

# *JOURNAL OF THE HELLENIC INSTITUTE OF EGYPTOLOGY*

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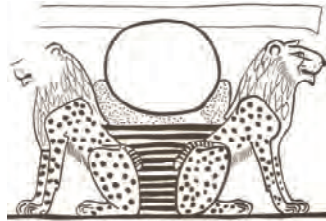


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## EDITORIAL

The *Journal of the Hellenic Institute of Egyptology (JHIE)* is jointly co-published annually, in one fascicle, by the HELLENIC INSTITUTE OF EGYPTOLOGY (Athens, Greece) and by the ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF ALEXANDRIA (Alexandria, Egypt). The aim of *JHIE*, based on the principles of Humanism and the desire for International Synergies and collaboration between colleagues of different nationalities that characterize both the Institute and the Society, is to provide a modern scientific *forum* for the discussion of a plethora of aspects, notions and facets from various domains of Egyptology, Archaeology and Archaeoastronomy, with emphasis on the religion, funerary texts, language and scripts, Epigraphy, Papyrology, Sciences (Astronomy, Mathematics, Botany, Architecture, & c.) of ancient Egypt, as well as Helleno-Roman Archaeology related to Egypt; furthermore, Coptology is also represented. Interdisciplinarity and the harmonious interference between various scholarly fields and disciplines are highly desirable, as is also a general emphasis on the collaboration of countries all over the Mediterranean Basin, encompassing studies of individual civilizations (in particular those related to ancient Egypt and Hellas), as well as common elements, contacts and interactions among them. Our journal is kindly published, handled and distributed by SERAPIS EDITIONS, Athens, Greece. All payments are due to SERAPIS EDITIONS, and not to the Institute neither to the Society.

*JHIE* is based on the highest standards and accepts, after peer-reviewing, original papers from all authors, without any discrimination between nationality, religion, gender or sexual orientation. We publish the work of international scholars, while also providing a virtual *forum* for the finest Hellenic and Egyptian scholarship; thus, we welcome original articles dealing with the aforementioned thematologies. Articles discussing different cultures will be considered for publication if they are clearly relevant to the ancient Mediterranean World (specifically to Egypt and Hellas), also including ancient Hebrews, Mesopotamians, Assyrians, Persians, Babylonians, Hittites, North Africans, & c. Information about new egyptological, archaeological and archaeoastronomical discoveries and current scholarly events is also welcome (in the form of very short notes). Publishers are highly encouraged to send review copies of their books in the relevant fields (please see below).

*JHIE* is a double-blind peer-reviewed journal. Articles must not have been published in, or submitted to, another publication at the time of submission and must be original. All submitted papers are firstly very carefully read by at least two Editors of *JHIE*, who will give a feedback to the author(s). Articles (excluding book reviews or research reports) are afterwards reviewed anonymously by at least two referees in their specific field, appointed by the Editorial Board. The whole peer-review process, as well as any judgment, is based on the quality of the article, its originality and the research conducted therein (only!). In cases where the reviewers recommend changes in the manuscript, authors are requested to revise their articles. In the rare case of unreasonable claims by a reviewer, the Executive Editors in Chief deserve the right to agree with the author not to accept these claims. The final approval of articles lies at the two Executive Editors and at the Editorial Board. Throughout the whole peer-review process, articles are treated confidentially. In case of (alleged or supposed) interest conflict, misconduct or plagiarism of any party involved, the two Executive Editors in Chief and/or (if necessary) another Member of the Editorial Board) shall

pursue the case and should the situation of taking action arise, shall notify the respective party. The List of the Editorial Board can be found printed in the journal and also at its official web-site. We collaborate with more Colleagues worldwide for specific themes and issues. Finally, in order to make the double-blind peer-review process transparent and comprehensible, we shall also publish occasionally in our web-page the names of referees; for this, see: <http://www.serapis.gr/JHIE>. All authors whose papers have been accepted are obliged to follow carefully and precisely all our *Editorial Guidelines*, otherwise their papers will not be published. The preferred languages for publication are English and French.

Nowadays, continuity and stability have also become strongly desired and discussed topics in the current situation. For *JHIE* we are happy to have already received a strong support from our readers, the authors, our reviewers and the editors. We have appointed new members of the Editorial Board during the past years; we have taken care to equip our *wi3 n pt* with the international *šmsw* we need to cross all the Great Greens (*W3dw Wrw*), heavenly and terrestrial alike, in the future, and —of course— under any weather conditions ...

All communications, manuscripts, disks and books for review should be sent to the Executive Editor in Chief in Greece: Dr Dr Alicia MARAVELIA (*JHIE*), c/o: SERAPIS EDITIONS, 27, Notara Str., GR-106 83, Athens, Greece. For e-mailing, please use the following alternatives (M<sup>rs</sup> Sophia TSOURINAKI, Asst Secretary of the Institute): [hieg-aker.org@otenet.gr](mailto:hieg-aker.org@otenet.gr) and [s.tsourinaki@yahoo.com](mailto:s.tsourinaki@yahoo.com). For matters of payment and subscriptions, please ONLY communicate with the Publisher (SERAPIS EDITIONS), as above, NOT with the Institute or the Society; and in this case, for e-mailing, kindly use: [serapis.gr@gmail.com](mailto:serapis.gr@gmail.com).

In this fascicle, the 12 authors, whose selected papers represent our principles, contribute substantially to the propagation of fresh original knowledge concerning ancient (and also Coptic) Egypt and Hellas. Different periods of the ancient Egyptian History and different interesting topics are dealt with in methodical and fascinating ways. The continuity of notions, ideas and facts, the interdisciplinary approaches and the originality of certain ideas and methods are to be praised. Follow some book reviews for recently appeared works, as well as two obituaries: one for the unforgettable Colleague Dr Raphael VENTURA, who was of Greek-Hebrew origin; and another for the most reverent Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral, Archbishop of Cetinje, M<sup>gr</sup> Dr AMPHILOCHIOS, for life Honorary Principal Member and Great Sponsor of the Institute, who passed away on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020. Very special thanks go to Dr Themis DALLAS (University of Thessaly, Hellas) for his very warm and invaluable help with the Journal's web-site, the DOI numbers and many more; Prof. Dr Sven GÜNTHER (IHAC, NENU, China) is also kindly acknowledged for his warm and precious advice during the first «international steps» of this journal! We should like to thank ALL of you wholeheartedly for your contributions and for accepting to co-journey with us in our (dual and virtual) celestial and terrestrial voyage ...

**Alicia MARAVELIA & Mona HAGGAG**

*Executive Editors in Chief*

Athens-Alexandria, December 2020

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## EDITING GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

All authors are kindly requested and expected to follow precisely the Editing Rules. Papers of authors who do not follow the *JHIE*-Rules will NOT be published, even if they are accepted by the Referees! We kindly ask you to respect this and follow the rules, trying to save as much time as possible, for both parts, in both: unnecessary labour and unnecessary exchange of e-mails.

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2. No unorthodox, racist or strange political statements are permitted and terminology should be politically correct, without discrimination between men and women or any other «racial», religious or sexual discriminations! For instance DO NOT say «man/men has/have done a lot», prefer rather *humans have done a lot* or *humanity has done a lot*, & c.
3. Use throughout *Hellenic* instead of «Greek», *Hellas* instead of «Greece», *Hellenic language* instead of «Greek language». Also, kindly, use throughout BC and AD.
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# PETOSIRIS, THE «PHARAOH»: A USURPER OR A RESTORER OF THE ORDER?

José das Candeias Montes SALES

*Universidade Aberta, Lisbon, Portugal*

## ABSTRACT

In the textual inscriptions of the inner chapel of the Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna 'el-Gebel, and in the iconography of the outer halls of the facade, there are several traces of the use by this high priest of epithets and expressions associated with the pharaonic protocol, as well as the performance of typical functions and ritual acts traditionally performed by Egyptian pharaohs. Never before had been witnessed such political audacity. Does the disappearance of the traditional indigenous central power, close, strong and effective, caused by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Persian Domination, and the political and administrative disorders around the ancient city of Hermopolis Magna, explain this usurpation of functions and privileges? Is this merely a case of abuse of *potestas sacerdotalis*? Are we before an exceptional example of priestly consciousness due to the decline of the traditional pharaonic royal model? This paper will try to shed light on these questions.

**KEYWORDS:** Petosiris, iconographic sources, textual sources, memory, pharaonic power, priestly consciousness, Hermopolis Magna, 2<sup>nd</sup> Persian Domination.

## I. INTRODUCTION.

Petosiris was not officially an Egyptian pharaoh. In fact, he was high priest (*Wr Diw, Hrp-Nswt: Great one of the Five, Lord of the Thrones*) and *lesōnis* (λεσῶνις / *imy-r3 šnt*) or *oikomonos* (οἰκονόμος: *administrator, head of finance*) of the Temple of Thoth, in *Hnmw/Hermopolis*<sup>1</sup>. Petosiris <sup>c</sup>Ankhefkhonsū (*P3-di-Wsir, ḥnh.f Hnsw*) lived in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> Century to the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC (until the end of the reign of Ptolemaios I Sotēr I at 285 BC)<sup>2</sup>. Following a family tradition already counting two generations, he was consecrated since childhood to the god Thoth, the great god of Hermopolis, and has taken the priestly office after his brother, Djedthothiuief'ankh, have been removed from it, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Persian Domination (341-332 BC), when Egypt was, therefore, a Satrapy of the vast Empire of the Achaemenids, even before the arrival of Alexander, the Great<sup>3</sup>. He was buried in a family tomb at Tuna 'el-Gebel, built by him around the year 300 BC<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See Inscription N<sup>o</sup> 81 (Tomb of Petosiris, East Wall of Chapel): [...] *the Great one of the Five, the Master of the (Holy) Seats, the High Priest who sees the god in his shrine, who carries his lord and follows his lord, who enters into the Holy of Holies, who performs his functions together with the Great Prophets; the Prophet of the Ogdoad, Chief of the Priests of Sekhmet, Leader of the Priests of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Phylai; the royal scribe who reckons all the property in the Temple of Hermopolis; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Prophet of Khnūm-Rē<sup>c</sup>, Lord of Herwer, and of Hathor, Lady of Nefrusi; the Phylarchos of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Phylē of the Temple of Herwer and that of Nefrusi, the Prophet of Amūn-Rē<sup>c</sup> and the gods of those places, Petosiris, the revered, called (cAn)khef(en)khons, born of the Lady Nefer-renpet, justified* (LICHTHEIM 1980: 45; cf. LEFEBVRE 1924: 136; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 53-59; LEFEBVRE 1921: 223-224; LALOUETTE 1984: 263-264, 340; SALES 2011: 19-22).

<sup>2</sup> See *PP* III: 5406. Petosiris is the adapted Hellenic onomastic form of the Egyptian name *P3-di-Wsir* (*He Whom Osiris has given*). His surname was *ḥnh.f Hnsw* (*Khonsū is his Life*); see ARAÚJO 2003: 314; LEFEBVRE 1923B: 15; MENU 1994: 321, n. 42; REDFORD 2001: 38, 39.

<sup>3</sup> LICHTHEIM 1980: 44; SAUNERON 1988: 16; SALES 2012: 47, 48. The role of *Wr Diw, Hrp-Nswt* would remain in the family for five generations (SALES 2012: 60, 61, 73).

<sup>4</sup> The monument was discovered at the end of 1919 by Gustave Lefebvre, at Tuna 'el-Gebel, the necropolis of the ancient Hermopolis in the Helleno-Roman Period whose ruins can be currently found in Middle Egypt, in the area of Mallāwi, about 300 km south of Cairo (TYLDESLEY 1999: 1037-1039).

Petosiris was not officially an Egyptian pharaoh, but when we use the available sources — iconographic and textual— to study his period and his life, especially those from his tomb at Tuna `el-Gebel, we observe that his behaviour is, in several aspects, the behaviour of an ancient Egyptian pharaoh. Why this actually happened?

## II. PETOSIRIS, HIS TOMB AND HIS LIFE.

The sumptuous Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna `el-Gebel endures as a remarkable and exceptional monument<sup>5</sup>. Strikingly well preserved, it is nevertheless surprisingly understudied<sup>6</sup>. It is among the most immediately recognizable monuments in Egypt from the late 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC. Architecturally, it has the appearance of a small cult temple of the Helleno–Roman Era. Oriented North to South, it consists of two rooms visually differentiated: a transverse hall (*pronaos* or vestibule) with a colonnaded facade (composed by four columns, two in each side, linked by half–height screen walls), and a chapel (*naos* or *cella*) almost square in shape. Four pillars support the chapel's roof and divide the space into three sections. Near the centre of the chapel's floor is the covered pit that leads to the subterranean burial chamber<sup>7</sup> [FIG. 1-2].



FIGURE 1: The Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna `el-Gebel: facade of the tomb.

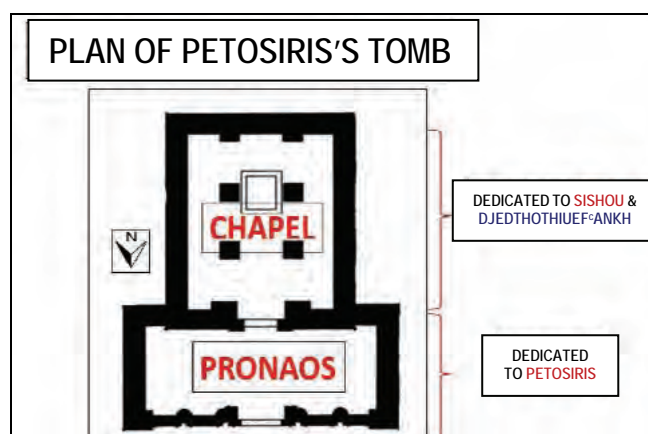


FIGURE 2: The Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna `el-Gebel: plan and orientation of the monument.

<sup>5</sup> According to Cherpion *et al.*, it is «un des plus beaux monuments de l'Égypte tardive» (CHERPION, CORTEGGIANI & GOUT 2007: 3).

<sup>6</sup> VENIT 2016: 5.

<sup>7</sup> LEFEBVRE 1923B: Planches I-IV. It is accepted that this tomb–temple is the most complete building from the years that marked the transition between the Saitic–Persian and the Ptolemaic Periods to survive until now. The facade is exclusively dedicated to Petosiris. The pronaos (L = 9.40 m, W = 3.80 m) is strictly reserved to his burial cult, his spouse, his younger brothers, his children and his grandson. Petosiris's deceased father and brother, Sishou and Djedthothiuief<sup>c</sup>ankh, are venerated in the naos of the tomb (L = 7.15 m, W = 6.25 m). The edification and decoration of the chapel are expected to have occurred towards the end of Petosiris's life, most likely around 300 BC. His son kept building and decorating the tomb during the time of Ptolemaios II. The same holds for his grandson, under Ptolemaios III Euergetēs I. The pronaos is slightly more elevated than the chapel (4.85 m height for the chapel *vs* 4.45 m for the pronaos). The east and west walls are 5.15 m tall and the facade, north of the complex, reached about 11.20 m. Lefebvre deduces the pronaos as a later addition to the monument just because of its short back walls. However, nowadays we admit there is no compelling reason indicating that the building itself was constructed in two phases and it is much more likely that the construction of two rooms was contemporaneous (FESTUGIÈRE 1959: 104; LEFEBVRE 1924: 49; VENIT 2016: 8-18).

About the goals of this construction, Petosiris states: *I built this tomb in this necropolis, beside the Great Souls who are there, in order that my father's name be pronounced, and that of my elder brother; a man is revived when his name is pronounced*<sup>8</sup>.

The tomb presents the first pronaos of Egyptian architecture<sup>9</sup>, an element which later would become a compulsory formal element of Ptolemaic and Roman temples' architecture that we can observe for example in the hypostyle halls of the Ptolemaic Temples of Edfu (in honour of Horus) and Esnah (dedicated to Khnūm), in the Roman Temple of Kalabsha (devoted to the god Mandulis) and in the Meroitic–Ptolemaic–Roman Temple of Debod (venerating Amūn of Debod), built in the periods that immediately followed<sup>10</sup>.

The inscriptions and figurative reliefs provide the most complete document of eschatological expression in the interstice between the height of Egyptian power and the encroaching subjugation accompanying Persian and Macedonian control<sup>11</sup>. Its inscriptions are «the most elaborate statements of personal morality that [had] survived from the Late Period»<sup>12</sup>, while its reliefs provide Petosiris's biography in visual form [FIG. 3].



FIGURE 3: Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna `el-Gebel: the position of images and inscriptions on the facade.

The two outermost columns of the facade of the tomb terminate in palm-leaves' capitals; the two innermost, which flank the doorway, are capped with composite floral capitals<sup>13</sup>. The doorway is finished off with a broken lintel, a feature of Egyptian temples beginning in the New Kingdom [FIG. 4-5].

<sup>8</sup> LICHTHEIM 1980: 45, 46; LEFEBVRE 1924: 136; LEFEBVRE 1921: 224, 225 (Inscription N<sup>o</sup> 81: 14-16).

<sup>9</sup> There is, however, only one record of such: the plan of the Temple of Thoth which is located in Hermopolis, where Petosiris served as high priest and for whose foundation, in which the pronaos can be dated back to the reign of Nectanebo I (380-362 BC), he was proud of. The plan of this temple (now disappeared) may thus have directly inspired the design adopted by Petosiris for his tomb, made in a small scale. His tomb is a tomb inspired by a temple. Modern day Egyptians living at the site call the tomb «the temple» (*al-maabad*), because of its highly decorated doorway and columns (SNAPE & BAILEY 1988: 5-8; SNAPE 2011: 256; CHERPION *et al.* 2007: 2, 3; TYLDESLEY 1999: 1038; VENIT 2016: 8, 9).

<sup>10</sup> SALES 2012: 48-51; VENIT 2016: 8.

<sup>11</sup> PIKE 2009: 76, 77.

<sup>12</sup> LICHTHEIM 1980: 45.

<sup>13</sup> LEFEBVRE 1920A: 50, 51; LEFEBVRE 1923B: Pl. VI; CHERPION *et al.* 2007: 13, 18.



FIGURE 4 [LEFT]: Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel: east side of the doorway.



FIGURE 5 [RIGHT]: Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel: west side of the doorway.

Symmetrically arranged images of Petosiris offering incense to seated deities decorate the four half-height screen walls<sup>14</sup>: on the two low walls that flank the doorway the deity approached by Petosiris with a triple libation with three water-jars and a fumigation of incense (*ir sntr kbhw*) is an ibis-headed figure identified by inscription as Osiris, the Ibis: *Osiris l'Ibis, dieu grand, père des dieux, Chef de l'Ennéade des dieux, vizir, juge de l'équité, qui fait du bien à tout le monde. Offrande de l'encens et de la libation par le Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, Prophète de l'Ogdoade, Chef des Prêtres de Sekhmet, Chef des Prêtres de la troisième et de la quatrième Classe, scribe royal, comptable de tous les biens du Temple de Khmounou, Petosiris, fils du Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, second Prophète de Khnūm-Rē, Seigneur d'Hirourt, Sishou* [West Side: Inscription 12]<sup>15</sup>. *Osiris l'Ibis, dieu grand, père des dieux, chef de l'Ennéade des dieux, vizir, juge de*



FIGURE 6 [LEFT]: Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel: east corner of the facade.



FIGURE 7 [RIGHT]: Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel: west corner of the facade.

<sup>14</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 45; LEFEBVRE 1923B: Pl. VI, 1 & 2; PM IV, 1934: 169, 171; CHERPION *et al.* 2007: 20 (Scene 12); 21 (Scene 14); 24 (Scene 22); 25 (Scene 20).

<sup>15</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 46; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 4-5; MENU 1995: 283.

*l'équité, qui fait du bien à qui lui est fidèle, qui fait du mal à ses ennemis. Offrande de l'encens et de la libation par le Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, Prophète de l'Ogdoade, Chef des Prêtres de Sekhmet, scribe royal, comptable de tous les biens du Temple de Khmounou, Petosiris, fils du Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, le Prophète Sishou» [East Side: Inscription 19]<sup>16</sup>.*

On the two low walls toward the corner of the tomb [FIG. 6-7] Petosiris is shown revering with food a baboon-headed figure, identified by inscription in both cases as Osiris, the Cynocephalus: *Osiris le Cynocéphale, dieu grand, chef des dieux, qui aime l'équité, qui se complait dans l'équité, qui écoute les prières des hommes. Apport des offrandes par le Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, scribe royal, comptable de tous les biens du Temple de Khmounou, Petosiris, fils du Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, Sishou [East Side: Inscription 21]<sup>17</sup>.*

In all the four representations, the deities were anthropomorphic, sitting, wearing the bull tail, lunar crescent and solar disks upon their heads, and holding at their hands the *w3s*-sceptre and the *ḥnh*-symbol. Thoth, the great god of *Hmnw*, imaged as both the ibis and the baboon, is elevated by his assimilation to the deity of the dead Osiris, and Osiris, in both cases, is established as a universal deity, who is worshiped also in Hermopolis<sup>18</sup>.

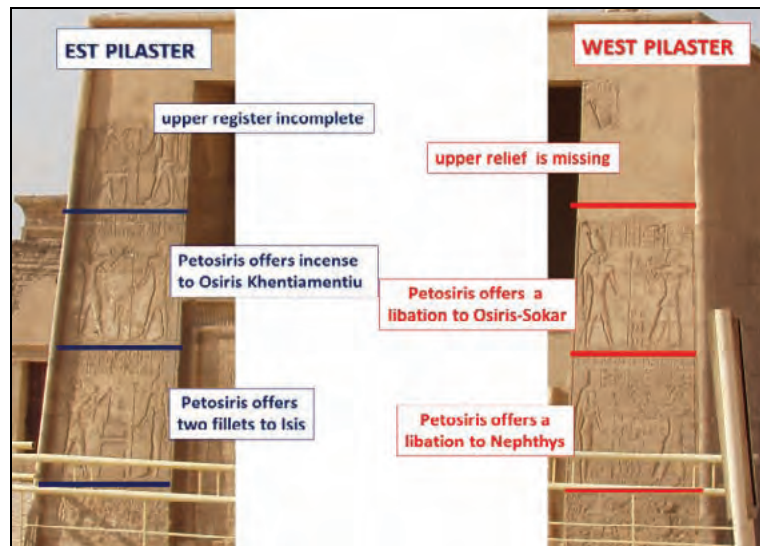


FIGURE 8: Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel: the east and west pilasters.

The west pilaster [FIG. 8] is divided into three carved registers, though the upper relief is missing; remains only the white crown of the deity<sup>19</sup>. In the second (central), Petosiris offers a double libation with two water-jars to Osiris-Sokar (*ir kbḥw*): *Sokaris-Osiris honoré dans Sheto, dieu grand honoré dans Khmounou. Offrande de la libation par le Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, Prophète de l'Ogdoade, Petosiris [West Side, Central Register: Inscription 15]<sup>20</sup>.* And in the third (lower), two vases of ointment to Nephthys (*ir mdt*): *Nephthys qui défend*

<sup>16</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 47; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 6; LEFEBVRE 1923B: Pl. VI, 1 & 2; MENU 1995: 283; CHERPION *et al.* 2007: 20 (Scenes 12 & 25; Scene 20).

<sup>17</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 47; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 7; LEFEBVRE 1923B: Pl. VI, 1 & 2; MENU 1995: 283; CHERPION *et al.* 2007: 21 (Scenes 14 & 24; Scene 22). The text of the west side (Inscription № 14) is damaged, but would be similar to that of Inscription 21 (see LEFEBVRE 1924: 46).

<sup>18</sup> VENIT 2016: 18, 19; MENU 1995: 283.

<sup>19</sup> CHERPION *et al.* 2007: 19, 22 (Scene 15).

<sup>20</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 46; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 5; LEFEBVRE 1923B: Pl. VI, 2; CHERPION *et al.* 2007: 19, 22 (Scene 16).

son frère et protégé le fatigué de cœur [Osiris], honoré dans Khmounou. Cérémonie de l'onction des membres divins par le Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, Prophète de l'Ogdoade, Petosiris, fils du Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, Sishou» [West Side, Lower Register: Inscription 16]<sup>21</sup>.

On the east pilaster (its upper register is incomplete, with an unidentified masculine deity)<sup>22</sup>, Petosiris offers two little cups of incense to Osiris *Hnty-Imntyw* in the second register [FIG. 8]: *Osiris Khentamentit, dieu grand, maître d'Abydos, honoré dans Khmounou. Offrande de l'encens par le Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, Prophète de l'Ogdoade, Petosiris* [East Side, Central Register: Inscription 23]<sup>23</sup>. He also offers two fillets to Isis in the lower one (*ir mnht*): *Grande Isis, mère des dieux, Dame du Ciel, Reine de tous les dieux, honorée dans Khmounou. Offrande des bandelettes par le Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, Prophète de l'Ogoade, Petosiris, fils du Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, le Prophète Sishou* [East Side, Lower Register: Inscription 24]<sup>24</sup>. All the deities represented on the facade of the Tomb of Petosiris (screen walls and pilasters) are deities in their mortuary aspect and Petosiris's image is in accordance with the traditional Egyptian treatment of assigning images of the tomb owner to the exterior in order to introduce the visitor to its occupant.

As Lefebvre points out, the facade is decorated structurally as if it were a temple, with Petosiris paying obeisance to the gods<sup>25</sup>. Temple building in Egypt, however, had been always the prerogative of pharaohs, and Petosiris has further appropriated the regal privilege of the pharaoh, who alone paid homage to the god on its facade. In one way or other, the images used by Petosiris on his tomb facade gives to the observer a material and concrete experience, summoning all ancient Egyptian political and religious imagery. Objectively, he represents himself performing the ritual gestures of offering to the gods, a role traditionally played by the Egyptian pharaoh (*nb irt ht*). He is the agent responsible for the transition from chaos to order<sup>26</sup>.

Due to his high position in the *Hmnw*/Hermopolis priestly hierarchy, Petosiris was not a regular «cult official»: he was *lesōnis* (λεσῶνις / *imy-r3 šnt* / ΛΑΨΑΝΕ) for seven consecutive years, as indicated by Inscriptions 59, 61, 62, 81 and 82<sup>27</sup>, with assumed concerns resulting from his position and its technical functions: *J'ai exercé les fonctions de λεσῶνις de Thoth, Maître de Khmounou, pendant sept ans, alors que des hommes venus des pays étrangers gouvernaient l'Égypte* [Inscription 59: 1, 2]<sup>28</sup>; [...] *a passé sept ans comme λεσῶνις de Thoth, sans qu'on trouvât de faute* [...] [Inscription 61: 31, 32]<sup>29</sup>; *Je passai sept ans comme λεσῶνις de Thoth, Maître de Khmounou, faisant toutes choses excellemment dans son temple* [Inscription 62: 3]<sup>30</sup>; *Je passai sept ans comme λεσῶνις de ce dieu, administrant ses biens, sans que fût trouvée de faute dans ma ges-*

<sup>21</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 46; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 6; LEFEBVRE 1923B: Pl. VI, 2; CHERPION *et al.* 2007: 19, 23 (Scene 17).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. LEFEBVRE 1923B: Pl. VI, 1; CHERPION *et al.*: 19, 26 (Scene 23).

<sup>23</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 47; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 7; LEFEBVRE 1923B: Pl. VI, 1; CHERPION *et al.* 2007: 19, 26 (Scene 24).

<sup>24</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 48; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 8; LEFEBVRE 1923B: Pl. VI, 1; CHERPION *et al.* 2007: 19, 27 (Scene 25).

<sup>25</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 45.

<sup>26</sup> MCCOSKEY 2020: 143.

<sup>27</sup> MENU 1994: 321-324, 327; LEFEBVRE 1921: 227, 228, SALES 2011: 20-22. The *mr-šm* was an annual and renewable role (see MENU 1994: 321, n. 43).

<sup>28</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 80 (Pronaos).

<sup>29</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 105 (Pronaos).

<sup>30</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 82 (Pronaos).

tion, alors qu'un roi des pays étrangers était en puissance sur l'Égypte [Inscription 81: 26-28]<sup>31</sup>; [...] a passé sept ans comme λεσῶνις de Thoth, Maître de Khmounou, sans qu'on trouvât de faute [...] [Inscription 82: 103-105]<sup>32</sup>.

During the seven years of his *λεσωνεία*, Petosiris indeed performed several tasks traditionally typical of a pharaoh<sup>33</sup>: he built and rebuilt temples and sanctuaries<sup>34</sup>, consolidated their enclosing walls<sup>35</sup>, re-established cults and ceremonies<sup>36</sup>, increased the number of the priests and liturgies employed in the cult<sup>37</sup>. Traditionally, the only «archpriest» capable of and responsible for the liturgy and for rendering worship to the numerous Egyptian gods was the pharaoh. He was who guaranteed *mꜣt* (the dynamic equilibrium of cosmos and the principle of social solidarity) and he became the living paradigm of humankind relating to the gods. To that extent, only he could maintain the privileged trade with the world of gods, performing the ancestral rites. The pharaoh guaranteed and promoted piety and religiosity all over the Egyptian land *r dr.f*.

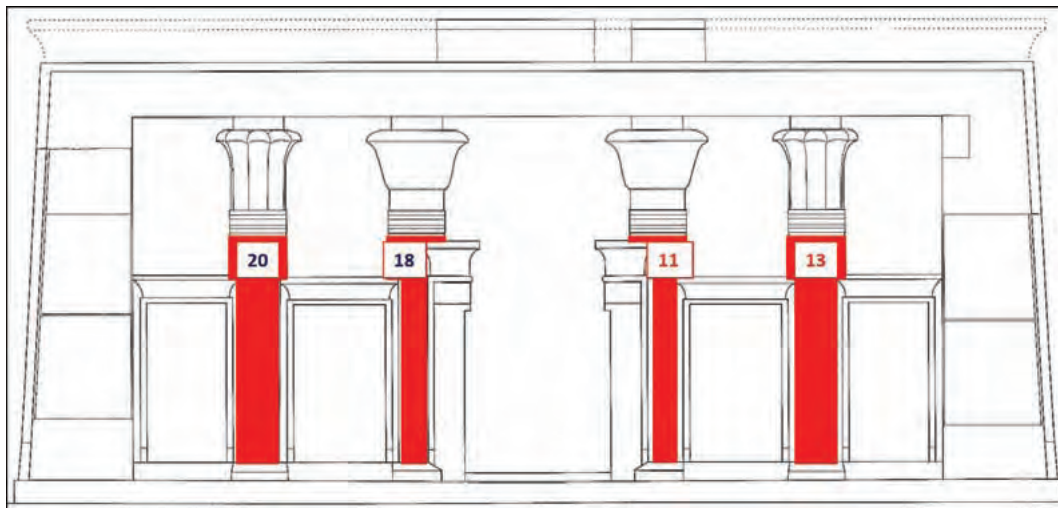


FIGURE 9: Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel: position of the inscriptions on the columns.

Obviously, by his inherent human condition, the pharaoh could not officiate in all places at the same time thus needing to delegate his liturgical prerogatives in priests, his *locum tenens*, daily substitutes. On his behalf, they collaborated in the maintenance of cosmic harmony, assuming certain duties and privileges. The required technicity to the accomplishment of rituals turned priesthood into a real «profession» («technicien spécialisé dans les rapports avec le divin»)<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 137; LEFEBVRE 1921: 227, 228 [Chapel: Side of Sishou].

<sup>32</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 135 [Chapel: Side of Sishou].

<sup>33</sup> DEVAUCHELLE 1993: 117; MCCOSKEY 2020: 143.

<sup>34</sup> Inscriptions 59: 2, 3; 61: 32; 81: 34, 35 (Temple of Thoth); 61: 18; 62: 3, 4; 81: 47, 48 (Temple of Rē<sup>c</sup>); 61, 33 (Temple of Khnūm–Rē<sup>c</sup>); 61: 20-23; 81: 51-53 (Sanctuary of the goddesses inside the Temple at Hermopolis); 59: 4, 5; 61: 23-27, 32; 81: 56-59, 69, 70 (Sanctuary of the goddess Nehmetauai); 81: 57, 58 (Sanctuary of Hathor); 61: 34-41; 81: 70-76 (Temple of Heqet). For the tasks of directing the works he ordered to be executed in the Temple of Thoth in *Hmnw*/Hermopolis, he was called *Hrp-Kꜣwt* (Chief of Works).

<sup>35</sup> Inscriptions 61: 19; 81: 60-63; 81: 68-70.


<sup>36</sup> Inscription 81: 35.

<sup>37</sup> Inscriptions 62: 3; 81: 36-40.

<sup>38</sup> CANNUYER 2005: 42-44; PERNIGOTTI 1992: 167.

However, what is always stated on temple walls is the pharaoh's liturgical exclusivity and his privileged relationship with the gods. It is always the pharaoh — never the priests — that is figured officiating and accomplishing the sacred rites. Thereupon, the priest never fully practiced his priesthood; he exerted it by representation. Priests were appointed to the office by the pharaoh. Nonetheless, at certain times, priests achieved some autonomy («autonomous priestly ethos»). During the Helleno–Roman Period, for instance, heredity of offices led to the establishment of priestly «dynasties»<sup>39</sup>.

Petosiris's case falls within this scenery, not just for the undertaken tasks mentioned in his inscriptions<sup>40</sup>, but also by the images used. On his tomb facade Petosiris usurps liturgical acts traditionally destined to the pharaohs: incense offerings, libations, fumigations, nourishment, drinks<sup>41</sup>. Furthermore, likewise for his own benefit, he uses four times the royal *LPH–Formula* [FIG. 9], derived from the pharaonic protocol: *ꜥnh-wd3-snb* (*life, prosperity, health*)<sup>42</sup>: *L' im3hw de Thoth, deux fois grand, Seigneur de Khmounou, qui a exécuté des travaux dans son temple, le Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, Second Prophète de Khnūm–Rē<sup>c</sup>, Seigneur d'Hirouurt et d'Hathor, Dame de Neferoust, Petosiris, vie, santé, force, fils du Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, Sishou* [West Side: Inscription 11; East Side: Inscription 18]<sup>43</sup>; *L'im3hw d'Osiris l'Ibis et d'Osiris le Cynocéphale, le Grand des Cinq, Maître des Sièges, scribe royal, comptable de tous les biens du Temple de Khmounou, Petosiris, vie, santé, force, né de la Dame Nofritrenpet* [West Side: Inscription 13; East Side: Inscription 20]<sup>44</sup>.

In the same way, the same formula (*ꜥnh-wd3-snb* after Petosiris's name: ) appears in Inscriptions 29, 33, 38, 42, 51, 58 (Pronaos interior) and 106 (Naos, South Wall, West Side)<sup>45</sup>; that is in a total of 11 references in the tomb. Therefore, Petosiris through gestures and epithets assimilates himself to the pharaoh<sup>46</sup>. In the same manner, acting as a pharaoh, he «stretched the cord, released the line», the first operation during the foundation ceremony of Rē<sup>c</sup>'s Temple, in Hermopolis: *Je tendis le cordeau, je déroulai la ligne pour jeter les fondations du Temple de Rē<sup>c</sup> dans le parc, car il n'était plus qu'une ruine depuis fort longtemps*<sup>47</sup>. *Je le construisis en belle pierre blanche de calcaire, complété par tout sorte de travail: ses portes étaient de sapin plaqué de cuivre d'Asie; je fis qu'y séjournât Rē<sup>c</sup>, le nourrisson qui réside dans l'Île de la Flamme* [Inscriptions 62, 4; 81: 47-51]<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> PERNIGOTTI 1992: 160, 161; SNAPE 2011: 256.

<sup>40</sup> As Prof. John Baines states, the biographical inscriptions had a «principal purpose»: «present the almost royal role of Petosiris himself, as a restorer and builder of monuments in his nome» (BAINES 2004: 46).

<sup>41</sup> NAKATEN 1982: 996, 997; DEVAUCHELLE 1993: 118.

<sup>42</sup> Inscriptions 11, 13, 18 & 20. The Inscriptions 13 and 20 are found on the central columns (with palm-leaves' capitals) and Inscriptions 11 and 18 on the columns with composite floral capitals (cf. LEFEBVRE 1924: 45-57).

<sup>43</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 45, 47; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 4, 6.

<sup>44</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 46, 47; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 5, 7. The Inscription 20 reproduces the Inscription 13, only with the addition of «éternellement, à jamais» (cf. LEFEBVRE 1924: 47; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 7).

<sup>45</sup> Inscriptions 29 (LEFEBVRE 1923A: 10); 33 (LEFEBVRE 1924: 55; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 12), 38 (LEFEBVRE 1924: 56; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 14), 41 (LEFEBVRE 1924: 59; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 15), 51 (LEFEBVRE 1924: 75; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 24), 58: 5, 6 (LEFEBVRE 1924: 85; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 29) & 106: 10 (LEFEBVRE 1924: 187; LEFEBVRE 1923A: 77).

<sup>46</sup> DEVAUCHELLE 1993: 117, 118.

<sup>47</sup> The passage «car il n'était plus qu'une ruine depuis fort longtemps» appears only in the Inscription 62, not being present in the Inscription 81.

<sup>48</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 83 (Inscription 62); LEFEBVRE 1924: 139; LEFEBVRE 1921: 231 (Inscription 81); LICHTHEIM 1980: 47; LALOUETTE 1984: 263.

Inscription 61 (Pronaos; by Teos, son of Petosiris) doesn't explicitly mention that Petosiris «stretched the cord, released the line», but assigns to him the temple foundation: *Tu [Petosiris] as construit le temple de Rē̄ dans le parc en belle pierre blanche de calcaire, complété par tout sorte de travail: ses portes étaient de sapin plaqué de cuire d'Asie; je fis qu'y séjournât Rē̄, le nourrisson qui réside dans l'Île de la Flamme* [Inscriptions 61: 18]<sup>49</sup>.

In theory, the rituals of foundation of a temple were conducted by the king himself<sup>50</sup>. The first rite is fixing the plan of the building by *stretching the cord* [*pd-sš, wh<sup>c</sup>-w<sup>3</sup>w<sup>3</sup>t*]. This name became by extension the name of the whole group of foundation ceremonies or at least of those which preceded the actual work of construction<sup>51</sup>. The rite involved the careful orientation of the temple by astronomical observations and measurements. According to the textual sources, the pharaoh was assisted in this ritual by the goddess Seshat (*Sš<sup>3</sup>t*) or *Sfht-<sup>c</sup>bwy*, the scribal goddess of writing and measurements<sup>52</sup>.

Petosiris surpasses the simple action of pharaoh's delegate–substitute, to behave as if he was invested of a complete and full *potestas sacerdotalis*. His family background of High Priests of Thoth, in Hermopolis, always closely linked to the political conjuncture as member of the Egyptian *élite* («dominant ethno–class», as Christophe Thiers called it<sup>53</sup>) with his personal experience, on the one hand<sup>54</sup>, and the enormous political–institutional restlessness of the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC, on the other, boosted and justified his behaviour<sup>55</sup>.

The second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC was, indeed, a time of crisis, of generalized disorder; a peculiar time on Egypt's political point of view, of intense instability. In a short time, kingship changed hands several times: from Nectanebo I (380-362 BC), last Egyptian representative of the 30<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, to the Achaemenid Artaxerxes III Ochus (in 343 BC), after the ephemeral Khababash, last indigenous pharaoh, then further the Hellenic Dynasty with Alexandros III the Great (332-323 BC), Philippos Arrhidaios (323-317 BC) and Alexandros IV (317-310 BC); and lastly with Ptolemaios I Soter I (305-285 BC), first of the Ptolemaic Dynasty. Through most of the time (as in the case of the Persians and Macedonian kings), the pharaohs were absentee sovereigns (*in absentia*), living outside Egypt<sup>56</sup>.

Comprehensibly, the breakdown of political–institutional order and stability, with the disruption of the established relations with so many changing interlocutors, also called into

<sup>49</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 102.

<sup>50</sup> MONTET 1960: 173-174, 179; MONTET 1964: 74-100; GUILHOU 2015: 297; MCCOSKEY 2020: 143.

<sup>51</sup> WILKINSON 2000: 38; MARTZOLFF 2011: 1, 17, 26. The ceremony of «stretching of the cord» was performed as early as the 1<sup>st</sup> Dynasty. The first depiction of the ritual dates from the reign of Kh<sup>c</sup>asekhemouy, last king of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dynasty (c. 2750 BC). It continued throughout Egyptian history until the Helleno–Roman Period (see ENGELBACH 1934: 183-185; SHALTOU & BELMONTE 2005: 273-298; MARAVELIA 2006: 250, 606).

<sup>52</sup> MONTET 1960: 174, 175; GUILHOU 2015: 297.

<sup>53</sup> See THIERS 1995: 506; cf. also MCCOSKEY 2020: 132.

<sup>54</sup> Although in the tomb inscriptions no sovereign is nominated and no date is recorded, his father, Sishou, had been priest and advisor of Pharaoh Nectanebo II (Inscriptions 69: 10; 90: 1-2); his brother, Djedthothiu<sup>c</sup>ankh, kept the role since the later reign of Nectanebo II (360-343 BC) and during all the 2<sup>nd</sup> Persian Domination, from 343 to 332 BC (Inscriptions 102: 4; 105: 16); Petosiris was nominated when the Hellēnes arrived (Inscriptions 59: 2, 3; 62: 3; 81: 26, 27; 81: 87); cf. MENU 1994: 316-327; MENU 1998A: 247-252; MENU 1998B: 24, 25.

<sup>55</sup> CANNUYER 2005: 48-50; DEVAUCHELLE 1993: 118.

<sup>56</sup> MENU 1998A: 254-255; MENU 1998B: 24; ARAÚJO 2003: 313-314; SALES 2012: 57-59.

question the regular functioning of social, economic and religious order. As Inscription 81 records: *Et il n'y [in Egypt] avait plus rien qui fût en sa place d'autrefois, depuis que des luttes se déroulaient dans l'intérieur de l'Égypte, le Sud du pays étant dans l'agitation et le Nord en état de révolte. Les hommes marchaient dans l'égarement, il n'y avait plus de temple qui fût à la disposition de ses desservants, et les prêtres étaient éloignées des sanctuaires, dans l'ignorance de ce qui s'y passait*<sup>57</sup>. In many cases, profanations and recklessness prevailed, as, for instance, in the care given to Egyptian temples in the region of Hermopolis. The circumstances profoundly impressed Petosiris's mentality and consciousness, as well as his philosophical and religious, ethical and moral, juridical and political conceptions<sup>58</sup>.

Petosiris lived in this period<sup>59</sup>. For his priestly responsibilities as *lesōnis*, he felt the need to re-establish order and he engaged in it. In the absence of a strong, consistent and continuing authority, he broadened powers, capturing most of the royal prerogatives and exercising a full priesthood<sup>60</sup>. The iconographic composition on his temple-tomb facade, elaborated from Egyptian traditional models, is very significant in this aspect: it is a testimony of a daring priestly consciousness, particularly concerned with the restoration of the lost order. To achieve it, in an unprecedented way, he didn't hesitate in presenting (texts) and representing himself as pharaoh (iconography). The pronaos facade simultaneously shows a «real image» of a specific individual (Petosiris) performing the roles of a character-type («ideal/archetypal image»): of the pharaoh<sup>61</sup>.

Petosiris performed royal prerogatives in favour of his country, in order to re-establish the essential bonds between humans and gods. He acted as a *saviour* (σωτήρ). It was a behaviour of high morality. He was a man of high moral and ethics<sup>62</sup>.

### III. FINAL REMARKS AND CONCLUSIONS.

The inscriptions about the works carried out by Petosiris in favour of his god, Thoth, aims to demonstrate his attitude of religious faithfulness and exemplary life. The disturbances caused by foreign kings of late 4<sup>th</sup> Century/early 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC disintegrated Egyptian social and political memory, breaking traditional *m3't*. Like a saviour-pharaoh from the past, or imitating a pharaoh, Petosiris doesn't content with a passive lament; instead he acts on behalf of retrieving past memory and recovers that very memory's seats of splendour: that is the temples and shrines of Egyptian gods. The political disorder acts as a vector of affirmation of (new) moral and cultural values, susceptible of refounding new times of order, stability and harmony<sup>63</sup>.

It was Petosiris's fidelity and personal zeal for his god Thoth and his profound respect for *m3't*, the moral obligation he never departed from, that led him to assume the status of a

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<sup>57</sup> LEFEBVRE 1924: 137; LEFEBVRE 1921: 227.

<sup>58</sup> MENU 1998A: 247.

<sup>59</sup> In the expression of B. Menu: «il a été témoin ou acteur dans la vie politique» (MENU 1998B: 23).

<sup>60</sup> MCCOSKEY 2020: 134.

<sup>61</sup> LABOURY 2010: 1.

<sup>62</sup> MORENZ 1977: 180.

<sup>63</sup> SALES 2012: 68; DEVAUCHELLE 1993: 118, 119. On the notion of *M3't*, see ASSMANN 1989 (many thanks are due to Dr Alicia Maravelia for adding this reference, as well as for her overall perfect editing of my paper).

true (virtual) pharaoh, restoring religion, rebuilding temples, founding new sanctuaries, and embellishing them. At the same time, he acted as pharaoh, he represented himself as pharaoh in his tomb–temple facade at Tuna `el-Gebel. As Nicolas Grimal wrote: «Ce personnage, devenu légendaire, est unique tout autant par le statut quasi–royal qu’il s’attribue dans sa tombe que par l’architecture de celle-ci»<sup>64</sup>. Untypical and unique monument. Untypical and unique man!

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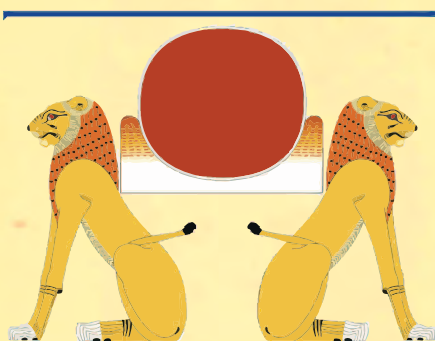
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