

Culture and History of the Ancient Near East

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VOLUME 42

Opening the Tablet Box

Near Eastern Studies
in Honor of Benjamin R. Foster

Edited by
Sarah C. Melville and Alice L. Slotsky



BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON
2010

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S SUCCUBUS—
THE HERDSMAN’S ENCOUNTERS IN P. BERLIN 3024,
THE PLEASURES OF FISHING AND FOWLING,
THE SONGS OF THE DRINKING PLACE, AND
THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN LOVE POETRY

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Thus we find strange bed-fellows, and
the mortal and immortal prematurely
make acquaintance.

J. Sheridan LeFanu, “*Green Tea*”

An incomplete and seemingly obscure Middle Egyptian literary text known as the Tale of the Herdsman, probably originating during the early Middle Kingdom,¹ relates an encounter between a man and weird woman in a marsh. The man—apparently a herdsman from what follows²—ultimately addresses a group of cattle under his charge, referring as well to a group of herdsman and magicians accompanying the animals. The description of the female who inspires terror in the male narrator seems somewhat incomplete, and may be open to several interpretations. The brevity of the surviving portion of the story³ and the unusual content of the account have attracted few studies;⁴ those that have addressed the grammar and lexicography of the text have presented often questionable grammar and have neglected to search widely for parallels, with the exception of the well know Coffin Text mate to the herdsman’s “water spell.” When one considers the place of the encounter, the fact that the narrator has gone into the marsh alone, ahead of companions whom he

¹ Vernus 1990: 300; Parkinson 2002: 50. For the possible original context of the papyrus in a collection of literary texts, see Moers 2001: 158 n. 624.

² Parkinson (2002: 300 n. 7) rightly rejects the suggestion by Morenz (1996: 135) that the narrator is a deity.

³ Traces of additional, erased lines of text, four at the beginning and four at the end, survive on the papyrus—Parkinson 1998: 287–288 and 295 n. 1 (he notes that the traces “are almost, but not quite, legible”); Parkinson 2009: 89.

⁴ The most extensive are Goedicke 1970; Morenz 1996: 124–141; and Schneider 2007; important observations and references in Parkinson 2002: 300 and *passim*.

later addresses, and taking into account the description of the woman—however vague it may be—a host of texts and images present themselves to illuminate the account. In particular, in the light of a re-examination of several songs from the corpus of New Kingdom Love Poetry, alongside the texts known as the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling, the Voyage of the Libyan Goddess, the Songs of the Drinking Place from the Colonnade Hall of Luxor Temple, and the images and texts in the Middle Kingdom tomb of Ukhhotep at Meir, the herdsman's encounter becomes an image of what might happen if the boundaries between the old year and the new, the angry and the pacified goddess of the Eye of the Sun, were transgressed, and mortal worshippers and the immortal object of their veneration—the once and future pacified but still very angry and deadly goddess—were to meet prematurely.

The myth of the wandering Goddess of the Eye of the Sun is closely tied to the time of the summer solstice and the coming of the Nile Inundation.⁵ Having fled her father Re for the far south and west, she becomes a raging lioness, seeking whom she may devour in the deserts of the south. Hunted by Onuris, enticed back to Egypt by Thoth, she returns, and transforms from the wild, unpredictable Sakhmet, dangerous to Egypt and all life, and becomes the pacified, helpful Bastet, benevolent to Egypt, but still capable and pleased to cast her fire against the enemies of Egypt and order. The earliest surviving clear presentation of this constellation of concepts is the Book of the Heavenly Cow, first attested on the outermost shrine of Tutankhamun, but based on concepts of which at least a few are ultimately of Middle Kingdom date, if not older.⁶ Other texts of Middle Kingdom date probably allude to the revels for the returning goddess, both at temple settings and within the Western Desert.⁷ Two

⁵ Important discussions of the concept include Junker 1917; Inconnu-Bocquillon 2001; Spiegelberg 1917b; De Cenival 1988 (with the reviews thereof by Smith 1992; Jasnow 1991). See also Desroches-Noblecourt 1995.

⁶ A passage in the Instruction for Merikare alludes to the so-called Destruction of Mankind portion of the Book of the Heavenly Cow—"He slaughtered his enemies and destroyed his children, because they planned rebellion" (Hornung 1982: 90–95).

⁷ See the references in Darnell 1995: 47 and 52 n. 30; for evidence of desert worship, Darnell 2002: 66–67, 126–127, and 129–131; R. Friedman and J.C. Darnell on the archaeological and epigraphic material from the Hk64 site, in Friedman et al. 1999: 20–23 and 27–29; Friedman 1999. Probable Old Kingdom forerunners to the desert celebrations of the returning goddess at Elkab may find allusions in the rock inscriptions of the Wadi Hilal—see Vandekerckhove and Müller-Wollermann 2001: 36–37, 43–44, 47, and the review thereof in Darnell 2004b: 154–155; for the evidence of the architectural ensemble in the Wadi Hilal, see also Darnell 1995: 92.

doorjamb from Buhen appear to relate to a New Kingdom version of the later attested accounts in which the god Thoth entices and accompanies the goddess back to Egypt and pacify.⁸ On one doorjamb (794 + 836) Thoth is *p3 ḥms nfr ḥwi² w3.t⁹ m ḥb ir.t n Hr nb Bhn*, “the spouse, who treads the road on the festival of the Eye of Horus-Lord-of-Buhen;” on the other he is *ʿrdi⁷ Wd3.t štp m s.t=s*, “one who sets⁷ the contented Healthy Eye in her place.”

Seeing the goddess—beholding the benevolent goddess whose pacification is the ultimate outcome of the happy, albeit at times no doubt alarming, events of the nocturnal revels—comes at the end of a temporally specific and ritually governed bout of feasting, consumption of alcohol, and sexual activity.¹⁰ When the goddess returns, Egyptians greet her and the strange entourage that accompanies her. She brings with her foreign adorrants, and animals of the far southeast, both real and mythical, evocative of her presence on the far southeastern edge of the world.

I. *The Tale of the Herdsman*

Part I. *Setting and Nocturnal Encounter*

Transliteration

¹*m=tn* ^a*wi* *h3.kw*² <*r*> *zš*
iw=f *tkn* *m* *mhr* *pn*^b
³*iw* *m3.n=i* *s.t-ḥm*. *t^c* *im=f*
nn *s(y)* *m^d* *ḥm.w* ^e*4rmt*^f
šny=i *ddf*^g
⁵*m33=i* *srw.w* ^h*=s*
n *n^c* ⁶*n* ^j*wn=s*^k
nn *sp* *iry=i* *dd.t.n=s*
^{ššf}*t=s* *ḥt* *ḥ^c* *w=i*

⁸ Smith 1976: 101–102 and 114, pls. 15, 22, and 73.

⁹ For the orthography of *w3.t* as the *w*-coil + *t*, compare several such orthographies in the New Kingdom Netherworld Books (cf. Hornung 1992: 378; see also Grapow 1936: 24 and 27). In addition to other suggestions, Grapow (1936: 101 n. 2) also notes the possibility of reading *ḥwwt*, “male,” the earlier *ḥ3w.ty* and the Coptic ⲒⲐⲟⲩⲧ. For the *mni.t*-post in the hand of the seated determinative to *ḥms*, see Darnell Forthcoming a.

¹⁰ See the comments and references in Depauw and Smith 2004: 80–93.

Translation

¹Now I had gone down ² (to) a marshy area
 that approaches this pasturage.
³I saw a woman there,
³⁻⁴who was not accompanied by human servants.
 My hair stood on end
⁵while I beheld her fur,
 because of the smoothness of her nudity.
 Never would I do what she said,
 for her aweful aura pervaded my limbs.

Text notes:


^a The opening with *m=tn*, as the plural of *m=k*, suggests a turn of attention to a second party, as though a shift has occurred in a discourse (cf. Johnson 1984), with a resulting sentence opening a new section, perhaps in contrast to something that has gone before (Lichtheim 1971). The use of *pn* in *mhr pn* is consistent with a reference to an aforementioned marshy area. With the following *iw sdm.n=f*, the opening section is an excellent example of the introduction of narrative discourse (cf. Winand 2006: 375 and 407–408).

^b On *mhr* for *mḥr*, “marshy area,” see Morenz 1996: 126 n. B; the term literally means “lowland, bottomland,” with the accompanying sense of low-lying land with associated turbid waters.

^c Although *s.t-ḥm.t* can refer to a goddess in some Graeco-Roman Period texts—cf. Wb. III 407 14; Goyon 2006: 77 n. 4—the use of the term here probably reflects the herdsman’s first impression of the being in the marsh, rather than being a consciously chosen designation for a deity. Having recognized her true nature, the herdsman later (l. 23) designates the unusual female entity as *ntr.t tn*, “this aforementioned goddess.”

^d The construction *nn* with following dependent pronoun *s(y)* as subject, with following adverbial predicate (Gardiner 1957: § 44.2), here has the sense “without” (Gardiner 1957: § 109) in a virtual relative specifying *s.t-ḥm.t*. The preposition *m* in this passage has the sense “together with,” for which see Smither 1939: 166–169; Gardiner 1953: 20 n. 3a and 31. According to Smither 1939: 167, “. . . it seems suitable to translate *ḥn* ‘by *with*’ and *m* by *accompanied by*’, for the noun following the latter appears to designate persons of lesser importance than the speaker;” he also notes (Smither 1939: 167 n. 6) that most of the nouns following *m* are in the plural. In a form of *litotes*, the statement that the goddess did not

have *human* servants indicates the presence of non-human attendants. Expected human servants might be musicians and performers who act their parts for the goddess at night—cf. Epigraphic Survey 1980: pls. 34 and 36 with p. 47; Darnell 1995: 53–80; Depauw and Smith 2004: 73. The *hm*-servant is not infrequently of foreign origin (cf. Hannig 2006: 2/1654), a feature of the term appropriate to the context (see below).

^e Schneider (2007: 311–312) reviews the previously suggested readings for the final word in the third surviving line, and opts for the standing mummiform figure as the transcription of the key sign, reading *twt*.¹¹ Morenz (1996: 126) suggests *3b*, reading *m 3b rmt*, “als Freude/nach Wünschen der Menschen,” apparently thinking of the Late Egyptian *n/r 3bb* + subject (Wb. I 7, 6), of which the final word in l. 3 would not be a reasonable orthography. Moers 2001: 214 has “deren Physis nicht menschlich war”; Moers 2005: 229 ex. 6 suggests *m 3b.w rmt.w*, “die nicht von *rmt*-hafter Physis war,” without further commentary, presumably derived from the *3bw.t* of Hannig (2006: 1/12 188), with its single occurrence in CT VI 334g. The single phonetic sign receives no phonetic complement, a feature speaking against most of the suggested readings. The reading *hm.w* (consistent with the transcriptions of Gardiner and Goedicke; note also the remarks of Parkinson reported in Schneider 2007: 312 n. 12) appears to be correct—the sign is a better *hm*, *3b*, or *mr* than the standing mummy, and only *hm* should commonly appear without phonetic complement. Following the *hm*-sign is a stroke over a seated man followed by ligatured plural strokes  (cf. Möller 1927: 74, LVIII, lower Illahun example), suitable to a writing of “servants;” the suggested *hm* for “body” (so for example Parkinson 1998: 287; Quirke 2004: 180; Fischer-Elfert 2005: 184–185; P. Dils, on-line notes at the Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae)¹² is only an Egyptological postulate to explain the term *hm*, more traditionally rendered “majesty,” and is not used independently, as reading *hm* as “body” or “appearance” here would require (see the comments of Morenz 1996: 126 n. D; Schneider 2007: 311–312 n. 12).

¹¹ If one were to read the sign as the standing mummy, the orthography more reasonably would represent *irw*. Rather than the more concrete applications of *twt* to statuary, etc., *irw* refers to visual appearance—see Assmann 1969: 321 and 390; Hornung 1967: 126–128; Ockinga 1984: 103–106.

¹² <http://aew2.bbaw.de/tla/servlet/GetTextDetails?u=guest&f=0&l=0&tc=17085&db=0>.

^f For *ḥm.w rmt*, compare the *bik rmt*, “human falcon,” of CT 149 (de Buck 1938: 226b) etc. For *rmt* as “mortal,” as opposed to deity, see Gardiner 1959: 15. The passage apparently indicates that the weird female had no human companions.

^g For *ddf* Goedicke 1970: 248, cites also CT V 333e (the only occurrence in van der Molen 2000: 868).

^h The term *srw* (Wb. 191, 3–4) refers not only to a wig, but to short, bristly animal fur, as Goedicke 1970: 249 and n. 2 observed; so also Schneider 2007: 312 (with proper critique of the attempt in Morenz 1996: 126–128 to read *srw* as “bracelets,” the term in Hannig 2003: 1172 [no. 28958]). Following Derchain 1975b: 69–72, others have assumed a reference to a wig—so Parkinson 1998: 295 n. 2; Moers 2001: 214. Although Morenz 1996: 126 n. 552, stated “Immerhin wurden aber Perücken auch aus Tierhaar verfertigt,” surviving wigs that have been analyzed appear to be of human hair—see the remarks of Fletcher 2000: 495–496.

^j The first *n* could also represent the preposition *m* elided to the *n* of the following *n*‘, in the idiom *m33* + object + *m*, “jemanden (etwas) ansehen als ..., halten für ...” (Wb. II 8, 9), although the resulting “while I saw her fur as the smoothness of her skin/color” is somewhat obscure. Goedicke (1970: 249) and Schneider (2007: 312) take the first *n* as a writing of the water-*n* for the negative arms, reading *ny n*‘. *n iwn=s*; the resulting aeoristic statement is not appropriate, however, to the proposed translation “her skin was not smooth,” for which the negation of the stative would be more appropriate; the use of the suffix conjugation for *n*‘ would require a sense of process, the thought then being “her skin/color could not become smooth.”¹³ As the herdsman does not appear to have observed the goddess for an extended period of time, only the reading of the first *n* as the preposition avoids a grammatical problem. The term *n*‘ can mean smooth, and in the context of color can indicate uniformity and evenness of tint/complexion.¹⁴

^k For *iwn* here, note *im iwn/iwn*, “present the color, hue,” meaning “reveal one’s nude body,” in P. Chester Beatty 17, 5–6, O. Deir el-Medina 1266 + O. CGC 25218, 19, and P. Anastasi I, 25, 5, see Fox 1985: 39; Mathieu 1996: 51 (n. 139), 108 (n. 364), and 219 (§ 119).

¹³ For *n sdm.n=f*, see the comments of Winand 2006: 278–280.

¹⁴ Westendorf 1957: 297–298; Grandet 1994: 67 n. 241.

¹ D. Klotz (personal communication) notes that the particular phrase $\check{s}\check{f}\check{f}.t=s \check{h}t \check{h}'w=i$ finds parallels in later biographies, and in the statue Cairo JdE 38033 $\check{s}\check{f}y.t=fm \check{h}'w=i$ appears to describe the priest's physical and mental state following an oracular event, a psychic encounter with divinity—Coulon 2001: 88 col. 3, 90, 96 n. (gg).

If *srw.w* has the meaning “wig” in this section, the herdsman would be said to have become frightened seeing a woman wearing a wig and having smooth skin. Such a reading is entirely possible, and would presumably have been just as possible for an ancient reader of the tale; one may suggest that such a reading would hardly seem to be a particularly terrifying scenario, for an ancient reader as well as for us. Such an understanding of the passage as referring entirely to human attributes would well explain the designation *s.t-ḥm.t*, but not the fear she inspired in the herdsman.

At the same time, just as one may read *srw.w* as locks of hair or artificial braids of a wig, and take $n'' n'wn$ as a quality of the skin of a human female, so the same terms may all refer to animal hide as well. As *srw.w* may be bristles, so may n'' designate a quality of bovide hide, both on and off the living animal. A type of cattle and leather may receive the designation n'' , “smooth.”¹⁵ The way n'' describes colors could mean that the man does not see the coloration of the sort he expects on a normal animal. However, although this might give rise to fear on the part of the herdsman, the description would leave us uncertain as to how he made the initial determination that the being is in some way a human female.

In order to achieve a more terrifying potential for the section, and in order to accommodate the fact that the being is—in spite of her peculiarities—clearly designated a *s.t-ḥm.t*, an at least humanoid female, we—along with an ancient reader—might suggest that *srw.w* here more likely indicates “bristles, fur,” with *wn* having the sense of “nudity, exposed skin” that it has in the Love Poetry (see above). Read in this manner, the dichotomy of animal fur and smooth human skin on a single, otherwise seemingly human female is the combination that frightened

¹⁵ Enmarch (2008: 175), discussing Admonitions II 6; Enmarch cites Newberry 1893b: pl. 7 (tomb 15), a reference to a *bḥs n''*; an “evenly toned (?) calf;” and Spiegelberg 1917a: 22 (P. Hierat. Strassburg 43, fragment β, l. 4), apparently a reference to n'' -toned cattle hides (both attestations in the Wörterbuch *Zetteln*).

the herdsman. The herdsman would not say that his hair stood on end when he saw the *srw.w* of the *s.t-hm.t*-woman, because she had fur—he is already aware and presumably more or less comfortable with the fact that she is not in the company of a human entourage, and presumably—on the basis of her *srw.w*—is not herself human. The apparent contrast of the *srw.w* with the smoothness of her skin is the cause for alarm—because of smoothness (*n n'ʿ*) does he fear. The uniformity of her coloration is a sexually appealing trait—the herdsman is perhaps most frightened because he sees in an at least partially furry and probably partial animal being an object of sexual attraction.

Fortunately, in spite of the multiple readings possible for the exact appearance of the woman, the word *n'ʿ* is attested elsewhere with particular application to the returning goddess of the Eye of the Sun. In the Book of Overthrowing Apep, the returned Eye of the Sun is made *n'ʿ*-smooth,¹⁶ possibly an allusion there to the transformation of the raging Sakhmet. The goddess has smooth, presumably soft skin, and a range of meanings for *n'ʿ* comparable to German “sanft, zärtlich sein” is possible.¹⁷

Whether the herdsman actually saw the goddess' skin is perhaps debatable. The term *ʿwn/ʿwʿn* is sometimes confused with *ʿnm/ʿnʿm*, understandably considering that the range of meanings of these terms parallels that of Greek Χρῶμα.¹⁸ The skin of a deity may be said to be of a striking color, for the skin of the solar god is gold.¹⁹ So in hymns of Ramesses III:²⁰

ʿwn=k šw hh=k ʿnḥ.t
 ‘3.t nb špsy 3bh ḏ.t=k

Your color/skin is light, and your breath the flame-of-life,
 all precious stones being united with your body.

¹⁶ Faulkner 1933: 72 l. 1; see the remarks of Faulkner 1938: 48 (note to P. Bremner-Rhind 29 4–5); Lustman 1999: 236, 257, and 268–270.

¹⁷ For the rendering of *n'ʿ* as “sanft, zärtlich sein,” implying the same range of meanings as the German terms for the Egyptian word, discussing the Instruction of Ani B 16, 15, see Quack 1994: 93 n. 31. Although this remains essentially an inferred connotation, one may derive some support for the suggestion from the *ntr n'ʿ mnḥ šhr.w* of P. Leiden I 350, III 20–21 (Zandee 1948: pl. 3, ll. 20–21).

¹⁸ See Iversen 1984: 509; Aufrère 1991: 492–495.

¹⁹ For an excellent physical version of this concept, see the remarkable divine image in Reeves and Taylor 1992: 172. For colors and minerals of the divine body, see—among the many references possible—Klotz 2006: 68–73.

²⁰ Epigraphic Survey 1934: pl. 22A and 23A, l. 4; pls. 2B and 23B, ll. 6–7.

The solar deity is $\text{'š3-}i^{\prime}rr.wt$, “plentiful of uraeus-serpents,” an epithet parallel to the more rarely attested $\text{'š3-}i^{\prime}wn.w$, “plentiful of colors/hues.”²¹ So in TT 33, the solar deity is:²²

$nb \text{ḥ}^{\prime}(.w) m nhp$
 $\text{'š3 } i^{\prime}wn.w$
 $\text{ḥ}^{\prime} ntr.w m m3n=f m-hnw n Mḥn.t=f$

lord of glorious appearances in the early morning,
 plentiful of colors,
 at the sight of whom—within his protective serpent—the gods rejoice.

The $i^{\prime}wn$ -color of the sun also appears to have special reference to the color of the morning sun, and as $\text{'š3-}i^{\prime}wn$, the summer sun.²³ In New Kingdom literature, the reborn Bata in the Tale of the Two Brothers becomes $w^{\prime} n k3 \text{'3 } iw=f m i^{\prime}wn nb nfr$, “a great bull of every beautiful color,” a solar manifestation.²⁴

The entourage of the returning goddess comprises beings divine, human, and animal (or at least zoomorphic);²⁵ though most are rather pacific, and attempt to appease her lessening rage as she returns, she also has with her—at least in her anger—fearful and punishing emissaries.²⁶ Ptolemaic texts describing the Wandering Goddess’ return make specific

²¹ Assmann 1969: 171 and 328; Zandee 1992, vol. 1: 106 and n. 45, and pp. 106–109 in general, specifically p. 109 (color of feathers), and pp. 350–364 (relative to turquoise, on which see also Aufrère 1991: 491–517).

²² Assmann 1983: 50 text no. 38 l. 11.

²³ Zandee 1992, vol. 1: 351. For the different colors of the sun at different times of the day, see Motte 1989 (on red, green, blue, and white). For the different colors of the sun at the different times of year, see already Brugsch 1883: 529–530: Spring is $mfk3.t$, Summer is $ḥkr$, $\text{'š3-}i^{\prime}wn$; Fall is $d^{\prime}m$; and Winter is thn .

²⁴ P. D’Orbiney 14, 5—see Gardiner 1932: 24 ll. 4–5; Wettengel 2003: 149–161, with references; D. Klotz (personal communication) also points out Vos 1998.

²⁵ Darnell 1995; Goyon 2006: 33 and 152 (l. 3: Hathor is accompanied by goddesses and women, perhaps a reference to rituals in which sex-based adoration was appropriate—cf. Darnell 1995: 56–57). Hathor also appears in the company of the Seven Hathors—Goyon 2006: 58 (discussing Chassinat 1928: 236 ll. 7–8: Bastet, Eye of Re, instigator of the Inundation, has an entourage of divine females— $\text{'šps.wt } m phr=s$); the returning goddess finds the seven 'šps.wt adoring her return—Goyon 2006: 48, 52–53 n. 6, and 154 l. 6; the 'šps.wt come in $hy-hnw$, shaking sistra—Goyon 2006: 86, 88 n. 8, and 159, l. 6. In the Return of the Libyan Goddess, the 'šps.wt also appear in the goddess’ retinue (Verhoeven and Derchain 1985: 45 n. bk and pl. K ll. 2–3, cited in Goyon 2006: 88 n. 8).

²⁶ A somewhat dated sampling of the numerous references possible appears in Darnell 2004a: 350 n. 324 and 365; see also Goyon 2006: 116 and 162 ll. 7–9.

reference to *hm*-servants as associates of the returning goddess.²⁷ The non-human servants would be divine beings, like the 18 lion-headed demons that accompany the goddess,²⁸ and the “anthropomorphicized” animals that accompany the goddess.²⁹ Even if some of the foreign adorants still accompanied the transforming goddess, their presence within the sphere of her terrifying aura, and their intoxication—both alcoholic perhaps, and through the influence of the love and love-provoking power of the goddess—would behave in a way that removed them from the normative human/*rmṯ* world.³⁰

The protective companions of the goddess, and the herdsmen evocative of the cattle and their calves, recall the time of the summer solstice, the heliacal rising of Sothis, and the coming of the Nile Inundation.³¹ Her arrival causes fear, as in a Ptolemaic hymn to the returning goddess:³²

sḏd n=i *nṯr.w*
 imy.w š3.t
 imy.w m3n.t
 imy.w ḥtr itrw

To me tremble deities,
 those in the swamp,
 those in the stagnant water,
 those in the stagnant branch(?) of the river.

The herdsman does not say as much, but he might cry out the pronouncement of the worshippers of the wandering solar eye goddess in the Voyage of the Libyan Goddess:³³ *ḥnw.t=n nb.t im3w Šhm.t m šḥ.t ḥn'=n*, “our mistress, the lady of Kom el-Hisn—Sakhmet—is in the field with us.”

²⁷ In a pun on the name of month Epeiphi, the deity Thoth is said to assign (*ip*) *hm*-servants to the returning goddess—Goyon 2006: 63, 66, and 56 l. 5; another text describes the raising of male children to be her *hm*-servants—Goyon 2006: 76 and 158 l. 8.

²⁸ Leitz (2009: 311) suggests: “die 18. Löwen den Zeitraum abdecken, der von der Sommersonnenwende bis zum durch den Sothisaufgang bestimmten Neujahrstag reicht.”

²⁹ Darnell 1995: 80–94.

³⁰ Compare the remarks of Münch and Moers 2005: 142–148.

³¹ A time nicely summarized in Leitz 2009: 311, as involving “Rückkehr der Fernen Göttin, Beginn der Nilflut und anschließendes starkes Ansteigen, verstärktes Auftreten von Krankheitsdämonen während der Epagomenentage, Sothisaufgang, Geburt des Sonnengottes am Neujahrstag.”

³² Goyon 2006: 42, 44 nn. 15–16, and 153 l. 8, and pp. 96–100 on the fear of the returning goddess.

³³ Verhoeven and Derchain 1985: pl. C ll. 3–4.

Part 2. *Retreating from the Marsh and Casting Magical Protection*

Transliteration

⁸*dd=i n=tn*
ih^a k3.w^b h3=n^c
⁹*ih^a d3 bhs.w^d*
sdr¹⁰w.t r r3-^c n msh^e
mnⁱ.w m s3¹¹iry
smh=n n h3
k3.w m-^b ih.w^f ¹²rdi r ph.wy=fy
rh.w-ih.t¹³nyw mnⁱ.w hr sd.t hsw-mw
¹⁴*m dd r=f pn*

h^c k3.w=i mnⁱ.w t3y.w^g
¹⁵*nn wn srwy=i m š3 pn*
rnp.t¹⁶H^cp(y)^c3
wd wd.t n s3.w¹⁷t3
n tn šr itrw
wd3¹⁸r=k r-hnw n pr=k
iw ih.w mn¹⁹m s.t=sn
iy=i
iw snd=k 3k
²⁰*ššf.t=k rw.ti*
r 3k.t²¹nšny n Wsr.t
snd.w²²n nb.t T3.wy

Translation

⁸I say to you:

Let us go back, oh bulls;

⁹then: let the calves cross over,

and ¹⁰the small herds spend the night back at the zeriba,

the herdsmen (looking) after them/at the back ¹¹thereof -

and our skiff for the return,

the bulls along with the cows ¹²set behind it;

the magicians ¹³of the herdsmen reciting the water spells,

¹⁴saying this:

“My powers rejoice, oh herdsmen, oh men!/oh male herdsmen!

¹⁵Never shall I be driven from this papyrus swamp,

in a year of a great flood,

who issues commands for what is on the backs (peri-
phery) ¹⁷of the earth,

when the lake cannot be distinguished from the
river.

Proceed ¹⁸into your house,

the cattle remaining ¹⁹in their place,

and I shall come (prosp.).
 Fear of you (the flood apparently?) has perished,
²⁰your awful aura has gone to naught,
 until perishes ²¹the storminess of the Powerful lady,
 the fear ²²of the lady of the Two Lands.”

Text notes:

^a Schneider 2007: 312–313, after properly dismissing renderings of the initial *ih* in an unattested use as an interjection “oh!” (so Morenz 1996: 125), incorrectly rejects the possibility of this being an example of the particle *ih* with following *sḏm=f* in commands and exhortations (Gardiner 1957: §§ 228, 440.4, and 450.5a), with the noun *k3.w* between *ih* and the verb form, assuming that such does “not inspire confidence.” Schneider’s attempt at reading *k3.w* as a direct object in extraposition, without resumptive pronoun following *h3=n* inspires less confidence. As Vernus 1990: 101–102, had already observed—missed by both Morenz and Schneider—the Herdsman’s address begins with an example of *ih* + prospective *sḏm=f*, with an extraposed noun as vocative, parallel to another example in which a topicalized object is extraposed between *ih* and the prospective *sḏm=f* with resumptive pronoun.³⁴

^b While the herdsman might conceivably address a group of men as *k3.w* (so Goedicke 1970: 249–250), the bulls are probably the actual animal charges of the herdsman—compare the monologues addressed to animals in the scenes of bucolic life in the tomb of Paheri at Elkab (Taylor and Griffith 1894: pl. 3)—at the left end of the third register from the top in front of the tomb owner, a charioteer speaks to his team, addressing it as *p3 htr ikr*; “you excellent span;” and toward the right end of the upper register, a group of oxen are addressed as *k3.w*, “oh bulls”, bull over plural strokes, the same word appearing in the herdsman’s address.³⁵

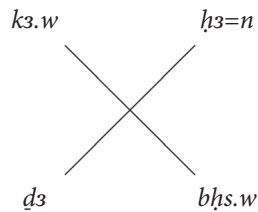
^c The verb *h3* apparently means “to go back (to shore)” (Wb. III 12, 12; Faulkner 1996: 161; Kurth 2003: 123), with the sense “to run aground” (so Hannig 2006: 1 / 1588 [no. 19324]) when that return to shore is unintended; Schneider’s “go off course” is not easily supported. Schneider’s

³⁴ Curiously, the example Schneider cites for extraposed object with resumptive pronoun (though his copy of the text, and his translation “you let it hear,” curiously misinterpret the resumptive *s.t* as the subject of the sentence) is Vernus’ second example (Vernus’ citation properly including the subject, *s3=k*), albeit with the actual subject of the sentence omitted.

³⁵ Compare also the similar text in a similar scene in the tomb of Setau at Elkab, in which the bovids are addressed as *n3 ih.w*, “oh cattle”—see Guglielmi 1973: 67–69.

“make the bulls go off course” would also be an odd, transitive use of a verb of navigation with a group of animals as object.³⁶ His proposed transitive use of *ḥ3* in l. 14 is achieved only by the expediency of the syntactically unwise separation of *k3.w* from *m-ḥ* in that line. The interjection *ḥ3y*, “go back,” addressed to a donkey in Tomb No. 3 at Beni Hassan (Newberry 1893a: pl. 29 [lower left of the right portion of the west wall of tomb no. 3]; Guglielmi 1973: 113–114; Hannig 2006: 1 / 1587 [19308]), is probably related to the verb *ḥ3*, “to go back (to shore),” and is apparently the pithy, imperative version of *ih k3.w ḥ3=n* in the Tale of the Herdsman.³⁷

^dThe use of extraposed subject in the first sentence allows for the creation of a chiasmic pair, the nouns for animals separated by the two verbs:



Gardiner 1957: 408, § 501 n. 6, suggested as “very doubtful” the possibility that *ih* here is the interrogative as object of *ḏḏ*.

^e P. Dils (at the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* website) rightly rejects Lüdeckens 1943: 32, understanding of *m3ḥ* as “Bruch” on the basis of a misreading of *m3w.t* in an Edfu Temple text (Chassinat 1932: 248 2; Meeks 1972: Tf. 5*); Dils cites Wilson 1997: 405–406, for additional occurrences of *m3ḥ*; note also the example Newberry et al. 1894: pl. 17 (bottom register, apparent address of herdsman to cattle), cited in Hannig 2006: 1 / 1016 (no. 12290).³⁸ Schneider 2007: 314, suggests rendering *m3ḥ* as “paddock,” a term applying to turn-outs for horses, however, not to pasturage or housing for cattle. The term may be related to *mḥ*, “nest”

³⁶ Parkinson 2009: 322, attempts something similar with “The bulls, let’s turn them back!”

³⁷ A herdsman says *ḥ3y ʿ3*, “go back/go to land, oh donkey,” but appears to address only cattle, who are crossing a waterway, while a crocodile lies in wait, and a man on a skiff ahead of them makes the gestures of pronouncing a protective utterance. Is “donkey” here used figuratively of the back-turning bovid, who is thereby deemed to be stubborn?

³⁸ Note the appearance of the cattle counting next to the scene of the fishing and fowling tomb owner (pls. 17 and 18), and the reference to “shutting the mouth of the greedy(?)” in the address to the cattle in the bottom register—an interesting association of cattle, pool, herdsman, and possible warding off of the crocodile.

(*Wb.* II 121, 10), Coptic $\mathbf{M}\mathbf{\Lambda}\mathbf{2}$, and may well be the ancient Egyptian term for *zerriba*, an enclosure essentially woven together of branches, after the fashion of the usual bird's nest. Such would explain the use of the term *mḥ*, “nest,” for fortified point in the texts of Kamose's struggle with the Hyksos (Helck 2002: 89).

^f Although Goedicke 1970: 251–252, and Schneider 2007: 314, read the sign following *m-b* as *wts* and *rsy* respectively, assuming that the sign for the bovid should have the same appearance in all occurrences within the text, the sign is apparently a variant orthography of the bovid sign (so Morenz 1996: 128), essentially identical to the appearance of that sign in the lower Illahun example of Möller 1927: 13 no. 142.

^g Goedicke 1970: 254 and 257 suggested *tʒy.w* be read attributively, an early attestation of *Wb.* V 345, 14–19, translating “manly herdsmen.” In the light of the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling, and the possible gender-based division of activities in that text, the suggestion is attractive. For pre-New Kingdom attestations of the usage, see Hannig 2006: 2716 no. 37588; Kubisch 2008: 91 and 340–341.

The water spell probably entered the Tale of the Herdsman from the same magical tradition as that behind the parallel “Water Spell” in CT VII 36i-s (Spell 836), known from the Theban coffin of Buaw.³⁹ The reference to the *H'py* ‘3 within the magicians' incantation is appropriate to the approach of the wandering goddess and her entourage—according to an Edfu Temple text, Bastet the Great, Eye of Re, is:⁴⁰

Nṯr.t tn šps.t
Wsr.t
H'py m sḳd hr=s
bik hr wnmy.t=s
šps.wt m phr=s

This noble goddess,
 The great one,
 beneath whom the Inundation flows,
 the falcon on her right,
 the noble women in her entourage

³⁹ See Parkinson 2002: 300 and n. 9, with proper assessment of the relation of the Coffin Text spell to the Tale of the Herdsman (common origin of the water spell), and rejection of the assumption that the Coffin Text spell represents an adaptation out of a pre-existing Tale of the Herdsman (cf. Moers 2001: 196). On the accessibility of this text cited in the Tale of the Herdsman, see Parkinson 2002: 142.

⁴⁰ Chassinat 1928: 7–8; Goyon 2006: 58.

The water spell is related to scenes of cattle and herdsmen—some of whom are in the pose of reciting just such spells—crossing water, images not uncommon in Old Kingdom mastabas.⁴¹ As with images of hippopotamus hunting, the mortuary scenes of men herding cattle across water illustrate the crossing of the deceased between this world and the next.⁴² To some extent, the allusion to festival activities, the coming of a Hathoric deity, and the herdsmen with cattle crossing a body of water, evoke the birth of the solar child from Hathor, and the resulting celebrations, themselves involving music, dance, and overt eroticism.⁴³

The inclusion of the water spell in the text, and the allusions to the wandering goddess, place the pastoral setting outside the realm of folktales and set it in the same realm as the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling and the scenes of country life in the tomb of Ukhhotep at Meir (see below)—fishers, fowlers, scantily clad cross-dressing dancers, and half-naked shepherdesses are representations of all of Egyptian society approaching the landscape of the goddess who draws nigh at the cusp of the years.

Part III. *Return and Morning Encounter*

Transliteration

ḥd.n r=f t3 dw3.wy
²³*iw ir(=w) mi dd=f*
ḥp r=f sw nṯr.t tn
²⁴*iw=f di=f ḥ3.t n š^a*

ii.n=s
ḥ3=s²⁵ m ḥbs.w=s
tḥtḥ=s^b šnw=s^c

Translation

Then when it dawned, very early,
²³it was done like he said,
 while this goddess approaches him.
²⁴He shows himself before the lake.

⁴¹ Ritner 1993: 225–231; Gnirs 2009: 141–142. Schneider 2007: 314–315 stresses the fact that the spell is directed against predators—crocodiles more specifically—that may lurk in the water.

⁴² Altenmüller 1989a, 1989b.

⁴³ See Gnirs 2009: 133–137; Altenmüller 1965: 82–96; Wegner 2009: 458–463.

That she came
 was divesting herself²⁵ of her clothes,
 and disarranging her hair.

Text notes:

^a Interestingly, in a hymn to Isis at Philae, after the goddess drives off the evils of the old year, the king is said to turn his back to them, and his face to the goddess; the same hymn refers to the punishing powers of Sakhmet who bring *idr*-herds to the divine slaughtering place (see Zabkar 1988: 117–119 and 182 nn. 26–27).

^b Morenz 1996: 130 n. T, and Schneider 2007: 316, take *h3=s* and *thth=s* as passive *sdm=f* forms with the subjects thereof specified in apposition, following Westendorf 1953: 73, and Hannig 1991: 243–244. As in the Tale of the Herdsman Dils observes,⁴⁴ Allen 2000: 284 und 487, exercise 20, no. 24, understands both *h3=s* and *thth=s* as circumstantial *sdm=f* forms.

^c Although at first glance she had bristles—fur—she now has hair. For *sr.t*-bristle replaced by *šny*-hair in a parallel text, see Von Deines and Westendorf 1959: 486.

The herdsman is afraid in the night, when he has stepped out of the proper time for meeting the goddess; resuming his proper ritual position and meeting her in the morning, fear is apparently absent and he does not flee the goddess.⁴⁵ The final description of the goddess' removal of clothing and shaking of hair leaves her in control—apparently the man will do just as she desires.

The goddess meeting the herdsman with her wagging tresses is reminiscent of Pyramid Text Utterance 254, §§ 282b–c,⁴⁶ in which the goddess personifying the Beautiful West greets the king, and gives him safe passage. Of the appearance of the approaching goddess, the text observes only her hair:

⁴⁴ <http://aaew.bbaw.de/tla/servlet/So2?wc=636620&db=0>.

⁴⁵ Compare the discussion of fear in Egyptian literature, and the loss of fear through adoption of an accepted socio-cultural role, in Verbovsek 2009. According to Quirke 2004: 180, “the next day, his fears are realized as the woman appears to him;” no indication of fear survives for this morning encounter, however. The tale also does not contain a clear indication that the herdsman ultimately rejected the goddess, *contra* Parkinson 2008: 126; Parkinson 2009: 132. Parkinson 1998: 295 n. 6, also suggests that the morning approach of the goddess was perhaps “probably to wash or drink, before setting off,” but this ignores the parallels with other texts regarding the return of the goddess.

⁴⁶ Sethe 1908a: 152.

m=k sy iw=s m ḥsf=k
Imnt.t nfr.t m ḥsf=k
m n3b.t=s nfr.t

See she is coming to meet you,
 the Beautiful West is coming to meet you,
 with her lovely locks⁴⁷

The goddess in the Tale of the Herdsman is actively removing her clothing and shaking her hair. In the context of the papyrus swamp, the goddess' rustling of her own hair alludes to the ritual of rustling (not pulling up) the papyrus (*zšš w3d*).⁴⁸

The goddess' disheveling of her hair, including the verb describing the action, in conjunction with her nudity—something the herdsman has apparently already found appealing—recalls the beginning of the fourth song in the first group of the Papyrus Harris love songs.⁴⁹ “They are becoming disarrayed (*thth*), the plants of the canal;” in the second song in the third group of the same collection, the woman says: “I belong to you like the *ḥ3-n-t3*-field which I planted with flowers.” A woman is said to be a field in wisdom literature, and such imagery appears in other literary contexts;⁵⁰ in the love poem, the plants of the canal are disarrayed, apparently from the erotic activities that the riverine festivals may call forth.

The approach of the goddess in the morning, the fact that—from her appearance—she is also more approachable than during the foregoing night, and the marshland setting, are all features present in the text known as the Voyage of the Libyan Goddess.⁵¹ Specifically, section B2-C1 of the composition relates how the worshippers of the goddess spend the night in the field, and then approach the goddess in the morning, drenched with dew.⁵²

m=ṯ sy ḫ.ti m š3
t3w n [...]s pw n ḫp=s

⁴⁷ For *n3b.t* see Meeks 1998: 182 77.1986.

⁴⁸ On which see *inter alia* Munro 1993: 95–118; Baud 1999: 130–134; for the sound, see Manassa 2008: 128.

⁴⁹ Müller 1932: pl. 3 l. 10 (= P. Harris 500 col. 1 l. 10).

⁵⁰ Wettengel 2003: 58–62; compare also Adams 1982: 82–85.

⁵¹ General similarities between the Tale of the Herdsman and the Voyage of the Libyan Goddess are observed in Schneider 2007: 316–317.

⁵² Verhoeven and Derchain 1985: 32–33 nn. i-m, pls. B–C.

*mī=n īr=n n=s sdr m sht*⁵³
īwh=n n=s m īsd.t n(y.t) p.t

Now may she come back from the marsh
 (it is the breath of her(?) [. . . for (?)] the one who relies upon her).
 Come, let us spend the night for her in the field,
 For her shall we become saturated by the dew of heaven.

Upon seeing the approaching deity in her incompletely transformed state, the herdsman takes thought for his animal and human charges. In his attempt to protect his herd and human companions from the potential wrath of the returning goddess, he foreshadows the benefits that result from her return if humans can indeed properly pacify and satisfy her. Section H of the text “Voyage de la déesse libyque” asks the goddess to come and protect “the remnant of us,” apparently a reference to the humans who survived the wrath of the solar deity and his female Eye emissary in the Destruction of Mankind; the text then incorporates what appears to be a quotation of a common saying, addressed to the goddess, as though she might emulate the lesser benevolence of the human herdsman, and protect her human herd:⁵⁴ *īn mniw mk* ‘w.t=f, “It is the herdsman who protects his flock.”

Understanding the setting of the herdsman’s encounters is crucial to understanding the tale. The location of the meetings between the herdsman and the strange female is the object of reasonably detailed description, and movement between two areas is important in the encounters, as are various terms for wetlands and the river,⁵⁵ near and across which the action—such as it is—takes place. The constellation of early morning (*dw3.wy*), the approaching goddess, and the Inundation, appears in the Book of the Heavenly Cow.⁵⁶ The early morning—the time of the second and final surviving encounter—is the time of meat offerings, the time for *šms-ib*, “*carpe diem*,”⁵⁷ and what goes therewith. Sakhmet at night becomes Hathor of the morning, just as Sakhmet of the old year becomes the beneficent goddess of the new.⁵⁸

⁵³ The ritual *s3r m sht* is discussed in Derchain 1975a: 78.

⁵⁴ Verhoeven and Derchain 1985: pl. H l. 4, quoting P. Berlin 3053 XIV, 7 (and p. 44 nn. Bc and bd).

⁵⁵ On the toponymy of the Tale of the Herdsman, see Fischer-Elfert 2005: 185.

⁵⁶ Hornung 1982: 8; Morenz 1996: 130.

⁵⁷ Goyon 2006: 63 and 156 ll. 2–3. In the same volume, see also the text on pp. 76 and 158, l. 12, in which everyone sees the goddess in the morning, and does what she desires.

⁵⁸ Inconnu-Bocquillon 2001: 206–207 (cf. Philae 41: *Shm.t n sf W3dy.t n hrw pn*).

Descending into the marsh is appropriate not only for herdsman, but for numerous groups of people during the inundation festival. The goddess is seen after the drinking and singing of the nocturnal revels that presage her return and ensure the beneficent nature thereof.⁵⁹ However, in the Tale of the Herdsman, the male protagonist encounters—one might say literally almost stumbles upon—the goddess before the celebrating begins, before the ritual intoxication has had time to take effect, before the libidinous events of the night have occurred, and before the night itself has run its course. The Tale of the Herdsman is an ancient Egyptian example of “what if?,” a literary exploration of a scenario that no true religious text appears to have examined, but a question—a fear—that may not have been far from the mind of many an Egyptian as the year drew to a close and the Goddess of the Eye of the Sun drew nigh. What if one were to meet the goddess before the festival ran its course, before she was pacified?

How the goddess appeared to the herdsman when he first encountered her is left somewhat to the reader's imagination; all one knows is that she was essentially a mature human female, albeit with some manner of fur, although her skin was smooth. Only her companions—her servants—are said not to be human. The goddess may have had an animal head, although that not being expressed, one is perhaps more justified in envisaging her in the form of the statuette of Ahat (or Beset), Manchester Museum 1790,⁶⁰ a nude woman with a mask—or face—incorporating both human and feline elements, feline ears, and a large wig (or very full hair), a three-dimensional image of a serpent-controlling figure who appears on several Middle Kingdom magical knives.⁶¹ The statue was part of the collection of Middle Kingdom objects and papyri belonging to the so-called Tomb of the Magician at the Ramesseum, which interestingly also included an ivory statuette of a herdsman carrying a calf on his back.⁶²

⁵⁹ Darnell 1995: 59–63; Depauw and Smith 2004: 69 and pl. 10, ostracon 1 ll. 3–4: worshipers come to adore Nehemanit who is within the marsh (*sth* for *idhw*); ll. 4–5: *ir=w thy ir=w m33 t3 mr3r.t r hnw*, “no sooner are they drunk than they see the *Mrt*-goddess (Depauw and Smith 2004: 72) through the vessel.”

⁶⁰ Quibell 1898: pl. 3 no. 12; Ritner 1993: 222–232; Gnirs 2009: 144–146; Lorand 2009: 18–19.

⁶¹ Wegner 2009: 466–471 (although with too much attention given to possible Near Eastern influence on the *potnia theron* pose). For the possible appearance of the goddess, compare also the image of Beset in Allen 2005: 31 no. 24.

⁶² Note also Hathoric Nephthys with leonine head in the Leontopolitan temple of Sakhmet—Meeks 2006: 17, 227–230, and 470–473.

The goddess as the herdsman first sees her, at night, is perhaps most terrifying not because of her appearance, but because she is Hathor-Sakhmet before the *šh̄tp-Šhm.t* festival.⁶³ The anger of the goddess appears playfully in the love poetry, and indeed the New Kingdom love poetry helps to illuminate the Tale of the Herdsman, because a common setting of both is also the marsh, the regions of fishing and fowling, the banks of the river at the time of the Inundation waters, with the lover taking on Hathoric traits—ideally properly pacified ones. In love poetry, the woman of the male-female pair may also assume the role of the angry goddess.

II. *The Angry Female Paramour and the Escaped Monkey*

The eighth poem in the first group in the Papyrus Harris 500 cycle is rather short, but remains poorly understood. Previous translations have suffered from dependence on Müller’s hieroglyphic transcription of the text, a dependence that Müller—given the number of question marks and notes he adds to his transcription—would no doubt have found more troubling than flattering. Although properly recognizing the somewhat comically masochistic air of the text, misreadings of the seeming hapax *ḳf̄šw.t* have prevented a full appreciation of the subtlety and allusions of the song.

The text refers to the woman as an angry likeness of the angry goddess of the Eye of the Sun, with a pet monkey running for its life, in contrast to the accepted role of the god Thoth, whose simian avatar is charged with the return and pacification of the goddess. The events occur in a bucolic setting, a towered villa, and the male narrator desires in fact to guard the gate of the angry woman:⁶⁴

p3 bḥn n sn.t=i
 ʿp3y=sʿ r3 m ḥry-ib p3y=s pr^a
 ʿ3.wy=sy wn
 ḳf̄šw.t^b w3^c =s <r> pr.t^d
 sn.t=i ḳnd.ti^e

⁶³ Morenz (1996: 126–128 and 132–135) suggests the unlikely goddess Seret; Parkinson 2002: 300 n. 8; and Schneider (2007: 315–317) reject this in favor of her seeming identification with Hathor (the latter more specifically with the “Libyan” form of the returning Eye goddess).

⁶⁴ Müller 1932: pl. 5.

ḥ3l dī=tw ⟨wī⟩ r ḥry-ʿ3
ḥry=i sy ḥdndn r=i
k3 sdm=i ḥrw=s
ḥnd.ti

ḥrdw=i n ḥry.t=s^f


The towered villa of my sister,
 its door in the middle of her demesne,
 its double door leaves open—

The monkey is about to get out,
 and my sister is going ape.

Oh were I made her gateman;
 I would make her angry at me,
 so I could hear her voice
 when she goes ape.

Through fear of her I shall become a child.

^a *Bḥn* here is the term for a towered structure, such as a temple pylon, here in the sense of a turreted villa. The *bḥn* is the ancestor of the *pyrgoi*, the tower-augmented farmhouses so prominent in Egyptian documents of the Graeco-Roman period (for towered farmhouses see Caminos 1954: 140–141; Sethe 1933: 907 n. 189; Husson 1983: 248–251. Nowicka 1969: 100 fig. 60, pp. 129–139). The *pr*, in which the door is located, may be synonymous with the *bḥn* here, although it probably refers to the enclosing compound containing the *bḥn*—note the reference to a towered villa and its entrance in a particularly damaged portion of the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling (see below). The door may be sexual imagery, as generally assumed (cf. Landgrafova 2008: 73; compare also Adams 1982: 89).

^b The word is a writing of *g(i)ft*, (Wb. V 158, 17–20; note also the orthographies *g3f* [V 155], *gwf* [V 160, 9], and *gf* [V 166]), female long-tailed monkey (for the term *g(i)ft* see also Breyer 2003: 320–326), and not a hapax—or bizarre writing of *k3rt*, as Müller 1932: pl. 4 n. 12e, questioningly suggested—for door bolt. The signs to the left of the abbreviated quail chick (coil) are a terminal feminine *.t* to the word for monkey, over a road sign (). The latter sign is correctly transcribed in Wb. V 32, 8, which gives an accurate transcription of all signs from the *k* through the stroke, although the assumed *k3t*, with road and stroke determinatives, “in unklarem Zusammenhang,” does not exist as a single word. For the idiosyncratic orthography of *g(i)ft* as *k3wt*, adding to those already noted in the *Wörterbuch*, compare Verhoeven

and Derchain 1985: transcription pl. A, l. 5 and pl. 7, l. 5 (*k3yfy*). As already *Wörterbuch* noted, the word may appear without a determinative.

^c Müller’s transcription as a three pronged *hn*-plant with question mark has been followed by others, although it is not at all an orthographically reasonable suggestion. Müller recognized the problem, and his note 12e questioningly suggests a faulty orthography *kr3.t* for *k3r.t* (*Wb.* V 12, 2–7). Fox 1985: 373, and Mathieu 1996: pl. 9, l. 12, follow Müller in their transcriptions. A transcription as a road sign explains the appearance of the stroke following, part of a group writing of the sign (like the addition of *t* + stroke following a city determinative, stroke following a sun disk in late writings of *hrw*, etc.). The most reasonable reading is as *w3=s(.t)*, with *s.t* for the third person singular feminine suffix pronoun *s*. This is the verb *w3i* plus *r* (here omitted) + infinitive, “to begin to, be about to do something” (*Wb.* I 246, 5–9 [“besonders oft von unerfreulichen Handlungen oder Zuständen”]; see also Spalinger 1982: 56–57), here in the form Noun plus prospective *sdm=f* (absence of the expected prospective ending *y* is not uncommon—see Winand 1992: 211–212 [present in 42 % of his examples for Dynasties 18–19]).

^d What Müller transcribes as *w* between the *r* and walking legs of *pri* might represent the ending *y* for the expected *pr.t*, in a *w* for *y* interchange—on the interchange of *-y/-w/-ty* endings, see Fecht 1960: 94, § 172. For the inverse of this, later writings of the *-w* ending as *-y*, see Osing 1976: 176 and 686 n. 799; Kurth 1990: 66–70 (note that *t* for final *y* is a New Kingdom cryptographic device—cf. Sethe 1908b: 12*, and Piankoff 1944: pl. 67, l. 3). The infinitive of *pri* in Late Egyptian does not normally show an ending *-y*—see Winand 1992: 59 (§ 104); note, however, the writing of *iry* as *irw*, Winand 1992: 86, § 159. Alternatively, what Müller read as *w* is simply a *t* with a more flourishing tail than is usual for the sign, and this transcription is adopted here. For the construction, see Franke 1998: 51–56 (I thank D. Klotz for bringing this to my attention).

^e The use of *knd*, with the usual simian determinative, as the description of the sister’s anger makes a nice pun on the monkey—the sister is literally “going ape.” The verb *knd* may describe the anger of the unpacified returning goddess—compare *bn knd=s* in the prayer of Theban women to Hathor in Budge 1914: pl. 40, l. x+7.

^f The conclusion is often read as a non-verbal sentence, a closing label describing the male narrator (the seated man then being a second deter-

minative following the seated child—compare Černý, 1945: pl. 8 Document 1, col. 3, l. 10 [seated child + seated man over plural strokes]). More likely, this is an example of the verb *hrd* (*Wb.* III 398, 13–17).

A monkey occasionally appears beneath the chair of an Egyptian lady.⁶⁵ Monkeys occur in the entourage of the wandering goddess,⁶⁶ so for the monkey to flee from the angry girl suggests that the girl is the angry goddess. A New Kingdom figural ostracon⁶⁷ depicts a cat—apparently a manifestation of the Goddess of the Eye of the Sun—and an angry cat at that, brandishing a stick at a monkey—the little simian manifestation of the god Thoth. The fleeing of the monkey in the love poem suggests flight of the deity Thoth, in his form of the *wnš-kwf*, who comes to bring the goddess back to Egypt. The ostracon, like the love poem, and the Tale of the Herdsman, represents in somewhat comic form what is ultimately a question of truly cosmic terror—what if the angry wandering goddess arrives and is not pacified? The country setting of the love poem is that of the Tale of the Herdsman and the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling. Recalling the fear experienced by the herdsman, the narrator of the song desires to anger the lady in her pastoral retreat, going so far to say that he will grow younger through fear of her—he, like the year, will be rejuvenated through encountering the returning goddess.

The nude goddess with disheveled hair, in a marshy environment, may be a literary foreshadowing of New Kingdom images of the naked Hathor suckling a child representative of the new year.⁶⁸ That a man encountering the approaching goddess should renew like the new year she brings is the reason the man in the love poem declares that he shall become a child through fear—the fear of the beloved as goddess brings rejuvenation to the lover.

In the first song in the third group of the Papyrus Chester Beatty 1 love poems, *thth*, “dishevel,” appears in a context that further evokes the return of the wandering goddess. The man presents himself before the

⁶⁵ Compare the scene in Martin 1987: pl. 15; a scene in the tomb of Djeserkaresoneb—see Decker and Herb 1994: vol. 1, pp. 818–819; vol. 2, pl. 181; a scene in the tomb of Paheri at Elkab (Taylor and Griffith 1894: pl. 6).

⁶⁶ See Verhoeven and Derchain 1985: 30 n. c; Darnell 1995: 80–84.

⁶⁷ Brunner-Traut 1956: 91–92 and pl. 33 no. 92.

⁶⁸ Desroches Noblecourt 1995: 99–100; Arnold 1996: 99–100; see also, with caution, Koltsida 2006.

house of his beloved, and proceeds to endow the portal with the offerings and activities appropriate to the activities for a goddess at the entrance to a temple.⁶⁹

pr=s m ḥs.t ḥb.w ṛp dsrw ḥw.wt=s
iry=k tḥtḥ nzy=s šrgḥ
mnk=k s.t m pzy=s grḥ

ḥr dd=s n=k
imī wī m knī=k
ḥd-t3 iw=n m mīt.t

May she be provided with song, dance, wine, strong beer, and her fans,
 may you dishevel her *šrgḥ*,
 may you finish her during her night;⁷⁰

so she will say to you:
 “Take me in your embrace—
 So shall we be at dawn.”

Apparently the man must appease his beloved during the night, with all the things the wandering goddess herself requires; the man must perform a rustling, a disheveling of something, like the tinkling and jingling of the sistra and necklaces, the rustling of the papyrus, the sounds and motions that appease the goddess. The night is her night, like the night of the turn of the year is the night of the angry Sakhmet; the man must embrace the beloved at night, engage in the apotropaic erotic exercises that bring peace in the morning. The sixth stanza of the second group of poems in the Deir el-Medina vase cycle,⁷¹ though damaged, contains a wish by the man that the woman might come back so that he could see her; he even says: *iry=i ḥb n ntr(.t) i.dī=s tm=s wzy . . .*, “I shall make festival for the goddess—may she prevent her from going away;” he later specifies that he will perform *proskynesis* before a god’s *ka*, and: *sw3š=i sw m nfrw grḥ*, “I shall adore him in the depth of the night”—the man will keep a vigil, the time of worshipping the Eye of the Sun.⁷² The woman is a goddess like the solar eye; the woman must somehow hinder her own removal from the man, just as the eye must somehow begin her journey back to Egypt.

⁶⁹ A difficult passage, and this is not the place to enter into the discussion of *šrgḥ*—see Fox 1985: 69–70, and Mathieu 1996: 33 and 47–48 (nn. 122–126), for this poem. For the entrance to the temple and Hathoric worship, see Darnell 1995.

⁷⁰ The verb *mnk* may have sexual connotations here (so Mathieu 1996: 48 n. 125, with reference to the use of the verb in I Setne), and could also refer to a completion of the festival—cf. Gardiner 1953: pl. 2 l. 21.

⁷¹ Fox 1985: 388–389; Mathieu 1996: pls. 20–21.

⁷² See the remarks of Mathieu 1996: 111 n. 387.

What is it that the goddess in the Tale of the Herdsman said to the eponymous cowherd, the thing he says he would never do? The combination of strange yet alluring female in a watery environment belongs to an association of the dangerous attraction of the woman from outside.⁷³ The implication of the morning's sequel at the end of the surviving portion of the story is that the evening's goddess spoke of sexual activity. In a similar context as that of the Tale of the Herdsman, in a sort of sacred marriage to which the Songs of the Drinking Place allude, Hathor accomplishes the same with and for the king.

III. *Songs of the Drinking Place—The Goddess Does the Best of Good Things*

The scenes and inscriptions in the Colonnade Hall of Luxor Temple (primarily dating to the reign of Tutankhamun), detailing the events of the Opet Festival, record the texts of three songs entoned by priests and priestesses accompanying the riverine procession.⁷⁴ Although these only surviving versions of the songs derive from the late Eighteenth Dynasty, the image of the sky as wings in the first song evokes the image of the Horian cosmic boat traveling atop celestial wings on the First Dynasty tomb of Wadj,⁷⁵ and a portion of the recitation for the bark in the third song appears in the Sixth Dynasty tomb of Mereruka at Saqqara.⁷⁶ The first song describes the preparation of a drinking place for the sailors, presumably those performing the navigation of the barks during the Opet procession. The second song is a brief adoration of Amun in the midst of his riverine fleet, and the third song returns to the theme of the drinking place for the celebrants. The third song—with the notation that it is to be recited four times—is labeled “Recitation for the bark”:⁷⁷

⁷³ For the Tale of the Herdsman and this concept see Ogden 1987, 2004; Moers 2001: 213–214. For the concept more generally in Egyptian literature, see Fischer-Elfert 2005: 171 and 177–193; see also Darnell Forthcoming c: 3–4.

⁷⁴ See the author's text edition in Epigraphic Survey 1994: 12–14; Sethe 1929: 1–5; Junker 1942: 43–44; Wolf 1931: 16 [7], 35 [6], 56–57, 73–74; parallel texts for the second song, from the Red Chapel of Hatshepsut and the Akhmenou of Thutmose III, appear in Lacau and Chevrier 1977: 187–189 [§§ 265–268]; see also Borges and Larché: 60–61; Altenmüller 1998: 764; for an overview of the festival see Darnell Forthcoming b.

⁷⁵ Westendorf 1966: 22–24.

⁷⁶ Epigraphic Survey 1938: pl. 141, cited by Barguet 1962: 176 n. 3; Barta 1983: 102.

⁷⁷ Epigraphic Survey, *RILT* 1 pl. 26 and pp. 12–14.

*m*swr *ḳd* *n* *mr*(.t) *nt*(y) *m* *dp*.t *n*(y.t) *dp*.wt
*w*3.wt *3kr*.w *mr* *n=k*
H'py wr 'hy
*sh*tp=*k* *Nb*.ty
nb *Hd*.t/*N*.t *Hr* *tm*3-'
hn=t(w) *ntr* *hr* *nfr*.t *ntr*
*p*3.n *H*.t-*Hr* *ir*(.t) *nfr*.t *nfr*.wt *n* RN

A drinking place is built for the party that is in the boat of boats;
 the ways of the Akeru are bound up for you;⁷⁸
 a great Inundation is high.

May you pacify the Two Ladies,
 oh Lord of the White Crown/Red Crown,⁷⁹ Horus strong of arm,
 while one conveys the god with her, the good one of the god.

For the king has Hathor already done the best thing.

The songs associate the festival journey with the course of the sun,⁸⁰ and at the same time allude to sexuality.⁸¹ The “best of good things” is suggestive of an expression for the consummation of sexual union in New Kingdom love poetry (Fox 1985: 22). The first portion of the Fifth Song of the Second Group in the Papyrus Harris cycle of love songs refers to this:⁸²

*p*3 *nfr* *hpr*
ib=*i* *r* *p*3y *m*h *h*.t=*k* *m* *t*3y=*k* *nb*.t-*pr*
*i*w *g*3bw.t=*k* *w*3h *hr* *k*3bw.t=*i*
*p*hr *n=k* *mr*w.t=*k*

The perfect thing has happened,
 and I desire this—taking care of your things as your mistress of the
 house,
 your arm resting upon my breast,
 so that your love revolves back to you.

⁷⁸ The ways of Aker allude to the east/west axis of the solar journey, parallel to the first song’s “royal” south/north axis (see Cauville 1983; Loeben 1990: 67; compare also the double axis of Luxor, the north/south processional forecourts, and the east/west orientation of Room XVII in the southern, solar temple—see Brunner 1977: 79–82).

⁷⁹ The text on the interior east wall has “White Crown;” that on the west wall gives “Red Crown.”

⁸⁰ Foucart 1924: 123–126, already recognized the solar aspect of the Opet Procession.

⁸¹ Barta 1975: 112, relates these songs to a *hieros gamos* intended to release the fertility of the Inundation.

⁸² Müller 1932: pl. 11 (= P. Harris 500, col. 5 l. 3). Mathieu 1996: 62 and 75 n. 223, with pl. 12 ll. 3–4, produces a rather odd rendering—his transliteration *p*3 *nfr* *hpr* *ib*=*i* [*r* *m*33 *nfr*.w=*k*] *m* *t*3y=*k* *nb*.t cannot be rendered as “ce serait beau que se realize mon désir [de voir ta beauté] sous ta tonnelle.”

A further detail confirming the sexual aspect of the Opet Festival is a statement of a priest who bends forward and addresses the bark of Amun as it emerges from Luxor Temple at the end of the Opet Festival: *bg33.wy smn bgg*, “How weary is the cackling goose!”⁸³ This short statement alludes to the cry of creation uttered by the great cackler in the eastern horizon, appropriate to the *smn*-goose form of Amun as the deity prepares to sail to Karnak.

III. *The Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling, Nudity in Love Poems, and the Shepherdesses of Meir*

The herdsman appears to have gone ahead of his fellows and their animal charges, perhaps hoping to see something in the marsh—although apparently not hoping to see her whom he saw. He refers to his companions as “male herdsman,” perhaps indicating “particularly masculine herdsman,” perhaps alluding to the possibility of herdswomen. The herdsman sees a female, and is not surprised by that, but rather by certain unexpected peculiarities of her appearance. One may thus suggest that women as well as men were in the marsh area for the vigil that the herdsman narrator of the tale almost—to his imminent peril—circumvented. For this probable feminine presence in a marsh, near men engaged in bucolic pursuits, both literary and iconographic evidence is forthcoming.

The text known as the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling, attested on a single and deplorably fragmentary papyrus of the later Eighteenth Dynasty, refers to fishing and fowling by both men and women in a marshy environment, apparently during the Inundation.⁸⁴ After a possible reference to the “[craft] of my beloved” (A 1, l. 1), perhaps referring to fishing and fowling as the craft of the marsh goddess *Sh.t*, the narrator mentions his companions (*sn.w*) in the context of *ws.t* and *ʿ3d.t*, “lack, meagerness,” and “affliction” (A 1, l. 2), the latter, in the context of the marsh, perhaps evocative of the change of the years. A reference to “we spend our Inundation period therein” (*ʿr=n šmw=n im*) in B 2, l. 1 may support such an understanding. That the subsequent event are celebratory is clear from the rubrum *hrw nfr iw=n h3.t r š3*, “a holiday when we descend to the marsh” in A 2, l. 1, with a subsequent mention of the

⁸³ Epigraphic Survey 1994: 26 and pl. 67; see also the references in Darnell Forthcoming c: 5–7 of the article.

⁸⁴ Caminos 1956: 7–21 pls. 1–7.

hrw-nfr holiday in A 2, l. 4, there addressed to Sobek Lord of the Lake, described more fully in the next line as Sobek, lord of the lake, son of Senuy,⁸⁵ great one in Lahun.⁸⁶ The text then relates a successful fishing and fowling expedition, with food in abundance, both for divine offerings and for human consumption (A 2, ll. 4–10). The text refers to fishing and fowling at night (B 1, l. 4: *sdr=n hr h3m*), and life amongst the marsh plants (B 1, l. 7).

The narrator then indicates that he is passing the night alone near his *bhn*-villa (B 1, l. 8: *w'.ty r-gs.wy bhny=i*); after another broken passage, the narrator mentions “the skiff in which we shall sail north to my *bhn*-villa” (B 1, l. 10: *smhy hdy=n im=f r bhny=i*); in the the next line something—the villa?—has no entrance (B 1, l. 11); in the same line hidden people(?) spend the night somewhere. The narrator constructs a hut of wood (B 2, l. 3: termed an *im3*, like a tent), and then proceeds to describe something he apparently observes from this hut, or blind.

The narrator says that he does something at or near the mouth of a field—perhaps the construction of the hut described above (B 2, ll. 4–5):

[...] *r3 sht*
m33=i msw(t) Hw.t-ihy.t
hr k3m w'3y.t
s.t nb.t hr snhy 3pd.w=s r-hr
n hn.t=f

[... in] the entrance of the field,
 while I observe the female children⁸⁷ of Houtihyet
 hunting *wiayet*-fowl with throwsticks,
 every woman mustering⁸⁸ her fowl forward,
 before he (scil. they) can cry out.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Senuy may relate to the twin crocodiles well attested in later Fayumic religion (Caminos 1956: 8; Rondot 2004: 88, 193, and *passim* [on p. 193, Rondot refers to the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling]), on whom see Widmer 2005: 171–184, and particularly pp. 179–180 n. 24, discussing the possibility of brotherly crocodile pairs.

⁸⁶ For Lahun here see Gomaà 1986: 398; Goedicke 1963: 89–90. For *hn.t*, see the remarks of Beinlich 1991: 289–291.

⁸⁷ Although Caminos 1956: 10, reads simply “children,” and in spite of the absence of the feminine ending, the use of the seated woman determinatives supports the reading, as do the images from the tomb of Ukhhotep at Meir (see below).

⁸⁸ In the tomb of Tjanuni at Thebes (TT 74), the verb *snhi* is used to describe the mustering/registering of both people and animals—see Brack and Brack 1977: 43 (text 34 to scene 15) and pls. 37–40.

⁸⁹ Caminos 1956: 10, understands *snhy r-hr* as “to prompt forward.” For the verb *hn.t*, with the determinatives of the alighting bird and the man-with-hand-to-mouth, Caminos opts for “to alight.” For a mixing of these determinatives between *hni*, “to alight,” and *hn*, “utterance,” compare the alighting bird and man-with-hand-to-mouth as determi-

The opening passage of the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling differs from the Tale of the Herdsman in omitting almost all reference to herding (now only a single reference to herdsmen survives in C 3, l. 18); nevertheless, the two compositions share the description of people going into a marsh, apparently at the time of the change of the year. In addition to evoking the landscape and the *bhn*-farmhouse of the eighth poem in the first group in the Papyrus Harris 500 love poems (see above), the passage B 1, l. 10 strongly recalls l. 11 of the Tale of the Herdsman, with its *smḥ n ḥ3*, “skiff for returning.”

The text of the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling also offers a possible explanation for why the herdsman appears to have gone ahead of his compatriots in the night, rather than waiting for the morning. In the Pleasures, the narrator appears to construct a blind, from which he observes female celebrants participating in fowling. The *hrw nfr*, the “holiday” to which the text refers, is almost certainly a reference to a festival, a participatory religious celebration of Hathoric associations, involving nocturnal revels.⁹⁰ Apparently, the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling are those of a Hathoric celebration, with men and women who might not always engage in such occupations fishing and fowling in essentially the same area, although apparently with some division of activity by gender.

The narrator of the Pleasures relates his observation of the fowling activities of girls and women; he occupies a hut, apparently observing them without being observed.⁹¹ Fowling women also appear in the Love Poetry, and in the first song of the second group of the P. Harris 500 collection, a female fowler is attired in a decidedly scanty, one might say masculine, manner:⁹²

ii.n=i ḥr grg
p3y=i pḥ3.t m dr.t=i
m dr.t=i p3y=i ṭbw
p3y=i s3 k3yḳ3

For snaring have I come,
 my trap in my (one) hand,

natives to *ḥni*, “to alight,” in P. Harris 500 recto 4 ll. 4 and 10 (Müller 1932: pls. 8–9 (correcting his transcription in l. 4); note also Janssen 1991: 31 n. 31.

⁹⁰ On *hrw nfr* and the Hathoric associations thereof, see Darnell 2002: 130–135.

⁹¹ Although this is not explicit in the passage describing the female fowlers, in B 2, l. 6 (Caminos 1956: pl. 2) the narrator describes observing someone while remaining unobserved himself.

⁹² Müller 1932: pl. 9 (= P. Harris 500, col. 4, ll. 2–3).

in my (other) hand my bird cage,
my back naked.⁹³

The poem continues in a remarkable way to describe the catching of myrrh-scented birds, come from Punt and sprinkled with the divinizing dust of the land of the morning sun, probable examples of the soul-birds that cross the boundaries of the imminent and transcendental worlds according to the Book of Nut.⁹⁴ What the woman is doing in the field, stripped to the waist like a common fowler, is not merely fowling, but catching liminal beings, probably at the liminal time of the change of the year; she is one of the female lovers of the outdoors like those in the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling, although her personal account is related to the personal and amorous associations of the time and activities.

Nudity and partial nudity are not uncommon in the love poetry, going hand in hand with the bucolic settings in which most of the activities in the poems are set. As in the first song of the second group of the P. Harris 500 collection, so in a passage in the fourth song in the third group of poems in the P. Chester Beatty 1 collection of love poetry, the woman says:⁹⁵

ir m-di dd=k irm ḥ3ty=k
m-s3=s n=i kni s.t

w3ḥ Imn ink iw n=k
iw t3y=i mssy ḥr k'ḥ=i

While you debate with yourself:
“After her for me—embrace her!”

As Amun lives—it is I who have come to you,
my clothes on my shoulder.

⁹³ For *k3k3*, “syllabic” orthography of *kk*, Coptic *κϣκ*, see *Wb.* V 71, 12; Peet 1930: 66, n. 10; Crum 1939: 100–101; Westendorf 1965: 59; Černý 1976: 53; Vycichl 1984: 74; Wilson 1997: 1070; and the demotic term for “bark of a tree”: Erichsen 1954: 533 and 551; Chicago Demotic Dictionary www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/PUB/SRC/CDD/CDD.html CDD Q (04.1) Page 89. Note the chiasmic parallelism of these lines describing the woman:

<i>p3y=i</i>	N	adjunct: <i>m dr.t=i</i>
adjunct: <i>m dr.t=i</i>	<i>p3y=i</i>	N
<i>p3y=i</i>	N	adjunct: stative of <i>kk</i> .

⁹⁴ On the remainder of this poem, see Darnell Forthcoming a; for the birds see also Klotz 2009: 136–140.

⁹⁵ Mathieu 1996: pl. 7; Fox 1985: 402.

Depictions of women of the sort whom the narrator in the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling espied from his hut, women whose images might well illustrate the first poem of the second group of the P. Harris 500 cycle of love poems—and other of the love poems as well—appear in a late Twelfth Dynasty tomb at Meir.⁹⁶ In this tomb of a priest of Hathor of Qusae, women—apparently priestesses and devotees of the goddess—fish from skiffs and haul the rope of a fowling net; the latter wear the long and tight fitting dresses of fine ladies, as do some of those bringing the catch in crates. The former, the fishing women, wear kilts, a few with sashes over their shoulders. A chorus and its director, with a troupe of dancers, perform before the tomb owner seated in state while the offerings enter. On another wall of the chapel, female offering-bringers occupy three registers, wearing a riot of differing and even bizarre hairstyles and/or wigs, some in dresses, others in male kilts. They bring trays of food, crates of fowl slung on yokes over their shoulders; they lead cattle and other animals by ropes. Apparently all, even those in men's attire, wear anklets. In another register, women in diaphanous gowns, wearing jewelry and very large and Hathoric wigs appear with two women who wear the kilts, straps, and penis sheaths of male hunting attire.⁹⁷ The women, some of them perhaps of priestly rank, singing and dancing as accompaniment to ritual offerings, are Middle Kingdom descendents of the much earlier women of the Acacia House (*pr-šnd.t*), who performed during meat offering rituals already during the late Predynastic Period.⁹⁸ The women in the tomb of Ukhhotep are fishing girls and female fowling, shepherdesses, apparently not by birth or vocational choice, but images of the very sort of sportswomen who occupy the marsh with the narrator of the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling, the sportswomen who are the prototypes for the fishing and fowling and roping women of the New Kingdom love poetry.

The nudity and the nocturnal celebration may center on a festival booth, a temporary structure of the sort the narrator of the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling builds for himself, and of the sort called *mšwr* in the Songs of the Drinking Place. These images and structures all appear in the fifth poem in the third group of the P. Chester Beatty 1 cycle of

⁹⁶ Blackman and Apter 1953: pls. 10–12 and 18.

⁹⁷ Darnell 1995: 73 n. 135; see also Verhoeven 2009: 439.

⁹⁸ On the women of the Acacia House, and their possible relationship to the Meir scenes, see Darnell, in Hendrickx, Riemer, Förster, and Darnell 2010: §4.

songs.⁹⁹ The female narrator encounters the man (*sn*) at the entrance of a waterway (*m r3 ḥnny*) with his feet in the river. He builds “a festival altar for spending the day” (*ḥ3w.t n wrš*), in which is beer; during the exertions of constructing the shelter: “He reveals the nudity of his backside, his height being greater than his breadth” (*sw in inw n dr.wy=<f> iw k3=f r wsh.t=f*). The festival booth and its complement of beer appear also in the Turin Love Poem,¹⁰⁰ in which a sycamore tree, witness to the festivities, declares: *ḥb imw ḥry=i*, “under me are a festival booth and a tent/hut;” later in the same text, the structure in which the pair celebrate is: *t3 ‘.t ḥnq.t*, “the beer hut,” which is described as being *thth m thw*, “messed up by means of drunkenness.” The hut would have been at the edge of the water, here apparently near the mouth of a basin but close enough to the river that the man could stand in the latter. A number of texts refer to the personified banks of Thebes being “in jubilation,” apparently allusions to this lining of the riverbanks with booths and awnings.¹⁰¹

IV. O. Gardiner 304 recto—*Embracing the Garlanded Beloved, and the Transformative Events of the Night*

O. Gardiner 304 recto¹⁰² describes the love of a woman in the context of a festal awarding of jewelry; the man then describes how he will embrace her in public, apparently following the ceremony of dispensing favor. What the woman wears, however, are the garlands of marsh plants, excepting the signet ring. The public embrace here is the welcoming of the woman at the end of the ceremony in the marsh, the public embrace at the conclusion of the ritualized events that occupied the night.

¹*Mrw(t) sn.t m t3 ... 2ḥ'.wt*
iw n3y=sšbyw n ḥrr.w
n3[y=s krm.t(?)]³n isy.w
p3y=s ḥtmw šri [ḥr ḏb'.t=s]
⁴*iw p3y=s sšny m dr.t=s*

iw=i (r) snny[=s] m-b3ḥ wnb nb
³*m=w p3y=i mrw.t*
y3 mnts it3 ib=i
ir m-ḏr nw=s r=i ḳbw

⁹⁹ Fox 1985: 402; Mathieu 1996: pl. 7.

¹⁰⁰ Fox 1985: 392–393; Mathieu 1996: pl. 16.

¹⁰¹ See the references in Darnell 1991: 76–80; Fischer-Elfert 1999.

¹⁰² Černý and Gardiner 1957: pl. 38, 2; Mathieu 1996: 114 and 121–122 (nn. 399–403).

¹ The love of the sister in the . . . ² body,
 her *shebyou*-collar of flowers,
³her¹ [bracelets(?)] ³of reeds,
 her little signet [on her finger,]
⁴her lotus in her hand.

I shall kiss [her] in the presence of everyone,
 that they might understand my love.
 She is the one who has stolen my heart—
 When she looks at me it is refreshment.

The *shebyou*-collar, bracelets, and signet are the accoutrements of the rewarded official, and for women the awarding of the *shebyou* appears to have been a rare occurrence.¹⁰³ This poem alludes to an event of royal awarding, but here not one of the king dispensing the gold of honor to a male recipient, but a description of the much more rarely attested dispensing of such gold of honor to a woman, like the scene of the queen dispensing the physical baubles of royal approval to Meryetre, wife of Neferhotep (Theban Tomb 49), during the reign of Aye.¹⁰⁴

Adorned with the plants of her bucolic dalliance, the woman in the love poem is transformed into a rewarded noblewoman. Like the goddess who emerges transformed in the morning, the lover is enobled, and the finery of the fields represents the rewards of the royal court.

V. Conclusion

In the light of a variety of texts and scenes—as seemingly unconnected as the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling and the scenes of refined shepherdesses in the Middle Egyptian tomb of Ukhhotep—the Tale of the Herdsman emerges as a description of a man's premature encounter with the returning goddess of the Eye of the Sun. Like the encounter between Enkidu and Shamhat at the watering hole, so well elucidated in Ben Foster's study of "sex, love, and the ascent of knowledge" in the story of Gilgamesh (Foster 1987), the Egyptian texts involve liminal, swampy areas, liminal periods—occasionally reflected in transgressions of more common gender roles and attire—and the promise of proper crossing of the

¹⁰³ To Mathieu's references add Vandersleyen 1971: 45–48; on the "gold of praise," add Binder 2008: 232–235 (on "women and the *šbyw* collar").

¹⁰⁴ See particularly the scene in Davies 1933: pl. 14 and pl. 15, in which she is led back home, wearing what appear to be *Shebyou* collars and many bracelets—see also Binder 2008: 315 (no. 113), with references.

dangerous boundaries (and potential development thereafter) through sexual activity. All of the text corpora presented here share an association with nocturnal and libidinous religious celebrations in a watery environment, at least many of these revels directly connected with the return of the goddess of the Eye of the Sun. Such a festival background does not entirely erase the weird impact of the herdsman's encounter, nor does it lessen the impact of the New Kingdom love poetry, or make them any less real expressions of love. Understanding the importance of the returning solar eye goddess, and the marshy environment in which her transformation from raging Sakhment to beneficent Hathor occurs, reveals greater ranges of meaning in the texts—like the goddess in the herdsman's marsh, the texts presented here entice with the beauty and pithy eloquence of their content, while at the same time frightening us with their often dreadful lacunae.

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