



## INTO THE WILD? RETHINKING THE DYNASTIC CONCEPTION OF THE DESERT BEYOND NATURE AND CULTURE

**Axelle Brémont**

Sorbonne Université / CNRS UMR 8167

### ABSTRACT

*The limited anthropization of environments like deserts has caused Dynastic hunting scenes to be overwhelmingly interpreted as aiming at ensuring (human) Order over (natural) Chaos. When systematically applied to animal iconography, however, this theory is symptomatic of what Philippe Descola has coined a “naturalist” ontology: a binary categorization where humans master and control the non-human disorganized wilderness. Ancient Egyptian human-animal relationships are still partly unconsciously conceived in these terms despite growing skepticism about the universality of the nature vs. culture dichotomy—one of anthropology’s most recent outcomes in the past 25 years. It seems worthwhile to re-examine Dynastic iconographic and textual mentions of animals to challenge the vision of the desert as a land of evil and chaos, and reestablish it and its animal inhabitants as partakers of an inherent cosmic order that is by no means restricted to human actions.*

While deserts span across the majority of today’s Egyptian territory and they already closely bordered the narrow fertile band of the Nile Valley in antiquity, Egyptological studies focusing specifically on ancient Egyptians’ conception(s) of desert environments have mostly studied their relation to its mineral resources, but are much scarcer when it comes to the relation to desert animals. Perhaps one of the most discussed evidence thereof is the painted wooden chest from Tutankhamun’s tomb (JE 61445) (Fig. 1), representing on each side the king fighting typical enemies of Egypt, while on the lid he hunts desert animals and lions.<sup>1</sup>

The chaotic nature of the desert animals in the hunting scene has appeared obvious to numerous authors, since they are combined with warfare scenes and the motif of the griffin trampling foreigners. Annie Forgeau and Marie-Ange Bonhême thus cite it as a perfect example of the dichotomy between “le monde royal de l’ordre [et] le tumulte à jamais menaçant” while John Baines describes it as a “mixture of conquest abroad, domination of nature with associated defense of order [and] celebration.”<sup>2</sup>

Such readings of the Tutankhamun chest, as well

as those proposed for other hunting scenes (especially from the New Kingdom when they multiply in both royal and private contexts), draw from one of Egyptology’s central theoretical tools at least as early as the 1950s: the assertion of order vs. chaos. Its importance in Ancient Egyptian political and cosmological thought has been brought forth in early works such as Erik Hornung’s and Siegfried Morenz’s.<sup>3</sup> Religious and funerary texts and temple iconography disclosed the idea that at the heart of the Dynastic conception of the world in most of its history laid the necessity that the frail order of the world be constantly maintained by human action.

The meaning of “chaos” in this conceptual pair appears to have slightly slid from “non-organization” in its early formulations—with Erik Hornung especially concerned about defining the Nun and its primeval indifferentiation—to “dis-organization” linked to Sethian disorder. Many subsequent works appear more concerned about human-animal relationships and animal symbolism, such as Torgny Säve-Söderbergh’s 1953 study of the hippopotamus or Hartwig Altenmüller’s opusculé *Jagd im Alten Ägypten* in 1967.<sup>4</sup> Building on such pioneer works, these concepts have then been reasserted in a number of major Egyptological works



FIGURE 1: Tutankhamun's painted wooden chest, Cairo Museum JE 61445. a (above): Eastern panel: Nubians being crushed by the king's chariot. b (below): Northern panel of the lid: hunting scene (from Davies and Gardiner 1962, pl. II and III; © image courtesy of the Griffith Institute, University of Oxford).



that include Henri Asselberghs, Krzysztof Cialowicz and Stan Hendrickx in Predynastic studies, and, for Dynastic Egypt, Barry Kemp or Jan Assmann.<sup>5</sup>

Indeed, the question of where the boundaries of the organized world stop and where human controlling action should begin finds no straightforward answer in Egyptian sources. It is fairly common however to read that this dangerous and unruly environment starts as soon as one leaves the strict narrow band of the Valley, an idea especially advocated by Jean Leclant (“les Egyptiens détestent le désert, domaine du dieu Seth et d’animaux terrifiants”), Alessandro Roccati, or Jean Yoyotte and Pascal Vernus.<sup>6</sup>

As a result for the scope of this paper, non-humans in general have very often been assigned to the chaotic side of this conceptual pair. The political imposition of order over enemies likely to invade Egypt and make it fade into chaos has therefore been added an “animalistic” dimension, and numerous scholars have agreed on the parallel status of both wild animals and foreign enemies as agents of chaos the king is expected to master, destroy, and control.

#### **HUMANITY, BARBARITY, ANIMALITY: “ORDER OVER CHAOS” IN HUNTING AND WAR DEPICTIONS**

The question of whether Ancient Egyptians made at any point a general differentiation between animals as a whole and humans cannot be answered in this brief paper; indeed, as shall be developed below, anthropology has underlined that many societies do not seem concerned with tracing such a clear-cut distinction. Some humans can appear comparable to animals in that they would epitomize a state of “uncivilization,” much like barbarian enemies in Greek thought were animalized by their very designation as “those who make bird-like sounds” and are not able to talk properly.

The case of Tutankhamun’s chest shall serve as a guiding thread throughout this short investigation on the topic of ancient Egyptian conception(s) of humanity and animality. At first sight, the close similarity between hunting scenes and war depictions seems undeniable. Not only do they occur on the same object, their composition is identical, with the king’s chariot structuring the image diagonally. As has been demonstrated by several authors, both stand complementarily as demonstrations of the king’s physical strength and fighting skills.<sup>7</sup> This is especially relevant for Tutankhamun’s chest, which contained archery gear<sup>8</sup> and therefore refers to its potential use to attack

either human enemies or game.

However, in line with Regine Schulz’s recent reinterpretation, I will argue that the two types of fighting cannot be regarded as exactly on the same plan.<sup>9</sup> The fact that animals are depicted on the lid while the four sides are devoted to human enemies differentiates them to some extent. Moreover, the impression of disorganization is notably clearer in the case of the enemies than regarding animals. Whilst the former are completely disarticulated and stacked atop each other without any kind of spatial coherence (Fig. 1a), the desert game are all fleeing in the same direction and follow traditional register lines – only they display the hill shape that renders desert environment since the Old Kingdom (Fig. 1b).

Generally speaking, the king’s relationship to animals is far less antagonistic and pejorative, as demonstrated by the numerous instances where he identifies himself with a wild bull or a fierce lion. In this particular context—and this interpretation of sacrifice shall be developed later on—killing the animal might serve as a way to absorb its superhuman strength rather than destroy it. This is clear in the inscriptions at Medinet Habu accompanying the rite of slaughtering the wild bull (*smꜣ*), but also, for example, on Thutmose III.’s Armant stela (“he captured twelve wild bulls in one hour, *and wore their tail down his back*”).<sup>10</sup> While the king can identify himself with fierce animals, human enemies have no qualities the king wishes to appropriate.

The representation of the griffin trampling enemies on the narrow sides of the chest also marks a clear difference between animals and foreigners: the king is indeed often shown in the guise of a powerful supernatural animal, but is never depicted in this way crushing and disarticulating evil animals. The goal of both killings appears quite different: in one case, as training, a display of strength, sport and elite leisure, giving game more positive interpretations than just an embodiment of chaos; while, regarding human enemies, the sole aim is to destroy them and render them powerless. Regine Schulz’s analyses of the box’s inscriptions point to the same direction: while they explicitly mention killing and destroying foreigners, the lid merely states that “he found numerous herds of desert animals (and) His Majesty *captured* them in a little moment.”<sup>11</sup>

Whether explicitly or not, consciously or not, readings of such objects as Tutankhamun’s chest, and overall of hunting scenes (especially when

paralleled with war ones), have resulted in transposing the order vs. chaos dichotomy onto nature vs. culture grounds. More exactly, the animal world is very often seen as partitioned between “the domesticated and ordered” and “the wild and disordered,” the latter including especially but not exclusively desert fauna.<sup>12</sup> However, recent anthropological works have convincingly demonstrated this dichotomy to be absent from most societies, which shall make us question its validity when dealing with any of the phases of Egyptian history.

#### THE “ONTOLOGICAL TURN”: A THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION

In the last 25 years, anthropology has witnessed an important paradigm shift, often coined “ontological turn.” While the controversies and ramifications it provoked are numerous, there can be said to be one intellectual glue holding together the many different approaches and theories subsumed under that term: “the dual movement towards, on the one hand, exploring the basis of the Western social and intellectual project and, on the other, of exploring and describing the terms in which non-Western understandings of the world are grounded.”<sup>13</sup>

The main point of agreement of all scholars defining themselves or having been defined as pertaining to the “ontological turn” therefore seems to be the very term of *ontology*. While it has sometimes been discarded as being “just another word for culture,” its relativist potentialities are higher.<sup>14</sup> The use of the term “ontology” goes hand in hand with the position of a *plurality of worlds*, thus enabling the social scientist to leave aside the positivist notion that “we are all living in the same world—one best described and apprehended by science,” which would unavoidably lead us to rank worldviews according to whether or not they are in line with *the real world*.<sup>15</sup> Instead, positing that other human societies have a specific “ontology” means that it is the world we live in itself that differs.

This heuristic position that “no world that is ready to be viewed exists—no world that would precede one’s view of it,”<sup>16</sup> in Eduardo Viveiros de Castro’s words, comes with a methodological posture for the anthropologist and equally so for other disciplines that deal with societies living in worlds different from our own: the fact that *we do not know better*. Of course, for around half a century, scholars have become increasingly careful not to come to other peoples with truths intended to replace their—

necessarily mistaken—*beliefs*; however, in a way, the ontological tendency considers that the way of dealing with natives’ assertions about how *their* world works had not yet been thoroughly decolonized.

When placed in front of an assertion they do not personally consider to be true—“*peccaries are human*,” for instance, an example suggested in Viveiros de Castro’s same article—scholars previously adopted, for example, a functionalist point of view, wondering what use it is to produce such a statement, or an interpretive or structuralist point of view, wondering about the logic behind the statement, if it is to be understood only metaphorically. But advocates of the ontological turn instead call for, so to say, an *inferential* point of view. Then, this sentence is treated as sheer truth and used to give way to other relevant questions that might help unravel other rules of this universe. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro has coined this attitude “taking the native seriously”: studying not the *raison d’être* of the statement in itself, but rather asking “what are its consequences? For example, what is eaten when one eats a peccary, if peccaries are human?”<sup>17</sup>

Building on a similar theoretical framework, the French anthropologist Philippe Descola has proposed, most thoroughly in his 2005 book *Beyond Nature and Culture*, to distinguish four main ontologies as regards societies’ conception of non-humans, based on whether they recognize them to hold similarities or differences to humans in their mental faculties on the one hand, and physical substance on the other.<sup>18</sup> One of them, what he has called the “naturalist” ontology, is familiar to us: based on the acknowledgement that both animal and human bodies share the same physical “building blocks,” it conversely affirms that they differ in that animals lack self-consciousness (much in the way the Cartesian *animal-machine* does) while humans are destined to be “masters and possessors of Nature,” again in Descartes’ words.<sup>19</sup>

Philippe Descola’s conviction, however, is that such a distinction is not at all universal, in that most societies do not oppose “nature” to “culture” in the way European thought has overwhelmingly done since the 15th century. But in the context of Dynastic Egypt, there is indeed one emic distinction that would be likely to encompass at least some of the connotations attached to the nature vs. culture one: that between *mꜣ.t* and *isf.t*. If animals could be shown to be on the side of *isf.t*, of disorder as equated to unruly wilderness, at least in some

textual sources from one specific period or throughout time, then this would prove the existence of a certain notion of “nature” as opposed to cultural order and human control.

“TAKING THE NATIVE SERIOUSLY”: EMIC  
CONCEPTIONS OF ORDER AND CHAOS

Although references to animals in Dynastic texts are rarely connected to either of these two concepts, there is one literary genre that may be combed for evidence of the relation of animals to *m<sup>3</sup>.t* and *isf.t*: the so-called “pessimistic literature.” The first striking fact when going through these texts is that they hardly ever feature any reference to animals; the ambient chaos they complain about appears confined to purely human evil, and the absence of a strong and rightful political power does not seem to imply any intrusion of animals into the human realms of culture and civilization: no packs of predators roaming in the once safe cities, no wandering hippos devastating the crops,<sup>20</sup> no plagues of grasshoppers.

In this literature broadly spanning from the First Intermediate Period to the Twenty-first Dynasty (depending on debates on dating that will be briefly exposed below), only a handful of quotations can be found to evoke animals in a rather negative way that may place them on the side of chaos and unrule. While keeping in mind that they date from a variety of periods and therefore might bear testimony to changes in practice, they nevertheless belong to a coherent social context, as regularly copied references for a scribal culture common to a rough millennium of Egyptian history.

The first occurrence is also the best-dated one: this “autobiographical” text from the nomarch Henqu II’s tomb in Deir el-Gebrawi is generally considered to date to the beginning of the First Intermediate Period, or possibly the end of the Sixth Dynasty.<sup>21</sup>


HENQU, COL. 23–24


*gm-n(=i) s(.y) m s<sup>3</sup>.w-pr.w n(y).w mnmn.t grg.wt  
n(y.w)t wh<sup>c</sup>w.w iw grg~n=i i<sup>3</sup>.wt=s nb.(w)t  
im<sup>3</sup>hw Hnkw m rmt mnmn.t r<sup>c</sup>w.t m bw-m<sup>3</sup><sup>c</sup>*

(Since) I found it (the nome) in a state of pastures of cattle and marshes of fishers/fowlers, I refounded all of its mounds, —I, Henqu the revered —, with men and big and small cattle, in truth<sup>22</sup>

Bernard Mathieu recently argued that “était nécessairement bannie de cette ménagerie (...) la

faune de la *h<sup>3</sup>s.t* (...) contextuellement aberrante, tant pour l’ancien gestionnaire de la vallée que pour le défunt nouvellement transfiguré.”<sup>23</sup> But this absence also constitutes a strong argument against it being a territory of chaos. Henqu II could have stated that the “natural” *h<sup>3</sup>s.t* had taken over the once civilized environment, a literary topos well-attested elsewhere in the Near East. For example, Sargon II, founder of the last Assyrian empire, states that in the dark times before his political restoration, Babylon “had become a desert for a long time (...) thorny bushes, thistles and shrubs ruled over these inaccessible paths; lions and jackals gathered and frolicked there like lambs.”<sup>24</sup> By contrast, the *h<sup>3</sup>s.t* fauna never appears in Henqu’s text as having pervaded the place, and so it seems not to come directly to the scribe’s mind when composing a text about the state of abandonment of the nome.

Instead, *mnmn.t* are evoked, whose purely domestic connotation has been ascertained for a long time and recently reasserted by Dimitri Meeks: “des graphies développées du type de celle du papyrus Boulaq 17  prouvent qu’on pouvait inclure dans les *mnmn.t* des animaux domestiques habituellement classés parmi les *w.t*, mais jamais les animaux de la catégorie *w.t h<sup>3</sup>s.t*.”<sup>25</sup> The term can hardly be given any negative value since Henqu himself boasts thrice that his efficient administrative action resulted in populating the nome with more cattle than before.

However expected, the difference between before and after Henqu’s action does not appear so clearly as to evoke “un territoire qu’il trouve laissé à l’abandon, presque à l’état de nature.”<sup>26</sup> Cattle is present both in the protasis and apodosis; as for *i<sup>3</sup>.t*, which “exprime dans l’idéologie égyptienne la notion de désolation, l’endroit dévasté, abandonné et improductif,” it would not be expected in the apodosis, nor in collocation with *grg*, a verb rather followed by the *positive and intended* result (e.g., column 18, *grg~n(=i) niw.wt*) than by the state of decay the object had reached.<sup>27</sup> The mention of *grg.wt* is puzzling too, as it often designates new agricultural domains founded by the monarchy; as Henry Fischer already pointed out, “if the determinative  [Gardiner N24] is to be taken at face value one would think of cultivated land rather than marshland.”<sup>28</sup> This might be accounted for on poetic grounds, the scribe purposefully accumulating homophonous terms (*grg.wt*; *grg~n=i*; *n dd(=i) grg*). Whatever the reason, the opposition between the nome’s state before and after Henqu’s

arrival is not so straightforward as to constitute a clear example of a nature/culture dichotomy.

Let us turn to two sentences from the *Laments of Ipuwer*, a (partly?) fictional text describing a devastated world where nothing falls in its place, formerly dated to the First Intermediate Period but now usually considered to be no earlier than the Twelfth, maybe even Thirteenth Dynasty, although mainly known by New Kingdom copies.<sup>29</sup>

IPUWER, L. 2,12

*iwms msh [...] ʒfy pʒ-rmw n it-n=sn šmn=sn rmt ds*

Alas: the crocodile[s] are fat on fish, and do not snatch, but people go to them of themselves<sup>30</sup>

Crocodiles have a very ambivalent status in Egyptian animal symbolism; but even considering their general bad reputation, one cannot help but notice that they are not portrayed *bringing* chaos, but merely taking advantage of it, since the sentence explicitly states that they do not attack people, but that they take their own lives.

IPUWER, L. 9,2–9,3

*mtn ih.w m wdy nn nwy st*

See, cattle are roaming without anyone to gather them<sup>31</sup>

It could be argued with Stephen Quirke that *nwi* also translates “to take care of,”<sup>32</sup> which would have a lesser connotation to human control; but the  $\text{𓏏}$  D40 determinative in any case pleads for it to be considered as a relation of domination. Given the next sentence however (*s nb hr in.t n=f ʒbw m rn=f*, “every man goes fetching for himself and branding with his name”<sup>33</sup>), these lines seem to denounce man’s egoism rather than a natural tendency of cattle to unruliness.

As for the *Prophecy of Neferti*, its most ancient copy dates from the first half of the Eighteenth Dynasty; while it is usually thought to have been composed in the Twelfth Dynasty, Andrea Gnirs has recently proposed to date its redaction from the reigns of Hatchepsout or Thoutmosis III. The traditional view however is that it illustrates a continuity in scribal cultural references throughout the Middle and New Kingdom.<sup>34</sup>

NEFERTI, L. 35–37

*ˁw.t hʒs.t r swr hr itr.w n.w km.t kbb=sn hr wdb.w=sn n gʒw str.w st*

Herds of desert animals<sup>35</sup> will drink from the rivers of Egypt and refresh on their shores, by lack of (anyone) chasing them

This passage has a particular status in the sense that it is a metaphor referring to the settlement of foreigners in Egypt rather than a reference to real animals; this appears much more clearly a few lines above, this time in a Nilotic environment: l. 29–30 *iw ʒpd drdr r ms.t mhʒ.t n.t tʒ-mhw ir-n=f sš hr gs.wy stkn sw rmt n gʒw* “a foreign bird will give birth in the Delta’s marshlands, it will have made its nest in the neighborhood while people will have let it in by negligence.”<sup>36</sup> Indeed, it shall be kept in mind that this propaganda text primarily intends to glorify the Eighteenth Dynasty political “restoration” after the supposedly dramatic Hyksos episode. This does not, admittedly, prevent the metaphor from being built on a similarity between foes and animals as they would both embody chaos. Still, the text incriminates the fact that none *chases (str)* these animals, and so does not ask for them to be *hunted* or *destroyed* but merely put away.

Finally, the *Teaching of Amenemope* is of a different textual genre as seemingly one of the latest known ethical teachings; Vincent Pierre-Michel Laisney recently proposed to date it from the end of the Twentieth Dynasty or the beginning of the Twenty-first, based on the late state of the language used, although most known copies are much later in date.<sup>37</sup>

AMENEMOPE, CHAPTER V, L. 7,2–7,6

*nʒ-msh.w kfʒ.w nʒ-dby.w hr-šw nʒ-rm.w m-sʒ f nʒ-wnš.w sʒ.w nʒ-ʒpd.w m-hb nʒ mkmrt hʒʒ*

The crocodiles are exposed, the hippopotami on dry (land), and the fish (?); the jackals are sated, the birds in feast, and the (fish)nets empty<sup>38</sup>

The scene is set in the time of either the withdrawal of the Nile after the inundation or a drought, and the following sentence seems to imply that men should rejoice and praise god even in the worst of times (*gr nb n hw.t-ntr s.t dd wr hs Rˁ* “every temperate man in the temple says ‘great is the benevolence of Re’”).<sup>39</sup> The reference to crocodiles and hippopotami on dry land could thus represent no more than a description of the effects of the water

level decrease on representative aquatic fauna. If, on the other hand, it represents a threatening situation, since crocodiles and hippopotami often bear negative connotations, it clearly does not concern the fish, which are definitely on the side of the victims.

As for the carnivores feasting on the piles of agonizing fish, they can be said to take advantage of the ambient chaos and deprive humans of their food. Yet, the similar phrasing in Henqu's biography, where he explicitly boasts on nourishing the same animals that can also be seen as hypostases to Anubis and Isis, invites us to reconsider.<sup>40</sup> They are rather portrayed doing what scavengers are supposed to do, i.e. feeding on other dead animals, without being held responsible for the resulting scarcity of human food.

In the end, no occurrence seems straightforward enough to clearly qualify the non-human sphere as a realm of chaos as opposed to human culture and social control. What is more, two occurrences in the *Laments of Ipuwer* actually point to animals being on the side of victims rather than perpetrators of this general chaos, and wishing for the return of order and rightfulness:

IPUWER, L. 5,5

*iwms* ᵛ*w.t* *nb.t* *ib.w=sn* *rm.w* *mnmn.t* *hr im.t* *m-<sup>c</sup>*  
*šhrw* [*t*ʒ]

All animals, their hearts weep; cattle moan because of the state [of the land]<sup>41</sup>

IPUWER, L. 6,1-6,2

*n gm~n=tw* *kʒy smw* *ʒpd.w* *nḥm=t[w]* [?] *m r n*  
*šʒy*

The fruits and plants of the birds cannot be found; the [?] is taken away from the pigs' mouth

Since these sentences mostly refer to domestic animals (although ᵛ*w.t* and *ʒpd* would admit wild animals as well), they beg the question: do various degrees of "naturalness" have to be considered, domesticates and pets being closer to the cultural world? This indeed would fall in line with the common view that desert fauna, as part of the least anthropized environment, is the paramount embodiment of unruliness.

**"L'HORREUR DES ÉGYPTIENS POUR LES DÉMONS DU DÉSERT": IS ḥʒs.t A REALM OF CHAOS?**

Although a complete lexicographic and iconographic study goes far beyond the scope of this

paper, this section presents a few arguments to temper the chaotic and fearsome characteristics generally attached to the desert in Egyptological literature.

The ḥʒs.t, especially before the New Kingdom, is primarily associated to the acquisition of valorized and rare resources. In the case of hunting scenes represented in private tombs, starting from the early Fourth Dynasty with the Maidum tomb of Nefermaat, they consist mainly of game meat to provision the funerary cult—a dimension that shall be detailed later—and, in the case of the majority of lexicographic attestations, of raw minerals and ores. As John Baines has pointed out, the desert "was good to act with and good to think with, principally for and on behalf of the elite."<sup>42</sup> The immediate desert margins seem especially to be conceived of as under human control; this "inner" desert (mostly designated by *smy.t* but also *d̄w* and even ḥʒs.t as early as the Sixth Dynasty) is quite integrated into the Egyptian territory, at least inasmuch as several administrative titles relating to desert management are known.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, the ḥʒs.t seems to be only very *secondarily* a negative space contrasted to a reassuring homeland, especially prior to the New Kingdom. Actually, the rare, definitely pejorative mentions of the ḥʒs.t before that period seem to be those where the word is specifically used in its metonymic meaning of "foreign country," that is, when the inscription bears an explicit military background. Those are especially located in the far desert and near the margins of the territory, as one would expect, especially in Sinai or the Nubian desert.

The relationship between the valley and the desert, especially when designated metonymically by their respective colors (*km.t* and *d̄sr.t*) seems to follow the same pattern: while sometimes indeed one of opposition, most attestations rather seem to point, both grammatically and conceptually, to a relation of complementarity. It is for example said in Sinuhe B 231-32 "Ra has placed your fear (*sn̄d*) throughout the Land, your terror (*hry.t*) throughout all Deserts;" in Sinai stela IS 196, this couple is even completed with a third part of the universe: *p.t*, the sky.<sup>44</sup> This makes it clear, as Alessandro Roccati has pointed out, that *km.t* and *d̄sr.t* stand as a summary of the whole world, and they are to reckon the complementarity between Lower and Upper Egypt, "le deuxième couple étant une spécification ultérieure du premier."<sup>45</sup> The distinction therefore serves to express the universal domination exerted

by the king, “onto whom the Black and the Red Land, Upper and Lower Egypt have been bequeathed” (*Urk.* IV 372,3), “he reigns upon the Black Land and governs the Red Land” (*Urk.* IV 58). In front of so many such formulae, it seems inexact in the end to describe the desert as the “chaotischen Teil der Welt, weil sie sich außerhalb Ägyptens Grenzen befinden,” as it clearly falls under the king’s control in an reflect parallel to the Nile Valley.<sup>46</sup>

In any case, while military connotations are (although rarely) attested prior to the New Kingdom, doubts can be cast on a supposed “fear of the desert” on part of the Egyptians, as Sydney Aufrère has pointed out.<sup>47</sup> One of the elements supposed to illustrate best the terrifying character of the desert is the fact that it is populated with mythological animals that have from early on been considered “demons.”<sup>48</sup> Examples of such creatures, however, are quite scarce (leaving aside the Mesopotamian-inspired Protodynastic examples), and mostly reduced, apart from the Seth animal, to griffins—for which, as argued above, a negative connotation is unconvincing. Indeed, not once, to the author’s knowledge, does the king or any private character triumph over a threatening griffin.<sup>49</sup> As Dimitri Meeks underlines it, “rien n’en fait des êtres intrinsèquement négatifs. L’auraient-ils été, que l’on n’aurait songé à les figurer, s’ébattant librement, sur les parois des tombes, sur les ivoires magiques destinés à protéger la mère et l’enfant, ou sur des objets de toilette.”<sup>50</sup>

As for other, “real” desert animals, their general association to chaos is rarely questioned, since they

are well attested at least for late periods as “incarnant et symbolisant les forces nuisibles.”<sup>51</sup> However, a first argument here is the need to take into account the diachronic factor. Philippe Derchain, for instance, has demonstrated that even if the rite of the sacrifice of the oryx as an “enemy of the Horus eye” does exist in the Ptolemaic period, a similar meaning into the Dynastic period is very dubious.<sup>52</sup> Regarding iconographic conventions for chaos too, the earlier remark that animals stay quite organized onto register lines in Tutankhamun’s chest, holds true for the whole of Dynastic representations of hunting scenes from the Fourth to the Eighteenth Dynasty. Even when they disappear in Ukhhotep’s tomb (Meir tomb B-2), this is only apparent as the animals’ paws remain aligned with each other. Rather than being intrinsic to the desert world, disorganization appears as a consequence of violent action, i.e. the irruption of the hunter in this environment. Without his bursting in, desert animals actually seem to behave rather peacefully, as appears in Kenamun’s tomb (TT 93) which exceptionally chooses to depict the moment before the hunter’s first blow rather than the action’s outcome.<sup>53</sup>

Moreover, it is important to stay aware of possible differences in meaning and symbolism between all three small mammals of the desert—ibex, gazelle and oryx. Because they are often considered together by Egyptians themselves (e.g., as multiple determinatives for *ʿw.t*), and admittedly representation in the round is sometimes not so easy to tell apart, they are often studied together without exact taxonomic identification, which tends to blur distinctions Egyptians might have made between those three animals.

Indeed, sacrificial practices are attested for the oryx but no such institutional ritual exists concerning the gazelle. The question of whether such a ritual killing may have taken place for ibexes is less clear and deserves a few more lines, since there is one attestation from Pepi II’s

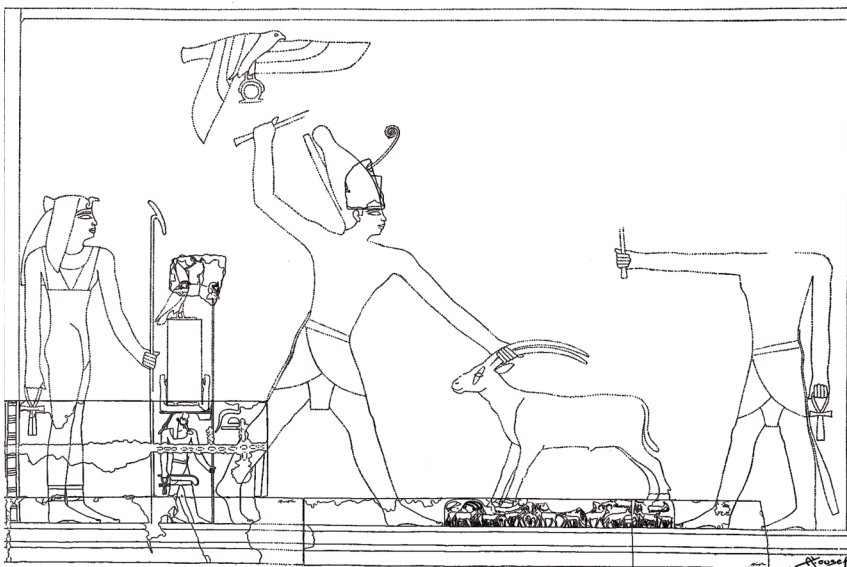


FIGURE 2: Pepi II’s mortuary temple vestibule, northern wall, Saqqara. Reconstitution by Gustave Jéquier (after Jéquier 1938, pl. 41).



mortuary temple vestibule in Saqqara which might be interpreted in this sense.<sup>54</sup> In the reconstruction given by Gustave Jéquier, the king appears in the act of smiting an ibex with a mace, in a gesture not unparalleled to that well known for enemies (Fig. 2).

However, doubts can be cast on the fact that the relief originally represented the smiting of an ibex. The only archaeologically remaining element is the extended foot of the king and, as Jéquier himself admits it, “le roi et les grands personnages chassant dans le désert n’emploient jamais d’autres armes que l’arc.”<sup>55</sup> His main argument against this more plausible hypothesis is the proximity between the animal and the king, which would not allow enough space for a bow and arrow. However, it should not be discarded, as both medium and higher parts of the relief are completely lost, so that a composition similar to its first occurrence in Sahure’s mortuary temple, with several registers of desert animals, could be imagined. In this case, the oryx would not be the only target aimed at by the king and could very well fall a little out of the axis of his arrow. In any case, the reconstruction of the animal being held by its horns and smitten with a mace is not confirmed by any positive argument save the fact that the wall it occurs on faces the traditional motif of the smiting of enemies, which, in the end, appears to have influenced Jéquier’s proposal.

Moreover, the animal represented facing the king in this scene might not even be an ibex. The only remaining part of it are the anterior hooves, whose morphology and little declaw do not authorize any precise identification since they are similar for any small bovid in Old Kingdom iconography. While it remains indubitable that this is a hunt in the desert, set in a dilated *h3s.t* hieroglyph, it does not indicate any special ritual status for the ibex, nor the existence of a specific rite that, to the author’s knowledge, is nowhere paralleled whether in the Old Kingdom or subsequent periods.

#### REHABILITATING THE ANIMALS OF THE DESERT—OR WHAT IS THE AIM OF SACRIFICE?

Finally, even if this ambiguous example were to testify to an existing sacrificial practice, just as the oryx sacrifice studied by Philippe Derchain, this would not necessarily mean that these animals are to be equated with evil and detestation: killing in a sacrifice is far from always just an annihilation of the victim. Actually, Claude Lévi-Strauss has defined it as aiming at “instaurer un rapport, qui n’est pas de ressemblance, mais de contiguïté, au moyen d’une

série d’identifications successives (...) du sacrifiant au sacrificateur, du sacrificateur à la victime, de la victime sacralisée à la divinité.”<sup>56</sup> Conceptual associations (a metaphoric or metonymic similarity), as well as ritual gestures (establishing contacts even where there was no apparent relation) thus create a working link between the sacrifice and its addressee. The existence of oryx sacrifices prior to the end of the New Kingdom, apparently destined to adorn the *hnmw*-bark of the god Sokar with its well-known antelope head,<sup>57</sup> could then be understood not as a way to destroy a potential danger, since the antelope is not yet associated to the enemy of Horus, but rather as a way to ritually infuse the *hnmw*-bark with the animal’s properties. Indeed, it seems ritually appropriate to associate a typical desert animal with a god known to have a strong connection to the desert margin as god of the necropolis “who is upon his sand” (*hry-š y=f*).<sup>58</sup>

This positive side of ritual killing is confirmed by one of the few instances of rock inscriptions in the desert mentioning an interaction with animals: the famous Wadi Hammamat graffito no. 110, recounting the appearance of a pregnant gazelle, then giving birth under the eyes of the quarrying team, on the very slab of granite intended to form king Montuhotep IV’s sarcophagus lid. After witnessing the “wonder” (*bi3i.t*), the team proceeds to sacrificing the gazelle on the stone itself—not indeed because the animal would represent any kind of danger or evil (on the contrary, everything points at it being a good omen), but because it is felt that the stone and the animal belong together somehow and have to be blended through ritual. Emmanuel Jambon proposes that this association is justified by “la rencontre, sous les yeux des hommes, de deux éléments naturels constitutifs de ce milieu désertique : l’animal sauvage et la pierre,” especially since the gazelle is understood as sent by Min, primary god of the mining expeditions in the Eastern Desert.<sup>59</sup> The identification between the pregnant gazelle and the sarcophagus lid intended to enable the king’s rebirth as new placenta also justifies their ritual merging, in order to infuse the stone even more with the life force embodied by the gazelle.<sup>60</sup>

These maternal connotations of the small caprine animals of the desert have been demonstrated by Jan Quaegebeur in his study of ibex depictions in the New Kingdom, based on their association to cosmetic objects and hathoric contexts, to princesses and concubines, to the “tree of Life” motif, and to the concept of New Year as symbolized in hieroglyphic

script by the ibex's annular horn.<sup>61</sup> Åsa Strandberg has in turn reassessed "the preference for the nursing gazelle and the fawn [suggesting] a beneficial, and plausibly regenerative, understanding of the value of this image."<sup>62</sup>

As animals of the desert, ibexes and gazelles appear doubly connected with these themes of fertility and, through it, rebirth and rejuvenation: because the necropoleis are mostly situated in the desert margins, i.e. in the natural environment where they can be encountered; and because they constitute a choice meat that, from the Predynastic on, is not hunted in the context of subsistence strategies, but consumed as luxury food and funerary offering.<sup>63</sup> Not only are they very frequent in offering bearers processions in Old Kingdom mastabas, but several captions label them as explicitly sought after for their meat, up to the point that in Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep's Fifth Dynasty tomb, "l'hiéroglyphe de l'oryx suffit à déterminer le mot—nouveau sous cette graphie—qui résume cette scène de vénerie: nwt, 'produit de la chasse, venaison.'"<sup>64</sup> Both themes can even be combined in that of the "nursing gazelle in an offering row" as Åsa Strandberg remarks it.<sup>65</sup>

In this frame of thought, the depiction of hampered mammals of the desert on cosmetic objects has to be reconsidered. The tied legs have regularly been understood since Jean Yoyotte as a way to render powerless a potential danger; but this hampering does not have to supersede their positive meaning, nor even advocate for a symbolic *ambivalence*.<sup>66</sup> Instead, this explicit depiction as captured game can be understood as pointing to their role as funerary offering, reinforcing even more the association with rebirth and rejuvenation.

Of course, the growing negativity attached to the desert biotope throughout the New Kingdom cannot be ignored: the increase in aridity as well as the gradual success of the Osirian cult and the parallel demonization of Seth could have implied the development over time of a concept of "nature" close to our own.<sup>67</sup> The relationship between Seth, desert animals and the king is, however, far from unambiguous, as proven by the inscriptions accompanying the hunting scenes at Medinet Habu: "le roi est beau dans le corral comme l'image de Seth," and again in the lion hunt on Tutankhamun's box: "the good god, powerful of strength (...) his power is like that of the son of Nut."<sup>68</sup> Moreover, this section has tentatively demonstrated that there is no fixity in the other way either: even though some

desert animals embody chaos in the Ptolemaic or Late Period and maybe as early as the New Kingdom, this does not necessarily represent an eternal characteristic of Egyptian attitude towards wild animals.

#### REESTABLISHING ANIMALS AS PARTAKERS OF THE COSMIC ORDER

It has nevertheless been argued that the depiction of intense sexual activity by animals, especially donkeys, was to be seen as a manifestation of a chaotic character and a lack of self-control.<sup>69</sup> Nadine Cherpion has proposed that the ibex's apparently remarkable sexual vitality might itself have been targeted by its hampering, and deliberate breaking of the handles on vases MET 11.215.460 and Cairo JE 48345.<sup>70</sup> This phenomenon could be explained more simply by the fact that the space between the horns is hollowed out, making the handles less steady; but mostly, this idea appears most contradictory with the plethora of depictions of desert animals mating and giving birth.

Of course, in human ethics, *m<sup>3</sup>.t* is largely paired up with the notion of mastering one's emotions: mind one's reactions, weigh every word, consider measure over excess in bodily appetites, and, regarding sexual behavior, respect social rules separating allowed from prohibited partners. But the many mating and birth-giving scenes, first encountered in Niuserra's sun-temple and thereafter in private tombs (beginning with Raemkai's), do not occur incidentally as a counterpoint to humans' socially regulated behaviors, but in very close connection with the ideology of rebirth and the solar cult.<sup>71</sup>

In this sense, the representations from Niuserra's "Chamber of seasons" or *Weltkammer*, where most known animal species both from the valley and the desert, both domesticated and wild, are mating (Berlin ÄM 14822, 20035 and 20063) and giving birth (Berlin ÄM 20036 and Cairo JE 34186) show them not as chaotic creatures but rather as included in the wider context of general fertility ensured by the sun god. Unfortunately, the accompanying caption is quite obscure: where von Bissing translates "marcher dans le désert en donnant naissance, renouvelant tout," Elmar Edel pointed out that the *it* had been mistakenly drawn *šm* and asserted that the translation should be "Die Wüste nimmt die Jungen von jeglichem Wild an sich."<sup>72</sup> Although it does not appear any more satisfying apart from this correction of the faulty transcription, it has unfortunately

not been retranslated in any of the recent publications.<sup>73</sup>

In any case, this continued fertility of animal creatures appears in another solar context where it is further associated with a praising of the creator god by both humans and non-humans: a depiction of animals visibly partaking in the universal celebration of the sun in the royal tomb of El-Amarna (Fig. 4) has been found to echo its literary equivalent that is the Great Hymn to the Aten:<sup>74</sup> “The entire land performs its work: all the cattle are content with their fodder, trees and plants grow, birds fly up to their nests, their wings (extended) in praise for your (Aten) ka. All the kine prance on their feet.”<sup>75</sup>

The reference to non-humans (even trees and plants) *performing their task* (*ir=sn k3.t=sn*) is particularly striking: all categories of beings play the part assigned to them and fulfill their roles with diligence. In this light, Niuserra’s sun temple depictions of quiet animals giving birth alongside each other, predators and herbivores alike, invite to wonder if Order, far from being imposed from the outside by human beings onto natural beasts, is not already present by essence into every single element of the world.<sup>76</sup>

Even though not explicitly named here, such a well-ordered world where everything falls into place inevitably evokes the notion of *m3.t*, not as a cultural order due to humans but indeed, as cosmological texts teach us, as a universal harmony organizing the world from its creation on. CT spell 80 for example recalls that after Atum emerges from the Nun and creates Shu and Tefnut, he assigns both their roles in these terms: “Life is his name, Maat is her name.”<sup>77</sup> Then if one is to “take the native seriously,” Maat has been present from the very beginnings of the Creation, immediately after the demiurge’s appearance and before any other kind of creature, gods alike, comes to existence.

Of course, “taking the native seriously” implies to extrapolate from an individual assertion to an

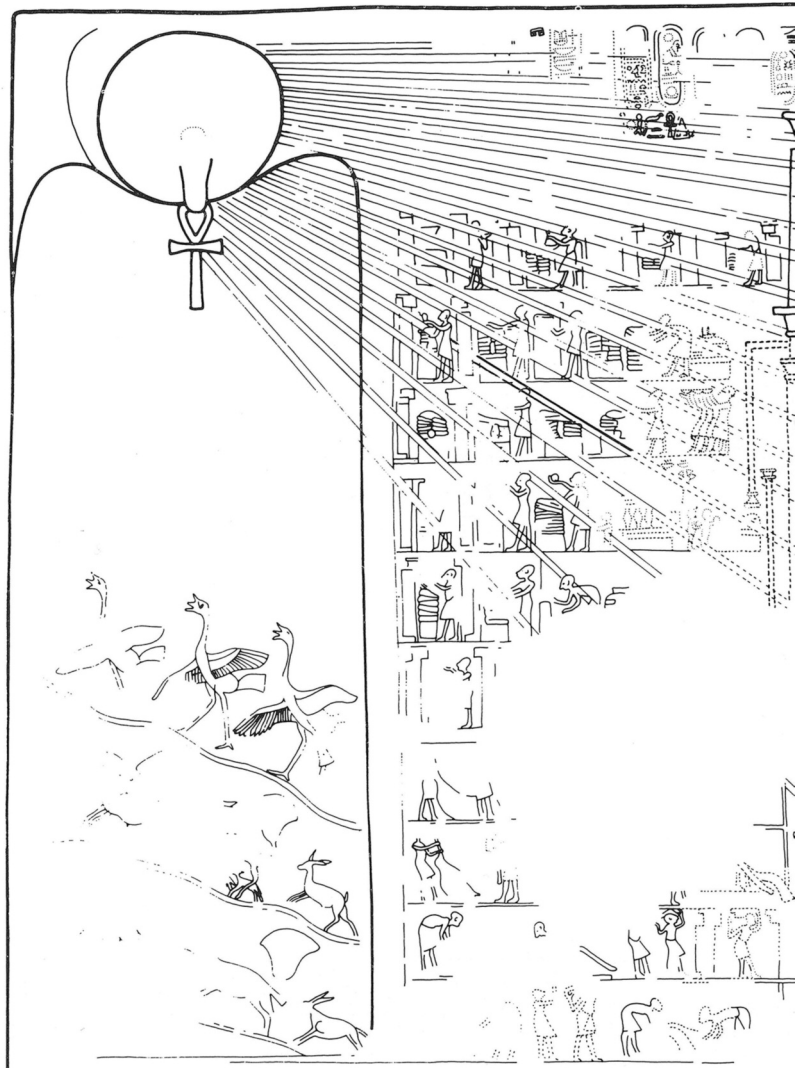


FIGURE 3: Royal tomb of El-Amarna, “Room Alpha”, Wall A (after Martin 1989, pl. 34. © Image courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society).

assumed generality in the society considered, which is all the more dangerous in the long-lived Dynastic Egypt. Other texts seem however to confirm that the world has been ordered from its very creation, e.g., the *Instructions of Ptahhotep* (probably Eleventh–Twelfth Dynasty): “Maat will shine on (...) she has not been destroyed since the time of He who created her.”<sup>78</sup> Nothing, therefore, opposes animals being fully part of the cosmos’s order, within which they were created.

Returning to the anthropological framework developed *supra*, naturalism does not seem very fitting for Dynastic Egypt because nowhere in the

evidence examined do non-humans appear as a sphere dissociated from humans or from cosmic norms ordering the universe. At least three other economies of beings are conceivable, however; to this purpose, Philippe Descola has redefined two major concepts of 19th- and 20th-century anthropology: *animism* (animals and humans differ in their external shapes but are perfectly similar in both their mental faculties and social functioning) and *totemism* (similarities on both the physical and mental plans regroup certain humans and non-humans pertaining to the same clans and differentiate them from others).

We have argued elsewhere that *analogism*, the last model in this framework, would correspond best to Dynastic Egypt, at least in what regards visual anthropology.<sup>79</sup> As defined by Philippe Descola, analogism is characterized by a string of minor differences, both in physicality and interiority, between every category of beings (be they human or non-human) and even between individuals. To use a theoretical example, a brown-haired female human may have as much in common with a female gazelle or a dark-pelted dog as with any blond male of her own species.

In many aspects of the relationship to animals expressed in the diverse evidence examined above, Dynastic Egypt appears to have mainly functioned in an analogist way, at least in the social milieu represented by the sources. Not only does the polysemy of each animal species, depending on context and moving analogies, speak in its favor, but also the lack of a clear-cut difference between animals in general and humans as a whole, like the fact that ethic behaviors do not only characterize the latter but really every living creature, be it human or non-human.

#### CONCLUSION: WHAT AN EGYPTOLOGY “BEYOND NATURE AND CULTURE” MIGHT LOOK LIKE

In the process of “denaturalizing” our understanding of ancient Egyptian relations to non-humans, new aspects are brought forth by asking this question: if it is not “nature”, then *what is* represented when an Egyptian depicts a piece of landscape occupied by animals, especially wild ones?

Recent anthropological works have begun making use of the concept of *landscape* away from its ontologico-centric connotations.<sup>80</sup> Staying in the framework of a plurality of worlds, landscapes can be conceived as representations that make the rules

by which each society’s world is played visually explicit—especially the boundaries and attributions of the different categories of beings.

In Dynastic iconography and canon, the positioning of figures, their ordering on register lines and the careful orchestration of a harmonious image reflect a cosmic order already at work, while at the same time performatively making it happen: order is both represented and achieved through the conventions of the image. Animals indeed never fail to be organized on register lines, contrary to depictions of enemies. But it is not to be conceived of as a way of cheating with nature, of correcting it in order to make it comply with a normative principle. Rather, the arguments exposed throughout this paper propose that the *m3̄.t* can be seen as infusing, in a purely inherent way, the bustling multitude of non-human life, no less than human action. Principles of Egyptian art would thus help highlight an intrinsic order rather than superimpose a cultural order onto a natural chaos.

Returning to the Tutankhamun’s chest, the parallel figures of the hunting and fighting king, rather than as a celebration of the civilized order triumphing over both natural and barbarian chaos, might be best understood as an expression of the king’s universal domination onto every region of the world, deserts alike. This “microcosmic” dimension has also been underlined by Regine Schulz in the relation between the contents and cardinal orientation of each panel.<sup>81</sup>

A close parallel appears in the *Instructions of Amenemhat* (attested at least from the Eighteenth dynasty, but maybe earlier), listing as the fulfilled duties of the pharaoh that he “ordered everything in its proper place. [He] subdued lions, [he] captured crocodiles, [he] enslaved the men of Nubia, took prisoners the Medjai, and [he] forced the Asiatic tribes to cower away like dogs”.<sup>82</sup> Note that the original Egyptian (*wḏ*) ensures us that the king claims he “gave orders” and not that he “put things in order”.<sup>83</sup> While lions and crocodiles often bear a very ambivalent meaning and are here equated with enemies, maybe this choice was influenced – rather than by a common chaotic nature—by their position as respective emblems of the desert and Nilotic biotopes, just as the Medjai and Nubians epitomize the South and the Asiatics the North-East.

This paper has tried to demonstrate that current anthropological reflections on the historical contingency of Nature and Culture can help reflect on our own conceptual tools as Egyptologists. Although order and chaos are structuring notions

for political and cosmological thought throughout the Dynastic period, human-animal relationships cannot be related to a naturalistic paradigm. In calling for an “Egyptology beyond nature and culture”, this paper necessarily represents a work in progress. While it tried to tackle what Philippe Descola has called the *mode of identification*—i.e., conceived boundaries between humanity and animality—the two other parameters he identified as defining a society’s attitude towards non-humans remain to be examined. These are first the *mode of categorization*, the way living beings are named and classified, building upon the reflections of ethnobiology; and the *mode of relation*, characterizing the main attitude endorsed by humans, in facts and concepts, when dealing with non-humans.<sup>84</sup> Both should be explored in subsequent work, which should also focus on an issue that could not be fully developed in this paper: whether, how, and to what extent Ancient Egyptians distinguished between a realm of “domestic” as opposed to “wild” animals—a distinction anthropology has shown, much like the one between Nature and Culture, to be much less universal than previously thought.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This paper has benefited greatly from invaluable comments by John Baines, Nathalie Beaux, Emmanuel Jambon, Claire Somaglino and Pierre Tallet, to whom I wish to express my sincerest thanks. My gratitude also goes to Tim Glawion for checking the English.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

Urk. IV = Sethe, Kurt. 1906. *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie. Abteilung IV, Bd. I–II*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche.  
 Wb. = Erman, Adolf, and Hermann Grapow. 1926–1931. *Wörterbuch Der Ägyptischen Sprache*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs.

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- 17 Viveiros de Castro 2013, 494.
- 18 Descola 2005.
- 19 Descartes 1909.
- 20 Despite the animal's repeatedly stressed reputation, from Säve-Söderbergh 1953 to Roche 2014.
- 21 Kanawati 2008.
- 22 Transcription and translation by Mathieu 2015, except in his differential rendering of the same term *mnmn.t* once as "pastures of beasts" and then as "cattle." English translation by the author.
- 23 Mathieu 2015, 266.
- 24 Quoted by Lackenbacher 1989, 73. English translation by the author.
- 25 Meeks 2012, 528.
- 26 Mathieu 2015, 267.
- 27 Moreno Garcia 1998, 39.
- 28 Moreno Garcia 1998, 39; Fischer 1968, 148.
- 29 Gardiner 1969.
- 30 As translated in Quirke 2004, 135.
- 31 As translated in Gardiner 1969, 67.
- 32 See *Wb.* II, 220, and Hannig 2006, I, 1213.
- 33 As translated in Quirke 2004, 146.
- 34 Gnirs 2006.
- 35 Quirke 2004, 137 translates "herds of foreign lands," which is appropriate considering the sense of the metaphor and the parallel with *ꜥpd drdr* l.29. Nevertheless, *ꜥw.t (n.t) ḥꜣs.t* has very numerous occurrences and does not specifically refer to foreignness, hence this neutral, topographic translation.
- 36 For *drdr*, see *Wb.* V, 604, as well as Hannig 2003, 1088; Quirke 2004, 135; Jambon 2011, 141, n. 42.
- 37 Laisney 2007, 6.
- 38 Translation adapted from Hannig 1995 and Enmarch 2005. For the debate on the hapax *m-šf*, see Laisney 2007, 84. There is too a debate on the translation of *wnš* as "wolves," refused by Laisney 2007, 84, but approved in Mathieu 2015, 265, note 13.
- 39 As translated in Simpson 2003, 228.
- 40 Mathieu 2015, 266.

## NOTES

- 1 First published in Carter 1923, 153 and 161–165.
- 2 Bonhême and Forgeau 1988, 216; Baines 2001, 229. See also Derchain 1966.
- 3 Hornung 1956, 28; Morenz 1960.
- 4 Säve-Söderbergh 1953; Altenmüller 1967, 24.
- 5 Asselberghs 1961; Cialowicz 1991; Hendrickx 2011; Kemp 1989; Assmann 1990.
- 6 Leclant 1969; Roccati 1989; Yoyotte and Vernus 2005.
- 7 Among many other studies, see e.g. Derchain 1966; Bonhême and Forgeau 1988; Kamrin 1998; Pietri 2014.
- 8 Davies and Gardiner 1962, 13–14.
- 9 Schulz 2000, 255.
- 10 Derchain 1966, 23; Bonhême and Forgeau 1988, 216.
- 11 Schulz 2000, 255.
- 12 Baines 2001, 69.
- 13 Course 2010, 245.
- 14 Michael Carrithers et al. 2010.
- 15 Henare et al. 2006, 9.
- 16 Viveiros de Castro 2013, 484.



- 41 Alan Gardiner's somewhat neutral translation as "animals" (Gardiner 1969, 42) has been chosen over Stephen Quirke's "herds" (Quirke 2004, 143) whose exclusive domestic connotation is not supported by the range of attestations for *w.t.* "Land" could be understood in the sense of "state" and echo the political situation, where Stephen Quirke's choice "cattle groan from the condition of the earth" (Quirke 2004, 143) points to animals being deprived of sufficient food rather than to a form of consciousness of the political distress. Both readings would be supported by *t3*. but "land" seemed like the most neutral term.
- 42 Baines 2001, 37.
- 43 Darnell 2013; Esposito 2014, 13–15.
- 44 Gardiner and Peet 1952, pl. 64.
- 45 Roccati 1989, 128.
- 46 Hofmann 2000, 19.
- 47 Aufrère 1991, 52.
- 48 Keimer 1944.
- 49 The only occurrence is the exceptional creature in Khnoumhotep II's Beni Hasan tomb, which is however not explicitly hunted but rather in the background, as opposed to the register below where animals are hit by arrows.
- 50 Meeks 1986, 3.
- 51 Yoyotte and Vernus 2005, 111.
- 52 Derchain 1962.
- 53 The author thanks Mathilde Bastien for pointing out this attestation.
- 54 Jéquier 1938.
- 55 Jéquier 1938, 32.
- 56 Lévi-Strauss 1962, 269.
- 57 Derchain 1962, 29–30.
- 58 On this epiclesis, see most recently Misuriello 2013, 245–253.
- 59 Jambon 2012, 137.
- 60 Jambon 2012, 138, n. 29.
- 61 Quaegebeur 1999, 64.
- 62 Strandberg 2009, 159; Bohms 2013, 80–82.
- 63 Linseele and Van Neer 2009; Lesur 2013.
- 64 Roquet 1985, 294.
- 65 Strandberg 2009, 187–188.
- 66 Bulté 2012, 202; Yoyotte and Vernus 2005, 102–103.
- 67 See Te Velde 1967, but also Meeks 1986, 14.
- 68 Derchain 1966, 22. Davies and Gardiner 1962.
- 69 Yoyotte and Vernus 2005; Bohms 2013, 64–66.
- 70 Cherpion 1999, 152.
- 71 Evans 2010, 167.
- 72 Von Bissing 1956, 329; Edel 1961, 245.
- 73 Voss 2004; Hollein and Brinkmann 2010.
- 74 As early as Kuentz 1923.
- 75 *Great Hymn to the Aten*, col. 5, as translated in Simpson 2003, 280.
- 76 A lion does attack a gazelle on Berlin relief ÄM 20043 but this, and the probable hunting scene above, are unfortunately fragmentary. In any case, it seems that animal/animal predation was not seen as a manifestation of chaos (especially as couples of antagonistic animals, e.g., hippo and crocodile, seem to be almost defined by their violent interaction) while the much more disturbing human/animal predation is never depicted; I am indebted to Nathalie Beaux for pointing out this dimension.
- 77 Quoted by Bickel 1994, 171; see also Assmann 1990.
- 78 Quoted by Bickel 1994, 175.
- 79 Brémont 2016.
- 80 For a specifically Egyptological attempt, see Widmaier 2009. More generally, see e.g. Descola 2012; Berque 1995.
- 81 Schulz 2000; for animals as a way to define a biotope, see recently Fitzenreiter 2009.
- 82 As translated in Simpson 2003, 170.
- 83 *Instruction of Amenemhat*, 3,1, e.g. in the synthetic hieroglyphic edition by Kosack 2015, 680.
- 84 Descola 1996.