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HORACE LAURINEL MAYER, for many years a Visitor in both the Classical and Egyptian Departments, died suddenly in Monte Carlo on February 21, 1968. The profound shock of his loss to the Museum and his friends can hardly be abated by the knowledge of his contributions to the Museum's collections and to the fellowship which is known amongst friends. His gifts and support give Horace Mayer a permanent place in the annals of the Museum. In recognition of this support, the Board of Trustees elected him a Benefactor of the Museum of Fine Arts in November 1966. It is as a man, warm, perceptive, continually probing and intensely humane, that his friends will remember him. The Museum extends its deepest sympathy to Mrs. Mayer and their family.

The Entourage of an Egyptian Governor

By EDWARD L. B. TERRACE

In memory of Horace Laurinel Mayer

The remarkable object popularly known as the Bersheh Procession came to the Museum in a shipment of antiquities from Egypt in 1920 (Cover and Figs. 2, 3, 7, 8, 10-17, 22).¹ Lyman Story, one of Reisner's assistants in the Museum's Egyptian Expedition (later he became Registrar of the Museum), found it during a short excavation at the site of Deir el Bersheh in Middle Egypt in 1915.² The site had been known to students of ancient history since the early nineteenth century when two Englishmen, Captain Mangles and Lieutenant Irby,³ stopped there in 1817 and discovered the tomb of a great official named Djehuty-hetep, who lived during the reign of Sesostriis III of the Twelfth Dynasty (1878-1843 B.C.). Djehuty-hetep's tomb is the only one reasonably preserved in the heavily quarried and earthquake devastated site. The tomb contains a unique scene: a colossal statue of Djehuty-hetep rests on a great sledge which is being hauled by many laborers to its final location.⁴ So vivid a depiction of an actual event caught the imagination of writers about ancient Egypt who had seen its culture in terms of rather gloomy funerary beliefs, and a drawing of the scene made by Bankes (one of the party which first opened Abu Simbel) was published several times during the nineteenth century. The scene has been remarked on and illustrated many times since. In 1891 P. E. Newberry and F. Ll. Griffith went to Bersheh for the Egypt Exploration Fund and methodically recorded such tombs as they could. These are published in the two volumes *El Bersheh I-II* (London, 1896). Other excavations were carried out by the Egyptian Department of Antiquities⁵ and by clandestine excavators. From one of the latter come three Middle Kingdom models acquired for the Museum in Egypt in 1903.⁶

The site of the Middle Kingdom rock-cut tombs lies on a terrace cut in the northern side of a dramatically eroded wadi which cuts through the eastern cliffs of the Nile valley.⁷ The wadi lies a little over a mile across the desert, east of the Coptic village of Deir el Bersheh, the northernmost of three villages, Nazlet el Bersheh, El Bersheh, and Deir el Bersheh, which make up the place called Bersheh. As in so many places in Egypt, there is a poignant continuity of the past with the present through the medium of burial places. In the valley below the Middle Kingdom terrace are burials of later dynastic periods and reaching out into the desert toward them are the domed mud-brick tombs of the Coptic inhabitants of modern Deir el Bersheh. In the luxuriant fields which lie between the villages and the Nile grow the same vegetables which are found in the offering scenes of the Middle Kingdom notables. And through these fields one may see every day graceful women carrying on their heads baskets of goods no different from those depicted in the Procession made 4000 years ago.



1. Wooden models, including the Procession, piled between the coffin and wall of the burial chamber of Djehuty-nekht's tomb at Bersheh.



2. Condition of the Procession shortly after excavation.

When Reisner arrived at the site he found a scene of devastation. The area was quarried extensively in ancient times, the tombs of their predecessors being used as sources of limestone for temples and buildings for later inhabitants of the region. As the living rock was tunneled out by the quarrymen, the strata were weakened, and finally earthquakes brought down what little was left. Only Djehuty-hetep's tomb was spared complete destruction and even its almost miniature painted scenes are sadly damaged. Probably deciding that a careful excavation would bear little fruit, Reisner departed for Cairo and Giza after a fortnight, leaving the inexperienced Story in charge of the work. Story proceeded to clear the terrace and to open as many burial pits as were exposed in the clearing. Unfortunately, he did not have a draftsman with him to re-record the decorated tombs. Even Djehuty-hetep's tomb was indifferently recorded by the Egypt Exploration Fund and to this day no careful work has been done with it.⁸ A number of pits had escaped the notice of the Newberry party and on April 23, 1915, Story's men began to clear a tomb, numbered 10 by him, which lay behind huge blocks of limestone debris. By the 27th, Pit A, lying within the un-

finished tomb, was being cleared. Story notes in the Diary for that day: "In debris a large number of figures from model boat; frags. of oars and spars from model boat . . ." On the 29th the bottom of the pit was reached and Story and the Reis were lowered down by rope, to peer into the chamber which opened off the bottom of the pit and which was still partially closed by a limestone block. Inside Story saw the great painted coffin which is one of the great treasures of the Boston Museum, the most splendid example of Middle Kingdom painting outside Egypt itself. From titles listed on the coffin we know that the tomb and its contents were prepared for the burial of a governor of the local province, called the Hare Nome after its insignia — a crouching hare (the nome insignia is seen in Fig. 27). The governor's name was Djehutynekht. Story cabled to Reisner, who returned to Bersheh on May 1 and supervised the

3. The Bersheh Procession. *Museum Egyptian Expedition. 21.326.*



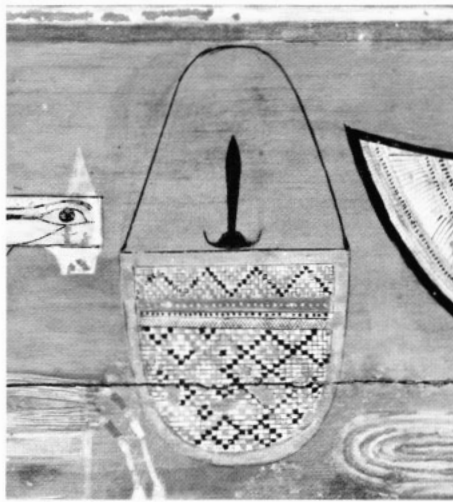
work until the 3rd when he left again. On May 13 the clearing of Pit A in Tomb 10 was completed.

Fig. 1 shows the chaos inside the chamber when it was exposed. Plunderers in ancient times had entered, seeking gold and precious things, and had ruthlessly sundered the coffin of the lady Djehuty-nekht, presumably wife of the governor Djehuty-nekht, ripped off the ends of the governor's coffins, torn apart the mummified bodies in their search for jewelry, and thrown about the small objects which had been deposited with the burials. These objects were primarily model faience and stone vessels and painted wooden models of the activities of daily life. Most of the models are coarsely made and are without any distinction except that they provide a very lively and literal insight into the way of life of the ancient Egyptians. But one very outstanding, and still unique, model had been deposited with the others. This is the Bersheh Procession.⁹

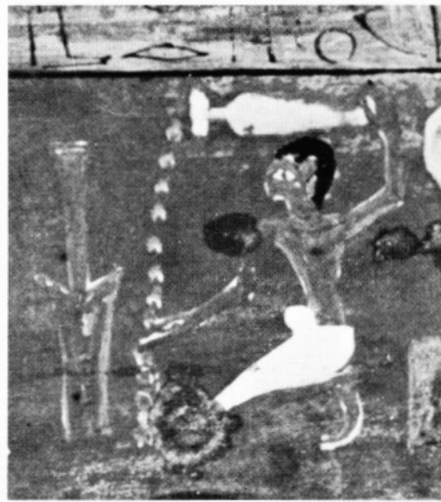
The date of Djehuty-nekht's tomb is based solely on the style of the paintings of his outer coffin, which are related to the paintings of Djehuty-hetep at Bersheh (reign of Sesostris III) and paintings at Meir (Sesostris III) and Qau el Kebir (Amenemhat III?). There is no reason to suppose that the Procession should be dated differently from the coffin.¹⁰

A man with shaven head leads three young women who carry goods on their heads. The first two girls each carry a duck in the right hand. The load of the young woman in the rear has disappeared; Aldred suggests that she carried a calf.¹¹ When excavated, the figures were somewhat askew (see Fig. 2) and the object carried in the right hand of the leader was only a handle with a stubby tenon. Twenty years after the piece had been on exhibition in the Museum, members of the Egyptian Department were examining the material sent from Bersheh with a view to reconstructing more of the models, if this were found feasible. This "secondary excavation" turned up a delicately colored piece of wood which turned out to be the case, now in place, which fits exactly over the little tenon (see cover illustration).¹² Presumably the case covers a mirror, since its handle, a highly stylized papyrus blossom, is the one used traditionally for mirrors. A fan is another, but unlikely, possibility. Fig. 4 shows the painted case of another presumed mirror, made in elaborate bead or matwork.

The group is certainly a religious procession, confirmed by the enormous *hes* vase which the leader carries over his shoulder. The vessel is one frequently depicted as containing sacred oils and liquids and many are shown on Djehuty-nekht's coffin. In one place (Fig. 5) a kneeling figure pours pellets of incense from such a vessel. The Egyptian word for vases of this shape is *hst* and related words have meanings "to praise," "to favor," "to perform rites," etc. The inscription on the large *hes* vase in Fig. 6 states that water is being brought as libation for Djehuty-nekht. By the same token, the ladies are bringing offerings for the deceased. Already in the Archaic Period figures are shown carrying baskets of goods on their heads and ducks in their hands and as such are participating in the offering ceremonies, even if only carrying these objects to the ceremony. Such a scene of the late Third or early Fourth Dynasty is found on the fragment of a limestone relief from Sakkara in the Boston Museum.¹³



4. Mirror case made of bead or basketwork; fan; girdle; other objects. Detail from painted frieze of objects of daily life, right wall of Djehuty-nekht's outer coffin. *Museum Egyptian Expedition. 20.1823.*



5. Detail of Fig. 6, showing a man pouring pellets of incense from a hes vase.

6. A priest burning incense before the seated Djehuty-nekht, left side of his outer coffin. *Museum Egyptian Expedition. 20.1822.*



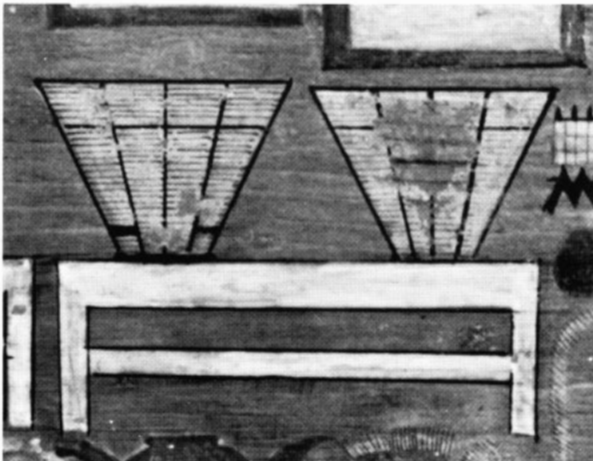


7. Head of the first girl.



8. The beer jugs carried by the second girl.

9. Detail of offerings before Djehuty-nekht, showing form of reed baskets, left side of outer coffin.



Middle Kingdom stelae frequently have scenes of the enthroned deceased before rows of figures carrying the same items, including ducks.¹⁴ In a sense, then, this procession is supplementary to the many items elaborately painted on the inner sides of Djehuty-nekht's coffin (see Figs. 4, 5, 6, 9).

The flesh of the man is pale pink (red iron oxide mixed with white calcium carbonate), and his shaven head is a very light ochre, as if slightly tanned by exposure to the sun. His skirt is white. The belt which holds it in place is shown in slightly raised relief. Sandal straps are painted white. It is interesting that the girls walk barefoot. Although women in ancient Egypt were usually painted yellow to indicate their lighter skin, these three are almost white-skinned. Their flesh is painted an extremely pale creamy white; ivory-colored is perhaps the best designation. Their gowns are white. The hair and details of the eyes (including those of the leader) are black. The quality of draughtsmanship is clearly evident in the rendering of the eye in Fig. 7. The mirror case, like the paintings of Djehuty-nekht's coffin, is a *tour de force* of detail and coloration. The case was made of two pieces of tanned red leather stitched together (the stitching is shown as red strokes on white). On both sides is a piece of mottled black and white cowhide held in place by strips of some green colored material. These strips are in turn fastened by black dots representing brads or stitching. The mirror handle is painted black to represent ebony.¹⁵ The green strips reveal the hand of the master of the coffin. Not one, but two greens were used. First, a light green strip was painted on, then the colorist took a green with a slightly lower value (perhaps achieved by putting a minute amount of carbon in the initial green) and stroked this second color over the first. It is precisely this kind of extended use of the ordinarily severely limited palette of the Egyptian painter that contributes to the unique quality of the Djehuty-nekht coffin. As usual in the case of painted wood, most of the colors described here, even white (calcium carbonate) itself, lie on an undercoat of white.

The *hes* jar is painted a rather purplish brown, probably to represent copper, although on the coffin copper tools are painted a dark brown-red. A flaring cover is in place on the mouth of the vase. In this instance, the cover is carved as one piece with the rest of the vessel. Originally the jar was held in place by a peg which passed through the fingers to the base of the jar. The form of the vessel is known from earliest times, and a large copper example was excavated by the Museum's expedition at Giza in the temple of the Mycerinus Pyramid.¹⁶ Several have already been noted on Djehuty-nekht's coffin, Figs. 5 & 6.

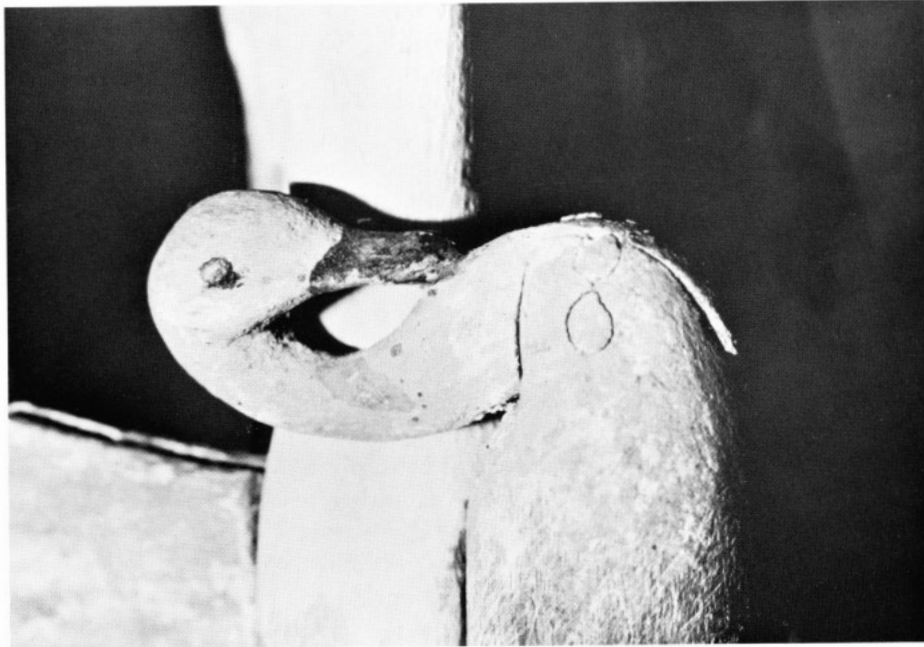
The first girl carries a covered basket, the contents of which might have included foods or fine linens. In fact, the basket and its cover are solid pieces. The cover is pegged down. The next figure carries a basket of dark red pottery jugs, probably beer or wine jugs (Fig. 8). The mouths are stoppered with painted representations of clay seals. Black stripes were painted across the white underpainting, leaving alternating stripes of white and black. Perhaps the stripes indicate that the clay or mud seal was scored. In the models of the Eleventh Dynasty official Meket-re, such stoppers are

shown as black with white spirals (Winlock, Pl. 31, Cairo) and as white with black spirals (*idem*, Pl. 32, New York).¹⁷ Originally the jugs were set loosely in the basket. They are now secured to the floor of the basket with an adhesive. The second basket is made of four thin pieces of wood fitted to a thin bottom. The ends of the sides are mitered and locked with dowels passing through the corners. The baskets which these models represent were made of reeds or rushes tied together or woven around heavier members. Such baskets are still used commonly and conveniently today. The black strips on the models represent the supports. Sometimes in the models the lighter strips are indicated by fine red lines (cf. the two offering bearers of Meket-re, Winlock, Pl. 30), or by fine black lines as in our Fig. 9. The baskets of Djehuty-nekht are very light yellow, with a suggestion of brown. Both baskets were originally pegged in place to the tops of the heads.

The last girl still clutches a fragment of a peg in her right fist; and in the left palm is a peg hole. Another hole was drilled just above this hand in the side of the wig. There is no evidence of a hole in the top of her head. Unfortunately, no record of separated pieces was kept as the object was excavated, repaired, and various pieces cemented in place. Fig. 1, for instance, shows that both baskets had fallen off, probably during the plunderers' ransack. A recent examination has shown that the following elements have been replaced since excavation: the two baskets; the left arms of the first three figures; the right arm of the man; apparently most elbow joints; the *hes* vase; the beer jugs; the mirror case. All these pieces fitted perfectly, indicating that a minimum of damage was inflicted by the grave robbers. No restorations had to be made in reassembling the figures.

Each of the ducks is made in three pieces. The wings, two for each fowl, were shaped and carved from a single piece of wood, the end of which was formed as dowel. This dowel is clutched in the right hand, passing through it into the back of the duck. An example of the extraordinary detail given to the sculpture is the naturalistic delineation of each finger curved around the wing, although the fingers cannot be seen behind the wings. The bodies were shaped and on them, carved in extremely delicate low relief, are the legs and feet. The webbed feet are particularly realistic. The neck and head of each fowl is a separate piece, fitted into the breast and back. They are doweled in place with tiny pegs running through the side of the breast. The extension of the neck which fits into the breast follows the form of the breast perfectly (Fig. 10).

Although the bodies of the ducks have a somewhat pinkish hue now, this is due to the partial wearing off of the thin layer of light gray with which they were originally painted. The gray has thus mingled with the reddish color of the wood. The same phenomenon occurs in the plumage of the famous dove on the coffin, where the pink is due really to the mingling of gray and red strokes with the reddish color of the wood. The leg joints of each duck are red and the webs black. The tiny bulbous eyes are black, as are the bills. Another surprising example of realism is the creased cheek formed by straining muscles pulled into tension by the bent neck of the first duck (Fig. 10). The second, which holds its neck straight up, has a normally rounded



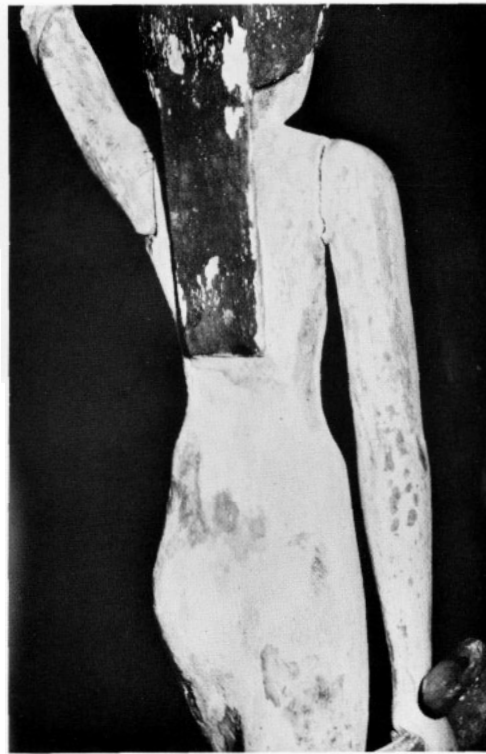
10. The duck carried by the first girl.

11. The second duck.

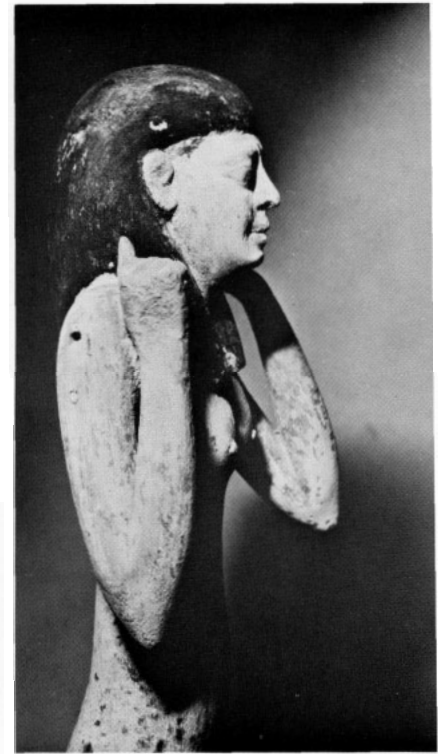




12. Upper part of the first girl.



13. Back of the first girl.



14. The third girl.

cheek (Fig. 11). Here may be seen the naturalistic modeling of the joint with the thigh, with both bone and muscle structure carefully indicated. The undersides of the tails are lightly incised to suggest feathering.

An interesting feature of the group is that each girl wears a different form of haircut or wig. The first is a rather complicated affair. Cut short in front, around the ears and toward the back, a long flat hairpiece falls down behind to the middle of her back. Another thin piece was inserted inside the space created by the longer fall (see Figs. 12 & 13). The middle figure wears a short bob cut, while the last has a full head of hair with lappets falling over the shoulders in front as well as behind (Fig. 14).

The dresses worn by these girls cling to the flesh like skin and they might be thought nude except for the filling of the space between the legs. On the other hand, the nipples, which are cut-off ends of pegs, protrude in the round. The gown of the man is similarly diaphanous, although here a heavy (starched?) skirt hangs out beyond the forward leg. Representations in sculpture and in reliefs and paintings often show such protruding skirts. The most likely explanation of these stiff fronts is that they were starched, but starch or a glue or flour size, because they are organic and therefore fugitive substances, have not been detected in the examinations of ancient



16

15. Modeling of the leg and hips under the skirt of the man.



16. Head of the man.

fabrics. It has been suggested that the skirts were held out on frameworks of some kind, but excavations have not unearthed objects to which such a use could be ascribed.¹⁸ Despite the heaviness of the skirt, the subtle modeling of each leg is exposed (Fig. 15), as it is in the legs of the girls. It is further notable that the flaring skirt was carved as one piece with the body.

The face of the man was carved from a separate piece of wood which was doweled skillfully and discretely through the *filtrum* immediately below the nostrils. On this same "mask" the ears were carved (Fig. 16). Each arm of the figures is a separate piece. In the case of the left arms of the first three figures, the arms are made of two pieces. Great ingenuity and superlative sculptural skill are shown in the joining of these separate pieces. The modern term for the kind of joint used at the elbows of these left arms is an open half-lap joint. A flat surface on each round form was carved to fit at the bend of the elbows and these are locked together with a dowel. Despite the complexity of moving from a flat plane to a round one, and from one direction to its opposite, the sculptor's tool did not falter. Covered with an intact layer of paint, there would be no way to discern more than a single piece of wood, so smoothly were the adjoining pieces carved and fitted. The shoulders, too, join the torso with



17. Joint of left shoulder of first girl.

the utmost smoothness. This refinement is all the more notable in the case of the two arms raised to hold baskets (Fig. 17, where the pulled muscle may be seen).

Carved in one piece with the feet of the figures are thick tenons which fit into spaces hollowed out of the base. These tenons are dowel-locked from the sides of the base, in each case from the right side for the rear feet and from the left side for the front feet. Presumably when covered with a fairly thick layer of pale brown paint (although in terms of the usual work on such figures, still an unusually thin layer), the feet would have had the appearance of resting directly on the base. Over a layer of white the base was painted a light brown color, somewhat pinkish in hue, which suggests the color of desert sand. The pigment is a mixture of yellow ochre (hydrated oxide of iron) and red ochre (iron oxide). It is not difficult to picture these members of Djehuty-nekht's entourage crossing the desert plain between the river and the cliffs, taking their produce to lay before their master's tomb.

Several other small wooden sculptures from the Museum's excavations at Bersheh remind us of the widespread use of such objects in the Middle Kingdom and of the particular taste at Bersheh for a style of grace and delicacy. Story's Tomb 19 is the same as Newberry's Tomb 4 (Neheri son of Kemi). This tomb, on the basis of the style of its fragmentary reliefs (an exaggeration: the scenes are only strongly incised) and its inscriptions and the graffiti of the same Neheri in the Hatnub quarries, is dated to the very end of the Herakleopolitan period and the beginning of the Eleventh Dy-



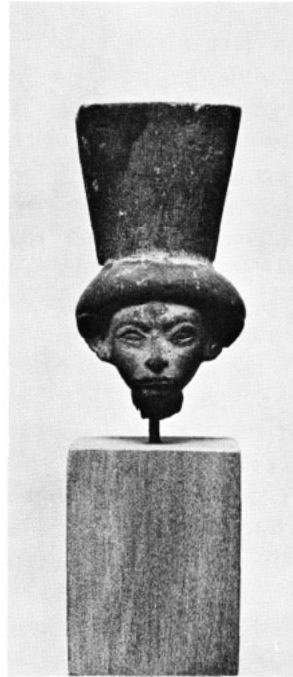
18

18. A naked Nubian.
Museum Egyptian Expedition. 20.1121.

19. Member of a princely court.
Museum Egyptian Expedition. 20.1120.



19



20

20. Foreign woman wearing a leather crown (?).
Museum Egyptian Expedition. 20.1125.

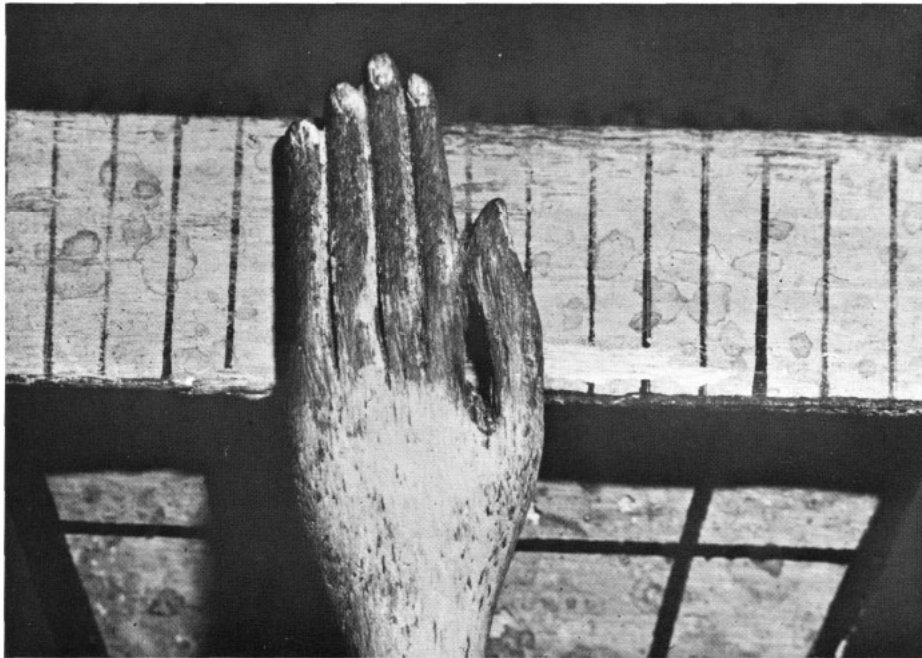


21

21. Model wooden censer from Djehuty-nekht's tomb.
Museum Egyptian Expedition. 20.1124.

nasty.¹⁹ Within the chamber of this tomb was sunk a pit, numbered 19 B by Story, from which came several very fine wood sculptures and faience objects.²⁰ Although a few fragments of coffin sides and a complete canopic chest were in the burial chamber, no inscription gives us the name of the owner of the tomb or an indication of the sex of the deceased. Fig. 18 illustrates that rather remarkable class of female figures called "concubine" figures because it has been assumed that such legless girls could not leave their master's harem.²¹ Often they were made in faience and are shown wearing an open net-like pattern of beads, represented in black on the blue ground of the faience.²² Sometimes they are nude, as in our example. In fact there is no evidence for or against the concept of the "concubine," although I am not prepared to offer an alternative. The round curls (made by inserting tiny pegs in an allover pattern on the tight wig) and thick lips of the Bersheh "concubine" suggest that she might have come from Nubia or the Sudan. Indeed, women of the royal family of Mentuhotep Nebhepet-re (2061-2010 B.C.) at Thebes were quite explicitly shown as brown-skinned natives of these southern regions.²³ From the beginning of Egyptian history there had been an intimate physical and cultural relationship between Egypt and her African neighbors, an intimacy made possible by the great highway of the Nile. The figure is further embellished with inlaid eyes: the whites are a white stone, the pupils a dark brown or black stone. The face is separately made, like that of the man in the Procession. Although she is shown armless in Fig. 18, both arms were found in the excavation. Fig. 19 is another lithe, gracefully formed girl.²⁴ Unlike the figures in the Procession, her arms were held in place by tenons firmly set in the body, onto which the arms were fitted. Again, both arms were found; only one is shown in place here. The brows and rims of the eyes of this figure are molded rather sharply in relief. Although the brows of the Procession are plastic, they are only lightly so, and the outlines of the eyes are painted. The block under the feet shows that she stood on a separate base. Since her feet are placed together and her arms are held close to her body, it is doubtful that she was an offering bearer. More likely the statuette represents the deceased, if female, or a wife or member of the family of the deceased, if male.

The refinement of the wig, the facial features, and the sensitivity of the modeling of breasts, abdomen, and pubis relate the style of the sculpture to that of the Procession. Note especially the pelvic structure of Figs. 18 & 19 and that of the first girl in the Procession, Fig. 13. Pit 19 B was, therefore, an intrusive burial in a much older tomb. The same is true of the other figures from Pit 19 B, including the "concubine" and the curious head with tall crown, Fig. 20.²⁵ The conical shape of this ornament implies that it is a crown or hat of some kind, but strangely it is hollow and has no top. On the other hand, set below the rim inside the hollowed-out cone, there is a ridge which might suggest that some kind of cover was fitted within the cone. Smith has suggested that the head formed the finial of a staff or handle, since the neck is extremely thin and has a sharp backward angle. The form of the hair is also curious, not to mention the strangely foreign appearance of the eyes, high and broad cheekbones, and narrow chin. Perhaps the head represents a visitor from some other land. It should be remembered that at Beni Hasan to the north of Bersheh there is a famous painted representa-



22. Fingers of the left hand of the first girl.

tion of a visiting caravan of Asiatics.²⁶ In this tomb of Khnumhetep of the reign of Sesostris II (1897-1878 B.C.) an Asiatic lyre player wears his hair cut in a thick round coif which might be related to the rather similarly represented hair of the lady with the crown.²⁷ The theoretical reconstruction of a cap with mica appliqués from Kerma in the Sudan gives to the cap a straight-sided cylindrical shape. The Kerma micas are dated to the period immediately following the end of the Twelfth Dynasty.²⁸ When excavated, some of these interesting appliqués were found still adhering to traces of leather. The thickness of the cap worn by our Bersheh lady may indicate that it, too, was made of leather.

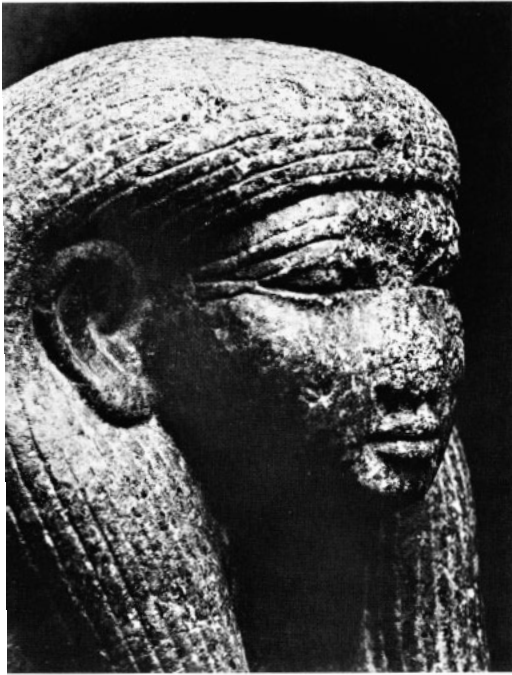
The superbly made model censer ending in a hand which holds a dish for incense comes from Djehuty-nekht's burial chamber (Fig. 21).²⁹ The tiny box was meant to contain pellets of incense like the one being dropped on the brazier in Fig. 6. A tiny knob (actually a peg) and incised lines show what would have been a sliding lid in the original from which the model was designed. The arm is inserted separately into the box. The long, narrow fingers, realistically closed over the handle of the dish, with their daintily carved nails, indicate that the object was carved by the man who created the Procession. The fingers of the girl holding the closed basket (Fig. 22) are a good example of the superlative skill of this woodcarver, and of the similarity existing between the two objects. There is now no evidence that the censer was painted. These model censers represent an important part of the funerary ceremony, at which the

soul of the deceased underwent a rite of purification by virtue of the recitation of magical formulae, the "sweetening of the breath" with incense, and other means.³⁰

During the Twelfth Dynasty we can recognize two strains at work in the artists' studios. One of these represents an adherence to an earlier, Memphite tradition of idealism. This tradition effected an idealism of youthful beauty, physical health and prowess, repose, straightforward nobility of aspect and pose. In a word, the aim of the Memphite, Old Kingdom, ideal of human form was to represent it at the height of its physical well-being, namely at the stage of early maturity. Into this physical well-being, no mental stress was permitted to intrude. How far from this idealism are some of the royal portraits of the Twelfth Dynasty! The faces of Sesostris III and Amenemhat III, and even some of their predecessors, are filled with an inner agony which betrays the anxiety of a rulership no longer unthinkingly confident of its aspirations and ideals.³¹ The two sculptural movements are observed in private sculpture, and in the case of the Bersheh Procession, it is back to the ancient idealism of the Old Kingdom, that the sculptor has turned. The lady Sennuwy, the black granite statue from Kerma made at the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty, expresses the same tradition.³² This lady, conceived in large masses, sits lightly on her narrow but solid block seat. The broadly defined planes of her face are instinct with a grace made all the more real by the slight smile in her lightly upturned lips. A suspicion of the mannerism of the preceding Eleventh Dynasty is detected in the almost triangular profile of the crisply outlined eyes. These subtleties and the narrowness of the waist are in sharp contrast to the heavy wig and thick legs. So skilfully are these apparent contradictions conceived as a unity that there is no disfigurement, no distraction of one element from another. This resolution of contrasts is one of the great successes of Egyptian sculpture in every period.

An important recent acquisition of the Museum reveals the extent to which the new influence worked to change the ideal of feminine beauty. Fig. 23 is a small black granite bust of a queen, her royalty indicated by the remains of the uraeus on her wig. The heavy wig, thick face, weighty cheeks, and ponderous brows suggest an emotionalism which is missing from the Procession and the lady Sennuwy. Perhaps it is too much to say that it is an uneasy crown which this queen wears, but we cannot deny that the stress of its responsibilities is conveyed in what approaches a portrait. Here again we see very specifically the great contrast between pure design — the sharp relief of eyebrow and cosmetic line — and naturalism — the melancholy mouth which imposes an entirely subjective character on the sculpture. On the basis of a similarly sized black granite bust of Sesostris II in Vienna, with features related to our bust, and two life-sized inscribed granite statues in Cairo, it is likely that the personage represented in the new Boston sculpture is Nofret, queen of Sesostris II.³³

Despite the notable changes which occurred during the Dynasty, it is striking that near the end of the period, in a provincial capital, a master sculptor could remain infused with the idealism of the halcyon days of another age. The only difference be-



23. Black granite bust of a queen, probably Nofret, wife of Sesostris II (1897-78 B.C.). *Egyptian Curator's Fund. 67.9.*



24. Dressing the hair of the royal lady, Kawit. From her limestone coffin excavated at Deir el Bahari. *Egyptian Museum, Cairo.*

tween the figures of the Procession and the lady Sennuwy is an even greater refinement, a larger grace, if you will, which we see in the elongation of proportions, the *caractère séduisante* of the modeling in its every aspect, the delicacy of the facial features, the light-filled palette with which the figures are colored.

The lengthening of form in these figures to an extreme limit brings us close to a state which Aldred, speaking of another late Twelfth Dynasty wooden sculpture, described as "trembling on the verge of mannerism."³⁴ It is as if the Middle Kingdom had come full circle from its beginnings in the Eleventh Dynasty. In the sunk reliefs of the coffins of the ladies of Mentuhotep's court referred to already,³⁵ there is a precision of drawing, indulgence in a certain kind of minute patternization, and continuation of a curving line for its own sake, which betoken an intense sense of design as the artist's primary goal. The hairdressing scene on the coffin of Kawit³⁶ is the classic example of this mannerism (Fig. 24). Eleventh Dynasty sculpture in the round does not provide us with enough examples to make possible a sequential development, but in the wooden head of a woman excavated at Lisht by the Metropolitan Museum and now in Cairo,³⁷ we can see Memphite idealism touched by Eleventh Dynasty mannerism (Fig. 25). This head, with its enormous and yet somehow lightly placed wig, is the basis for dating a remarkably beautiful wooden statuette in Leiden (Fig. 26).³⁸ A smallish head is surrounded by a large wig which is slit at either side where it falls over the shoulders.



25. Wooden head of a young woman, from Lisht. *Egyptian Museum, Cairo.*

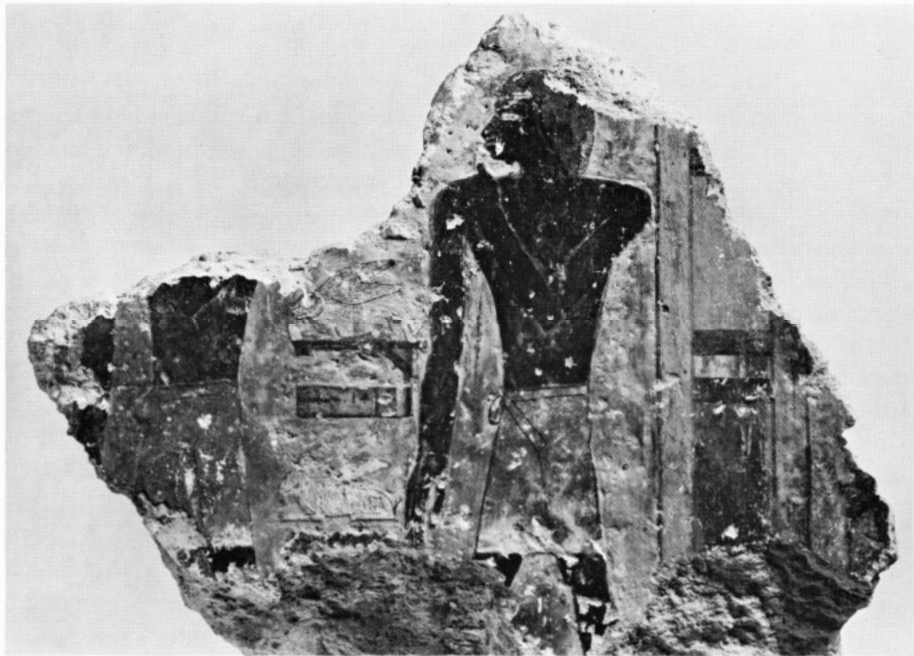


26. Wooden statue of Imeret-neb-es, perhaps from Thebes. *Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden.*

What is particularly significant for purposes of comparison with the Procession, is the treatment of the pelvic structure. This could not be further from a true portrayal of the complex anatomy involved: the pelvic bones themselves are separated absurdly from the protrusion of the thighs. But the point of these exaggerations is not the lack of naturalism or realism, but the extent to which the sculptor played with natural forms to create a total concept of design. It is in this respect that the idealistic naturalism of the Memphite tradition has been leavened by an Upper Egyptian inspiration for formalistic design. In the Procession the two concepts meet in complete unity and harmony.

The elongated proportions and the attention to every detail are seen in the fragment from the tomb of Djehuty-hetep (it was discovered by Story while clearing the terrace in front of his tomb), published here in a photograph for the first time (Fig. 27).³⁹ The present condition of this fragment gives but a small indication of the delicate workmanship in this remarkable tomb, whether in the well-known relief of the ladies of his court or in the delicate paintings with which much of the tomb is decorated.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the tall narrow-waisted figure and the sinuously-drawn hares in the inscription bring us very close to the Djehuty-nekht paintings and the Procession.

If it were possible to define the character of Egyptian sculpture in a single phrase, it would be necessary to say that this sculpture aims to retain an integral mass and space within itself, without reference to external experience. A sculpture in the round, whether seated or standing, whether stone or wood, is conceived as belonging within



27. Attendants from the tomb of Djehuty-hetep at Bersheh. Painted limestone relief. *Museum Egyptian Expedition. 47.1659.*

the block of material in which it is carved. Each member of the figure is seen to be tightly restrained within the framework of its origin. In painting and even in relief, the outline performs the function of defining form, and particularly of constraining form within the single subject. No loose ends are permitted to suggest that the figure has an essential relationship with others beyond it, except in terms of a compositional, or design, relationship. Perhaps the most successful expression of the constraint imposed by the outline is sunk relief. Here the sharp shadow thrown by the sun, or any light source, on the edge of the sunk relief defines the drawing, and thereby the form, more aptly even than a heavy outline painted around a figure. At the same time, sunk relief by its very nature takes form directly into the substance in which it is carved, where the Egyptian artist thought form belonged in the first place. In this respect, the Bersheh Procession is uncharacteristic because, perfect as it is within itself, its very lightness and movement take it out of the restricted sphere of self-containment and into a larger spatial involvement. A similar inspiration moved the master of the coffin to see the possibilities of expanding vision in two dimensions.

We can probably be certain that the man who produced the master paintings and the one who carved the Procession were not the same. As far as we can tell, the various crafts were kept quite distinct. On the other hand, it is clear that the Procession was subsequently colored by the master of the coffin. If the delicacy of the palette were not enough to indicate this (remembering that the palette used here is itself an

almost unique thing, observed otherwise only at Meir and Qau el Kebir),⁴¹ the decoration of the two chests is very suggestive. The black lines of the heavier reed supports of the chests in Procession and coffin paintings are copies of each other (cf. Figs. 8 & 9). In analyzing the pigments of Djehuty-nekht's coffin, it was determined that the green consisted of a mixture of Egyptian blue (calcium copper sulphate) and the mineral atacamite (copper chloride), finely ground. Atacamite is found as a corrosion product of copper deposits, especially in arid climates. It has not been observed in Egyptian pigments before. Mr. Young and Miss Whitmore of the Museum's Research Laboratory have now analyzed several pigments on the Procession, including the green found on the mirror case. Atacamite was again found to be the principal element of the green.⁴² The occurrence of this very rare pigment here is the strongest evidence that the colors came from the same paint pot, and that they were surely used by the same man.

In every respect, Bersheh is a remarkable site. The workmanship there was on the highest level from the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty. Even the tomb of Aha-nekht (Newberry No. 5)⁴³ of the Tenth Dynasty approaches in quality the rather careful and refined relief at Assiut of the same period. This is exceptional in an age when craftsmanship was on a pretty low level in the other provincial capitals of the First Intermediate Period. The level of excellence kept to in the Intermediate Period was raised to a remarkable height during the Twelfth Dynasty, when Bersheh and its close neighbors in Middle Egypt led the entire country in the production of the finest paintings and reliefs of the period. The wooden statues of the members of the princely court of the Hare Nome, which we have seen here, belong to the greatest expression of that excellence.

NOTES

1. 21.326. (*Expedition No. 15-5-434.*) L. of base, .665 m. See W. S. Smith, *Ancient Egypt*, Fig. 58; D. Dunham, *MFA Bulletin*, 39, 1941, pp. 9, 10; *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 29, 1943, Pl. II opp. p. 50; J. H. Breasted, *Egyptian Servant Statues*, New York, 1948, Pl. 63; D. Dunham, *The Egyptian Department and its Excavations*, Boston, 1958, Fig. 45; C. Aldred, *Middle Kingdom Art in Egypt*, No. 38. The wood from which the figures are made is probably acacia. The base is another wood. Photo credits: C. Aldred, *Middle Kingdom Art in Egypt*, London, 1950, Pl. 29: Fig. 26. Author: Figs. 7-17, 22. Creative Photographers (Boston): cover and Figs. 3, 4, 6. Expedition: Figs. 1, 2, 5. Heinz Herzer (Munich): Fig. 23. K. Lange and M. Hirmer, *Egypt*, New York, 1956, Pl. 84: Fig. 25. MFA: Figs. 18-21, 27. W. S. Smith, *Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt*, Baltimore, 1958, Pl. 61: Fig. 24.

2. The story of the Museum's excavation at Bersheh is recounted in Chapter II of my *Egyptian Paintings of the Middle Kingdom: The Tomb of Djehuty-nekht*, in press.

3. The 19th Century exploration of Bersheh is given in Newberry and Griffith, *El Bersheh*, I, London, 1896, pp. 3-5.

4. *El Bersheh*, I, Pl. XV.

5. *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte*, 1, 1900, 17ff.; 2, 1901, 14ff.; 206ff.; 3, 1902, 278ff.; B. Porter and R. L. B. Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*, Vol. IV, Oxford, 1934, pp. 177-187.

6. 03.1648-1650. *Emily Esther Sears Fund*.

7. Cf. D. Dunham, *MFA Bulletin*, 19, 1921, p. 45; Dunham, *The Egyptian Department*, Fig. 18; *Egyptian Paintings of the Middle Kingdom*, Figs. 1-2.

8. But cf. the fragments of painting copied by W. S. Smith, *American Journal of Archaeology*, 55, 1951, Pls. 18-20; these are reproduced in color in *Egyptian Paintings of the Middle Kingdom*, Pls. XLIX-LI.

9. Another, but far less elegant procession similar to ours is known, Winlock (n. 17 below), Pl. 32.

10. We cannot enlarge here on the matter of the dating of Djehuty-nekht's coffin paintings. The problem is discussed by W. S. Smith in the article cited in n. 8 and elsewhere, as well as by myself in *Egyptian Paintings of the Middle Kingdom*, Chapter V, with references to the earlier discussions.
11. Aldred, *Middle Kingdom Art*, No. 38.
12. D. Dunham, *MFA Bulletin*, 39, 1941, pp. 9, 10.
13. 63.489. Edwin E. Jack Fund.
14. For example, *Catalogue générale des Antiquités égyptiennes du Caire*, Berlin, 1902; H. Lange and H. Schäffer, *Grab-und Denksteine des Mittleren Reichs*, Vol. IV, CG 20088, 20098, 20535, 20572 (a lady holding a hes vase), etc.
15. An actual example is shown in W. C. Hayes, *Sceptre of Egypt*, I, New York, 1953, p. 241, Fig. 154.
16. 11.744. *Museum Egyptian Expedition*.
17. H. E. Winlock, *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt from the Tomb of Meket-rê at Thebes*, Cambridge, Mass., 1955.
18. A. Lucas, 4th edition, revised by J. Harris, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, London, 1962, p. 8. Also see E. Riefstahl, *Patterned Textiles in Pharaonic Egypt*, New York, 1944, p. 4. Mrs. Riefstahl is preparing an up-to-date and much enlarged edition of this invaluable work.
19. R. Anthes, *Die Felseninschriften von Hatnub*, Leipzig, 1928, pp. 92ff., 98ff., 114. Cf. *El Bersheh*, II, pls. X-XI. Our own records include photographs of some wall fragments from this tomb not published by Newberry and Griffith.
20. See *Ancient Egypt*⁴, pp. 95, 97, Fig. 60.
21. 20.1121. (*Expedition No. 15-5-670*.) H. .186 m. Dunham, *The Egyptian Department*, Fig. 46 b, and p. 70 where it is incorrectly stated that this and acc. no. 20.1120 come from Djehuty-nekht's chamber.
22. Cf. *Sceptre*, I, p. 221, Fig. 137.
23. E.g., chamber of Kemsit, poorly reproduced in color in E. Naville, *The XIth Dynasty Temple at Deir el Bahari*, Vol. III, London, 1907, Pls. II-III.
24. 20.1120. (*Expedition No. 15-5-666*.) H. .274 m.
25. 20.1125. (*Expedition No. 15-5-787*.) H. .054 m.
26. P. E. Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, I, London, 1893, Pls. XXX-XXXI; N. M. Davies and A. H. Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Paintings*, Chicago, 1936, Pls. X-XI.
27. Davies and Gardiner, Pl. XI.
28. W. S. S[mith], *MFA Bulletin*, 59, 1961, pp. 122, 123.
29. 20.1124. (*Expedition No. 15-5-153*.) L. .111 m.
30. For an interesting discussion of these censers in the form of an extended arm, see H. G. Fischer, "The Evolution of the Armlike Censer," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, 2, 1963, pp. 28ff. A drawing of MFA 20.1124 appears in Fig. 6a.
31. Aldred puts forth the highly interesting, but as yet unprovable, theory that Thebes, or at least Upper Egypt, was the source of the new ideas which made possible such innovations as the royal portraiture of the later part of the Twelfth Dynasty, see *Middle Kingdom Art*, pp. 8ff. See more on this below.
32. G. A. Reisner, *Kerma*, Vols. IV & V, Cambridge, Mass., 1923, Pl. 31; *Ancient Egypt*⁴, Fig. 54; and elsewhere.
33. 67.9. *Egyptian Curator's Fund*. H. .190 m. The bust will be published elsewhere with all relevant data. See H. G. Evers, *Staat aus dem Stein*, Vol. II, Munich, 1929, Pl. XII, Fig. 64 (Sesostris II, Vienna); Vol. I, Pls. 72-75 (Nofret, Cairo).
34. Aldred, *Middle Kingdom Art*, No. 79.
35. See n. 23 above.
36. Aldred, *Middle Kingdom Art*, No. 8.
37. *Ibid.*, No. 33.
38. *Ibid.*, No. 29.
39. 47.1659. *Museum Egyptian Expedition*. H. .280 m. This fragment comes from the south wall of Djehuty-hetep's tomb. It belongs to the bottom register, west end, *El Bersheh*, I, Pl. XXIV (extreme right edge). W. S. Smith has reconstructed this wall in *AJA*, 55, 1951, pp. 323, 325, Figs. 2, 3. The relief published here is fragment 9 on Fig. 2.
40. Cf. the elegantly attired ladies of Djehuty-hetep's court, a fragment of the tomb now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo: W. S. Smith, *Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt*, Pl. 74 A; Kodansha publishers, *Museums of the World: Egyptian Museum, Cairo* (in Japanese), Tokyo, 1968, Pl. 38 (color).
41. See n. 8 above. This important subject is discussed by Smith in several places and by myself in Chapter V of *Egyptian Paintings of the Middle Kingdom*, where reference is made to the earlier studies.
42. Other pigments from the mirror case are: white (calcium carbonate), red (red ochre = red iron oxide), black (charcoal black). The analyses of the coffin pigments are published in *Egyptian Paintings of the Middle Kingdom*, Appendix. Also see *The Saturday Review*, February 3, 1968, cover and p. 60 (where it was incorrectly stated that there are many deposits of atacamite in Egypt; there is no mention of this mineral in the more general studies of the geology of Egypt).
43. *El Bersheh*, II, Pls. XII-XVII; Anthes, *Hatnub*, p. 114.