

*The Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 18 (2007), 53–58.

N.B. *red numbers within brackets* indicate the beginning of a page in the published version.

Footnotes are endnotes there.

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[53]

## A Late Middle Kingdom Parallel for the *incipit* of Book of the Dead Chapter 22

by Jacobus van Dijk

In 1963 J. Vandier published ‘a curious funerary monument of the Middle Kingdom’ consisting of four rectangular limestone slabs which he tentatively interpreted and reconstructed as a kind of model *serdab* (Louvre Inv. No. E. 25485).<sup>1</sup> These slabs are inscribed for the *imy-r mšꜥ* and *iry-ꜥt* Amenysonb and his household, who probably lived somewhere in the vicinity of Atfih on the east bank of the Nile opposite the Fayyum<sup>2</sup> at the end of the Twelfth or during the Thirteenth Dynasty. Apart from the offering formulae and the names and titles which accompany the representations of Amenysonb *cum suis*, there are two more substantial texts, and these were subsequently published by Vandier in 1968.<sup>3</sup> The first of these is inscribed on Vandier’s ‘Panneau D’; it is a ritual text known from seven further copies ranging in date from the Twelfth to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. This text has been discussed several times<sup>4</sup> and the

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<sup>1</sup> [56] J. Vandier, ‘Un curieux monument funéraire du Moyen Empire’, *Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France* 13 (1963), 1–10. Vandier’s reconstruction remains problematical, as he was very well aware himself, and in the present Egyptian galleries of the Louvre the slabs are shown separately again. Panel A is [57] exceptional in that it is the only one to have a scene in raised relief on the reverse. The area surrounding this scene has been left rough. This treatment is reminiscent of the Middle Kingdom stela of Sirē in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (E.3921), where the reverse has a small area carved with a figure of the owner in high relief in a doorway, whereas the rest of the back has been left rough. A.N. Dakin, “The Stela of Sirē at Oxford” in: *JEA* 24 (1938) 190–97, plausibly suggested that “perhaps the likeliest explanation is that the stela was let into the thickness of a wall in such a way that the whole of the front was visible on one side while only the inscribed panel of the back showed through a hole on the other side. In such a case there might be no need to trim the edges or smooth down the rest of the back” (*JEA* 24, 190 n. 5). This explanation may very well apply to the Louvre slab as well.

<sup>2</sup> The alleged provenance of the monument is the Faiyûm and one of the offering formulae mentions ‘Hathor Mistress of Atfih’.

<sup>3</sup> J. Vandier, ‘Deux textes religieux du Moyen Empire’, in W. Helck (ed.), *Festschrift für Siegfried Schott zu seinem 70. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden 1968), 121–24.


<sup>4</sup> E. Naville, *ASAE* 10 (1910), 191–92; id., *ASAE* 16 (1916), 187–90; id., *REA* 1 (1927), 31–44; H. Kees, *ZÄS* 57 (1922), 92–120; E. Stavnik, *RdE* 2 (1934), 165–71; H. Altenmüller, *MDAIK* 22 (1967), 9–18;



the egg which is in the land of the mysterious one'. Quite apart from the questionable translation of the group ,<sup>9</sup> the continuation appears to be stylistically at odds with the preceding spell, which consists almost entirely of short sentences in the second person singular addressed to the snake, ordering its disappearance or claiming its defeat, as is so often the case in snake charms. By contrast, the line of text on the lintel is the only one using the first person singular. I would prefer, therefore, to take it as a separate text,<sup>10</sup> and this would seem to be corroborated by the fact that this text is actually known from another source: it is the *incipit* of Book of the Dead Chapter 22, a 'Spell for giving the deceased's mouth (back) to him in the necropolis'.

The occurrence of this line from BD 22 on a Middle Kingdom monument is remarkable since this chapter is not found in the Coffin Texts. The earliest source for it is provided by the hieratic texts on the coffin of Queen Mentuhotep seen and copied in facsimile in Thebes by Sir John Gardner Wilkinson in 1832 — a remarkable achievement even by present-day standards — but now lost.<sup>11</sup> The exact date of this coffin has been the subject of debate ever since Goodwin first drew attention to it.<sup>12</sup> Goodwin dated it to Dyn. 11 on account of the name Mentuhotep and in this he was followed by Budge, Birch, and Griffith. In a famous article published in 1947 Winlock<sup>13</sup> assigned Queen Mentuhotep and her husband King Djehuty to Dynasty 17, and this date appears to have been accepted by most scholars. More recently a Dynasty

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<sup>9</sup> As an alternative, one might consider 'the end (of the snake? of the spell?) has come', taking  not as a defective writing of the prospective form *iw-y* (Borghouts, op. cit., 706 n. 22), but as a stative (old perfective). If the end of the spell is meant, the group would amount to a colophon, in which case it would provide a further argument for separating the lintel text from the snake spell. It has to be admitted, however, that no parallel for an abbreviated colophon of this type can be cited; cf. G. Lenzo Marchese, 'Les colophons dans la littérature égyptienne', *BIFAO* 104 (2004), 359–76.

<sup>10</sup> The fact that Vandier excludes this line from his publication of the texts probably means that he, too, considered it as a separate entity.

<sup>11</sup> Wilkinson's tracings (now in the British Museum, BM 10553) were published by E.A. Wallis Budge, *Facsimiles of Egyptian Hieratic Papyri in the British [58] Museum I* (London 1910), Pls. XXXIX–XLVIII. BD 22 is on Pl. XLVI, ll. 17–19; see for its position on the back of the coffin Budge, op. cit., p. xxii and L.H. Lesko, *Index of the Spells on Egyptian Middle Kingdom Coffins and Related Documents* (Berkeley 1979), 105. The texts have recently been published in full in C. Geisen, *Die Totentexte des verschollenen Sarges der Königin Mentuhotep aus der 13. Dynastie. Ein Textzeuge aus der Übergangszeit von den Sargtexten zum Totenbuch* (Studien zum Altägyptischen Totenbuch, 8) (Wiesbaden 2004); BD 22 is on pp. 39–40 (Pls. IV, ll. 17–19), with transliteration and translation on p. 89.

<sup>12</sup> C.W. Goodwin, 'On a Text of the Book of [the] Dead belonging to the Old Kingdom', *ZÄS* 4 (1866), 53–56.

<sup>13</sup> H.E. Winlock, 'The Tombs of the Kings of the Seventeenth Dynasty at Thebes', *JEA* 10 (1924), 217–77.

13 date has been proposed, however, first by Von Falck, Klie and Schulz,<sup>14</sup> then in more detail by Vandersleyen,<sup>15</sup> and this date has now convincingly been narrowed down to the end of the Thirteenth Dynasty by Christina Geisen.<sup>16</sup> Vandier assigned the Louvre relief slabs to the end of [56] Dynasty 12 or Dynasty 13 on account of the large number of small figures of relatives of the owner depicted on them and the forms of their personal names,<sup>17</sup> and details in the offering formulae such as the phrases *dī=f prt-ḥrw* and *n kꜣ n* and the writing of the name of Osiris without determinative tend to confirm this date.<sup>18</sup> The form of the monument too, although consisting in its present form of four loose slabs, resembles the so-called ‘stèles-chapelles’ of Dynasty 13.<sup>19</sup> It would seem, then, that the Louvre monument is contemporary with, or perhaps even slightly earlier<sup>20</sup> than the coffin of Queen Mentuhotep. If so, it provides the earliest attestation of the *incipit* of BD 22.

The connection between this line of text and the niche or doorway above which it is inscribed, although probable, is difficult to establish with certainty. It seems likely that the niche once contained a (wooden?) statuette of the deceased, perhaps in the form of a mummy, but since no trace of it remains we can only speculate. Small rectangular niches or doorways both with and without figures in the round of the owner are not uncommon on Middle Kingdom stelae, and in some cases<sup>21</sup> these are associated with the “Opening the face” (*wn ḥr*) formula, which in its basic form begins with the words “Opened is the face (sight) of N that he may see the Lord of the Horizon when

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<sup>14</sup> M. von Falck, S. Klie, A. Schulz, ‘Neufunde ergänzen Königsnamen eines Herrschers der 2. Zwischenzeit’, *GM* 87 (1985), 15–19.

<sup>15</sup> C. Vandersleyen, ‘Rahotep, Sébekemsaf I<sup>er</sup> et Djéhouy, rois de la 13<sup>e</sup> dynastie’, *RdE* 44 (1993), 189–91.

<sup>16</sup> C. Geisen, ‘Zur zeitlichen Einordnung des Königs Djehuti an das Ende der 13. Dynastie’, *SAK* 32 (2004), 149–57; id., *Die Totentexte des verschollenen Sarges...*, 2–3.

<sup>17</sup> *Revue du Louvre* 13, 9–10.

<sup>18</sup> C.J.C. Bennett, ‘Growth of the *ḥtp-dī-nsw* formula in the Middle Kingdom’, *JEA* 27 (1941), 77–82.

<sup>19</sup> G. Lapp, ‘Die Stelenkapelle des *Kmz* aus der 13. Dynastie’, *MDAIK* 50 (1994), 231–52.

<sup>20</sup> In his article in the *Fs. Schott Vandier* narrows the date of the monument down to the end of the Twelfth or the beginning of the Thirteenth Dynasty; cf. also Vandier, *Les antiquités égyptiennes au Musée du Louvre*, 5<sup>me</sup> édition (1973), 19.

<sup>21</sup> A. Lohwasser, *Die Formel “Öffnen des Gesichts”* (Vienna 1991), 37: Basel Inv. No. III5002, with mummified figure in niche, and Vienna Inv. No. 156, with three mummified figures in niches and a large openwork ankh sign; in the case of BM EA 101 and Vienna Inv. No. 109 the stelae themselves have the form of a doorway. In later times, too, the formula is associated with doorways: in the tomb of Puyemre (TT 39) it is inscribed next to a representation of a false door (A. Hermann, *Die Stelen der thebanischen Felsgräber der 18. Dynastie* (Glückstadt etc. 1940), 73 fig. 11), and in the tomb of Ibi (TT 36) it is found on the lintel of the actual doorway leading to the first pillared hall: K. Kuhlmann, W. Schenkel, *Das Grab des Ibi*, Theben Nr. 36, I (Mainz am Rhein 1983), Pl. 17.

he traverses the sky. May he grant that N appear as the Great God, the lord of the imperishable stars, the lord of eternity”. As Angelika Lohwasser has shown,<sup>22</sup> the *wn hr* formula refers to the resurrection of the deceased, who awakes from the sleep of death and opens his eyes to see the light of the sun. He has been enabled to do so because the ritual of Opening the Mouth has been performed for him and he appears as the Great God, i.e. Osiris. In Chapter 22 of the Book of the Dead the line of text found on the Louvre slab is used to introduce a spell which has a similar meaning and also refers to the Opening of the Mouth ritual: the deceased has risen from the egg (*swht*, which also means ‘coffin’) which is in the mysterious land (the underworld or the tomb), his mouth has been given back to him ‘so that he can speak to the gods of the underworld with it’ and he has become Osiris (*ink wsir nb R<sup>3</sup>-st<sup>3</sup>w*). I would suggest, therefore, that the text on the lintel of the niche of the Louvre monument has a function comparable to that of the *wn hr* formula: as a newly resurrected man the owner appears in the doorway of his tomb to see the sun and begin his renewed existence in the hereafter.

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<sup>22</sup> op. cit., 34–35.



Plate 1. Louvre E 25485 Side A. After *Revue du Louvre* 13 (1963), 3.

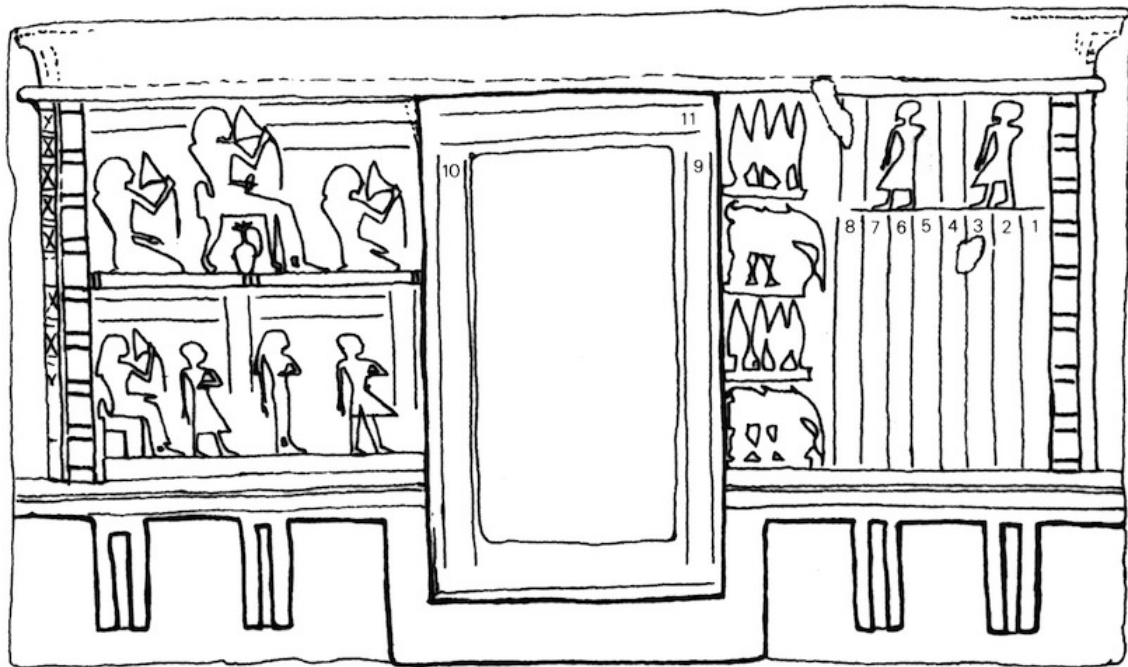


Figure 1. Louvre E 25485 Side A.