 of Vandier’s (1964: 130, Fig. 39) analysis of the offerings from the estates.

The motif of gazelle on leash continued to be used during the later periods as well, however not as a part of the procession of the estates but in the standard offering scene, even though the composition of male and female offering bearers is reminiscent of that of the estates (Vandier 1964: 135).

⁸⁵ Compare with the contemporary private tombs in Meidum (PM IV: 90, 92), where the procession of the estates is included as an offering scene, without however the gazelle (e.g. Petrie 1892: Pls XI, XII, XV, XIX, XXI).

Tomb of Kemsit (Burial chamber), TT 308, Deir el-Bahari, 11th dyn.
(North wall, PM I/1: 386 (2); Naville and Hall 1913: Pl. II)

In the tomb of Kemsit, a gazelle is held on a leash by a female offering bearer. She also holds a bird in the same hand. The other hand grasps what seems to be some kind of vegetable (?). Above this group the caption reads *n k3=f*, “for your ka”. The composition is reminiscent of the Old Kingdom versions of bringing offerings from the estates. The gazelle is the only game animal to be offered. The tomb walls are otherwise dominated by the motif of cow and calf and other prepared food stuffs. A gazelle head can be discerned among the offerings on one of the offering tables as well.

Tomb of Amenemhat (Inner room) TT 82, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, 18th dyn.
(North-east wall, PMI/1: 166 (17); Davies and Gardiner 1915: Pl. XXII)

Although not a formal procession of the estates, images parallel to those found in that context appear in the NK tomb of Amenemhet. A female offering bearer with a gazelle on a leash can be distinguished in the tomb of Amenemhat. The gazelle is portrayed in natural, rather than diminished, size. The offering row is fragmentary, making it difficult to discern details. Still, it is possible to note that the gazelle is the only game animal included among the offerings that otherwise consist of grapes, pomegranates and other fruits and food stuffs. The male and female offering bearers are shown mixed, in contrast to earlier periods when the division was rather distinct. A stylistic oddity is that the horns are in profile for one and frontal for another.



Figure 41.

Gazelle on leash

The motif of gazelle on leash, presented by an offering bearer is most common during the Old Kingdom (estates), only to decrease in number during the Middle and New Kingdoms.

a.2 Gazelle on leash, nursing

Tomb of Kagemni (Room IV), LS 10, Saqqara, 6th dyn., Teti
(South wall, PM III/2: 523 (19); von Bissing 1905: Pl. VII, 2)

One of the more unusual examples of a gazelle in the procession of the estates is from the tomb of Kagemni. There are numerous examples of female offering bearers leading a gazelle on a leash in this tomb. One of the gazelles nurses a fawn (von Bissing 1905: Pl. VII, 2). The gazelle mother has her head turned back, facing left, a feature familiar from the desert hunt scenes where it is found with fleeing gazelles and recumbent gazelles in inserts.

This is the only known example of a nursing gazelle combined with the procession of the estates, nor is there an example of any other nursing animal in this context.

a.3 Gazelle carried

Tomb of Akhethotep (Hall), D 64a, Saqqara, 5th dyn., Isesi-Unas
(East wall, PM III/2: 599 (5)-(6); Davies 1901: Pls XIII, XIV)

There are several examples of the procession of the estates featuring female offering bearers in the tomb of Akhethotep. Several of these women carry gazelles. This is a pose common for the male offering bearers (cf. below 5.1.1/b.2) that are also found in this tomb (Davies 1901: Pls XVII, XXII).

The woman carries the gazelle next to the chest with one arm under the belly of the animal. This posture is also found with the domesticated calf and some large birds (geese?). Similar depictions are found in the east hall⁸⁶ of this tomb on both left and right sides (PM III/2: 599 (5)-(6), Davies 1901: Pls XIII, XIV; cf. Harpur 1987: 83).⁸⁷ This appears to be the preferred gazelle motif in this tomb with numerous examples showing female and male offering bearers carrying a gazelle next to the chest (Davies 1901: Pls X, XVI, XVII), with the female examples outnumbering the male.



Figure 42.
Carrying the gazelle

⁸⁶ This part of the mastaba was called the “hall” in the PM publication, while Davies (1901: 9) labels it “chapel”

⁸⁷ The second gazelle is more “embraced” than held, still belonging however to this type.

a.4 Procession of the estates – concluding remarks

There is little variation in the composition of the procession of estates (Vandier 1964: 131). Given the rigid form, the options for depicting the gazelle are restricted. The gazelle is either led on a leash or carried. The disproportionately small size of the animals on leash, as well as the ease with which they were held to the chest suggests that these are young animals. The example of a suckling gazelle on a leash in the tomb of Kagemni would further suggest that there is a deliberate allusion to reproduction. The procession of the estates displays a more limited variation in gazelle motifs than found in other offering processions.

b. Procession of offering bearers

The procession of offering bearers consists primarily of men who carry various goods as well as leading forth both domesticated and game animals. Brought separately one by one (Vandier 1969: 1), these animals take up considerable space in this composition. In contrast to the procession of the estates, the gazelles seen in the procession of offering bearers are commonly depicted as large and thus not suitable for being carried. The difference in the size of the animals may reflect a deliberate reference to the gender of the offering bearer (small – female, large – male). Junker (1938: 69, Fig. 7) referred to the animals being led forth by guiding or pulling the horns as stubborn creatures (“störrischen Tieren”), an interpretation that may extend to include the motif of both pulling by the horns and pushing forth from behind.

A thorough examination of the variations of the offering procession was published by Vandier (1969: 1-58), where he defined such scenes as ‘les défiles’, referring to the array of animals. Further, he interpreted the animals found in these scenes as domesticated (“élevage des animaux” 1969: 6) and fattened before being slaughtered (cf. discussion above).

b.1 Gazelle walking

There are numerous variations in the gazelle motif in the processions of bringing offerings. Some of them are only found for the gazelle, others are more generally used. The most common shows the gazelle walking while being guided by the horns or both pulled and pushed by the offering bringers. Some examples include a tight leash.

This variation often includes a small text reading *rn n ghs*, read here as “fattened gazelle” (Cf. e.g. Nefer-seshem-ptah, Capart 1907: Pl. LXXX; Idut, Macramallah 1935: Pl. XX; Ankhmahor, Badway 1978: Fig. 35, discussed below). In some examples, the gazelle is a part of the procession of

offerings, generally depicted as a row of striding animals, but without intervention or force.

b.1.α Guiding the gazelle by the horns

Tomb of Shetui (*šwti*) (Chapel), Giza, end of 5th – early 6th dyn.

(East wall, PM III/1: 106 (2); Junker 1950: 187, Fig. 86)

A gazelle is pulled forth by a male offering bringer on the east wall in the tomb of Shetui. He holds the muzzle in one hand while the other grips the gazelle's horns. The inscription above the gazelle reads *ghs*. This motif is located in the middle register of an offering scene in front of a standing oversized tomb owner. The gazelle is a part of an offering procession where



Figure 43. Guiding the gazelle

the oryx in front and the addax behind are being pulled (and pushed) in similar fashion. The upper row contains four oxen being led forth on leashes and the bottom register appears to have had representations of kneeling female offering bearers with goods from the estates.

The animals, including the gazelle, are portrayed as rather large, reaching up to the chests and shoulders of the male offering bringers. This hardly reflects real life, as the average height of an adult gazelle was c. 60 cm (see Chapter 2 above and Kingdon 1997: 410). The other species may however be correctly drawn regarding the shoulder height (Kingdon 1997: 439 (oryx), 442 (addax)). Both the oryx and the gazelle are identified with a label, while the addax was further described as “fatted” (*rn nwdw*).

Tomb of Khnumhotep [III] (Hall), BH 3, Beni Hassan, 12th dyn.

(South wall, PM IV: 147, (15)-(19); Newberry 1893: Pl. XXXV)

In the Middle Kingdom tomb of Khnumhotep, a fattened gazelle is being guided forth by its horns by a male offering bringer. The inscription above this composition reads *rn n ghs* “fattened gazelle” another detail that can be traced back to the Old Kingdom version of this motif. However, it seems that such captions were primarily in use during the Old Kingdom, only to more or less disappear during the succeeding periods. The gazelle here is far from the oversized examples seen in the earlier period. This gazelle is seen in an

offering row that mixes game with domestic animals, rather than strictly dividing the two groups.

The Middle Kingdom offering rows display a shift in the items brought forth as offerings. All of the live animals, wild and domesticated, continue to appear side by side, however, in addition to food stuffs, various objects and furniture, i.e. 'manufactured objects', become more common in the offering rows, as part of burial equipment necessarily for the deceased. This pattern can be observed in several of the other Middle Kingdom necropoli, such as el-Bersheh, Meir and Thebes. This trend is found in the New Kingdom examples of this scene as well.



Figure 44.
Guiding the gazelle

Tomb of User (Passage), TT 21, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, 18th dyn.
(North wall, PM I/1: 36 (10); Davies 1913: Pl. XXII)

The offering rows continued to be an important part of tomb decoration during the New Kingdom. As the majority of the private tombs from the New Kingdom are found in the Theban necropolis, the composition tends to be uniform. The items featured in the offering rows go from the 'simple' food stuffs represented by live animals to prepared food as well as various manufactured objects, such as furniture. The presentation of game animals is primarily located immediately next to the desert hunt (Davies 1913: 23 "trophy of the chase"). In these sections the mixture of wild game and domestic animals do not occur. In the separate offering scene, the gazelle continues to be found, although less frequently.

In the tomb of User, the so-called return from the hunt includes an ibex, three gazelles, a hyena, multiple hares, an ostrich and an oryx. One of the gazelles is being guided forth by its horns. The male offering bringer holds a loose leash tied to a hind leg of the gazelle. The two other gazelles are carried on the



Figure 45.
Guiding the gazelle

shoulders of offering bearers. The scene does not have headings. The animals found in the offering procession correspond to the standard game of the desert hunt scene, which unfortunately is quite damaged in this tomb. The gazelle is also represented by a head depicted on the offering table in the shrine (Davies 1913: Pls XXVI, XXVII).

b.1.β Gazelle pulled and pushed

Mastaba of Sekhemka, (Chapel), G 1029, Giza, end of 5th – early 6th dyn.
(East wall, PM III/1: 53 (1)-(2); Simpson 1980: Fig. 4)

Another characteristic example of bringing forth the gazelle is found on the east wall of the chapel of G 1029, belonging to Sekhemka. The gazelle is both pulled by the horns and pushed from behind by male offering bringers. This wall is divided into five registers, containing activities primarily associated with daily life. On the fourth register from the top, the bringing of



Figure 46.

Pulling and pushing the gazelle

wild game included from right to left: an oryx, ibex, addax and finally a gazelle. Each of these animals are identified by the inscription “fattened” (*ṛm*) followed by the name of the species. Two of the male offering bringers accompany the gazelle as it is presented to the oversized deceased. The gazelle is slightly smaller and more slender than the

other three animals in the same register, yet oversized in relation to the men bringing it. Once again indicating that it is unlikely that *ṛm* should be read as young, rather than fattened (cf. discussion above, 5.1).

Tomb of Ukhhotep (Hall), C 1, Meir, 12th dyn.

(North wall, PM IV: 253; Blackman and Apton 1953: Pl. XV)

Ukhhotep⁸⁸ has one of the smallest tombs in the cemetery of Meir. The tomb contains both a fishing and a fowling scene, but no desert hunt scene. The gazelle appears however a few times in the registers of offerings. One of the

88 Not the same Ukhhotep as discussed in 4.3.2/b.2, who is the son of Senbi and has tomb B 2.



Figure 47.
Guiding the gazelle

gazelles is brought forth by an offering bringer, and even though the scene breaks off at the neck of the gazelle, it can be deduced that the gazelle was being held at the neck and pushed from behind by the same offering bearer (cf. discussion of Rekhmire below). The gazelle is preceded by two offering bearers, identified as lector-priests. Each of them holds a large *hps* foreleg, placing the gazelle in the same category of offerings.

Tomb of Rekhmire (Hall), TT 100, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, 18th dyn.
(North wall, PMI/1: 210 (10); Davies 1943: Pl. XLV)

The tomb of Rekhmire features a desert hunt scene as well as a register with the bringing of wild animals located next to it. The animals are the same as those hunted, which include among others, hartebeest, oryx, and hyena. The gazelle is shown pushed forward by the horns and by the hind quarters by a male offering bearer (as are the oryx and hartebeest). In contrast to the Old Kingdom versions of this motif, it seems that this composition did not require two offering bringers to attend to the gazelle. This may relate to the animals being portrayed in a more realistic size than those that had been stall fed. This register appears among the presentations of other products, and connects the desert hunt and the offering.

b.1.γ Gazelle pulled and pushed, nursing

Tomb of Ankhmahor (Doorway), Saqqara, early 6th dyn.
(North wall, PM III/2: 513 (10 b); Capart 1907: Pl. XLIV, cf. Badawy 1978: Fig. 35)

The “pulled and pushed” motif is augmented in the tomb of Ankhmahor with the nursing element. In the upper of two registers an oryx and a nursing gazelle are brought forth. Above the scene the text reads *shpt ʿwt h3st tntt n=f in hm(w) k3*, ‘bringing the desert game that is brought for him by the *k3*-servant(s)’.⁸⁹ The oryx to the left is guided by two male offering bringers, holding the horns and muzzle of the animal. The description of this scene reads, “fattened oryx” (*rn n m3 hq*) and then “seizing a large (one) for you”

⁸⁹ Badawy (1978: 27) confuses the two crooks (Gardiner sign list S38, S39) transliterating *hk3w* instead of *ʿwt* while still translating “desert animals”.

(*lft r=k wrt*).⁹⁰ The nursing gazelle is found at the far right of the scene. This is the only known example of a nurturing gazelle in this context. Here two men try to control the gazelle, while she suckles her fawn. The man to the left holds the muzzle and horns, while the other pushes from behind. The inscription above reads “fatted gazelle, holding it (her) tightly for stability” (*rn n ghs ndr sw r mn*).⁹¹ In this instance, as with the desert hunt, the role of nursing mother is reserved for the gazelle.



Figure 48. Guiding a nursing gazelle

b.1.8 Striding ‘independently’

Tomb of Seshemnefer [IV] (Architrave) LG 53, Giza, end of 5th – early 6th dyn. (PM III/1: 225 (19), Junker 1953: 205, Fig. 79)

The offering procession in the tomb of Seshemnefer includes the gazelle striding without assistance. This scene is divided into three short registers, with an aurochs on the upper register, a cow in the middle and the gazelle in the lower register. This scene is found on the western side of the architrave and a similar scene is located on the eastern side with the gazelle replaced by an addax and ibex. This manner of ‘bringing’ the gazelle is relatively

⁹⁰ But cf. Badawy (1978: 27): “...*rn n m3 hq*, young oryx, ...*lft r.k wrt* pull strongly to thee”.

⁹¹ But cf. Badawy (1978: 27): “*rn n ghs*, young gazelle, *ndr sw r mn*h, Hold him properly”. Note that even though the label over the gazelle mother lacks the feminine ending *t*, referring to a nursing animal as “him” (*sw*) is misleading.

common, with the ‘independent animal’ often shown as last in the line of animals.

Even though the caption above the gazelle simply reads *ghs*, it can be concluded that it was a part of a fattened group of animals based on size and context.



Figure 49.

Gazelle striding independently

Tomb of Khety (Hall), BH 17, Beni Hassan, 11th dyn.
(North wall, PM IV: 156 (7); Newberry 1894: Pl. XIV)

In a scene that is not a clear cut offering scene (as it is not directed explicitly towards the tomb owner), but still depicts the bringing of goods, a number of

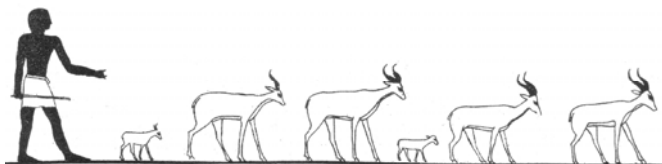


Figure 50. ‘Herding’ the gazelles

gazelles striding forth independently can be noted. The group includes four adult gazelles and two young. At the far left of this register there is a man with a short stick, as if guiding a ‘herd’ of gazelles. A similar arrangement is repeated in the three registers below, which included oryxes, geese and cranes.

Tomb of Ineni (Doorway), TT 81, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, 18th dyn.
(North wall, PM I/1: 163 (19); Dziobek 1992: Pl. 29)

It can be concluded that, despite the fragmentary condition of the tomb wall paintings, the tomb of Ineni once contained a desert hunt scene, however no image of a gazelle has been preserved. The gazelle does appear in the offering context, where it is seen striding independently in front of a male offering bearer, who is holding a ‘tray’ laden with traditional bread and vegetable offerings. It may be noted that on the opposite side of the doorway (south wall), the scene is almost identical, except for the gazelle, that has been replaced by a calf. This calf, on the other hand, is on a leash, wrapped

tightly around its muzzle, the offering bringer carries a short stick in his other hand. The contrast between the wild animal striding independently and the domesticated calf held on a tight leash is striking. Furthermore, the equation of the gazelle and calf echoes Old Kingdom offering scenes where this is a common feature.

b.1.ε Striding ‘independently’, nursing

Mastaba of Rawer [II] (Chapel), G 5470, Giza, late 5th dyn.

(East wall, PM III/1: 162 (1); Junker 1938: 233, Fig. 48)

The motif of the independently striding gazelle is augmented with that of nursing in the mastaba of Rawer, where the text found with the offering procession refers to bringing the animals from the funerary estate (*m pr dt*). The procession originally extended over five registers. The deceased stood to the right of these. In the third register, from right to left, are two oryxes (*m3 hd*), followed by an ibex (*n[ft]*), ending with the motif of a gazelle suckling



Figure 51. Nursing the fawn

her young. The mother has her head turned back, keeping an eye on the fawn (cf. Kadua, discussed above). The two oryxes are accompanied, while the ibex and the gazelle are not. All four animals are said to be “fattened” (*rn*). The realistic representation of the individual animals is expanded to refer to a more general concept of offering, as the entire phrase reads *h3 rn g[hs]*, “a thousand fattened gazelles”. The other animals are similarly

characterized as “a thousand fattened ...”. This appears to be a reference to the common description of funerary offerings as consisting of (*m*) a “thousand bread and beer ...” (cf. e.g. Junker 1934: 69, 75; Franke 2003: 49). Once again in this otherwise uniform representation of the common combination of desert game, the gazelle stands out as the animal that nurses its young.

Tomb of Kadua (Offering room), Giza, 5th dyn., Niuserre or later

(South wall, PM III/1: 245; Hassan 1951: 103, Fig. 82)

The striding, nursing gazelle is also found in the tomb of Kadua. Here the motif of a nursing gazelle is the second and final image in an offering row,

preceded by the motif of an ibex brought forth by a male offering bringer, gripping the horns and muzzle of the ibex. The mother and fawn are alone, without any offering bringer guiding them forward. Above the ibex is the standard phrase “fattened ibex” (*rn nī3*), and that above the gazelle reads “fattened gazelle” (*r[n] ghs*) confirming that the gazelle is also an offering animal. In the two upper registers, as well as the lower one, there is another scene where male offering bearers guide the wild game forward. The gazelle mother has her head turned back, as if to check upon her young. One of the gazelle mother’s hind leg is upraised (cf. Ptahhotep, 4.3.1/b.3), scratching the ear or the muzzle; this motif correlates to numerous images of the suckling cow (e.g. Roth 1995: Pl. 156, cf. also Keel 1980: Figs 12, 26; Simpson 1980: Fig. 30). The apparent analogy drawn between the nursing gazelle and cow indicates that the two are associated. Examples of nursing gazelles in offering scenes in the tombs of Nebemakhet (Keel 1980: 73, Fig. 32) and Kapi (Roth 1995: Pl. 59b, frontispiece) further confirm that among the many animals, only the gazelle is represented nursing in the offering scenes. An additional observation that may relate to specific artistic traditions is that the nursing gazelle in an offering context is primarily found in tombs at Giza,⁹² while the nursing gazelle in a desert hunt scene context is a feature of the tombs of Saqqara.⁹³

The incorporation of the gazelle mother-child constellation of the nursing scenes into an offering context has the effect of putting an emphasis on the generative aspect of the funerary meal, both in terms of an implicit reference to a “meal – nursing” correlation and in that the deceased will receive both mother and child as part of that meal.

b.2 Carrying the gazelle

Analysing the different poses in presenting offering goods, Vandier (1964: 117-125, Figs 33-36) has no less than 123 different categories of “Attitudes des porteurs d’offrandes”. Three of these involve carrying a gazelle (Vandier 1964: 119-121, Figs 34, 35, Postures 49, 85, 93). The majority of the examples of this pose have the offering bearer carry a gazelle either on the

92 Cf. e.g. the tombs of Rawer (Junker 1938: 233, Fig. 48), Kadua (Hassan 1951: Fig. 82), Kapi (Roth 1995: Pl. 59 b) and Nebemakhet (Keel 1980: 32). There are two examples of nursing gazelles in offering context in Saqqara tombs: Ankhmahor (Badawy 1978: Fig 35) and Kagemni (von Bissing 1905: Pl. VII).

93 Cf. e.g. tombs of Ptahhotep (Davies 1900: Pl. XXI), Pehenuka (Harpur 1987: 530, Fig. 188), Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep (Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 38), a block from shaft no. 6 (Hassan 1975b, Pl. XIVc) and the causeway of Unas (Labrousse and Moussa 2002: Fig. 55).

shoulders or next to the chest. In addition to the gazelle, the domesticated calf and large birds are commonly carried in the processions of offering bearers. The context, frequency and manner of carrying the calf and the gazelle indicate that the two were treated as analogous.

Also included in this category is the motif in which an animal is carried in baskets on a pole or yoke, with the gazelle being the most frequently portrayed animal in this context.

b.2.α Carrying the gazelle on shoulders

Tomb of Seshat-hotep (Chapel), G 5150, Giza, early 5th dyn.

(West wall, PM III/1: 150, (5) and (7); Junker 1934: 182, Fig. 28)

A good example of the gazelle carried on the shoulders of a male offering bearer is found in the mastaba of Seshat-hotep. The bearer has one hand holding the legs and the other grasping the neck of the animal (cf. Vandier 1964: Fig. 35, Posture 92). The other desert game animals, oryx, ibex and on the lower register ox and addax, are brought forward with the guidance of male offering bringers and are depicted considerably larger than the carried gazelle.



Figure 52. Seshat-hotep:
Carrying the gazelle



Figure 53. Seshemnefer:
Carrying the gazelle

Tomb of Seshemnefer [III] (Offering room), G 5170, Giza, 5th dyn, Isesi
(East wall, PM III/1: 154 (1); Junker 1938: 73, Fig. 8b)

One of the most common variants of carrying a gazelle on shoulders can be observed in the offering procession of Seshemnefer. In that representation the animal lies across the shoulders of the male offering bearer, the legs in front, next to his chest. Both hind legs and one of the fore legs are restrained by one

hand; the other arm is around the animal's neck, holding a foreleg. This motif is further elaborated with additional offering goods in the arms or hands of the offering bearer (cf. Vandier 1964: Fig. 35, Posture 93)

Tomb of Ukhhotep, ("Room B"), C 1, Meir, 12th dyn.
(North wall, PMIV: 253; Blackman and Apted 1953: Pl. XVIII)

In one of the offering rows in the tomb of Ukhhotep a female offering bearer carries a gazelle on her shoulders. One arm is around the neck of the gazelle, and her other hand grasps the feet of the animal. This posture is fairly common during the Old Kingdom, however, female offering bearers are not found in this position, making this a rare example. The gazelle appears to be the only animal carried in such manner in this tomb, repeating a pattern observable during the Old Kingdom.



Figure 54. Female offering bearer carries a gazelle

Tomb of Menna (Hall), TT 69, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, 18th dyn.
(East wall, PMI/1: 137 (5); Mekhitarian 1978: 87)

A male offering bearer carries the gazelle on his shoulders, one hand grasping the neck and the other tightly holding the feet of the animal. This composition is one of the most common postures in this context during the New Kingdom and is seemingly reserved for male offering bearers. There is a limited variation within this category and is in no way comparable to the diversity in detail displayed during the Old Kingdom.

b.2. β Carrying the gazelle next to chest

Tomb of Nesutnefer, (Chapel), G 4970, Giza, early – middle 5th dyn.
(East wall, PM III/1: 143 (2)-(3); Junker 1938: Fig. 28)

Another way of carrying a gazelle is next to the chest, in the arms. This composition is also varied in many different ways. Two main variations may be distinguished, either hands holding on to the legs of the gazelle or hands/arms located under the belly. The manner in which the gazelle is carried next to the chest is also found with large birds (cf. Vandier 1964: Fig. 35, Postures 83 and 84) and occasionally other young wild game (Vandier 1964: Figs 35, 86). The domesticated calf appears frequently in the arms of male offering bearers as well.

In the bottom register of the east wall, the offering row contains various food items such as bread, beer, fowl and red meat, all brought to the oversized Nesutnefer and his wife. The two last offering bearers to the far left



Figure 55.

Carrying next to chest

carry a calf and a gazelle, albeit in slightly different ways. The gazelle is held next to the chest, restrained by the forelegs, with the neck of the animal in a firm grip. Even though the posture differs slightly from that of carrying the calf, which was carried next to chest, hands under the belly, the two are analogous. This example is used in Vandier's analysis (1964: 119, Fig. 34, Posture 49; cf. 120, n. 2) and is parallel to the way birds are carried (where the

beak was restrained rather than the neck, cf. Vandier 1964: 119, Fig. 34, Posture 50). This posture is an uncommon way to carry a gazelle during the Middle and New Kingdoms. This is reflected in the Vandier's (1964: 113-126), documentation of different postures of primarily Old Kingdom date.

b.2. γ Carrying the gazelle next to chest, holding legs

Mastaba of Kaninesut [I] (Offering room), G 2155, Giza, early 5th dyn.

(West wall, Vienna ÄS 8006, PM III/1: 79 (7); Junker 1934: Fig. 18)



Figure 56. Carrying,
holding legs

Three registers with offerings presented to the oversized Kaninesut and his wife are found between two false doors on the west wall. The lower register depicts 10 men bringing various offerings, including forelegs (*hps*), birds and other meat offerings. The sixth man from the right carries a gazelle, holding it next to his chest; one of his hands clasps all four legs and the other hand is on the side of the belly, securing the grip (Vandier 1964: Fig. 35, Posture 85; cf. 123, n. 2). The gazelle is the only four-legged animal in this register, with the ox implicitly represented by the two *hps*-forelegs.

Tomb of Amenemhat (Hall), BH 2, Beni Hassan, 12th dyn.
(North wall, PMIV: 142 (7)-(11); Newberry 1893: Pl. XIII)



Figure 57.
Holding legs

In a fairly long offering row, where a variety of prepared food stuffs, poultry and an ox are being presented to the tomb owner, a male offering bearer carries a gazelle next to his chest, holding its legs. Again the gazelle represents the only game animal to be offered, even though a desert hunt scene appears two rows above, including multiple desert species. The combination of ox, poultry and gazelle as live animals is an echo of the earlier period. This position is not common during the Middle Kingdom.

From an unknown Theban tomb, 18th dyn.
(BM 37980, Wreszinski 1923: Pl. 32)

A fragmentary block now in the British Museum displays a painted offering procession with four male offering bearers preserved. Two of the men are offering vegetable and flowers, another man brings two hares and the fourth man is carrying a gazelle next to his chest, holding its legs. Considering that the other offering goods are vegetables and flowers, the scene should be understood as part of an offering scene rather than a so-called return from hunt. This posture is most common during the Old Kingdom, with few corresponding examples from later periods.

b.3 Carrying the gazelle in a basket on a pole

A variation of carrying the gazelle as offering involves baskets on a pole. The yoke, from which the baskets hang, is, as a rule, carried by male offering bearers, with exceptions however being found (cf. tomb of Nehwet-desh, Kanawati 1988: Fig. 3). The gazelle is not the only animals carried in a basket; birds, hares and hedgehogs are also among those found. The majority of the examples of the basket motif are from an offering scene context, while two examples of this motif can be distinguished in a desert hunt context (cf. above 4.2.1/b and 4.3.1/b.5), where it is associated with the collection of small animals.

Numerous examples of the baskets motif are included in the analysis of Vandier (1964: Fig. 33, Postures 14 and 25; Fig. 35, Postures 65-68).

b.3.α Carrying gazelles in baskets

Tomb of Idut (“Room III”), Saqqara, 6th dyn.

(South wall, PM III/2: 618 (13); Macramallah 1935: Pl. X)

Examples of gazelles in baskets can be found at least three times in the tomb of the princess Idut (Macramallah 1935: Pls X, XX). They are all similar in composition. A basket or box hangs from the pole with the head of a gazelle protruding from either side, forming a ‘pair’. This was the most common variant of the motif of two gazelles in a basket⁹⁴ (cf. Vandier 1964: Fig. 33, Posture 25). There are examples of young gazelles in a basket where there are more than two animals (Nebemakhet, Keel 1980: 73, Fig. 32; Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 34), possibly referring to a general concept of abundance. Even though the gazelles in baskets are shown with horns, their size and willingness to sit still indicate that it is a question of young animals (Osborn 1998: 177). The recumbent pose found here suggests a carry over from the standard depiction of the young animal in hiding, common in inserts (cf. above 4.1.4).



Figure 58.
Gazelles in basket

The motif of gazelle in basket occurs mainly during the Old Kingdom, with only one example known that is dated to the Middle Kingdom (Ukhhotep, Blackman 1915a: Pl. VIII, cf. below). In the Middle Kingdom example, the gazelle is both recumbent and has its head turned back, yet another feature corresponding to the gazelle inserts.

Two motifs are shared by the offering and hunt scenes: the nursing gazelle and the gazelle in the basket. These two motifs, both involving a young gazelle, appear to be associated. In approximately half of the examples of offering scenes where the nursing motif is found, the basket motif also occurs. Most of the scenes where this motif is found are located in Saqqara.⁹⁵

94 Cf. e.g. Ptahhotep (Davies 1900: Pl. XXII), Hetepherakhti (Mohr 1943: Fig. 9) and Ti (Wild 1966: Pl. CLXV).

95 The motif of baskets on pole (Old Kingdom) is found in the Saqqara tombs of Ptahhotep (Davies 1900: Pl. XXII), Khnumhotep and Niankhkhnum (Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 34), Merytet (Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CXL), Idut (Macramallah 1935: Pl. X), Hetepherakhti (Mohr 1943: 41, Fig. 9). In Giza, in the tomb of Nebemakhet (Keel 1980: 73, Fig 32). The Niuserre block originated from Abu Ghurob (von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI a).

Tomb of Ukhhotep (Hall), B 2, Meir, 12th dyn.
(West wall, PM IV: 251, (12); Blackman 1915a: Pl. XI)

The single Middle Kingdom example of the motif of male offering bearers carrying gazelles in baskets is located in the tomb of Ukhhotep at Meir. This section of the tomb was partially unfinished with the grid lines still visible.

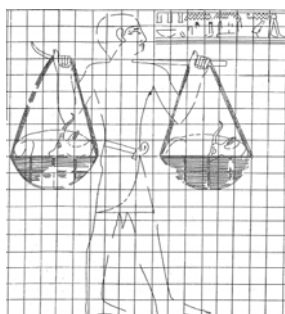


Figure 59.
Carrying two gazelles
in baskets.

The picture is still exceptionally detailed and differs from the examples from the Old Kingdom. The baskets are bowl shaped, instead of the box-like or oval forms of the earlier period. A single gazelle lies in either basket, in a recumbent position, with the head turned back. This position is the same as that seen in the so-called inserts from the desert hunt scenes, which would confirm the interpretation of collecting young animals in the desert. This composition reiterates the idea of a pair of gazelles, albeit in a different form.

c. A Late Period version of the offering procession

Tomb of Petosiris (Pronaos), Tuna (Hermopolis Magna), c. 350 B.C.
(East wall, PM IV: 172 (81)-(82); Lefebvre 1924: Pls XXXV, XXXVI)

The tomb of Petosiris is one of the last tombs decorated with traditional ancient Egyptian motifs. There is no desert hunt scene but a long register shows offering bearers with a mixture of wild and domesticated animals, including the gazelle. Even though there are some non-Egyptian elements in the style of these reliefs, the motifs have their origin in traditional Egyptian compositions.

The gazelle is presented in three ways, all of which can be traced back to the Old Kingdom. The gazelle is shown on a leash (cf. 5.1.1/a.1 above), striding independently (cf. 5.1.1/b.1 d above) and carried on shoulders (cf. 5.1.1/b.2.a above). The gazelle is not the only animal represented like this; most of the other species were portrayed with the same variation (Soemmerring's gazelle, ibex, oryx, fallow deer, calf, and goat). Children are also carried on shoulders, providing an interesting commentary to the animals found in a similar position, suggesting a reference to 'age'.

Those carrying the gazelle on the shoulders are male offering bearers, while the gazelle on a leash is led by both a man and a woman. The striding animals are found next to the male offering bringer. The scenes from the tomb of Petosiris indicate that the gazelle continued to be regarded as an important part of the offering scene, with its representation faithfully adapted from earlier versions.

5.1.2 Offering scene motifs - concluding remarks

A number of variations are found in the depiction of the gazelle in offering scenes. The gazelle is found walking on a leash (a.1), when led by the female personifications of the estate or being pushed and pulled by the men of the offering procession (b.1.α-γ). The orderly procession of “fattened” animals can find the gazelle walking “independently” (b.1.δ-ε).

The gazelle can also be carried, in the arms of a female offering bearer (a.3) or a male offering bearer (b.2.β-γ) or across the shoulders of a male offering bearer (b.2.α). It can also be carried in the offering procession in a basket hanging from a yoke, either alone or with one or more of the gazelles (b.3).

Like the other desert animals found in the offering scenes, the gazelle is described as “fattened” (*mn*). This relates to the idea of the hunt as involving the capture as well as the killing of these animals.

The element of nursing is added to some of these poses, giving a nursing gazelle on a leash in the procession of the estate (a.3), and in the offering processions either while being pulled along (b.1.γ) or when walking independently (b.1.ε), even in this circumstance the gazelle can be described as “fattened”.

The gazelle occurs as both an adult and as a young animal. Size is not only used as an attribute to indicate the age of the animals. The disproportionately small gazelles in the procession of the estate might, being on leashes, be interpreted as young animals. One variant of this motif however includes nursing, making it clear that at least in this instance the gazelle, in spite of its size, is an adult. Other considerations, such as various aspects of the aesthetics of the scene, appear to have determined how large or small the gazelle is depicted. Contextually however there are indications that some of the animals depicted are young. A parallelism with the calf found in the pose with the gazelle across shoulders would indicate a young animal, as would the motif of gazelle in the basket, associated as it is with the collection of young animals in the desert hunt scene.

The composition of the nursing motif in the offering scenes also displays similarities with that featuring the cow and calf. It is, however, only

the gazelle among the desert game animals that is shown suckling her fawn. This restriction of the nursing motif to the gazelle is also true of the desert hunt, indicating continuity in motif between the two types of scenes. The ease with which the nursing variation is added to the various motifs also suggests that it is primarily, if not exclusively, the female gazelle that is depicted.

5.2 Offering lists

The desert hunt and offering scenes, it could be argued, are elaborate versions of the offering list, describing the procurement and presentation of the offerings, as opposed to a simple listing. The offering list in contrast is a straight forward account of those offerings. Its composition is simple, consisting of a list of the gifts that the deceased is to receive, often placed in relationship to the image of the recipient before an offering table. Appearing on temple as well as tomb walls, the list also ensured similar benefits for the gods (Barta 1963: 1). The offering list⁹⁶ can be understood as a “Speiselist” (e.g. Junker 1934: 69), with references to various food stuffs and drink. It also, however, can include cosmetic oils, incense, cloth and eye paint, as well as other more specialized items, representing typical grave gifts (Hassan 1948: 76), making it a list of both necessities and luxuries.

The earliest hieroglyphic list traces back to the 2nd dynasty (Hassan 1948: 45, el-Metwally 1992: 5). Being found primarily on the tomb wall during the Old Kingdom, the offering list is one of the most fundamental images in the ancient Egyptian tomb iconography (Junker 1934: 70). The private offering lists of the Middle Kingdom appear mainly on the coffins, with examples located on tomb walls being few. An abbreviated version of the offering list seems to have been transferred to tomb stelae instead (Barta 1963: 98-99). As for the New Kingdom, the offering list seems to have been replaced by depictions of various offering rituals (Barta 1963: 105-106).

In short, the offering list was used extensively during the Old Kingdom, while during the succeeding periods the inclusion of the list became less common, with its form changing as well. The royal offering lists formed a category of their own, where the gazelle only is found exceptionally, such as in the offering list of Seti I at Abydos (cf. Barta 1963: 130-134).⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Junker (1934: 69) differentiated between an offering list and an offering formula.

⁹⁷ For the ancient Egyptian offering lists, cf. Hassan 1948, Barta 1963 and 1968, and el-Metwally 1992.

5.2.1 The gazelle in the offering lists

The gazelle is found to a much lesser degree in the offering lists than in the offering scenes. The offering lists classify each item according to type, with the most relevant category in this instance being food (cf. e.g. Barta 1963: 47-50). The gazelle appears for obvious reasons as “meat”. When the gazelle is included in the list, it is generally found listed between the more common oxen (‘cattle’, *k3* or *tw3*) and poultry (*3paw*) (Barta 1963: 60). This represents a hierarchy similar to that found in the offering scenes. The oryx is more frequently found in the lists and appears to have been chosen to represent desert game (Hassan 1948: 58⁹⁸, Pl. IV). Where there is a reference to the gazelle, it is specific, with the spelling *ghs* followed by a gazelle head as a determinative. Occasionally only the head occurs (Hassan 1948: Pls V, VI, CXIII, CLXV). In these cases identification is dependent upon the characteristic curve of the horns of the gazelle (e.g. Junker 1934: 128, Fig. 11). The horns differentiate the different desert animals and the combination of animals relates directly to those found in the desert hunt and offering scenes.

The majority of the meat offerings in the lists are not specified by species but rather by cut, (e.g. *lw3*, *lwf*, *swt*, *gsw*, *pbr* cf. Ikram 1995: 113-144), with no indication of which animals the meat came from. The occasional reference to the gazelle in these lists, does however confirm its status as an offering and a source of meat.

Tomb of Seshat-hotep (Chapel), G 5150, Giza, early 5th dyn.
(South wall, PM III/I: 150 (4); Junker 1934: 187, Fig. 33)

An offering list that has the full spelling of the word gazelle with the head as determinative is found in that of Seshat-hotep. The tomb wall has a list on the



Figure 60. *ghs* in offering list

Figure 60. *ghs* in offering list

98 Note that the animal that Hassan (1948: 58, *kbl swgβ.w*) identifies as an ibex is in fact an oryx. A further mistake is made when in another example the oryx is called “gazelle” (Hassan 1948: 68).

identical scene appears in the tomb of Nesut-nefer, where the gazelle is also included (G 4970, PM III/1: 144 (4); Junker 1938: 75, Fig. 9b).

Tomb of Kapunesut (Chapel), G 4651, Giza, early – middle 5th dyn.
(South wall, PM III/1: 135 (2); Junker 1938: 135, Fig. 17)



Figure 61.

Offering list. Gazelle to the left

A gazelle head without an alphabetic spelling, but where a determinative is preceded by *mn* “fattened” is found in the offering list in the mastaba of Kapunesut. It is found in the lower row, fourth from right, preceded by ox, oryx and

ibex. The offering list formed the upper part of the scene, with the deceased seated in front of an offering table with loaves of bread found below. Offering bearers are seen on the opposite tomb wall, including one carrying a gazelle (Junker 1938: 139, Fig. 18). Offering lists tend to be located on one wall (south) while on the opposite wall (north) the bringing of animals forms an additional commentary to the offering theme.

5.3 The gazelle on the offering table in scenes and as object

The offering table, piled with gifts before the recipient, is an earlier form of the offering list. The gazelle head, found as a determinative in the spelling of *ghs*, is found, if rarely, in some examples, among the offerings on the offering table. The primary offering found on the table is that of bread, in different shapes (cf. Vandier 1964: Fig. 26, Bárta 1995: Fig. 4), although food items are also often found (Robins 1998: 957-961). The number of offering table scenes decreases rapidly during the Middle Kingdom, increasing again during New Kingdom. The examples from Middle and New Kingdom are often lavishly decorated with bread, meat, vegetables and flowers. Tables laden with a diversity of offering goods are most common during the New Kingdom.

5.3.1 Tomb of Ukhhotep, B 2, Meir, 12th dyn.

(South wall, PM IV: 250 (4-5); Blackman 1915a: Pl. VI)

A good example of a scene depicting an offering table featuring the head of a gazelle is found in the Middle Kingdom tomb of Ukhhotep. The offering table not only has the head of the gazelle but also that of an oryx, an ibex and a calf. The characteristic distinctions in the



Figure 62.

Gazelle head on an offering table

shape of the horns are used to distinguish the animals. Here too there appears to be an intentional grouping of animals, representing in this context, as seen from the lists, “meat”.

5.3.2 Offering tables as objects

A votive object in the shape of offering tables is found throughout ancient Egyptian history, with its popularity peaking twice, once during the Old Kingdom and later in the Late Period. Its primary location was in the tomb, in front of the false door or some other image of the deceased (Hassan 1944: 180). Offering tables or altars occur in temples as well.

The offering table appears in various shapes; perhaps the most common is a rectangular stone slab with the *hnp* sign on the facing surface (Mostafa 1982: 1-2). The surface is commonly inscribed with the name and title of the owner and a short offering formula. The formulae rarely contain more information than a list of a group of offerings, such as poultry (*3pḏw*) and oxen (*k3w*) (e.g. Mostafa 1982: 14). The offerings, mainly different kinds of bread and meat offerings, could also be depicted, either in sunken or raised relief depending on the date of the object. These food offerings, named and/or depicted, were made viable by pouring a libation over the offering table. The water/beer/wine could be assembled into small basins, formed in the offering table. The libation would then drain out via a small spout, pouring onto the ground. The offering tables saw little development during the Middle and New Kingdoms, with the number of depicted offerings increasing and the basins becoming cartouche shaped (Bolshakov 2001: 572-576). The gazelle did not constitute a regular item on these offering tables (cf. Habachi 1977, Borchardt 1937, Hassan 1944, Kuentz 1981). As always, there are exceptions to this rule.

a. Offering table of Teti, Giza, Old Kingdom

(Hassan 1944: 184, Fig. 32)

A gazelle head can be distinguished on an offering table of Teti from Giza (Hassan 1944: 184, Fig. 32), in the section that concerns meat offerings. There are no hieroglyphs specifying the word *ghs*, however, the characteristic curve of the gazelle horns clearly identifies the animal, following the same pattern as that for the two-dimensional depictions of offering tables. The term *rn* precedes the gazelle head, a feature that is common in the offering scenes (cf. above 5.1). Further, the offering next to the gazelle is the head of a calf. In short, the function of the gazelle on the offering table is the same seen in

the offering scenes, lists and offering table scenes, serving as sustenance for the deceased.

5.4 The gazelle as offering - concluding remarks

The gazelle appears in a large variety of compositions as an offering: in the offering rows, lists and tables. The majority of the examples originate from private rather than royal sources. The offering scenes display great variation in the depictions of this animal, particularly during the Old Kingdom. An equivalent diversity in detail is not seen in later periods. Even though the offering lists, offering table scenes and actual offering tables are far more restricted in their portrayal of the gazelle, some comparable features can be noted.

The gazelle in the offering scenes is carried in different ways, emphasizing its small size. This composition often occurs parallel with the domesticated calf, indicating that the gazelle, when carried, is also treated as a young animal. The number of examples of carrying the gazelle either on the shoulders or next to chest dating to the Middle and New Kingdoms decreases radically, but the compositions as such remained stable.

The second category of offering images is comprised of bringing forth the gazelle, either on leash, guiding forth by horns or pushing, or with the gazelle striding independently. The gazelle is the only animal shown nursing its fawn in this context. Some of the compositions are similar to that of a cow and her calf, again indicating a correlation between the cow and the gazelle, possibly in a “domesticated – wild” pairing, as well in an emphasis on the relationship between mother and young. The nursing motif in the offering context is only found during the Old Kingdom.

The young gazelle is also found in the so-called basket motif. The gazelle is the most common animal found in this motif, although it is not exclusive for the gazelle. Further, based on some of the examples, the “ideal” number of gazelles depicted in the baskets is two. This is yet another example of gazelle pairs, similar to compositions in other contexts (cf. Chapters 6 and 7 below).

The offering list on tomb walls is primarily used during the Old Kingdom. The gazelle occurs as a detail in these lists, still they add correlating information concerning its role as offering. The word *mn* is occasionally included, reflecting the characterisation found in the offering rows. The gazelle is grouped either with other wild animals or together with cattle and poultry; another detail similar to the offering registers.

Depictions of the gazelle on offering tables are rare. However, when present the animal is easily identified by its distinctive horns. The same can be said for the gazelle on actual offering tables, where the horns indicate the intended species.

The greatest variation of the gazelle in the offering context is thus observable from the material dating to the Old Kingdom. The development toward fewer examples of the gazelle as offerings (in all categories) began during the Middle Kingdom and continued during the New Kingdom as well (cf. Vandier 1964: 136). The depictions of offering scenes in the private tombs of Middle Kingdom and of the 18th dynasty are generally replaced with those focusing on various funerary rituals (cf. 5.2 above). The more mundane offering goods are superseded by the products of high status industries that produced desirable funerary equipment.

When the gazelle is found in the offering context, the compositions are the same as those seen during the Old Kingdom, even though the tomb itself may be several centuries younger. The offering of the gazelle is a standardized element of one of the most important rituals of ancient Egyptian civilization; the funerary meal (Vandier 1964: 81). This ritual connected the deceased to living relatives, with both receiving sustenance from the flesh of the gazelle, albeit on a symbolical level.

6 The Gazelle Motif on Objects

In the discussion of the early depictions of the gazelle (Chapter 3), a number of objects that bear its image are cited: ceramics knife handles, combs, palettes and the disc from the tomb of Hemaka (3.2-3.5, 3.7). These objects primarily illustrate the use of the hunting motif in a Pre- and Early dynastic context. This is followed up in Chapter 4 with the discussion of hunting scenes that include a number of objects from the tomb of Tutankhamun: bow case, chest, tunic and unguent jar (4.2.3/a), decorated with examples of the royal hunt. In the discussion below, additional categories of objects, exemplified with individual examples, from the Early Dynastic Period and after, are examined in relationship to the development of the iconic image of gazelle.

6.1 The gazelle wand

A pair of short hand-held staffs, each with a gazelle head, is found in the collection of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo. (6.1.1). Depictions of this object also occur as determinatives in the Pyramid Texts (6.1.2). Representations are also found in scenes from private tombs and temples (6.1.3-4).

More properly termed a “wand”, it is, like the sceptre, symbolic in character (Graham 2001: 165-166) and differs from sceptres in its association with women rather than with men and gods (Graham 2001: 165-166, cf. Kaplony 1986: 1373-1374). Although only rare examples of these objects have survived (e.g. Hayes 1953: 284-287), a pair of gazelle headed wands (see 6.1.1) as well as a *w3s* sceptre, with the head of a ‘canine’,⁹⁹ can be traced to the 1st dynasty through archaeological finds in Giza and Abydos (Petrie 1903: Pl. II, 11, cf. also Wilkinson 1999: 189-190). The only other example of a sceptre with an animal motif is the *w3r*-sceptre, with the head of another canine, the jackal.

The use of animal forms on sceptres/wands is limited to these examples, as otherwise floral motifs, such as the papyrus, is favoured (cf. Kaplony 1986: 1376, Andrews 1994: 82). It is interesting to note the

⁹⁹ The identity or classification of the animal located on top of the *w3s*-staff remains uncertain; the suggestions vary from dog, to jackal to the Seth animal (Kaplony 1986: 1374, Wilkinson 1992: 181) and to even the gazelle (Graham 2001:166). The other zoomorphic ‘staff’ would be the jackal headed hieroglyph *w3r* (Gardiner Sign List F 12), which is used e.g. in the names of the 5th dynasty kings Userkaf and Niuserre.

juxtaposition of the gazelle and the canine as wand/sceptre symbols in a period when the “dog attacking gazelle” motif is a prevalent theme.

6.1.1 A pair of gazelle wands, Giza, 1st dynasty

(Cairo, CG 69246 / JE 38972; Petrie 1907: Pl. IV; Hickmann 1949: Pl. XI, B; cf. PM III/1: 312)

A pair of gazelle headed wands of ivory (c. 15 cm in length, including head and handle) was discovered in tomb no. 23 during an excavation in the southeast section of the Giza cemetery (Kafr al-Batrân). This tomb is associated with a mastaba dated to the 1st dynasty (Petrie 1907: 4-6, cf. also Hickmann 1949: 22). The wands are in two pieces, head and “handle”, assembled together. This pair is the only known example of the gazelle headed wand, and only one of these appears to be preserved in Cairo today.

Petrie (1907: 4-6) reported the name of the owner of the mastaba to be “Zet”, and there is nothing in the archaeological record for the adjacent tomb 23 that provides information about their use. The inclusion of these objects in the catalogue of “Instruments de musique” (Hickman 1949) apparently reflects a deduction made from the various representations where they are seen used in a way similar to clappers, that also occur in ivory and in pairs, and to sistra.

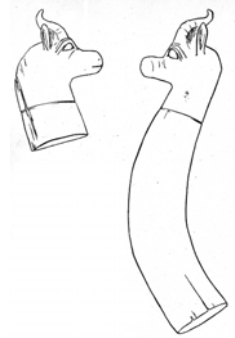


Figure 63.
Gazelle wands, Giza

6.1.2 The Pyramid Texts and the gazelle wand, 6th dyn.

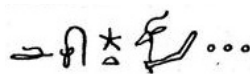
The image of the gazelle wand is found in the Pyramid Texts, where it occurs as the determinative for the word *dw3t* (or *dw3wt*) in two of the three versions of Utterance 504. The spell concerns the purification of the king and begins with reference to the birth of the feminine dawn (*dw3t*). This birth empowers the king who “raises himself”. The spell continues with reference to purification in two groups of lakes.

The Pyramid Texts provide a number of examples where the Lake of the Jackals (§ *s3b*) is paired with the Lake of the Netherworld (§ *d3t*), with a clear reading of *d3t* or *d3ti*, most often with the town (⊗) determinative. The context in which these two lakes occur is however the same as that in Utterance 504. In Utterance 268 (§372b-c, W, N) Horus bathes (§[w]b) the

king in the Lake of the Jackals and purifies (*sfhw*) the king's ka in the Lake of the Netherworld. In Utterance 512 (§1164b, P, N) the deceased king is called upon to bathe (*w^cb*) in the Jackal Lake and be “deified” (*snfr*) in the Lake of the Netherworld. Utterance 697 (§2170a, N), similarly refers to bathing (*w^cb*) and purification (*sfh*) in the two lakes. In these examples the reference is to two different lakes rather than two groups of lakes. There are also two other references to the Lakes (plural) of the Netherworld, without mentioning that of the jackal. In Utterance 568 (§1432b, P), the Bull of the Sky desires to pass (*sw3*) over to the Lake of the Netherworld and in Utterance 577 (§1530a, P), the king becomes a duck of the marsh (*3pd w3d*), and the Lord of the Lakes of the Netherworld descends to him so that the king can bathe (*w^cb*) in the Goose Lakes (*šw smn*).

Although passage §1083a-b reads so that Lakes of the *dw3wt* have a parallel role to that of the Lake of the Netherworld, the spelling *dw3t* with the gazelle wand determinative and plural dots indicates that it differs from the other references. The verb *dw3*

has the meaning “to worship” (e.g. Faulkner 1962: 310, *Wb* V: 426-428), and *dw3t* therefore can mean “she who worships”, encouraging Faulkner (1969: 180) to translate “Lakes of the Worshipping Women”, this reading is reinforced by the image of a woman holding the gazelle wand. In the earlier lines of the utterance (§1082b), there



Pepi I



Merenre



Pepi II

is reference to the dawn (*dw3t*) as the daughter of Nut, the night sky (cf. discussion in Goebis 2008: 9-10). This offers the possibility of connecting the dawn and the Lake of the Netherworld by writing *dw3t* instead of *d3t*. That the gazelle wand was thought appropriate here suggests that it was associated with allusions to, and possibly rituals for, the dawn and the rising sun. The connection between the *dw3t* lakes, connected to gazelle imagery and the Jackal Lakes, is also worth noting, as another example where the gazelle and a canine are combined.

6.1.3 Dancing with gazelle wands

a. Tomb of Inti, Deshasheh, middle of the 6th dynasty or later¹⁰⁰
(PM IV: 121 (2)-(3), Petrie 1898: Pl. XII)

In the tomb of Inti at Deshasheh the gazelle wands appear in a scene where female dancers hold them in their hands. One can separate these dancers into two groups based on their position and the number of wands. The group to the left consists of four women, each holding a single gazelle wand in their hands. There are five women¹⁰¹ in the second group, with a wand in each hand.



Figure 64. Gazelle wands in the tomb of Inti

The dancing women with the gazelle wands appear among other dancers (on the row above), with a harp player found on the register beneath, suggesting that this is a banquet scene. The lower register has a slaughtering scene. These activities are all played out in front of the tomb owner and his wife and daughter. This composition and combination of motifs are unusual for Old Kingdom private tombs (Harpur 1987: 117).

6.1.4 The gazelle wands and the royal women at the Heb Sed

a. Kheruef, TT 192, 'Asâsif, 18th dyn., Amenhotep III-IV (c. 1390-1336 B.C.)
(Court, west wall, PM I/1: 298 (5); Epigraphic Survey 1980: Pls 44, 45)

Traces of depictions of gazelle wands are found in the 18th dynasty tomb of Kheruef, among the many scenes in this tomb related to the Heb Sed celebration of Amenhotep III. Four women carry a gazelle wand in one hand and a menat necklace in the other. They are grouped in pairs, side by side. There may have been additional women carrying wands, the walls however

¹⁰⁰ The dating of Inti's tomb has been debated (Kanawati and McFarlane 1993: 17).

¹⁰¹ From the 1993 publication of this tomb, it can be concluded that the group at the right end originally consisted of five women (Kanawati and McFarlane 1993: Pl. 29), while in the earlier publication of Petrie (1898: Pl. XII) the fifth person is lacking, probably due to the poor condition of the tomb wall at the time of documentation.

are too damaged to make out any more figures. These women, described as chantresses (*šmꜣt*),¹⁰² wear platform crowns, surmounted by feathers or some kind of floral motif. The inscription *hnwt nfrt* “beautiful girl(s)” is found above the group. They are part of the scene depicting the “towing of the night bark” (Wente 1980: 51), an aspect of the Heb Sed represented with several episodes on the same wall. Thus these women were among the participants in the Heb Sed (Wente 1969: 84).¹⁰³

b. Temple of El-Kab, 19th dyn., Ramses II (c. 1279-1213 B.C.)
(PM V: 175, Wilkinson 1971: 117, Fig. 51)

Two daughters of Ramses II, Merytamun III and Bananit I (Troy 1986: 170) are depicted holding gazelle wands on a block from his temple at El-Kab. In their other hand they hold a sistrum, decorated with a Hathor head. They also wear platform crowns with a gazelle protome (cf. below 6.2).

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request of the publisher*

Figure 65. Princesses at el-Kab

The Iwn-mutef officiant, a role usually assumed by the crown prince (Spieser 2000: 131-133) is also present. In another relief on the west wall of the temple, Ramses II runs with the *hꜣp*-bull, a ritual that is also part of the Heb Sed (Martin 1984: 786).

c. Temple of Bubastis, 22nd dynasty, Osorkon II (c. 874-850 B.C.)
(PM IV: 29, Naville 1892: Pls XIV, XXV)

Several female musicians hold a gazelle wand in one hand and a sistrum in the other on the Heb Sed portal of Osorkon II from Bubastis. Three joined blocks are carved with the images of these women (cf. Barta 1978: Pl. I). A woman holding up a sistrum is included in the group. The actions of these women are described with the word *rwt* ‘dance’ or ‘clap hands’ (Faulkner

102 Cf. this with the Inti depiction where the women with this wand are dancers, rather than “chantresses” (Wente 1980: 52). Dancers are located in another section on the Kheruef tomb wall (Epigraphic Survey 1980: Pls 34, 36, 38, 40).

103 A similar feathered headdress is worn by several women depicted as participants in the same Heb Sed celebration at Soleb (PM VII: 170 (7), Schiff Giorgini 1998: Pl. 119). They do not however carry gazelle headed wands, but rather sheaves or bouquets.

1962: 174). They are also called *šmꜣyt* ‘chantress’ (Naville 1892: Pl. XXV). On one of the blocks a woman kneels holding a gazelle wand. (Naville 1892: Pl. I). Their headdresses have a floral design reminiscent of that seen in the tomb of Kheruef (cf. also Soleb, Schiff Giorgini 1998: Pl. 119).

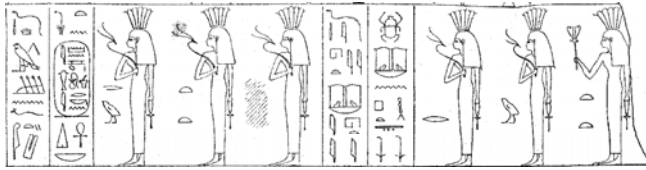


Figure 66. Gazelle wands at Bubastis

This is yet another example of women with gazelle wands participating in the Heb Sed, a celebration related to the renewal of the reign of the king. (Barta 1978: 29, Pl. I; Wente 1969: 84, Martin 1984: 782). It should be noted, that this scene is generally thought to be a copy of an earlier version of the Heb Sed representation (cf. e.g. Barta 1978: 25-26, Galán 2000: 255).

6.1.5 The gazelle wand – concluding remarks

The documentation of the gazelle wand, although sparse, stretches from the 1st through to the 22nd dynasty, covering a period of over 2000 years. In this material some recurring elements can be noted. The earliest reference to the wand tends to point to more general regenerative connotations. In the PT the “Lake of the Worshipping Women” is a place of purification, with an explicit word play on the word *dwꜣt* “dawn”, as well as an oblique comparison to the Netherworld. The scene from the tomb of Inti shows the wand used in a dance, performed in a funerary context. The idea of regeneration is confirmed in the context of the Heb Sed where the wand is documented during the New Kingdom and then during the 22nd dynasty.

The wand itself seems to have been used in ritual dance and is found together with the sistrum decorated with a Hathor head. In general, the context in which the wand is found, suggests that it belongs to a ritual environment, such as the Heb Sed, in which Hathor, as a generative force, is well attested (cf. Wente 1969: 89).

6.2 Gazelle protomes

Diadems fitted with gazelle heads as protomes, like the gazelle wands, represent a very specific use of the gazelle as “symbol”. Some of the

examples where a double gazelle protome is depicted show it combined with a modium crown, often decorated with various floral details. This kind of crown is sometimes referred to as a “papyrus crown” (Troy 1986: 121), which may further be understood as a reference to Khemmis (Goebs 2001: 325). The few but consistent representations of the gazelle protome show it with a pair of gazelles, although two dimensional depictions are not always distinct with regard to this feature. The diadem featuring a double gazelle protome does however support the notion of a preference for showing the gazelle as a duality.

The combination of a double gazelle protome on a modium crown appears to have been worn exclusively by women, in contrast to goddesses who are not known to be depicted with crowns or diadems with a gazelle protome. The simple modium crown, as well as one with additional details, is frequently worn by a number of female deities though, perhaps most notably Hathor and Taweret (Cinnatti 1997: 130, 132, 138, cf. also Malaise 1976: 224-225 on the association of the Hathor crown and the solar eye). The women depicted wearing the gazelle protome have in general been interpreted as concubines (Wilkinson 1971: 116), although this reflects an out-dated understanding of the title *hkt nsw* “royal adornment” (cf. e.g. Drenkhahn 1976: 60, 66).

The double gazelle protome appears to be analogous to the double uraeus. The two uraei, a common attribute of the crown worn by queens (Troy 1986: 124, Ertman 1993: 44) can be found wearing the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. This expresses a relationship to the Two Ladies, Nekhbet, the vulture of the south and Wadjet, the cobra of the north (Goebs 2001: 322). The double uraeus appears to have been introduced during the 18th dynasty and is thus approximately contemporary with the known examples of the double gazelle protome.

The two dimensional representations of gazelle protomes are characterized by their association with noble, and sometimes royal, women. Dated mainly to reigns of Tuthmosis III – Amenhotep III, the time span for the documentation of this type of headdress is narrow, extending with one example from the 19th dynasty, with two daughters of Ramses II.

6.2.1 Diadem with gazelle protomes, Tomb of Three Princesses, Thebes, 18th dynasty, Tuthmosis III (c. 1479-1425 BC) (MMA 26.8.99, PM I/2: 592; Lilyquist 2003: 225, Fig. 155)

This diadem with two gazelle protomes was found in the tomb belonging to the three foreign wives of Tuthmosis III (Wady D1, Wadi Qirud, Lilyquist

2003: 155, 161-163). The diadem has a double gazelle protome, positioned at the centre of a headband. They are flanked by two rosettes, with additional rosettes found on the band that stretches over the crown of the head. These rosettes may be the floral component also found in the drawings of gazelle protomes. They are also of a similar design as those found on panels from the tunic of Tutankhamun (cf. above 4.2.3/a.4).

The craftsmanship and the design of the diadem are in conflict, according to Lilyquist (2003: 158), suggesting that a number of different craftsmen had a hand in its creation. The diadem shows signs of wear, indicating that it was not a funerary object per se. This is confirmed by the representations of these head dresses (Wilkinson 1971: 114, Lilyquist 2003: 155), worn by living women.



Figure 67.
Double gazelle protome

6.2.2 The Stag Diadem, 17th dyn. (?)

(MMA 68.1361, Aldred 1971: 204-205, Pl. 59)

Another diadem with gazelle protomes is found in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. It is reported to come from El-Salhiya in the eastern Delta which is situated “ten miles east of Qantir” (Fischer 1970: 70), with a suggested dating to the 17th dynasty or perhaps even late Middle Kingdom (Aldred 1971: 204-205, Fischer 1970: 70). This electrum diadem has a stag head centre protome, flanked by a gazelle protome on either side. Four rosettes are placed between the animal protomes. Based on the date and provenance of the diadem, an Asiatic origin has been suggested (Aldred 1971: 204), although it may equally have been of either Egyptian craftsmanship or even Egyptian design.

6.2.3 Tomb of Menna, TT 69, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, 18th dyn., Tuthmosis IV-Amenhotep III (Hall, east wall, PM I/1:134 (2); Davies and Gardiner 1936: Pl. LIII)

The daughters of Menna, titled ‘royal ornament’ (*hkr̥t nsw*) are depicted wearing diadems with a gazelle at the brow, in their father’s tomb. The design of the two headdresses differ slightly from each other, with that to the left being more elaborate, consisting of a platform, surmounted by a floral design, the so-called papyrus crown. The gazelle protome on her forehead

appears to be connected to the petal fillet. An additional element is the miniature double “feathers” (*šwty*) extending from the diadem. Two lotus buds hang over the forehead as well. This woman holds a sistrum, with the head of Hathor in one hand and a menat in the other. The woman to the right is shorter and her headdress is also smaller, and lacks the floral elements. The double feathers are also somewhat shorter. She too holds a sistrum like her sister’s, but no menat. Also like her sister, two lotus buds decorate her brow. In both cases, only one gazelle is visible, it is however, given other evidence, likely that the other gazelle is “hidden from sight”.



Figure 68.
Daughter of Menna

6.2.4 Tomb of Pairy, TT 139, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, 18th dyn., Amenhotep III (PM I/1:253 (1), Lilyquist 2003: 157, Fig. 93b)

One of Pairy’s daughters wears a similar diadem to that of the smaller daughter in Menna’s tomb. The composition of the headdress included a petal fillet, a modium, the double feathers and a gazelle protome. She is probably holding a sistrum in one hand, while the other is empty. It is impossible to determine whether the sistrum is decorated with a Hathor head. Only faint traces of the name Hathor identify the girl (Lilyquist 2003: 157, Fig 93b). PM (I/1: 253 (1)), refers to her as a *hkr̥t nsw* or “royal ornament”. The girl is situated between two taller figures, a man in front of her and a woman, behind, described as family members. The larger sized woman is followed by two men, also shorter. This size differentiation may reflect age and rank.

The daughter of Pairy represents the only (known¹⁰⁴) example featuring a single person with gazelle protome. The other two-dimensional

104 It is possible that the royal daughter (*šst nsw*) Amenipet (daughter of Tuthmosis IV, Troy 1986: 165, 18.31) sitting in the lap of Horemheb (TT 78, PM I/1: 153 (6); Wreszinski 1923: Pl. 251) also wears a ‘single’ gazelle headed crown; unfortunately the section where the protome would have been is destroyed. The design of her headdress can otherwise be compared to that found on the girl to the left in the Menna representation, with a modium with floral stalks, fillet and double feathers (cf. Wilkinson 1971: 116). This Horemheb is contemporary with Tuthmosis III – Amenhotep III (PM I/1: 152), and therefore approximately contemporary with Menna. The daughter of Nebamun (TT 90, PM I/1: 184 (6)), the *hkr̥t nsw*

portrayals of such crowns are found in compositions that include two women or, as in the case of Satamun, a mirror image that creates a dual image.

6.2.5 Chair of Satamun, KV46, 18th dyn., Amenhotep III (CG 51113, PM I/2: 563; Quibell 1908: Pl. XL)

Satamun, the oldest royal daughter¹⁰⁵ (*s3t=f wrt*) of Amenhotep III, wears a papyrus modium crown and a fillet with the gazelle protome in a representation found on the surface of the back support of a chair from the



Figure 69. The chair of Satamun

tomb of her grandparents Yuya and Thuya. She also wears a side lock and holds a Hathor headed arched sistrum and a menat necklace in either hand; attributes which would correspond to the woman on the left side on the Menna tomb wall discussed above. This scene represents the only seated example of a woman with gazelle protome, the chair depicted possibly reflecting the object on which the representation is found.

The two mirror images consist further of the motif of offering “gold from the southern foreign lands” (*nbw n ḥ3swt rsyw(t)*) to the seated Satamun. The woman offering the gold wears a similar headdress, consisting of modium and fillet, without however floral details or protomes.

Segerttaui may also have had a gazelle protome on her papyrus crown, however here too the area where the protome would have been is destroyed (Davies 1923: Pl. XXI).

105 Satamun II was one of the five daughters of Amenhotep III and Teye (cf. Troy 1986: 166, 18.35-18.39). Yuya and Thuya were Satamun’s maternal grandparents.

6.2.6 Temple of El-Kab, 19th dyn., Ramses II

(PM V: 175, Wilkinson 1971: 117, Fig. 51)

In the temple of Ramses II at El-Kab, the two women carrying gazelle wands are also found wearing gazelle protomes (cf. above 6.1.4/b, Fig. 65). This is a simple headdress, consisting of a modium (Wilkinson 1971: 117, Fig. 51) with the gazelle protome attached possibly to a fillet or circlet. They also have side locks, despite being labelled *hmt nsw*, “wife of the king” (cf. 6.2.1 above that belonged to a royal wife). Both women hold a Hathor headed arched sistrum, together with a gazelle wand.

6.2.7 The gazelle protome – concluding remarks

The number of modium crowns adorned with a (double) gazelle protome is limited, yet the consistency in design indicates traditional use and connotations. Such headdresses appear to have been reserved for women of “subordinate ranking in the harem” (Troy 1986: 130). The ‘lower’ status may also have been a reflection of a young age, as some of the depictions of women shown wearing a crown with gazelle protomes occur in the daughter role. In contrast, there is no support for the idea that the gazelle protomes are worn by so-called “concubines”. Only the daughters of Menna and Païry hold the court title *hkr̥t nsw* (‘royal ornament’). Drenkhahn (1976: 64) has pointed out that most of the women with this title are also priestesses of Hathor, making the occurrence of the sistrum and menat appropriate.

Even though the majority of the examples come from funerary contexts, such as on tomb walls (Menna, Païry) or objects retrieved from tombs (chair of Satamun and Wadi Qirud diadem), the context of the depiction and the evidence of the Three Princesses’s diadem indicates that this headdress was worn in life.

6.3 The Horus cippi¹⁰⁶

The male deity featured on the so-called Horus cippi can be depicted with a single gazelle protome at his brow. This god is identified as the young Horus, or, in a variation as Shed or Horus-Shed (cf. Kákósy 1977: 61, Brunner 1984: 548). An additional example of the single gazelle as protome is found at the brow of the ‘foreign’ god Reshep (*rs̥pw*), who is also featured on votive stelae but not on those classified as cippi. These deities are characterized by their magical protective skills (cf. Simpson 1984: 243, Kákósy 1977: 60-61).

106 Cf. Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999a-b for a thorough study of the Horus cippi.

The god on the cippi stands on two crocodiles, holding snakes, scorpions, lions and antelopes. In some examples of this image, this deity wears a gazelle protome on his brow (Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999a: 27-36, cf. Bruyère 1952: 142-143, Figs 18-20). The composition reflects the protective role of the god and of the cippi (Leca 1971: 73). Drinking the water that had been poured over a cippus was said to heal anyone stung or bitten by dangerous desert animals. The idea of power over the animals of the desert is conveyed in the iconography that includes crocodiles, snakes, scorpions, lions and antelopes. The term antelope is used here as oryx, ibex and gazelle can all occur, with the oryx being perhaps most common (cf. Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999a: 8, Fig. 1).

The god, often depicted with a side lock, is either shown en face or in profile. The head of Bes is generally found above the scene (Kákosy 1977: 60). Some cippi feature additional motifs, such as the solar bark or Isis nursing Horus in the marshes, while others have simpler versions of the Horus image (cf. Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999b). A magical formula against dangerous desert animals is commonly written on the verso of the cippus (cf. Bruyère 1952: 143, Fig. 20, top). A long mythological version of this text is found on the most well known example of the object known as the Metternich Stela (MMA 1950.50.85, Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999b: 72). In this depiction however the god wears the uraeus rather than a gazelle protome. In many cases, it is impossible to determine whether the protome is a uraeus or gazelle because of wear or damage. Among the preserved examples, however, there seems to be an approximate 50/50 division between the two (cf. Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999b: 117-201, Pls I-LXb).

Horus stelae have been found in domestic houses as well as in tombs, confirming that these objects have a non-funerary use (Kákosy 1977: 61, Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999a: 4), and this may explain the worn condition that is characteristic for the cippi.

The desert motif is also found in relation to the male god Reshep who has been connected to several different western Semitic, Mesopotamian and Greek deities. Reshep is called the god of warfare because of his attributes, consisting of maces, spears, axes and shields (Simpson 1984: 244-245). Most of the representations of Reshep include a tall conical crown, reminiscent of the white crown of Upper Egypt. Reshep is often adorned with a gazelle protome on the brow (Schulman 1979: 69, 71). This has been interpreted as reflecting "his nature as a god from the desert" (Simpson 1984: 245, cf. Leibovitch 1939: 157). The gazelle protome can be replaced by a uraeus or his crown can lack both. A good example of Reshep featuring a gazelle protome is found on a stela in the collection of the Egyptian Museum of

Turin (Tosi 1988: 169, Fig. 231; inv. Cat. 1601 = CGT 50066; Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999a: Fig. 20).

6.3.1 An early Shed Stela, 19th dynasty, Ramses II

(DeM 118/JE 72024, PM I/2: 697; Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999b: 97, Bruyère 1952: 142, Fig. 18)

One of the earliest examples of a cippus shows the deity (Horus-)Shed standing on two crocodiles (?) holding snakes, scorpions, a lion and a bow in his hands. This was found in a temple dedicated to Ramses II in Deir el-Medina and is dated to the 19th dynasty and the reign of Ramses II (Bruyère 1952: 141). The decorated surface is divided into two sections, with the Shed scene located on the upper half. The lower part is dedicated to the royal scribe Ramose who donated the stela to the temple. He is depicted kneeling, his arms raised in adoration.

The protome on the brow of Shed is, according to Bruyère, “une tête de gazelle” (1952: 141); while Sternberg-El Hotabi (1999a: 28, n. 55) expresses her doubts; saying that it is “nicht klar”. The motif of two gazelles nibbling on a branch (‘palmette’), located in front of the feet of the deity, is an unusual feature, marking however a connection to the corpus of gazelle motifs (cf. below 6.4). The inscription is laconic but nonetheless enlightening. Shed is described as coming from the desert lands (*ḥꜣꜣꜣwt*) with the healthy udjat eye (*wꜥꜥꜣt snb*) in order to protect the shrines (in this case, those of the temple of Ramses II where the stela was found, cf. Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999a: 29, n. 57).

6.3.2 A Horus Cippus, Saite Period?¹⁰⁷

(Pushkin I.1.a.4467, Hodjash and Berlev 1982: 249-251, cat. no. 182)

On one of the magical stelae in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow we can observe the young Horus wearing the side lock of youth (Janssen and Janssen 1990: 40), with a gazelle protome on his forehead. That he is naked provides another reference to his status as a child (Janssen and Janssen 1990: 26, 37). He stands on two intertwined crocodiles and holds snakes, scorpions, a lion and an oryx (?) in his hands. This combination of animals is apparently iconic for “desert”. A so-called Nefertum standard is in front of him and behind him is a standard with a falcon crowned with double ‘plumes’. The

107 The Pushkin catalogue does not provide a date for this cippus. Sternberg-El Hotabi classifies it as a “Stelentypus I a” (1999a: 94-95) and further notes that “Das Kind trägt in der Saitenzeit in der Regel den Gazellenkopf an der Stirn...” (1999a: 94).

falcon in this scene more commonly perches on a flower (Kákósy 1977: 60, cf. e.g. Hodjash and Berlev 1982: cat. no. 192, I.1.a.4491 or Sternberg-El Hotabi 1999a: 18, “Horus who is on his papyrus” *hrw hrj w3dt=f*). Above the image of the god is the head of Bes. These elements are all common for the cippus (cf. Kákósy 1977: 60). A row of striding deities along the lower edge of the stela, is divided by two udjat eyes. A lengthy magical spell is found on the verso of this stela (Hodjash and Berlev 1982: 250-251).



Figure 70.
A Saite Horus cippus

6.3.3 A Horus-Shed Relief, Temple of Montu, Karnak, (Enclosure wall) (PM II: 15 (55), Sauneron 1953: 54 for figure)

An incised relief from the Late Period is a good example of the iconography of Horus-Shed. It is found on the enclosure wall of the Montu temple at Karnak (Sauneron 1953: 53-55). The young deity is shown standing on (two) crocodiles, holding two serpents in either hand. He appears to have been naked except for the broad collar on his chest and the gazelle protome on the forehead. A *sh*-booth serves as a frame for this motif, surmounted by the frontal face of Bes. The emblem of Nefertum is found before Horus-Shed, inside the booth; a lotus flower has been added to the top of a standard. Double plumes or feathers emerge from the flower. Behind Horus-Shed traces of another lotus (or papyrus?) standard with a falcon perched on top of

it can be discerned. This standard is also located inside the booth. The falcon wears double plumes. These components correspond largely to the Horus cippus described above and the cippi in general. This relief motif represents an elaborate fusion between the young Horus and Shed (cf. Bruyère 1952: 142-143, Figs 18-20).

The inscription on the enclosure wall of the Montu temple is fragmentary yet some information can be gleaned from it. Above Horus-Shed it reads *ḥr šd nṯr ʿ3 s3 wsir ms ʿst nṯr*, ‘Horus-Shed, the great god, son of Osiris, born of Isis, the divine’ (Sauneron 1953: 55). A lengthier sentence is inscribed outside the booth, to the left. Even more fragmentary, it is difficult to read beyond the reference to Geb and Nut as father and mother.

6.3.4 The Horus Cippi – concluding remarks

The representations of Horus and Horus-Shed with gazelle protome are of young deities, often wearing a side lock and commonly shown nude. This status may be analogous to that of some of the female wearers of the gazelle protome that are predominantly associated with the status of daughter, or (minor) wife. The gazelle protomes in this case however appear to be single, rather than double, just as the alternative single uraeus, is common in connection with the diadem or crown of the king.

The main contextual reference for this deity is that of one who protects from the dangers of the desert, primarily the bite and sting of snakes and scorpions. In this respect the “antelope”, including the gazelle, represents the desert environment to be controlled. The protome however appears to refer to agents of protection as well as danger, as is suggested by the occurrence of the uraeus in the same position. The connection gazelle-uraeus-udjat eye is found in the short reference to the healthy eye, and is mostly likely emblematic of the young god’s healing powers.

6.4 The palmette with antithetical gazelles on two chests

One common motif featuring the gazelle is that of antithetical gazelles eating from a palmette, a stylized tree (Kepinski 1982: 7), elaborated with floral petals, buds and stalks. This image appears mainly on furniture and household objects. Most of these gazelles-and-palmette examples date to the New Kingdom (Spalinger 1982: 117). The palmette motif has previously been seen as of western Asian origin (cf. Montet 1937: 143-146), but as pointed out by Spalinger (1982: 117) “...the reverse is equally possible: the appearance of this motif in Syrian art is due to Egyptian influence.” A similar conclusion is reached by Kepinski (1982 I: 116), who studied the different

palmette compositions found in e.g. Cyprus, Egypt and Iraq, compiled into three volumes (*L'arabe stylisé en Asie Occidentale I-III*, 1982). Volumes I and II present a meticulous study on the composition of the palmette, while Volume III is a catalogue with illustrations. It is worth noting that Kepinski's catalogue of the Egyptian palmettes does not include all known examples (e.g. excluded are the wooden cosmetic spoon, CG 44911/JE 33211, Wallert 1967: Pl. 20 and the funerary chariot panel, CG 51188, Quibell 1908: Pl. LIII). Although the frequent use of the palmette in western Asia makes an origin there plausible; it would appear that this motif has a further development in ancient Egypt, with a different style and expression, including such elements as grazing gazelles. The grazing gazelle motif can be traced back to the Old Kingdom, where a single gazelle is found nibbling on a bush (e.g. mastaba of Pehenuka, Harpur 1987: Fig. 188; temple wall of Niuserre, von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI a). Similarly, antithetical gazelles are a feature found in earlier times, as in the 11th dyn. tomb of Ip (above 4.3.2/d).

There are several examples where a palmette is used as a separating element between two animals that eat from it (cf. Kepinski 1982 III: Nos 903-918). It can also appear as an independent image without flanking animals (e.g. Bubastis silver jar CG 53262/JE 39867, Edgar 1925: Pl. I, Fig 1). The most common species associated with the palmette are the goat and the gazelle. While the goat is generally found nibbling on a tree¹⁰⁸ on tomb walls (e.g. TT 217, Ipuy, Wreszinski 1923: Pl. 366; Ka-hep, Kanawati 1980: Fig. 15; Akhet-hetep-her, Wreszinski 1923: Pl. 108), the motif of the gazelles grazing on a palmette is more common on objects.

Examples of this motif are found on a range of objects, with just a selection cited here: "bronze" jar stand (Chicago Field Museum of Natural History no. 30177 b, EGA 1982: 120, Fig. 106), wooden cosmetic spoon (CG 44911/JE 33211, Wallert 1967: Pl. 20), funerary chariot panel (CG 51188, Quibell 1908: Pl. LIII), game board (CG 68005, Pusch 1979: Pl. 45 (the animal could be an ibex)), and the image of a basket on the tomb wall of Ramses III (KV 11, PM I/2: 521-522; Montet 1937: 108, Fig. 146). To this list of examples where a gazelle eats from a palmette should be added a cippus, discussed above (6.3.1). In addition to the great variety of objects with the gazelle and palmette motif, there is a diversity of materials and techniques, from a painted surface on the chests to carved wood panelling

108 A chest located in the tomb of Sennedjem (TT 1) belonging to his wife Inyeferti is an exception to this rule; painted on the lid we can observe a gazelle standing on its hind legs, leaping upon a tree. The background was spotted, as if to imitate desert land. The gazelle has its head turned back and a hieratic inscription reading "made for Inyeferti" is included at the bottom of the scene (JE 27271, PM I/1: 5; Capart 1947: Pl. 756).

and open work metal for the jar stand. In short, the gazelle and palmette motif is not limited to a specific category of objects, yet the repetition of the motif indicates its broad popularity.

6.4.1 Chests of Perpaouty, Thebes, 18th dyn., Amenhotep III

Two painted wooden chests belonging to a man called Perpaouty (*pr p3 wt*, with varied spelling, Killen 1994: 38) are decorated with two antithetical gazelles nibbling on a palmette. The chests are located in different museums: Museo Civico Archeologico in Bologna and Durham University Oriental Museum. The grazing gazelles are on the short ends of both chests. The gazelle and palmette motif is augmented with the addition of suckling young as well. While the motif was the same on both boxes, the style differs slightly, suggesting two artists.

The chests were most likely used to store cosmetic jars, linen and clothing (cf. the boxes of Kha, TT 8, PM I/1: 17; Killen 1994: 44). This would have been its function in a funerary context as well and this kind of box is often depicted as part of the procession of funerary gifts (Kozloff 1992: 287). These, as well as other, chests are often decorated in accordance to their funerary function. The lids of the two chests, for example, are painted with the same pattern as a typical tomb ceiling, and the long sides of the chests are decorated with ‘traditional’ offering scenes with the deceased seated in front of an offering table (Kozloff 1992: 286, Killen 1994: 50). The inclusion of the motif of nursing gazelles, grazing on a palmette, found on both chests, indicates that it was a deliberate choice of a possibly popular funerary theme.

Discussion of these chests and their decoration has referred to the possible foreign origin of their owner Perpauoty. Although his Theban tomb is lost today, he apparently lived during the reign of Amenhotep III (Bologna 1994: 71). With his and some of this family’s unusual names, Kozloff (1992: 286) concluded that “the gentleman and his family were foreigners” and that the motif found on the chests could likewise be of foreign origin. This conclusion, as noted above, is far from certain.

a. The Durham Chest

(PM I/2: 838¹⁰⁹, Durham no. N. 1460; Kozloff and Bryan 1992: Pl. 33)

The details of the motif on the two short ends of the chest in Durham differ slightly from each other. One end displays nursing gazelles, standing on their

109 The name of Perpaouty is read in PM I/2: 838 as *pr p3 rꜥ*. Only the chest in Durham is cited, with the Bologna chest being omitted.

hind legs and nibbling on a flower sprouting from the palmette. The fawns are given short stubs, indicating growing horns. Palms hanging upside-down from the upper corners are unusual, possibly inspired by Middle Assyrian iconography (Kozloff 1992: 286). The other short end is similar, but without the nursing element. This time the gazelles are most likely fawns with short straight horns, possibly alluding to the young ones on the other side of the chest, only slightly older. A curious detail is the rather prominent udder on their bellies, despite their young age. The end panel, lacking nursing gazelles, coincides with the other New Kingdom examples of this particular motif (e.g. Kepinski 1982 III: cat. Nos 931, 936, 941, 942, 1032; also single gazelle, cat. Nos 926, 928).

b. The Bologna Chest

(Bologna, KS 1970; Bologna 1994: 71)

It has been suggested that the chest in Bologna was painted earlier than that in Durham as the gazelles were “drawn with straighter lines than the curvaceous outlines of the Durham gazelles” (Kozloff 1992: 287). The motif is still the same, nursing gazelles, standing on their hind legs, eating from the palmette. Some details differ however. The fawns, for example, lack indications of horns. They stand with their feet on the ground and the design of the palmette is slightly less elaborate than seen on the Durham chest. Furthermore, both short ends of the Bologna chest are decorated with the same motif of nursing gazelles separated by a palmette. These two chests are not the only ones attributed to Perpaouty, another plain chest has been suggested to come from this tomb (Killen 1994: 42).



Figure 71. The Perpaouty chest in Bologna

6.4.2 Antithetical gazelles and the palmette – concluding remarks

The motif of nursing gazelles eating from a palmette can only be found on the Perpaouty chests while the ‘basic’ motif of two gazelles nibbling on a palmette is widely distributed on other New Kingdom objects (Kepinski 1982

III: cat. Nos 931, 936, 941, 942, 1032; also single gazelle, cat. Nos 926, 928). The image on the short ends of the Perpaouty chests represents a fusion between two motifs that can be otherwise observed separately; the nursing gazelle, which can be traced back to Old Kingdom desert hunt and offering scenes (cf. Appendix III below) and the antithetical gazelles nibbling on a palmette, which can be observed on contemporary objects.

6.5 The nursing gazelle on faience bowls

Small shallow faience bowls, decorated with aquatic and floral motifs sketched in black or dark violet on both interior and exterior surfaces have been recognized as a specific “type” of vessel. Strauss interpreted their decoration as a picture of Nun, and coined the term “Nunschale” (1974: 70-82). Pinch (1993: 313) however uses the designation ‘marsh bowls’, a term she considers to be “more neutral”. They are mainly dated to the New Kingdom (Strauss 1974: 9, 65-66) and more specifically to the 18th dynasty (Pinch 1993: 311, Milward 1982: 141). The interior iconography varies from flowers, fish, ponds (‘water’), to Hathor heads, cows and girls playing the lute. The exterior focuses mostly on the floral motif (cf. Strauss 1974: 9).¹¹⁰ The motif of a nursing gazelle, as the only gazelle motif, although not among the most common on the bowls, is also found.

The exact use of the bowls is difficult to establish as most lack a recorded context (Strauss 1974: 65). The known provenances include temple areas (Pinch 1993: 308¹¹¹, 312), many of which are cult sites of Hathor. Faience bowls of this type have also been found in tombs, more specifically those in western Thebes (Strauss 1974: 65). The known find contexts point to an association with a ritual of some kind. Considering the dominant aquatic motif, they may have functioned as a container for libation water (cf. Pinch 1993: 313). Another possibility is as a drinking cup for wine, a suggestion yet again based on iconography, as the marsh motif may have referred to the Delta where the majority of the vineyards were located (Poo 1995: 11, 17-18).

The possibility that the bowls were used as a drinking cup for milk has also been suggested (Strauss 1974: 67, Pinch 1993: 314-315). This idea interested Bruyère (1937: 89), who tested the dried residue from some bowls and found that “...ce résidu provenait de l’évaporation et de la dessiccation

¹¹⁰ Strauss (1974) provides a good survey of the decorative range of this category of objects.

¹¹¹ Pinch (1993: 308, cf. also 311) states that most of the faience bowls come from a limited number of sites: “Deir el-Bahri, Faras, Serabit el-Khadim, and Timna”.

du lait”.¹¹² One source that supports the interpretation of these bowls as drinking cups is found on the early Middle Kingdom, Deir el-Bahari sarcophagus of Kawit (JE 47397), a wife of Mentuhotep II (Naville, Hall and Ayrton 1907: Pl. XX, Section “II”), where she is seen drinking from a small bowl similar in shape and size to the faience bowl. A male servant pours liquid from a small jug, said to be for her ka (*n k3=f hmw*). That Kawit drinks milk from the cup can be deduced from the adjacent scene in which a jug similar to that used by the servant is used to collect milk from a cow (Naville, Hall and Ayrton 1907: 55). If indeed the faience bowls were used to serve milk there is some sense to the presence of the nursing gazelle as decoration.

The examples of the nursing gazelle motif found on the bowls are similar, but not identical. At least four¹¹³ have been identified: the Maiherperi bowl (CG 24058/JE 33825, Daressy 1902: Pl. VI), two bowls in the collection of Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (E 1890.1137, Petrie 1891: Pl. XX, and E 1912.57, unpublished) and a fragment in the collection of the Petrie Museum (UC 30054). In each case a gazelle nursing her young in a floral-aquatic environment is found. The suggested term marsh bowl by Pinch would correlate with the iconographic elements in which this gazelle motif appears. Three of the bowls are stylistically similar. It is the Gurob bowl (Ashmolean E 1890.1137) that differs in style but is still similar in the composition of the image of the gazelle.

6.5.1 The bowl of Maiherperi, KV 36, mid-18th dynasty (CG 24058/JE 33825, PM I/2: 557; Daressy 1902: 24, Pl. VI)

The perhaps most well known of the bowls displaying the nursing gazelle motif would be that found in the tomb of Maiherperi. The interior of the faience cup is decorated with a gazelle nursing her fawn. The mother nibbles on a branch that extends from her mouth. The markings of the gazelle are represented with spots and stripes across the neck as well as a prominent eye ring. The gazelle appears to be standing near or in a pond, represented by lotuses and three tilapia fish. The bodies of the fish, like the gazelle, are decorated with spots, with the fins marked with stripes (cf. fragment in Munich, ÄS 5633, Strauss 1974: 63, Fig. 67; also UC 30054 and Ashmolean

¹¹² Bruyère appears to have cited personal experience when he says that the solution resulted in a “violente odeur” (1937: 89), yet no chemical analysis seems to have been undertaken (?).

¹¹³ A fragment located in the collection of Munich (ÄS 5633) shows an animal with a striped, elongated neck and a spotted body. Traces of a palm tree and lotus buds may be discerned as well (Strauss 1974: 62-63, Pl. 13, 2). Based on the other faience bowls featuring gazelles, it may be speculated that this fragment was originally a part of a nursing gazelle motif.

E 1912.57). One is represented “under” the gazelle, near a group of lotus buds, while two are drawn on either side of gazelle’s neck, apparently chewing on a strand of a pond plant (cf. Strauss 1974: 18 “durch einen gemeinsamen Stengel miteinander verbunden sind”). This gives the odd impression of the fish “hanging” on the neck of the gazelle. Leaves of ivy along the rim of the bowl complete the floral decoration.



Figure 72.

The Maiherperi bowl with nursing gazelle

The Maiherperi bowl is the only complete bowl of the four and the only with a tomb provenance. Maiherperi, titled “Child of the Nursery” and “Royal Fan-Bearer” was buried in the Valley of the Kings (KV 36) even though not of royal blood. His tomb, after being robbed, was resealed with many of the original grave gifts, including this bowl. It has been dated tentatively to the reign of Hatshepsut.

6.5.2 The Gurob bowl

(Ashmolean Mus. E 1890.1137, Petrie 1891: Pl. XX)



Figure 73. The Gurob bowl

A bowl fragment, dating to the 18th dynasty and found in the temple area of Medinet Gurob¹¹⁴ is also decorated with the nursing gazelle motif (Petrie 1891: 19). The primary components are the same as those found on the Maiherperi bowl: the nursing gazelle, the lotus buds and petals, and bush (rather than branch), from which

¹¹⁴ According to Petrie's publication, the bowl fragment was found at Medinet Gurob (1891), while the card in the files of the Ashmolean Museum states that it was a part of the “Riqqeh Corpus”.

the gazelle mother nibbles. Here however there is a firm ground line, similar to that found in tomb paintings. The more naturalistic depiction clearly identifies the animal as a gazelle with its characteristic horns. The body of the gazelle is not however decorated with spots and stripes, which otherwise reoccurs for this motif (cf. Strauss 1974: Figs 3-20). The nursing gazelle is also framed by two palmette-like plants. The remains of a large flower above the gazelle continue the floral theme.

6.5.3 The large Ashmolean Bowl

(Ashmolean Mus. E 1912.57, unpublished (?))

The second faience bowl, now in the Ashmolean Museum collection, featuring the motif of a nursing gazelle, was once rather large, although now represented by nine fragments that form only half of the bowl. The remaining section of the bowl preserves the nursing gazelle motif. Similar to the Maiherperi bowl, the gazelles, mother and child, are spotted, with the elongated neck striped. A branch extends to the mouth of the mother gazelle also as in the Maiherperi bowl. The surrounding motifs consist of lotus flowers, buds and a stylized palmette. The provenance for this bowl is cited on the exhibition card as “Serabit el-Khadim”, one of the cult centres of Hathor at Sinai (Pinch 1993: 50, 58).

6.5.4 The Petrie Museum fragment

(UC 30054: unpublished (?))



Figure 74. Bowl fragment in the Petrie Museum

A small fragment now in the collection of the Petrie Museum represents another version of the nursing gazelle seen on the Maiherperi and Gurob bowls. The gazelles are yet again decorated with spots and stripes. A branch reaches up to the mouth of the mother. The surrounding floral design is more similar to that on the Gurob bowl, with distinctive lilies. Further details are lacking on the fragment. The provenance for this fragment is not known, and an 18th dynasty date is suggested on the basis of the parallels.

6.5.5 The nursing gazelle on faience bowls – concluding remarks

The nursing gazelle is found as a reoccurring motif on the faience bowls known as “marsh bowls” or “Nunschale”. Two styles are found in the four examples cited above. The more stylized image with the gazelle decorated with spots and stripes, a branch found at the mother’s mouth, is represented by three examples. The provenance of two of these are known, with one coming from the Valley of the Kings’ tomb of Maiherperi and the other from the Sinai site of Serabit el-Khadim. The geographic distribution of the two examples suggests either a coincidental connection between the two finds, or that the motif was widely used. The other more naturalistic version of the nursing gazelle motif, found on the Gurob fragment, has elements in common with the first version, such as that of the mother eating while nursing. This is however a common addition to the depiction of the nursing gazelle (cf. e.g. the chests, above 6.4.1).

Perhaps the most striking aspect of this depiction is the connection made here between the gazelle and water in the scene itself. In both styles the gazelle is found near or “in” a pond of sorts. As seen in the discussion above, the gazelle is otherwise characterized as a “desert” animal. The connection to liquid is found on several levels here, with the bowl itself most likely a drinking vessel. The aquatic imagery strengthens this connection, and may provide the background for the inclusion of a nursing scene.

6.6 A gazelle-shaped vessel (tomb of Kenamun, TT 93) 18th dyn.

(West wall, PM I/1: 191 (9); Davies 1930: Pl. XX)

Animal-shaped vessels (“zoomorphic”) are found in various forms, with Middle and New Kingdom dates. In a scene from the tomb of Kenamun there is a depiction of a collection of New Year’s gifts. Among them are vessels in the forms of a recumbent oryx, ibex and gazelle. The gazelle and ibex-shaped vessels have lotus flowers extending¹¹⁵ from their mouths that most likely functioned as spouts (cf. Quaegebeur 1999: 33). This is confirmed by a vessel in the Louvre (E 12659) that has the form of a recumbent ibex. The animal’s mouth is the opening of the vessel. The Louvre vessel also has two fawns, one on either side of their mother’s neck (Gauthier 1908: Pl. III). It may have once contained “cosmetic substance” (Freed 1982b: 24), although the motif of mother and fawn favours a function as a milk jar (Paris 1981:

115 Although Davies (1930: Pl. XX), only shows the gazelle with the lotus coming out its mouth, LD III: Pl. 64a shows the flower in both the ibex’s and the gazelle’s mouth. The photograph in Wreszinski (1923: Pl. 306) shows that the area near the ibex’s mouth was damaged when copied by Davies.

227). Similar red-polished vessels shaped as a woman holding a child in her lap have been described as milk containers, used medicinally (Desroches-Noblecourt 1952: 49-67, Hayes 1959: 195, Freed 1982b: 61). Quaegebeur (1999: 33, 35) argues that the shape of the ibex horns is similar to the hieroglyph *ṛnp* “young” (Faulkner 1962: 150). Following this thread, it may be suggested that the gazelle-shaped vase on the Kenamun tomb wall is a milk jar, and that the rejuvenating properties of milk are associated with the beginning of a new year.

6.7 ‘Cosmetic’ Spoons¹¹⁶

Ivory spoons with zoomorphic handles have been found in graves from the Badarian Period (c. 4400-4000 B.C.) and these are described as “for eating with” (Brunton and Caton-Thompson 1928: 32, Pl. XXII). Similar objects of dynastic date have early on been treated as cosmetic utensils. The objects labelled ‘cosmetic spoons’ have handles and shallow containers, often round or oval in shape, hence the term ‘spoon’. Many of the objects understood as cosmetic spoons or dishes have been found in tombs “belonging to both men and women” (Freed 1982a: 207), while some have been found in temples. A few have been found in palace areas, such as Malqata or Amarna. Many of these cosmetic containers lack a specific archaeological context with the documentation only giving a place name such as Memphis or Thebes (Wallert 1967: 53).

There are much fewer examples of these spoons dated to the Old and Middle Kingdoms than to the New Kingdom when they are both numerous and elaborate. A few spoons of New Kingdom date feature the gazelle.

6.7.1 Typology

The style of the spoons varies greatly, as does the material of which they were made. This is particularly true of the New Kingdom examples. Cosmetic spoons of this period with gazelle motifs can be divided into three different types: the so-called swimming-girl spoons, the spoons with a handle and a flat container, and the trussed animal dishes.

The swimming-girl spoon refers to objects where the handle is shaped into an almost nude adolescent girl in an outstretched position, as if swimming (cf. Keimer 1954: Pls I-VI). The girl’s outstretched arms hold a container. This container can be in the shape of a duck or goose, an oval

116 A concise overview of the development and the classification of the cosmetic spoons can be found in Wallert (1967).

container (i.e. the “cartouche pond”) or, as in one example, a recumbent gazelle. These zoomorphic containers are often crafted with a sliding lid.

The second group of spoons is the most diversified. The spoons are often of wood, with the handles commonly carved in open work. The handles can be in the form of Bes figures, adolescent girls playing a musical instrument, intricate floral decoration or zoomorphic motifs (Frédéricq 1927, Wallert 1967, Freed 1982a, Kozloff 1992, Paris 1993). The gazelle occurs in this type on the handle. The flat or shallow containers are generally in the form of an oval cartouche. This can either be empty or decorated with fish, lotus flowers and/or birds.

The third type is that of the so-called trussed animal dishes (Paris 1993), and are excluded from Wallert’s analysis as they are not spoon-like in their shape. Yet they have been treated as cosmetic implements (Frédéricq 1927: 13, Peck 1982: 212-214, Paris 1993). The dish is shaped like a trussed animal, with the body serving as a shallow container. The most common animal found in this type is the oryx, followed by the ibex, probably due to the more sturdy shape of the horns (cf. Peck 1982: 212) that also form a smooth outline of the dish itself. Examples of trussed gazelles are also found (e.g. British Museum BM 20757, Frédéricq 1927: Pl. IX; Louvre E 11123, E 11043, E 22916, Paris 1993: 30-31). The horns of the gazelle are missing and not integrated with the object itself.

6.7.2 Function

The term ‘cosmetic spoon’ has caused some objections (Keimer 1954: 59, n. 1; Wallert 1967: 49-50, Freed 1982a: 207, Kozloff 1992: 331) as there are no explicit pictorial sources for the use of cosmetic dishes or any other indication that this was how the object was used. It is notable that the spoons found in tombs were not included in boxes or containers for cosmetic utensils (Wallert 1967: 53-54). Furthermore many of the spoons are too shallow to contain larger amounts of cosmetic substances and therefore would have been rather impractical. A few of these so-called cosmetic spoons have been shown to contain traces of residue or “incrustation” (Frédéricq 1927: 9). No chemical analysis has, however, been described. A double spoon belonging to the collection of the British Museum (BM 5953) is said however to have contained “remains of wax (?) or ointment (?)” (Frédéricq 1927: 9, Pl. VII).

An alternative interpretation of the spoons suggests that they have a ritual character, as “offering spoons” (Wallert 1967: 66) or as “ritual implements” (cf. Kozloff 1992: 331). This connection is supported by the trussed animal motif, with its association with offering. While Wallert raises the question of the function of the spoons, she does not refer to their

decorative forms. The iconography of the spoons has however been treated by Kozloff (1992: 331). The elaborate execution of many of these spoons has been seen as evidence of skilled craftsmen (Frédéricq 1927: 7, Peck 1982: 213, Paris 1993: 5), which would indicate the importance of this group of objects.

The gazelle is not a common motif among the cosmetic spoons. The spoon however draws on the same kind of motifs as the faience bowls (cf. above 6.5.1), and thus provides further evidence for the inclusion of the gazelle in a complex of available motifs.

6.7.3 Swimming-girl spoon with gazelle container

(New York, MMA 26.2.47; Wallert 1967: Pl. 15)

An example of a swimming-girl spoon holding a gazelle is found in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The handle is in the shape of a young woman, her arms outstretched, holding a container. The container has



Figure 75. Swimming-girl spoon with a recumbent gazelle as container

the form of a recumbent gazelle. The upper part of the gazelle's body, the neck and head constitute the sliding lid, while the belly forms the actual container. This sliding lid construction is found in other examples of swimming-girl spoons.

The girl is naked except for a girdle made in a separate material, as is her wig that has a side lock. Freed (1982a: 206) saw a similarity between this hair style and that of Satamun on the chairback (cf. above 6.2.4).

The gazelle, like the girl, is young, with only stubs indicating horns. Comparing the sliding lid with other such spoons reveals that the most common motif was the duck or goose (Wallert 1967: Pls 11-15, and N 1725A, N 1725C in the Louvre, Paris 1993; cf. Kozloff 1992: 332).

6.7.4 Cartouche Pond

(British Museum, BM 5958; Wallert 1967: Pl. 19)

A wooden cosmetic spoon in the British Museum is in the shape of a so-called cartouche pond. The “pond” is indicated by two antithetical tilapia fish with lotus buds and flowers sprouting from their mouths, similar to those seen on the faience bowls. The ‘handle’ has the form of a recumbent gazelle with its head turned back. The animal is carved in open work and the details on its belly indicate that it is a male.

This spoon belongs to the cartouche pond type, with interior motifs consisting of tilapia fish, lotus flowers and birds, all representing ‘pond life’. The handle iconography is more varied. In addition to the gazelle¹¹⁷, a hare (Brooklyn 37.608E, Wallert 1967: Pl. 20) and a gosling (AFIM 1990.35, Kozloff 1992: 352, cat. no. 79) may be noted.

The gazelle motif found here is clearly taken from the form typical for the insert (cf. above 4.1.4), representing the young gazelle in hiding.



Figure 76. Cosmetic spoon with fawn

6.7.5 A gazelle container

(Cairo, JE 44744; Freed 1982a: 201, Fig. 54)

This object, although not a box, is related to the spoons as a small¹¹⁸ container for “scented unguent” (cf. Freed 1982a: 200). Made of wood and in the shape of a recumbent young gazelle, this object reiterates the motif found on the New York spoon described above. The horns are missing, but may have originally been made in a different material (cf. the gazelle statue MMA 26.7.1292, see below Fig. 83). Such zoomorphic containers have generally been dated to the 18th dynasty (Freed 1982a: 200).

This object is included in Maspero’s presentation of ancient Egyptian art (1912: 200, Fig. 385), without comments on provenance.

¹¹⁷ There is a similar cartouche pond spoon in the Cairo Museum (CG 44911/JE33211), where the ‘handle’ is carved with the motif of two gazelles nibbling on a palmette (Wallert 1967: Pl. 20).

¹¹⁸ No measurements are given by either Maspero (1912: 200) or Freed (1982a: 200).

6.7.6 Cosmetic spoons and containers – concluding remarks

These three objects represent different kinds of containers, all possibly intended for some kind of cosmetic substances. The gazelle representations all have the recumbent posture that point to the young age of the animal. Aquatic references are also present. These components relate the spoons to the same decorative sphere as the faience bowls, with the fawn occurring instead of the mother-child combination.

6.8 Scarabs

The scarab was one of the most popular amulets in ancient Egypt, with a popularity that also reached beyond Egypt (Andrews 1994: 50). Its form not only gives the image of the beetle that rolls balls of dung within which its young are born, but also the hieroglyph *hpr* “to become”, “be transformed”, giving a context to its protective qualities (Bianchi 2001: 179).

Originally an amulet with scarab form in the Old Kingdom (Bianchi 2001: 180), by the Middle Kingdom the base was commonly decorated in such a way that it has been understood as a personal seal (Andrews 1994: 52). The scarab appears to have retained its protective function, with the base displaying a growing diversity of motifs. Various geometrical designs and hieroglyphic phrases, understood as beneficial, are common (Ward 1978, Tufnell 1984a-b). The desert hunt appears as an element of scarab iconography during the Middle Kingdom (cf. Hornung and Staehelin 1976: 138, Andrews 1994: 53) and is especially popular during the time of Ramses II (Givone 1984: 976). The components in the hunt scene are similar to those found in the tomb versions (cf. above 4.1.2), but more limited. The hunters could vary from archer to dog and lion (cf. e.g. Petrie 1925: Pl. XIV, Newberry 1906: Pl. XXV, 26). The desert topography can be represented by a branch or a uraeus, usually seen above a single striding or recumbent antelope (Tufnell 1984a: 132).

The oryx and the ibex are the preferred animals on scarabs, most likely because their horns have a ‘practical’ shape.¹¹⁹ It may be suggested that the desert game¹²⁰ seen on scarabs should rather be understood as antelopes in general rather than any specific species. “Die genaue Zuordnung der Tiere (Antilope, Gazelle, Steinbock usw.) spielt im Grunde keine Rolle, da sie alle zum Wild der Wüste gehören und die einzelnen Tiere eine ihnen gemeinsame Symbolik haben” (Wiese 1996: 134). This is a view shared by several authors

119 Cf. Andrews 1994: 30, on ram headed amulets and their horns. Also Lilyquist 2003: 159, on portraying animals in “small scale”.

120 Excluding species such as hares, hedgehogs and snakes.

(e.g. Hornung and Staehelin 1976: 138, Matouk 1977: 111-114, Tufnell 1984a: 132). These different species, as a group and individually, convey however very specific references to the desert landscape (cf. Goldwasser 1995: 21).

6.8.1 The gazelle on the scarab

There are a small number of scarabs decorated with the image of an antelope that can be identified as a gazelle (e.g. Hayes 1959: Figs 17, 48; Petrie 1925: Pl. XIV, Newberry 1906: Pl. XXV, 22; Matouk 1977: 387, no. 737). The limited use of the image of the gazelle may be explained by its lyrate (S-shaped) horns that pose some difficulties for the artist when faced with the limited space on the scarab base.

It has been suggested that the image of desirable game had the function of ensuring sustenance (Hornung and Staehelin 1976: 140, Andrews 1994: 51, Bianchi 2001: 180). If the scarab is related to the idea of the solar cycle as it would seem, then this becomes the desire for a daily renewal of this game. The branch,¹²¹ commonly found above the antelope (and here above the gazelle), is read as *mp*, translated as ‘young’ (Faulkner 1962: 150). In other words the plant represented “die Idee vom immer wieder jung sein” (Hornung and Staehelin 1976: 138). The desert game iconography provides an additional regenerative level to the scarab. This idea is confirmed in the use of the motif of a gazelle nursing her young¹²² documented in at least two examples (Keel 1980: Fig. 49c, Matouk 1977: 387, no. 737) and on a seal plaque (Keel 1980: 88, Fig. 49b) as well. The scarab motifs bring the nursing gazelle with her fawn together with the notion of young (*mp*) and the scarab form of the new born sun god Khepri.



Figure 77

A *mp* branch and gazelle

121 Hornung and Staehelin (1976: 138-139), further note the similarities between the branches on scarabs and the branch sprouting from the mouth of the nursing gazelle on the Maiherperi faience bowl (cf. above 6.5.1, 6.5.3 and 6.5.4).

122 The scarabs constitute the except where several examples of nursing ibexes can be observed (Keel 1995: 97, Fig. 165; Keel et al. 1997: 633, no. 287; 677, No. 43. It should be noted however that these scarabs were not found in Egypt). With the exception of the scarabs, the nursing motif is otherwise almost exclusively reserved for the gazelle. This exception may be explained as another example where the shape of the horns is decisive in the artist's choice of animal when dealing with limited surfaces.

6.9 The gazelle motif on objects – concluding remarks

The objects bearing the image of the gazelle can be viewed from two perspectives. On one hand the motifs used are those found in tomb painting. These are abstracted from that context and combined with other elements to strengthen the reading implicit in the motif. The preference for the nursing gazelle and the fawn suggests that there is a beneficial, and plausibly regenerative, understanding of the value of this image. This is explicit as the gazelle is placed in ritual and expressly symbolic, contexts, with the gazelle wands and headdresses with gazelle protomes. The parallelism between the gazelle and the uraeus underlines the elevation of this image to a meaning bearing icon. Its insistent association with young women also indicates a movement towards the solar daughter sphere that the uraeus represents.

7 The Gazelle and the Divine

The discussion up to this point has mainly focused on pictorial evidence in the form of representations of the gazelle either on temple and tomb walls or on objects. In reference to that material the primary aim has been to identify the motifs that are characteristic for the gazelle and to examine the context in which they occur. In this analysis, the natural world has dominated as the origin for the form of these representations. Some exceptions do however occur in the material discussed above that suggest that the image of the gazelle had another level of meaning. The gazelle wand, depicted in funerary dances and royal ceremonial processions, appears to have ritual significance (6.1). Found in the same, as well as other, contexts, a pair of gazelles as the protomes of a diadem adorns the brow of participating women (6.2). The other example of the gazelle as a protome is as the attribute of the god found on the Horus cippi. This also indicates that the image of the gazelle is not exclusively a natural representation. Suggestions that the Egyptians connected the gazelle with the cow in the combination of nursing mother and fawn, also indicate the manner in which the image of the gazelle tangents the divine sphere. Similarly it appears to be, in some contexts, interchangeable with the uraeus, as a brow ornament.

This chapter surveys the evidence for the gazelle as a representative of the divine. It follows the same chronological line as in previous chapters, beginning with Predynastic evidence and concluding in the last years of ancient Egyptian civilization.

7.1 The Predynastic gazelle burials

Animal burials are found in several cemeteries of Predynastic date. These animals are however commonly domesticates. The occurrence of the gazelle, a non-domesticate, is exceptional. The problem of interpretation represented by these burials is underscored by the discovery of an elephant grave in an elite cemetery at Hierakonpolis (Adams 2004, Friedman 2004: 132ff). Whatever the motivation for including these animals, either in separate graves, or together with humans in the same grave, in these cemeteries, it is plausible to conclude that the burials entail a desire that these animals partake of the same afterlife as that awaiting the other cemetery inhabitants. Immortality and proximity to the divine is thus not, in this early period, an exclusively human prerogative.

Animal burials are found at cemetery sites dating from the Badarian through to the Naqada periods.¹²³ The most common animals found are dog, sheep/goat and cattle. As these are all domesticated animals, Flores (1999: 84) sees the custom of burying gazelles as an indication of attempts at domestication. This connection between burial and domestication thus regards the grave as a way of reaffirming a tie that existed in life. This discussion is however somewhat more difficult to pursue given the discovery of the elephant burial.

Gazelles have been found in human graves and alone in pits, although individual burials are rare (Flores 1999: 33-34). The sites at which they are found are limited to a relatively well defined area in Upper Egypt, between Matmar - Mostagedda and el-Khatara, Ballas and Armant (Flores 1999: 83-87). Gazelle burials have sometimes been described as relatively common (Behrens 1963: 75, Debono 1954: 635). Closer examination of the bones recovered has however altered this picture. While earlier excavation reports have identified some of the bones from animal burials as gazelles (e.g. Debono¹²⁴ 1950: 234, 1954: 635-637; Leclant 1954: 73, Behrens 1963: table I), newer analyses have changed the classification of those bones to sheep/goat (cf. Flores 1999: 34, and Appendices A and B). Consequently, rather than being common, gazelle burials are now more accurately described as “moderately frequent” among the Predynastic animal burials.

The occurrence of the gazelle in the cemeteries of the Naqada culture indicates that it had a special status during this period, something that is also evidenced in the contemporary imagery (cf. Chapter 3 above). It appears to represent a desirable attribute of the afterlife. The most prevalent way to view the gazelle burials is to see the value of the animal in its meat and hide and thus part of the subsistence economy of the period. The later occurrence of mummified gazelles as possible “pets” buried with their owners (cf. above 2.4) also relates to the discussion of the gazelle as a “semi-domesticate”. Whether the gazelle, at this early period, represented a divine force, identified with a specific deity or deities, as is later the case (cf. below 7.2-6), is an open question, given the lack of written documentation.

123 E.g. Mostagedda (Brunton 1937: 57), Ballas (Petrie and Quibell 1896: 16), Matmar (Brunton 1948: 8) and el-Mahasna (Ayrtton and Loat 1911: 21).

124 Debono (1950: 234, 1954: 635-637) is uncertain in his identifications of the gazelle bones and his suggestions are tentative.

7.2 Gehesty – “The Place of the Two Gazelles”

Textual reference to gazelles as a pair is found in the place name Gehesty (*ghsty*), “[The Place of] the Two Gazelles”, first found in a number of Pyramid Texts utterances dated to the 6th dynasty. The name includes an ending commonly read as indicating a dual form,¹²⁵ an interpretation reinforced by the Pyramid Text writing of the place name with two gazelles (cf. below 7.2.1). Images of gazelle pairs occur in a number of different contexts in this material. A possible naturalistic background is the tendency for gazelles to graze in pairs during periods of limited grasses (noted in 2.2). This may account for the occurrence of gazelles in pairs in desert hunt scenes (Chapter 4, cf. also Appendices I, II). The aesthetic possibilities for depicting the gazelles in pairs were exploited in the late Predynastic period where a pair of gazelles, positioned back to back is found on a palette (3.5.2). Later this motif is used in relationship to the desert hunt (4.2-4.3), also occurring in the palmette composition with two feeding gazelles and the more subtle occurrence of the two young gazelles in baskets (5.1.1/b.3). That this becomes a distinct motif is illustrated by the examples of furniture decoration cited above (6.4). The symbolic use of the two gazelles is evidenced in the diadem with the two gazelle protome (6.2). Parallelism with the uraei, and their association, in turn, with the Two Ladies, the vulture of the south, Nekhbet, and the cobra of the north, Wadjet, indicate that the two gazelles of the diadem are female. Thus *ghsty*, read as the (The Place of) “the Two Female Gazelles”, fits into a pattern of preferred imagery.

Gehesty is cited throughout the history of Egyptian religion as a place associated with the death and resurrection of Osiris (cf. Griffiths 1980: 22). A specific relationship between this place and the goddesses Anukis, Nephthys and Hathor is found in the later material, with evidence that an equation was made between Gehesty and *pr 'nkt* (Gauthier 1925: 63, 87, Duemichen 1865: Pl. LXV, no. 23), a cult place of the goddess Anukis (Altenmüller 1977: 513), as well as having a connection to *pr mrw* (Komir) providing an association with Nephthys (Chassinat 1931: 232).¹²⁶

7.2.1 Gehesty in the Pyramid Texts, Old Kingdom

There are four utterances in the Pyramid Texts that include references to Gehesty, all of which come from 6th dynasty versions.

125 Cf. Gardiner 1957: 58, §72-73 for *ty* as a feminine dual ending.

126 In the autobiography of Weni (CG 1435, Borchardt 1937: 115-119, Pls 29-30) a toponym traditionally translated as “the Gazelle’s Nose” (e.g. Edel 1981: 10-11) includes a hieroglyph depicting in fact not a gazelle but possibly an addax (cf. above 2.1.4/c, also Osborn 1998: 158, Fig.13-71).

In the lengthy Utterance 478 (Pepi I, Merenre, Pepi II, §§ 971a-980c), the ladder to heaven is addressed, and there is an apparent reference to Isis searching for Osiris.

972 a	<i>it.n=t m hh sn=t wstr</i>	You have come seeking your brother Osiris
972 b	<i>ny.n sy sn=f stš hr gs=f</i>	His brother Seth has thrown him on his side
972 c	<i>m gs pf n ghsty</i>	on that side of Gehesty

In the shorter Utterance 485B (Pepi I, §§1032a-1035c) it is Geb that comes searching for Osiris.

1032 c	<i>it gb</i>	Geb comes,
	<i>3t tp=f</i>	the moment (of strength) being upon him
	<i>knity=f ir hr=f</i>	His yellow (eyes) are in his face
1033a	<i>ih=f in</i>	when he strikes you
	<i>lpp=f h3swt</i>	He examines the foreign lands
	<i>m shn wstr</i>	searching for Osiris
1033 b	<i>gm.n=f sw</i>	He found him
	<i>dy hr gs=f m ghsty</i>	being put on his side in Gehesty

An additional reference to the search for Osiris is found in Utterance 637 (two versions, Pepi II, §1799a-1804b). This time it is Horus that is searching for his father.

1799a	<i>it hr mh mgt</i>	Horus comes carrying unguent,
	<i>shn.n=f it=f wstr</i>	He has sought his father Osiris
1799b	<i>gm.n=f sw</i>	He has found him
	<i>hr gs=f m ghsty</i>	on his side in Gehesty

In each of these utterances, a god seeks out Osiris who is “on his side” in a place called Gehesty. This information is found in the context of different forms of resurrection: a ladder that reaches to heaven, the defeat of Seth as Osiris is admonished to “stand up”, and being anointed with the unguent of the Eye of Horus.

The fourth reference to Gehesty is found in Utterance 574 (Pepi I, §§ 1485a-1491c) addressed to “the tree that encloses the god” (*nht hnmt ntr*). A somewhat obscure text, this utterance equates the tree (*nht*) with an apparently feminine Djed pillar. There are references to the tree assembling those in the Underworld (*nw*) and those in the “celestial expanses” (*pdwt*) (§1486). Most likely it is the tree/Djed pillar that is referred to as “this peaceful maiden that this ba of Gehesty made” (*hnwt hpt irt.n b3 pn ghsty*

§1487c). Although not entirely clear, the utterance appears to equate the tree with the power (3t) that defeats Seth.

The spelling of the four surviving references to Gehesty indicates that two of the references retain an association with a gazelle pair, and with a “desert” location. The other two have phonetic spellings, with the *nwt* determinative clearly indicating a place name.

 §972c (only Pepi II)

 §1033b (Pepi I)

 §1799b (Pepi II)

 §1487c (Pepi I)

Gehesty in these utterances is thus the place where Osiris fell, was found and resurrected. In Utterance 637, the imagery is that of the transition between tomb and the next life, aided by a female tree/Djed pillar created by a “ba of Gehesty”. It is a place of both death and resurrection. In two of the examples, its spelling indicates a “desert” location.

7.2.2 Gehesty in Coffin Texts, Spell 837, Middle Kingdom

Only one reference to Gehesty is found in the Coffin Texts. Spell 837 (CT VII, 37-39) is found on the Theban coffins of Mentuhotep (Cairo 28027=T9C) and that of Amenemhat (Cairo 28092=B10C) from el-Bersheh. The sky opens its doors and Horus and Thoth go to Osiris, so that he may take his place at the head of the Ennead. Gehesty occurs here as the place where Osiris rises up between Isis and Nephthys.

<i>ḥꜥ r=k wstr</i>	Rise up Osiris
<i>ḥr gs=k m ghst(y)</i>	on your side in Gehesty
<i>ꜥ=k n 3st drt=k nbt ḥwt</i>	Isis has your arm, Nephthys has your hand
<i>šm=k lmyt=sn</i>	May you go between them
<i>dt n=k r pt ḥnꜥ t3</i>	To you are given the sky and the earth
CT VII, 37q-38a	

This Coffin Text spell places emphasis on Gehesty as the place of resurrection, introducing Isis and Nephthys as agents that facilitate the transition from death to new life. Given that the Coffin Texts are written in hieratic, the phonetic spellings ,  are not surprising.

7.2.3 Geheset in the Ramesseum Dramatic Papyrus, 12th dyn.

(P. Ramesseum B, British Museum; Sethe 1928¹²⁷)

In 1896 a collection of 22 papyri was found by Quibell in a Middle Kingdom shaft tomb, located in the western part of Ramesseum. Among these papyri was the so-called Ramesseum Dramatic Papyrus that was acquired by the British Museum in 1929. It is generally interpreted as a description of either the coronation of Sesostri I (c. 1956-1911 B.C., Shaw 2000: 480), whose name occurs in the text, or as a ritual for a statue of that king. The text relates the ‘drama’ of the royal enthronement, with allusions to the death of Osiris and the conflict between Horus and Seth and to the Sed Festival. It has been debated as to whether the papyrus is an updated version of an older ritual text, with some dating it to as early as to transition between the 2nd and 3rd dynasties (Altenmüller 1975: 1139).

The place name Geheset (𓄊𓄂𓄂𓄂) occurs in the last preserved scenes (45-46). The text begins with the bringing of a cake (of natron) and a vessel (of water) to the palace and most likely to an Osiris figure. This is followed by an admonishment “Don’t give to Gehest(y) the place where his father Osiris fell” (Sethe 1928: 240, columns 136-139, Pl: 22). Sethe interprets this text as setting up an opposition between the palace where the offering is taken, and the Place of the Gazelle (cf. 242, n. 137c) where Osiris fell, saying that Osiris is not to be found where he fell, but is resurrected in the palace. This reiterates the negative connotation associated with Gehest(y) as the place where Osiris was murdered found in the Pyramid Texts.

7.2.4 The stela of May, 19th dyn., Seti I

(Brussels, E. 5300; Speleers 1921:113-144)

The stela of May is inscribed with a lengthy hymn to Osiris, a large part of which corresponds to Chapter 181 of the Book of the Dead (cf. Faulkner 1990: 180-181). This text has a number of parallels, only one of which, the stela of Tournaroi (cited by Speleers 1921: 123), also refers to Gehesty.

The hymn consists primarily of a series of epithets describing Osiris. Among them is a reference to the praise he elicits from all beings, living and dead.

ll.n n=f rmt ntrw 3hw

mtyw m ksw

nhp.n n=f ʿ33t m ghsty

(the one) to whom people, gods, Akhu

and the dead have come bowing

for whom multitudes in Gehesty shouted

127 Gardiner (1955: 8) described the papyrus as “very cryptic”, referring to Sethe’s 1928 publication of the text.

ḥꜣw n=f tmyw dw3t

for whom those who are in Duat rejoice

This citation, from columns 11-12, indicates a parallelism between Gehesty, (written  in the May version and  in the version on the stela of Tournaroi) and the Duat. The Coffin Text passage discussed above has a division of roles between Nedit as the place of death and Gehesty as the place of resurrection. This kind of relationship between Gehesty and the Duat would be expected here, as a way of expressing the same entirety found in the combination of “people, gods, Akhu and the dead” found in the lines above. In which case, Gehesty would represent the place of the “living” (or reborn) contra that of the deceased in the underworld of the Duat.

7.2.5 Khnum, Lord of Gehesty, 21st dyn.

Khnum, the ram headed god, worshipped primarily at Elephantine but who is also part of the larger Egyptian pantheon is given the epithet “Lord of Gehesty”¹²⁸ in two chapters of a 21st dynasty version of the Book of the Dead. An additional example of the connection between this god and Gehesty is found in the temple of Dendera.

The example of the Book of the Dead discussed here was found in the royal cachette (TT 320, Bab el-Gasus) and belongs to a woman called Neskhons, who bears the title priestess of Khnum (*ḥmt ntr ḥnmw*), an association that may explain the exceptional inclusion of references to Khnum. The first occurrence is found in Chapter 17 (Naville 1912: Pl. XIII, 8) and the second in Chapter 112 (Naville 1912: Pl. XXII, 12). In both chapters Khnum is titled *nb (n) ghsty*. In the example from Chapter 17, *ghsty* is written with the two standing gazelles drawn clearly and distinctively. The writing from Chapter 112, shows two recumbent gazelles. There is no apparent explanation for the reference to Khnum other than the owner’s affiliation to his cult, nor is it clear what the association with Gehesty implies.

The next known reference to a connection between Khnum and Gehesty is dated to the Greco-Roman period. The epithet Lord of Gehesty (*nb n ghsty*) occurs again in the temple of Dendera. It is found in the context of the cult of the four living rams (bas). This cult was celebrated primarily at Elephantine and Esna, as well as being documented at the Hathor temple at Dendera (Otto 1975b: 953). The four rams represent the four gods Re, Shu, Osiris and Geb. Khnum, associated with Shu, is called Lord of Biggeh, as

128 This epithet is not included for Khnum in LGG VI, 15a-34a.

well as Lord of Gehesty (Brugsch 1871: 83). Biggeh, a small island next to Philae, was the burial place of Osiris, and thus possibly analogous to Gehesty in function. The association with Khnum, who is in essence a creator god, with Gehesty, would then appear to relate to its role as the place of burial, and possibly resurrection of the god.

7.2.6 Sarcophagus of Pa-di-sema-tawy, 26th dyn. (Cairo, JE 31566; Rowe 1938: 157-195)

The text found on a sarcophagus belonging to Pa-di-sema-tawy continues the trend of placing Gehesty in the framework of the death and resurrection paradigm. The sarcophagus, belonging to a general in the army of Psamtek II, was found at Kom Abu Yasîn (in the eastern Delta, near Horbeit, cf. PM IV: Map I, G 4). Another sarcophagus from the same date and location has a similar inscription (Daressy 1898: 78).

The text of interest is found on the sarcophagus lid. It is divided into three sections and once again refers to the death and resurrection of Osiris. Following convention, Isis is found at the foot end where she assures the coffin owner, as Osiris, that she is at his legs, watching him, protecting him from drowning. The central text is that of Nut who is said to extend herself over the dead, making him a god with no enemies, protecting him from all evil things.

It is the text that is found at the head end of the sarcophagus lid that is of interest. As is customary, here it is Nephthys that is featured.

<i>h wstr p3 dt-sm3 t3wy</i>	O Osiris Pa-di-sema-tawy
<i>ti n=k snt=k nbt hwt</i>	Your sister Nephthys comes to you,
<i>snt tmy(t) ghs(t)y</i>	the sister who is in Geheset(y)
<i>h'w=s¹²⁹ n=k tp=k</i>	She raises your head for you
<i>tnk=s n=k ksw=k</i>	She collects your bones for you
<i>dmd=s n=k 'wt=k</i>	She assembles your limbs for you.

The association between Gehesty and Nephthys¹³⁰ found here reiterates the emphasis on resurrection, found in the Coffin Texts citation.

129 According to Rowe (1938: 181, n.3), this verb should be read *psy* and not *h'w*.

130 Lengthier versions that describe Nephthys collecting the pieces of the body of the deceased ('Osiris NN') are found on at least three other contemporary coffins in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (i.e. CG 41002, CG 41006, CG 41007, Moret 1913: 44, 95, 102; cf. also CG 41044, Gauthier 1913: 32). There are similarities in the description of the assembling of the body together with PT Spell 637 (§ 1801a-c) and CT Spell 837 (discussed above).

7.2.7 Papyrus Jumilhac, Greco-Roman Period

(Louvre, E. 17110; Vandier 1961)

The toponym *ghst* occurs four times in the late Ptolemaic-early Roman (Vandier 1961: 1, Rössler-Köhler 1982: 708) papyrus known as Papyrus Jumilhac. Currently consisting of 23 “pages”¹³¹ of well formed hieroglyphs written in columns, the text of this papyrus is accompanied by vignettes, with some Demotic commentary along the margins. The papyrus appears to be a ‘handbook’ for the clergy of the 17th and 18th Upper Egyptian nomes, describing local religious traditions (Rössler-Köhler 1982: 709).

The texts found on this papyrus are largely mythological in nature, relating a version of the narrative of the death and resurrection of Osiris that features a form of Anubis that had become closely associated with Horus in local tradition. The episode in which two references to Geheset are found, involves the role played by Isis in protecting her dead husband from Seth and his cohorts. The goddess actively pursues Seth and while doing so transforms herself, first into the ferocious lioness Sakhmet, then into a dog (*tsm*), with a knife-like tail and finally into a serpent (*hfty*), in which guise she is associated with Hathor.

wnn šm[=s] mḥtt n spšt
ir.n=s ḥpr=s m hfty
ʿk.n=s n ḡw pn
ḥr mḥtt n spšt tn
ḥr rs ḥsyw stš
m tw=sn tp whš
ḡd.tw n=s
ḥwt ḥr nb ghst
 (Jumilhac III, 7-8)

Then she went north of the nome.
 She transformed herself into a serpent
 She entered into this mountain
 to the north of this nome
 to watch the confederates of Seth
 when they went out at night
 It is said of her
 “Hathor Mistress of Geheset”

The goddess continues to watch the allies of Seth and then she strikes.

ʿhʿ.n ḡdb=s r šw=sn
ʿk.n=s mtwt=s m ḥʿw=sn
ḥp=sn ḥr ʿ m sp wʿ
wnn snf=sn ḥr ḥr ḡw pn
ḥp[r] prš m ghst
 (Jumilhac III, 10-12)

And then she was angry at all of them
 She put her venom in their limbs
 They fell immediately and at once
 Their blood fell on this mountain
 and became juniper berries on Geheset.

¹³¹ The papyrus was probably cut up by Sabatier into these 23 sheets, who is reported to have been the first ‘owner’ of the papyrus, later inherited by Jumilhac (Vandier 1961: 1).

The last text section of the papyrus is given the title “Geheset” by Vandier (1961: 134, XXXVIII). It repeats the narrative of the transformations of Isis, adding further elaborations.

<i>ir ghst</i>	Regarding Geheset,
<i>hwt nrt n hwt hr ghst</i> ¹³²	(it is) the temple of Hathor of Geheset,
<i>hwt hry tp t3wy</i>	the house of the Chief of the Two Lands.
<i>hwt l'rt sh ntr</i>	House of Uraeus is (the name of) the divine booth
<i>n hwt hr m st tn</i>	of Hathor in this place.
<i>3st pw ir.n=s hpr=s m (l) rt</i>	Isis transformed herself into the uraeus.
<i>sgd.n=s r sm3yw stš</i>	She hid from the companions of Seth,
<i>nbt hwt tm r gs=s</i>	Nephthys was there at her side.
<i>wnn sm3yw hr snt hr=s</i>	The companions (of Seth) passed by her
<i>n rh=sn</i>	without their knowing
<i>h' psh=s sn r 3w=sn</i>	And then she bit them all.
<i>sš=s h3wy=š r h' =sn</i>	She threw her two lances at their limbs.
<i>hr snf=sn hr qw pn prš</i>	Their blood fell on this mountain, flowing
<i>hpr mwt=sn hr c</i>	and their death happened immediately

(Jumilhac XIII, 10-15)

This passage gives the wordplay that connects the juniper berries (*prš*) on the Geheset mountain with the flow (*prš*) of blood.

The final reference to Geheset is found in a part of the text, treated by Vandier as a subtext, accompanying a vignette. Found on the lower part of sheet IX, and designated Section XLVII, the text begins by describing the gods buried in the necropolis of Geheset “Beginning with Shu, continuing with Osiris and ending with Horus, son of Isis” (*h3t m šw š3c n wstr nfrw r hr s3 3st*, IX, 1-2). The text continues to list the gods buried there, including Hathor of Geheset (IX, 6). In discussing the Geheset found in this text, Vandier (1961: 53) described it as “une existence réelle”, with a cultic relationship as the site of the temple of the uraeus (XXIII, 12) to Hathor of Geheset.

It is evident that Geheset in Papyrus Jumilhac has a mythic status that is somewhat different from that found in earlier texts. It is the place where Isis, as Hathor, defends Osiris against Seth. Horus is curiously absent in this version, rather it is Isis-Hathor that has the role as defender of Osiris. Appropriately enough she vanquishes Seth in the form of a serpent (*hfty*),

132 With the variant spelling .

with the implication that she is really the uraeus, since Geheset is the site of the temple of the uraeus. Geheset in Jumilhac is where Isis transforms herself into forms associated with the solar eye (cf. below 7.4), as well as being the final resting place of the gods.

7.2.8 Gehesty – concluding remarks

Gehesty, the Place of the Two Female Gazelles, reoccurs as an important place in the Osirian myth for a period of over 2000 years. From being the place where Osiris was sought, found and resurrected in the Pyramid Texts, Gehesty becomes primarily a place of resurrection in the single reference in the Coffin Texts and possibly in the hymn to Osiris on the stela of May. Similarly, associated with Nephthys on the head end of the sarcophagus of Pa-di-sema-tawy, there is the implication that Gehesty is where the dead rises. The Jumilhac evidence gives a slightly different focus to Geheset in its association with the transformations of Isis-Hathor and the defeat of Seth and his companions. Here it is the place where violent forms of this goddess defeat the forces of chaos and rather than being a “desert” (*ḥst*) landscape, it is specifically a mountain (*ḡw*), also a place apart from the ordered life of the valley.

When identified as a real cult place, Geheset has been linked to *pr mrw*, the Komir of today. The centre of the worship of Nephthys in Greco-Roman times, it is also the site of the gazelle catacombs (cf. below 7.3.4). An alternative location that is suggested is *pr nkt* (Gauthier 1925: 63, 87), a cult place of the goddess Anukis (Altenmüller 1977: 513).

7.3 The gazelle at Wadi Hammamat, 11th dyn., Mentuhotep IV

(M 110, Couyat and Montet 1912: Pl. XXIX; 1913: 77-78)

The naturalistic images of the gazelle in tomb and temple reliefs have a textual counterpart in the well known Wadi Hammamat inscription of Mentuhotep IV. A series of five inscriptions, inscribed on the cliff walls, relate events of a quarry expedition of the 2nd year of the reign of this king.¹³³ The purpose of the expedition was to quarry blocks for the royal sarcophagus and its lid. The narratives are linked sequentially by the dates of the texts, covering a period of 25 days of the second month of Akhet.

Day 3	The miracle of the gazelle (M 110)
Day 15	Fetching the blocks (M 113)

133 For an overall discussion of these texts see Blumenthal 1977: 106-107, Gundlach 1980: 112 and Shirun-Grumach 1993: 5, 18.

Day 15	Raising the stela to Min (M 192a)
Day 23	The miracle of the well (M 191)
Day 28	The sarcophagus blocks are taken to Egypt (M 192b)

These texts, “signed” by the vizier Amenemhet, generally taken to be the successor of Mentuhotep IV, and the first king of the 12th dynasty (c. 1985-1956 B.C.) add the miraculous to the task of quarrying the stone that will, as sarcophagus, aid in the creation of a royal Osiris. The miracle of the gazelle marks the regenerative quality of the stone itself.

The text narrating the miracle of the gazelle (M 110, Couyat and Montet 1913: 77-78; 1912: Pl. XXIX) is incised on a square block. A scene accompanies the text, showing Mentuhotep IV offering two milk jars to Min the Coptite (Gundlach 1980: 99). The text relates the appearance of a pregnant gazelle at the quarry site.

<i>bl3t tn hprt n hm=f</i>	This miracle which happened for his majesty
<i>h3t n=f tn wt h3swt</i>	The animals of the desert came down to him.
<i>tw tn ght bk3t hr sm.tl</i>	And the pregnant gazelle came, walking
<i>hr=s r rmt hft hr=s</i>	her face was toward the people before her.
<i>tw trty=s hr m33 hr s3s3</i>	Her two eyes looked straight ahead.
<i>nn n=s h3=s r spr=s</i>	She did not turn back until she arrived
<i>r qw pn šps r tnr pn</i>	at this noble mountain to this block.
<i>tw=f m st=f</i>	It was in its place
<i>n wn pn n nb nht pn</i>	for this lid of this Lord of Life.
<i>mst pw tr.n=s hr=f</i>	She gave birth on it.
<i>tw m3c pn n nsw hr m33</i>	This army of the king looked on.
<i>h3c.n šc nht=s</i>	And then her throat was cut,
<i>smn.tl hr=f m sb n sdt</i>	being put on it as a burnt offering.
Lines 2-6	

After the offering was made the block was brought down from the quarry and homage was paid to Min, Lord of the Desert (*nb h3swt*).

The block of stone that was to become the lid of the sarcophagus is identified by the gazelle giving birth on it. This event is described as a miracle (*bl3t*) for his majesty, relating to the generative properties of the sarcophagus to be sculpted from the block. The sacrifice of the gazelle also provides an example of what has been deduced regarding the gazelle as offering from the offering processions (cf. Chapter 5 above).

The sculpting of the sarcophagus from the block is implied in M 113 (Couyat and Montet 1913: 79-81; 1912: Pl. XXIX) that describes the purpose of the expedition and the craftsmen (“sculptors, draughtsmen, metal-workers,

gold-workers”) included in the expedition. Another text (M 192a, Couyat and Montet 1913: 98-99; 1912: Pl. XXXVII) dated to the same day, the 15th, is devoted to the erection of a stela, dedicated to Min, and provides further information on the composition of the expedition drawn from several regions of Upper Egypt.

Some 20 days after the gazelle gives birth on the block at the quarry, another miracle occurs, described in M 191 and known as The Miracle of the Well (Couyat and Montet 1913: 97-98; 1912: Pl. XXXVI). A more difficult text, with different proposed translations (cf. e.g. Schenkel 1965, Gundlach 1980 and Shirun-Grumach 1993), the miracle of the well has some elements that appear to be an extension of the miracle relating to the gazelle (*whm b3t*). While working on the block on which the gazelle gave birth, it begins to rain.

<i>tr.tw h3st m nwy</i>	the desert was made into [a] flood,
<i>bst mw hr nh3 n tnr</i>	the water rising to the edge of the block ¹³⁴
<i>gm.t(w) hnm m hry tb int</i>	a well was found in the middle of the valley...
Column 3	

The imagery of the block is that of an island in the midst of rain water. The underlying theme of the gazelle episode is repeated here, as the block intended for the sarcophagus emerges from the flood, and rock opens up as a well in a way reminiscent of the stories that place the source of the Nile in two caves located at Elephantine (*krty*, Pécoil 1993: 97-102; van der Plas 1986: 176).

The final episode, dated to day 28, (M 192b, Couyat and Montet 1913: 99-100; 1912: Pl. XXXVII) tells of the celebrations that accompanied the completion of the lid. It is then taken to Egypt proper by 3000 soldiers from Lower Egypt. The reference to “Egypt” as the destination for the block marks the quarry area as foreign, desert, territory.

This group of texts centres on the procurement of a sarcophagus for the king. The reference to the lid as the place where the gazelle gives birth reflects both the form of the block, as a slab suitable for the purpose and the future properties of the lid, where the image of the goddess Nut, the mother that will give the deceased new life, will be inscribed. The gazelle, as an animal of the desert landscape where the quarry is found, fits into the realistic level of the narrative. It also carries with it certain allusions, such as the imagery of the desert hunt, implying the mastery of this landscape, and the

134 Cf. Faulkner 1962: 136 for the translation of *nh3 n tnr*, as “dry rock (?)”. Schenkel (1965: 268) suggests that the translation should read to mean that water was flowing from the rough surface of the stone.

idea of resurrection that, as has been shown, is found in the identification of Gehesty, where Osiris is found and given new life. The addition of the miracle of the well, introduces another level with an oblique reference to the original and repeated creation through the flood of waters, with the lifeless desert being given new life. While relating a seemingly practical expedition to a quarry, these small texts imbue this activity with mythological implications.

7.4 The gazelle and Anukis

The gazelle, while rarely functioning as the pictorial manifestation of a goddess, is documented in a few sources as an attribute of Anukis (Otto 1975a: 333). All of the evidence dates to the New Kingdom and is mostly concentrated to western Thebes (Valbelle 1981: 117, 124).

The written material provides one example where Anukis is explicitly associated with the gazelle. It is found in the texts from the temple of Esna, dated to the 1st century A.D. Here Anukis is called “lady of the gazelle” (*hnwt ghst* cited by Valbelle 1981: 132 and Sauneron 1968: 230, no. 312, 7, cf. below). The late date of this epithet suggests the need for caution with regard to the significance of the gazelle in understanding Anukis in earlier times. It is worth noting that this relationship is not found in the epithets collected by Leitz (cf. LGG II, 172b - 174a).¹³⁵

7.4.1 A relief from the temple of Buhen, 18th dyn.

(PM VII: 133, Caminos 1974: Pl. 20)

A relief on one of the pilasters in the southern temple of Buhen depicts Anukis giving life to Tuthmosis III, holding an ankh-sign to his nose. Anukis embraces the king with her other arm. The goddess is identified by her plumed head dress. Similar compositions with Anukis holding the ankh-sign to the king’s nose can be traced back to the Middle Kingdom, featuring e.g. Sesostris III and Neferhotep (Habachi 1950: Figs 1, 2). The hieroglyphic inscription on the pilaster is fragmentary, yet the remaining traces suggest the standard phrase “giving life, stability and dominion”. Behind Anukis a small graffito “incised rather deeply” (Caminos 1974: 21) has been added. The horns are curved inwards,¹³⁶ the legs slender and the short tail points upward.

¹³⁵ However, some of the other gazelle related epithets and references occur under the heading of *ghs* / *ghst*, with a selected bibliography (LGG VII, 324c).

¹³⁶ Short horns that curve inwards are a typical feature for female gazelles (cf. Osborn 1998: 175).



Figure 78. Anukis giving life, a gazelle graffito is behind her

These anatomical details are specific for the gazelle (Osborn 1998: 175). The animal is furthermore standing on an individual base line, thus serving as an iconographic comment to the goddess. This represents perhaps the earliest known example of Anukis associated with the gazelle. As it is difficult to establish when the gazelle graffito was incised, it is possible that it is of a later date than the 18th dynasty. Yet, the motif suggests an awareness of the iconographic link between Anukis and the gazelle.

7.4.2 The tomb of Neferhotep, TT 216, Deir el-Medina, 19th dyn., Ramses II – Seti II (PM I/1: 313 (6), Davies 1923: 52, Fig. 20)



Figure 79. Neferhotep's 'garden' of gazelles, with a nursing scene

From a period when the desert hunt is no longer included in the standard tomb decoration, an unusual scene is found in the tomb of Neferhotep, depicting an undulating landscape with various plants, trees and waterways, possibly indicating an island landscape. As many as eight gazelles walk around the area, with one, in the lower left of the scene, nursing her young. The heading for this representation is cited (PM I/1: 313) as the “Temple in grove of Anukis with gazelle on Island of Elephantine.” Anukis herself is however not present. This scene is not analysed by Valbelle (1981: 30), other than describing it as a garden with gazelles: “animaux sacrés d’Anoukis”. A similar comment is made by Bruyère (1926: 36) referring to a “parc d’antilopes d’Anoukit à Éléphantine”. It is apparent that both regarded the content of the scene as self-evident. Even though this scene is considered unique (Davies 1923: 51-52), no further discussion of this scene appears to have occurred (cf. Kampp 1996: 494-496). This ‘silence’ indicates perhaps how enigmatic the motif is.

Anukis is primarily mistress of the island of Sehel (Valbelle 1981: 94), and is associated with the cataract area. There are however a few New Kingdom examples of Anukis as *nbt 3bw*, ‘lady of Elephantine’ (de Morgan et al 1894: 7). Satis, often found together with Anukis in a triad with Khnum (e.g. Habachi 1957: Pl. VIII, Inscr. 27; de Morgan et al 1894: 93, dM 132, 96, dM 153) remained nevertheless the main goddess of Elephantine (Valbelle 1981: 106-107). The rich vegetation and the calm attitude of the animals in this scene should be compared to the barren landscape and pursuit theme of the desert hunt (Chapter 4), suggesting that this is an idealized image of the cult area of this goddess, where possibly a herd of her sacred animal the gazelle was kept.

7.4.3 Two ostraca from Deir el-Medina

Two ostraca, both originating from Deir el-Medina, further confirm the connection between Anukis and the gazelle, both in iconography and text. These examples represent the most explicit sources known to link the goddess with this animal.

a. A votive for Anukis

(Stockholm, Medelhavsmuseet, MM 14011; Peterson 1973: Pl. 19)

An ostrakon now in the collection of Medelhavsmuseet in Stockholm features a seated Anukis, with two recumbent gazelles in front of her. The goddess is found to the left, holding a staff in one hand and an ankh-sign in the other.

An offering table separates the animals from the deity. The inscription in front of her reads *ʿnkt nbt stt*, ‘Anukis, mistress of Sehel’. The title mistress of Sehel is established from the Middle Kingdom onward (Valbelle 1981: 107), with *h3st* occurring as the determinative for the toponym *stt*. The inscription above the gazelles reads *ghs ʿwt*, which translates as ‘wild gazelle’ or possibly ‘small gazelle’. Peterson (1973: 77) suggests that these two gazelles may have referred to Gehesty (cf. 7.2). Traces of an inscription along the lower edge read */// sdm ʿs m st pr m3ʿt imn n ipt ///*, ‘...hearing the summons (?) in the Place of the House of Truth, Amen-em-ipet ///’.

7.4.3/b Giving praise to Anukis

(Cairo, JE 43660; Quaegebeur 1999: 22, Fig. 14).

The second ostrakon is found in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. To the left is the royal scribe Hay, kneeling and with his hands raised in an adoration position. A lavish offering table is in the middle of the scene. To the right a gazelle strides forth from the mountains, facing the offering table and Hay. The inscription above the scene is divided into two sections; one describing Hay and the other the gazelle. Daressy published a complete transcription of the text (1919: 77), beginning with the inscription above the offering table and the kneeling Hay.

rdlt dw3 n ʿnkt
tr.n sš nsw
m st m3ʿt h3l.t¹³⁷ m3ʿ hrw
s3 Imn nht m3ʿ hrw s3 n s3=f

Giving praise to Anukis
 is that which the royal scribe
 in the Place of Truth Hay, justified
 and Saamunnakht, justified, son of his
 son did.

The text above the gazelle reads ‘an offering which the king gives Anukis, lady of the sky, mistress of the gods’ (*htp di nsw ʿnkt nbt pt hnwt ntrw*), clearly identifying the gazelle as Anukis. The motif of a gazelle emerging from mountains is analogous to that of Hathor striding forth from the western mountains, in her role as the lady of the west and the protector of the deceased (Hornung 1990: 58-59).

137 Cf. Ranke 1935 PN 1: 232, 8 for the transliteration of the name.

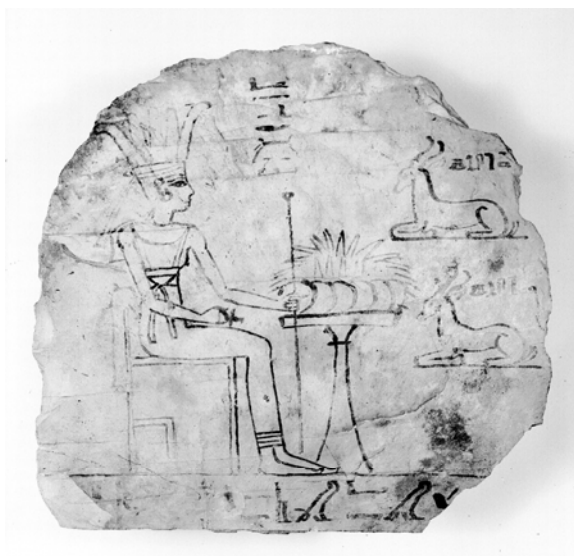


Figure 80. Anukis and the two recumbent gazelles



Figure 81. Hay adoring Anukis in the shape of a gazelle

7.4.4 The One who Dwells in Komir (*hr(yt) tb pr mrw*)

The relationship between the gazelle and Anukis, first documented in the New Kingdom, is reflected in some of the deity's titles. The title *hr(yt) tb pr mrw*, 'the one who dwells in Komir', is inscribed on a temple wall of the Khonsu Temple at Karnak dating to the 19th dynasty (Helck 1968: 121). This confirms that Anukis was connected to Komir as early as the New Kingdom (Gomaá 1977: 684). This site is situated ca 12 kilometres south of Esna, on the west bank of the Nile. This association is maintained until the Roman Period when one of Anukis' titles is *hnwt pr mrw*, 'mistress of Komir', found on the north inner wall of the temple at Esna (Sauneron 1975: 119, no. 516, 6). Sauneron (1975: 119 n. b), pointed out that this title has a parallel in another scene on a pillar at the same temple where however, *hnwt pr mrw* has been replaced by *hnwt ghst*, 'mistress of Geheset', written with a gazelle standing on a standard (Sauneron 1968: Esna III, 230, no. 312, 7). This equates *ghst* with *pr mrw* (Gauthier 1928: 219, cf. above 7.1).



Blocks once forming a part of a Ptolemaic Period temple at Komir further confirms that *ghst* is an alternate place name for *pr mrw* (cf. Valbelle 1983: Fig. 9, column 17). These inscriptions connect both Anukis and Nephthys to the toponym *ghst*.

7.4.4/a The gazelle cemetery at Geheset / Per-merw

A necropolis that includes several catacombs used for the burial of gazelle mummies is located in a desert area some three kilometres south of Komir. It has been dated to the Greco-Roman Period (Lortet and Gaillard 1903: 78-81, Gaillard and Daressy 1905: 13). Other animals, such as the ibis and the baboon, were kept in large numbers as cult animals that were purchased to serve as mummified messengers to the deity. This suggests that gazelles may have been kept for a similar purpose, and thus been a part of a temple complex in which gazelles were treated as sacred animals.

The mummified gazelles found in the Komir necropolis were wrapped with the limbs tucked under the belly (Lortet and Gaillard 1903: 78-79, Figs 42-43) in a position reminiscent of the recumbent gazelles in the two and three dimensional depictions (contra the shape of the 'standing' gazelle mummy of Isetemkheb D, TT 320; cf. above 2.4). Many of these gazelle mummies were reported to be female (Lortet and Gaillard 1903: 82). The overall mummification technique is described as poor (Lortet and Gaillard 1903: 78, 81, Gaillard and Daressy 1905: 12), which is a common feature ascribed to the votive mummies. In contrast to other animal votive mummies, the embalmed gazelles do not seem to have been equipped with any written

messages to a deity. The function of the votive mummies is not fully understood, but it is suggested that they communicated with the deity for whom they were regarded sacred (Ikram 2003a: 90).

In addition to Komir, a few gazelle mummies have been located in Kom Ombo, Dendera, Thebes, Hermopolis and Saqqara (Kessler 1989: 18-26), indicating a widespread but exclusive practice of mummifying gazelles during the Late Period.

In a Demotic lease contract from Thebes (c. 227-175 B.C.), a reference to a tomb of gazelles among the tombs of “Memnoneia” (Clarysse 1978: 234) is made. The document concerns the position of certain tombs, described as located next to the road of Amun and mentions *hwt n3 ghs.w* “the house of the gazelles” (Papyrus Philadelphia XXIV, El-Amir 1959: 110-113). The so-called Philadelphia Archive was “found in a corner of a Ptolemaic house... at Dra^c-Abu-el-Naga” (El-Amir 1959: 65, n. 1). Carnarvon and Carter excavated a site with Ptolemaic vaulted tombs at Dra Abu el-Naga (Carnarvon and Carter 1912: 49-50, PM I/2: 611) and at this site a few clay shrines, one of them containing “the bones of a gazelle”, were found (Carter 1912: 50, Pl. LXII, 2). The question remains whether the small shrine with its arched opening is the *hwt* referred to in P. Philadelphia XXIV.

7.4.5 A Demotic funerary text, Roman Period

(P. dém. Louvre N 2430c, Chauveau 1990: 3-8)

An enigmatic Demotic papyrus, dating to the Roman Period (P. dém. Louvre N 2420 c, Chauveau 1990: 3-8), with a suggested Theban origin, illustrates the connection between antelope and goddesses.

<i>šp[y]s r=tn t n3 tmnt.w</i>	Receive her, O westerners
<i>n3 tn.mwt w^c n t3 wšh.t m lt</i>	O deceased ones of the Hall of the Two Truths
<i>tw ḡb3 ḡpr ḡm t3y</i>	Because it is a young one (?)
<i>tw=w r dl.t n=s rt ḡn tmnt</i>	They will give to her a place in the West
<i>tw=w r ḡbh n=s mw t3 ḡtp.t</i>	They will pour libation water for her (on) the offering table
<i>m s3 3s.t lrm wstr</i>	after (pouring libations for) Isis and Osiris
<i>gm=[y]s ḡ.t t3 ḡr ḡr tb tmnt</i>	She will find Hathor in the West
<i>tw=s ḡms.k ḡr w^c ḡlgl</i>	sitting on a bed
<i>tw n3 šš.w n3 ḡhs.w (n3) 3ywr.w</i>	while the antelope, the gazelles, (the) deer
<i>n3 tp n t3wt.w n tw</i>	(and) the wild game of the desert

hr p3 sꜥ nꜥy hr=s tw=w ḏd are on the ground before her saying:
ln (5) dy tꜥy=n mwt ꜥn tꜥy=n mw.t "Is this our mother, our mother?"

In this short text, the inhabitants of the afterlife (the “West”) are asked to receive a young woman or child so that she might enjoy the benefits of a funerary offering. Filled with errors, and with no parallels to assist in the reading, the meaning of the text is difficult to comprehend. It is however clear that the text places the gazelle and other antelopes in the context of the necropolis as desert animals. The relationship with Hathor, as the presumptive “mother” of these animals, adds an additional level of divine association.

7.4.6 The gazelle and Anukis – concluding remarks

The connection between the gazelle and Anukis is confirmed in a limited number of sources from the New Kingdom. Anukis is further related to Komir, where a gazelle cemetery was located. The role of Anukis is perhaps best understood via other goddesses, such as Hathor as Lady of the West, protecting the deceased and Nephthys’ role in Gehest(y). This relates the connection between the gazelle and Anukis to the (western) mountains and regeneration.

Further, this review of the evidence reveals that the association between Anukis and the gazelle is not as prevalent as previously suggested (e.g. Valbelle 1981).

7.5 The gazelle and the divine eyes

The imagery of the divine eyes of the gods Horus and Re plays an important part in Egyptian mythology. The two texts discussed here place the gazelle in the context of first the eyes of Horus and then in relation to the goddess Tefnut, in the role of the Solar Eye.

The Eye of Horus is one of the central elements of the myth of Osiris. Taken from Horus and damaged by Seth during their struggle for the throne, it is returned to Horus after it was being made whole. At that point, Horus gives the Eye to his father Osiris, who thus completes the resurrection process becoming the king of the dead in the Underworld. The Eye of Horus thus becomes an icon for all offerings to the dead (Assmann 2001: 49-50).

The Solar Eye, daughter of Re, is a divine form that is associated with a group of goddesses that can occur in the form of the lioness Sakhmet and has associations with the fire-spitting uraeus. The most prominent among these goddesses is Hathor, who appears in the role in the well known story

given the title “Destruction of Mankind” (cf. e.g. Lichtheim 1976: 197-199, with reference). This and related tales tell of how the goddess runs off, and ends up beyond Egypt’s border in a foreign (*ḥ3st*) land. She is eventually enticed back, giving cause for celebration with the Festival of Drunkenness (*ḥb whm th*, Sternberg-El Hotabi 1992: 101-102). The transformations of Isis, described in Papyrus Jumilhac (cf. above 7.1.5) is one example of a goddess in the Solar Eye mode.

Although the two stories discussed below deal with different aspects of divine eyes, they share a basic theme, regeneration and the renewal of the kingship.

7.5.1 The Contendings of Horus and Seth

(Papyrus Chester Beatty I, 1:1-16:8; Gardiner 1931: 8-26, Pls 1-16; cf. Broze 1996)

The story of the conflict between Horus and Seth, how it began and how it ended, is found on Papyrus Chester Beatty I, dated to the reign of the 20th dynasty king, Ramses V. The myth that it relates, it has been argued, can be traced back to the Middle Kingdom (Broze 1996: 3).

Introductory lines establish the focus of the tale as the trial that is to judge which of the two gods, Horus or Seth, is the true heir of Osiris. A series of events leads to the escalation of the conflict between Horus and Seth. In the episode of interest here, Seth deprives Horus of both of his eyes, while he lies under a tree in an oasis.

<i>lst lr ḥr</i>	As for Horus,
<i>sw sḡr[.w] ḥr w^c nh3 ḡnw3^c</i>	he was lying under a shenusha-tree
<i>m p3 t3 n wh3t</i>	in the oasis country.
<i>wn.ln stḥ ḥr gm=tw.f</i>	The Seth found him,
<i>tw=f (ḥr) mh lm=f</i>	and he seized him,
<i>tw=f (ḥr) ḥw=tw.f</i>	and threw him
<i>ḥr 3t=f ḥr p3 ḡw</i>	on his back on the mountain.
<i>tw=f rwi wd3=f 2 m swt=w</i>	He removed his two sound (eyes) from
	their places
<i>tw=f tms=w ḥr p3 ḡw</i>	and buried them on the mountain
<i>r shḡ t3 tw p3 bnr 2 n lrty=f</i>	Toward morning his two eyeballs
<i>ḥpr m shrt 2</i>	became two bulbs
<i>tw=sn rd m sḡny</i>	and they grew into lotuses.
<i>wn.ln stḥ ḥr tt n=f</i>	And then Seth came to him
<i>tw=f ḥr ḡd n p3 r^c ḥr 3ḥty n ḡ3</i>	and told Pre-Harakhti falsely:
<i>bwpw=i gm ḥr</i>	“I did not find Horus”,
<i>ḥr tw gm=f sw</i>	although he had found him.

<i>wn.ln hwt hr hr nb nht ršy hr šm</i>	Then Hathor, mistress of the southern sycamore, went
<i>tw=st gm hr</i>	and she found Horus
<i>tw=f sḡr[.w] hr rmw hr t3 ḥ3st</i>	as he lay weeping in the desert
<i>wn.ln=s mḥ wꜥ ḡhst</i>	Then she caught a female gazelle
<i>tw=st hr=st</i>	and milked it,
<i>tw=st hr ḡḏ n hr</i>	and said to Horus:
<i>i.wn lrt=k</i>	“Open your eye,
<i>dt=i nšy lrtḡ tm</i>	that I may put milk there.”
<i>wn.ln=f hr wn lrt=f</i>	He opened his eye
<i>tw=st dlt n3 lrtḡ tm</i>	and she put the milk there
<i>tw=st dlt r t3 lmnt</i>	She put on the right (eye),
<i>tw=st dlt r t3 smḥ</i>	she put on the left (eye);
<i>tw=st hr ḡḏ n=f</i>	And she said to him:
<i>i wn lrt=k</i>	“Open your eye(s)!”
<i>tw=f wn lrt=f</i>	He opened his eye(s).
<i>tw=st ptr=f</i>	She looked at him,
<i>gm=s sw mns.t(i)</i>	she found them healed.
<i>wn.ln=s hr šmt r ḡḏ n p3 rꜥ hr</i>	Then she went to speak to Pre-Harahkti:
<i>3ḥty</i>	“I found Horus,
<i>gm(=i) hr</i>	Seth had deprived him of his eye(s)
<i>tw gb sw stḥ m lrt=f</i>	but I restored him again.”
<i>hr lr=l sꜥḥꜥ=f ʿn</i>	

Lines 10,1-11 (Gardiner 1932: 50-51)

Predating Papyrus Jumilhac by some 1000 years or more, still there are elements in this episode that tie the two together. In Papyrus Jumilhac, as in this narrative Isis intervenes on Horus’s behalf and transforms herself. And here, as in Jumilhac, Isis and Hathor combine efforts. The crux of the story however is found in the injury to the eyes of Horus, a central element of the Osirian myth. In other versions, the wounded eye, stolen by Seth, is healed by Thoth (Griffiths 1960: 29, 82; cf. also Book of the Dead Chapter 17). Here it is the milk (*lrtḡ*) of the gazelle (*ḡhst*) that heals both eyes (*lrt*). As in Jumilhac, the location is a mountain (*ḡw*). And indeed the presence of the gazelle may allude to the toponym Gehest(y), lending connotations of regeneration to this part of the story.

7.5.2 The gazelle in the Myth of the Solar Eye

The Demotic text known as the Myth of the Solar Eye (Pap. Leiden I 384, recto), dated to the early Roman Period, gives a clear example of a goddess, in this case Tefnut, in that role. The premise of the story is that Tefnut has left Egypt in anger and must be persuaded to return (Smith 1984: 1082-1083). Thoth is sent to Kush where the goddess has fled to cajole her by entertaining her with stories.¹³⁸ Tefnut begins the journey back to Egypt, but must take on the forms of different animals in order to escape her father's enemies. Somewhere between el-Kab and Thebes Tefnut transforms herself into 'a female gazelle' (*ḥbr n kḥs.t*, Pap. Leiden I 384, recto 21, 7-10; de Cenival 1988: 64). Her arrival in Thebes is greeted with a song, and she is further described as the '(female) gazelle of the mountain' (*kḥs3.t n p3 ḡw*, Pap. Leiden I 384, recto 21, 22; de Cenival 1988: 66). Tefnut it is surmised is eventually reunited with her father Re in Heliopolis. Both the beginning and the end of the papyrus is missing however, so the "conclusion of the myth is lost" (Smith 1984: 1084).

Tefnut takes on other forms on this journey. She transforms herself into a vulture (*nry.t*) when in el-Kab (Pap. Leiden I 384, recto 21, 3; de Cenival 1988: 64). This is logical considering that El-Kab was a cult centre for the vulture goddess Nekhbet. This suggests that the gazelle form may have had special interest for Thebes, although there is nothing specific to support that.

What is most interesting with the information from the Myth of the Solar Eye is that it provides evidence for the gazelle as a form of the female Solar Eye.

7.5.3 Additional references to the myth of the Solar Eye

References to the myth of the Solar Eye have been found in a number of temples dated to the Greco-Roman Period (e.g. Philae, Dendur, Kom Ombo, Esna, Edfu, Dendera, cf. Junker 1911 and Inconnu-Bocquillon 2001). An example of the inclusion of the gazelle in this context is found in a song inscribed on a pillar in the Hathor temple at Philae (PM VI: 251 (g)-(l); "deuxième colonne du Sud" (Daumas 1968: 9, § 18). The inscription is part of a chant that urges the gazelle to come down to Egypt, "Coming down to Egypt, the female gazelle of this desert/mountain"; *m tlt h3t r kmt t3 ḡhst n py mrw*¹³⁹ (Junker 1911: 46, Daumas 1968: 10). The writing *py mrw*

138 Cf. Smith (1984: 1083) for this identification of Thoth as *p3 šm n wnš kwf*

139 Cf. Daumas (1968: 10, n. 65) on the spelling of the word mountain as *mrw* versus *ḡw* during the later periods (also *Wb* V: 545).

“desert/mountain” implies a pun with the place name for Komir *pr mrw* (cf. above 7. 3.4).

The reference to “coming down to Egypt” parallels the events related in the Demotic Myth of the Solar Eye, and is a strong indication that the female gazelle is not merely an additional detail in the Demotic text but incorporated into the imagery of that myth and that the Solar Eye, daughter of Re, has, as one of her forms, a female gazelle from the desert mountains.

7.5.4 The gazelle and the divine eyes – concluding remarks

The two stories cited add additional levels of evidence regarding the relationship between the image of the gazelle and divinity. The earlier tale “the Conflict of Horus and Seth”, juxtaposes the gazelle with Isis and Hathor. The scene is that of the mountainous desert where Horus lies helpless having been blinded by his uncle Seth. Gazelle milk, with its connotations of motherhood and thus associated with Isis, is the healing agent. This combination of elements creates an analogy with the death and resurrection of Osiris. The regeneration of the eyes builds on that analogy as they become bulbs that bloom on the mountainside. The gazelle in this context is the mother that facilitates a solar “rebirth.”

The Myth of the Solar Eye has another focus. Although Jumilhac provides an example of the protective power of this category of goddess, the Myth of the Solar Eye deals with taming the wild daughter so that she will return to her father. The inclusion of the gazelle in this context suggests that the analogy seen between the gazelle and e.g. the uraeus is more than a question of the aesthetics of adornment. Rather, it has a follow through in the place given the gazelle as a manifestation of the Solar Eye.

7.6 Isis and the gazelle in Roman times

It is a Latin source that provides one of the last glimpses of the relationship of the gazelle to the divine. In one of the first natural histories, *De Natura Animalium*, Aelian (c. AD 175 - 235) describes the worship of Isis at Coptos. Focussing on the relationship of this goddess to the scorpion, the passage concludes with a reference to the gazelle.

At Coptos in Egypt the natives pay homage to Isis in a variety of rituals but especially in the service and ministry rendered by women who are mourning either a husband or a son or a brother. And at Coptos there are scorpions of immense size, possessing very sharp stings, and most dangerous in their attack (for when they strike they kill instantly), and the Egyptians contrive innumerable devices for self-

protection. But although the women in mourning at the temple of the goddess sleep on the floor, go about with bare feet, and all but tread on the aforesaid scorpions, yet they remain unharmed. And these same people of Coptos worship and deify the female gazelle, though they sacrifice the male. They say that the females are the pets of Isis.

De Natura Animalium XI, 23 (Schofield 1959: 315-317)

This source presents an observer's view of the remnants of Pharaonic practices and beliefs. Some of what is described can however be related to known phenomena. The magical power of Isis over the scorpions is noted in the text from the Metternich stela and in her role as Hedetet (Meeks 1977: 1076). The preference for the female gazelle, and its role as a pet has been discussed above, while the fate of the male reflects a general tendency to polarize the genders, with the male representing a hostile force (cf. e.g. the red and white hippopotamus, Säve-Söderbergh 1953: 47-52).

7.7 The gazelle and the divine – concluding remarks

Expressions of the relationship between the gazelle and the divine are found within a limited but consistent range. Two themes stand out. The first of these is the characterisation of the gazelle as a desert animal that thus represents the role of the desert in mythic thought. The other is the way in which the gazelle is integrated into the complex of ideas represented by female duality and transformation. The combination of these elements brings a focus on the process of resurrection, particularly as a form of rebirth and healing. The gazelle is thus an additional image that manifests some of the most fundamental concepts and paradigms in ancient Egypt.

The “desert mountains” as a place with inherent regenerative qualities is encountered in the concept of Gehesty (7.2). The earliest sources consider it to be the place of the death and restoration of Osiris. This resurrection could also (obliquely) apply to the enthronement of the pharaoh (7.2.3). As a “real” place, it is connected to *pr mrw* (Komir). *Pr mrw* during the Late Period appears to have been an alternative spelling to the desert mountains (*py mrw*).

The connection between the gazelle and divinity in a desert setting is implied by the naturalistic setting of the decoration of the funerary D-ware (3.2). This is repeated in the imagery of the desert hunt scene (Chapter 4) that is given an established place in tomb decoration. The so-called Miracle of the Gazelle (7.3), that takes place in a desert quarry, echoes the role of the desert as a place with rejuvenating qualities. These are then emphasized with the birth of a gazelle fawn on the stone slab intended as a sarcophagus lid. As a

“historical text”, the Wadi Hammamat inscription connects a real observation to a symbolic image, that relates to iconographic ideal.

The idea of the gazelle as an inherent duality is stressed in the dual form of the toponym Gehesty. The selection of pair depictions in desert hunt scenes (cf. Appendix II) reinforces this association. A nexus with the imagery of the uraeus as a duality is found in the gazelle as protome on the diadem and its depictions (cf. 6.2). The connection between the feminine duality of the gazelle and that of the sisters Isis and Nephthys is displayed in the role allotted Gehesty as the place of Osirian resurrection.

This duality extends to the transformatory capabilities of the Solar Eye, as the goddess in this role moves from fiercely protective to nurturing, the latter a role particularly suitable for the gazelle as the source of healing milk, illustrated in the Contendings of Horus and Seth (7.5.1). The Demotic myth of the Solar Eye, with the gazelle appearing alongside the vulture, is another point of connection with the duality of the protome, also found as gazelles. Expressed in various constellations, the gazelle with a well defined relationship to the female ‘mode’ alludes to mother and daughter. The different expressions of the Eye goddesses further demonstrate the complexity as well as the ‘validity’ of the gazelle as a meaningful image.

8 The Gazelle in Ancient Egyptian Art

Image and Meaning

The aim of this study has been to examine the role of the gazelle in ancient Egyptian art and determine its basic form and associations. This review, covering a period of some four thousands years, shows that the image of the gazelle is a reoccurring feature of Egyptian art. It is found in a number of different sources, from Predynastic objects (Chapter 3), to desert hunt and offering scenes (Chapter 4 and 5) and on a variety of objects (Chapter 6). The status of the gazelle as something more than a reference to natural surroundings is confirmed in the context in which these images are found as well as in the textual sources (Chapter 7). The vast majority of the images of the gazelle are relatively homogenous, suggesting that they were, by the historical period, canonical and subject to few changes. The written references to the gazelle are few but display a consistent frame of reference. The pictorial and textual images correlate and bring an underlining idea with specific connotations into focus. The primary material indicates that the natural image of the gazelle is paralleled with one laden with cultural concepts at an early stage; image and meaning were essentially “always” interwoven.

The gazelle images are to a large degree based on observation of its natural behaviour (Chapter 2). Certain aspects of this behaviour appear to have provoked associations resulting in the selection of specific images that were consequently solidified into icons. These in turn carried associations that motivated their continued inclusion. This indicates that the underlying meaning of the images is as important, if not more so, than the natural representation of the gazelle.

The pattern that emerges from following the gazelle imagery through time is one that indicates an explicit relationship between the gazelle and attributes of regeneration. An initial image of the gazelle as prey is joined, and later superseded, by that of mother and child, thus placing the gazelle in the sphere of the feminine, particularly in the funerary context. The connection between the gazelle and the desert landscape as the place where death is transformed into new life is particularly prominent. Here the image of the nursing gazelle and the two gazelles underscore the idea of transition.

The Predynastic images (Chapter 3) locate the gazelle in its natural environment, the desert, where it was hunted by various predators. The motif

of dog (/lion) attacking gazelle is one of the earliest and most prevailing images. The hunter and the hunted formed binary pairs, connoting control versus chaos. The capture and death of the gazelle provided a food offering, transforming the animal into life giving sustenance. The Predynastic burials of gazelles (7.1) indicate that the relationship with desert prey had gained a ritual character early on.

The dynastic royal and private desert hunt scenes (Chapter 4) display more or less the same set of gazelle motifs, demonstrating the established position of the gazelle in such compositions, and the desert hunt scene alters little in its composition during the millennia it was in use. This canonical stability is explained by the function of the motifs. The gazelle stands out in these scenes however in its singular role as nursing mother (cf. Appendix III).

One of the most fundamental concepts in the funerary iconography is the offering of food and other gifts to the deceased (Chapter 5). The overall composition of the offering scene does not change significantly during the Dynastic Period. The gazelle as an element in these scenes stands out in a few respects; most notable is the nursing gazelle in an offering row (5.1.1/b.1.γ and ε), however, it is limited in the offering context to the Old Kingdom. Further, the gazelle is carried by the offering bringers in a great number of variations (5.1.1/a.3, 5.1.1/b.2), focusing on it as a small and, mostly likely, young animal. The compositional position of the gazelle fawn is commonly paralleled with the calf, suggesting that these two are equated and thereby conceptualized as belonging to the category. This creates an analogy with divine cow – calf paradigm found with Hathor and the king. The so-called basket motif (5.1.1/b.3, cf. Appendix III) is another image typical for the Old Kingdom that features the gazelle fawn. The basket motif also tends to include two animals in the basket, providing a distinctive reference to duality as a compositional structure repeated with the gazelle.

8.1 Abstracted motifs

Most of the gazelle motifs that have an origin in the desert hunt scenes are used in other contexts. These include the dog-attacking-gazelle motif, the gazelle with face turned back, the nursing gazelle, the recumbent fawn and the pair of gazelles. These are all found on, and as, objects. The textual references represent a correlating adaption of the conceptual role of gazelle imagery.

8.1.1 The eyes of the gazelle - face turned back

The best known textual description of the gazelle, describes the approach the pregnant animal about to give birth on the slab destined to be the lid of a royal sarcophagus.

<i>twt in ghst bk3t hr šm.tl</i>	And the pregnant gazelle came, walking
<i>hr=s r rmꜥ hft hr=s</i>	her face was toward the people before her.
<i>tw lrty=s hr m33 hr s3s3</i>	Her two eyes looked straight ahead.
<i>nn ʿn=s h3=s r spr=s</i>	She did not turn back until she arrived
<i>r qw pn šps r inr pn</i>	at this noble mountain to this block.

Wadi Hammamat M 110, Couyat and Montet 1912: Pl. XXIX; 1913:
77-78, cf. above 7.3

This image is easily recognizable as characteristic of the motif of the fleeing gazelle, face turned back, in the desert hunt scenes from all periods. The insistence on this pose suggests that there is more to the composition than a mere observation of the natural behavior. The description in the Wadi Hammamat text focuses on the eyes of the animal, and while observation reveals the importance of the gazelle's ability to see long distances (cf. 2.3.5), there is also the later connection between the gazelle and divine eyes (cf. 7.5). The integration of the "eye" theme with that of nourishment and healing is also revealed in the Wadi Hammamat inscription as the story of the birth of the gazelle fawn is illustrated with the king offering two milk jars to Min, calling forth associations with the later narrative of healing in The Contendings of Horus and Seth (7.5.1). Although this interpretation might be considered somewhat speculative, it is clear that the eyes of the gazelle were often the focus of its portrayal.

8.1.2 Mother and child – the nursing motif

The most common motif portraying the relationship between mother and young was the nursing gazelle. This image appears in the desert hunt scenes from the Old Kingdom throughout the New Kingdom and it is found in the Old Kingdom offering rows as well (Appendix III). The nursing gazelle is transposed to other contexts, most notably in the New Kingdom faience bowls (6.5). Such faience bowls were primarily found and used in the Hathoric cult centers, and the image of the nursing gazelle may infer a reference to both Hathor and the goddess' use of milk to heal, described in The Contendings of Horus and Seth (7.5.1).

The repeated use of the nursing gazelle motif indicates that it had an important connotation particularly in a funerary context. The occurrence of the nursing gazelle on the faience bowls, with an aquatic setting, calls to mind the story of Isis who conceals, protects and nurses the Horus child in the marshes of Khemmis (cf. Pinch 1993: 313).

8.1.3 The hidden fawn

The gazelle fawn is often found on the inserts (4.1.4), a motif mainly used in the Old Kingdom desert hunt scenes. This image reflects the natural hiding and survival behavior of the gazelle fawn (2.3.4). The recumbent form of the fawn is the most common motif found for the so-called cosmetic spoons or containers dating to the New Kingdom (6.7). This recumbent position of the fawn has a pictorial resemblance to the trilateral sign used in the word “heir” (Faulkner 1962: 12, Gardiner Sign List E 9), providing a semiotic link between the gazelle fawn and the child Horus, son of Isis. Here too, there is the possibility to see a connection with the idea of the protected child in the Osirian myth.



Trilateral sign
for “heir”

8.1.4 Single gazelle protome – the uraeus and Udjat Eye

The single gazelle protome found on the Horus cippi and on the forehead of Reshep (6.3) most likely referred to the apotropaic qualities of these deities,



Figure 82.
Gazelle and the
udjat eye

and a general association to healing. The interchangeability of the gazelle and the uraeus as protome indicates that the uraeus too had this association possibly as Wadjit (*w3ḏt*), the cobra goddess of Lower Egypt. The combination of the gazelle and the sound Eye of Horus (*wḏ3t*) is found on the reverse of a scarab in collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 82). The eyes of Horus are healed, made sound by the milk of the gazelle (7.5.1). The Eye is also the main icon for

offerings. The scarab illustration brings together several levels of regeneration, implicit in the connection between the gazelle and the divine Eyes (cf. 7.5).

8.1.5 The desert mountains

The gazelle as a desert animal (2.2) is stressed on numerous occasions, both in the context in which its image (cf. 4.1.1) is found and particularly in the textual material. The qualities of the desert are beneficial for the dead, as

demonstrated by the role given Gehesty (7.2), as well as the reoccurrence of the desert mountain topography in the both pictorial and textual sources.

The desert is the natural home of the gazelle, it the scene for the desert hunt, and the place from which it is taken to become an offering for the deceased. In mythic terms, the desert is Gehesty “The Place of the Two Gazelles”, where Osiris both dies and is raised up. The two gazelles that make up its name is a motif from the desert hunt scenes (e.g. 4.3.1/b.1 and Appendix II). In the wild, female gazelles pair up when food is scarce (2.2). The repeated motif of two gazelles in the desert hunt scenes may contribute to the idea of the desert as a place of want, with the death of Osiris as a part of that idea.

The desert hunt scenes may have the death of Osiris behind them as an implicit condition for the function of the tomb. The myth itself is however implicit in later sources when the milk of the gazelle plays an active part in the resolution of conflict with the healing of the eyes of Horus, leading to the god’s defeat of his father’s murderer and his own ascent to the throne (7.5.1). This too is placed in the context of a desert mountain that, like Gehesty, is given the attributes of both death and regeneration.

The gazelle is a natural participant in the quarrying activities required for the acquisition of the stone for a royal sarcophagus. The Wadi Hammamat inscription (7.3) that describes a gazelle giving birth on the slab intended for the lid is metaphoric in character, overlaying the connotations of the desert-gazelle relationship onto the function of the block.

The desert mountains as a transformative topography play an active part in the Myth of the Solar Eye (7.5.2), as Tefnut transforms herself into a gazelle upon entering Thebes. The Theban mountains, found on the west bank, give an added level of generative imagery to this tale.

This explicit connection of the gazelle to the desert is further illustrated in the Roman Period gazelle necropolis in the desert at Komir (7.4.4). The Egyptian name for Komir, *pr mrw* can also be read as the Late Period term for desert mountain *py mrw*.

The desert as an attribute of the gazelle is incorporated into a gazelle statue dated to the 18th Dynasty (MMA 26.7.1292, Arnold 1995: 10; here Fig. 83). The gazelle stands on a wooden base that has been crafted into an undulating desert ground, interspersed with desert plants and bushes. This delicate object shows the gazelle as a desert animal, an image with multiple associations.



Figure 83. Gazelle standing on desert ground (MMA 26.7.1292).

8.1.6 The gazelle pair

The motif of two gazelles is used in a number of different contexts. Found in the desert hunt scenes (Appendix II), the two gazelle motif is reflected earlier in the pair of gazelle wands (6.1) and repeated in the gazelle protomes (6.2). Common for the latter is an association with a ritual context in which women participate. The evidence for these wands covers the period from the 1st to at least the 22nd dynasty, often in the context of the Heb Sed. An early depiction of the wands as determinatives in the term *dw3wt* (“worshipping women” in the Pyramid Texts (6.1.2), relates them to a group of lakes in which the king, as Osiris, is bathed as part of the resurrection process. As also the place where the dawn is born, these lakes, represented by the gazelle wands, have clear regenerative properties, similar to those ascribed to Gehesty, the Place of the Two Gazelles.

The gazelle wands are often carried by women wearing a modius, in one example ornamented with a double gazelle protome (6.1.4/b). The women wearing the two gazelle protome could also carry sistras and menats, indicating an association between the gazelle wand and protomes with the cult of Hathor. The women themselves appear to occur in the role “daughter”, as noted on the chair of Satamun (6.2.5) and in the tombs of Menna and Paury (6.2.2-3). The young women depicted in the Heb Sed context are also often termed *msw nsw*, “children of the king” (cf. e.g. Troy 1986: 89-90). All of this suggests that there is an association between the gazelle iconography and women of younger “daughter” rank. This connection is affirmed in the incorporation of the gazelle into the Myth of the Solar Eye (7.5.2), in which Tefnut, the daughter of Re, transforms herself into a gazelle. Further, it has been suggested that the chair of Satamun (6.2.5) represents an early image of the Demotic myth (Radomska 1991: 269-275).

Hathor is another goddess attributed with the role of daughter of Re, often found with a platform crown with two plumes, said to connect her to the Solar Eye (Malaise 1976: 224). This implies that the gazelle protomes attached to a modius, and in a few examples the plumes, also have this connotation. Hathor is also, in Papyrus Jumilhac (7.2.7) closely associated with Gehesty, the Place of the Two Gazelles.

One of the primary forms of the Solar Eye is as a cobra, called in that context a uraeus. While the king wears the single uraeus, it is the double uraeus that characterizes the iconography of the royal women. It is this duality that is paralleled by the double gazelle protome. Additional feminine dualities such as the Two Ladies of Upper and Lower Egypt and the Osirian sisters Isis and Nephthys all are part of a paradigm of renewal (cf. Troy 1986: 46-47), into which the gazelle is incorporated.

8.2 Conclusion

The image of the gazelle has its origin in nature, and more so in the response of the Egyptians to seeing it in its natural surrounding. The image that comes from this meeting is employed as an expression of some of the most central ideas of Egyptian culture: as prey in an illustration of the interaction of order and conflict, as an image of nurturing regeneration and healing for the deceased in a funerary context, as a representation of the protective action of the mother hiding her child in preparation for the ascent of a new generation. The gazelle also functions as an icon for the place in which the transition between death and life takes place. The preference for the feminine aspect of the gazelle allows it to move into the paradigms of that role, making it a

manifestation of the same conceptual sphere as found for goddesses such as Tefnut, Hathor and Isis, mother and solar daughter.

The gazelle as icon and divine image embodies a range of expressions that correlate with its nature as a desert animal, while provoking associations with central cultural concepts. These motifs, with their continuing presence in Egyptian art thus have parallel functions as both image and meaning.

Appendix I: desert hunt scenes – royal monuments

Old Kingdom

Khufu (?), Lisht (L 13-14: 315), 4th dyn.

Source	Reused blocks found in the pyramid of Amenemhat I at Lisht. Dated to the 4 th dynasty, from temple of Khufu (?).
Motifs	4 gazelles in group, striding
References	Goedicke 1971: 135, fragment 82

Sahure, Abusir, 5th dyn. = 4.2.1/a

Source	Blocks from pyramid temple (Berlin 21783) = 4.2.1/a
Motifs	2 pair compositions: striding; dorcas and Soemmerring's, fleeing, pierced by arrow, head turned back, dog attack, recumbent in insert
References	PM III/1: 327 (5), Borchardt 1913: Pl. 17

Niuserre, Abu Ghurob, 5th dyn. = 4.2.1/b

Source	Blocks from Sun temple (Berlin 20036)
Motifs	Pair composition: dorcas and Soemmerring's foaling, recumbent, nibbling on bush, basket on pole.
References	PM III/1: 319, Von Bissing 1956: Pl XI a-b, Edel and Wenig 1974: Pl. 14

Unas, Saqqara, 5th dyn. = 4.2.1/c

Source	Causeway leading to pyramid complex
Motifs	Two pair compositions: striding, one of them dorcas and Soemmerring's, dog attack, head turned back, mating (?), pair composition: dorcas and Soemmerring's foaling (?), recumbent in insert, nursing
References	PM III/2: 419, Hassan 1938: Pl. XCVII A, Labrousse and Moussa 2002: 147-152, Figs 42-59

Pepi II, Saqqara, 6th dyn. = 4.2.1/d

Source	Pyramid temple
Motifs	Pair composition: striding, recumbent in insert (?)
References	PM III/2: 427 (27), Jéquier 1938: Pls 41-43

Middle Kingdom

Mentuhotep II, Deir el-Bahari, 11th dyn. = 4.2.2/a

Source Blocks from funerary complex (Brussels, Musée Royaux E.4989)
Motifs Fleeing, pierced by arrow, head turned back
References PM II: 385, Naville, Ayrton and Hall 1907: Pl. XVI

New Kingdom

Amarna, 18th dyn.

Source Amarna royal tomb
Motif Traces of animals in desert, gazelles fleeing, head turned back (no hunting per se)
References PM IV: 236 (10), Smith 1965b: 182, Fig. 62 a

Source Block from palace in Amarna
Motif Gazelles fleeing in desert, head turned back (no hunting per se).
References Smith 1965b: 182, Fig. 62 b

Thebes, 18th dyn.

Source Block from the Aten shrine in Karnak
motif Traces of animals fleeing in desert
References Smith 1965b: 182, Fig. 62 c

Tutankhamun, KV 62, Valley of the Kings, 18th dyn. = 4.2.3/a.1-4

Source a. Bow case (Cairo JE 61502)
Motifs Fleeing, male gazelle nibbling on bush
References PM I/2: 581, McLeod 1982: Pls VI-XVI

Source b. Painted chest (Cairo JE 61467)
Motifs Fleeing, species grouping
References PM I/2: 577, Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CLXXV (J 121)

Source c. Embroidered tunic (Cairo JE 62626)
Motifs Fleeing, head turned back, dog attack, recumbent, nursing
References PM I/2: 582, Crowfoot and Davies 1941: Pl. XXII

Source d. Unguent jar (Cairo JE 6119)
Motifs Fleeing, head turned back, dog attack
References PM I/2: 580, Carter 1927: Pl. LI

Source Temple of Amun, Karnak
 Motifs Block fragment showing shooting from chariot, traces of pierced aurochs. According to the inscription a desert hunt (*bhs ʿwt nbt njt ḥ3st.*)
 References Decker and Herb 1994: 343, Pl. CLXXI (J 118)

Seti I, temple of Hauron-Haremakheth, Giza, 19th dyn.

Source Stela (no. 80)
 Motifs Traces, no gazelles visible
 References PM III/1: 39, Hassan 1953: 104, Fig. 74

Ramses III, Medinet Habu, 20th dyn. = 4.2.3/b

Source Funerary temple = 4.2.3/b
 Motifs Fleeing, head turned back, pierced by arrow, species grouping
 References PM II: 516 (185), Epigraphic Survey 1932: Pls 116-117

Appendix II: desert hunt scenes – private tombs

Old Kingdom

Meidum

Nefermaat, Tomb 16a (Cairo 43809), 3rd-4th dyn. = 4.3.1/a.1

Motifs Dog attack
 References PM IV: 93, Petrie 1892: Pl. XVII, Harpur 2001: Pl. 5

Atet, Tomb 16b (Pennsylvania University Museum E.16141), 3rd-4th dyn. = 4.3.1/a.1

Motifs Dog attack
 References PM IV: 94, Petrie 1892: XXVII, Harpur 2001: Pl. 37

Rahotep, Tomb 6 (Cairo T19.11.24.3G), 4th dyn. = 4.3.1/a.2

Motifs Fleeing, head turned back, dog attack
 References PM IV: 91, Petrie 1892: Pl. IX, Harpur 2001: Pl. 40

Saqqara

Methen, LS 6, 4th dyn.

Motifs No gazelles depicted

References PM III/2: 493 (4), Smith 1949: 152, Fig. 60

Raemka, Tomb 80 (D3, S 903) (MMA 1908.201.1), 5th dyn. = 4.3.1/b.1

Motifs Pair composition: fleeing (?), dog attack, head turned back, recumbent in insert

References PM III/2: 487 (3), Hayes 1953: 99, Fig. 56

Pehenuka, Tomb D 70 (LS 15) (Berlin 1132), 5th dyn. = 4.3.1/b.2

Motifs Nibbling on bush, nursing, recumbent in insert

References PM III/2: 491-492 (4), Harpur 1987: 530, Fig. 188

Ptahhotep [II], Tomb D 64b, 5th dyn., Isesi-Unas = 4.3.1/b.3

Motifs Dog attack, recumbent in insert, nursing

References PM III/2: 601 (17), Davies 1900: Pl. XXI

Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, 5th dyn., Niuserre – Menkauhor = 4.3.1/b.4

Motifs Recumbent in insert, nursing

References PM III/2: 642 (10), Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pls 38, 40

Akhethotep, Tomb D 64a, 5th dyn., Isesi-Unas

Motifs Lion attack, recumbent in insert, possibly a dog attack

References PM III/2: 599 (1)-(2), Davies 1913: Pl. XL, 1-3

Ti, Tomb 60 (D22), 5th dyn.

Motifs Lion attack

References PM III/2: 473 (35), Schweitzer 1948: 54, Fig. 6

Thefu, 5th dyn.

Motifs Lion attack

References PM III/2: 605, Hassan 1975b: Pl. LXXXVI, C

Fetekta, Tomb LS 1, 5th-6th dyn.

Motifs Three striding, in insert, with pair of Soemmerring's gazelle and an ibex.

References PM III/1: 351 (6), LD II, Pl. 96

Nebkauher, 5th-6th dyn.

Motifs Traces of desert hunt scene, no gazelles visible
References PM III/2: 628 (10), Hassan 1975a: Pl. XIX, C

Mereruka, Tomb A, 6th dyn.

Motifs Lassoed, recumbent in insert (?)
References PM III/2: 528 (18), Duell 1938 I: Pls 24-25

Meryteti (son of Mereruka), Tomb C, 6th dyn. = 4.3.1/b.5

Motifs Lion and dog attack, dorcas and Soemmerring's striding in group,
 gazelle in basket (?), recumbent in insert
References PM III/2: 536 (112), Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CXL (J 40)

Seankhuptah, 6th dyn.

Motifs Striding gazelles in group, gazelle in insert
References Kanawati and Abder-Raziq 1998: Pl. 67

Idut, 6th dyn.

Motifs Reported in PM
References PM III/2: 619, "unplaced", Decker and Herb 1994: 309 (J 37)

Wernu, 6th dyn.

Motifs Lion attacking oryx, a gazelle striding
References PM III/2: 519 (8), Saad 1943: Pl. XLIII

Unknown, Shaft no. 6, 6th dyn.

Motifs Nursing
References PM III/2: 613, Hassan 1975c: Pl. XIV, C

Giza

Minkhauf, Tomb G 7430 + 7440, 4th dyn., Khufu-Khefren

Motifs Fragment of a kneeling hunter, no gazelles visible
References PM III/1: 195, Decker and Herb 1994: 299 (J 19), Smith 1949: 170,
 Fig 65.

Nimaatre, Tomb G 2097, 5th dyn. = 4.3.1/c.1

Motifs Striding, dog attack, (?), Pair composition: dorcas and Soemmerring's mating

References PM III/1: 70, Roth 1995: Fig. 189

Seshemnefer [IV], LG 53, 5th- 6th dyn. = 4.3.1/c.2

Motifs Fleeing, head turned back, lassoed, recumbent in insert, mating

References PM III/1: 224 (6), Junker 1953: Fig. 63

Akhetmerunesut, Tomb G 2184, 5th-6th dyn.

Motifs Fragmentary, hunting with lasso, no gazelles

References PM III/1: 80 (4)-(5), Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CXXXVIII (J 34)

Deir el-Gebrawi

Ibi, Tomb 8, 6th dyn. = 4.3.1/d.1

Motifs Striding, lion attack

References PM IV: 244 (11), Davies 1902a: Pl. XI

Djau, Tomb 12, 6th dyn.

Motifs Striding, head turned back

References PM IV: 245 (7), Davies 1902b: Pl. IX

El-Hawawish

Hesi-min, Tomb G 42, 6th dyn.

Motifs Traces, no gazelles visible

References Kanawati 1987: 13, Fig. 3

Intef, Tomb BA 63, 6th dyn. or after

Motifs Traces, no gazelles visible

References Kanawati 1987: 34, Figs 20, 21

Kheni, Tomb H 24, 6th dyn. - FIP

Motifs Fragmentary, two dogs attack.

References Kanawati 1981: 23, Fig. 19

Qubbet el-Hawa

Pepy-nakht Hekaib, A.9, 6th dyn., Pepi II

Motifs Traces, no gazelle visible

References PM V: 237, Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CXLII (J 48)

Kom el-Ahmar Sawaris (Scharuna)

Pepyankh-hwi, 6th dyn.

Motifs Reported in Decker and Herb

References Decker and Herb 1994: 311 (J 43)

Kom el-Ahmar (Hierakonpolis)

Pepynenankh, 6th dyn. – MK

Motifs Reported in PM

References PM V: 197 (1), Decker and Herb 1994: 311 (J 42)

Heruemkhauf, MK

Motifs Reported in PM

References PM V: 197 (4)-(5), Decker and Herb 1994: 328 (J 82)

Naga ed-Deir

Merw, N 3737, 6th dyn.- MK

Motif Traces of a hunter with bow and arrows

References Smith 1949: 297, Fig. 148

El-Mo'alla

Ankhtifi, FIP

Motifs Dog attack

References PM V: 170, Vandier 1950: Pl. XXXVIII

Sobekhotep, FIP

Motifs Dogs attacking aurochs, possible traces of gazelles

References Vandier 1950: Pl. XLII

Assiut

Khety II, FIP – MK

Motifs Reported in Decker and Herb

References Decker and Herb 1994: 315 (J 56)

Middle Kingdom

Beni Hassan

Amenemhat, BH 2, 12th dyn.

Motifs Fleeing, looking back

References PM IV: 142 (7)-(11), Newberry 1893: Pl. XIII

Khnumhotep [III], BH 3, 12th dyn. = 4.3.2/a.1

Motifs 3 gazelles fleeing in group, one head turned back, foaling recumbent
in insert

References PM IV: 145 (7)-(11), Newberry 1893: Pl. XXX

Khnumhotep [I], BH 14, 12th dyn.

Motifs Traces. Dog attack (from Griffith Institute photo, not published by
Newberry)

References PM IV: 149 (2)-(3), Newberry 1893: Pl. XLVI, Griffith Institute
Photo 1523

Baqt [III], BH 15, 11th dyn.

Motifs Striding, fleeing in group of 3 adults, 1 young.

References PM IV: 151 (2)-(6), Newberry 1894: Pl. IV

Khety, BH 17, 11th dyn. = 4.3.2/a.2

Motifs Two scenes: striding, fleeing in group, head turned back; dog attack,
lassoed

References PM IV: 155 (2)-(3), 156 (5); Newberry 1894: Pls XIII, XIV

Baqt [I], BH 29, 11th dyn.

Motifs No gazelles visible.

References PM IV: 160 (5)-(6), Newberry 1894: Pl. XXIX

Baqt [II], BH 33, 11th dyn. (?)

Motifs Dog attack (?)

References PM IV: 160: (3)-(4), Newberry 1894: Pl. XXXV

Meir

Senbi, B 1, 12th dyn., Amenemhet I = 4.3.2/b.1

Motifs Dog attacking gazelle, 3 gazelles in insert in opposite directions;
nursing gazelle, nibbling on bush

References PM IV: 249 (1), Blackman 1914: Pl. VI

Ukhhoteb, B 2, 12th dyn., Sesostri I = 4.3.2/b.2

Motifs Two dogs attacking, arrow in body, mating

References PM IV: 250 (2)-(3), Blackman 1915a: Pls VII-VIII

Ukhhoteb, B 4, 12th dyn., Amenemhat II

Motifs Traces of net, reported in PM to be a part of desert hunt

References PM IV: 253 (6), Blackman 1915b: Pl. V, 1

Ukhhoteb, C 1, 12th dyn., Sesostri II

Motifs Traces of desert hunt, no gazelles visible

References PM IV: 253 (not reported), Blackman and Apted 1953: Pl. IX

El-Bersheh

Djehutinakht [VI], Tomb 1, 12th dyn.

Motifs "Hunting", cited in PM

References PM IV: 177 (1), no published pictures

Djehutihoteb [II], Tomb 2, 12th dyn., Sesostri I-II

Motifs Fragmentary, possible traces of two gazelles striding

References PM IV: 179 (5) Newberry 1895: Pl. VII

Neheri, Tomb 4, 12th dyn.

Motifs Pair composition: striding or fleeing

References PM IV: 181, Griffith and Newberry 1895: Pl. XI, 7

Aha-nakht, Tomb 5, 12th dyn.

Motifs Traces of desert animals, no gazelles

References PM IV: 182 (9), Griffith and Newbery 1895: Pl. XVI

Theban Necropolis

Intefiker, TT 60, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, 12th dyn., Sesostris I =4.3.2/c.1

Motifs Fleeing, dog attack, head turned back

References PM I/1: 122 (9), Davies and Gardiner 1920: Pl. VI

Dagi, TT 103, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, 11th dyn., Mentuhotep II

Motifs Fragment, no gazelle visible

References PM I/1: 216-217 (not reported), Davies 1913: Pl. XXX, 2

Khet, TT 311, Deir el-Bahari (MMA 23.3.173), 11th dyn., Mentuhotep II

Motifs Dog attacking fleeing gazelle (?)

References PM I/1: 387 (2)-(3), Hayes 1953, 164, Fig. 100

Djar, TT 366, 'Asâsîf, 11th dyn.

Motifs Cited in PM as "man holding gazelles"

References PM I/1: 429 (1), Kampp 1996: 592

Intef, TT 386, 'Asâsîf, 11th dyn.

Motifs Fleeing, arrows through eye, neck and belly, head turned back

References PM I/1: 437, Jaroš-Deckert 1984: Pl. 21

El-Saff

Ip, 11th dyn. = 4.3.2/d.1

Motifs Antithetical composition: dorcas and Soemmerring's gazelle, separated by a small hill and bush, dog bites Soemmerring's hind leg.

References Fischer 1996: Pls A, 6

Qubbet el-Hawa

Sarenput [I], Tomb 36, 12th dyn., Sesostris I

Motifs Traces, no gazelle visible

References PM V: 238, Müller 1940: Fig 11 b

El-Kab

Sobek-nakht, Tomb 10, 12th dyn. – SIP

Motifs Dog attack (?)

References PM V: 185 (10), Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CLV (J 84)

New Kingdom, 18th dyn.

Theban Necropolis

Djehuti, TT 11, Dra' Abû el-Naga', Hatshepsut – Tuthmosis III

Motifs Destroyed: fleeing (?)

References PM I/1: 23 (16), Säve-Söderbergh 1958: 290, Fig. 7

Hery, TT 12, Dra' Abû el-Naga', Ahmose – Amenhotep I (?)

Motifs Traces, possibly including gazelles

References PM I/1: 25 (5), Wegner 1933: Pl. IV a-b

Montuherkepeshef, TT 20, Dra' Abû el-Naga', Tuthmosis III = 4.3.3/a

Motifs Three fleeing, pierced by arrow (?), nursing

References PM I/1: 35 (7), Davies 1913: Pl. XII

User, TT 21, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis I

Motifs Fleeing in pair, pierced by arrows, head turned back, dog attack

References PM I/1: 36 (10), Davies 1913: pl. XXII

Nebamun, TT 24, Dra' Abû el-Naga', Tuthmosis III

Motifs Reported desert hunt scene in PM

References PM I/1: 42 (7), Kampp 1996: 209-210, no published pictures

Puimre, TT 39, Khôkha, Tuthmosis III

Motifs Dog attack, 3 downed

References PM I/1: 72 (10), Davies 1922: Pl. VII

Amenemhat, TT 53, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis III

Motifs Fleeing, one kneeling, dog attack, head turned back

References PM I/1: 103 (5), Wreszinski 1923: Pl. 53 a

Userhat, TT 56, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Amenhotep II

Motifs Pair composition: fleeing, pierced by arrows, species grouping
References PM I/1: 113, (13), (14), (15), Wreszinski 1923: Pl. 26

Re, TT 72, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis III

Motifs Reported desert hunt scene in PM
References PM I/1: 142 (4), Kampp 1996: 303-306, no published pictures

Ineni, TT 81, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Amenhotep I – Tuthmosis III

Motifs Traces, no gazelles visible
References PM I/1: 161 (10), Dziobek 1992: Pl. 16

Amenemhat, TT 82, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis III

Motifs Traces, no gazelles visible
References PM I/1: 164 (7), Davies and Gardiner 1915: Pl. XXXI

Amunedjeh, TT 84, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis III – Amenhotep II

Motifs Traces, possibly including gazelles
References PM I/1: 169 (15), Wegner 1933: Pl. IX a-b

Amenemheb, TT 85, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis III – Amenhotep II

Motifs Deceased confronts female hyena with a stick. No gazelles.
References PM I/1: 173 (18), Wreszinski 1923: Pl. 21

Kenamun, TT 93, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Amenhotep II

Motifs One reclined, with head turned back, identity uncertain
References PM I/1: 193 (19), Davies 1930: Pl. XLVIII

Rekhmire, TT 100 Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis III – Amenhotep II

Motifs Pair composition: fleeing gazelles, pierced by arrows, head turned back, dog attack
References PM I/1: 210 (11), Davies 1943: Pl. XLIII

Min, TT 109, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis III

Motifs Reported desert hunt scene
References PM I/1: 227 (17), Kampp 1996: 389-390, no published pictures

Amenemhat, TT 123, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis III

Motifs Photo only of tomb owner hunting from chariot

References PM I/1: 237 (10), Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CLXIV (J 100)

Amunuser, TT 131, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis III

Motifs Reported desert hunt scene in PM

References PM I/1: 246 (10), Kampp 1996: 419-422, no published pictures

Intef, TT 155, Dra' Abû el-Naga', Hatshepsut – Tuthmosis III

Motifs Traces, possibly including gazelles

References PM I/1: 256 (10), Säve-Söderbergh 1957: Pl. XVI

Mentuiwiw, TT 172, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, Tuthmosis III- Amenhotep II

Motifs Pair composition, fleeing, pierced by arrows, species grouping, one recumbent

References PM I/1: 280 (7), Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CLXVIII (J 108)

Ahmoose, TT 241, Khôkha, Tuthmosis III?

Motifs Reported desert hunt scene in PM

References PM I/1: 331 (5), Kampp 1996: 517-519, no published pictures

Nebemkemet, TT 256, Khôkha, (Amenhotep II)

Motifs Reported desert hunt scene in PM

References PM I/1: 341 (8), Kampp 1996: 583-535, no published pictures

Sayemiti, TT 273, Gurnet Mura'i (Ramesside)

Motifs Traces of gazelles visible

References PM I/1: 351 does not mention desert scene, Kampp 1996: 545-546, Griffith Institute, Schott 4864, no published pictures

Amenemipet, TT 276 Gurnet Mura'i (Tuthmosis IV ?) = 4.3.3/b

Motifs Pair composition, fleeing, dog attack, head turned back, species grouping

References PM I/1: 353 (11), Wilkinson 1878: 92, Fig. 357

Djehutimes, TT 342, Sheikh Abd el-Gurna (Tuthmosis III-Amenhotep II)

Motifs Reported desert hunt scene in PM

References PM I/1: 410 (4), Kampp 1996: 581-582, no published pictures

Neferhotep, A 5, Dra' Abû el-Naga' (Tuthmosis III-Amenhotep II)

Motifs Group of 4 fleeing, pair composition: fleeing, pierced by arrows, dog attack

References PM I/1: 449, Keimer 1940: Pl. III, cf. Osborn 1998: 12

Unknown tomb, Western Thebes (?) = Berlin 5/65, 18th dyn.

Motifs Reported in Decker and Herb

References Decker and Herb 1994: 343 (J 119)

El-Debeira, Nubia

Djehutihotep, 18th dyn. (Tuthmosis III or later)

Motif Traces of shooting arrow from chariot

References Säve-Söderbergh 1960: 32, Fig. 5

Late Period

Ibi, TT 36, 'Asâsîf, 26th dyn. (Psamtek I) = 4.3.4/a

Motifs Lion attack, fleeing

References PM I/1: 67 (20), Scheil 1894: 647, Fig. 8

Nesu-su-djehuty, Saqqara (Cairo 17.6.24.11), 26th dyn. (Psamtek I)

Motifs Traces, pair composition: striding

References PM III/2: 669, Quibell 1912: LXII, 1

Appendix III: selected motifs

Mating, foaling, nursing and young gazelles in baskets



Mating

Desert hunt scenes

Royal monuments

Unas, Saqqara, 5th dyn. = 4.2.1/c

Source Causeway leading to pyramid complex

Comments Mating gazelles (?), heads missing

References PM III/2: 419, Labrousse and Moussa 2002: 150, Fig 52, Doc. 38

Private tombs

Nimaatre, Tomb G 2097, Giza, 5th- 6th dyn. = 4.3.1/c.1

Comments Dorcas and Soemmerring's mating, as well as other species

References PM III/1: 70, Roth 1995: Fig. 189

Seshemnefer [IV], LG 53, Giza, 5th – 6th dyn. = 4.3.1/c.2

References PM III/1: 224 (6), Junker 1953: Fig. 63

Ukhhotep, B 2, Meir, 12th dyn. (Sesostris I) = 4.3.2/b.2

References PM IV: 250 (2)-(3), Blackman 1915a: Pl. VII

Objects

Silver jar, (Cairo CG 53262, JE 39867), Bubastis, 19th dyn.

References Edgar 1925: Pl. I, Fig. 1



Foaling

Desert hunt scenes

Royal monuments

Niuserre, 5th dyn., Abu Ghurob = 4.2.1/b

Source	Blocks from Sun temple (Berlin 20036)
Comments	Pair composition: dorcas and Soemmerring's foaling, individual gazelle foaling
References	PM III/1: 319, von Bissing 1956: Pl XI a-b, Edel and Wenig 1974: Pl. 14 (Z.250)

Unas, 5th dyn., Saqqara = 4.2.1/c

Source	Causeway leading to pyramid complex
Comments	Pair composition: dorcas and Soemmerring's foaling (?)
References	PM III/2: 419, Hassan 1938: Pl. XCVII A

Private tombs

Khnumhotep [III]. 12th dyn., Beni Hassan, BH 3 = 4.3.2/a.1

References	PM IV: 145 (7)-(11), Newberry 1893: Pl. XXX
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Objects

Painted Box, 13th dyn. – SIP, Riqqeh

Comments	Foaling gazelle with hyena sniffing the fawn. Traces of Bes and Taweret
References	Petrie 1907: Pl. XXIV



Nursing

Desert hunt scenes

Royal monuments

Unas, Saqqara, 5th dyn. = 4.2.1/c

Source Causeway leading to pyramid complex

References PM III/2: 419, Hassan 1938: Pl. XCVII A, Labrousse and Moussa 2002: 151, Fig. 55, Doc. 41

Private tombs

Pehenuka, Tomb D 70 (LS 15, Berlin 1132), Saqqara, 5th dyn. = 4.3.1/b.2

Comments Mother nibbles on bush (no traces of bush)

References PM III/2: 491-492 (4), Harpur 1987: 530, Fig. 188

Ptahhotep [II], Tomb D 64b, Saqqara, 5th dyn (Isesi-Unas) = 4.3.1/b.3

References PM III/2: 601 (17), Davies 1900: Pl. XXI

Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, 5th dyn. (Niuserre – Menkauhor), Saqqara = 4.3.1/b.4

References PM III/2: 642 (10), Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pls 38, 40

Unknown, Shaft no. 6, Saqqara, 6th dyn.

References PM III/2: 613, Hassan 1975c: Pl. XIV, C

Senbi, B 1, Meir, 12th dyn. (Amenemhet I) = 4.3.2/b.1

Comments Mother nibbles on bush

References PM IV: 249 (1), Blackman 1914: Pl. VI

Montuherkepeshef, TT 20, Dra' Abû el-Naga', 18th dyn. (Tuthmosis III)
= 4.3.3/a

References PM I/1: 35 (7), Davies 1913: Pl. XII

Neferhotep, TT 216, Deir el-Medina, 19th dynasty (Ramses II – Seti II) =
7.4.2

Comments Desert environment, several gazelles, no hunt element

References PM I/1: 313 (6), Valbelle 1981: 118, Fig. 7, 257 B

Objects

Embroidered tunic, (Cairo JE 62626), KV 62, 18th dyn. (Tutankhamun) =
4.2.3/a.3

References PM I/2: 582, Crowfoot and Davies 1941: Pl. XXII

Nursing: offering scenes

Private tombs

Nebemakhet, LG 86, Giza, 4th dyn. (Khafre – Menkaure)

References PM III/1: 230-231 (4), Keel 1980: 73, Fig. 32

Kapi, G 2091, Giza, 5th-6th dyn. = frontispiece

References PM III/1: 70 (9)-(10), Roth 1995: Fig. 168

Kadua, Giza, 5th dyn. (Niuserre or later)

References PM III/1: 245, Hassan 1951: 103, Fig. 82

Rawer [II], G 5470, Giza, 5th dyn. = 5.1.1/b.1.e

References PM III/1: 162 (1), Junker 1953: 233, Fig. 48

Ankhmahor, Saqqara, early 6th dyn. = 5.1.1/b.1γ

References PM III/2: 513 (10), Badawy 1978: Fig. 35

Kagemni, LS 10, Saqqara, 6th dyn. (Teti) = 5.1.1/a.2

References PM III/2: 523 (19), von Bissing 1905: Pl. VII, 2

Nursing motif on objects

Embroidered tunic, (Cairo JE 62626), KV 62, 18th dynasty (Tutankhamun) = 4.2.3/a.3

Comment Desert hunt scene

References PM I/2: 582, Crowfoot and Davies 1941: Pl. XXII

Faience bowl, Maiherperi, KV 36 (Cairo CG 24058, JE 33825), 18th dyn. Tuthmosis IV (?) = 6.5.1

References PM I/2: 557, Daressy 1902: Pl. VI

Faience bowl, Medinet Gurob (Riqqeh Corpus) (Ashmolean 1890.1137), 18th dyn. = 6.5.2

References Petrie 1890: Pl. XX, 5

Faience bowl, (UC 30054, "Petrie Museum fragment") 18th dyn. = 6.5.4

Reference Unpublished

Silver bowl, Bubastis (?), (MMA 07.228.20), 19th dyn.

Comments Desert scene

References Seipel et al 2001: 97-98, cat. no. 108

Faience bowl, Serabit el-Khadim (Ashmolean 1912.57), NK = 6.5.3

References Unpublished, referred to in Pinch 1993: 310.

Chest, Perpaouty, Thebes (Durham Oriental Museum N 1460), 18th dyn. Amenhotep III = 6.4.1/a

Comments Attribute of an antithetical composition with palmette

References Killen 1994: Pls 29, 32

Chest, Perpaouty, Thebes (KS 1970), 18th dyn. (Amenhotep III) = 6.4.1/b

Comments Attribute of an antithetical composition with palmette

References Bologna 1994: 71

Scarabs, New Kingdom

Reference Cited in Keel 1980: 88, Fig. 49c, 49d; Matouk 1977: no. 737



Basket motif

Desert hunt scenes

Niuserre, Abu Ghurob, 5th dyn. = 4.2.1/b

Source Blocks from Sun temple (Berlin 20036)

References PM III/1: 319, Von Bissing 1956: Pl. XI a, Edel and Wenig 1974: Pl. 14

Meryteti (son of Mereruka), Tomb C, Saqqara, 6th dyn. = 4.3.1/b.5

References PM III/2: 536 (112), Decker and Herb 1994: Pl. CXL (J 40)

Khety, BH 17, Beni Hassan, 11th dyn.

Comments Man with empty baskets on a yoke

References PM IV: 155 (2)-(3), Newberry 1894: Pl. XIII

Offering scenes

Nebemakhet, LG 86, Giza, 4th dyn. (Khaefre – Menkaure)

References PM III/1: 230 (4), Keel 1980: 73, Fig. 32

Ptahhotep, D 64b, Saqqara, 5th dyn. (Isesi – Unas)

Comments Gazelle with other species such as oryx, ibex and hartebeest.

References PM III/2: 602 (18), Davies 1900: Pl. XXI

Hetepherakhti, D 60, Saqqara (Leiden F. 1904/3.1), 5th dyn. (Niuserre or later)

References PM III/2: 593 (2), Mohr 1943: 41, Fig. 9

Ti, Tomb 60, (D 22), Saqqara, 5th dyn. (Niuserre or later)

Comments Gazelles with two hartebeest

Reference PM III/2: 475 (38), Wild 1966: Pl. CLXVI

Niankhnum and Khnumhotep, Saqqara, 5th dyn. (Niuserre – Menkauhor)

Comments Six gazelles in a box carried by a donkey, as well as offering bearer with a box of five gazelles

References PM III/2: 642 (9), Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 34 (Fig. 13)

Adua (?), CG 1552, Dashur or Saqqara, 5th dyn.

Comments False door, male offering bringer with baskets on pole

Reference Borchardt 1964: Pl 58

Idut, Saqqara, 6th dynasty = 5.1.1/b.3.α

References PM III/2: 618 (13), 619 (24), Macramallah 1935: Pls X, XX

Ankhmahor, Saqqara, early 6th dyn.

References PM III/2: 513 (18), Badawy 1978: Fig. 49

Nehwet-desh, G 95, el-Hawawish (cemetery of Akhmim), 6th dyn.
(Merenre – Pepi II)

Comments Female offering bringer carrying baskets on pole

References Kanawati 1988: 12, Fig. 3

Ukhhotep, B 2, Meir, 12th dyn. (Sesostris I) = 5.1.1/b.3.α

References PM IV: 251 (12), Blackman 1915a: Pl. XI

Bibliography

Abbreviations

ÄA	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen, Wiesbaden.
ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament, Wiesbaden.
ACE	The Australian Centre for Egyptology, Sydney.
ÄF	Ägyptisches Forschung, Glückstadt/Hamburg/New York.
AH	Aegyptiaca Helvetica, Geneva.
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archeology</i> , Baltimore/Norwood.
ASAE	<i>Annales du service des antiquités de l'Égypte</i> , Cairo.
AV	Archäologische Veröffentlichungen, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Kairo. Berlin and Mainz.
BdE	Bibliothèque d'Etude, Institut Français d'Archéologie Oriental, Cairo.
BIFAO	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Oriental</i> , Cairo.
BSEG	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'Égyptologie de Genève</i> .
CdE	<i>Chronique d'Égypte</i> , Brussels.
CG	Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire.
DAIK	Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Kairo.
DE	<i>Discussions in Egyptology</i> , Oxford.
EGA	<i>Egypt's Golden Age: The Art of Living in the New Kingdom 1558-1058 B.C.</i> , ed. Brovarski, E. et al. Museum of Fine Arts: Boston.
EEF	Egypt Exploration Fund, London.
EES	Egypt Exploration Society, London.
FIFAO	Fouilles de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire.
GM	<i>Göttinger Miszellen</i> , Göttingen.
HÄB	Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge. Hildesheim: Verlag Gebrüder Gerstenberg.
HdO	Handbuch der Orientalistik, Leiden/New York/Köln.
IFAO	Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, Cairo.
JARCE	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i> . Boston and New York.
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i> , London.
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i> , Chicago.
JSSEA	<i>Journal of the Society of the Studies of Egyptian Antiquities</i> , Toronto.

<i>LÄ</i>	<i>Lexikon der Ägyptologie</i> . Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
LÄS	Leipziger Ägyptologische Studien, Glückstadt/Hamburg/New York.
LD	See Lepsius 1849-59.
LGG	See Leitz et al 2002a-c.
MÄS	Münchener Ägyptologische Studien, Munich/Berlin.
<i>MDAIK</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo</i> , Cairo.
MIFAO	Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, Cairo.
MMA	The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Department of Egyptian Art, New York.
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis. Freiburg/Göttingen: University Press / Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications, The University of Chicago, Chicago.
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, Leuven.
OMRO	Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden, Leiden.
PM I/1	See Porter, B. and R. Moss 1960.
PM I/2	See Porter, B. and R. Moss 1964.
PM II	See Porter, B. and R. Moss 1972.
PM III/1	See Porter, B. and R. Moss 1974.
PM III/2	See Porter, B. and R. Moss 1978-1981.
PM IV	See Porter, B. and R. Moss 1934.
PM V	See Porter, B. and R. Moss 1937.
PM VI	See Porter, B. and R. Moss 1939.
PM VII	See Porter, B. and R. Moss 1951.
<i>PSBA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology</i> . London.
<i>RdE</i>	<i>Revue d'égyptologie</i> , Paris.
<i>RT</i>	<i>Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes</i> , Paris.
<i>SAK</i>	<i>Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur</i> , Hamburg.
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation, The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, Chicago.
Urk. IV	Urkunden IV: 893, 14-15, see Sethe 1907
Urk. IV	Urkunden IV: 1245, 14-15, see Helck 1955
Urk. IV	Urkunden IV: 1739-1740, see Helck 1957
<i>Wb</i>	See Erman and Grapow 1926-1931.
<i>ZÄS</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</i> , Leipzig/Berlin.

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