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On the Pyramid of Ameny-Qemau and its Canopic Equipment

By NABIL SWELIM and AIDAN DODSON

(Plates 54-55)

The 1957 discovery of the pyramid of the Thirteenth Dynasty king Ameny-Qemau at South Dahshur was one of the more important, yet most obscure, events in the history of pyramid exploration. Incidents immediately following it prevented any substantive publication of the monument appearing until a decade after its discovery; the objects found have hitherto escaped publication altogether. This paper aims for the first time to reconstruct the events surrounding the find, consider the full architectural/historical context of the pyramid, building upon the pioneer work of MARAGLIO and RINALDI, and publish the material that is known to have been recovered from it¹).

I. The Discovery

The pyramid of Ameny-Qemau²) lies upon a small hill, 1.150 metres S.E. of the Bent Pyramid, and approximately a kilometre S.S.W. of the pyramid of Ammenemes III at Dahshur (fig. 1). It overlooks Lake Dahshur from the west at a distance of 500 metres, and the wadi leading to the lake from the south, at a similar distance. Its location seems to have escaped the notice of even such a keen spotter of ruined pyramids as LEPSIUS³).

However, in 1957, an American scientist and publisher, CHARLES ARTHUR MUSES, approached the Antiquities Service with a view to undertaking excavations at Dahshur and Matariya⁴). Excava-

¹) This paper's origins go back over a decade, when SWELIM received photographs of the canopic jars from the pyramid from the late LABIB HABACHI. They had been previously passed to the latter for publication by the late SHAFIK FARID. We would like to thank various friends and colleagues for their help in the preparation of the paper, including JAROSLAW DOBROWOLSKI (for drawing figure 3), DOUG HAWK (for contemporary press cuttings), SALIMA IKRAM (for research in the Temporary Register of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo), JOHN LARSON, RAIS MOHAMMED ABDEL MAWGOOD (for sharing memories of the site at Saqqara), Mrs. LILLIAN NADIM SWELIM (for translations from the Italian), KIM RYHOLT (for discussion of problems of Second Intermediate Period chronology) and EDWARD F. WENTE. Part II and the Appendices to this paper are the work of SWELIM, while DODSON is responsible for the bulk of Parts I, III and IV.

²) The second element of the name, Qemau , was originally read as Qemw , but now as Qemaw , on the basis of G. POSENER, *Les Asiatiques en Égypte sous les XIIe et XIIIe dynasties*, *Syria* 34 (1957), 145-63. The reading is further discussed by S. QUIRKE, *Royal Power in the 13th Dynasty*, *Middle Kingdom Studies*, ed. QUIRKE (New Malden, 1991), 129, where he additionally concludes that the name derives from the root 'to create', rather than 'harvest worker'. On the proposal that the name should be interpreted as 'Qemau [son of] Ameny', see K. RYHOLT, *A Bead of King Ranisob and a Note on King Qemaw*, *GM* 156 (1997), 97-100, and below p. 330.

³) See Appendix 1 for a discussion of any connexion with the problematic structure, 'Ziegelpyramide No. LIX'.

⁴) A principal source for the story of the events surrounding the discovery of the pyramid is SAMI GABRA's autobiographical *Chez les derniers adorateurs du Trismégiste: la nécropole d'Hermopolis Touna el Gebel* (Cairo: Government Printing Office, 1971), 203-7. Other sources are given in nn. 10ff, below. See also DODSON, *The Strange Affair of Dr Muses*, *KMT* 8:3, 1997, 60-3; cf. n. 11, below.

tions began at Dahshur under MUSES' direction in association with SAMI GABRA, south of the Black Pyramid of Ammenemes III. SHAFIK FARID, Chief Inspector for Lower Egypt, was also involved in the work.

Excavations initially revealed Old Kingdom mastabas, one of which, belonging to a certain Ipi, contained a pair of standing, headless statues⁵). The final two weeks of work, however, brought to light what first appeared to be a mastaba, but on further investigation proved to be a pyramid⁶). The discovery was made known via annual summaries of fieldwork⁷), but MUSES' sponsorship of the work was shortly brought to a sudden halt at the end of the season⁸). On 20 June, Dr MUSES was detained at Cairo airport, on charges relating to antiquities and currency allegedly found in his possession⁹). The most important charges were overturned at appeal in June 1958¹⁰), but MUSES seems never to have returned to Egypt, and he apparently never completed the book he stated that he was writing on his discovery¹¹).

Following this debacle, work at the site was abandoned. However, some time later, those parts of the pyramid substructure which had been exposed were examined in detail by VITO MARAGIOGLIO and CELESTE RINALDI, who published their report in 1968¹²). No further substantive work seems to have been carried out, although some scrutiny of the area was carried out in the mid 1970s¹³). Apart from a discussion of the pyramid's chronological placement¹⁴) and an incomplete discussion of the objects found¹⁵), little else appears to have been thus far published concerning this most important structure.

II. The Pyramid Complex

THE PYRAMID

The scanty ruins of Ameny-Qemau's pyramid are scattered around the central pit in which the substructure had been constructed. MARAGIOGLIO and RINALDI were unable to locate any route for supplying materials such as white limestone, quartzite and bricks, and thus surmised that these supplies may have come along the wadi to the south.

To construct the superstructure of the monument, the site was prepared by removing the surface sand and uncovering the bed rock (fig. 2). The levels in the west were a little higher than in the east.

⁵) GABRA, *Chez ...*, 205, 209; cf. *PM* III², 895. The name of the tomb's owner is reported in *Rocky Mountain News* (hereafter *RMN*) 12 May 1958, 32.

⁶) GABRA for some reason had doubts as to the monument's status (cf. DIA 'ABOU-GHAZI, *Last Excavations, Organisation des Antiquités de l'Égypte, Vies et Travaux* II: *Sami Gabra, from Tasa to Touna* [Cairo, 1984], who calls it 'a mastaba built on the top of the hill').

⁷) H. B[UNNER], *Ausgrabungen in Gise, Saqqâra, Memphis, Dahshur*, *AfO* 18 (1957-8), 479-80, based on information given out by SELIM HASSAN on 2 September 1957 at the 24 Congress of Orientalists; LECLANT, *Orientalia* NS 27, 81-3, used a press release, supplemented by HASSAN's remarks. The discovery also featured in the contemporary press.

⁸) DIA 'ABOU-GHAZI, *Vies et Travaux* II, 32.

⁹) As well as by GABRA, and in various press reports, the events are recounted by E. F. WENTE, *NARCE* 25 (July 1957). Cf. below footnote 29 and p. 326.

¹⁰) *RMN* 27 June 1958, 68.

¹¹) *RMN* 13 April 1958, 8. MUSES has proposed an account for publication in a forthcoming issue of *KMT*.

¹²) MARAGIOGLIO and RINALDI, *Note sulla piramide di Ameny 'Aamu*, *Orientalia* NS 37 (1968), 325-38.

¹³) D. ARNOLD / R. STADELMANN, *Dahshur - Erster Grabungsbericht*, *MDAIK* 31 (1975), 174, Abb. 3, Taf. 112. The possible location of two more pyramids in the area was noted (see fig. 1).

¹⁴) DODSON, *The Tombs of the Kings of the Thirteenth Dynasty in the Memphite Necropolis*, *ZÄS* 114 (1987), 36-44.

¹⁵) DODSON, *The Canopic Equipment of the Kings of Egypt* (London, 1994) [hereafter *CEKE*], 30, 114-5.

Following this, three large trenches were dug in the bed rock with a level bedding: two ran east west and the third joined them on the west side. Toward the east the pair of trenches ended in an open area roughly levelled by extracting the superficial rock and accumulating it on the limits of this side.

The trench surrounds a rough square, upon which the pyramid nucleus was built. The top of this rough square was not level; thus, it decreased from 120 cm at the south west corner to 90 cm above the level of the south trench at the south east corner. The nucleus brickwork is still *in situ* above this feature, which measures:

North side	East side	South side	West side
44.20 metres	45.20 metres	44.80 metres	45.30 metres
= 84.351 cubits	= 86.259 cubits	= 85.496 cubits	= 86.450 cubits

The outer walls of the trenches were covered with crude brickwork and a little limestone. The width of the trench on each side of the pyramid is:

North side	East side	South side	West side
6.50 metres	6.00 metres	5.85 metres	6.20 metres
= 12.40 cubits	= 11.45 cubits	= 11.16 cubits	= 11.83 cubits

The level bedding and width of the trenches surrounding the brickwork of the nucleus allows for a foundation, backing masonry and outer facing for a pyramid of a base length of 100 cubits (52.40 metres)¹⁶). The following pyramids have a base length ranging from 90–110 cubits, two of which date to the Thirteenth Dynasty, possessing the same base length:

PYRAMID	base length in cubits
Giza GIa	90
Giza GIc	90
Giza GIb	94
Dahshur, Ammenemes II	95 (?)
South Saqqara, Khendjer	100
Mazghunah, South Pyramid	100
Dahshur, Bent Pyramid 'subsidiary' ¹⁷)	101
Saqqara, Unas	110
Mazghunah, North Pyramid	110 (?)

The brickwork surrounding the trenches would have to be explained as either the foundation of the pavement or some element associated with the construction of the monument.

¹⁶) MARAGIOGLIO and RINALDI introduced the option of a narrow pyramid court and a wavy thin wall of bricks surrounding the monument: cf. *Orientalia* 37, 329.

¹⁷) Since the base-length of this pyramid exceeds one fifth of the base length of the Bent pyramid, one might question this monument's true classification as a subsidiary. On the other hand, the pyramids south of those of Chephren and Userkaf also show this peculiarity.

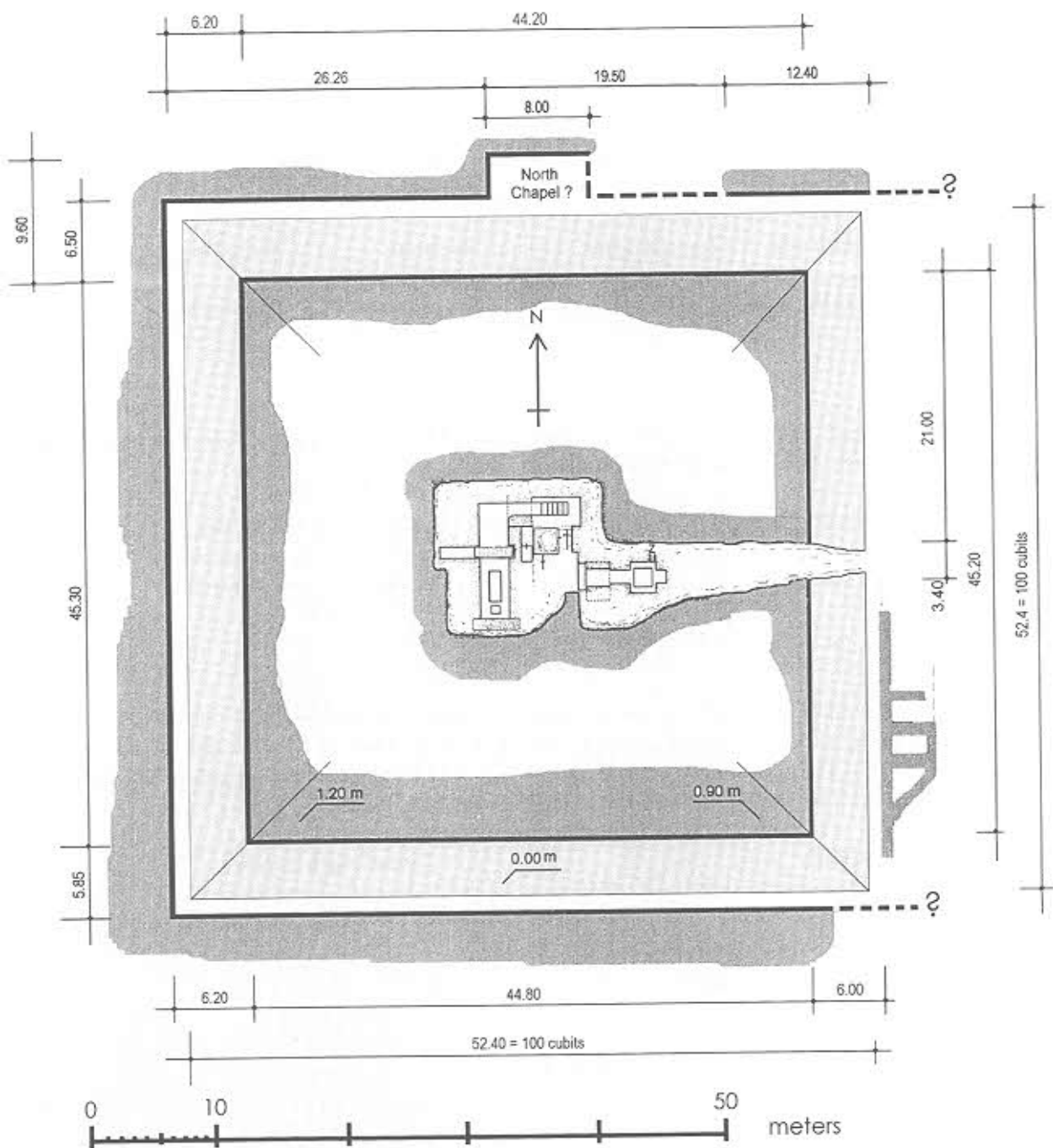


Fig. 2: Plan of the pyramid of Ameny-Qemau

THE TEMENOS

In their report, MARAGIOGLIO and RINALDI point out some destruction on the east side which could indicate the former presence of an upper temple. It is difficult without any further clearance to determine details of a causeway or other elements of the pyramid complex. The north trench of the pyramid superstructure, however, is 6.50 metres wide for 26.26 metres from the west, and then suddenly widens to 9.60 metres, as is shown in fig. 2. This widening is created by turning the outer brickwork 3 metres northward, then 8 metres eastward, after which it is lost for 11.50 metres, before reappearing, aligned with the first part, for 12.40 metres; the trench may have never been completed in the areas of these missing sections. Consequently, it is likely that this rectangular projection was intended for the stone foundation for a northern chapel; the building process will have been discontinued at an early stage.

THE SUBSTRUCTURE

The substructure was constructed in a roughly squared central pit. A ramp approaching from the east appears to be on the axis of the nucleus, with an entrance displaced a little, 0.65 metres, to the south. The ramp and pit were probably excavated after the pyramid's nucleus was set¹⁸). The ramp began at the same level as the area directly east of the nucleus and a little to the east of the side line¹⁹). MARAGIOGLIO and RINALDI were unable to measure either the descending angle of the ramp or the depth of the pit.

The rock wall of the ramp is level in the upper part of the north side and unfinished at the west end of the south side. There appear to be no traces of a connection between the descending ramp and the constructions in the central pit. Perhaps the work was discontinued, or finished off quickly with less care. Consequently the ramp that should have led to the substructure was filled in.

The substructure was entered by a narrow passage, blocked by dry masonry from an early age, although the lower parts were neatly built in brick. To the east, masses of chippings and a large limestone block were found *in situ*. The constructions that lay in the pit were lined with limestone blocks of approximately 1.5 to 0.60 metres thickness, a fill being observed between this masonry and the rock wall of the pit.

The basic scheme of the extant substructure is shown in fig. 3:

- A sloping corridor (A) descends westwards, to be followed by a short horizontal passage (B); from this, a visitor would ascend a vertical shaft (C-D) to a second horizontal passage (D-E), still in a westward direction.
- This shaft would be closed at the top by a large vertically dropping quartzite block. From the end of the horizontal passage, a second vertical shaft (E-F) ascends to a third horizontal westward-leading passage ending in a north-south chamber (G). The shaft was designed to be closed by a large quartzite block sliding from the south.
- From G, a stairway (H)²⁰) leads in a northward direction to a second apartment (I). A second stairway leads out of this room in a westward direction to give access to the antechamber (J). In the antechamber the sarcophagus lid was stored until the burial took place.
- This lid was slid into the burial chamber (K) after the interment had taken place, closing the great quartzite monolith that combined the features of a sarcophagus and canopic chest, by containing separate cavities for the mummy and the canopic equipment.

¹⁸) For the construction of the pyramid nucleus with a 'construction gap' allowing continued access to the substructure-cutting, cf. D. ARNOLD, *Building in Egypt: Pharaonic Stone Masonry* (New York and Oxford, 1991), 179-81.

¹⁹) This means that it probably began from the pyramid facing and could support a base length of 100 cubits.

²⁰) This area was badly damaged; a stairway is suggested by MARAGIOGLIO and RINALDI.

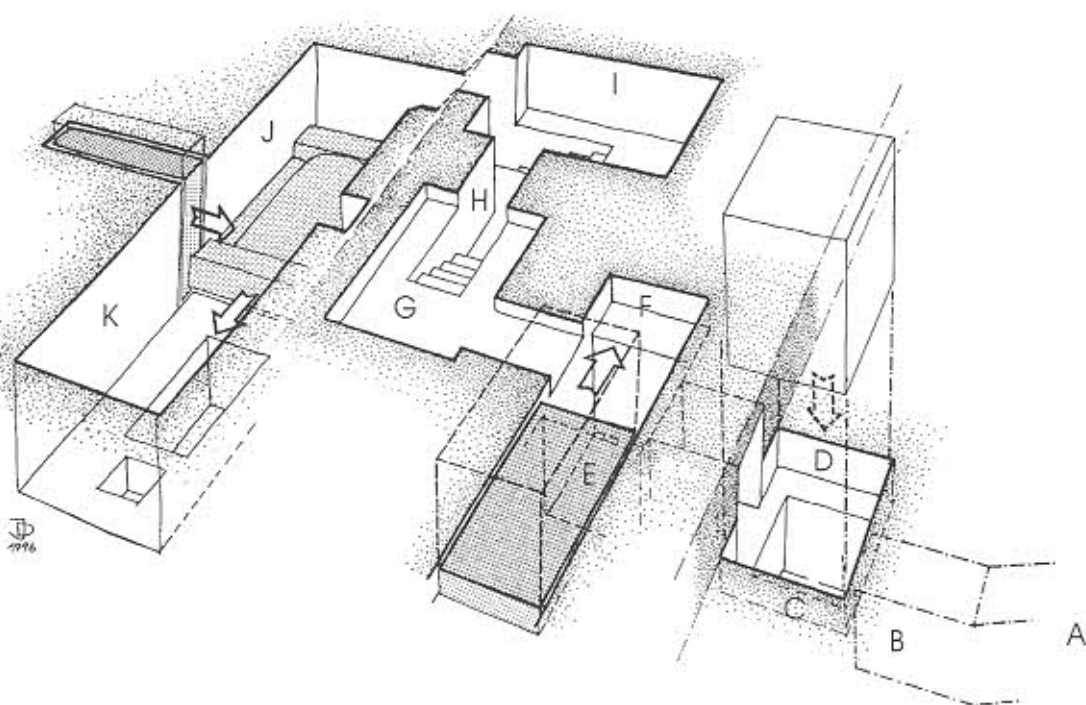


Fig. 3: Reconstructed layout of the substructure of the pyramid of Amen-y-Qemau (after MARAGIOGLIO and RINALDI)

- The burial chamber would have been sealed off by a quartzite slab sliding from the west, and thus separating it from the antechamber.

The plan of the substructure is very similar to, but slightly less developed than that of the North Pyramid at Mazghuna. The two monuments should therefore be closely linked chronologically, with Amen-y-Qemau's regarded as the earlier²¹).

III. The Canopic Equipment and other Finds


From the nearly-contemporary tomb of Hor, we have a fairly good idea of the kind of material that was to be found in a king's tomb of the Thirteenth Dynasty²²). However, the devastated state of Amen-y-Qemau's monument left little chance of substantial survivals; aside from a set of broken canopics, to be discussed shortly, only one fragment can be traced²³). Entered in the Cairo Museum Temporary Register (TR) as $\frac{25111}{60}4$, it is the edge of a flat calcite object, 0.9 cm thick, conceivably part

²¹) Cf. also below, pp. 326 ff. and 330. For a full discussion of the relative dating of Thirteenth Dynasty pyramids, see DODSON, *ZÄS* 114, 36-44, pace M. LEHNER, *The Complete Pyramids* (London, New York 1997), 184-7.

²²) *PM III*², 888-9; cf. DODSON, *ZÄS* 114, 42.

²³) There remains very considerable uncertainty as regards the fate of much of the material recovered (cf. n. 29, below), and it is possible that other items may have been found, not susceptible at present to identification.

of an offering table, although such an item is absent from Hor's sepulchre. From the photograph in the Register²⁴), it does not seem to be from a stela of the types found in that king's tomb²⁵). The

Ameny-Qemau fragment bears the end of a band of text: . This is easily restored as having read '[Ameny-Qema]u, true [of voice]²⁶).

We have no clues as to where TR $\frac{25|11}{60|4}$ originated within the pyramid, although the antechamber seems most likely; however, the remaining items certainly came originally from the burial chamber, its floor entirely filled by the giant combined sarcophagus/canopic chest. The actual canopic cavity lies at its south (foot) end, the normal orientation for such containers. From the parallel of the approximately contemporary interment of Hor, one would assume that a wooden inner chest was formerly present, but no fragments of such are recorded. On the other hand, remains of four calcite jars were recovered (pl. 54-55, fig. 4):

- A. Description: Fragments making up complete jar, bearing the Imseti formula, incised and filled with blue/green pigment.
 Dimensions²⁷): Height 26.5 cm, Diameter 20.5 cm.
 Present Location: Uncertain²⁸).
 Text: *ist stp st.t hr* Isis, delimit your protection about
msti nty im.t Imseti, who is in you;
imshy hr msti the honoured before Imseti,
nsw imny-qm3w m3' hrw King Ameny-Qemau, true of voice.
- B. Description: Fragments making up almost complete jar, bearing the Hapy formula, incised and filled with blue/green pigment.
 Dimensions: Height 27.5 cm, Diameter 21.5 cm.
 Present Location: Uncertain; a portion, made up of three glued fragments and measuring overall 13.9 × 8.2 × 0.12 cm, is Cairo TR $\frac{25|11}{60|1}$ ²⁹). It includes a large part of the text area. A piece of the rim, measuring 10 × 1.8 cm, with the top left-hand corner of the text panel, is TR $\frac{25|11}{60|3}$.
 Text: *nbt-hwt [st]p st.t hr* Nephthys, delimit your protection about
hpy nty im.t Hapy, who is in you;
imshy hr hpy the honoured before Hapy,
[n]sw imny-qm3w m3' hrw King Ameny-Qemau, true of voice.
- C. Description: Fragments making up partial jar, with most of its upper part missing, bearing the Duamutef formula, incised and filled with blue/green pigment.

²⁴) It has not thus far proved possible to examine physically any items recovered from the pyramid.

²⁵) Cairo JE 30951-2.

²⁶) The *w*-quail chick is legless: cf. below, p. 328.

²⁷) Estimated from scale on photograph.

²⁸) According to *PM* III², 890, the canopic material from the pyramid is preserved in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, under the Temporary Register numbers $\frac{25|11}{60|1-4}$. However, as already noted, $\frac{25|11}{60|4}$ is not from a canopic, and the remaining numbers of the block do not represent any of the material represented in the FARID photographs. Nothing of the present jar appears to be in the Temporary Register.

²⁹) It is possible that the reason for the separation of certain fragments from the bulk of the jars is that they were caught up in the events following Muses' arrest (cf. *RMN* 13 April 1958, 8).

Two pieces bear numbers in ink³⁰): 'A637', on fragment of shoulder, and 'A696m²' on a rim sherd.

Dimensions: Height ~ 19 + x cm.

Present Location: Uncertain; part of the shoulder (8.2 cm wide), with the upper parts of the left-hand text columns, is Cairo TR $\frac{2511}{601} 2$.

Text: *[...]p sꜣ.t hr* [...] , delimit your protection about
[... dwꜣ-mwt]fnty im.t [Duamut]ef, who is in you;
imꜣ[h]y hr dwꜣ-mwtf the honoured before Duamutef,
nsw [...] King [...].

D. Description: Fragments making up complete jar, bearing the Qebhsenuef formula incised and filled with blue/green pigment.

Dimensions: Height 26 cm, Diameter 19 cm.

Present Location: Uncertain.

Text: *slqt stp sꜣ.t hr* Selqet, delimit your protection about
qbh-sn.wfnty im.t Qebhsenuef, who is in you;
imꜣhy hr qbh-sn.wf the honoured before Qebhsenuef,
nsw imny-qmꜣw mꜣ' hrw King Ameny-Qemau, true of voice.

There remains confusion as to whether anything of the lids were found. EDWARD F. WENTE remarks that 'the jars, as usual, had lids representing the four sons of Horus'³¹). A contemporary newspaper report also mentions 'covers from four canopic jars found in the tomb'³²). However, no such elements are included in the FARID photographs, nor do they appear to be in the Cairo Temporary Register. Their existence thus remains uncertain.

DISCUSSION

The jars basically conform to the size, shape and textual content that becomes broadly standard from the latter half of the Twelfth Dynasty. The precise textual formulation is that characterised by SETHE as 'Type III'³³), whose distinguishing features are the writing out of the initial Π of *stp-sꜣ*, together with ending the first section with *imꜣ/t*, rather than *hr.t/t*. The type specimens come from the reigns of Sesostri III and Ammenemes III, being the jars of Princesses Menet³⁴) and Sithathorinet³⁵).

Given the problems in precisely fixing Ameny-Qemau within the Thirteenth Dynasty, it is interesting to compare his jars with those of the fourteenth king, Hor³⁶), and those of the latter's daugh-

³⁰) The nature of the numbers marked on sherds is unclear. They were presumably applied before arrival at the Egyptian Museum, since they do not square with any of the numbering systems used there.

³¹) NARCE 25, [1]. In response to an enquiry, Professor WENTE tells us: 'My recollection is that the description I gave of them came solely from a conversation I had with Sami Gabra. I rather doubt now that the stoppers of the jars had the animal heads of the 4 sons of Horus at this early date, and perhaps the statement I made was based on a mention of the 4 sons on the body of each jar. I do not remember ever actually seeing the jars' (personal communication, 3 March 1996).

³²) Denver Post 24 July 1957.

³³) K. SETHE, *Zur Geschichte der Einbalsamierung bei den Ägyptern, und einiger damit verbundener Bräuche* (Berlin, 1934), 1*.

The text-types mentioned in this paper are reproduced at figure 5.

³⁴) CG 4005-6, from Dahshur (G. A. REISNER, *Canopics (CCG)* [Cairo, 1967], 3-4).

³⁵) MMA 16.1.45-8, from Lahun (G. BRUNTON, *Lahun I: the Treasure* [London, 1920], pl. 14).

³⁶) CG 4019-22 (REISNER, *Canopics*, 11-4; CEKE, 146).

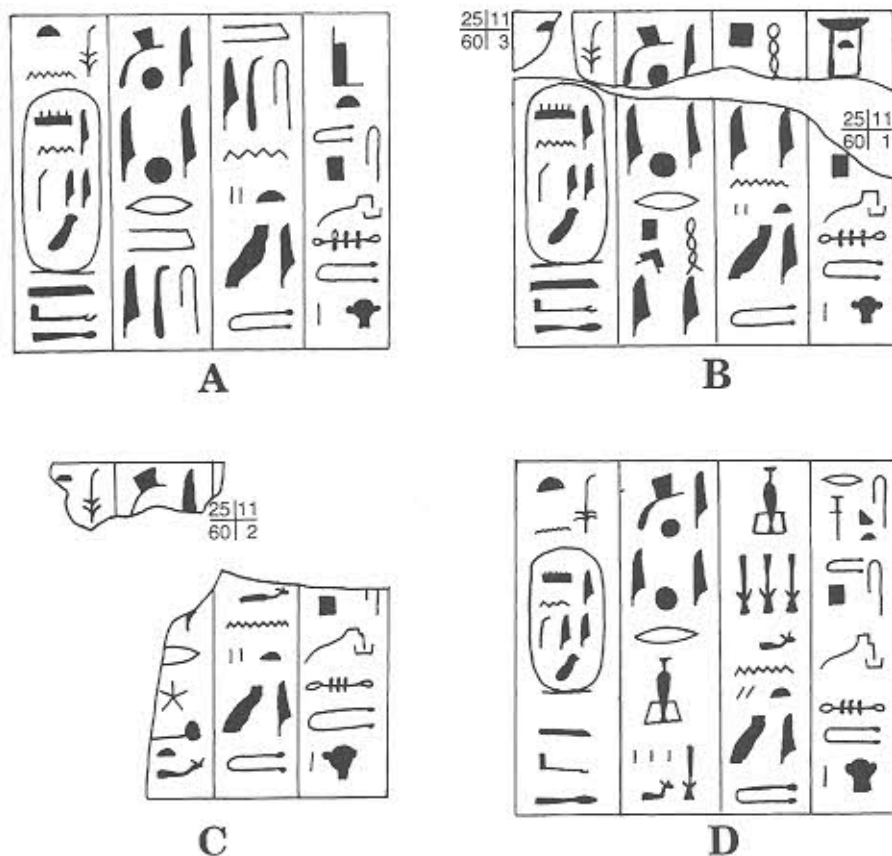


Fig. 4: The canopic texts of Ameny-Qemau

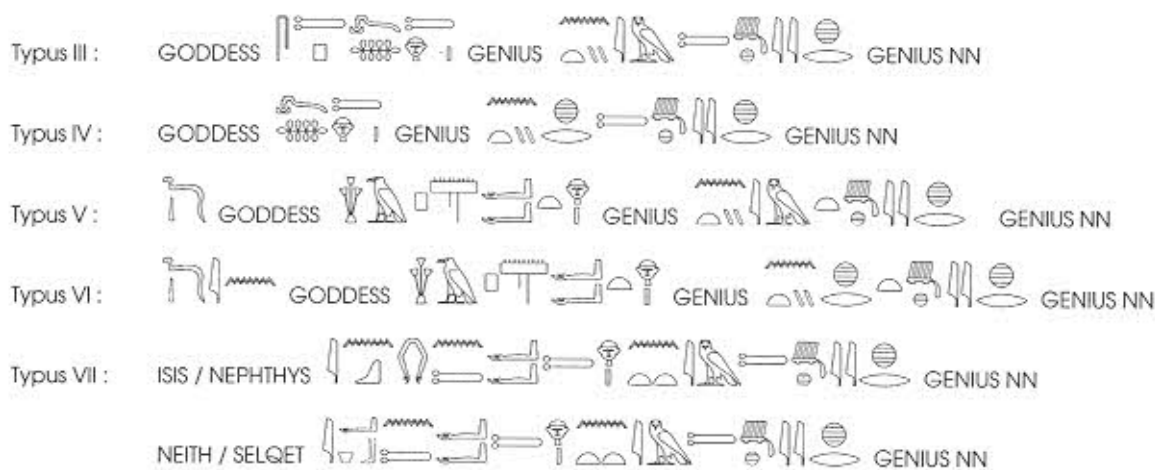


Fig. 5: Canopic formulae of the late Middle Kingdom (after SETHE)

Typus III: Ameny-Qemau; Princesses Menet, Sithathoriunet

Typus IV: Hor, Sobkemsaf (jars)

Typus V: Hor (chest)

Typus VI: Princess Nubhetepthikhered (jars)

Typus VII: Princess Nubhetepthikhered (chest)

