

Riches of written documents in the Egyptian Museum of Turin

ثروات من وثائق مكتوبة في المتحف المصري في تورينو

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ملخص:

يعتبر فرانسوا شامبليون Champollion أول من قام بقراءة للوثائق الأصلية التي يكتنحها المتحف المصري في تورينو؛ وهو من قام بفك شفرة الكتابات المصرية القديمة. كما سعى بعض تلاميذه المميزين بعد ذلك لتطبيق نظرياته وشرح محتويات الآثار الصغيرة، والتي تسمى لوحة.

ولكن بعد نحو خمسة عشر عامًا قام الباحث ريتشارد ليبسوس Lepsius بنشر الطبعة الأولى لبردية طويلة، حيث اعتقد أنها تعتبر الأطول والأكثر اكتمالاً من نوعها، حيث يعود تاريخها إلى العصر الصاوي. وقد كانت هذه المحاولة الأولى لنشر بعض أوراق البردي الشاملة في عام 1842م، ونظرًا لوجود عدد من أوراق البردي المشابهة التي عثر عليها في المقابر، والتي كانت مكتوبة بالهيراغليفية، وهو الخط المعروف في ذلك الوقت، وعلى الرغم من أننا لا نستطيع الأخذ برأي ليبسوس، الذي اعتمد على أساس خاطئ في تأريخها، عن النص الصاوي المنقح من كتاب الموتى.

The first to read native documents shortly acquired by the Egyptian Museum of Turin was the Decipherer of the ancient Egyptian scripts, Jean François Champollion. Some distinguished pupils of his endeavoured thereafter to apply his theories and to explain the contents of single small monuments, namely stelae.¹ But only about fifteen years later, the Prussian scholar Richard Lepsius was to print the first edition of a long papyrus,² one which he believed to be the longest and most complete witness of its kind, and which he dated to the Saitic period. This was a first attempt (1842) to publish some comprehensive papyrus scroll,³ owing to the number of similar papyri found in the tombs, as it was written in hieroglyphs, a better known script in those times, although we cannot maintain Lepsius' opinion, based on a wrong dating, about a Saitic recension of the Book of the Dead.

Actually papyrus is a fragile material, and should be preserved in dry and quiet places, as the Theban necropolis has proved to be. No wonder then that the

collection owned by the Turin Museum, gathered mainly in that area, is especially rich in papyri. Their dating of course depends on the times ancient Thebes flourished, and on the quarters of the necropolis which were spoiled by the antiquities hunters. The rather homogeneous papyrus collections, now in Turin, extend from the Ramesside period until the Roman empire, and comprise particularly documents in the hieratic, abnormal hieratic, demotic and Greek scripts. In the following pages we shall limit our treatment to the hieratic papyri belonging to the New Kingdom. However, the research will push us eventually out of the narrow walls of the Turin Museum to find complements, either physical or related to the contents, in other places. That will help us know something more about the history of these documents, since nothing is recorded about their discovery and their early stages. On the contrary, their history, both ancient and modern, is being written by the studies in progress.

About the middle of the nineteenth century, new sensational discoveries were made, such as the existence of works of entertainment and education, and scholars became eager to know more about the collections and to make their contents available. Therefore, Wilkinson published the list of kings (Royal Canon) already seen by Champollion,⁴ again Lepsius turned himself to the plan of a tomb in the Valley of the Kings,⁵ while Chabas examined the Gold Mines papyrus,⁶ and Déveria devoted himself to the 'papyrus judiciaire'.⁷ Among the distinguished European scholars Willem Pleyte set himself in collaboration with Francesco Rossi, who became in 1870 Professor of Egyptology at the University of Turin, and they both produced a thick book of papyri in facsimile, which includes the best preserved pieces of papyri, (excluding the funerary ones)⁸ along with two ostraca⁹. Scholars could begin a harvest of promising studies.¹⁰ Wilhelm Spiegelberg pointed out among the administrative papyri the Strike Papyrus,¹¹ while among the literary papyri Max Müller recognised a garland of love songs,¹² Herman Grapow the Hymn to the Nile (1914) and Georg Steindorff a Ramesside eulogy (1917); Gardiner recognised a copy of the Satirical Letter.¹³ More plates were to be the object of dedicated studies, most of which are still underway. Meanwhile Naville selected two Books of the Dead dated to the New Kingdom¹⁴ for his synoptic edition of the Theban recension of the Book of the Dead.

In 1899, Ernesto Schiaparelli, who five years earlier had been appointed director of the Egyptian Museum, presented briefly at the twelfth Congress of Orientalists in Rome, in front of an audience dominated by Adolf Erman and Eugène Revillout, some new results of his personal research in that field.¹⁵ The publication of some of these was later entrusted to two younger scholars, Giuseppe Botti and Thomas Eric Peet, pupils respectively of Schiaparelli and Gardiner,¹⁶ which one edited a first

volume of hieroglyphic transcriptions, partly related to some sheets already facsimiled by Rossi. More scrolls found their way in the edition of homogeneous volumes, in hieroglyphic transcription, by Gardiner¹⁷ and Cerny.¹⁸ Therein remarkable documents were collected, already renowned as the (Turin) Strike papyrus,¹⁹ the Turin Indictment papyrus, the Letters of the scribe Butehamon, among many others.

A step forward in the research had been taken: documents were no longer considered according to their state of conservation, but rather in the light of their contents and meaning, and were treated together with similar evidence. Turin papyri entered the publications of Piankoff,²⁰ Edwards,²¹ Janssen,²² Bakir.²³

Some monographs resumed under a new perspective older publications, like the Royal Canon²⁴, the Tomb plan,²⁵ the Gold mines,²⁶ or added new evidence.²⁷ Also the ostraca, mainly coming from Schiaparelli's excavations were reproduced²⁸ and checked,²⁹ the final edition being that of Lopez.³⁰

At this point a new problem came up: more fragments pertaining to the Turin papyri and ostraca were noticed in other collections like Geneva, which was provided by the activity of the same Bernardino Drovetti who sold his collection to Turin,³¹ or, rather mysteriously, in Budapest.³² A ritual scroll found by Schiaparelli in his excavations at Deir el-Medina is actually shared with the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, which owns its upper part.³³ That shows that the remains housed in Turin are by no means complete, and a hope to find more complements somewhere is still likely.

There are other collections in Europe which may have pieces completing those in Turin, or at least showing a similar content or having the same provenance.³⁴ A series of papyri looted during the French excavations at Deir el-Medina in 1928, and belonging to the Amennakht archives, are now the pride of the British Museum, being the outcome of the Chester Beatty gift.³⁵ These papyri, mainly of

literary character, are of special importance for our research, as they provide a number of parallels to similar documents in Turin. Sometimes the Turin parallel helps reconstitute the London document, as is the case of the papyrus with the Story of Isis and Re (pBeatty XI). P. Beatty IX is a parallel to the Ritual of Amenhotep I with a number of variants. P. Beatty V holds a parallel to the Miscellany Turin D, which has another parallel also in pAnastasi III. Fragments of a book of aphrodisiacs in Turin are better preserved than those of pBeatty VI. Sections of pBeatty VII and VIII are found again among the Turin fragments³⁶ P. Beatty XVI corresponds to the beginning of the Book of Thot preserved in the Turin great magical papyrus, whose edition is forthcoming. It is true that the papyrus with the Ritual of Amenhotep I was found in the excavations of Schiaparelli in 1910, but the ancient collection gathered by Drovetti owned already several fragments belonging to different books of the Daily Ritual, beside the Ritual for opening the mouth.

Often the Chester Beatty papyri give a basis to rearrange the scattered Turin fragments.³⁷ The reconstitution of some manuscript at Turin happened also to uncover the remnants of several parallel papyri in a decayed condition in the same collection. On another side some Turin texts were adapted to be used as amulets.³⁸

At any rate the reconstruction of the rolls, even when their contents are known already through better preserved manuscripts, has proved essential in the frequent case of rolls written on both sides, and with an unknown text on one side. The discovery among the Turin papyrus fragments of an exact parallel of the Apopis Book in the pBremner Rhind at London³⁹ has resulted in the ordering of the text on its verso, probably related to spells for foretelling the future,⁴⁰ which allow us to recover a completely unattested genre. More observations of this kind are to be expected, also in relation with the study of ostraca.

Moreover the knowledge of genres and a detailed study of reconstituted manuscripts may lead to a completely renovated interpretation of what was deemed.⁴¹ It remains obscure why a calendar of the feasts of the temple of Montu at Armant slipped in the archives of Deir el-Medina, but it may be enlightening for more occurrences of this kind. In Turin several manuscripts referred to works used to decorate the tombs of the Valley of the Kings, namely the Book of the heavenly Cow,⁴² and they may have been used for the tomb of Ramesses VI. In fact several drawings concern different plans drawn during the preparation of the tomb of Ramesses IV.⁴³

A well-furnished school library contains several classics, like the Hymn to the Nile (two manuscripts),⁴⁴ the Satire on the Trades, the Maxims of Ptahhotep,⁴⁵ the Teaching of a Man for his Son (two manuscripts),⁴⁶ and the Tale of Sinuhe. It is noteworthy that no papyrus manuscripts for the Book of Kemyt, nor for the Teaching of Amenemhat I,⁴⁷ nor the Prophecies of Neferty, nor the Instruction of Hardedef, nor the Instruction of Amennakht were detected in spite of the high number of ostraca reporting these texts.

If we compare the Chester Beatty papyri with the Turin papyrus collection, we notice a wide range of resemblances for the same or similar texts, but also some remarkable differences. In the Chester Beatty papyri, and in the Turin collection as well, there are examples of the Hymn to the Nile, the Satire on the Trades, the Satirical Letter, Love Songs, Miscellanies. No roll, however, among the Turin fragments, is comparable to pBeatty I with the contendings of Horus and Seth, or pBeatty II and its novel of Blinding of Truth by Falsehood. pBeatty III reports on its reverse a copy of the poem of the Battle of Qadesh, which may be compared with a poem about the wars of Thutmosis III in Turin.⁴⁸ PBeatty I contains a praise of Ramesses V, while Turin owns a collection of hymns to Ramesses VI and VII.⁴⁹

Late Egyptian pieces of literature are now deemed as ‘actuality’ literature⁵⁰ opposed to ‘tradition’ literature that may explain why the Late-Egyptian novels are normally known only by one witness, with the exception of the Miscellanies and some instructions (Ani, Amennakht, Amenemope), in contrast with Middle-Egyptian writings, which are often known mainly through the school practice.

Otherwise the Turin evidence covers many items which are known also from other sources, and it sometimes shows a number of parallels of the same texts.⁵¹ For instance, the Book of Isis has not only a parallel copy in pBeatty XI, but the Turin ‘archives’ also held one more copy, in accurate calligraphy on a roll written only on the obverse; and some quotations can be found in the contemporary ostraca. The Dream Book is well preserved in pBeatty III, but a scrap of a similar text is noticed also in Turin.

Mythical tales were encompassed in magical texts, and include exotic topics as Seth/Baal and Anat and Astarte, which are present both in the pBeatty VII and at Turin. The wide horizon of the Ramesside ‘empire’ is thereby present in its actuality. However, a relationship of this material to the temple libraries must be envisaged, though its historical background remains open to questions. The school muster books, concerning literature in Middle Egyptian draw from works produced during the Twelfth Dynasty, *i.e.* about seven centuries earlier. Some magical texts also drew from old materials, in addition to ritual and religious books.

Moreover it is interesting to point out the literary fields which are lacking in the Turin, or Deir el-Medina, material in general. No medical texts, comparable to the renowned treatises of the New Kingdom, were available; nor mathematical handbooks or what in general is termed science.

Unique pieces are the Royal Canon, a private copy of some official document; or the Map of the Gold Mines, an extraordinary example of descriptive

topography and geology;⁵² and the Satiric-erotic papyrus.⁵³ On another side at least three manuscripts of the Instruction of Ani certainly come from Deir el-Medina; while the Instruction of Amennakht is reconstructed only from ostraca,⁵⁴ and there is just a small ostrakon for the late Instruction of Amenope, which was to become widespread.

Indeed the ostraca help to ascertain the knowledge, and the popularity, of rarely attested works, like the Teaching for Merikare. Nothing refers to the Middle Kingdom Story of the Peasant, in spite of some possible quotations in the Ramesside tombs.⁵⁵ These observations are good to check the reception of literature over the centuries.

We can also try to form an opinion about some special find as the case of intact burials. The tomb of Sennedem, dated to the Nineteenth Dynasty and discovered in 1882, gave the Cairo ostrakon with a large quotation of the Story of Sinuhe; but no roll of the Book of the Dead was found in this tomb. During the Ramesside period chapters of the Book of the Dead were mainly used to decorate the walls of the funerary chambers.

The tomb of architect Kha, a wealthy official, found in 1906, can be dated to the end of the reign of Amenhotep III. The Book of the Dead made for Kha and his wife was produced in the same workshop as the Book of the Dead of Yuya, the king’s father-in-law. However in the extremely various and rich furniture of this tomb nothing literary turned out. This ‘deception’ can be understood under several insights: Kha, an excellent and estimated technician, was no learned man. Or more probably, the works which we have described above belong to the ‘reality’: school, administration, work, and are not the heritage of what we now consider ‘literature’. Among the Deir el-Medina people we find no narratives nor biographies: does it mean that this level of society had no language excellencies?

Just a few meters outside the tomb of Arch. Kha, and a couple of centuries later, a conspicuous amount of rather well-preserved papyri was to be deposited until its discovery in 1928. What happened to the Eighteenth Dynasty documents? Not a scrap of evidence remains from Deir el-Medina.

Notes:

- 1 C. Gazzera, *Applicazione delle dottrine del signor Champollion minore ad alcuni monumenti geroglifici del Regio Museo Egizio, Memorie dell'Accademia delle Scienze* 29 (1825) 83-142.
- 2 R. Lepsius, *Das Todtenbuch der Ägypter nach dem hieroglyphischen Papyrus in Turin* (Leipzig, 1842).
- 3 Also: R. Lepsius, *Auswahl der wichtigsten Urkunden des Aegyptischen Alterthums* (Leipzig 1842), dealing with the Royal Canon, the Satiric roll and parts of the Gold Mines papyrus.
- 4 J.G. Wilkinson, *Hieratic Papyrus of Kings at Turin* (London, 1849).
- 5 R. Lepsius, *Grundplan des Grabes Königs Ramses IV in einem Turiner Papyrus* (Berlin, 1867).
- 6 F. Chabas, *Les inscriptions des mines d'or* (Paris, 1862); 'Les inscriptions relatives aux mines d'or de Nubie', *Mémoire de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Chalons-sur-Saone* IV (1869), 437-532 (Oeuvres Diverses II, 1902, 183-230). Cf. J. Lieblein, *Deux papyrus hieratiques du Musée de Turin* (Christiania, 1869), 77-111.
- 7 Th.Dévéria, *Le papyrus judiciaire et les papyrus Lee et Rollin* (Paris, 1868). Last treatment in Yvan Koenig, 'A propos de la conspiration du harem', *BIFAO* 101 (2001) 293-314.
- 8 Except the plates identified by J. Lieblein, *Le livre égyptien "Que mon nom fleurisse"* (Leipzig, 1895).
- 9 W. Pleyte, F. Rossi, *Papyrus de Turin* (Leiden, 1869-76).
- 10 F. Chabas, 'Sur un papyrus de formules magiques du Musée de Turin', *CRAIBL* IV, t. III, 57-68.
- 11 W. Spiegelberg, *Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung im alten Ägypten* (Strassburg 1895). Earlier Spiegelberg published 'Ein Papyrus aus der Zeit Ramses V', *ZÄS* 29 (1891) 73-84.
- 12 M. Müller, *Die Liebespoesie der alten Ägypter* (Leipzig, 1899).
- 13 A.H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Hieratic Texts of Literary Character I. The Papyrus Anastasi I and the Papyrus Koller, together with the Parallel Texts* (Leipzig, 1911).
- 14 E. Naville, *Das aegyptische Todtenbuch der XVIII. bis XX. Dynastie* (Berlin, 1886).
- 15 G. Botti, 'La collezione Drovetti e i papiri del R. Museo Egizio in Torino', *Rendiconti dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei* 30 (1921) 128-35, 143-49, devoting this second part of his paper to the discoveries added by the research of Schiaparelli, see note 48.
- 16 G. Botti and Th.E. Peet, *I papiri ieratici del Museo di Torino. Il Giornale della Necropoli di Tebe* (Torino, 1928).
- 17 A.H. Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Miscellanies, Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca* VII (Brussels, 1937); *Rameside Administrative Documents* (London, 1948); 'Rameside Texts relating to the Taxation and Transport of Corn', *JEA* 27 (1941) 19-73.
- 18 J. Černý, *Late Rameside Letters, Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca* IX, (Brussels, 1939).
- 19 P.J. Frandsen, *Editing Reality: The Turin Strike Papyrus: Studies in Egyptology presented to M. Lichtheim* (Jerusalem, 1990), 166-199.
- 20 A. Piankoff, *Mythological Papyri* (New York, 1957): already edited by F. Rossi, *Illustrazione di un papiro funerario del Museo Egizio di Torino, Rendiconti dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei* 14 (1878), 1203-24, and reproduced in V.R. Lanzone, *Dizionario di mitologia egizia* I (Torino, 1881-84), pl. 71-72.
- 21 I.E.S. Edwards, *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom. Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum* IV (London, 1960).
- 22 J. Janssen, *Two Ancient Egyptian Ship's Logs (Papyrus Leiden I 350 verso and Papyrus Turin 2008+2016)* (Leiden, 1961). The Turin papyrus had already been dealt with by Peet, *BIFAO* 30 (1930), 481.
- 23 Abd el-Mohsen Bakir, *Egyptian Epistolography, from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-first Dynasty* (Cairo, 1970).
- 24 G. Farina, *Il papiro dei re restaurato* (Roma, 1938); Gardiner, *The Royal Canon of Turin* (Oxford, 1959).
- 25 H. Carter, A.H. Gardiner, 'The Tomb of Ramesses IV and the Turin Plan of a Royal Tomb', *JEA* 4 (1917), 130 ff. See note 43.
- 26 Gardiner, 'The Map of the Gold Mines in a Rameside Papyrus at Turin', *Cairo Scientific Journal* 8 (1914) 41-46; G. Goyon, *Le papyrus de Turin dit "des mines d'or" et le Wadi Hammamat, ASAE* 49 (1949), 337-392.
- 27 G. Farina, *RSO* 13 (1932), 313-18, publishing new papyrus fragments from a manuscript of the Satirical

- Letter. To be supplemented with R. A. Caminos, *JEA* 44 (1958) 3-4.
- 28 E. Schiaparelli, *Relazione sui lavori della Missione archeologica italiana in Egitto* I(1903-1920) (Torino, 1922), 168-181.
- 29 G. Posener, 'Recherches littéraires III. Ostraca inédits du Musée de Turin', *RdE* 8 (1951), 171-89.
- 30 J. Lopez, *Ostraca ieratici*, four volumes (Milan, 1978-1984).
- 31 A.H. Gardiner, 'A Pharaonic Encomium', *JEA* 41 (1955), 30; *JEA* 42 (1956), 8-20; A. Roccati, 'Un nuovo rotolo magico diviso tra le raccolte di Ginevra e Torino', *BSEG* 7 (1982), 91-94.
- 32 A. Roccati, 'La quarta pagina del papiro Budapest Inv. N° 51.1961: Mélanges offerts à E. Varga', *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts*, Supplément 2001, 419-421.
- 33 E. Bacchi, *Il rituale di Amenhotpe I* (Torino, 1942).
- 34 P. Lansing is believed to have been found in Deir el-Medina. Also, G. Botti, 'Frammenti di papiri ieratici della XX dinastia nel Museo Egizio di Firenze', *OrAnt* 3 (1964) 221-26.
- 35 Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum*, 3rd Series (London, 1935).
- 36 See following note.
- 37 A. Roccati, 'Nuovi paralleli torinesi di testi magici ramessidi', *Aegyptus* 49 (1969) 5-11, cf. A. Roccati, *Un inno al Sole levante: ... ir a buscar leña (Studi Lopez)* (Barcelona, 2001), 169-173; A. Roccati, 'Une légende égyptienne d'Anat', *RdE* 24 (1972), 154-159.
- 38 Y. Koenig, 'Deux amulettes de Deir el-Médineh', *BIFAO* 82 (1982), 283-291; Y. Koenig, 'Le papyrus de Moutemheb', *BIFAO* 104 (2004), 291-321, 314-317 e 326, fig. 4.
- 39 A. Roccati, *Aspetti di dio nella civiltà egizia: Dio nella Bibbia e nelle civiltà ad essa contemporanee e connesse* (Torino, 1977), 218-231.
- 40 A. Roccati, *Smnw sxnw*, in: Hommages à Jean Leclant I (Cairo, 1994), 493-497; S. Demichelis, *La divination par l'huile à l'époque ramesside, La magie en Égypte, Actes du colloque* (Paris, 2002), 149-163.
- 41 S. Demichelis, *Il calendario delle feste di Montu: papiro ieratico CGT 54021 verso* (Torino, 2002), being a remake of G. Botti, *Il culto divino dei faraoni, Memorie dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei* V, 17 (1923), 141-168.
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- 43 S. Demichelis, 'Le project initial de la tombe de Ramses IV? Papyrus de Turin CGT 55002', *ZÄS* 131 (2004), 114-133.
- 44 D. van der Plaas, *L'hymne à la crue du Nil* (Leiden, 1986).
- 45 P. Vernus, 'Le début de l'Enseignement de Ptahhotep: un nouveau manuscrit', *CRIPEL* 18 (1996), 119-140.
- 46 H. W. Fischer-Elfert, *Die Lehre eines Mannes für seinen Sohn: Eine Etappe auf dem "Gottesweg" des loyalen und solidarischen Beamten des Mittleren Reiches*, *ÄAT* 60 (Wiesbaden, 1999).
- 47 F. Adrom, *Die Lehre des Amenemhet I*, *Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca* XIX (Brussels, 2006).
- 48 G. Botti, 'A fragment of the Story of a Military Expedition of Tuthmosis III to Syria', *JEA* 41 (1955), 64-66, resuming a first attempt: 'Frammenti di un testo storico in onore di Tutmosi III', *RANL* V, 31 (1923), 348-353.
- 49 V. Condon, *Seven Royal Hymns of the Ramesside Period* *MÄS* 37 (Berlin, 1978). More fragments of this papyrus have been subsequently discovered by S. Demichelis.
- 50 U. Verhoeven, *Ein historischer "Sitz im Leben" für die Erzählung von Horus und Seth des Papyrus Chester Beatty I, Wege Öffnen (Fs. Gundlach)*, *ÄAT* 35 (Wiesbaden, 1996), 347-363; W. Wittengel, *Die Erzählung von den beiden Brüdern. Der Papyrus D'Orbiney und die Königsideologie der Ramessiden*, *OBO* 195 (Freiburg & Göttingen 2003); A. Spalinger, 'Encomia and Papyrus Anastasi II' in: St. Quirke (ed.) *Discovering Egypt from the Neva. The Egyptological Legacy of Oleg D. Berlev* (Berlin, 2003), 123-144; under a different insight J. Osing, *School and Literature in the Ramesside Period: L'Impero Ramesside* (Vic.Or.Quad.1) (Roma 1997), 131-142.
- 51 A. Roccati, 'Un nuovo rotolo magico diviso tra le raccolte di Ginevra e Torino', *BSEG* 7 (1982), 91-94.
- 52 J.A. Harrell, V.M. Brown, 'The Oldest Surviving Topographical Map from Ancient Egypt: (Turin Papyrus 1879, 1899, and 1969)', *JARCE* XXIX (1992), 81-105; Th. Hikade, 'Expeditions to the Wadi Hammamat during the New Kingdom', *JEA* 92 (2006), 153-168.
- 53 D. Kessler, 'Der satirisch-erotische Papyrus Turin 55001 und das "Verbringen des schönen Tages"', *SAK* 15 (1988), 192-196.
- 54 A. Roccati, *La sapienza di Amennakhte & di Baki*, *Studi cattolici* 69/70 (2008), 489-493.
- 55 L.D. Morenz, 'Sa-mut/Kyky und Menna, zwei reale Leser/Hörer des Oasenmannes aus dem Neuen Reich' *GM* 165 (1998), 73-81.