Mut. In comparison with other divinities the goddess Mut makes a late appearance in the history of Egyptian religion. As companion of the god *Amun she takes her outstanding position in Egyptian religion since the time of queen Hatshepsut. The oldest representation of M. seems to be a lion headed figure with inscription *Mwt* on a so–called magic wand [1] of c. 1730 B.C., possibly from Middle-Egypt. On a stela [2] from approximately the same time she is called mistress of *Mgbt*, that is to be localised in Middle Egypt, 10th Upper Egyptian nome, where she also was venerated later on [3]. Since the NK the most important cultplace of M. was *Karnak [4]. It is unknown whether, when and how she was introduced in this cultcenter of Amun. Her name is found for the first time in Karnak on blocs of a building of Amenhotep I [5]. It is not to be excluded that her name occurs already in Coffintexts and in personal names of the MK [6], but one has to reckon with the possibility that the vulture with which her name is written there has to be read as 'mother' or *Nekhbet.

The name of the goddess is written with the vulture [7], not so much because she was a vulture-goddess: She is represented as an anthropomorphic being with human head or sometimes lion head and not as a vulture like Nekhbet. The vulture headdress she wears (together with the double crown) she has in common with many goddesses [8]. The vulture hieroglyph seems to be an ideogram for motherhood [9]. Before anything is known of the goddess the hieroglyph vulture, to be read *mwt*, means mother and the name of the goddess could mean in origin nothing else but mother [10]. Now it must be said that in general the etymologizing of names of divinities is often a rather speculative affair and that in this case the name of the goddess and the word for mother, that are written in the same way, have had separate developments in the course of the history of Egyptian language. From the Greek rendering of the name Μουτ or Μουθ we know that the consonant at the end of the name was retained; this may be archaizing for religious reasons, and that there was definite preference for the Middle Egyptian dialectical form *mou*(*-t*) [11] next to the more usual word for mother in Coptic ⲘⲀⲀⲨ. Future research has to make out in how far this could be another argument for the above indicated Middle Egyptian origin of the goddess.

Whether or not her name means mother, M. is mother goddess who can be represented with a child on her lap [12] and she is mother of Khonsu [13]

(*Chons). Since the time of Hatshepsut she forms with Amun and Khonsu the theban triad[14]. The delivery of the goddess and the birth of the divine child was celebrated in Karnak[15]. And she gives strength to the pregnant woman and delivers her in due time[16]. But as a mother goddess, M. has specific traits that distincts her from other mother goddesses. Since Hatshepsut the pharaoh is called son of Amun and Mut[17]. And as Hatshepsut wears the double crown as if she were a masculine pharaoh, M. wears the double crown as do several masculine gods and not just the crown of Lower Egypt or of Upper Egypt as several goddesses do. The god's wives of Amun (*Gottesgemahlin) had a special relationship not only with *Tefnut, the maiden who was the first feminine being in mythology, but also with Mut[18]. The epithet *wrt* (great) is usually added to her name. This characterises her as a person of consequence as a matron, as she is as the stately lady with the crowns. In the MK *mwt wrt* may mean 'the elder mother' or even 'grand mother'[19]. In the mythologies and folklores of many peoples the figure of the old wise woman has a very special place. As companion of Amon-Re Mut is not just his spouse, but also his daughter (eye of Re, *jrt-Rˁ*) and his mother (mistress of the sky, *nbt pt*). She is said to be 'the mother who became a daughter' or 'the daughter who became mother, who brought forth the light (the moongod Khonsu) anew'. One may think here of a female counterpart of the *Kamutef theology[20]. This mother goddess does not only give life, but directs it also as wearer of the double crown. The femininity of M. has something to do with the femininity of the old wise woman. It is the companionship man meets in his mother, sister, daughter and from a certain point of view in his wife. In wisdom literature[21] it can be contrasted with the femininity of *Hathor that is the sexual excitation[22] man finds in the strange woman from outside the family. This femininity of M. can however also be terrifying. She can be depicted as the bad mother, the woman-with-the-phallus, who scares away her opponents[23].

M. is called mistress of Asheru (*Ascheru). The exact meaning of the word is not known. It seems to have been a crescent-shaped lake in several places of Egypt, where lion goddesses such as *Uto, *Bastet and *Sakhmet were appeased[24]. Since the 18th dyn. it denotes especially the place in South Karnak where the temple of M. was. In the train of Amun M. was venerated in many places in Egypt. There was venerated a M. in the house of *Ptah in *Memphis and elsewhere and there seems to have been a temple of M. *ḫntt ˁbwj ntrw* in *Gisa[25].

[1] Hartwig Altenmüller, Die Apotropaia und die Götter Mittelägyptens, Diss. München 1965, 45 (nr. 50). – [2] Renate Krauspe, in: Fs Ägyptisches Museum Berlin 1974, 159–161. – [3] Malek, in: GM 29, 1978, 71–78. – [4] For data concerning the cult of Mut, her temple and the personnel of her temple in South Karnak, see Helck, Materialien, 60–62 and PM II², 255 ff. – [5] To be published by Labib Habachi and Claude Traunecker. The text of one block is given in: Pierre Lacau and Henri Chevrier, Une Chapelle d'Hatshepsout à Karnak I, Cairo 1977, 369, fig. 28. – [6] Cf. Yoyotte, in: RdE 14, 1962, 102. Later on the name of Mut occurs very often in personal names, probably more than that of any other goddess cf. Ranke, PN III, 1977, 58–59. – [7] Gardiner, Signlist, G 14 and 15. – [8] Iunet and Tenenet who are never said to be vulture-goddesses did wear the vulture headdress, already before M., in the MK cf. Maria Theresia Derchain-Urtel, Synkretismus in ägyptischer Ikonographie, GOF IV, 8, Wiesbaden 1979, 37. – [9] Hopfner, Tierkult, 105 with int. al. reference to Horapollo I, 11. – [10] This is denied by Rusch, in: RE XVI/1, 928. – [11] Crum, CD, 197 a (akhmimic). – [12] CG 39369–39374. – [13] v. Bissing, in: AcOr 8, 1930, 149. – [14] The earliest representation of the theban triad seems to be on the north side of the east half of the 8th pylon in Karnak (PM II², 174) or in the now reconstructed reliefs of the bark of Amun at Deir el-Bahari (not yet in PM). – [15] Stricker, in: OMRO 34, 1953, 26–27 = Pap. Leiden T 32, III, 22–24. – [16] Roeder, Von Debod bis Kalabsche, 61 f. § 160, pl. 19. – [17] Hayes, Scepter II, 105. – [18] Leclant, in: ZÄS 90, 1963, 80. – [19] Henry G. Fischer, Varia. Egyptian Studies I, New York 1976, 94–95. – [20] Sethe, Amun, 29 f. – [21] Pap. Insinger VIII, 18–19. – [22] Philippe Derchain, Hathor quadrifrons, Istanbul 1972, 45. – [23] See text and vignet (*Götter, androgyne, Abb. 2) of Tb 164. The lionheaded ithyphallic figure in the temple of Khonsu in Karnak (PM II², 242) is anepigraphic, but an identical figure in the temple of Hibis is provided with the inscription *mwt ʿ*, cf. Norman de Garis Davies, Temple of Hibis III, New York 1957, pl. 2, III no. 8. – For ethnographic parallels see Focke Sierksma, Religie, sexualiteit en agressie, Groningen 1979. More references of the malevolent Mut in: Pascal Vernus, Athribis, BdE LXXIV, Cairo 1978, 242. – [24] Cf. also the hymns to Mut in Pap. Berlin 3014 + 3053. – [25] Christiane M. Zivie, Giza au deuxième Millénaire, BdE LXX, Cairo 1976, 299–300.

Lit.: See the references in the notes especially to the work of Sethe, Rusch and Yoyotte and Bonnet, RÄRG, 491–494; Sauneron, in: BIFAO 62, 1964, 50–57 and BIE 45, 1968, 45–52; te Velde, in: JEOL 26, 1979–1980 (forthcoming).

H. te V.