

The Rituals of Love in Ancient Egypt: Festival Songs of the Eighteenth Dynasty and the Ramesside Love Poetry

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Summary

The love poetry of Ramesside Period Thebes presents human love against a backdrop of frequently bucolic and marshy environments, with the trappings of festivals and religious imagery present in some of the poems. Precursors for the corpus appear in the form of festival songs recorded in Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tombs, presenting the festival activities of the gods against a backdrop of mortal love, performed in the setting of banquets involving ritual drunkenness. The Ramesside love poetry may reflect events of a romantic and even orgiastic nature that accompanied certain New Kingdom Theban celebrations. The common festival background for parallel corpora of texts celebrating divine love and human love in Egypt may provide a template for the performance setting of the Song of Songs, and help explain why that text is both so descriptive of the interactions of two human beings, and a text ultimately accepted as part of the Old Testament.

Phoebus farewell, a sweeter saint I serve.
Thou art far off, thy kingdom is above;
She heav'n on earth with beauties doth preserve.
Thy beams I like, but her clear rays I love;
Thy force I fear, her force I still do prove.
Sir Philip Sydney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, Third Book

No single internal theme or trope, other than love between two humans, links together all of the love poetry of the ancient Egyptians.¹ Within this unfortunately small corpus of material, all of Ramesside date and apparently Theban in origin, several basic motifs occur with some repetition, although not uniformly, through many of the poems. Although the lovers are together in a domestic setting in some poems, and other apparently related poems reference the concept of love-sickness,² more of the New Kingdom love poems share a pastoral-aquatic setting, often with the specific background of a festival celebration. Though she is seldom overtly present – a notable exception

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- 1 Fox 1985: 295, rightly summarizes that “The Egyptian love songs and the Song of Songs are first of all poems about lovers.”
 - 2 For the “space” of the love poems, see the discussion in Mathieu 1996: 151–159. Graves-Brown 2010: 122, appears to have misunderstood Mathieu – rather than 70% of the encounters between the lovers involving the house of the female protagonist, 70% of the encounters having a domestic setting occur in or near the woman's house.

is P. Chester Beatty I Group A (Fox' No. 31A) – the returning goddess of the New Year, the moisture with which she is associated, and the festivities that accompanied and ensured her propitious return, form a backdrop to many of the love poems from New Kingdom Egypt.

Evidence for Egyptian rituals for the returning goddess of the eye of the sun appears in a number of disparate sources, much being of Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom date. Material such as a deposit of ostrich feathers and small stone “bulla” from the desert just northwest of Hierakonpolis, inscriptions concerning groups of desert travelers “spending the day at the base of the gebel on holiday (*hr hrw-nfr*)” at a desert stopping point on the Farshût Road connecting ancient Thebes with the region of Abydos and ultimately the southern oases of the Western Desert, a late text referring to worshippers of the returning goddess going “out upon the desert,” and a hymn from Medamûd detailing the worshippers – both human and animal, real and mythical – who accompany the returning goddess Rat-Tawy in her guise of the eye of the sun – such sources archaeological and epigraphic from the Middle Kingdom through the Graeco-Roman Period, reveal a participatory worship in which humans greet and accompany a divine journey in a setting of *hrw-nfr*-celebration.³ A portion of the Mut Temple at Karnak, constructed under Hatshepsut, appears to be the architectural setting of such worship, a place of human worship through imitation, the setting for human celebration, ritual drunkenness, and sexual activity ensuring the return and pacification of the potentially yet angry goddess of the eye of the sun.⁴ Group worship for the goddess Mut as the returning deity to be pacified, led by – at least in theory – the ruler in person, occurred well into the later periods of Egyptian religion.⁵

In the P. Harris 500 collection of love poems, four of the eight poems in the first section (Fox' Nos. 3, 4, 7–8) relate to a moist and fecund landscape, with two (Fox' Nos. 5 and 8) appearing to reference a festival. In the second section of the same collection, five of eight (Fox' Nos. 9, 10, 11, 14, and 16) also have a pastoral or festival background; the entirety of the third section of the collection is both pastoral and festive. In the two groups of the Cairo Love Songs, the first focuses on an aquatic environment, with the trappings of festival attire and accoutrements. The Turin love poems, although not overtly aquatic in setting, take place within a festive orchard. The first group of the Chester Beatty I songs makes some of the most direct and fulsome references to divinity within the entire corpus. Although more permanent architectural structures appear in some of the poems,⁶ many emphasize love outdoors, with temporary shel-

3 Most of this material is summarized with appropriate references – and some more fully discussed – in Darnell 2010a: 99–140.

4 Bryan 2014.

5 Klotz 2012a: 277–278.

6 P. Harris 500 A Nos. 7, 13; Chester Beatty I A Nos. 32 and 36; B No. 38; C Nos. 41, 42, 46, and 47; implied at least in P. Harris 500 A Nos. 6, 14, and 15, and in Cairo A No. 20G.

ters, and references to water and navigation. Alcoholic beverages are present in some of the poems, and the accoutrements and preparations of formal dress appear, sometimes incongruously, even if the pressures of love do not always give the lovers time and opportunity to attend properly to their outward appearance.

The apparent Persian Period date of composition for the Song of Songs removes that text from any probable influence by the surviving love poems of the ancient Egyptians.⁷ Surviving Egyptian texts of the first millennium BCE do not preserve either copies of the Ramesside love poetry, or any truly comparable later versions of the same genre (see Quack, this volume). A common festival background⁸ is perhaps more important in explaining the similarities and parallels between the Egyptian and Biblical texts than the unlikely possibility of direct textual borrowing. The place and time of origin of the Egyptian material, and close parallels in other compositions from the same time and place, point to Theban, Memphite, and Delta Residence as specific festival settings for the Ramesside love poetry.

More precisely, whatever their allusions, most of the surviving ancient Egyptian love poems are the literary copies, if not personal products, of scribes in the royal workmen's city of Deir el-Medina, and all with known provenance come from Thebes.⁹ The surviving Egyptian love poems contain internal allusions to disportments of the elite, or at least the scribal class, and reveal affinities with the eulogies of cities, another literary genre well ensconced, if not at home, in the Theban milieu.¹⁰ In both genres – poetic praise of bodies human and architectural – though Memphis and even the region of the Delta Residence may be a goal of journeys both physical and mental, all movement in the north as it appears in the texts is in origin a trip from the south. Although later versions of the New Kingdom love poetry have not thus far appeared in the corpus of Egyptian texts from the first millennium BCE, other parallels for the texts and their themes appear within the surviving texts of New Kingdom Egypt. More specifically, precursors to the Ramesside love poetry appear in Eighteenth Dynasty festival texts, a group of poems representing divine interactions with allusions to human love in their depictions of the reconciliation of divine elements, foreshadowing the Ramesside love poems and their occasional references to the divine world for reflections of the processes and nature of human love. These Eighteenth Dynasty poems are festival songs that blend themes of human and divine love, and include architectural elements as ob-

7 See Dobbs-Allsopp 2005; Loprieno 2005.

8 Note the discussion of “love poetry as entertainment,” and the description of the possible performance of the Song of Songs, in Fox 1985: 244–252.

9 See the convenient chart in Landgráfová and Navrátilová 2009: 231.

10 Ragazzoli 2008: 135–137.

jects of love, thus presaging both the love poetry and the eulogies of cities in the New Kingdom Theban literary corpus.

I. The Beloved is Temporarily and Temporally Divine – Love Poetry Evokes Ritual

The ancient Egyptian love poems are not exclusively personal. Multiple people appear in a number of the poems, revealing love between the two protagonists as one of perhaps many microcosmic expressions of love within a larger setting, and elements of true ritual activities and processes suffuse several of the texts. The Middle Kingdom text known as the Tale of the Herdsman presents a similar group background – herdsman and their cattle gather on the edge of a marsh, and one of their number encounters a strange female, apparently the returning goddess before she has fully returned and before she is either entirely transformed or fully placated.¹¹ Several of the New Kingdom love poems essentially adopt a similar background, with groups of people assembled at the time of a divine epiphany or ritual occurrence, although in their standard form the New Kingdom texts reveal the encounter between the human and divine worlds through the interactions of two human lovers.

The first group of the Papyrus Chester Beatty I love poems stresses an identification of the beloved with the returning goddess of the eye of the sun. The names or epithets of specific divinities in the love poetry appear, albeit without any considerable frequency.¹² References to elements of festival and ritual, and to enobling aspects of participation in the acting out of love, are, however, also present in the poems, and augment the more overt presence of a specific divinity in the corpus. The description of the beloved reflects an enobling description of the body and its accoutrements as elements of a ritual of divinization. The festival background that appears in a number of the songs reflects a possible performance background in riverine processions and bucolic celebrations, in which the reconciliation of elements of a divine pair find both prototypes and reflections in the interactions of human lovers.

In a text on the recto of O. Gardiner 304¹³ a man describes his beloved as though her festival adornments of plants and jewelery were the wealth of a formal awarding of honors. The man describes his reception and embracing of the woman in a public context:

11 See Darnell 2010a: 101–118 *et passim*, with references to many of the discussions of the text; also Mathieu 2015: 196–205 (ref. courtesy J. Quack).

12 Mathieu 1996: 233 (§143).

13 Cerny and Gardiner 1957: pl. 38, 2; Mathieu 1996: 114 and 121–122 (nn. 399–403), pl. 26; Landgráfová and Navrátilová 2009: 100–102; see also Darnell 2010a: 130–131.

¹*mrw(.t) sn.t m tʃ ...* ²*h^c.wt*
īw nīy=s šbyw n hrr.w
nīy=s [krm.t(?)]¹⁴ ³*n īsy.w*
pīy=s htmw šrī [hr db^c.t=s]
⁴*īw pīy=s sšny m dr:t=s*
īw=i <r> snny[=s] m-bʃh wn bw nb
^cm=w pīy=i mrw.t
yʃ mnts ītʃ īb=i
īr m-dr nw=s r=i kbw

¹ The love of the sister in the ... ² body,
 her *shebyou*-collar of flowers,
 her [bracelets(?)]³ of 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 – only the last an actual element of non-botanical adornment in the O. Gardiner 304 text, and one occurring elsewhere in the New Kingdom love poetry¹⁵ – are emblems and rewards of an honored official. Excepting perhaps the ring, however, the insignia of favor are the plants of the marshy and sexually charged landscape of the nocturnal and aquatic dalliance.

Although women do not often appear as the recipients of the *shebyou*,¹⁶ a particularly detailed example of such an occurrence appears in the tomb of Neferhotep (Theban Tomb 49, reign of Aye),¹⁷ the recipient being Meryetre, wife of Neferhotep. The lady, standing with her retinue of leaping attendants, receives rewards from the queen, who dispenses them from a window of appearances of a palatial structure filled with food, drink, and garlands. Behind come two well-dressed women – one holding a sistrum – who, “sheltered perhaps from view by the pomegranates, figs, sycamores, and grape vines of the gardens, surreptitiously take deep draughts from pitchers which they have

14 Following Mathieu 1996: 121 n. 400; for the term *krm.t/kmr*, see also Hoch 1994: 321 (n. 463).

15 O. DM 1266 + O. CGC 25218, B3; P. Chester Beatty I, group 3, no. 3; possibly also O. DM 1266 + O. CGC 25218, 8–14, A2 (cf. Landgráfová and H. Navrátilová 2009: 145 and n. 250).

16 Binder 2008: 232–235; Kozloff 1998: 114. For the actual collars see Brand 2006: 17–42.

17 Davies 1933: vol. 1, pls. 14–15, and vol. 2, pl. 1; Binder 2008: 315 (no. 113). Although a signet is not clearly present, “the neck of Meryet-Re^c is heavy with gold necklaces, and her forearm covered with armlets” (Davies 1933: vol. 1, p. 26).

brought with them.”¹⁸ Neferhotep himself received rewards from the king and queen, apparently during the same visit to the palace as that of his wife; when the two return home, female musicians greet them, and perform at a banquet in the pair’s honor.

Receipt of the regalia of reward ennobles the official and his wife, as the events of the night have ennobled the beloved in the love poem.¹⁹ In the poem P. Harris 500, third collection, no. 3, the man has participated in a festive event, and returns to the woman, who takes his *m³h.w*-garlands and rubs his feet, apparently in the company of some group of children. As in O. Gardiner 304, the couple is not alone, and pictorial parallels for the greeting of a returning family hero may include children accompanying celebrating musicians – so in the tomb of Neferhotep, children appear in the retinue of Meryetre, both as she stands before the queen, and during the return to her own home.²⁰ A passage in the fifth poem of the first group of the P. Chester Beatty I love poetry, echoing a passage of the praise of the goddess Mut on O. DM 1055, refers to *mry.w*, “male lovers,” bowing to the beloved due to the greatness of her love. In the song of the sycamore in the Turin cycle, the lovers are in the environs of “a festival booth and a tent/hut” (*hb imw*) beneath the tree, and a “beer hut” (*ᶜ.t hnḳ.t*);²¹ the multiplicity of temporary structures would well accommodate the pair who are the protagonists of the poem, as well as the others, for the note the tree sends to the woman urges her to come and pass time with the *ᶜdd.wt*, “young women.”²²

18 Davies 1933: vol. 1, p. 26. For the nature of the palatial structure see Vomberg 2004: 143–148.
19 Correcting Fox 1985: 288.

20 Davies 1933: vol. 1, pls. 14–15, and vol. 2, pl. 1. Children also accompany the musicians meeting Neferhotep after his own reception of royal awards, and in banqueting scenes depicting the celebrations following the couple’s visits to the palace (*ibid.*, pls. 17–18).

21 For the temporary structures see Darnell 2010a: 129–130 *et passim*.

22 Although the orthography of the determinative of *ᶜdd.wt* may be emended to show the signs of the seated man and woman over plural strokes, the surviving signs appear to show two seated women, the text of the opening of the tree’s missive reading (Pleyte and Rossi 1869–1876: pl. 82):

mᶜ.t ᶜry=t ʿᶜ.t m-ᶜhnw ᶜdd.wt=ᶜi
ᶜᶜ r hrw=f
hb imw hry=ᶜi

Come spend a time amongst my young women,
 the swamp being at its proper day –
 under me are a festival booth and a hut.

The tree then instructs the woman to send out her *hm*-servants with instruments. The text refers to a celebration of a group of women within a meadow, similar to that described in the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling, and recalling the later references to female companions or attendants of the returning goddess as *hm.w*, the term employed for the attendants pointedly absent in the entourage of the strange female in the Tale of the Herdsman – see Darnell 2010a: 107–108 and 126–127. For *r hrw* see Mathieu 1996: 92 n. 308; note also Meeks 1998: 180 (no. 79.1839).

In the first love poem of P. Chester Beatty I Group²³ A (No. 31_), the ritual of donning regalia – the basis for the text of O. Gardiner 304 – becomes a more direct identification of the beloved as both mineral and divinity. The beloved first appears as Sothis, and then as a beautiful woman, who nevertheless shines and glows as a celestial being:

¹*w^c.t sn.t nn sn.nw=s nfr(.t) r hr-nb.t^a*
ptr s.t m^l sb³.t
h^cy m h³.t rnp.t nfr.t

sšp.t ikr:t *wbh.t iwn^b*
‘n.t ir.ty <hr> gmh *bnr sp.ty=s(y) <hr> mdw.t*
bn n=s hnw m-h³w

k³.t nhb.t *wbh.t k(3)by.t^c*
hsbd.t m³^c šn.w=s
g³b.ty=s(y) hr i^l.t nbw^d
db^c.w=s mi sšn.w

One unique is the sister, without her equal, more beautiful than all women.
 Behold her like the star/constellation,
 having appeared in glory at the beginning of a good year.

Shining of excellence, luminous of hue;
 beautiful of eyes when glancing, sweet her lips when speaking –
 for her no word is excessive.

Long of neck, luminous of chest;
 true lapis is her hair,
 her arms putting on gold,
 her fingers like lotuses.

text notes:

^a Following Gardiner’s suggested reading. Alternatively, *r-nfr* as an adverbial could follow *nn sn.nw=s*, although this would then require *hr-nb.t* to be the subject of *ptr* as verb.

^b In a hymn to the rising sun god at Medinet Habu, the worshipper addresses Horakhty:²⁴ *psd=k m hr[.t] wbh.tw nn šn^c.w*, “you shine in heaven, with the result that it (the heaven) is luminous, without clouds ...” The passage contains an early attestation of a group frequently encountered in Ptolemaic texts: a word for heaven + a qualitative

²³ See Mathieu 1996: 41 n. 76.

²⁴ Epigraphic Survey 1963: pl. 431 A, ll. 1–2.

of a verb of luminosity + *nn* followed by a noun of bad weather.²⁵ The term *iwn* here parallels *ikr.t* as a description of the outward appearance (cf. Hannig 2006: 241).

^cThe description of luminous skin here gives way to a more concrete description of the adorned body. The *shebyou*-necklaces of O. Gardiner 304 would themselves impart a solar aspect to the neck and chest of the one so adorned – compare the solarizing *shebyou*-necklaces amongst the solar accoutrements of the divine Amenhotep III (Johnson 1990: 26–48; Johnson 1998: 86–87).

^dFor *iti* “to don, put on” regalia, cf. Meeks 1998: 39 (no. 79.0380).

The plants of temporary personal adornment become the precious minerals that represent those plants in formal jewelery, enobling the beloved. Even the form of the first love poem of P. Chester Beatty I Group A mirrors closely the form of a hymn to Mut on O. DM 1055.²⁶ The transformation of bucolic accoutrements into the trappings of ritual through the process of human love mirrors the processing of the products of field and river into the offerings of temple celebrations through festival processes. Such interdependence of agricultural and economic activities with temple rituals appears in the depiction of the sourcing of the festival produce in the scenes literally underlying the depictions of the royal Jubilee in the temple of Amenhotep III at Soleb.²⁷

Even the love poems of P. Turin 1966, in which trees participate, and poems in which a park-like landscape serves as the backdrop for the lovers (such as the ninth poem in the first group of the P. Harris 500 love poems), fit nicely into the context of the garden surroundings of both palace and temple.²⁸ In both the love poetry of Ramesside Period Deir el-Medina, and the praises of Eighteenth Dynasty banqueting songs extolling the sensual nature of the god's union with his temple (see below), the products of the natural world provide the materials that ensure the divinization of the lovers, be they human, divine, or architectural.²⁹ The outer areas of temples were gardens, continuing into the world of the present the fossilized, stone-carved swamp plants of the temple world.³⁰ Even a poetic description of the ideal nature of a newly constructed temple describes the outer garden area in terms of the divinizing bouquets it will deliver to the deity, whose *nfrw*-perfection resides within.³¹

25 See already Brugsch 1874: 140–41; also examples cited under *sšp* in *Wb* IV 282, 12.

26 Mathieu 1996: 212–213 and 237–240 (§§110 and 148–151).

27 Giorgini 1998: pls. 86–93 and 134–137; compare also Epigraphic Survey 1980: pls. 58–63 (see also the discussion in Leblanc 2011: 156–157, 243, and 554).

28 See the remarks of Sheikholeslami 2015 on the poems and their possible performance context.

29 This description of a processual environment appears also in the eulogies of cities Ragazzoli 2008: 195–205.

30 An excellent depiction of the architectural plants of the temple in the setting of the temple garden is Davies 1933: vol. 1, pls. 41–44 (and vol. 2, pls. 3 and 6). For the temple as moist, swampy environment translated into stone, see Finnestad 1985; Darnell 1994: 35–39.

31 So the description of the temple of Merneptah at Akhmim in the “Festival Song of Thoth” (Kitchen 1982: 30, ll. 5–9):

II. The Beloved is Temporarily and Temporally Divine – Ritual Reflects Love Poetry

In the formal presentation of jewelry to the pharaoh – the costly and polished albeit artificial representations of the ennobling plants of the love poems – royal children might even sing a song that references the beauty of the royal body through comparison to the minerals of which the proffered jewelry is composed. As in the love poetry, the ennobling of the beloved through the process of love transforms adornments into the transfiguring regalia of ritual, so in the ritual of presenting these very elements of regalia to the ruler, the songs assume the characteristics of the love poetry. In the Eastern High Gate at Medinet Habu, Ramesses III's daughters bring broad collars to their royal father, and chant a hymn in which they liken the body of the king to precious stones. The daughters appear in the High Gate playing the game of *senet* with the king, and offering broad collars to him; they fulfill the Hathoric, rejuvenating role of other daughters in banqueting scenes in New Kingdom non-royal tombs.³² In the High Gate scenes, the royal daughters' offering of broad collars to the king is the central event of the encounter, as it is the only one to receive a lengthy descriptive text:³³

¹*dd.t.n n3 ms.w-nsw.t n² nsw.t-bity nb-t3.wy Wsr-m3^c.t-R^c Mr-Imn³ s3-R^c nb-h^c.w R^c-ms-s(w) Hk3-Imnw^a*

*sw dg3.tw m šnw nb bnr sthn.ti m hrw.w
 n3y=s k3m.w hr sšny.w prh.w šy.w 'nhm.w' twfy.w
 hrp.tw=w m p3 msy.w n mn.t r p3 wb3 n Dhwty
 di=w w3d w3d.w pr-Dhwty m-rnpi
 nfrw n 'Imn n Mr.n-Pth htp-hr-M3^c.t di 'nh htp m-hnw=s
 iw=f m3 Šw hr wbn
 shb.n=f Hmnw m m3w.t=f d3=f ntry 'Hsr.t' r-nhh*

It is planted with all sorts of fruit trees, decorated with flowers.

Its gardens yield lotuses, blooms, reeds, lotus buds, papyrus,
 that they might be dedicated as daily garlands to the court of Thoth,
 that they make green the foliage of the temple of Thoth afresh,
 with the result that he perfection of Amun of Merneptah rests within it,
 he being like the sun upon rising.

While divinizing 'Heseret' forever has he made Hermopolis festive with his rays.

A surviving example of the apotropaic bouquets and garlands is studied in Erroux-Morfin 2012.

32 Attempts to identify them as harem women continue – so O'Connor 2005: 439–454 (although acknowledging the label of “royal daughters”). Janssen and Janssen 2007: 119–120, note that at least some of the girls are clearly labeled as daughters of the king; they suggest that some may be “royal ornaments,” but nevertheless observe that the girls appear all to be quite young. For the Hathoric daughters in banqueting scenes, see Graves-Brown 2015.

33 For flowers and stones of jewelry compared, see Condon 1978: pl. 21, ll. 1–5. The hymn is Epigraphic Survey 1970: pl. 630 *et passim*; see also Darnell 1995: n. 41. The songstresses are the royal daughters according to Epigraphic Survey 1970: pl. 648, ll. 1–5.

⁴[šš]p wšh.w
 šn(y)=k^{b5}[h]sbd inh.wy=k(y)^c ir.ty=k š⁶[sm].t^d r3=k ḥnmw.t^e ...

Statement by the king's children to the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, the Lord of the Two Lands, Usermaatre-Meramun, the son of Re, Lord of Glorious Appearances Ramesses-Hekaon:

Receive the broad collars:

Your hair is lapis lazuli; your eyebrows are black hematite(?); your eyes are green malachite; your mouth is 'red jasper'; ...

text notes:

^aThe object of the girls' address is the king seated before them, and the object of the preposition *n* concluding the first line of text above the ladies takes as its object the titles and names of the king (Wente, in Epigraphic Survey 1970: 14 n. *a* suggested the object was omitted). Compare Fischer 1977: 79–81, particularly fig. 82, wherein the object of the statement *dī=f ḥn w3s n* behind the flail of the god Amun-Re-Kamutef takes as its object the names of the king above the offering image of the king, opposite the ithyphallic deity.

^bWente (in Epigraphic Survey 1970: 14 n. *b*) suggested a confusion of the hieratic sign for hair with that for the leopard's head; the many references to hair of lapis lazuli (*cf.* Aufrère 1991: 466–467 and 479–480; Zandee 1992: 350–353; Mathieu 1996: 36 n. 34) make this a virtual certainty. Lapis has cosmic and regenerative associations (*ibid.*, pp. 463–488), is well attested for beads (Lucas 1948: 456; the term would also apply to glass substitutes – see Harris 1961: 124–129), and is associated with collars and the eye of Horus (Aufrère 1991: 466).

^cFor this obscure mineral see Aufrère 1991: 262 n. *g* (note the possible example of this mineral, as *k3.t*, in the manufacture of a collar); *contra* Harris 1961: 133, the term does not appear “only in texts of the Graeco-Roman period.” Harris 1961: 232–233, suggests that the term may designate a black haematite with a metallic lustre.

^dGreen malachite is used in eye makeup (see Lucas 1948: 99–104; Aufrère 1991: 244 n. *f*, and 2, pp. 541–543); although apparently little used for jewelry, it appeared in the form of a few beads in the tomb of Tutankhamun (see Lucas 1948: 456–457). Associated with turquoise as a product of Sinai and the east (Harris 1961: 132; see also Grandet 1994: 157, n. 623; van der Molen 2000: 633), both given stellar associations in PT 567 (utterance 350), the mineral is appropriate as an evocation of the land of the rising sun.

^eWente (in Epigraphic Survey 1970: 14, n. *f*) suggested “a very confused writing of *ḥnmt*, ‘red jasper,’ or *mḥn(m)t*, ‘jasper.’” For red jasper and the eye of Horus, see Aufrère 1991: 553–554); for the stone see Harris 1961: 123–124; Lucas 1948: 454; Aufrère 1991: 554 and 737 (n. *b*); Grandet 1994: 81, n. 298; Gardiner 1948: 48, l. 4 (Turin Strike Papyrus vs. 5, 14); Lucas 1948: 454; compare also Reeves and Taylor 1992: 129. In the fragmentary love poem O. Prague NpM P3827/1, l. 1, some aspect of the beloved – who may also be designated *sbj ḥnh*, a “living star” – is apparently compared to *mḥnm.t* (Landgráfová and Navrátilová 2009: 102 and 230).

Other rituals involving music and dance employ transformative metals and stones in events that similarly divinize the object of the performance. In the Middle Kingdom Story of Sinuhe appears an earlier example of a similarly transformative ritual, in which musical instruments of metal and beadwork – not unlike in materials to the collars of the Medinet Habu ritual – work the transformation of the king and the royal passions. At the time of the return of the far-wandered Sinuhe to Egypt, the royal daughters and the queen take up their sistra and menats – instruments that make the rustling and tintinnabulating music that pacifies deities.³⁴ The song they sing likens the king to the deity Atum as the solar archer, consort of the Hathor-Tefnut whose role the queen assumes, transforming the ruler through their metal- and jewelry-aided ritual.³⁵

That the song the daughters sing to Sesostris I, a seemingly spontaneous paean to the ruler, might extend directly into the world of human and divine interaction in a temple context, is clear from texts such as that in the Hathor Temple at Abu Simbel, accompanying a depiction of the goddess Hathor, in her local manifestation of Lady of Ibshek. The goddess presents a *menat*-necklace to the ruler, pronouncing a brief summons to the king (first scene on the south interior wall of the entrance court):³⁶

ḥ.wy ḥr=f nfrw nsw.t w3ḥ ḥkrw n nb(.t) t3.wy

(Your) hands be upon it, the beautiful thing – oh established king – the *ḥkry.t*-adornment of the lady of the Two Lands.

These are almost identical to the opening words with which the daughters of Sesostris I begin their song in the Story of Sinuhe (here following the Berlin version):³⁷

ḥ.wy=k r nfr.t nsw.t w3ḥ ḥkry.t n.t nb.t p.t
d3 nbw ḥnḥ r fnd=k
ḥnm tw nb.t sb3.w

Your hands be toward the beautiful – oh established king – the *ḥkry.t*-adornment of the lady of heaven,
with the result that the Gold gives life to your nose,
that the lady of stars might unite with you.

34 Derchain 1970: 79–83; Westendorf 1977: 293–304.

35 Leblanc 2011: 127–129.

36 Desroches-Noblecourt and Kuentz 1968: vol. 1, 48, 57–58, and 181–185 (n. 226); vol. 2, pls. 39–40.

37 Koch 1990: 77 (B 269–271).

The presentation of *menat*-necklaces by a chorus, and the reception thereof by the one to be transformed, appears as an aspect of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, allowing the tomb owner to come into contact with magically charged materials from the domain of Amun.³⁸

Transformational singing by a chorus of musicians, at least acting the parts of royal offspring, appears for Akhenaton. A group of 32 people, apparently when complete divided evenly between male and female participants labeled as “royal children,” sing to Akhenaton at the time of his Jubilee, as preserved on *talatat* from Karnak:³⁹

[*dd mdw in*] *ms*[.wt *nsw:t*]
 [*ind hr=k*] *R^c r^c nb ind hr=k b¹k r^c nb ind hr=k it=n r^c* [*nb ind hr=k ...*]
ind hr=k nsw:t Nfr-hpr.w-R^c W^c-n-R^c nb [...].wt=f w^c.w it h³.w
iw sh³.w=k n hb[-sd ...] ds=f m¹ sh³.w=f
h^c [...].wt
kf sw r hpr.w im=f

ihy hb-sd
 [...] *m hb.w m¹ R^c [...]* *hnty ntr.w* [...]

[Words spoken by] the [royal] child[ren]:

[Hail to you] Re, everyday; hail to you falcon, every day; hail to you, our father, [every] ‘day’; hail to you ...].⁴⁰

Hail to you King Neferkheperoure-Waenre, lord [...] his [...], alone, who accumulates magic.

Your ‘Jubilee’ writings are [...] himself, like his writings,
 the lifetime of [...],

who uncovers himself according to the transformations therein.

The Jubilee song:

[...] in the Jubilee rituals like Re [...] the foremost of the gods [...]

The text refers to the king’s writings for the Jubilee, the *ihy*-song itself by implication being a song written by the king for the Jubilee. The *ind-hr* exclamations of the Akhenaton ritual correspond to the shouts that might accompany transformation rituals.⁴¹ This visible transformation appears in the Tomb of Kheruef as Amenhotep III wearing the feathers of the divine falcon, as whom

38 A convenient collection of examples is Schott 1952: 874–875; see also Hartwig 2004: 64–65 and 96–97.

39 Spalinger 1988: 29–33 and fig. 16; Leblanc 2011: 131–134; Gohary 1992: 95 and pl. 47.

40 The quadripartite introductory address to the king by male and female “children” finds a concise parallel in the Soleb scene of “male and female royal children” performing *hnw*-jubilation for the ruler four times (*ms.w-nsw:t t³y.w hm.wt ir.w hnw sp-fdw*) – Giorgini 1998: pl. 117.

41 Spalinger 1988: 29–33, citing Winlock 1921: 50–54, appendix “The Rite of Transfigurations”.

the king here is addressed.⁴² Love poetry can describe the transformation of the self into the soul – a woman may catch her own soul-bird through the process of love⁴³ – and the king may become his own avian form through the interaction of song and deed.

The offering of transformative jewelry, accompanied by songs and chants of an Hathoric nature, could also occur in a private context. In the Middle Kingdom tomb of Ukhhotep's son Senebi at Meir, the tomb owner receives a broad collar while three sistra-shaking women profer “*menat*-collars of Hathor.” A harpist, castanet players, and singers accompany the event. The castanet players sing a particularly revealing song:⁴⁴

nbw m zš.w sp-sn.nw s.wt sp-sn.nw
k³=s ḥtp.ti
ḥtp.ti Nbww

The golden one is in the marshes, the golden one is in the marshes –
 (the gold is in) the places, the places,
 with the result that her *ka*-spirit is pacified.
 May you be pacified, golden one.

The song is similar in import to the statement of worshippers of the returning Libyan Goddess – *ḥnw.t=n nb.t im³w Shm.t m sh.t ḥnᶜ=n*, “our mistress, lady of Kom el-Hisn, Sakhmet, is in the field with us”⁴⁵ – although describing an earlier stage of the goddess’ return.

In the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Djeserkaresoneb at Thebes (TT 38), the tomb owner sits within a *sh*-pavillion, observing a banquet at which musicians perform, while two daughters adjure him to “celebrate a holiday” (*ir hrw nfr*). One of the ladies holds a floral collar out toward her father, and says: “Join the holiday, oh grain accountant of Amun” (*sm³ hrw-nfr p³ ḥsb-ît n ʾImn*).⁴⁶ The wearing of the collar constitutes a union of person and event, transforming the participant into the attested *sm³y hrw-nfr*, “companion of the holiday.” Songs of human love referencing adornments and the body transformed into precious elements of the cosmos, revealing the person of the beloved to be enobled and even divine, reflect rituals and accompanying songs of ritualists. Those songs and rituals, in the Jubilee scenes of Akhenaton or in the High Gate at Medinet Habu, occur within an intimate, familial environment, even

42 Hardwick and Riggs 2010: 107–119; Darnell 2014: 48.

43 Compare the remarks of Mathieu 1996: 167; Landgráfová and Navrátilová 2009: 176; perhaps the most developed expression is in the second poem of the second group of the P. Harris 500 collection.

44 Blackman 1914: pls. 2–3.

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

46 Davies 1963: pls. 5–6.

if – as in the Jubilee ritual – that portion of the activities is but a sub-set of the broader, grand, public event.

Such an apparent juncture of ritual and seeming domesticity is prevalent in the iconography of Amarna. On the Amarna stela JdE 44865, Akhenaton hands a circular object with depending verticals – apparently an earring – to a royal daughter who looks up and receives it. The ruler mimics the hands of Aton, and the daughter's upturned hands form the human counterpart thereto, at the same time forming the shape of the horizon. The earring parallels the circular disk and depending arms of the Aton – Akhenaton appears as intermediary, and the precious metals of the sun become a solar element of his dispensing.⁴⁷ Akhenaton can also be the beneficiary of transformative jewelry, as when the queen attaches a collar to the royal neck.⁴⁸

III. Festival Songs of Religious Import in a Royal Context – Human Sexuality and Divine Interactions in the Space of Transformative Love

During the New Kingdom, a deity may be said to rise (*wbn*) for a person – both royal and non-royal – or a temple; when for royalty or a temple, the sun does this for *mrw.t*-love.⁴⁹ A temple may receive the epithet *ḥ.t ḥ^{cc}.wy*, “horizon of rejoicing;” like the horizon with which the solar deity unites, the temple as a place where the royal and divine statues appear in procession is a place of exultation. The *ḥ^{cj} m ḥ.t* of the solar deity is an expression of joy at the union of the sun with a female element, be it an horizon, a divine bark, or a temple.⁵⁰ Because of these concepts, rituals within a temple setting might not simply allude to parallel rituals of human sexuality amongst those both joining and observing the celebrations of the temple cult. Songs within the temple ritual could reference gods and even the temple as though the rituals themselves were sexual in nature.

Festival Songs of the Opet Procession

The eponymous celebration of the month *Paophi* (second month of the season of *ḥ.t*) was the annual Festival of Opet at Thebes, during which initially the bark of Amun, and later those of Mut, Khons, and the king, traveled from Karnak to Luxor. Well attested in scenes and more modest associated inscriptions,

⁴⁷ Arnold 1996: 101–103.

⁴⁸ Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung ÄM 14511 – see Menz 2008: 186, cat. no. 31.

⁴⁹ See Desroches-Noblecourt and Kuentz 1968: vol. 1, 136–145 (n. 57).

⁵⁰ See the text describing Medinet Habu as *ḥ.t ḥ^{cc}.wy s.t ḥtp n Km.t*, etc., in Epigraphic Survey 1957: pls. 355E–356; brief notes also in Darnell, in Bryan and Lorton, eds., *Essays in Egyptology*, pp. 41–42.

the Eighteenth Dynasty celebration involved the transmission of the royal *ka* through the person of the reigning king, who merged with Amun during rituals that ultimately evoked the union of Amun and Mut.⁵¹ Texts accompanying scenes of the Opet Procession from the reigns of Hatshepsut and Tutankhamun record songs performed during the festival, describing the union of the male and female aspects of Theban divinity in terms and imagery that evoke those of human love poetry.

The Songs of Opet from the Reign of Hatshepsut

Scenes in Hatshepsut's Red Chapel from Karnak record a harpist singing a song⁵² referring to the ithyphallic form of the double-plumed Amun, raised of arm (*dsr-^c*). Behind the harpist and accompanying dancers are female and male singers performing songs that complement that of the harpist, if they are not in fact elements of the same song. The event occurs twice – during the celebration of the Opet Festival, within the Karnak temple enclosure between the shrine of Amenhotep I and the *Hw.t-^{c3}.t* during the return of the bark of Amun to Karnak, and – apparently at the same place within the Karnak enclosure – at the return of the bark of Amun from Deir el-Bahari during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley.

Upper Register, Text of the Harpist:

lw.n(=?) hr=k ntr t3y-ntr.w p3w.ty-t3.wy dsr-^c 'Imn nb-šw.ty
hw=k nsw.t-b1ty M3^c.t-k3-R^c ml R^c

That I have come before you, (oh) god, male of the gods, primeval one of the Two Lands, raised of arm, Amun lord of the double plumes,
 is that you might protect the king of Upper and Lower Egypt Maatkare like Re.

Upper Register, Song of the Female Musicians Playing Sistra:

hnr.w(t) ny 'Imn
sty (i)h.t sty (i)h.t
ndm.wy sty pr-'Imn
lw=f hnm m htp.t df(3)

51 For the Opet Festival, see the overview in Darnell 2010b; see also Gabolde 2015: 155–168.

52 Burgos, Larché, and Grimal 2006 : 64 (block 66) and 109 (block 61); Lacau and Chevrier 1977 : 198–202.

The musicians of Amun:

The aroma of offerings, the aroma of offerings –
How sweet is the aroma of the domain of Amun.
It is aromatic by means of offerings and provisions.

Lower Register, Song of the Male Singers:

šsp.t dh̄n

wḏ3 nṯr r hn.t=f ʾImn nb ns.wt-t3.wy
ib=f 3w m ir:t n=f nb t3.wy M3c.t-k3-Rc

The chorus of those giving the rhythm:

The god departs for his navigation, Amun lord of the thrones of the Two
Lands, his heart joyful because of that which the king of Upper and
Lower Egypt, Maatkare, has done.

The aroma that fills the palace, in the context of the ithyphallic form of Amun, is the aroma of the god at the time of the *hieros gamos*. So in the divine birth cycle (citing the Luxor Temple version): “The palace was inundated with the divine scent, all its aroma from Punt” (*ḥ bḥ <m> sty-nṯr hnmw=f nb m Pwn.t*).⁵³ This olfactory imagery appears within the Love Poetry, specifically in the second poem of the third group on P. Chester Beatty I: the sky descends as a wind, bringing “her aroma, a scent inundating and intoxicating those present” (*hnmw=s sty bḥ di.t th=tw n3 nty r-hft-hr*).

The Songs of Opet from the Reign of Tutankhamun

The scenes and inscriptions detailing the Festival of Opet in the Colonnade Hall of Luxor Temple, together forming a major artistic work of the reign of Tutankhamun and one of the most significant continuous visual cycles of New Kingdom Egyptian art, record almost incidentally three songs performed during the event – the Songs of the Drinking Place as they may be termed.⁵⁴ Sung by time-keeping priests and sistra-shaking songstresses, each is brief. Although the second song is a short address to Amun with a wish that he be pleased with the riverine festival, the first and third songs reference a *mswr*-

53 Brunner 1986: pl. 4 (compare also the Ramesside text pl. 25 [and p. 225, addition to p. 47]). For the “sweet smell of divinity” in Egypt, see conveniently the remarks and references in Barrett 2011: 294–295.

54 Epigraphic Survey 1994: pls. 12–14 and pp. 12–14; Sethe 1929: 1–5; Junker 1942: 43–44; Wolf 1931: 16 [7], 35 [6], 56–7, and 73–74; parallel texts for the third song, from the Red Chapel of Hatshepsut and the Akhmenou of Thutmose III, appear in Lacau and Chevrier 1977: 187–9 (§§265–8); Burgos, Larché, and Grimal 2006: 60–61.

drinking place, and contain passages redolent of the Love Poetry. The importance of the songs is clear from the inclusion of the third song in so synco-pated a version of the Opet Procession as that appearing in the Red Chapel of Hatshepsut.⁵⁵ The significance of songs and a college of musicians as part of a processional ritual is apparently as old as the Predynastic Period, finding an early expression in the songstresses whose performances accompanied and help “translate” the meat offerings.⁵⁶ These songstresses in temple ritual may include, if they do not in fact represent, the musical royal children in scenes of the Jubilee.⁵⁷

First Song:

¹*Imn-R^c nb nsw.t t3.wy ʿnh.ti d.t*
mswr^a ndr(.w) p.t stt.ti^b r rsy
[mswr] ndr(.w) p.t stt.ti r mht.t
swr skd[.w nyw] Dsr-hpr.w-R^c Stp-n-R^c
mry ʿImn-R^c-K3-mw.t=f hsy ntr[.w]
i [N.t]

ʿAmun-Reʿ, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, may you live forever!
 A drinking place is hewn out, the sky is folded back to the south;
 [a drinking place] is hewn out, the sky is folded back to the north;
 that the sailor[s of] Tutankhamen/Horemheb,
 beloved of Amun-Re-Kamutef, praised of the god[s], may drink.
 Utterance of Neith.^c

text notes:

^aThe uncommon term *mswr* appears first in Pyramid Text Spell 473, a description of the deceased king taking his rightful position at the “drinking place of every *akh*-spirit,” in a spell beginning with an association of the two reed-floats of the sky with the day and night barks of the sun; *mswr* subsequently appears in Coffin Texts Spell 1115 (part of the Book of the Two Ways), where it is the “celestial drinking place of the divine booth” (*mswr p.t nw sh-ntr*) – see *Wb.* II 136, 6 (and 143, 9, as well); Hannig 2003: 563–564; Hannig 2006: 1135.

^bThe use of a term for the folding of a bird’s wings – *stt* here (see *Wb.* IV 363, 1–2; Caminos 1954: 94) is apparently the causative form of a verb *itt* (*Wb.* I 151, 6; Hannig 2003: 240; Hannig 2006: 451).

^cNeith’s appearance presages her later appearance as “Lady of the inebriation in the (season of) the fresh inundation waters” (see Zabkar 1988: 107 and 181 [n. 25]), and

⁵⁵ Lacau and Chevrier 1977: 188–189 (§268).

⁵⁶ For the songstresses, the “women of the acacia house,” and their probable identity with the later *hnr.t*-performers, see the author’s remarks in Hendrickx, Riemer, Förster, and Darnell 2010: 212–219.

⁵⁷ Compare the remarks of Leblanc 2011: 86 n. 258.

probably reveals her apparent association with the Theban goddess Amunet (see the discussion with references in Klotz 2012a: 71 and 75).

The rare term *mswr* appears to correspond to the booths that served as temporary shelters for celebrants attending riverine festivals, and occurring as some of the few architectural elements appearing in the New Kingdom love poetry (particularly in the song of the sycamore in the Turin cycle, discussed briefly above).⁵⁸ The second song is much shorter than the others, being the simple recitation: “Hail, Amun, primeval one of the Two Lands, foremost one of Karnak, in your glorious appearance amidst your [riverine] fleet, on your beautiful festival of Opet – May you be pleased with it.”

Third Song:

mswr *kd n mr(.t) nty m skd.t n wj̃.w*
wj̃.wt j̃kr.w mr n=k H^cpy wr h̃i
sh̃tp=k Nb.ty nb n.t/h̃d.t Hr tm̃^{3-c}
hn=t(w) ntr hr nfr:t ntr
p̃³.n Hw.t-Hr ir(.t) nfr:t nfr:wt n Dsr-hpr:w-R^c Stp-n-R^c

A drinking place is built for the party which is in the voyage of the fleet.
 The ways of the Akeru are bound up for you; a great inundation is high.
 May you pacify the Two Ladies, Lord of the Crown, Horus, strong of arm,
 when one conveys the god with the good lady of the god.
 For the king has Hathor already done the best of good things.

The final portion of the third song appears already in a scene of the riverine procession of barks associated with the funeral and rebirth of the deceased in the Sixth Dynasty mastaba of Mereruka.⁵⁹ This oldest portion of the Luxor Temple cycle of riverine festival songs, referencing the goddess doing the “best of good things,” finds a parallel in the fifth poem of the second group of the P. Harris 500 love poetry, in a description of the consummation of festival sexuality – “The best thing has happened” (*p̃³ nfr hpr*) while the beloved is in his *nb.t*-arbor – and in the similar summation of the sixth section of the first group of the P. Chester Beatty I poems.

In the depiction of the barks of the Theban triad departing Luxor Temple at the end of the Opet Festival, at the south end of the interior east wall of the

⁵⁸ Derchain 1975a: 82–86; Fox 1985: 14–16, 46, and 48 (n. q); Fischer-Elfert 1999; Darnell 1991.

⁵⁹ Sakkarah Expedition 1938: pl. 141; Altenmüller 1998: 764. The epithet *tm̃^{3-c}* also supports a greater age for the song, the epithet receiving visual augmentation in the form of Thutmose III punting or rowing at the stern of the divine bark in the Red Chapel scenes, harkening back to images of Monthuhotep II performing the same nautical task at Deir el-Bahari, and Sesostri I following suit at Karnak – Gabolde 1998: 49–51 (§§64–68) and 159–162 (§§246–255).

Colonnade Hall, a priest bends forward and facing back toward the bark of Amun, pronouncing a short statement that further confirms the *hieros gamos* aspect of the procession. His pithy “How weary is the cackling goose!” (*bgʒʒ.wy smn bgg*)⁶⁰ This short statement refers to the cry of the creator as the great cackler in the eastern horizon – particularly appropriate to Amun as the *smn*-goose – and serves as an introduction to the Songs of the Drinking Place that follow to the left, accompanying from the shore the sailing of the festival fleet back north to Karnak.

IV. Festival Songs of Religious Import in Non-Royal Contexts

The songs that appear in Eighteenth Dynasty cycles of images and texts illustrating the Opet Festival find parallels in non-royal texts. Even more directly than their royal counterparts, these songs evoke the later love poetry of the Ramesside Period. In the Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tomb of Amenemhat (TT 82, reign of Thutmosis III), in the upper register of a scene of musicians, a songstress – Baket – plays a harp and addresses a song to the aegides of Amun, a reference to the bark of the god at it sails in a festival. Behind her two other musicians – a male lutenist and a female flautist – also each sing a separate line, apparently together three incipits of songs. In the lower register a male singer – Bak (brother of Baket?) – also plays a harp and sings a song describing the temple of Amun at Karnak as a woman awaiting the visit of the divine consort, evocative of the settings, imagery, and vocabulary of the ancient Egyptian love poetry. Only the song of Bak appears in what may be its entirety:⁶¹

Upper Register, *Incipits* of Songs (of the Harpist and Songstress Baket, the Lutenist Amenemhat, and the Flautist Ruiuresti):

<i>wbn=k</i>	<i>wbn nʒ n hʒ.wt ny ʾImn-R^{ca}</i>
<i>hrw-nfr</i>	<i>wrš.t dwʒ.t nfr.t</i>
<i>ʔ^b nb=ʔ</i>	<i>ʾwr^c=k n nhḥ smʒ=k m ḏ.t</i>

May you shine forth – shine forth, you aegides of Amun-Re.

A holiday – passing a perfect morning.

Oh my lord – may you grow great forever, may you unite with eternity.

60 Epigraphic Survey 1994: 26 and pl. 67; see also Darnell 2014: 38–39.

61 Davies and Gardiner 1915: pl. 15 (with pp. 63–64); also Darnell 1995: 59–62.

Middle Register, Song of Harpist and Singer Bak:

nfr.wy n tʃ hw.t-ntr ny.t ʿImn-R^c
tʃ wrš.t m ḥb^e
hr nsw.t-ntr:w ḥm=s [sdr.wy?^f]
ḥw=s m² ṯh.ṯ^g
hms.ti^h r-rwy ny dṛ.t^j
[hn]sky ḥm [...]^k hr tʃy= ṯs^l [mnd.t] nfr.t^l
ny=sy šs ḥnkw^m

How well it goes for the temple of Amun-Re,
 she who spends the day in festival,
 with the king of the gods within her, [spending the night(?) ...]
 She is like a drunken woman,
 seated outside the wall of the shrine,
 the braided locks [in which are ...] upon ṯher^l beautiful [breasts].
 She has linen and sheets.

text notes

^aThe aegides shine like the sun when the bark of the god sails forth in festival – *cf.* Epigraphic Survey 1994: 5 (n. *a* to pl. 14) and pls. 20 (l. 1) and 28 (with p. 14); Klotz 2012a: 38 n. g; see also Darnell 2010b: 7.

^bThe line addresses a deity, apparently Amun-Re. Although Gardiner’s “emend *ḥw.k* for *ḥw nb*” (Davies and Gardiner 1915: 63 n. 2) is possible, a direct address (for an *r*, *ḥw*, *ḥ* interchange in Late Egyptian, see *inter alia* Junge 2001: 38) is more probable.

^cThe small, doubled line beneath the narrow damage to the left of the sign of the leaning man is the forked bottom of a staff in *wr* (thus Gardiner’s sign A20). The staff in the relatively small-scale sign of a standing figure elsewhere in the tomb appears as both a simple line (Davies and Gardiner 1915: pl. 16, upper left), and with a forked bottom (*ibid.*, pl. 10, label to the *dṛ.t wr.t* in the lower left), also appearing in the more elaborate and larger sign in title *smsw-hʃy.t* of Davies and Gardiner 1915: pl. 7, upper left. The doubled line beneath the damage to the left of the standing man might be another figure, facing right, the group writing *snsn*, in parallel with *smʃ* (J. Quack, personal communication). However, the damage as shown on the plate is insufficient for a full, striding male figure, and the fork at the bottom of the damage is too narrow for a counterpart to the standing man to the right; a version of the cryptographically attested variant of man to right and woman to left for *snsn* (Drioton 1940: 422) is unlikely here.

^dSee Lichtheim 1945: 184 n. 37, for the opening words of the song. The duplication of *n* may insist on the phonetic value *n* before the dental of *tʃ*, a reflection of the at least occasional Late Middle Egyptian use of *m* for the preposition *n* (Jansen-Winkel 1996: 172, §271).

^eFor the Hathoric “spending the day in holiday,” see Darnell, *et al.* 2002: 129–138.

^f Compare the stative of *sḏr* in The Tale of the Two Brothers, in which the elder brother's wife suggest that she and the younger brother "sleep together" (Gardiner 1937: 12, l. 11: *mī ḫry=n n=n wnw.t sḏr.w(y)<=n>*); in the woman's false report to her husband, the brother is made to suggest "Let us spend an hour sleeping together" (Gardiner 1937: 14, ll. 4–5: *mī.t ḫry=n wnw.t sḏr.(wy)n*).

^g The orthography *th.tl* would suit a stative following a potential missing term (*s.t*, "woman," or some such), but the copy shows no indication of damage at the end of the preceding line. The word is probably the participle *th.t* with a "full" writing of *t* as *tl* (for *tl* for *t* as increasingly common as a variant in Middle Egyptian orthography during the Eighteenth Dynasty note Gardiner 1957: 278 [§362] and 303–304 [§387.2]; Ward 1985: 333–335). Also possible is a reading *mī th.tl=Ø*, "(the one who will) drink to satiety" (cf. Borghouts 2010: 263 [§73.c.ii]).

^h The god finds the temple in a manner redolent of that in which the younger brother finds the elder brother's wife in the Tale of the Two Brothers, "with one occupied with her wig" (Gardiner 1937: 11, l. 14: *ḫw=tw ḥms ḫr nbd=s*; she later describes her condition as *ḫw=f gm wī ḥms.kw <m>-w^c.t* [Gardiner 1937: 14, ll. 3–4]).

ⁱ The term *ḏr.t* appears to reference objects of both wood and stone, sometimes a container – even a sarcophagus – other times an inner room of a temple, or the outside of a ship's cabin – see the discussion and references in Wilson 1997: 1241–1242; Hannig 2003: 1508–1509; Hannig 2006: 2852. The determinative suggests the translation offered here.

^k *im* might refer back to the temple, the sign at the top of the damage describing the hair as "falling" upon the breasts (so Schott 1952: 894: "Locken fallen auf ihre schöne Brust;" Darnell 1995: 60–61). Also possible is a qualification of some content of the hair, a potential parallel being Book of the Dead chapter 84 – a divine ram-form is addressed, with reference to a "lock of hair in which is turquoise" (Naville 1886: vol. 1, pl. 96, and vol. 2, p. 186: *ḥnsky.t imy.t mfk.t* – Barguet 1967: 121: "la tresse qui est leur (parure de) turquoise;" Hornung 1979: 171: "mit Locken an ihrer Türkis(-Perücke);" De Buck 1938: 214c, solar deity as "blue-haired of visible forms" [*ḫr ḫw.w*]). Myrrh or some other oil would routinely be applied to the hair of a participant in a festival banquet, in close association with the serving of alcoholic beverages (cf. Schott 1952: 838–842), thus completing the imagery in the song in the tomb of Amenemhat.

^l The traces visible below the penultimate line, curving down to the right and extending farther down after a short break, may belong to the *ḏ*-serpent of *mnd.t*. The association of erotically charged wig or braided hair and beautiful breasts is well attested – Derchain 1969: 19–25; Derchain 1975b: 55–74; Pehal 2010: 103–104; note the late epithets of Sakhmet as *ḥnsk.tyt-mnd.wy*, "she of the locks and (beautiful) breasts" (Leitz 2002a: 224) and Hathor as *ḥnw.t-ḥnsk.t-bn.ty*, "mistress of locks and (beautiful) breasts" (Leitz 2002a: 197). The juxtaposition of hair/fur and nudity – an ancient "Venus im Pelz" – appears in the Tale of the Herdsman (Darnell 2010: 114–118). In the woman's false report to her husband in the Tale of the Two Brothers, the younger brother is made to suggest "Let us spend an hour sleeping together; don your wig" (Gardiner 1937: 14, ll. 4–5: *mī.t ḫry=n wnw.t sḏr.(wy)n wnh p³y=t nbd*). Putting on the wig is enough to be ready, according to the eighth stanza of the second cycle of the Papyrus Harris 500 love poems (cf. Mathieu 1996: 77 n. 243).

^mFor the linen and sheets, see Darnell 1995: 61–62. After suggesting that they “lie together,” the elder brother’s wife promises the younger brother “beautiful clothing” (Gardiner 1937: 12, ll. 11–12: *k3 ỉry=ỉ n=k Ỉbs.w nfr.w*).

The festival setting of this song is reinforced by a parallel song also recorded in the tomb of Amenemhat, sung by a harp playing songstress named Ahmose, also seated at the head of a middle register of celebrants,⁶² beginning as does Bak’s song:

nfr.wy n t3 Ỉw.t-ntr ny.t ʿImn[-R^c]
Ỉb-wp-rnp.t m sm3wy [...] [*...*]^a *nb r-dr=s*
tt-sw Ỉsp=f nfrw=s
sft=tw ỉ w3ʿ.w=s m Ỉn.wt ʿw.t=s Ỉ3s.wt m Ỉ3.w n ʿI[mn m]
ʿImn ʿy.t=f m Ỉb[.w] tp-ʿtr.wʿ^b

How well it goes for the temple of [Amu]n[-Re]
 at the festival of the new year, in the renewal of [...] [*...*]
 [...]all [...] in its entirety,
 while he receives its perfection,
 one slaughtering its cattle by hundreds, its small cattle by
 thousands, for ʿAmunʿ [as] his ʿpermanent offeringʿ in the
 ʿcalendricalʿ festival[s].

text notes

^a Schott 1952: 893 (no. 138) reads: “erneuert für Amon, Herrn der Throne der beiden Länder, dem Allherrn,” not showing restoration. Note that the *n* appearing in the plate at the top of the third line of the song is to be disregarded, according to Davies and Gardiner 1915: 40 n. 9. A reference to Amun could explain some of the erasure, although the *r-dr=s* at the end should not refer to Amun as *nb-r-dr*, but rather the entirety of some feminine element, perhaps the same as that to which the *=s* of *nfrw=s* refers, probably the temple of Amun. The renewed material might be the *Ỉmny.t*-offerings appearing at the end of the song, or *Ỉtp.w-ntr*-offerings, either potentially attacked by Aton-ists – compare der Manuelian 1999 (Amun’s name is not attacked everywhere in the tomb – compare the songs in Davies and Gardiner 1915: pl. 15).

^bthe song begins with a reference to the new year festival, and ends with a mention of general “calendrical festivals,” mixing festival imagery in the manner of the banqueting scenes in Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tombs (see below, with n. 97).

The union of the god and the temple may employ the imagery of human love, in an evocation of the human sexual relations that occur in conjunction with the festival celebrating the arrival of the deity. The parallelism of the love song for the god and temple and the paean to the wealth of festival endowment reveal a close association

62 Davies and Gardiner 1915: pl. 5.

of the celebration of sexual love and the feasting, the more sensual aspects of a temple celebration.

That these songs are not unique creations, but otherwise unrecorded examples of a genre accompanying such celebrations as those appearing in the tomb of Amenemhat, is a conclusion finding support in the snippet of song above the heads of female musicians in a banquet scene depicted in the tomb of Djeserkaresoneb (TT 38, reigns of Thutmose IV and Amenhotep III). Above the heads of three clapping women, seated behind two harpists, a flautist, lutenist, and a dancing girl, is the text of a brief song that parallels the *incipits* of songs in the upper register of the scene in the tomb of Amenemhat.⁶³

hrw nfr
ʔw=tw shʔ=tw nfrw ʔImnʔ
ndm.w ʔib
hn^c rdʔ.t ʔʔ(w) r kʔ n p.t n hʔ.wt=k
tnw dd
ʔib.w r mʔ=sn
ʔr s.t pʔ hsb-ʔt.w [ʔImn] rnb

Holiday!

One recalls the perfection of ʔAmunʔ,
 with the result that he is pleasant of heart,⁶⁴
 and gives the highest praise to your aegides.

Everyone says:

“Desire to see them!”
 Do it, oh grain accountant of [Amun], every day.”

Graphically silent songs, sung in festivals depicted in tombs and shrines, but unrecorded in most examples, probably alluded to a sensual reception of the deity.

The song of Bak in the tomb of Amenemhat is an even more direct example of the interaction of the genres of love poetry and eulogy of cities than that appearing in the “pastiche” of P. Anastasi IV 4, 11–5, 5.⁶⁵ That text references a desire for Memphis and a yearning both for the coming of the deity Ptah, and the mental release of sleep, apparently the coming of a deity to the sleeping adorrant who will then see the deity, as would occur within temple revelry in a festival setting, as for Hathor at the Mut Temple at Karnak.⁶⁶ Bak’s song

⁶³ Davies 1963: pl. 6.

⁶⁴ For *ndm-ib* as Amun’s condition resulting from his hearing of something he enjoys, compare Kitchen 1979: 214, l. 12.

⁶⁵ See the remarks of Ragazzoli 2008: 137; also Quack 2010.

⁶⁶ Bryan 2014: 93–123.

transfers the love of a city to the love of a specific temple city. Within the New Kingdom love poetry corpus, in the sixth poem of the first group of the P. Harris 500 collectuon, the man journeying to Memphis where he hopes to find his human love describes the city that is his goal as a divinely personified landscape of deities, summarized and perhaps physically collected in the form of *g³y*-bowl of mandragoras.⁶⁷

In the Theban tomb chapel of Nebamun, musicians accompanying a banqueting scene sing a song addressing the deity Ptah:⁶⁸

[...] *sty dd Pth*
sr(w)d.n Gb nfrw=f m h.t nb.t
lr:n Pth nn m c.wy=f(y) r msh n ib=f
lw mr:w mh m mw (m) m³w.t
b³ bch m mrw.t=f

[...] the aroma that Ptah exudes.

Just as Geb has caused his perfection to endure in every body,^a
 so has Ptah made this with his two hands to be the joy of his heart.^b

The water channels are filled with water anew,
 and the land is inundated with his love.

text notes:

^a The voice of the beloved strengthens the *h^c.wt*-limbs of the beloved to in O. DM 1266 and O. CGC 25218, 8–14, A 1 (*in t³y=s mrw.t dd rwd=i*). A number of passages in the love poetry, refer to love being mixed with the body of the lover – see the examples collected in Landgráfová and H. Navrátilová 2009: 143–148.

^b Reading *r msh*, “to rejoice,” an early appearance of the verb *msh*; also possible would be a divided writing of *mshn-ib*, “resting place of his heart.”

After a more damaged portion the song addresses itself to necropolitan matters, and directly to the tomb owner. The Memphite deity appears in a song in which a personified landscape appears in a festival setting, the aroma of the deity evoking the aroma of the deity in the divine birth cycle.

That the city of Memphis may be a bowl set before its god in the imagery of the Ramesside love poem finds an Eighteenth Dynasty foreshadowing in song

67 The image is probably that of an elaborate festival “centerpiece” depicting a landscape associated with the returning goddess in the form of an elaborate metal bowl, for which see Donnat 1999, who discusses the elaborate centerpieces as representations of the Nubian landscape that is the home to Hathor-Tefnut, whom the golden metal itself evokes. A simpler Hathoric vessel, depicted in a simple evocation of its probably more riotously floral original use, appears in Hayes 1959: 206, fig. 121. These vessels are ultimately related to the *Prunkgefäße* that appear in images of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley (Schott 1952: 840–842), ultimately deriving from earlier, scalloped rimmed vessels (see Darnell, *et al.* 2002: 76).

68 Parkinson 2008: 70–83.

recorded in the Tomb of Horemheb (TT 78) from the reign of Thutmose IV,⁶⁹ in which the goddess Mut is said to have come for giving provisions, shaking her sistras, and mixing the *th*-drink in a golden bowl, depicted as a large, footed bowl with scalloped rim.

V. Ramesside Love Poetry as Reflection of Eighteenth Dynasty Festival Songs

A number of passages within the New Kingdom Love Poetry evoke the statements of Eighteenth Dynasty festival songs. The Ramesside love poetry both references the settings of especially riverine and bucolic festival landscapes, and contains allusions to interactions between the lovers that closely mirror the events of divine epiphany and the entry of the deity into his feminine temple counterpart that appear in Eighteenth Dynasty festival texts.

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The text of the ostrakon refers to an encounter between lovers, with a probable reference to the consummation of love as an “office” or “duty” in the middle section. The opening sees the man arrive, with provisions and musicians:⁷⁰

hrw-nfr p3y=i ptr=k sn hsy 3 p3 m33=k
bsy=k n=i irm hn.k.t hsy.w 3pr m h.c.w
lw r3.w=sn 3pr m shmh-ib n r3w.t th.t

A holiday is my seeing you, brother; a great favor is the sight of you.
 May you cross over to me with beer, musicians equipped with instruments,
 their mouths provided with (songs of) diversion, for joy and exultation.

The *incipit* of the song references the festival celebration of the *hrw-nfr*, initially and persistently having application to funerary banquets, but by the Middle Kingdom referring to Hathoric celebrations, generally of groups of people, even in marginal areas.⁷¹ The woman’s desire that the brother come in to her finds expression in the verb *bsi*, a term that refers to the crossing of liminal

⁶⁹ Brack and Brack 1980: 30 and pl. 3 (text 11.c).

⁷⁰ Mathieu 1996: 113–144 and 120–121 (nn. 392–398), pls. 22–24; Landgráfová and Navrátilová 2009: 209–212; Quack 2015.

⁷¹ For *hrw-nfr*, and the evidence for celebration of such an event in the Western Desert, see the references in Darnell, Klotz, and Manassa 2013: 1 n. 2. The discussion of *hrw-nfr* in Gregersen 2015: 55–85 omits all but New Kingdom and later evidence from non-funerary contexts, but does stress the banqueting aspect of the expression.

boundaries, and in a temple context to the introduction of the ruler.⁷² The diversions in the mouths of the musicians recall directly the label to the first group of the Chester Beatty love songs: *ḥ3.t-ḥ m r3.w nyw t3 šhmḥ.t-ib 3.t*.

In the conclusion, the pair's encounter involves truly divine adoration of each other:

sn.t=k ḫkr:t m ḫ3w:t n ḫr=k sny-t3 n ptr=k
šsp.tw=s.t m ḫnk.t ḫr sntr
*m3 p3 šhtp ntr*⁷³

Your excellent sister is in adoration before you, in proscynesis at sight of you –
 May she be received by means of beer and incense,
 like the appeasement of a deity.

The woman essentially worships the man as though he were a deity; the man in turn must welcome the woman like one who appeases a deity – an allusion to the *šhtp*-rituals for deities, particularly Sakhmet.⁷⁴ As in the song in the tomb of Amenemhat personifying the temple of Karnak, the woman is in place, visited by the man who comes with the human and comestible accoutrements of festival. She receives him worshipfully, and he in turn treats her with a similar deference due to divinity. The individual microcosm of human interactions reflects the macrocosm of god and temple; human sexual relations embody the interactions of the male and female aspects of divinity.

A reflection of the temple as place of encounter and love between deities, and specifically between masculine and feminine hypostases thereof, appears in the stepped domestic altars of Deir el-Medina.⁷⁵ These structures, present in the front rooms of some houses, have the appearance of house altars, with decoration that suggests amorous and regenerative activities; two had stone headrests atop them, evidence of an at least symbolic dormition atop the structures. That they have been interpreted as places for ritual sexual activity is not surprising in the light of their location near the entrance to a house. The structures appeared in domestic architecture during the later reign of Amenhotep III, occurring at Amarna and again at Thebes in the post-Amarna Period, related to

72 See the discussions in Kruchten 1989: 147–202; Darnell 2004: 120–121; Manassa 2007: 127–128; for the demotic survival of the term see Jasnow and Zauzich 2005: 299.

73 The brother is described as *ḫkr* in the sixth stanza of the first cycle of poems in P. Chester Beatty I 4, 1. For *šsp.tw=s.t* rather than a *.tw*-augmented imperative, see Quack 2015: 75 n. k.

74 Compare Goyon 2006. The rendering in Landgráfová and Navrátilová 2009: 211, ignores the opening of the text, in which the man comes with the beer. After being allowed to enter in to the woman with festival accompaniment, he in turn receives her by means of the beer he brings, together with incense.

75 Overviews of the material, with bibliographies, are Koltsida 2006; Kleinke 2007; Weiss 2009; see also Manniche 2015 (particularly pp. 216–219).

the processional festivals that so defined ritual life at Amarna and Thebes during the New Kingdom.

Within the domestic realm they present a counterpart to the temple scenes of a goddess greeting and suckling the ruler. The entrance kiosk of a temple could be the place of a meeting of the god and temple-goddess,⁷⁶ and a special structure attached to the main temple could perform such a function in the context of drunken religious revelry. The love poetry that is a peculiar survival of the Theban New Kingdom may well correspond functionally to the elevated domestic altars of Thebes and Amarna, architectural expressions that belong – like the love poetry – to the particularly rich processional background of New Kingdom Thebes.

The summons of the deity that the worshipper may see the divine is an aspect of the nocturnal rituals in honor of deities, in particular the goddess Hathor and other “returning” deities.⁷⁷ The revelation of the beloved to the paramour is similar to the ritual of desire and eventual beholding of the divine epiphany. In P. Chester Beatty I, first collection, second stanza, the woman says “Come to me that I might see your perfection” (*mī n=ī mʾ=ī nfrw=k*).⁷⁸

VI. Possible Performance of Love Poetry in Ancient Egypt

The themes of the Love Trap, the aquatic Traveling to a Rendezvous, and Love in the Garden⁷⁹ all find an unexpected illustration in a late Twelfth Dynasty tomb at Meir, in Middle Egypt.⁸⁰ Scenes show the tomb owner Ukhhotep, priest of Hathor of Qusae, watching as groups of women engage in fishing and fowling. Some of the women are attired as well-dressed Middle Kingdom ladies, in long, tight dresses ill-suited to the physical labor of drawing the ropes of clap-nets and hauling in the catch in which some are engaged; others wear but kilts and shoulder sashes. On one wall of the tomb chapel, three registers of women bring in offerings, including live quadrupeds led by ropes, fowl in crates, and trays of food. Some wear dresses, some kilts, and all are adorned with anklets; the array of unusual hairstyles serve to draw uncommon attention to their hairstyle, in many of which a long curled or plaited lock forms a conspicuous element. In one register, women wearing large wigs, diaphanous gowns, and jewelry appear opposite two other women attired in male hunting

76 Compare the scenes and texts at Medamûd, discussed in Darnell 1995: 47–94; Klotz 2012a: 208–210.

77 Many of the pertinent references are collected in Bryan 2014: 93–123; DePauw and Smith 2004; Quack 2013b: 76–79.

78 Similarly also in O. Deir el-Medina 1266 and O. CGC 25218 B6.

79 Fox 1985: 282–291.

80 Blackman and Apted 1953: pls. 10–12 and 18; see also the earlier discussion in Darnell 2010: 129.

costumes of shoulder straps, short kilts, and penis sheaths.⁸¹ The women in the tomb of Ukhhoteb are fishers, fowlers, and herders, and not dressed as would be appropriate if any of those tasks were their true vocations; the women are either overdressed for the tasks, or unexpectedly dressed in male attire.

The women in the scenes in the tomb of Ukhhoteb could well illustrate the themes of fishing, fowling, and roping that appear in the New Kingdom love poetry. They could be nothing more than actors in a well-managed play, but the text of the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling suggests that they are participating in a ritual that involved actual disportment in bucolic settings. In that text, known from a single late Eighteenth Dynasty papyrus, a narrator refers to fishing and fowling in an aquatic setting in a holiday (*hrw-nfr*) context.⁸² After describing his construction of an *imʿ*-hut (B 2, l. 3), the protagonist relates what he sees at the entrance of a field (B 2, ll. 4–5):

[...] *rʿ sht*
mʿʿ=ʿ msw(t) Hw.t-ihy.t
hr kʿm wiʿy.t
s.t nb.t hr snhy ʿpd.w=s r-hr
n hn.t=f

[...in] the entrance of the field,
 while I observe the children⁸³ of Houtihyet
 hunting *wiayet*-fowl with throwsticks,
 every woman mustering⁸⁴ her fowl forward,
 before he (scil. they) can cry out.

The narrator and his apparently male companions disport themselves separate from a group of children, including women who are participating in fowling activities. The women, and perhaps the young men amongst them, would be the “companions” who escort the goddess in the Tale of the Herdsman and in other accounts of the returning eye of the sun.⁸⁵

The motif of the fowling woman appears in the New Kingdom Love Poetry, with the first song of the second group of the P. Harris 500 collection describing a female fowler attired and equipped as though she might be one of the women in the scenes of the tomb of Ukhhoteb.⁸⁶

81 Darnell 1995: 73, n. 135; Verhoeven 2009: 439.

82 Caminos 1956: 7–21, pls. 1–7 (the *hrw nfr* appears in A 2, ll. 1 and 4); see also Darnell 2010: 125–130.

83 Correcting the reading “female children” in Darnell 2010: 126.

84 For *snhi* describing the mustering/registering of people and animals, see Brack and Brack 1977: 43 (text 34 to scene 15), pls. 37–40.

85 See Darnell 2010: 107 n. 25 *et passim*.

86 See Darnell 2010: 127–128.

$\dot{u}.n=i$ hr grg
 $p^3y=i$ $ph^3.t$ m $dr:t=i$
 m $dr:t=i$ $p^3y=i$ $\dot{t}bw$
 $p^3y=i$ s^3 $k^3y\dot{k}^3$

For snaring have I come,
 my trap in my (one) hand,
 in my (other) hand my bird cage,
 my back naked.

The poem describes the woman's catching of a myrrh-scented bird, a soul-bird – her soul – that has crossed the boundaries of the imminent and transcendental worlds dusted with the incense of the lands of the far south-east, a bird that connects the worlds of gods and men of the sort that appears in the Book of Nut.⁸⁷

Providing an unfortunately not transcribed choral accompaniment to the activities of the women in the scenes in the tomb of Ukhhotep is a group of eighteen women – depicted in three rows of six singers each – each sitting with one knee raised, facing left, arms raised in front, facing right, toward a standing female director. Behind the kneeling chorus are an indeterminate number of standing women holding sistra and *menat*-necklaces. The chorus in the tomb of Ukhhotep, accompanying women who act out events that might well illustrate many aspects of the bucolic love poems, may have performed texts such as the Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling, if not direct but not now surviving Middle Kingdom precursors of the New Kingdom love poetry. With a male director, a chorus of women appears visually and textually in the much later hymn to Rat-Tawy as Hathor at Medamûd, a text referring to the drunken and revels that welcomed the nocturnal arrival and “seeing” of the returning goddess.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ For the birds see Klotz 2009.

⁸⁸ The leader of the performance for Rat-Tawy in a probably Roman Period hymn at Medamûd is termed the *shn*, perhaps a direct rendering of the Greek χορηγός (for Coptic $\epsilon\alpha\zeta\eta\epsilon$ as χορηγέω, and $\rho\epsilon\phi\epsilon\alpha\zeta\eta\epsilon$ as χορηγός, see Darnell 1995: 55). For the leader of a Greek chorus of the sixth century# BCE possibly carrying a wreath, see the scene on the Clazomenian black-figure vessel from Benha, Egypt (Berlin 4530, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut 1908: pl. 54, fig. 1a). The *choregos* of the Daphnephoria appears to have borne the $\kappa\omega\pi\acute{\omega}$, a staff “entwined with laurel branches, flowers and various objects of symbolic value” (Calame 1997: 59–60). For a male conductor of female musicians in a Middle Kingdom scene, see Manniche 1991: 123 (the drawing of the same in Silverman 1988: figs. 31 and 35d is incomplete).

VII. The Deity Desires the Worshipper as the Worshipper Desires the Deity

The performance of the love songs as entertainment at a time of ritual would focus on humans the same eroticism, the central core of rejuvenation, as the Amenemhat song focuses on the temple of Karnak. The festival songs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, and their reflections in Nineteenth Dynasty love poetry, are worshipful entertainment in a time of ritual celebration. A deity could act out of love for a structure – as Amun loves Karnak and *vice versa* in the Amenemhat song – and out of love for a human as well. A worshipper could cry out to a deity urging that he or she might come to the ritual,⁸⁹ as one might begin a prayer to a deity, much as a lover my cry out for the beloved to come to him or to her.⁹⁰ The human may cry out for a paramour, and a deity may cry out in the same way, in the same poetic pattern, for a human.

The Eighteenth Dynasty priest Paḥu (probably reign of Amenhotep II) carved a depiction of the hippopotamus goddess Taweret at a desert shrine southwest of Naqada. Accompanying the image is a short text recording a pronouncement of the goddess.⁹¹

<i>T3-Wr.t dd=s</i>	Taweret, as she says:
<i>p3y(=i) sp-snw</i>	Mine, mine!
<i>P3-ḥw</i>	(oh) Paḥu!
<i>p3y(=i) ink</i>	My very own!

As a liminal deity, Taweret may, like Bes,⁹² communicate with humans and deities alike.⁹³ Paḥu's depiction of the speaking Taweret may allude to a dream revelation,⁹⁴ and in a small way recalls the Late Egyptian pronouncements of animals on the Medamud blocks Cairo JdE 58924 and 58925.⁹⁵ Taweret is a personal deity, as she appears on the offering basin Turin 22031, there in

89 So for instance in the tomb of Ukkhotep's son Senebi at Meir, the depiction of an officiant following a group of offering bringers bears the annotated speech: "May you come by, that there be holiday, that it may see happiness" (*nml=t nfr hrw m3n=f bw nfr* – Blackman 1914: pls. 2–3; see also Darnell 2002: 130–131)

90 See Mathieu 1996: 178 (§64). In prayers, the summons to the deity to come is parallel to a statement that the petitioner has cried out to the deity, so the call to a deity – divine or divinized lover – to come is an *ṣ*-cry (see Darnell 2014: 31–32 text n. b).

91 Darnell 2014: 21–25.

92 Romano 1982: 223–224 and 308 (cat. no. 281).

93 See the remarks of Baines 1985: 128.

94 Compare Assmann 1978: 33, n. y; see also Sparks 2006: 250–251.

95 Collombert 2008 (his understanding of the grammar of the texts is to be preferred to that of von Lieven 2009: 178–180).

the form of “(Ta)weret of Penbewy.”⁹⁶ The liminal being and the mortal may address one another, even intimately, but not in a dialogue.⁹⁷

Texts of other summons provide parallels to the pattern of Taweret’s speech – a doubled initial address, a secondary address, and a concluding statement or address.⁹⁸ The pattern appears in the recorded address of a farmer to cattle, and in the Morning Hymn to Amun. Paḥu’s composition is then a literary evocation of “poetic spontaneity.” The pattern also appears in the text of O. Faculteit Letteren (K. U. Leuven) dem. 2:⁹⁹

swr=f wnm=f nk=f m-bʒḥ Tʒy
Tʒy sp-sn.nw hr=f pʒ mr ʾry
pʒ šwšw Bʒs.t
*ʾw=f cš Tʒy*¹⁰⁰

⁴He will drink, he will eat, he will have sex in the presence of (goddess) *Tay*.

⁵“*Tay, Tay*,” he says, the one who desires a companion,

⁶the one who worships Bastet,
 as he cries out “*Tay*!”

At a time of inebriation and sexual activity during a festival honoring a returning goddess, the worshipper shouts the nickname of the goddess.¹⁰¹ The call to the goddess is linked to the desire for a (human) companion.

The inextricable links between human love, divine love, and the interactions of the two, provide the backgrounds and connections between the festival songs of divine love of the Eighteenth Dynasty and the songs of human love from the Ramesside Period. The cynosure of these genres and their probable times and places of closest correspondence were the great festivals that took place in and near major temple complexes. The love poetries of Egypt – both divine and human – are not allegories, but attempts to express psychic and physical realities. The “secular” love poetry of Egypt, with its allusions to the times, places, and beings of the temple cult, presents a parallel line of communal, popular activity accompanying religious celebrations, in which some of the celebratory songs contained allusions to physical love. The Ramesside Period love poetry alludes to parallel events and concepts in the cultic sphere, and Eighteenth Dynasty festival texts referring to the celebratory arrival of the

⁹⁶ Bierbrier and De Meulenaere 1984: 26–27.

⁹⁷ See the comments and references of Luiselli 2005: 44–47.

⁹⁸ See the discussion in Darnell 2014: 24.

⁹⁹ DePauw and Smith 2004: 75. For the name of the goddess, see Quack 2013b: 78–79.

¹⁰⁰ For the reading *Bʒs.t*, see Quack 2013a: 271.

¹⁰¹ Hathor refers to herself as “Heli” in the dream of Thothemheb (Assmann 1978: 26, Text I, l. 11 [and p. 32, n. t]; Feucht 1985: 98 n. 430; Szpakowska 2003: 138–141.), and worshippers address Nebethetepet as “Pipi” (see Sweeney 2009: 539; Heiden 2002: 193–4, n. e).

deity and his bark indeed reference events and settings common to those of the later love poetry – human love appears as a prototype for divine love during the Eighteenth Dynasty, even earlier than we find clear examples of the divine world providing imagery for texts describing human eroticism. In the light of the importance of ritual performance within Egyptian religion, the love poetry and the events it describes would lose its significance if it were allegorical. At least in ancient Egypt, human love makes divine love possible.

The imagery of the love poetry is closely associated with riverine and marshland environments, and other allusions to nautical celebrations that focus on the time of the Nile inundation. Other undertakings are less calendrically specific, and some of the events and associated literature – such as fishing and fowling – might well occur during the time of the receding waters and ultimately the harvest, with much of the imagery ultimately applicable to celebrations such as the Beautiful Festival of the Valley and the Opet Festival.¹⁰² The possible events during which the love poetry might have been performed were several, and the places where they were performed, and where the sexual acts to which they allude so playfully¹⁰³ may also have occurred, were temple enclosures and even temple constructions.

Although little evidence is forthcoming to describe the results of poetry-accompanied orgiastic activities within temples, a few texts appear to describe the ultimate results of some of the encounters – the birth of a child – itself occurring within a temple setting. According to a Nineteenth Dynasty statue of Paser from the temple of Monthuhotep II at Deir el-Bahari, the future vizier was born on the land of Amun:¹⁰⁴

102 A similar blending of various events and dates occurs within tomb and temple texts and iconography relating to festivals of drunkenness – for the combining of various themes and celebrations within the “banquet icon” in Theban tomb imagery, see Hartwig 2004: 98; for ambiguity of material related to the “drinking environment,” see Bryan 2014: 107–108. The Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling text refers to celebrants spending their *šmw*-period in the disportments. This could be the time of the inundation, if the text references the time of *šmw* during the latter Middle Kingdom period that is the probable date for the composition of the text (the text is so understood in Darnell 2010: 125), or it could refer to the period in general preceding the New Year celebration for the returning goddess, whose return will mark the beginning of “ideal” *ḥ.t*-inundation. Such ambiguity also appears in the festival contexts of Old Kingdom dance scenes – Kinney 2008: 171: “a few dance scenes are placed in the context of festivals such as the Sed-festival scenes at Abusir. Harvest Dance and some Boys’ Game scenes occur in the context of the agrarian cycle. Marshland settings are also a popular context for dance scenes, sometimes combined with motifs, such as orchestral recitals which are usually encountered as part of the presentation scene, suggesting this is an outdoor version of the presentation scene, with references pursuits featuring as part of the divertissements or offering inventory.”

103 Note the important observations of Fox 1985: 298–300.

104 Kitchen 1980: 18, ll. 3–4. The passive *šdm=f* in both this and the following passage could be nominal – see the discussion in Darnell 2004: 352–353; Wente 1996: 863–865; Manassa 2013: 265 nn. 57–59 (for p. 173).

ink sʒ n(y) s-n(y)-pr
msy=i hr sʒtw=k
shr=k mn m ib=i

I am the son of a propertied man.

I was born on your *temenos*-ground,¹⁰⁵
 with the result that your counsel endures in my heart.

The Twentieth Dynasty Stela of Qenherkhopeshef, dedicated to Hathor, references a more specific location for birth:¹⁰⁶

ink bʒ r-hft-hr nb=f
ms=i m pʒy wbʒ
pʒ rw.ty r-gs dsr.t r-sʒh-r mn-ls.t

I am a *ba*-spirit opposite his lord.¹⁰⁷

I was born¹⁰⁸ in this forecourt,
 (specifically) the gate beside Deir el-Bahari, abutting Meniset.

Later sources suggest that in Graeco-Roman Egypt, and in the exported cults of Egypt, human sexual activity – not merely exposure of the genitalia in a ritual context¹⁰⁹ – might occur in a ritualized, temple setting; though not the object of the activities perhaps, and certainly not the focus of any of the love poetry, children might be both conceived and born in a temple environment.¹¹⁰ The settings of the Egyptian love poetry and their Eighteenth Dynasty festival precursors, along with the texts describing the births of Paser and Qenherkhopeshef, recall a passage in the Song of Songs:¹¹¹

105 For *sʒtw* see the remarks of Rondot 1997: 35 (n. b to text no. 13 inf).

106 Kitchen 1983: 275, ll. 12–13.

107 A pun on the name of Deir el-Bahari as *hft.t-hr-nb=s*, “she who is opposite her lord.”

108 The verb *msi* here might refer to conception by the male, although that extended use appears to be confined to divinities, and the more common use is perhaps intended here. Bryan 2014: 119 reads *ms=i* in the Qenherkhopeshef text as “I was conceived;” Froid 2007: 230, translates “I was born” (Note that Froid renders *rw.ty* as “cave,” probably on the basis of the Amarna reference in *Wb.* II 409, 2; on p. 254 n. 19, she suggests this might reference the unfinished tomb overlooking Deir el-Bahari (for which see Wente 1984, with references). Although she does not reference it, the erotic graffiti in that “grotto” might relate to such an event, but the fact that *rw.ty* almost certainly has its usual value “portal” makes this moot. The description suggests a forward gate area near the now lost site of the Ahmose-Nefertari temple).

109 See the studies of Volokhine 2012, and Morris 2007.

110 See the references and discussions in Jasnow and Smith 2010/2011, and Klotz 2012b. For the fact that “the absence of any explicit concern with fertility distinguishes both the Egyptian love songs and the Song of Songs from the Sacred Marriage songs [of Mesopotamia],” see Fox 1985: 287–288.

111 Translation of Fox 1985: 167.

“Under the apricot tree I woke you –
 there your mother conceived you,
 there she conceived you, she who bore you.”

In the light of the Egyptian texts – the ritual songs that evoke human love, and the poems of love with their bucolic and festival imagery – the Song of Songs may in this passage reference sexual activity in just such a setting, human intercourse evoking divine interactions, from generation to generation. If the Song of Songs indeed entered the realm of scripture through performance during religious festivals,¹¹² then one might suggest that it also – like the Egyptian love poetry – represents a human reflection of a genre of performative texts – like the Eighteenth Dynasty festival songs – perhaps transmitted orally and never transcribed, that did perhaps describe divine interactions with places and perhaps even people in terms of human love.

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112 See the discussion of Fox 1985: 250–252.

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