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## The adoration gesture in private tombs up to the early Middle Kingdom

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<<Abstract>>

A study of the representations of the major figures depicted in adoration attitude. The material considered consists of false doors, stelae and tomb chapels ranging in date between the late Old Kingdom and the early Middle Kingdom. Establishing the significance of the adoration gesture is the main aim of the article.

The subject of this article is the adoration gesture in which a figure is depicted standing with both arms raised upwards with open hands, palms facing down.<sup>1</sup> Our main interest is the representations of the major figures in private tombs.<sup>2</sup> Most of these representations are to be found on the jambs of false doors, while some of them are preserved on stelae and in tomb chapels, either on their entrance thicknesses or walls and pillars. Although the significance of these representations is the main aim of the article, a careful examination of the dating of the available examples is inevitable here for more accurate results.

*Documents:*

The material is arranged in each group according to the alphabetical order of the owners' names. Almost all of the figures on the false doors are represented on jambs, except in one case where a figure is represented on the panel of the false door

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<sup>1</sup> This subject was briefly treated in some earlier studies: Klebs, *Reliefs II*, 177-78; H. Müller in: *MDAIK 7*, 1937, 93-94; Junker, *Gîza XI*, 186; H. Goedicke in: *ASAE 55*, 1958, 45-49; *LÄ II*, 573 ff; B. Dominicus, *Gesten und Gebärden in Darstellungen des Alten und Mittleren Reiches*, *SAGA 10*, 1994, 28-32.

<sup>2</sup> As a minor figure posture, the first attested prototype is to be found in the temple relief of Sahure, it was used for both standing and squatting figures (Borchardt, *Sahure II*, pls.1, 5, 7, 12). In private tombs, the first attested example is in the chapel of *Jj-mrj* at Giza (LD Erg. IVc), which is dated either to the reign of Neferirkare (Baer, Rank and Title, 54 (21), 287; Y. Harpur, *Decoration in Egyptian Tombs of the Old Kingdom*, London, 1987, 265 (14); N. Cherpion, *Mastabas et hypogées d'Ancien Empire*, Brussels, 1989, 227) or to the reign of Neuserre (N. Strudwick, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom*, London, 1985, 134).

belonging to *Ppjj-nht* (doc. 8 below). All the figures on the jambs are facing inwards. The one on the panel faces right towards the offerings piled before him. All the figures on the entrance thicknesses are facing outwards. Except for the figure of *Hnw* represented on the western wall of his chapel (doc. 27 below), all the examples are facing right.

#### I. The false doors

- (1) The false door of *Jpj* from Abusir.<sup>3</sup> Two figures are represented in adoration posture on both inner jambs.
- (2) The false door of *Jpj: Jn* from Saqqara.<sup>4</sup> The adoring figure is on the left inner jamb.
- (3) The false door of *Jpj-nhw: Jpj* from Saqqara.<sup>5</sup> The adoring figure is on the left inner jamb.
- (4) The false door of *Jpj-m-z3.s: Jpj* from Saqqara.<sup>6</sup> The adoring figure is on the left inner jamb.
- (5) The false door of *Jnpw-m-h3t* from Saqqara.<sup>7</sup> The adoring figure is on the left inner jamb.
- (6) The false door of *Jd*, probably from Abydos.<sup>8</sup> The adoring figure is on the left outer jamb.
- (7) The false door of *Wsr* from El-<sup>c</sup>Atamna.<sup>9</sup> The adoring figure is on the right jamb of the outer frame.
- (8) The false door of *Ppjj-nht* from Abydos.<sup>10</sup> Five figures in adoration posture are represented on the panel and on the lower parts of the four jambs.

<sup>3</sup> H. Schäfer, *Priestergräber und andere Grabfunde vom Ende des Alten Reiches bis zur Griechischen Zeit vom Totentempel des Ne-user-Rê*, Leipzig, 1908, fig. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Quibell, *Excav. Saqq. 1905-6*, 20-22, pl. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Firth-Gunn, *Teti Pyramid Cemeteries I*, 181-82; II, pl. 67(2).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* I, 182; II, pl. 68.

<sup>7</sup> Quibell, *Excav. Saqq. 1905-6*, 22-24, pl. 15.

<sup>8</sup> CG 1500.

<sup>9</sup> A. Kamal, in: *ASAE* 15, 1915, 186-87.

<sup>10</sup> CG 1573.

- (9) The false door of *Mstnj: Tzt* from Saqqara.<sup>11</sup> The adoring figure is on the left inner jamb.
- (10) The false door of *Nj-<sup>c</sup>nh-Hr* from Saqqara.<sup>12</sup> Two figures are represented in adoration posture on both outer jambs.
- (11) The false door of *Njt-htp* from Saqqara.<sup>13</sup> The adoring figure is on the left outer jamb.
- (12) The false door of *Hrj-š.f-nht* from Saqqara.<sup>14</sup> The adoring figure is on the right outer jamb.
- (13) The false door of *Hrj-š.f-nht* from Saqqara.<sup>15</sup> The owner is represented three times in adoration posture: on both inner jambs and on the right outer jamb.
- (14) The false door of *H3* from Giza.<sup>16</sup> The adoring figure is on the right inner jamb.
- (15) The false door of *S<sup>c</sup>nh-gmn* from unknown provenance.<sup>17</sup> The adoring figure is on the left outer jamb.
- (16) The false door of *Šd-3bd* from Saqqara.<sup>18</sup> The adoring figure is on the left middle jamb.
- (17) A fragment from the false door of *K3(j)-rnn(j)* from Saqqara.<sup>19</sup> Two figures are represented in adoration posture on both inner jambs.

<sup>11</sup> Quibell, Excav. Saqq. 1905-6, 24, pl. 16 [left].

<sup>12</sup> A. Abdalla, in: JEA 78, 1992, 97-99, fig. 3 (a), pl. 20 (3). This false door and the other one belonging to the owner's wife were set within the same niche. In the pavement in front of each one was a double offering table. Since they were made at the same time (ibid., 107), it seems justifiable to study the whole group as one for dating purpose. For the wife's false door and the double offering table, see: ibid., 97-99, fig. 3 (a, d), pl. 20 (3, 4).

<sup>13</sup> Firth-Gunn, Teti Pyramid Cemeteries I, 185 (10); II, pl. 72 (2).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. I, 184 (8); II, pl. 71 (2).

<sup>15</sup> Quibell, Excav. Saqq. 1905-6, 20, pl. 12.

<sup>16</sup> Goedicke, op. cit., 35-55, pl. 1.

<sup>17</sup> CG 1458.

<sup>18</sup> Mariette, Mastabas, 367-69 (D.69); CG 1453.

<sup>19</sup> Quibell, Excav. Saqq. 1905-6, 25, pl. 17 (1).

- (18) The false door of *Gmn-m-h3t: Gmn.j* from Saqqara.<sup>20</sup> Two figures are represented in adoration posture on both inner jambs.

## II. The stelae

- (19) The stela of *Jrr.j* from Sheikh Farag.<sup>21</sup>  
(20) The stela of *Wn.j* from Abydos.<sup>22</sup>  
(21) The stela of *Wnn.j* from Saqqara.<sup>23</sup>  
(22) The stela of *Nfr-prt* from unknown provenance.<sup>24</sup>

## III. The tomb chapels

- (23) The chapel of *Mrjj* at El-Hagarsa.<sup>25</sup> The adoring figure is on the right thickness of the entrance.  
(24) The chapel of *Mrjj-3* at El-Hagarsa.<sup>26</sup> The adoring figure is on the north thickness of the entrance.  
(25) The chapel of *Mrw: Jjj-3w* at Naga ed-Dêr.<sup>27</sup> The adoring figure is on the east wall of the chapel, where the owner is seen standing before his adoring son.  
(26) The chapel of *Hw.n-wh* at Quseir el-Amarna.<sup>28</sup> The adoring figure is on the right thickness of the entrance.  
(27) The chapel of *Hnw* at Saqqara. The owner is represented in adoration posture on the west wall,<sup>29</sup> and again with his

<sup>20</sup> Firth-Gunn, Teti Pyramid Cemeteries I, 187-88; II, pl. 27 (b).

<sup>21</sup> D. Dunham, Naga-ed-Dêr Stelae of the First Intermediate Period, London, 1937, 31-32 (no.18), pl. 10 (2); R. J. Leprohon, Stelae I: The Early Dynastic Period to the Late Middle Kingdom, CAA 2, 1985, 125-27 (no.25.674).

<sup>22</sup> CG 1619.

<sup>23</sup> Jéquier, Tombeaux, 113-14, fig. 129.

<sup>24</sup> Roeder, in: Berl. Inschr. I, 112 (no.7512); E. Brovarski, in: JNES 32, 1973, 461, fig. 6.

<sup>25</sup> N. Kanawati, The Tombs of El-Hagarsa I, ACE: Reports 4, 1993, pl. 42 (a-b).

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. III, ACE: Reports 7, 1995, pl. 34 (a).

<sup>27</sup> C.N. Peck, Some Decorated Tombs of the First Intermediate Period at Naga ed-Dêr, University Microfilms, Ph. D. Thesis, Brown University, 1958, pl. 11.

<sup>28</sup> A. El-Khouli/ N. Kanawati, Quseir el-Amarna: The Tombs of Pepi-ankh and Khwen-wekh, ACE: Reports 1, 1989, pl. 36 (b).



similarly depicted son on the southern face of the southern pillar.<sup>30</sup>

*Dating:*

I. The false doors


The types of these false doors in addition to their palaeographic and epigraphic features suggest that they belong to three distinctive groups of different dates:

The first group includes documents 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 14 and 15. Their dating could be reasonably established in view of the following considerations:

Doc. 3, 4 and 15 have the epithet of Anubis *jmj wt*, determined with both  and . This combination of determinatives is attested in the reign of Pepy II and reappears before the end of the Eleventh Dynasty.<sup>31</sup>

Doc. 3 and 11 have "T"-shaped panels, which was used in Saqqara since the middle of the Sixth Dynasty up to the end of the Eleventh Dynasty.<sup>32</sup> Of the same type is doc. 15, whose provenance is unknown.

Doc. 4 and 11 have narrow jambs with only one column of inscription on each, which characterizes the false doors in Saqqara during the reign of Pepy II.<sup>33</sup> Of a similar type of jambs is doc. 15, which could be associated with these two documents.

Doc. 4, however, has some later features such as: (a) The writing of the sign  with three crosspieces only instead of four, a feature which has a parallel in Dendera's inscriptions dating to the

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<sup>29</sup> Helck, *Geschichte*, pl. 2 (7); H. Altenmüller, in: *SAK* 1, 1974, 14-15.


<sup>30</sup> R. Caminos/ H.G. Fischer, *Ancient Egyptian Epigraphy and Palaeography*, New York, 1976, 39 with fig. 3.

<sup>31</sup> W. Schenkel, *Frühmittelägyptische Studien*, Bonn, 1962, 40-41. See also: Fischer, *Dendera*, 84 (15); E. Brovarski, in: *Mélanges Gamal Eddin Mokhtar I*, BdE 97, 1985, 127, 135.

<sup>32</sup> Strudwick, *op. cit.*, 18-19, 36.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* 17 35-36

Eighth Dynasty onwards.<sup>34</sup> (b) The prothetic read leaf sign in the epithet of Anubis *jmj wt* is otherwise documented in Saqqara since the late Old Kingdom and became common during the Tenth Dynasty.<sup>35</sup> (c) The writing of the looped end of the sign  with forked tail is frequently found at the end of the Old Kingdom, the First Intermediate Period and the Eleventh Dynasty.<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, a date within the Eighth Dynasty is suggested here.

Doc. 6 and 8 have the name of Anubis written as . This rare variant<sup>37</sup> could be a precedence of the phonetic writing of the name, which is attested elsewhere since the beginning of the reign of Pepy II and became common during the Tenth and Eleventh Dynasties.<sup>38</sup>

Doc. 7 has the typical Old Kingdom writing of the west ideogram with the falcon on the divine standard,<sup>39</sup> although the feather is missing here. However, the use of the outer frame suggests a later date within the Old Kingdom. For while this type is attested in Saqqara late in the reign of Pepy II, it is otherwise attested in some provincial sites after the Sixth Dynasty.<sup>40</sup> A date within the Eighth Dynasty seems probable.

Doc. 8 is dated by Baer to a period ranging between the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Merenre's reign and the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Pepy II's reign,<sup>41</sup> but Kanawati and Strudwick date it to the second half of Pepy II's

<sup>34</sup> Fischer, Dendera, 120.

<sup>35</sup> Brovarski, op. cit., 128. See also: Fischer, Dendera, 131 and n.518.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 82 (no.12).


<sup>37</sup> Only one other example is known to me from the false door of *Jsmt* from Dahshur, which is dated to the Sixth Dynasty or later (CG 1395; Vandier, Manuel II, 404, fig. 278 [lower right]).

<sup>38</sup> N. Kanawati/ A. McFarlane, Akhmim in the Old Kingdom, Part I: Chronology and Administration, ACE: Studies 2, 1992, 131-132; Brovarski, op. cit., 128.

<sup>39</sup> Idem, in: JNES 32, 1973, 464 and n.31.

<sup>40</sup> Strudwick, op. cit., 17; Fischer, Dendera, 87.


<sup>41</sup> Baer, Rank and Title, 289 (135).

reign.<sup>42</sup> The later date is supported by the writing of the ideogram for *w<sup>c</sup>b*  in the title *jmj-r w<sup>c</sup>btj*, since the usual Old Kingdom wavy line representing the water issuing from the jar is replaced here by drops of water<sup>43</sup> in a manner conforming to that used in both Dendera<sup>44</sup> and Coptos<sup>45</sup> in the reign of Pepy II, and again in Coptos in the reign of the Eighth Dynasty king Neferkauhor.<sup>46</sup>

Doc. 14 has the epithet of Anubis *jmj wt* written with the city determinative, the typical form of the Sixth Dynasty, which does not reappear before the Twelfth Dynasty.<sup>47</sup>

In view of the above-mentioned criteria, the period from the reign of Pepy II to the late Eighth Dynasty is suggested here for the whole group.

The second group includes documents 1, 12, 17 and 18. Its possible date could be based on the following evidence:

Doc. 1 has a lintel adorned with a pair of eyes, a decoration which is attested for the false doors ranging in date from the end of the Tenth Dynasty to the Twelfth Dynasty.<sup>48</sup> Its inscription has the epithet of Anubis *jmj wt* written with the determinative , which is attested since the First Intermediate Period up to the reign of Mentuhotep II.<sup>49</sup> Also the offering formula has *p<sup>r</sup>t-h<sup>r</sup>w* written

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<sup>42</sup> N. Kanawati, *Governmental Reforms in Old Kingdom Egypt*, Warminster, 1980, 89; Strudwick, *op. cit.*, 201, 220, 303.

<sup>43</sup> For the typical Old Kingdom form of the ideogram for *w<sup>c</sup>b* see: Fischer, Dendera, fig. 23 (no.2).

<sup>44</sup> W. M. F. Petrie, Denderah, *EEF* 17, 1900, pl. VI [middle]; Fischer, Dendera, 88 (no.8).

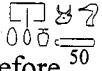
<sup>45</sup> *Urk.* I, 287 (17), 292 (6).



<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 304 (1).


<sup>47</sup> Schenkel, *op. cit.*, 40-41.

<sup>48</sup> Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 40 and n.2.

<sup>49</sup> Schenkel, *op. cit.*, 40.

with the addition of fowl and oxen as , which was usual until the Eleventh Dynasty or shortly before.<sup>50</sup>



Doc. 1 and 17 have abbreviated forms of the epithet *jm<sup>3</sup>hw*; in doc. 1 it is written as , while in doc. 17 as . This feature is exceedingly rare until the Ninth Dynasty.<sup>51</sup>

Doc. 12 has an offering formula of the type characteristic of the Ninth and Tenth Dynasties.<sup>52</sup> Since the constant reversal of the sign  in the owner's name is an uncommon feature before the Tenth and Eleventh Dynasties,<sup>53</sup> a date in the Tenth Dynasty is suggested for it.

Doc. 18 mentions the title *mtj n z<sup>3</sup> W3d-swt-Mrjj-k<sup>3</sup>-R<sup>c</sup>* "controller of a phyle of the pyramid of Merykare" among its inscriptions.

In view of the above-mentioned criteria, the First Intermediate Period is suggested for this group.

The third group includes documents 2, 5, 9, 10, 13 and 16. The following points may help in dating them:

Doc. 2, 5 and 16 have the epithet of Anubis *jmj wt* determined with both  and . This combination of determinatives is attested in the reign of Pepy II and reappears again before the end of the Eleventh Dynasty.<sup>54</sup>

Doc. 9, 10 and 13 have the epithet of Anubis *jmj wt* written with the city determinative, which is attested during the Sixth Dynasty and again during the Twelfth Dynasty.<sup>55</sup>

Doc. 2 and 5 mention the title *mtj n z<sup>3</sup> W3d-swt-Mrjj-k<sup>3</sup>-R<sup>c</sup>* "controller of a phyle of the pyramid of Merykare" among their inscriptions.

<sup>50</sup> Fischer, Dendera, 83 (n.359); cf. G. Lapp, Die Opferformel des Alten Reiches, SDAIK 21, 1986, 91.

<sup>51</sup> Fischer, Dendera, 131 and n.578; E. Brovarski, in: Mélanges Gamal Eddin Mokhtar I, BdE 97, 1985, 142-43 (n.63).

<sup>52</sup> For the offering formula including *prj n.f hrw nfr m jz.f n hrt-ntr (m zmjt jmntt)* see: Barta, Opferformel, 39 (Bitte 2 f).

<sup>53</sup> Brovarski, op. cit., 142-43 (n.63).

<sup>54</sup> See n.31 above.

<sup>55</sup> See n.47 above.



Doc. 2 and 5 have the 3 sign without any extension beyond the hind-most leg, which is common in the late Old Kingdom, the First Intermediate Period and the Eleventh Dynasty.<sup>56</sup>

Doc. 10 is dated to the early Middle Kingdom (X-XI Dynasties) without excluding the possibility of being of a slightly later date, i.e., the second half of the Eleventh Dynasty or even the early Twelfth Dynasty.<sup>57</sup> However, the later alternative is adopted here in view of the following considerations: (a) The interpolation of the prospective *dj.f* before *pri-hrw* in the offering formula is not attested before the reign of Amenemhat I.<sup>58</sup> (b) The book-roll determinative with the two ties on both sides of the mud-lump seal on its top made its first appearance early in the Twelfth Dynasty.<sup>59</sup> (c) The unguent jar determinative  $\overline{\text{I}}$  with the two ties on both sides of its stopper is attested for the first time during the Eleventh Dynasty.<sup>60</sup>

Doc. 13 has the titles separated from the owner's name, a phenomenon that is not attested anymore under the Twelfth Dynasty.<sup>61</sup>

Doc. 16 has an offering formula of the type attested within the Ninth and Tenth Dynasties, and then in the Twelfth Dynasty.<sup>62</sup>

According to the above considerations, the whole group is presumed to date to the early Middle Kingdom, i.e., not before the Eleventh Dynasty and not later than the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty.

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<sup>56</sup> Fischer, Dendera, 82 (no.7).

<sup>57</sup> A. Abdalla, in: JEA 78, 1992, 94, 107 (n.23).

<sup>58</sup> D. B. Spanel, in: Studies in Honor of William K. Simpson, MFA, 1996, 767-68.

<sup>59</sup> Schenkel, op. cit., 27-28; Spanel, op. cit., 766-68.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 770 (n.18).

<sup>61</sup> S. Hodjash/O. Berlev, The Egyptian Reliefs and Stelae in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Leningrad, 1982, 72 (no.27); R. Freed, in: Studies in Honor of William K. Simpson, MFA, 1996, 304.

<sup>62</sup> For the offering formula including *j<sup>c</sup>r.f n ntr<sup>c3</sup> nb pt m-m jm3hw* see: Barta, Opferformel, 40 (Bitte 31 a), 62 (Bitte 31 a).

## II. The stelae

Doc. 19 is dated to the early First Intermediate Period on stylistic and palaeographic grounds.<sup>63</sup>

Doc. 20 has the following title within its inscription: *shd hm(w)-ntr H<sup>c</sup>j-nfr-Mrj.n-R<sup>c</sup>* "The superintendent of priests of the pyramid of Merenre". It has also the typical Old Kingdom writing of the west ideogram with the falcon on the divine standard.<sup>64</sup> However, it is dated to the middle of the Sixth Dynasty.<sup>65</sup>

Doc. 21 has the elongated shape of the roll of bread determining *p<sup>r</sup>t-hrw*, a feature that would be elsewhere indicative of a date within the late Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period.<sup>66</sup>

However, the evidence for dating is too slim to permit a dependable date for the stela.

Doc. 22 is dated to the very end of the Eighth Dynasty on stylistic, palaeographic and epigraphic grounds.<sup>67</sup>

## III. The tomb chapels

Doc. 23 is supposed to be built for Mery by Pepy II.<sup>68</sup> Kanawati suggests the second half of Pepy II's reign as a possible date,<sup>69</sup> while Harpur dates it either to the reign of Pepy II or to the Eighth Dynasty.<sup>70</sup>

Doc. 24 is dated by Schenkel to the few years following the end of the Sixth Dynasty,<sup>71</sup> and Kanawati assigns it to the Eighth

<sup>63</sup> Leprohon, op. cit. 125-26.

<sup>64</sup> See n.39 above.

<sup>65</sup> Kanawati/ McFarlane, op. cit., 270, 299.

<sup>66</sup> Fischer, Dendera, 83-84 (no.13).

<sup>67</sup> E. Brovarski, in: JNES 32, 1973, 461 and n.27.

<sup>68</sup> E. Edel, Hieroglyphische Inschriften des Alten Reiches, ARWAW 67, 1981, 76.

<sup>69</sup> Kanawati, El-Hagarsa I, 57.

<sup>70</sup> Harpur, op. cit., 281(676).

<sup>71</sup> W. Schenkel, Memphis, Herakleopolis, Theben, ÄA 12, 1965, 38.

Dynasty.<sup>72</sup> Both Fischer<sup>73</sup> and Harpur<sup>74</sup>, however, favor a date within the First Intermediate Period.

Doc. 25 is recently dated to the reign of Merenre or early in the reign of Pepy II,<sup>75</sup> while Peck assigns it to the Ninth Dynasty.<sup>76</sup>

Doc. 26 is dated by Harpur to the late Sixth Dynasty or later,<sup>77</sup> but El-Khouli and Kanawati suggest a date late in the reign of Pepy I.<sup>78</sup>

Doc. 27 is suggested to be later than the Old Kingdom.<sup>79</sup>

*Significance of the gesture:*

Since most of the available material has no inscriptions describing the gesture depicted, nor does it have any representations of the possibly related divinities, the significance of the gesture remains uncertain. However, according to Müller, it probably constitutes a prayer for an invisible deity (Osiris?).<sup>80</sup> On the other hand, Goedicke thinks that it is a gesture for greeting the tomb visitors.<sup>81</sup> Junker suggests that it either relates to the deceased's desire for coming out through the false door, expressing his reverence to the sun; or, when compared with a certain Twelfth Dynasty stela,<sup>82</sup> it could be a prayer for the gods of the dead who supply food.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Kanawati, op. cit., III, 28-29.

<sup>73</sup> Fischer, Dendera, 130 (n.574).

<sup>74</sup> Harpur, op. cit., 281 (675).

<sup>75</sup> Kanawati/ McFarlane, op. cit., 108-12, 299.

<sup>76</sup> Peck, op. cit., 123-27.

<sup>77</sup> Harpur, op. cit., 280 (642).

<sup>78</sup> El-Khouli/ Kanawati, op. cit., 25

<sup>79</sup> Altenmüller, op. cit., 8 (doc. 7); Caminos/ Fischer, op. cit., 39 and n.41.

<sup>80</sup> H. Müller, in: MDAIK 7, 1937, 94 (n.1).

<sup>81</sup> Goedicke, op. cit., 48-49.

<sup>82</sup> G. Steindorff, Die Kunst der Ägypter, Leipzig, 1928, 209.

<sup>83</sup> Junker, Giza XI, 186 (n.1).

In fact, the comparison with the Middle Kingdom material is inevitable here, but it should be treated carefully for two reasons. Firstly, while most of the Middle Kingdom material came from Abydos,<sup>84</sup> which could mean a possible influence of its local gods, our material belongs to different sites with different local gods. Secondly, while most of the Middle Kingdom material consists of stelae, our material consists mainly of false doors in addition to some stelae and tomb chapels, each of which has its own scheme of decoration.

However, most of the Middle Kingdom stelae of similar context either have a deity represented in front of the adoring figure<sup>85</sup> or an inscription related to the depicted gesture written directly in front of the adoring figure,<sup>86</sup> although sometimes such a text is found above the figure.<sup>87</sup> So, if there is any inscription associated somehow with one of the figures under consideration, it is expected to be found in similar places, i.e., either in front of the adoring figure or above it. While it is easy to identify such inscriptions on stelae and chapel walls, it seems more complicated in the case of false doors. Since most of the false doors have the adoring figures on their jambs, the limited area of the jambs never allowed any additional inscriptions in front of these figures. Nevertheless, the symmetrical decoration of the jambs is very clear in many examples, so that some of them have exactly the same decorations on the opposite side.<sup>88</sup> However, in many cases

<sup>84</sup> All the examples cited in the following two notes are of Abydene provenance except CG 20404, whose provenance is unknown.

<sup>85</sup> E.g., CG 20277, CG 20517, CG 20612; W.K. Simpson, *The Terrace of the Great God at Abydos: The Offering Chapels of Dynasties 12 and 13*, PPYE 5, 1974, pls. 65 (ANOC 65.4), 71 (ANOC 52.4), 79 (ANOC 57.4), 82 (ANOC 67.1).

<sup>86</sup> E.g., CG 20039, CG 20057, CG 20153, CG 20315, CG 20341, CG 20348, CG 20410, CG 20451, CG 20538; Simpson, *op. cit.*, pls. 34 (ANOC 23.2), 37 (ANOC 61.2), 64 (ANOC 47.1), 76 (ANOC 54.2), 83 (ANOC 67.3).

<sup>87</sup> E.g., CG 20180, CG 20404; Simpson, *op. cit.*, pls. 15 (ANOC 6.1), 62 (ANOC 43.1). However, in most of these examples the inscription continues in front of the adoring figure.

<sup>88</sup> E.g., CG 1398, CG 1413, CG 1459, CG 1467, CG 1484, CG 1490; LD II, 48; Mariette, *Mastabas*, 150, 173-74, 191, 291-93, 307-9, 319-20, 422-23, 424-25, 446-47; Murray, *Saqqara Mastabas*, pl. 20; Hassan, *Giza III*, fig. 109; Junker,

this symmetry was gained by considering that each pair-part of jambs completes the other.<sup>89</sup> This leads us to the conclusion that if the adoring figures have any inscriptions in front of them, these inscriptions are more probably to be found on the opposite jambs.<sup>90</sup>

In view of these remarks, we may notice the consistent presence of divine or royal names above or in front of the adoring figures, and that these names -I believe- are connected with the represented gesture. Taking these remarks and observations into consideration, we should now examine the available material. On the false door of *H3* (doc. 14), just above his adoring figure, is written: *dw3w Dd.f-Hr jm3hw H3* "Adorer of Djedefhor, the honored one, Kha". *Dw3* is most probably a substantive derived

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Gîza IV, fig. 6; VII, fig. 101; Firth-Gunn, Teti Pyramid Cemeteries II, pl. 67 (1); Jéquier, Tombeaux, figs. 97, 98; N. Kanawati/ A. Hassan, The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara I, ACE: Reports 8, 1996, pl. 40; N. Kanawati/ M. Abder-Raziq, The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara III, ACE: Reports 11, 1998, pl. 73.

<sup>89</sup> This is better explained by the false door of *Nfr-sšm-Rc* (ibid., pl. 58), where the outer jambs have identical offering formula, the middle jambs have identical biographical text and the inner jambs have complementary text describing the successive acts of the burial. However, many false doors have only two pairs of jambs, of which the outer is inscribed with an offering formula, while the inner has titles, e.g., CG 1403, CG 1442, CG 1457, CG 1563; LD II, 65, 84, 88 (a); Mariette, Mastabas, 247-49, 366; Sheikh Saïd, pls. 23, 25; Hassan, Gîza III, figs. 56, 58; IX, fig. 28 a; Junker, Gîza III, fig. 46; VI, fig. 31. The former arrangement could be reversed, e.g., ibid., fig. 18; Mariette, Mastabas, 295. The false doors with three pairs of jambs sometimes have offering formula on one pair and titles on the other two, e.g., ibid., 118-20; Murray, Saqqara Mastabas, pl. 8; S. Hassan, (ed. by Z. Iskander), Excavations at Saqqara II, Cairo, 1975, fig. 13; N. Kanawati et al., Excavations at Saqqara I, Sydney, 1984, pl. 18. Nevertheless, other symmetrical arrangements are known, cf., Meir IV, pl. 11; Petrie-Murray, Memphite Tomb Chapels, pl. 9; CG 1449; Murray, Saqqara Mastabas, pl. 7.

<sup>90</sup> However, of the eighteen false doors studied here, three exceptions are noticed. The first one is (doc. 4): the adoring figure is on the left inner jamb and the possibly related inscription is on the opposite middle jamb. The second one is (doc. 9): the adoring figure is on the left inner jamb and the presumably related inscription is on the opposite outer one. The third one is (doc. 18): the two adoring figures are on the inner jambs and the possibly related inscriptions are on the middle jambs. In these cases the artists seem to have used the surface on the neighboring jambs as a continuation to that containing the adoring figure.

from the verb *dw3*,<sup>91</sup> which is frequently associated with the adoration gesture during the Middle Kingdom.<sup>92</sup> It appears, therefore, that the inscription and its accompanying gesture in all probabilities are connected with the adoration of Djedefhor, the sage of the Fourth Dynasty who is regarded as a deified person since the late Old Kingdom.<sup>93</sup>

A similar conclusion could be reached from the chapel of *Hnw* (doc. 27). For his adoring figure on the western wall is accompanied by a long text, of which the following is cited: *špss nswt pr-<sup>c3</sup> Hnw dd.f j hntjw-š nw Nfr-swt-Wnjs... jn.tn n.j prt-hrw m wdb-rd<sup>94</sup> n Wnjs nb.tn jr n.tn msw.tn mjtt jnk b3k n Wnjs ...* "The king's nobleman of the palace Khenu, he says: O *hntjw-š<sup>95</sup>* officials of the pyramid of Unis ... may you bring for me funerary offerings from the temple revenues of Unis, your lord, so that your children will do the like unto you. I was a servant of Unis...". In view of Altenmüller's suggestion that *b3k n Wnjs* here means "adorer of Unis",<sup>96</sup> and Khenu's request for funerary offerings from the revenues of the temple of Unis, the associated gesture could be an adoration to king Unis in his capacity as giver of the offerings.<sup>97</sup>

However, both Khenu and his elder son are represented in adoration posture on the southern face of the southern pillar. The upper part of the pillar is inscribed with names and titles of king

<sup>91</sup> Edel, *Altäg. Gramm.*, § 227.

<sup>92</sup> For *dw3* and *rdjt j3w* in association with the adoration gesture during the Middle Kingdom, see: Dominicus, *op. cit.*, 30.

<sup>93</sup> Goedicke, *op. cit.*, 44 - 45.

<sup>94</sup> For the meaning of *wdb-rd* see: Altenmüller, *op. cit.*, 16-17 (c); Lapp, *op. cit.*, § 252.

<sup>95</sup> For this title and the responsibilities of its holders see: Junker, *Giza VI*, 15-19; Fischer, *Dendera*, 170-7; P. Posener-Kriéger, *Les archives du temple funéraire de Néferirkarê-Kakaï, les papyrus d'Abousir*, Cairo, 1976, 577 ff; A. Roth, *A Cemetery of Palace Attendants, including G 2084-2099, G 2230 + 2231 and G 2240*, Boston, 1995, 42-43.

<sup>96</sup> Altenmüller, *op. cit.*, 12, 17 (d); cf., *Wb I*, 429, 18.

<sup>97</sup> For the king as giver of offerings in parallelism with other gods up to the Middle Kingdom see: Gardiner, *EG, Excursus B*, 170-73; Lapp, *op. cit.*, §§ 48-49, 58.

Unis followed by an inscription identifying the owner. The remaining part has two more inscriptions: one belonging to Khenu and the other belonging to the son. They are as follows: *jm3hw hr Wnjs* “The honored one before Unis” and *smr wctj hrj-hbt jm3hw hr nb.f Z-n-Wnjs* “The sole companion, the lector priest, the honored one before his lord, Sienunis”. Because the deification of king Unis is attested since the beginning of the Sixth Dynasty,<sup>98</sup> this representation most probably relates to the adoration of that king. The use of *jm3hw hr* is significant here, for according to Altenmüller *jm3hw hr* with a royal name or a private person’s name equals *jm3hw hr* with a name of a deity, and consequently the mentioned person was regarded as a deified creature.<sup>99</sup>

Two other examples connecting the adoration gesture with royal names by means of *jm3hw hr* should be added here. The first one is the false door of *Jpj* (doc. 1), where the following text is inscribed just above the adoring figure on the left jamb: *jm3hw hr Jnj Jpj* “The revered one before Ini (Neuserre), Ipi”. The second example is the false door of *Jp: Jn* (doc. 2), where the following inscription is written on the opposite jamb to that showing the adoring figure: *mrjj n jt.f hzjj n njwt.f tm(.tj) jm3hw hr nb.f Jpj ...* “Beloved of his father, praised by (lit. of) his entire city, the honored one before his lord, Ipi...” Since the title *mtj n z3 W3d-swt-Mrjj-k3-Rc* “controller of a phyle of the pyramid of Merykare” is mentioned among the false door inscriptions, most probably that king Merykare is the one meant by *nb.f* “his lord”. As already pointed out in the preceding paragraph, the presence of *jm3hw hr* before these two royal names means that the gesture is connected here with the adoration of deified kings.

In many examples, *jm3hw hr* is followed by a god’s name in association with the adoration gesture. The god Anubis is mentioned on the following false doors:

Doc. 2, on the opposite jamb to that showing the adoring figure: *jm3hw hr Jnpw tpj dw.f ntj m srwt Jpj rn.f nfr Jn* “The honored one before Anubis, who is on his mountain, the one who is among the magistrates, Ipi, whose beautiful name is In”.

<sup>98</sup> Altenmüller, op. cit., 1ff.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 9-14.

Doc. 3, above the adoring figure: *jm3hw hr Jnpw tpj dw.f Jpj-<sup>c</sup>nhw* “The honored one before Anubis, who is on his mountain, Ipiankhu”.

Doc. 9, on the opposite outer jamb to that showing the adoring figure: (1) *hkrt nswt w<sup>c</sup>tt špst nswt hmt-ntr Hwt-hr jm3hw<sup>t</sup> hr Jnpw Mstnj* (2) *jm3hw<sup>t</sup> hr Pth-Zkr hr Jnpw tpj dw.f nb t3 dsr Mstnj* “(1) The sole royal ornament, the noblewoman of the king, priestess of Hathor, the honored one before Anubis, Mesteni (2) The honored one before Ptah-Sokar and before Anubis, who is upon his mountain, lord of the sacred land, Mesteni”.

Doc. 11, on the opposite jamb to that showing the adoring figure: *jm3hw hr Jnpw tpj dw.f Njt-htp* “The honored one before Anubis, who is upon his mountain, Neithotep”.

Doc. 16, on the opposite jamb to that showing the adoring figure: *jm3hw hr Jnpw nb t3 dsr Šd-šbd* “The honored one before Anubis, lord of the sacred land, Shedabed”.

Doc. 17, above the adoring figure: *jm3hw hr Jnpw K3(j)-rnn(j)* “The honored one before Anubis, Karenen”.

The god Osiris is similarly mentioned after *jm3hw hr* on the following examples:

Doc. 1 (false door), above the adoring figure: *jm3hw hr ntr 3 nb pt Jpj* “The honored one before the great god, lord of heaven, Ipi”.

Doc. 6 (false door), on the opposite jamb to that showing the adoring figure: *htp dj nswt Jnpw tpj dw.(f) (n) jm3hw hr ntr 3 Id* “An offering which the king gives and Anubis, who is on (his) mountain (gives to) the honored one before the great god, Id”.

Doc. 8 (false door), above the adoring figure: *jrj-p<sup>c</sup>t h3tj-<sup>c</sup> jmj-r Šm<sup>c</sup> m3<sup>c</sup> jmj-r k3t nbt nt nswt jmj-r w<sup>c</sup>btj jm3hw hr Wsjr Ppjj-nht* “The hereditary prince, the count, the true overseer of Upper Egypt, overseer of the two workshops, the honored one before Osiris, Pepynakht”.

Doc. 17 (false door), above the adoring figure: *jm3hw hr ntr 3 K3(j)-rnn(j)* “The honored one before the great god, Karenen”.

Doc. 21 (stela), above the adoring figure: *htp dj nswt Jnpw tpj dw.f prt-hrw n jm3hw hr ntr 3* “An offering which the king gives and Anubis, who is on his mountain (gives), that funerary offerings be presented to the honored one before the great god”.

Doc. 22 (stela), above the adoring figure of the son: *htp dj nswt Wsjr ... nt jm3hw hr ntr 3 smr w<sup>c</sup>tj Nfr-prt ...* “An offering which the king gives and Osiris ... belonging to the honored one before the great god, the sole companion, Neferpert...”



Two more gods are mentioned after *jm3hw hr* in connection with the adoration gestures, as follows:

Doc. 9 (false door), on the opposite outer jamb to that showing the adoring figure: *jm3hwt hr Pth-Zkr hr Jnpw tpj dw.f nb t3 dsr Mstrj* "The honored one before Ptah-Sokar and before Anubis, who is upon his mountain, lord of the sacred land, Mesteni".

Doc. 20 (stela), in front of the adoring figure: *jm3hw hr ntr c3 Pth-Zkr Wn.j* "The honored one before the great god and Ptah-Sokar, Weni". The mention of Ptah-Sokar on this stela is significant. Since the stela was found at Abydos, the mention of this Memphite god after *jm3hw hr* is suggested to mean that the individual has spent a period of his life in the capital.<sup>100</sup>

Doc. 23 (tomb chapel), on the right jamb adjacent to the right door thickness, on which the adoring figure is represented: *j(m3hw hr) Wp-w3wt...* "The honored one before Wepwawet...". However, the god Wepwawet is known to be the local god of El-Hagarsa, where the chapel exists.<sup>101</sup>

Similar divine names could be found in association with the adoration gesture without being preceded by *jm3hw hr*. They could be components of both titles and personal names. As components of titles we have the following examples:

Doc. 4 (false door), on the opposite middle jamb to that showing the adoring figure: *jm3hwt hmt-ntr Hwt-hr Jpj* "The revered one, priestess of Hathor, Ipi".

Doc. 18 (false door), on the two middle jambs opposite to those showing the adoring figures: *mtj n z3 Dd-swt-Tij mrjj nb.f jm3hw Gmn(j)* "The controller of a phyle of the pyramid of Teti, beloved by his lord, the honored one, Gemni", and *mtj n z3 W3d-swt-Mrjj-k3-Rc hzjj n nb.f jm3hw Gmn(j)* "The controller of a phyle of the pyramid of Merykare, praised by (lit. of) his lord, the honored one, Gemni".

Doc. 26 (tomb chapel), above the adoring figure: *hm b3w P hm b3w Nhn* "The servant of the souls of Buto, the servant of the souls of Nekhen".

<sup>100</sup> E. Martin-Pardey, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Provinzialverwaltung bis zum Ende des Alten Reiches*, Hildesheim, 1976, 134 ff. However, this is confirmed by the owner's title: *shd hm(w)-ntr H'j-nfr-Mrj.n-Rc* "The superintendent of priests of the pyramid of Merenre".

<sup>101</sup> F. Gomaà, in: *LÄ II*, 929.

As regards the divine names, which are used as components of personal names in a similar context, they are to be found on the following false doors:

Doc. 5, on the opposite jamb to that showing the adoring figure: *jm<sup>3</sup>hw smr w<sup>c</sup>tj Jnpw-m-<sup>h</sup>st...* "The honored one, the sole companion, Inpuemhat..."

Doc. 8, except for the left outer jamb, the four figures have only titles followed by the owner's name: ...*Ppjj-nht* "...Pepynakht". Since none of the owners of the monuments on which the adoration gesture is accompanied by a royal or private name proved to be contemporaneous with the mentioned person, the owner of this false door should be later than the mentioned Pepy. Because this false door is securely dated to the reign of Pepy II, the gesture is suggested to be associated with Pepy I.

Doc. 13, on the opposite three jambs to those showing the adoring figures: (1) *mtj z<sup>3</sup> rh nswt H<sup>r</sup>j-š.f-nht* "The controller of a phyle, the acquaintance of the king, Herishefnakht". (2) *p<sup>r</sup>t-hrw nt jm<sup>3</sup>hw H<sup>r</sup>j-š.f-nht* "Funerary offerings belonging to the honored one, Herishefnakht". (3) *jm<sup>3</sup>hw H<sup>r</sup>j-š.f-nht* "The honored one, Herishefnakht".

Doc. 10, on the same jamb: *hp.f m htp m hrt-ntr ssm.tj.f jn k<sup>3</sup>w.f jm<sup>3</sup>hw Nj-<sup>c</sup>nh-Hr* "May he travel in peace in the necropolis and be guided by his kas, the honored one, Niankhhor".

The adoration gesture is clearly related to the gods mentioned in the offering formulae in the following examples:

Doc. 7 (false door), on the architrave of the outer frame and its adjacent left jamb opposite to that showing the adoring figure: *htp dj nswt Wsjr (nb) Ddw Hntj-jmntjw m 3bdw (n) smr w<sup>c</sup>tj* "An offering which the king gives and Osiris, (lord) of Busiris, and Khentiamentiu in Abydos (give to) the sole companion".

Doc. 10 (false door), on the architrave and its adjacent outer jamb opposite to that showing the adoring figure: *htp dj nswt Wsjr nb Ddw ntr <sup>c</sup>3 nb 3bdw prj n.f hrw nfr m jz.f jm<sup>3</sup>hw Nj-<sup>c</sup>nh-Hr* "An offering which the king gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, the great god, lord of Abydos, that funerary offerings be presented to him well in his tomb, the honored one, Niankhhor".

Doc. 12 (false door), on the architrave and the left jamb opposite to that showing the adoring figure: *htp dj nswt Wsjr nb Ddw prj n.f hrw nfr m jz.f n hrt-ntr H<sup>r</sup>j-š.f-nht* "An offering which the king gives and Osiris, lord of Busiris (gives), that funerary offerings be

presented to him well in his tomb of the necropolis, Herishefnakht”.

Doc. 15 (false door), on the opposite jamb to that showing the adoring figure: (*htp dj nswt*)<sup>102</sup> *Jnpw tpj ḏw.f jmj wt nb t3 ḏsr (n) jm3hw S<sup>c</sup>nh-gmn* “(An offering which the king gives) and Anubis, who is on his mountain, who is in the embalming place, lord of the sacred land (gives to) the honored one, Sankhgemn”.

Doc. 19 (stela), in front of the adoring figure: *htp dj nswt Jnpw tpj ḏw.f prt-hrw (n) smr...* “An offering which the king gives and Anubis, who is on his mountain (gives), that funerary offerings be presented (to) the companion...”

Doc. 25 (tomb chapel), above the adoring figure of the son: *htp dj nswt Jnpw tpj ḏw.f prt-hrw nt h3ty-<sup>c3</sup> jmj-r hm(w)-ntr Mrw* “An offering which the king gives and Anubis, who is on his mountain (gives): funerary offerings belonging to the count and overseer of priests, Meru”.

The association of the adoration gesture with an offering formula could be clearly understood when compared with some of the Middle Kingdom stelae of a similar context. For example, the Abydene stela of *Hnms* shows him standing in an adoration attitude in front of an offering table. On the other side of the offering table is the following inscription: (*r*)*djt j3w n Wsjr ntr <sup>c3</sup> nb 3bdw Wp-w3wt Šm<sup>c</sup>w Mhw Mnw-Hr-nht ntrw jmjw 3bdw dj.sn prt-hrw (m) t3w ndm n <sup>c</sup>nh 3h wsr m hrt-ntr n k3 n rh nswt Hnms ...* “Giving praise to Osiris, the great god, lord of Abydos, Wepwawet of Upper and Lower Egypt, Min-Hornakht and the gods who are in Abydos, that they may give funerary offerings consisting of the sweet breath of life and a powerful spirit in the necropolis to the ka of the acquaintance of the king, Khenmes ...”<sup>103</sup> According to this inscription, the accompanying gesture is

related to the adoration of the gods mentioned in the offering formula in order to supply the owner with food. This explanation could also apply to all the other examples in which the adoration gesture is accompanied by the names of Osiris and Anubis.

The repeated association of the gesture with the gods of the dead in order to supply the owners with food, and the possibility

<sup>102</sup> *htp dj nswt*, which is written on the architrave, introduces the offering formulae on both the architrave and the right outer jamb.

<sup>103</sup> Simpson, op. cit., pl. 76 (ANOC 54.2). For some other similar examples see: *ibid.*, pl. 79 (ANOC 57.4); CG 20404.

of combining the gesture with the adoration of king Unis in his capacity as giver of offerings (doc. 27) is significant. Since most of our material dates to the late Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period, the introduction of the adoration attitude could be a result of the economic problems and famines attested probably since the late Old Kingdom.<sup>104</sup> It is probably no coincidence that the biographical inscription in the chapel of *Mrjj-ḥ* at El-Hagrsa (doc. 24) refers to the years of famine.<sup>105</sup> The closeness of this inscription to the adoring figure is remarkable, for the figure exists on the northern door thickness and the inscription exists on the neighboring northern part of the western wall.

An isolated example, hard to be classified under any of the above-mentioned groups because of its bad state of preservation, exists on the northern door thickness of the tomb chapel of *Mrjj-ḥ* (doc. 24), where the poorly preserved inscription before him shows only the following: ...*jj*... *Wp-wṣwt* "... Wepwawet".

In conclusion, the adoration gesture was used for major figures since the late Old Kingdom. This attitude was probably introduced at that time as a result of the economic problems and famines attested towards the end of the Old Kingdom. The adoring figures are always accompanied by divine names either written in front of or above them. The accompanying divine names are rarely introduced by some clearly related words such as *dwṣw* and *bṣk* "adorer". In many examples they are introduced by *jmṣhw hr*. Sometimes, such divine names are written as components of titles and personal names. In some other examples the divine names are mentioned among the accompanying offering formulae.

The adoration gesture is related mainly to the gods of the dead Osiris and Anubis. In some examples it is associated with the local gods Ptah-Sokar, Wepwawet and Herishef. Other examples associate the major gods Hathor and Horus with the gesture. The

<sup>104</sup> For references to the famines in that period see: Fischer, Dendera, 206-208, fig. 42 [line 3]; Vandier, Mo<sup>a</sup>alla, 162 ff; idem, La famine dans l'Égypte Ancienne, RAPH 7, 1936, passim. As for a possible Eighth Dynasty dating for *ḥh.tj.f* see: Martin-Pardey, op. cit., 207, 233; F. Gomaà, Ägypten während der Ersten Zwischenzeit, TAVO 27, 1980, 24, 31 ff; Kanawati, Governmental Reforms, 105-107, 109-15, 119; Kanawati/McFarlane, op. cit., 297.

<sup>105</sup> Kanawati, El-Hagrsa III, 32-33, pl. 35 [line 3].

royal names Neuserre, Unis, Teti, Pepy I and Merykare are also mentioned in association with that gesture. The sage Djedefhor, the souls of Buto and the souls of Nekhen are rarely mentioned in association with the adoration gesture.

The gesture signifies that the represented person adores the divine being, whose name is mentioned in the accompanying inscription. When a royal name is concerned, the gesture means that he was either adored as a deified being or that he probably was adored in his capacity as a giver of funerary offerings. But when the gesture is associated with Osiris and Anubis, it most probably means that they were adored in order to provide the represented person with food supplies.