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THE STATUS OF FREE WILL IN ANCIENT EGYPT'S OLD AND MIDDLE KINGDOMS ACCORDING TO THE *INSTRUCTION OF PTAHHOTEP*

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Dissertação orientada pelo Professor Doutor José Augusto Ramos
e por Doctor Harold M. Hays (Universiteit Leiden)

2010

For my parents

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ABSTRACTS:

This thesis tackles the problem of free will in ancient Egypt having as point of departure the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*. In order to assess the status and conception of free will in a given culture one has to grasp the way that very culture understands man as an agent. Therefore, in the first chapter five of the elements which constitute human nature and which are featured in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* were scrutinised; these elements are: the moral character, heart, belly, *kꜣ*, and *bꜣ*. Of these the most important and relevant in the conception of the human agent is the heart. It was concluded that these elements have little to do with volition but, nonetheless, play a major role in free will: they grant the individual the ability to will freely.

Besides the agent conception, it is also important to address the principal obstacle to free will, which in the foregoing instruction are the gods. Therefore the second chapter was dedicated to the analysis of divine intervention. This was divided into "divine determination" and "fate." In this chapter focus was directed to what one may term "negative divine intervention." In this type of intervention a god not only controls the actions of an individual, but, through that control, may also condemn him to not be able to access the hereafter and lead a pleasant existence there.

But divine intervention was not always believed to be negative. There was also a "positive divine intervention." An example of such intervention is the maintenance of the created world by the gods. In a like manner a god could also be beneficial towards an individual, usually in a reciprocal relation.

At the conclusion it was inferred tha the importance given to moral responsibility in the extant written record is determinant to the status of free will; even though some may be determined by a god, those who are not have the possibility to will freely.

Esta tese aborda o problema do livre arbítrio no antigo Egipto tendo como ponto de partida a *Instrução de Ptahhotep*. De modo a avaliar o estatuto e concepção do livre arbítrio numa dada cultura, é necessário apreender o modo de como essa cultura entende o homem como agente. Por conseguinte, no primeiro capítulo são analisados cinco elementos constituintes da natureza humana e que figuram na *Instrução de Ptahhotep*; estes elementos são: o carácter moral, o coração, o ventre, o *kꜣ*, e o *bꜣ*. Destes, o mais importante e relevante na concepção do agente humano é o coração. Foi concluído que

estes elementos têm pouca relação com a volição mas que, no entanto, desempenham um papel fundamental no livre arbítrio: garantem ao indivíduo a capacidade de escolher livremente.

Para além da concepção do agente, é também importante abordar o principal obstáculo ao livre arbítrio, que na referida instrução são os deuses. Consequentemente o segundo capítulo foi dedicado à análise da intervenção divina. Esta foi dividida em "determinação divina" e "destino". Neste capítulo a atenção foi direccionada para o que podemos designar de "intervenção divina negativa". Neste tipo de intervenção, um deus não só controla o indivíduo como, através desse mesmo controlo, pode também condená-lo a não poder desfrutar de uma vida agradável no Além.

Mas a intervenção divina pode também ser positiva, manifestando-se por vezes na relação recíproca entre homem e deus.

Na conclusão foi inferido que o relevo dado à responsabilidade moral no registo documental chegado até nós é determinante para o estatuto do livre arbítrio; mesmo que alguns sejam determinados por um deus, aqueles que não o são têm a possibilidade de escolher livremente.

Esta tese aborda o problema do livre arbítrio no antigo Egipto tendo como ponto de partida a *Instrução de Ptahhotep*. De modo a avaliar o estatuto e concepção do livre arbítrio numa dada cultura, é necessário apreender o modo de como essa cultura entende o homem como agente. Por conseguinte, no primeiro capítulo são analisados cinco elementos constituintes da natureza humana e que figuram na *Instrução de Ptahhotep*; estes elementos são: o carácter moral, o coração, o ventre, o *kꜣ*, e o *bꜣ*. Destes, o mais importante e relevante na concepção do agente humano é o coração. Por coração entendemos aqui *ib*, uma vez que na referida instrução *ḥꜣ.ty* figura apenas uma vez e num contexto fora da dimensão intelectiva do humano. Foi argumentado que o *ib* constituía uma causa mental onde pensamentos e emoções tinham origem e eram posteriormente concretizados através da acção física ou da verbalização. Interessantemente o ventre forma uma relação dialéctica com o *ib*, e tal é particularmente observável na *Instrução de Ptahhotep*. Talvez por o *ib* se situar dentro do ventre, estes dois elementos partilham várias características, incluindo a causação mental. No entanto, em termos axiológicos, o *ib* tem geralmente predominância sobre o ventre. Deste modo, para Ptahhotep ouvir o ventre é "pertencer ao inimigo." Neste capítulo foi concluído que estes elementos têm pouca relação com a volição, que parece

estar mais associada com o *ḥ3.ty*, mas que, no entanto, desempenham um papel fundamental no livre arbítrio: garantem ao indivíduo a capacidade de escolher livremente. E é de destacar que nas discussões filosóficas sobre o livre arbítrio o conceito de *capacidade* é fundamental; o agente tem de *poder* concretizar em acção a escolha que tomou.

Para além da concepção do agente, é também importante abordar o principal obstáculo ao livre arbítrio, o determinismo. Em *Ptahhotep* a determinação está sobretudo a cargo dos deuses. Consequentemente o segundo capítulo foi dedicado à análise da intervenção divina. Neste capítulo a atenção foi direccionada para o que podemos designar de "intervenção divina negativa". Neste tipo de intervenção, um deus não só controla o indivíduo como, através desse mesmo controlo, pode também condená-lo a não poder desfrutar de uma vida agradável no Além. É o caso de um filho rebelde a quem os deuses implantaram um obstáculo e que, talvez em virtude desse mesmo obstáculo, ficou privado de aceder ao Além. Este tipo de intervenção negativa foi dividida em "determinação divina" e "destino". O critério usado para esta divisão foi linguístico, uma vez que em Egípcio antigo existem vários termos para designar o conjunto de fenómenos que usualmente designamos de *destino*: *š3*, Meskhenet, e Renenutet. Embora a partir do Império Novo o destino estivesse sobretudo relacionado com a preordenação do dia da morte, no Império Médio estava também conectado com as acções do indivíduo. Este aspecto está particularmente patente na *Narrativa de Sinuhe*. Neste texto do Império Médio o protagonista procura respostas para a sua fuga precipitada do caos instalado na capital após a morte de Amenemhat I. Num processo semelhante ao recurso a práticas divinatórias para descobrir a causa de uma aflição, Sinuhe identifica deus como a causa do seu infortúnio e como a agência que predeterminou a sua fuga. Mas não é apenas em *Sinuhe* que as acções de um indivíduo são preordenadas. Também em *Ptahhotep* um indivíduo cujo comportamento é duvidoso é aparentemente alvo de retribuição divina; no entanto se o comportamento foi predeterminado por deus que justificação haveria para ser castigado? Outro caso em que um indivíduo aparenta ter sido controlado por deus de forma arbitrária, ou seja sem ter cometido uma falta que justificasse retribuição divina, insere-se nesta aporia a que os Egípcios não parecem ter dado resposta.

Mas a intervenção divina pode também ser positiva, manifestando-se por vezes na relação recíproca entre homem e deus. Esta é realçada na *Instrução para o Rei Merikaré*.

Na conclusão foi inferido que o relevo dado à responsabilidade moral no registo documental chegado até nós é determinante para o estatuto do livre arbítrio. Segundo a fórmula 1130 dos *Textos dos Sarcófagos* o responsável pelo mal entre os homens não é o deus criador, mas sim os corações (*ib.w*) dos homens. No primeiro capítulo foi sugerido que a causa estruturante, ou seja a causa que despoleta a causa mental, do *ib* era o próprio indivíduo e as suas acções – sendo equiparado a um vaso, o coração torna-se sujeito do investimento do indivíduo; se este se preocupar em aderir às expectativas morais em relação a ele, o efeito no seu *ib*, enquanto produtor de pensamentos e emoções, será construtivo; a acção inversa naturalmente que terá o efeito contrário no *ib*. Parte desta causa estruturante é a memória; talvez por esta razão se usassem amuletos do coração enquanto exteriorizações do coração destinadas a lembrar o indivíduo de que a sua consciência moral não só o estava permanente a observar como iria também ser perscrutada no julgamento dos mortos. E é justamente esta responsabilização que afirma o livre arbítrio humano; mesmo que alguns indivíduos sejam determinados por um deus, aqueles que não o são têm a possibilidade de escolher livremente e de serem julgados não perante os deuses mas perante Maat.

Keywords: Moral responsibility; heart; divine intervention; fate.

Palavras-chave: Responsabilidade moral; coração; intervenção divina; destino.

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INTRODUCTION:

A discourse over free will is alien to Egyptian material. And so are discussions about art, religion, and philosophy. Nonetheless scholars have engaged themselves with identifying these phenomena in the Egyptian culture as they are implicitly manifest. In order to study such themes it is often necessary to draw upon epistemological premises and knowledge from neighbouring fields, such as Biblical Studies. In a like manner I propose to identify a notion of free will in the Egyptian culture of the Old and Middle Kingdoms with the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* as a core source.

The prologue of the instruction attributes its authorship to the vizier Ptahhotep of the Fifth Dynasty. However, not all Egyptologists who have studied the text agree with such an early date of composition. In fact, the earliest extant support containing the instruction, the Papyrus Prisse, dates from the Twelfth Dynasty[1]. It would not be impossible that this version would be itself a copy from an older manuscript. However, some of the concepts and grammatical constructions used in the text are only developed in the Middle Kingdom. Examples of these include the writing of the first person suffix pronoun =*i*[2] which in Old Egyptian was always omitted, the term, the word *bi3.t*, which began to be used from the end of the Old Kingdom onwards[3], a possible reference to a universal judgement of the dead in line 97 – "the end comes, *maat* endures" –, the reference to the *ba* of an individual when he is still alive – in the Old Kingdom private tomb inscriptions the *ba* was seldom mentioned; the *ba* was featured almost exclusively in the Pyramid Texts –, and, according to Pascal Vernus[4], the lack of the opposition between *ib* and *ḥ3.ty* which would have been featured in a citation of the instruction in a stele of Senusret I[5]. Although one may still feel tempted to suggest that the work was adapted from Old to Middle Egyptian it is important to note that

[1] See Pascal Vernus, *Sagesses de l'Égypte pharaonique*, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale Éditions, 2001), 55, and Richard B. Parkinson, "Teachings, Discourses, and Tales from the Middle Kingdom," in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, ed. Stephen Quirke, (New Malden: SIA Publishing, 1991), 106.
[2] See for example line 7: "sovereign, my lord (*ity nb=i*)".
[3] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom: a study and an anthology*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 84, (Freiburg, Schweiz: Universitätsverlag, 1988), 142.
[4] *Sagesses de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 71 with n. 35.
[5] Ibid., 71. For more details see his "L'intertextualité dans la culture pharaonique: l'Enseignment de Ptahhotep et le grafitto d'*jmny* (Ouâdi Hammâmat nº 3042)," *GM* 147, (1995): 107, quoted in ibid., 115 n. 35. Note however that the word *ḥ3.ty* is also absent from two other Middle Kingdom compositions, the *Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*, and the *Shipwrecked Sailor*. See Alexandre Piankoff, *Le "coeur" dans les textes Égyptiens: Depuis l'Ancien jusq'à la fin du Nouvel Empire*, (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1930), 18.

in the history of the Egyptian language, Old and Middle Egyptian form a unity distinct from that formed by Late Egyptian, Demotic and Coptic. [...] The Ancient Egyptians themselves felt the necessity of translating texts from Middle Egyptian into Late Egyptian (Urkunden VI and Ani), and from Middle Egyptian into Demotic (Pap. Carlsberg I), but never texts from Old into Middle Egyptian.[6]

Despite this factor, Gerhard Fecht argued for an adaptation of an Old Kingdom original to the Middle Egyptian version of Papyrus Prisse especially based on the differences of metre and language[7]. Richard Parkinson turned the argument round and proposed to interpret the Old Kingdom metre used in the Prisse version as an archaism device[8]. In sum, scholars are not unanimous about the date of composition of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, with proposed dates ranging from the late Old Kingdom to the Middle Kingdom.[9] Notwithstanding, based on the differences above enounced and on Richard Parkinson's argument for archaism I will consider this instruction a Middle Kingdom document.

As a Middle Kingdom composition, it indeed shares moral contents with the Old Kingdom biographical inscriptions, as surely it was also influenced by the intellectual and religious reflections of that period. But in the transition from the Old Kingdom to the Middle Kingdom there occurred shifts in royal ideology, afterlife beliefs, scope and focus of literature, redefinitions in mythology, and, most certainly, how free will was perceived. Therefore, it would be unwise to use Old and Middle Kingdom sources interchangeably as, in the evolution from one historical period to another, there are bound to be discontinuities along with the continuities. I thus propose to place the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*[10] at the centre of my discussion and to trace back from it beliefs regarding free will both in the Old and Middle Kingdoms.

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[6] Éric Doret, *The Narrative Verbal System of Old and Middle Egyptian*, Cahiers d'Orientalisme 12, (Geneva: Patrick Cramer Editeur, 1986), 14-5.

[7] "*Cruces Interpretum* in der Lehre des Ptahhotep (Maximen 7, 9, 13, 14) und das Alter der Lehre," in *Hommages à François Daumas*, ed. A. Guillaumont, (Montpellier: Université de Montpellier, 1986), 227-51, quoted in William Kelly Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 576.

[8] "Teachings, Discourses, and Tales from the Middle Kingdom," in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 103-4.

[9] For a brief overview see Ronald J. Williams, "The Sages of Ancient Egypt in the Light of Recent Scolarship," *JARCE* 101, (1981): 9.

[10] The *Instruction of Ptahhotep* is part of the genre known as "wisdom literature." It focuses on proper conduct in several situations and under several offices or social positions. For an overview and comments on specific passages see Richard B. Parkinson, *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection* (London: Continuum, 2002), 257-66. For the text transcribed into hieroglyphs from the hieratic see Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptahhotep* (Prague: 1956), 15-65, and Christian Jacq, Jacq, *Les maximes de Ptah-Hotep: l'enseignement d'un sage au temps des pyramides* (Fuveau: La Maison de Vie,

In order to assess the status and conception of free will[11] I propose to analyse the conception of the human agent, on the one hand, and, on the other, to scrutinise the opposite of free will, i.e., determinism, which in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* is expressed above all by divine intervention.

1. AGENT CONCEPTION:

In our discussion it is paramount to seek a definition, in the Egyptians' own terms, of the human agent. Such definition must concern to which extent the agent was able to choose from the available options, that is, to which point the intellectual processes of decision-making allowed him to be in control of his decisions. Neither all cultures nor all thinkers need to share the same premises about what is to be an agent in what concerns free will. A case in point is Thomas Hobbes's theory that humans were no different from animals in that they were bound to follow irrational desires and any decision was the result of the attempt to fulfil them[12].

How the Egyptian elite understood and depicted the conscience of the human agent is then what will be tackled in this chapter. I will attempt to answer the following queries: how is the moral conscience characterised, and what is its role in the process of decision making? The *Instruction of Ptahhotep* will be the main source, but comparisons with other documents from the Old and Middle Kingdoms will be made whenever felt pertinent.

Five Egyptian concepts dealing with the human moral conscience are particularly prominent in Ptahhotep: the character, heart, belly, *kꜣ*, and *bꜣ*, and they will be subjected to intensive analysis here.

2004), 113-217. In the translations of this instruction presented below line numbers are given before the verses.

[11] This study builds on my article "O problema do livre arbítrio e da intervenção divina na instrução de Ptah-hotep" [The problem of free will and divine intervention in the instruction of Ptah-hotep], *Cadmo* 19 (2009). Most of the inferences and translations presented here update the ones given there.

[12] For an introduction to Thomas Hobbes's theory about free will see Thomas Pink, "Nature," in *Free Will*, A Very Short Introduction (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 55-72.

1.1. **Moral Character**:

I qualify character as "moral" after Kevin Timpe's article "moral character" on *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*[13]. The concept of character, by itself, "denotes the purely factual characteristics of a thing or a person as distinguished from other things or persons."[14] But because a human being produces actions with consequences that are appraised by others as being positive, negative, or neutral – speaking in general terms – the very character that defines each person therefore has an ethical component. And since most of the relevant extant Egyptian sources denote ethical concerns, it is appropriate to apply to them the category of moral character.

Before advancing to a survey of the Egyptians' perspectives on moral character and whether it was related with free will or not I propose to briefly introduce how character is important to understand free will according to some philosophers.

As stated just now, character has a moral dimension. And it is precisely in this dimension that character plays an important role in the argument between supporters of Free Will and proponents of Determinism. Moral agents are expected by their community to abide by certain rules and behave appropriately. But those expectations rest on the assumption that the agent is able to do otherwise, i.e. that nothing in his nature or character prevents him from breaking the rules[15]. A related problematic is whether the agent has control over his character, or if it is the product of moral luck[16]. This issue stems from what Robert Kane has termed "the condition of Ultimate Responsibility," which requires that an action must originate from the agent himself if he is to be responsible for it, i.e. the agent must be the ultimate cause of his actions:

> Compare Aristotle's claim cited earlier that if a man is responsible for wicked acts issuing from his character, then he must at some time in the past have been responsible for forming this character.[17]

[13] http://www.iep.utm.edu/moral-ch/ (accessed March 9, 2010).
[14] W. Arnold, "Character," in *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, ed. H. J. Eysenck, W. Arnold, and R. Meili, (London: Search Press), 1: 158.
[15] About the relation of character with free will see Arthur C. Danto and Sidney Morgenbesser, "Character and Free Will," *The Journal of Philosophy* 54, no. 16 (Aug. 1, 1957): 493-505.
[16] About moral luck see Kevin Timpe, "Moral Character," in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
[17] Robert Kane, "Excerpt from 'Responsibility,'" in *Free Will*, ed. John Martin Fischer, Critical Concepts in Philosophy, vol 2, *Determinism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 147-51 (quotation is in p. 151). Originally published in *The Significance of Free Will*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 32-37.

It is here that moral luck or chance comes into play. One may trace the sequence of causes and events that led to the agent performing a certain action, but only to find out that the agent could not have been responsible by certain elements, namely formative circumstances such as family, social customs, etc., that partook in the formation of his character. Therefore the moulding of the agent's character is subject to luck, and if it is luck that underlies the agent's actions then the very concepts of moral responsibility and free will are endangered[18].

One may gather from the preceding discussion that the analytical definitions of character and its connection to the agent will have profound impact on one's definition of freedom of choice and, consequently, on moral responsibility – thus on the results of the present study. Having outlined our modern theoretical perspective, let us now analyse the ancient Egyptians' thoughts on character to perceive if they considered it important to free will.

In Old and Middle Egyptian there were several words to convey the sense of *character*:[19] *ỉwn* ("nature, disposition")[20], *ỉrw* ("shape, form")[21], *bỉ3.t* ("character, qualities")[22], *sḫr* ("nature")[23], *qỉ* ("form, shape")[24], and *qd* ("form, nature, reputation, character, disposition")[25]. Since some translations overlap we can reduce them to a core field of meaning: nature, disposition, shape, form, character, qualities, and reputation. As it happens with most translations of ancient languages, the literal meaning often gives place to a rendering more tuned with modern sensibilities. The basic root meaning underlying most of these concepts is "form," or "shape." While it is striking that the general ancient Egyptian sensibility seems still to be shared by psychologists today – for example, "character is the *form* of a person, and a stage in the forming, or development of personality"[26] – modern cogitations about character will of course not necessarily match the details of the Egyptians' ideas about it. It is important to pin down the details through the presentation of the most pertinent excerpts from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*:

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[18] Kevin Timpe, "Moral Character," in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
[19] These are the concepts listed by Miriam Lichtheim, *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 155, (Fribourg: University Press, Göttingen: Vandenhoek and Ruprecht, 1997), 17.
[20] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1962), 13.
[21] Idem, *Ibidem*, 27.
[22] Idem, *Ibidem*, 80.
[23] Idem, *Ibidem*, 243.
[24] Idem, *Ibidem*, 276.
[25] Idem, *Ibidem*, 282.
[26] W. Arnold, "Character," in *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, 158.

(489) Know the ones at your side[27] and your possessions will endure (*rḫ šw.tyw=k wnn ḫ.t=k*).

(490) Do not make your character mean in relation to your friends (*m ḫs*(*y*) *bi*(*ȝ.*)*t=k r ḫnms.w=k*).

(491) It is its[28] river bank which fills (with the flood); it (the river bank) is greater than its riches ({*ḥ*}<*w*>*ḏb=f*[29] *pw mḥ=f wr sw r špss.=f*),

(492) For possessions change from one to another[30] ({*sw*}<*i*>*w*[31] *ḫ.t ky n ky*).

(493) The character of a son of man will be beneficial to him (*ȝḫ bi*(*ȝ.*)*t n*(*.i*)*t zȝ z*(*i*) *n=f*).

(494) A good character (*qd*) will be a memorial (*iw qd nfr r sḫȝ.w*).[32] (Maxim 35).

(495) Punish chiefly; instruct entirely (*ḫsf ḥr*(*i*)*-tp sbȝ ḥr*(*i*) *qd*).

(496) Supression of wrongdoing will set an example (*iw nḏr.t ḫww r mn*{*.t*} *bi*(*ȝ*))[33].

(497) As for a case (of punishment)[34] indeed not concerning wrong (which was done) (*ir zp n is ḥr ii.t*),

(498) It will cause the one who complains to turn into an opponent (*rḏi ḫpr ꜥnꜥy pw m itn.w*). (Maxim 36).

(575) As for the fool who does not listen (*ir wḫȝ iw.ty sḏm=f*).

[...]

(581) He lives from that which one dies (ꜥ*nḫ=f m mwt=tw ḫr=s*),

(582) A twisted discourse is his nourishment (ꜥ*q.w=f pw ḫbn ḏd*).

(584) That is the character in the knowledge of the officials (*bi*(*ȝ.*)*t=f i*(*ȝ*)*m=f m rḫ n*(*.i*) *sr.w*),

(585) Which is: his life is death every day (*ḥr mwt* ꜥ*nḫ r*ꜥ*-nb*). (Epilogue).

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[27] As Christian Jacq, Jacq, *Les maximes de Ptah-Hotep: l'enseignement d'un sage au temps des pyramides*, 228 n. 115, notes, the writing for *šw.tyw* (also translatable as "neighbours") can also stand for *mȝꜥ.tyw*, "the just ones," and consequently both meanings may be simultaneously conveyed. The horizon of the teaching could thus be extended to relate only with good people.

[28] The pronoun *=f* is probably referring back to *biȝ.t*.

[29] The reading *wḏb* is confirmed by the L1 version.

[30] I aimed to a more literal translation. Christian Jacq's although less literal is clearer: "car les biens de l'un peuvent échoir à l'autre." See *Les maximes de Ptah-Hotep: l'enseignement d'un sage au temps des pyramides*, 192.

[31] L1 version corrects *sw* to *i*[*w*].

[32] It is worthy of note that *qd* and *biȝ.t* are used interchangeably. As Miriam Lichtheim pointed out both terms are different but they certainly share a common core of meaning.

[33] I take this sentence, *iw nḏr.t ḫww r mn*{*.t*} *bi*(*ȝ*), to be the complex future *iw=f r sḏm* (see Boyo G. Ockinga, 2nd rev. ed. (Mainz am Rhein: Verlag von Zabern, 2005), p. 60 §94; an example is line 494 cited above: *iw qd nfr r sḫȝ*). This interpretation rests on the assumption that the scribe made an error by adding a *t* to *mn*, because the morphology of *mn* in the infinitive is *mn* and not *mn.t*. Also assuming a scribe's mistake, one could add an *s* to *mn.t*, with no alteration on the translation. Another hypothesis would be to render the sentence like Christian Jacq did, *iw nḏr=t*(*w*) *ḫ*ꜥ*w r mn.t bi*(*ȝ*), and understand it as a *sḏm.t=f* (an alternative that Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 160, however does not consider to fit the context) and translate it as "one will suppress wrongdoing until an example is set."

[34] In the L1 version lines 496 and 497 are 426 and 427 respectively. In L1 426 the word in lieu of *zp* is *ḫsf*, thus suggesting that in Prisse *zp* is referring back to *ḫsf* in line 495.

(593) Every man is taught according to his behaviour (lit. "according to what he does") (*z*(*i*) *nb sbȝ mi ir=f*).

[...]

(596) Set a good example (lit. "do a good deed"). Do not get reproached (*ir biȝ*) *m rḏi ꜥḏ.t=k*![35] (Epilogue, 593-596).

Maxim 35 stresses the social dimension of character. Line 490, which advises one not to be weak of character towards friends, is complemented by lines 339 and 343 of maxim 22: "Satisfy those close to you in whom you can trust, according to the means that come your way / [...] what happens in the future is unknown, (even for the one who has an intuition about tomorrow." A person of good character who cares for her friends is thus more secure in times of need through the principle of reciprocity, whereas an individual more detached from his social network is more liable to suffer from the ephemerality of an agriculture based economy. In the *Instruction for the King Merikare* there is a similar aphorism, but instead of a social dimension it pertains to the religious relation between the king and god: "more acceptable is the loaf (*biȝ.t*[36]) of the upright of heart than the *iwȝ*-cattle of the evil-doer. Act for the god, that he might do the like for you".

Line 494 of maxim 35 also makes it clear why one of the meanings of *qd* is "reputation." To say that "a good character will be a memorial" is the same as saying that it will leave a good impression of a person on others. And reputation is precisely

[35] The latter part of the sentence, after *ir biȝ*) runs: *m rḏi ꜥḏ.t=k*. There are doubts as to what *ꜥḏ.t=k* means and which verb form, if it is one at all, it might be. Raymond Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 51, in the entry *ꜥḏ.t* provides as example only the sentence we are now addressing and gives an insecure rendering of the word, expressed by an interrogation mark, as "offense," but opted to emend the *=k*, thus translating the sentence as "do not give offense!" In this case it seems more sensible to adopt the attitude advised by James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, 389: "Egyptologists are (or should be) wary of labeling something an error rather than an exception." Christian Jacq, *The Wisdom of Ptah-hotep: Spiritual Treasures from the Age of the Pyramids*, 146, interprets *ꜥḏ.t* as a noun in the sense of "destruction." Jacq renders the sentence as "do not give free rein to your destruction," but one could also translate it as "do not cause your destruction!" Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 167, in his turn, inquires about whether one should read *ꜥḏ.t=k* or rather *ꜥḏ.t*(*w*)*=k* and proposes the meaning "reproach." Pascal Vernus, *Sagesses de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 110, translates the verb with the meaning propounded by Žaba: "Sache te comporter [*ou*: sois un modèle], ne te fais pas reprendre." Although Christian Jacq's rendering is appealing, Vernus's translation is the one that, to me, fits the context better and is hence the interpretation I follow here.

[36] It has been argued by R. J. Williams, in *The Seed of Wisdom: Essays in Honour of T. J. Meek*, ed. W. S. McCullough, (Toronto, 1994), 19 with n. 29, quoted in David Lorton, "God's Beneficent Creation: Coffin Texts Spell 1130, the Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aton," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 20, (1993): 130, with n. 17, that here *biȝ.t* means "loaf" instead of "character." I agree with David Lorton (n. 17) that there is a pun intended, the word thus conveying a double meaning. About the semantic content involved in the dichotomy between the loaf and the *iwȝ*-cattle see David Lorton's n. 18. For other examples where character and reputation are closely connected see Miram Lichtheim, *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, 22-3.

that. Therefore to the ancient Egyptians the moral characterisation of an individual was inextricably interlinked with the ethical appraisal made about him both by society and by the gods[37]. In this sense, the word *qd* is also related to the concept of *imakhu* which will be addressed further below.

Maxim 36 addresses formative circumstances under which one's character is shaped and the risks of unjust punishment. There is also an interesting pun noted by Christian Jacq[38]; *ḥr-tp* literally means "on the head" and *ḥr qd* "on the character." Therefore, whereas punishment is applied on the body, to teach is also to give a person her inner form or shape.

Lines 575 through 585 seem to give a fatalistic description of the *wḫ3*, the "fool." But, the introductory line 575, by stating "as for the fool who does not listen," allows for the interpretation that had he listened he would have been able to lead a different course of life. This passage might also present a causal nexus for a person's character and life style. The fool's present condition, as described by Ptahhotep, would then be the result of a decision taken earlier in his life, or at least the product of his consent. However, if we connect this passage with line 546, the fool's condition was not brought about by his own decision or consent but by divine intervention[39].

Line 593 seems to refer to one's natural dispositions, especially if we compare *mi ir=f* with the word *sḫr* which means not only "nature" but also "conduct." And it is noteworthy that these innate dispositions may however be shaped by means of teaching.

The general picture that emerges from these quoted passages is that character has a social dimension; it is reflexive, i.e. how an individual's character is perceived by others reflects back to him under the notion of reputation; it may be influenced by earlier decisions; and it is malleable and receptive to formative circumstances, notwithstanding one's natural dispositions.

Despite maxim 36, Ptahhotep also conveys the notion that the individual himself is responsible for keeping his character on the right track. This perspective is also shared by Old Kingdom Pepyankhheryib's biographical inscription[40], as well as by

[37] An example concerning the desire to be positively assessed by the gods is the inscription of Pepyankhheryib at Meir from the middle reign of Pepy II: "Serving as an official was how I spent all my life, doing good things and saying that which was liked, so that my reputation would reach the great god". Translation of Nigel Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, Writings from the Ancient World (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 369.

[38] *The Wisdom of Ptah-hotep: Spiritual Treasures from the Age of the Pyramids*, 167-8 with n. 112.

[39] See section 2.1. below.

[40] See n. 37 above.

Middle Kingdom *Instruction of a Man for His Son*: "make character without transgressing thereby."[41]

Having reached this conclusion about *Ptahhotep*, it is striking that, in contrast, tomb inscriptions from at least the Fifth Dynasty onwards seem to put emphasis on natural dispositions acquired since birth. The following examples demonstrate it:

> I never let anyone spend the night angry with me about a thing since my birth.[42]

> I never did harm (to) anyone, and I never since birth caused that any man spend the night being angry with me on any matter.[43]

> Never did I make anyone unhappy since my birth.[44]

Although by the late Old Kingdom the phrase "since my birth" is omitted from the sources,[45] in the Middle Kingdom it was picked up again and became central in the moral profile of elite individuals[46]. Miriam Lichtheim sums up this evolution:

> In the growth of the moral vocabulary during the 11th dynasty the stress was on traits of character rather than on actions performed. The men of the 6th dynasty had said 'I did', those of the 11th dynasty said 'I am.' The 12th dynasty harvested the vocabulary and added generalisations on what it meant to be 'good.'[47]

The late Eleventh Dynasty stele of the priest Mentuhotep from Abydos is an epitome of the claim of innateness of character:

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[41] Translated with use of transliteration and translation provided at "The Teaching of a Man for his Son" in *Digital Egypt for Universities: A learning and teaching resource for higher education*, managed by Stephen Quirke, (University College London, 2000-2003), http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/literature/manforson.html (accessed April 13, 2010).

[42] Inscription of Werkhuu from the Fifth Dynasty. Miriam Lichtheim, *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 155, (Vandenhoek and Ruprecht Göttingen: University Press Fribourg Switzerland, 1997), 13.

[43] Inscription from the tomb of Khuiwer at Giza, Fifth Dynasty. Nigel Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 293.

[44] Sixth Dynasty inscription of Metjetji of unknown origin but perhaps from Saqqara (Nigel Strudwick, *Ibidem*, 297). Translation of Miriam Lichtheim, *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, 13.

[45] "By the end of the sixth dynasty, the phrase was replaced by the assertion of having a pleasant disposition [...]. That was a gain in clarity; but dropping the phrase 'since birth' also entailed a loss, because it was no longer clear that the friendly behaviour was 'innate.'" Miriam Lichtheim, *Ibidem*, 13.

[46] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ibidem*.

[47] Idem, *Ibidem*, 22.

A cool one who got bread on time, whose conduct (*sḫr=f*) replaced him a mother at home, a father who said, 'take note my son.' One well disposed (*nfr qd*) and taught by his nature (*sbȝ.n biȝ.t=f*), like a child grown up with a father, but behold I had become an orphan.[48]

This passage is particularly interesting as the three concepts *sḫr*, *qd*, and *biȝ.t*, complement each other. I have reproduced Miriam Lichtheim's translation, but it is also possible to render *sḫr* as "nature," *qd* as "form," and *biȝ.t* as "character." All three concepts constitute what we may call *natural dispositions*: they are qualities innate to the individual, not chosen by him. And according to Mentuhotep's claim such dispositions are positively oriented and lead the individual in the right way. Furthermore, they not only guide the individual but also determine his behaviour. This claim is in utter disagreement with the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, which not only holds the individual accountable for his own character but also rejects the determinism of good innate dispositions: "there is no one who is born a wise" (Prologue, 41).

This discrepancy between views is problematic. Is each account specific to its context, or is there any sort of interchange between them, a dialectic relation? In my view this query can be answered if we connect this discrepancy, between wisdom literature for the living and biographical tomb inscriptions, to another important difference arising between the same two genres, that of humbleness against the claim of being the best. The *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, for example, not only advises against the feeling of superiority due to knowledge that others may not possess[49], but also urges one not to boast about having offspring[50], for example. In stark opposition, however, it is very often the case that highly placed officials claim, each one, to have performed his duty better than anyone else and to have been praised by the king more than any other of his servants[51]. In my opinion the claims of good innate natural traits since birth and

[48] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom*, 69, plate 4. Another good example of innateness of good dispositions is stele Berlin 1204 line 8. Translation and references in Idem, *Ibidem*, 15.

[49] "Do not make your heart big because of what you know; / take counsel both with the ignorant and the wise." Maxim 1, 52-54.

[50] "If you should plough, and there is growth in the field, / (because) god gives in abundance into your hand, / do not fill your mouth about it to those near you, / (for) great is the respect the silence one inspires." Maxim 9, 161-166.

[51] A case in point is Weni's claim: "'There was revealed to me (or: I inspected) the number of these troops; /it had never been revealed to/inspected by any "servant" (*bȝk*).'" John Baines, "Restricted Knowledge, Hierarchy, and Decorum: Modern Perceptions and Ancient Institutions," *JARCE* 27 (1990): 18. Baines elaborates further on Weni's declaration: "This statement might seem almost absurd, because a commander needs to know how many troops he is to lead, but it becomes meaningful if the qualifying *bȝk* is taken into account. Earlier in the text, classes of officials are listed more than once, apparently according to a formula as *sr*, *sʿḥ* and *bȝk*. The point seems to be that such information would not be

of being the best at one's tasks are closely associated. They are part of the ideal biography genre. One of the main purposes of this discourse probably was to cajole visitors to the tomb both to make offerings, and execute the proper rituals in the case of priests, and to not damage the tomb in any way[52]. It also seems a strong possibility to me that these statements complement the wishes imparted in the *ḥtp-ḏi-nỉ-sw.t* boons, especially the most fundamental one of reaching the desired afterlife with success. This enhanced profile of the deceased would be an asset both in the judgment of the dead, developed in the Middle Kingdom, and in the desire to be accepted by the gods and travel upon the ways the *imakhu* journeyed during the Old Kingdom[53]. As an asset for the judgement of the dead, the attitude conveyed in the idealised moral profile of the deceased might not be much different from the use of magic in the mortuary literature[54].

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available to a *bꜣk*." *Ibidem*, 18. In his biography Weni is depicted as someone who started his work on the state administration from lower rank. But the fact that his father was a vizier (see Janet Richards, "Text and Context in late Old Kingdom Egypt: The Archaeology and Historiography of Weni the Elder," *JARCE* 39, (2002): 90, and Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 18) makes one doubt whether Weni really had access to sensitive information and was assigned to duties normally performed by higher officials while having the rank of *bꜣk*. If Weni indeed benefitted from his father's position and exaggerated in his biography, then this hyperbole becomes a case in point that illustrates how much individualism, i.e. showing that one was more competent than others especially at one's job, was for these officials. It is interesting to note that this attitude is not exclusive to the Old Kingdom but instead is visible throughout most of Egyptian history as we may see in this passage from Tutankhamun's Restoration Stela, Cairo 34183, from the Eighteenth Dynasty: "He has added to what was in former time, he has surp[assed that] done since the time of the ancestors". John Bennet, "The Restoration Inscription of Tut'ankhamūn," *JEA* 25, (1939): 10.

[52] Apart from priests tomb visitors would most probably be family and friends (as suggested in "The Immortality of the Writer," in *Digital Egypt for Universities: A learning and teaching resource for higher education*, managed by Stephen Quirke, (University College London, 2000-2003), http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/literature/manforson.html (accessed April 15, 2010)). Even if there were other visitors they might not have been able to read (John Baines, "Society, Morality, ad Religious Practice," in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), 140). That the tomb owners felt the need to persuade *ka*-servants to execute their tasks is attested in several inscriptions, one of them quite illustrative: "O lector priest, *imakhu* in the sight of Anubis, may your heart be sweet in relation to the king! Do not desist from your reading of the transfigurations! I know the royal decree made for an *akh*." From the tomb of Ankhi, called Intji, at Saqqara, perhaps early sixth dynasty; translation in Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 218. An example of threats against *ka*-servants who might vandalise the tomb comes from the inscription of Meru called Bebi, originary from Saqqara and dating to the Sixth Dynasty: "[With respect to anything bad done to my tomb] by the soul priests of my funerary estate, I shall be judged with them by the Great God, lord of the West in the place where Maat is." Translation of Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 225. An example of a Middle Kingdom address to potential tomb violators is expressed in the stele of the chamberlain Semti the Younger from the reign of Amenemhat II: "People! Be kind-hearted to my monument, and kind-handed to my memorial! For I have not done wrong." In Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom: a study and an anthology*, 97.

[53] See for example the text from the tomb of Tepemankh at Saqqara, from the late Old Kingdom: "An offering which the king gives and an offering which Anubis gives that he may travel on the perfect ways of the West upon which the *imakhu* travel in peace and in the sight of the Great God." In Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 215.

[54] In my interpretation, the usage of magic formulae, like the Htp-Di-ni-sw.t boons for example, in the mortuary literature may have been used to counterbalance the highly set ethical expectations by which the

The innateness of a good character seems then as pertaining exclusively to the funerary context. But could it also have been a belief of the living rather than a wish of the deceased? In other words could there have been two divergent views on the human nature within a single context of discourse? I ask this query because it seems that in the New Kingdom there was[55]. However there is one major difference between the Middle and New Kingdoms. Whereas in the Middle Kingdom the different views are conveyed between two separate genres, in the New Kingdom they occur within a single one, wisdom literature.

1.1.1. **Premises of human nature implied in the creation of mankind through the creator's eye:**

The earliest attested mention to the creation of human beings appears in the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts. In certain spells mankind is said to have been created from the tears of the creator god. With the words *tears* and *mankind* being homophones in Egyptian, *rmṯ.w* and *rm.wt* respectively, some authors have taken the reference as a metaphor for humanity's flaws and the suffering to which people are inevitably subjected. If this is so, can the metaphor have any import on the beliefs regarding human nature of the Egyptians from the Middle Kingdom? One may presuppose that

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individual was supposed to lead his conduct. It would be a way to compensate for one's impossibility to reach ethical perfection. This becomes particularly apparent in the spells 30, 30A and 30B of the *Book of Going Forth by Day*. A passage from spell 30B enlighteningly reads: "To be said as a charm: my heart of my mother, my heart of my mother, my breast of my being, stand not against me as a witness, oppose me not in the Council. Outweigh me not before the keeper of the balance." Thomas George Allen, *The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day: Ideas of the Ancient Egyptians Concerning the Hereafter as Expressed in Their Own Terms*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 37, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1974), 40. In my view the innateness of a good character expressed in Old and Middle Kingdom biographies would be a way to dwarf any negative aspect of the individual's character or/and conduct in the ethical appraisal made by the living and, more importantly, by the gods. A similar view, regarding the judgment of the dead, is presented in Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "Os Amuletos do Coração no Antigo Egipto: Tipologia e Caracterização" [The heart amulets in ancient Egypt: Typology and characterisation], *Cadmo 15*, (2005): 116.

[55] Miriam Lichtheim, *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, 31-2, has gathered evidence for the differing arguments. I reproduce here her translation on p. 32 of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV, verso 6,5 ff., which is a case in point:

> "Beware of saying:
> 'Everyone is according to his nature (*bi3.t*)
> Ignorant and learned ones alike.
> Fate and fortune are graven in the nature
> In the god's own writing.
> Everyone is as he was made,
> And his lifetime lasts an hour.'
> It is good to teach unceasingly, till the son replies with words of his father!
> If I let you know right in your heart, you will do what seems straight to you."

this connection between tears and human beings may have been established earlier, but as stated there is no evidence to confirm it. Conversely, there is some evidence from later periods to provide a comparative framework of reference.

As Geraldine Pinch[56] notes Coffin Texts spells 80, 714, and 1130 contain particularly relevant accounts of the creation of humanity. I shall now cite the passages in question:

> It is Geb, it is my[57] son who will live, whom I begot in my name. He knows how to nourish him who is in the egg for <me>, namely the human beings who came forth from my eye which I sent out while I was alone with Nu in lassitude, and I could find no place on which to stand or sit, when On had not yet been put together that I might dwell on it, when my throne (?) had not yet been put together that I may sit on it; before I had made Nut that she might be above me, before the first generation had been born, before the Primeval Ennead had come into being that they might dwell with me.[58] (Spell 80, CT II 33b-34f).
>
> [...]
>
> There live falcons, ducks, jackals in movement, pigs in the desert, hippopotami in the marshes, people, corn and shoals of fish, fish in the waters which are in the Nile, in accordance with Atum that I[59] should govern them and nourish them with this mouth of mine.[60] (Spell 80, CT II 42b-43b).

> The weeping I[61] did was because of the uproar[62] against me; mankind belongs to the blindness that is behind me.[63] (Spell 714, CT VI 344f-g).

> I[64] created the gods from my sweat, while people are the tears of my eye.[65] (Spell 1130, CT VII 464d-465a).

In spell 80, human beings are first referred to as having been created by Atum's eye, and are afterwards listed among other groups of animals. Spell 714 is of difficult

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[56] *Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 66-7.
[57] The deceased, identified with Atum is speaking.
[58] Translated by R. O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts* (Oxford: Aris and Phillips, 1973), 84. I have added *in gbb*, "it is Geb," from B1L version.
[59] The deceased identified with Shu is speaking.
[60] Translated by R. O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 85.
[61] The speaker is the deceased identified with Nu, the god embodying the primeval waters.
[62] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 7, translates *ȝd* as "anger."
[63] Translation in Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many*, trans. John Baines, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1982), 150. Faulkner's translation is somewhat different, perhaps because of the damage the spell recovered only from one coffin, designated as B3L, presents in CT VI 344f-h. It runs: "What went forth from me was under my supervision; it means that tears are what I created in him who was angry with me, and men of the blind ones are my cattle" (CT VI 344e-g. Raymond O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 270.
[64] The speaker is the deceased probably identified with Atum.
[65] David Lorton, "God's Beneficent Creation: Coffin Texts Spell 1130, the Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aton," 127-9.

interpretation due to the lacunary state of the passage under analysis; however, according to Erik Hornung's rendering blindness was involved in the creation of mankind. In spell 1130 it is clearly stated that men were created through the creator's tears.

Apart from possibly spell 714 there is no direct relation between creation from tears and suffering or flawed nature as a condition inherent to that particular mode of creation for the Middle Kingdom. Suffering and lack of insight are indeed realities present in the lives of every sentient being and that is not what is at issue here. What is being inquired is whether for the ancient Egyptians such suffering is rooted in the way they were created, perhaps laying the responsibility for that condition on the creator god, or instead is brought about by other causes.

Unambiguous evidence that the process of creation of mankind determined it to be flawed and to suffer comes from later periods. Papyrus Bremner-Rhind from the Graeco-Roman period states that men were created from the tears of the eye of the creator god, which were caused by the wrath it felt when it found out that the sun god had already replaced it[66]. And the cosmogony of Neith, from the same period, is even more explicit; when Re sees her mother, Neith, he makes the gods from his smile, but when he is apart from her he cries and from the shed tears the god creates men[67]. Bernard Mathieu's argument that the identification between men and tears began primarily as a pun and only later evolved into a philosophical explanation of human suffering[68] seems partly confirmed by a New Kingdom inscription from the temple of Karnak, where the goddess Mut creates the gods from her tears as well[69].

The time span of this pun is exceptionally long[70], perhaps denoting stronger implications than just a simple wordplay. Conversely, the gods are created from varied fluids and parts from the creator's body, including sweat, saliva, mouth, smile, these last three being somewhat synonymic, and, as we have just seen, tears. As Bernard Mathieu points out, there was no word sufficiently similar to *nṯr.w* to create a pun, apart from

[66] See Raymond O. Faulkner, "The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus – III." *JEA* 23, (1937): 172.
[67] See translation of passage with hieroglyphic version in Bernard Mathieu, "Les hommes de larmes: A propos d'un jeu de mots mythique dans les textes de l'ancienne Egypte." In *Hommages à François Daumas*, ed. Institut d'Égyptologie-Université Paul Valéry, (Montpellier: Université de Montpellier, 1986), 2: 503. Note that the signs for *rmṯ.w* and *rm.wt* are the same, a crying eye.
[68] Idem, *Ibidem*, 503-4.
[69] See Harold H. Nelson, "Certain Reliefs at Karnak and Medinet Habu and the Ritual of Amenophis I-(Concluded)." *JNES* 8, (1949): 341 (translation) and 342 ll. 14-5.
[70] Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt*, 66.

nt(*i.*)*t*, "saliva," although the connection had not last for long, which may account for such diversity[71].

If a deeper meaning rather than just a mere pun was intended in the relation between men and tears, could it be one of suffering and flawed nature as some authors have argued?[72] This argument has been subjected to severe criticism from David Lorton[73]. The author draws attention to other later examples where a god's eye creates "plants" and "fresh waters"[74], and to the statement in the *Instruction for the King Merikare* that men are "his (the sun god's) images which have come forth from his body"[75]. To David Lorton the crucial element in the creation of man in Coffin Texts spell 1130 is "that this little etiological account is intended to place the origin of deities and humans in two kinds of divine fluid, both to be viewed as positive." However, may the myth expounded in a more elaborate way in Bremner-Rhind Papyrus, to which mention was made above, be already present in the Coffin Texts' mythical statements? I believe the answer is yes.

In Coffin Texts spell 76 Atum sends his "Sole Eye" (*wꜥ.t ỉr*(*.t*)) to find Shu and Tefnut (CT II 5b). When in CT II 33d-e (Coffin Texts spell 80) Atum sends out his eye, although Shu and Tefnut had not been created yet, its task might have been to retrieve them as in Coffin Texts spell 76. Seemingly anachronisms are not a problem to the producers and audience of mythical accounts. Even in Coffin Texts spell 80 an anachronism is committed when stating that mankind was in the egg when it had already been issued forth from Atum's eye; therefore I assume that the existence of Shu and Tefnut is already implied when the eye is sent by the creator god in this spell. In the account from the Bremner-Rhind Papyrus the eye weeps after finding out about its replacement. Still in spell 80, in CT II 41f-g, Shu says: "I knit on his (Atum's) head and make his uraeus to live"[76]. Placing the eye on his head as the uraeus cobra is precisely

[71] Bernard Mathieu, "Les hommes de larmes: A propos d'un jeu de mots mythique dans les textes de l'ancienne Egypte." In *Hommages à François Daumas*,

[72] See for example Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt*, 67, Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many*, 150, and John Baines, "Society, Morality, and Religious Practice," in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), 163-4.

[73] "God's Beneficent Creation: Coffin Texts Spell 1130, the Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aton," 129 n. 14.

[74] See the examples in Selim Hassan, *Hymnes religieux du Moyen Empire*, (Le Caire: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français d'Archaeologie Orientale, 1930), 159-60.

[75] David Lorton, "God's Beneficent Creation: Coffin Texts Spell 1130, the Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aton," 136.

[76] Raymond O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 85.

how the god Atum calms its anger. Therefore, my suggestion is that, as proposed by Geraldine Pinch, Erik Hornung and John Baines[77], in the Middle Kingdom humankind is already created through the creator's eye when this one is experiencing feelings of anger and sadness. The fact that in the New Kingdom the gods are also created through the goddess Mut's tears, certainly without the same motivation, may simply be another version of the creation of deities from a creator god's bodily fluids without any particular implication to it.

Two of the basic phenomenological characteristics of tears pointed are that they blur vision, and that they are often unwilled and uncontrolled.[78] Both these characteristics are present in the Egyptian myth. This myth is constructed as if mankind's creation was an accident and not a planned event. But as all myths it has a purpose, and this one aims to justify why people lack insight and commit errors and make bad choices, as in Ptahhotep 103-107: "If a man says: 'I will be wealthy,' / he will later say: 'My perceptions (*si3.t=i*) trapped me.'" By being overwhelmed with afflictive feelings the eye of the sun god could not control his creation, as in Coffin Texts 714 assuming that Erik Hornung's rendering of the damaged passage is correct. It is also noteworthy that the creator god is not made responsible for this faulty creation. In fact, the reason for the replacement of his eye is not even clearly stated; it appears to be a device to set the wheels in motion.

Despite the fact that human beings share a divine element with the rest of the gods, it is relevant that when the creation of men and gods is paired together, as in Coffin Texts spell 1130, men always come from tears and gods from another bodily fluid. Even though the gods are immanent and are not detainers of perfection they are still superior to men, especially because they are virtually immortal[79]. The pairing of gods and men in the reference to their creation may then reflect this vertical hierarchy.

We may now ask: was this version of the myth prevalent among the Egyptian intellectuals? Most Coffin Texts spells were collected from the necropolis at el-Bersha, and spells 76, 80, 714, and 1130 are no exception; only one example of spell 76 has been gathered outside el-Bersha, in Gebelein, and spell 80 was recorded, besides el-

[77] See n. 58.
[78] See further Gary L. Ebersole, "Tears," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, 2nd ed. (New York: Thomson Gale, 2005), 13: 9024.
[79] In Coffin Texts spell 1130 (CT VII, 467e-468b) and in the *Book of Going Forth by Day* chapter 175 the return of the world to its original chaotic state is announced. It is interesting however that Atum and Osiris do not cease to exist and because they persist a recreation of the world might be implicit.

Bersha, in a coffin also from Gebelein and in another one from Aswan[80]. It is not unconceivable that other accounts from several theological centres existed[81], but the fact that this particular account was registered in several Middle Kingdom coffins and was maintained for so long a time is significant on its own and suggests wide acceptation among the elite.

More than determining men, the myth of the creation of mankind acknowledges its imperfections and necessity to listen to the teachings of the sages. This view on human nature supports the realism and empiricism of the sapiential instructions rather than the statements of good innate character traits made in tomb inscriptions[82]. I shall therefore take as a premise that at least to the ancient Egyptian elite of the Middle Kingdom character was malleable and that the individual was responsible not only for moulding it according to ethical expectations but also for keeping it on the right track.

1.2. Heart:

The heart was a very important element in the Egyptian conception of conscience, and it is therefore relevant to our discussion. Since the heart in the Egyptian culture has been the subject of intensive studies[83], I intend to focus mainly on the importance that Ptahhotep and sources contemporary with it may have attributed to the heart in what concerns free will. But first I should like to briefly introduce the historical setting of the heart.

[80] For more details, including the owners of the coffin, see Adriaan de Buck, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 7 vols., (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1935-61).

[81] See for example the hypothesis of an account similar to the one in the Bible in Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt*, 68.

[82] It may seem a contradiction that this myth was also inscribed in tombs. But as has been suggested, Coffin Texts spell 1130, for example, was perhaps originally intended to be recited at festivals in honour of the sun god. See David Lorton, God's Beneficent Creation: Coffin Texts Spell 1130, the Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aton," 144 with references.

[83] Examples of comprehensive works are: Alexandre Piankoff, *Le "coeur" dans les textes Égyptiens: Depuis l'Ancien jusq'à la fin du Nouvel Empire*, (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1930), Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "O coração e o homem no antigo Egipto: Contributos para a compreensão de uma 'Psicologia' antiga" [The heart and man in ancient Egypt: (Contributions to the comprehension of an ancient "Psychology"] master's thesis, University of Lisbon, 1998), Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência" [The symbolic of the heart in ancient Egypt: Study of religious anthropology about the representation of conscience], 2 vol.s (PhD dissertation, University of Porto, 2006), María Isabel Toro Rueda, "Das Herz in der ägyptischen Literatur des zweiten Jahrtausends v. Chr. Untersuchungen zu Idiomatik und Metaphorik von Ausdrücken mit *jb* und *ḥ3tj*" (PhD dissertation, Universität Göttingen, Göttingen, 2003), and Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2009), 55-127.

1.2.1. **Historical setting: the evolution of the officials' heart from the Old to the Middle Kingdom:**

In the Old Kingdom there is a conspicuous absence of the heart, either as *ḥ3.ty* or *ib*, in the self presentation of the deceased in tomb biographies. The only heart that was regularly mentioned was the king's *ib*. And both *ib* and *ḥ3.ty* were featured in the *Pyramid Texts*, but then again this corpus was exclusive to the king and certain queens of the Sixth Dynasty. According to Jan Assmann, in the Old Kingdom the king's heart took precedence over his subjects':

> The first [stage in the history of the heart] is the ideal of the "king-guided individual." At this stage, which is coeval with the Old Kingdom, there is no explicit mention of the heart. The individual (the official; we have no written testimonies of any other groups) sees himself as the executive organ of the royal will. The heart of the king thinks and plans for all.[84]

This interpretation is confirmed by a passage from the tomb inscriptions of Ankhi, called Intji, perhaps from the early Sixth Dynasty:

> O lector priest, *imakhu* in the sight of Anubis, may your heart be sweet in relation to the king![85]

Despite the more limited role of the heart of non-royals, apparently it could stand for the persons' moral conscience, for in a speech by a god from the temple of Sahure at Abusir it is stated:

> [To you have I given] ... all [(*enemies or foreigners of some type*)] under your sandals. I have collected together the hearts of all the *rekhyt* people for you.[86]

This text is the written counterpart to the base of a statue of king Djoser where he is depicted threading on the Nine Bows and is one foot away from stepping on three lapwings, the lapwings symbolising the *rekhyt* – the king's subjects – and the number three standing for the plural.[87] Seemingly the subject's heart was not important for its own features within each individual; instead it appeared to have been important as the

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[84] *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1996), 135. The brackets are mine.
[85] Translation by Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 218.
[86] Ibid., 85-6. Brackets and emphasis by the author.
[87] A picture is available in Farid Atiya, Abeer El-Shahawy, Mathaf al-Misrī, Farid S. Atiya, *The Egyptian Museum in Cairo: a walk through the alleys of ancient Egypt* (Cairo: Faryd Atiya Press, 2005), 39.

locus of loyalty to the king. Even in the biographies from Upper Egypt the heart of the king remained the only important one. Officials deployed in the provinces of Egypt had more liberty to develop biographies with a greater focus on their individual action than their homologous ones at the capital, but even so they did not explore the role of their hearts in their individuality.

However, with the collapse of the kingship and state institutions that dictated the end of the Old Kingdom the king lost credibility as the central reference and element of prestige. Following the civil war and fragmentation of the political power into several potentates, rulers became their own element of reference and of their local subjects. Filling in the gap left by the king, these rulers and their officials exploited not only their self-proclaimed magnanimousness and efficiency but they were also concerned with pinpointing where in their conscience did such attitudes originate. This is one of the major shifts from the Old Kingdom biographies and was further developed in the Middle Kingdom. Assmann terms the stage in the history of the heart in ancient Egypt that corresponds to the Middle Kingdom as "heart-guided individual." According to the author's interpretation of the loyalist teachings – including the *Loyalist Instruction* and the *Story of Sinuhe* –, it was now the "heart full of Maat" (stela London BM 142[88]) that prompted the individual to be loyal to the king.[89] The king was trying to regain his role of reference and centrality that was held in the Old Kingdom, but now the heart, as part of man's conscience, mediated the relation between the individual and monarch. This does not mean that the official gained a conscience only in the Middle Kingdom or that he could not choose to not follow the king until this period; evidence shows the opposite: the character (*qd*) was mentioned in the Old Kingdom, as we have seen, and regarding the tombs' iconographic programs the officials had some control about them – as Nico Staring demonstrated, the degree of personal choice the official was allowed to have depended on the distance from the capital and on the king himself, some kings exerting a tighter control over the iconographic programs than others[90]. Therefore the focus on the heart as the locus of choice to follow the king may be interpreted as a search for the origin of one's attitude rather than a breakthrough from an automaton-like behaviour to conscious decision-making.

[88] See translation in Jan Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt* ..., 136.
[89] Ibid., 135-6.
[90] Nico Staring, "Fixed rules versus personal choice: The Dynamics of Memphite Old Kingdom elite tomb decoration" (master's thesis, Leiden University, 2008), 132-135. See also the article by Deborah Vischak, "Agency in Old Kingdom elite tomb programs: traditions, locations, and variable meanings," *IBAES* 6 (2006): 255-76.

It has been suggested that the judgment of the dead, which morally appraises the heart, was introduced in the Middle Kingdom as a political strategy to guarantee the officials' loyalty[91]. Indeed, at the most advanced stage of the judgment of the dead, in chapter 125 of the *Book of the Dead*, the king is mentioned: "O He-Who-Is-Not-Abandoned, who has come forth from Busiris, I have not reviled the king"[92]. But the king is not the main focus of the negative confession – a whole range of social and private practices and attitudes are. And it should be taken into consideration that one of the first texts where an indication of a moral judgment taking place in the hereafter was given, the *Instruction for King Merikare*, was addressed to a king. In my view, this ethical judgment was the corollary of the exploration of man's inner self. With a deeper look into one's conscience and an acute sense of morality, it seems only natural that with the mixing of both phenomena a general judgment of the dead had come out as a result.[93]

It should be borne in mind that the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* was authored in this milieu and therefore one expects it to have more to do with the conception of heart in the Middle Kingdom, than with the notion of it in the Old Kingdom.

1.2.2. **Overview of the heart concept:**

Whereas modern western languages only have the word "heart," Egyptian had two main[94] words: *ỉb* and *ḥ3.ty*. Because until the New Kingdom the latter was mainly used to denote the physical heart, either of people or of animals[95], and because the

[91] See Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência," 1:67.

[92] Translation by Robert Kriech Ritner, "Book of the Dead 125: The Negative Confession," in *Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 273.

[93] A more developed survey of the evolution of the view on the heart from the Old to the Middle Kingdom may be found in Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência," 1:59-68. About the emergence of a universal judgment of the dead see Rudolf Anthes, "Egyptian Theology in the Third Millenium B. C," *JNES* (1959): 182.

[94] On the possibility of *bsk* being a synonym of *ỉb*, see Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2009), 128-30. See also the term *ʿq* in Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência," 1:42 n. 6.

[95] In the Old Kingdom the *ḥ3.ty* of oxen was depicted, for example, in the butchery scenes of Old Kingdom tombs. See Rune Nyord, "Taking Phenomenology to Heart: Some heuristic remarks on studying ancient Egyptian embodied experience," in *Being in Ancient Egypt. Thoughts on Agency, Materiality and Cognition*, British Archaeological Reports International Series 2019, ed. Rune Nyord and Annette Kjølby (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 2009), 67, and Alexandre Piankoff, *"Coeur"* …, 8-9, with examples and references.

former was used metaphorically and in association to intellectual thought, emotions, and feelings, Alexandre Piankoff identified the *ḥ3.ty* as the organ itself and the *ib* as the moral heart[96].

The scarcity of metaphorical uses of *ḥ3.ty* until the New Kingdom[97] could account for the near absence of *ḥ3.ty* in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*[98], where *ib* is referred to in several lines, in the *Lamentations of Khakheperre-Sonbe*[99], a text which can be described as "a man addressing a monologue to his heart," and in the Middle Kingdom *ex libris*, the *Story of Sinuhe*. Moreover in other literary texts from the Middle Kingdom, namely the tale of the *Shipwrecked Sailor*, the tale of the *Eloquent Peasant*,[100] and the *Instruction for Kagemni*[101], *ḥ3.ty* makes no appearance whatsoever. It is interesting to note that in the extant fragments of the L2 version of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, dated from the Eighteenth Dynasty[102], the absence of a dichotomy between *ib* and *ḥ3.ty* was maintained. However, according to Pascal Vernus there is a quote from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* in a biography from the reign of Senusret I where *ḥ3.ty* is introduced to pair with *ib*[103].

In the above mentioned texts, where *ḥ3.ty* occurs a few times, each occurrence of this lexeme bears metaphorical value, a pattern that is similar to the one displayed in the Coffin Texts where metaphors including *ib* are more numerous than the ones involving *ḥ3.ty*[104]. Additionally, in the Pyramid Texts *ib* is sometimes found where one would

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[96] *"Coeur"* …, 13.
[97] Rune Nyord, "Taking Phenomenology to Heart ...," 67 with n. 15.
[98] This word occurs only once, in maxim 32: May you not copulate with a child-woman. / Know that one will contend against the water in his heart" (*imi=k nk ḥm.t ḫrd rḫ n=k ḫsf=tw r mw ḥr ḥ3.ty=f*). For commentaries and an alternative translation see Richard B. Parkinson, "'Homosexual' Desire and Middle Kingdom Literature," *JEA* 81 (1995): 68-70.
[99] The *ib* is predominant in this text as well, with the *ḥ3.ty* being used only once in verso, 2: "hearts are sad (*ḥ3.tyw snm.w*)." María Isabel Toro Rueda, "Das Herz in der ägyptischen Literatur des zweiten Jahrtausends v. Chr. Untersuchungen zu Idiomatik und Metaphorik von Ausdrücken mit *jb* und *ḥ3tj*," 170. Although this text is preserved in a writing board (BM 5645) dating from the Seventeenth or Eighteenth Dynasties, some authors place its composition date in the Middle Kingdom. See Richard B. Parkinson, "The Text of Khakheperreseneb: New Readings of EA 5645, and an Unpublished Ostracon," *JEA* 83 (1997), 55 with n. 3.
[100] The absence of *ḥ3.ty* in these two texts was noticed by Alexandre Piankoff, *"Coeur"* …, 18 (see n. 5). About the date of composition of these texts see Richard B. Parkinson, "Teachings, Discourses, and Tales from the Middle Kingdom," in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, ed. Stephen Quirke, (New Malden: SIA Publishing, 1991), 115.
[101] It must be taken into account, however, that this instruction survived in a fragmentary state. About the dating of this text see ibid., 105.
[102] Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 7.
[103] *Sagesses de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 71 with n. 35.
[104] Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 108.

expect *ḥ3.ty*[105], i.e., with a physical connotation, and the latter is employed in metaphors that, in the Coffin Texts, are more associated with the *ib*[106].

Furthermore, in the medical papyri the dichotomy between *ib* and *ḥ3.ty* is also present. But whereas outside the medical texts the *ib* might replace the *ḥ3.ty* and vice versa, in the medical papyri such interchange is highly improbable as suggested by Bernard Long:

> Les textes médicaux sont des textes techniques. Il est difficile d'imaginer qu'un médecin emploie un mot pour un autre.[107]

As recognised by Rune Nyord, although *ib* and *ḥ3.ty* interchange in the Coffin Texts, they also do so only in occurrences where both terms share similar characteristics. The exemplification provided by the author is that "whereas both terms can be said to be 'taken way', only the *ib*, never the *ḥ3ty*, is said to be 'given' to the deceased or others."[108] The same conclusion was reached by Bernard Long[109] and the author proposes the following differentiation[110]:

Anatomical and metaphorical meanings of *ḥ3.ty*:

- The one who is at the fore
- Physical heart
- Emotion

Anatomical and metaphorical meanings of *ib*:

- Intelligence
- Conscience
- Desire
- Memory
- Satisfaction
- Sentiment
- Taste
- Stomach entrails

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[105] See the example provided in Alexandre Piankoff, *"Coeur"* …, 11.
[106] See Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 110-1.
[107] Bernard Long, "Le *ib* et le *ḥ3ty* dans les texts médicaux de l'Égypte ancienne," in *Hommages à François Daumas*, 485.
[108] Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 109.
[109] "Le *ib* et le *ḥ3ty* dans les texts médicaux de l'Égypte ancienne," in *Hommages à François Daumas*, 485.
[110] The author presents a diachronic and synchronic model in ibid., 488. I reproduce solely the meanings of each concept.

- Epigastrium-frenic heart
- The one who is at the middle

Metaphorical meanings shared by *ib* and *ḥ3.ty*:

- Courage
- Love
- (Emotion)[111]

It is very significant that both terms refer to anatomical structures as well as to the abstract concepts related with these structures, which suggests a close affinity between both conceptualisations. In fact, *ḥ3.ty* was understood to be the physical organ[112] of the heart which powered the body by pumping the *mt.w* vessels[113]. By virtue of its anatomic role, the *ḥ3.ty* was an active principle and, according to Rogério Sousa, its hieroglyphic sign was not due only to phonetic value. Depicting the forepart of a lion, *ḥ3.t* is related to the sun as the lion of tomorrow. Since *ḥ3.t* denotes being at the fore or vanguard and due to the *ḥ3.ty*'s function within the body the same author states that *ḥ3.ty* is particularly connected with discernment and intellective properties[114].

In stark contrast, the *ib* is difficult to define in anatomical terms. It does not seem to refer to a particular organ but rather to a range of organs inside the torso. The closest account to the Egyptians' conception of the *ib* might be the one by Thierry Bardinet, who suggests that the *ib* comprehends all organs within the torso except for the *ḥ3.ty*[115]. However, Rune Nyord concluded in a survey of occurrences of the heart in the *Coffin Texts* that "no certain indications were found of the *ib* referring to the entirety of internal organs as understood by Bardinet"[116]. Nonetheless, the *ib* does refer to more than one organ and hence it is "anatomically undefined," as Rogério Sousa put it[117], in the sense that it cannot be pinpointed to a single organ or location within the body in the same way that the *ḥ3.ty* can. But despite the comprehensiveness of the term *ib*, there are

[111] This was not considered by Long as a shared meaning between *ib* and *ḥ3.ty*.
[112] About the notion of organ in ancient Egypt see Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência," 1:45.
[113] Ibid., 43-6.
[114] Ibid., 57.
[115] *Les papyrus medicaux de l'Égypte pharaonique*, Penser la Medicine (Paris: Fayard, 1995), 103 quoted in Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência," 1:43 with nn. 10, 12.
[116] *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 112.
[117] "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência," 1:45.

several instances in the medical texts where it stands for the stomach[118]. Being the recipient of aliments, the stomach displays a passive role, and given that in some occurrences in the medical papyri the *ib* is addressed as the stomach Rogério Sousa interprets the *ib* as being a passive element as against the *ḥ3.ty* which had, as just said, an active role[119]. The relation between the *ib* and the stomach gave rise to the identification of the *ib* with a vase[120], which was extrapolated to the material cultural in the form of heart amulets with a hollow inside[121]. In some occurrences of *ib* in the *Coffin Texts*, it also functions as a "container," in Nyord's terminology, of several elements[122], which according to the Danish Egyptologist is a rare feature of other torso organs except for the *ḫ.t*[123]. Interestingly it is never said to contain aliments. But it is said to contain emotions[124] and "speech acts"[125], for example, which are in consonance with the range of mental properties, as it were, attributed to the *ib*. The conceptualisation of the physical *ib* as the stomach thus led to the formulation of the metaphorical *ib*; as a result, expressions for memory and intellectual understanding – "to place something in one's *ib*" –, and for trust in someone – "to fill one's *ib*"[126] – were rooted in the experience of the *ib*, while identified with the stomach, as a recipient. Nonetheless, it is striking that in CT 26 the *ḥ3.ty* is said twice to be a container for "awe" (*šfšf.t*)[127], which may have more to do with a more suitable connection between *šfšf.t* and *ḥ3.ty* rather than a *de facto* conceptualisation of the *ḥ3.ty* as a container.

Although the ancient Egyptian notion of heart consisted fundamentally on the unity formed by *ḥ3.ty* and *ib*, the latter formed a dialectic relation with *ḫ.t* both on the physical as well as on the metaphorical level. In the *Coffin Texts* the belly is, as the *ib*,

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[118] Ibid., 43-4.
[119] Ibid., 45.
[120] This identification is not a modern interpretation but rather an ancient association. Evidence for this is presented by the use of the W10 sign of Gardiner's Sign-List as a determinative for "heart." See ibid., 1:57, and ibid., 2: annex V 1.8.
[121] See Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "Os Amuletos do Coração no Antigo Egipto: Tipologia e Caracterização" [The heart amulets in ancient Egypt: Typology and characterisation], *Cadmo* 15 (2005): 111-6.
[122] Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 68-78.
[123] Ibid., 68.
[124] Ibid., 77-8.
[125] Ibid., 75-6.
[126] As in a passage from the biography of Weni which reads: "and the heart of his majesty was filled with me (*iḫr mḥ ib n(.i) ḥm=f i(3)m(=i)*)". Kurt Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reichs*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1933) 100, 4 (henceforth referenced as *Urk* I). Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 353, in his translation of the same passage provides a more common, but less literal, rendering of *mḥ ib*: "and his heart was full of me". The same expression is also present in the *Instruction of Amenemhet I*: "do not fill your heart with (i.e. do not trust) a brother (*m mḥ ib=k m sn*)". Translated from the original text in Alexandre Piankoff, *Le "Coeur"* ..., 43.
[127] Ibid., 75.

described as a container of some of the elements contained in it as well as others, starting with the *ib* itself[128] which is said to be in the right place. Whereas the *ib* is differentiated from the *ḥ3.ty*, it shares some of its fundamental characteristics, both physical and metaphorical, with the *ḫ.t*. In fact, one may say that the *ḫ.t* mirrors the *ib*, but while the former has usually a negative connotation, the latter has frequently a positive denotation. The exact relation between *ib* and *ḫ.t* is at times difficult to ascertain, usually because of the polysemy of *ḫ.t*, which can mean "belly," womb," body," and "sole (of foot)"[129]. In the wisdom literature it usually stands for belly, as in the following excerpt from the *Instruction for Kagemni*:

If you sit with a crowd, / dislike the food you want; control of the *ib*[130] is for a trifling moment. Gluttony is base / and one points the finger at it. A cup of water, it quenches thirst. A mouthful of herbs[131], / it fortifies the *ib*. What is good replaces the good[132]; a small quantity replaces a great one. Baseness / is greed of one's belly when the appropriate time (for the meal) has passed. One must ignore the belly that has free reign in others' house. (*ir ḥmsi=k ḥnʿ ʿš3.t / msdi t(3) mrr=k 3.t pw kt(.i)t d3r ib ḫw.w pw 3fʿ / iw ḏb3 i(3)m iw ikn n(.i) mw ʿḫm=f ib.t mḥ{.t} r(3) m šww / smn=f ib iw nfr.t idn bw-nfr iw nhy n(.i) kt(.i)t idn wr ḫzy / pw ḥnt n(.i) ḫ.t=f sw3 tr smḫ.n=f wstn ḫ.t m pr=sn*). (I, 3-7).[133]

This passage also makes explicit the dialectic between the *ib* and *ḫ.t*. Whereas the latter stands for hunger and failure to control it, particularly in a social context, the former stands for discipline and self-control.

1.2.3. **The *ib* as a mental cause and its dialectic relation with *ḫ.t*:**

[128] Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 68.
[129] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 200.
[130] *D3r ib* is usually translated as "self-control," but I opted for a literal translation in order to allow for an appreciation of the original sense.
[131] William Kelly Simpson, "The Teaching for the Vizier Kagemni," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 150, suggests "rushes."
[132] I take this sentence to mean that what is healthy, at least from the point of view of apropriate social behaviour, should be preferred over what tastes good.
[133] Translated from the original in Alan H. Gardiner, "The Instruction Addressed to Kagemni and His Brethren," *JEA* 32 (1946), pl. XIV, and with resort to the translation by William Kelly Simpson, "The Teaching for the Vizier Kagemni," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 150. The fact that representations from the tombs of officials exhibit some overweight, certainly as an element of prestige, suggests that Kagemni's exhortations to hold one's appetite applied only to eating in a social context instead of being the norm. The last sentence may refer to banquet in another's official place entailing, therefore, a social context.

There are several texts where the *ib* is said to be at the origin of what the individual says or does. In the epilogue of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, for example, it is said:

(528) May his *ib* match his tongue (*mḫ3 ib=f n ns=f*),

(529) May his lips be precise when he speaks (*ʿq3 zp.ty=fy iw=f ḥr ḏd*).

A similar statement is made in the stela Berlin 1157 erected by Senusret III at Semna in Nubia:

What my *ib* plans is what takes place through my action (literally 'arm') (*k33.t ib=i ḫpr.t m ʿ=i*)"[134].

It is interesting that centuries later, in the Late Period, the same verb employed here, *k3i*, is used in the Memphite Theology: "It is the tongue that repeats what the *ḥ3.ty* plans (*in ns wḥm k33.t ḥ3.t*(*y*))" (line 56)[135]. The use of *ḥ3.ty* in place of *ib* is in consonance with the gradual replacement of the latter by the former in later times[136].

In some of the *Coffin Texts* spells the *ib* is also at the root of what Rune Nyord terms "speech acts"[137]:

I speak from[138] my *ib*, the strength of my *ba* protects me [...]. I speak from my *ib* to the ones in the Tribunal in the mansion of the Foremost of Westerners (*ḏd=i m ib=i ḫw w*(*i*) *nḫt.w b3=i* [...] *ḏd=i m ib=i n imy.w ḏ3.t m ḥw.t ḫnt*(*y*)*-imn.tyw*) (*CT* 149, II, 242b-c, 243c-244a).[139]

His utterance is what comes out from his own *ib* (*r*(*3*)*=f pr.t m ib=f ḏs=f*). (*CT* 321, IV, 147h).[140]

See, what he has said will not come out from his lips (*st ḏd.n=f m ib=f n pr ḥr sp.ty=f*(*y*)). (*CT* 673, VI, 301s-t).[141]

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[134] Translation by William Kelly Simpson, "The Semna Stela," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 338. Hieroglyphic text in *Aegyptische Inschriften aus den Königlichen Museen zu Berlin* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1913), 1:257. For an introduction to the political context of this stela see Toby Wilkinson, *Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt: The History of a Civilisation from 3000 BC to Cleopatra* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), 174-9.

[135] Translation from the text in Lorraine Tartasky, "Lioness of the Sun," http://www.lionessofthesun.com/main/glossary/M/MemphiteTheology (accessed 7 September, 2010).

[136] Bernard Long, "Le *ib* et le *ḥ3ty* dans les texts médicaux de l'Égypte ancienne," 487.

[137] See *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 75-6.

[138] The preposition *m* allows for several translations, namely "in," through," and "with." I followed Faulkner's rendering (Raymond O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 1:127.

[139] Translated with resort to ibid., 1:127-8.

[140] Translated with recourse to ibid., 1:249.

And in the *Story of Sinuhe* the protagonist's *ib* is made responsible for his perambulation in Syria-Palestine:

> Foreign land has given you to foreign land under the counsel of your *ib* for you (*ḏḏ tw ḫ3s.t n ḫ3s.t ḥr zḥ n(.i) ib=f n=k*) (B 182).[142]

If the speech or action originates in or is planned by the *ib*, then it may be considered the cause of such events as an originator of thoughts that are materialised through the body. Given that the production of speech and action pertains to the intellective dimension, the *ib* may also be said to function as what we term "mind." In this quality the *ib* is a mental cause. And the concept of mental causation is very important in the philosophy of mind as pointed out by Julie Yoo:

> The phenomenon of mental causation [...] is absolutely fundamental to our concept of actions performed intentionally (as opposed to involuntarily), which, in turn, is central to those of agency, free will, and moral responsibility.[143]

This mental causation is also mirrored by the *ḥ.t*:

> Do not speak about matters of secret (*m ḏd md(.w)t n(.i) ḫ3p*).
>
> The one who is discreet (lit. "hides his belly"), has made his shield (*iw ḫ3p ḥ.t=f ir.n=f i(k)m=f*)[144].
>
> Do not speak of matters of the activity of the *ib* (i.e., thoughts) (*m ḏd md(.w)t n(.i) pr-ꜥ-ib*),
>
> When one sits down with you defiantly (*iw ḥms=tw ḥnꜥ=k ksm.w*).[145] (*Instruction of Dua-Khety*, stanza 25).

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[141] Translated with resort to ibid., 2: 243.

[142] Text in María Isabel Toro Rueda, "Das Herz in der ägyptischen Literatur des zweiten Jahrtausends v. Chr. Untersuchungen zu Idiomatik und Metaphorik von Ausdrücken mit *jb* und *ḫ3tj*," 286. About the role of the heart in the *Story of Sinuhe* see also "O coração na Aventura de Sinuhe" [The heart in the Adventure of Sinuhe], in Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, *A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência*, 1:123-8. See also section 1.2.5. of this thesis.

[143] Julie Yoo, "Mental Causation," in *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://www.iep.utm.edu/mental-c/ (accessed September 7, 2010).

[144] Transliteration and translation of this sentence according to James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, 2nd ed., 490.

[145] Transliteration of Papyrus Sallier II from María Isabel Toro Rueda, "Das Herz in der ägyptischen Literatur des zweiten Jahrtausends v. Chr. Untersuchungen zu Idiomatik und Metaphorik von Ausdrücken mit *jb* und *ḫ3tj*," 172-3. For a variant see ibid., 173. My translation was made with resort to William Kelly Simpson, "The Satire on the Trades: The Instruction of Dua-Khety," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 436.

(I am) One who knows what lies in the belly without coming out through the lips, and speaks saying in accordance with his *ib* (*rḫ imy.w-ḥ.t n pr.t ḥr sp.ty mdw r ḏd ḫft ib=f*). (Biography of Intef, the Great Herald of the King, from the Eighteenth Dynasty).[146]

Despite the polysemy of *ḥ.t*, the pairing with *ib* strongly suggests that it refers to the belly. And the hiding of the belly in the *Instruction of Dua-Khety* resembles the quoted passage from the biography of Intef. The metaphor of the shield, in the same instruction, suggests that the thoughts generating in the belly are irrational or inconsiderate, especially when we think on the scenario of the confrontation with the disputants (maxims 2-4 in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*) – which is also contemplated in the *Instruction of Dua-Khety*: "if a man reproves you, and you do not know how to oppose his anger, make your reply very cautiously in the presence of listeners" (section 23)[147].

In the biography of Intef an interesting compound is used: *imy.w-ḥ.t*. It literally means "what is in the *ḥ.t*." And according to Raymond Faulkner, it means "thoughts"[148], a translation that is suitable to the Egyptian expression since Intef states that what is in his belly is not allowed to be verbalised. However, such thoughts have a pejorative connotation. The axiological superiority of the *ib* in relation to the *ḥ.t* pervades the majority of the passages where both elements form a dialectic. To my knowledge only in the New Kingdom is the belly conceived as containing good answers – although it also contains bad ones:

A man's belly is wider than a granary,
And full of all kinds of answers.
Choose the good one and say the good
While the bad is shut in your belly. (*Instruction of Any*, VII, 9-10).[149]

[146] Translated from the original in Kurth Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1909), 971, line 2, and with resort to the translation in "Stela of Intef the Herald," in James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. 2, *The Eighteenth Dynasty* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1906), 299.
[147] Translation by William Kelly Simpson, "The Satire on the Trades: The Instruction of Dua-Khety," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 435.
[148] *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 200.
[149] Miriam Lichtheim, "Didactic Literature," in *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms*, ed. Antonio Loprieno, Probleme der Ägyptologie 10 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 255.

The conceptualisation of the *ib* and *ḥ.t* as mental causes may derive from the physical experience of them, since both are involved in procreation. In several texts, the *ib* is mentioned as an important element in sexual reproduction[150], and a hymn to the god Min, from the Thirteenth Dynasty, "shows that the 'joining of the interior (*ib*)' of the man with the woman is seen as part of the procreative process that takes place after intercourse"[151]. Therefore both the man's and woman's *ib* was relevant in reproduction. In the *Coffin Texts* either the belly of a goddess or of the deceased could also be mentioned in a procreative role[152]. Both the *ib* and the belly have, therefore, a creative power, and it is possible that the intellective role of both elements in the origination of thoughts is owed to their relevance in procreation.

Since the *ib* is said to be inside the *ḥ.t*, as it was mentioned above, and given that both elements play a role in procreation, can there be a procreation-like relation, on the metaphorical level, between the two? If so, it is possible that thoughts and feelings are generated from the dialectic relation between *ib* and *ḥ.t*. The impression given by the texts is that one either tunes in with the *ib* or with the *ḥ.t*. For example, in the *Tale of the Eloquent Peasant* it is stated that: "there is no one light of *ib* who is guarded (lit. "heavy") of the counsel of the *ḥ.t* (*nn iz-ib dns sḫr-ḥ.t*) (B 1, 209)[153]. Since "light of *ib*" has a similar meaning to the modern "light-minded"[154], and that *dns* has the sense of "guarded" in *dns mhwt* ("guarded of speech")[155], I propose the interpretation that while one disregards the *ib* the *ḥ.t* comes into play and vice-versa. As for the compound *sḫr-ḥ.t* it is similar to *imy.w-ḥ.t* with the main difference of having a specific word for "counsel," or "plan" – it can also mean "conduct," and "governance" –,[156] instead of a prepositional nisbe.

The dialectic between *ib* and *ḥ.t* is also developed in maxim 14 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*:

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[150] Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 419 ff. A striking example of the *ib* in a procreative role comes from the Second Stele of Kamose:

> The women of Avaris shall not conceive (*nn iwr ḥm.wt ḥw.t-wꜥr.t*),
> Their *ib.w* shall not open up (*nn sn ib.w=sn*)
> Inside their bellies (*m-ḫnw ḥ.t=sn*).

Translation and transliteration according to ibid., 421.

[151] Ibid., 420.

[152] For references see ibid., 72-3.

[153] Alan H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar: Being an Introduction to the Study of Hieroglyphs*, 83. For a different interpretation of this passage see Telo Ferreira Canhão, "O conto do camponês eloquente" [The tale of the eloquent peasant], *Cadmo* 16 (2006): 46 n. 136.

[154] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 30.

[155] Ibid., 314.

[156] Ibid., 242.

(232) Should you be with people (*ir wnn=k ḥnꜥ r(m)ṯ.w*),

(233) Seek for yourself partisans of a trustworthy man (*ir n=k mr.w n(.i) kfȝ-ib*)[157].

(234) The trustworthy one (*kfȝ-ib*),

(235) Is the one who does not turn to what is said in his belly (*iw.ty pḫr=f ḏd m ḫ.t=f*).

(237) He will become a commander himself (*ḫpr=f m ṯz.w ḏs=f*),

(239) A possessor of goods who acts according to his plan (*nb ḫ.t d(.w) m-ꜥ m sḫr=f*)"[158].

[...]

(243) The *ib* of the one who listens to his[159] belly passes by[160] (*wnn ib sḏm n ḫ.t=f*),

(244) He causes dislike in place of his love (*ḏi=f kn.t m s.t mr.wt=f*).

(245) The *ib* will be withered, and his body will not be anointed (*ib fȝk.w ḥꜥ.w=f ḫsȝ*).

(247) The people who are great of *ib* have been given by god[161] (*iw wr ib rḏi.w nṯr*),

(248) While the one who listens to his belly belongs to the enemy (*iw sḏm n ḫ.t=f n(.i) sw ḫft.y*).

As we may observe, two opposing archetypes are presented here: the trustworthy man and the one who turns and listens to his belly. The word spelled out as *kfȝ* may in fact be a variation of *kfi*. And whereas the former means "be discreet," the latter means "to uncover"[162]. Thus *kfȝ-ib* literally means "discreet of *ib*," while the sense of *kfi-ib* is "uncovered of *ib*." Both renderings might actually be viewed as synonyms if we

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[157] I followed John L. Foster, *Thought Couplets and Clause Sequences in a Literary Text: The Maxims of Ptah-hotep*, 40. Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 134, however, considers this rendering unsatisfactory. This line is not entirely clear. Christian Jacq translates it as "procure-toi des alliés, en tant qu'homme digne de confiance qui atteint le cœur" (*Les maximes de Ptah-Hotep: l'enseignement d'un sage au temps des pyramides*, 148). This rendering would be better suited to the L2 version which replaces the *n* for an *m* – which could be construed as an *m* of identification. Furthermore, Jacq reads the word here transliterated as *kfȝ* as *pḥ*. However, because the L2 version spells out *kfȝ* – the word in Prisse may be an abbreviation of *kfȝ* –, and because the expression *kfȝ-ib* is attested at least in another text (Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 285) I take this expression to be *kfȝ-ib* and not *pḥ-ib*. The latter compound is not listed neither in Adolf Erman, Hermann Grapow, *Worterbuch der Aegyptischen Sprache* (Berlim: Akademie-Verlag, 1971), 1:533-5, nor in María Isabel Toro Rueda, "Das Herz in der ägyptischen Literatur des zweiten Jahrtausends v. Chr. Untersuchungen zu Idiomatik und Metaphorik von Ausdrücken mit *jb* und *ḥȝtj*," 339.

[158] For the transliteration and translation of this line I followed Christian Jacq, *Les maximes de Ptah-Hotep: l'enseignement d'un sage au temps des pyramides* (Fuveau: La Maison de Vie, 2004), 149.

[159] The third person suffix pronoun in this and the next two lines refers to the person.

[160] I take *wnn* to be a gemination of the *tertiae infirmae* verb *wni*, "to pass by." The sense is that the heart will take the wrong direction, and is made clear by the L2 version, from the Eighteenth Dynasty, which replaces *wnn* by *nnm*, "to err," or "go wrong."

[161] The wording of this line would suggest a pseudo-verbal construction, as interpreted by Rune Nyord: "he who is great of *ib* will become one of the god-given people." In *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 89. However one would expect the infinitival *rḏi.t* instead of *rḏi.w*. Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 135, also reads *rḏi.w* in place of *r ḏi.w*. Nonetheless, both the morphology and syntax do fit a *iw=f* passive *sḏm=f* complex verb construction (about this construction see Boyo G. Ockinga, *A Concise Grammar of Middle Egyptian*, 2nd rev. ed., 59). In translating "people" instead of "one" I followed Christian Jacq, who translates it so because of the determinatives for man and woman included in the writing of *rḏi.w*.

[162] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 285. Faulkner does not identify *kfi* as a *tertiae infirmae* verb; for this see James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*[2], 471.

suppose that the discreet of *ib* is one who can keep a secret, and that the uncovered of *ib* is someone with nothing to hide. Both expressions favour the translation "trustworthy"[163].

In lines 234 and 235 it is said that the trustworthy man does not follow what is said in his belly. The L2 version of line 235 is even clearer: "he is the one who does not listen to what his belly says (*iw.ty sḏm=f n ḏd ḥ.t=f*)." Lines 237 and 239[164] add that because of this attitude the trustworthy man will prosper.

Lines 243-248 shift from the trustworthy to the one who listens to his belly. It is interesting that in line 243 it is the *ib* and not the person that will err. This implies that the *ib* is still functioning as a mental cause. And the belly is here depicted as the element that negatively influences what the *ib* causes. In contrast to the trustworthy man, the one who listens to his belly will be alienated from his social circle[165]. What is meant by *ib fꜣk.w* is more obscure, but may also be related with antisocialism.

Line 248, which ends maxim 14, states that the one who listens to his belly belongs to the enemy, without giving any further details about what belonging to the enemy exactly means. In the description of the ignorant, the opposite of the silent man, in the Epilogue (lines 575-587), no reference is made to the belly – nor to the *ib* for that matter. And in the reproach of the avidity of *ib* (*ʿwn ib*), the cause of all kinds of evils according to Ptahhotep (lines 298-301), the belly is mentioned but as a neutral element:

> (322) It is a little of avidity about it (*in nhy n*(*.i*) *ʿwn.t ḥr=s*)
>
> (323) That brings about quarrelsomeness in a cool belly (*sḫpr šnty m qb ḥ.t*). (Maxim 20).

This last passage from maxim 20 presents another feature of the *ib* and *ḥ.t*: the emotional state of the individual may be characterised through the temperature of his *ib* and *ḥ.t*; a cool temperature denotes calmness and pleasantness, whereas a hot temperature expresses emotions related to anger[166]. Thus, besides being cool the *ḥ.t* may also be said to be hot:

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[163] This connotation is reiterated in maxim 30, line 433.

[164] Lines 236 and 238 are featured in the L2 version alone, and therefore will be taken into consideration here.

[165] See e.g. the biographical inscription of Senedjemib Inti from his tomb at Giza (reign of Izezi): "and his majesty saw to it that I was anointed with unguent and that my skin was cleansed in the presence of his majesty by an inspector of hairdressers of the Great House, a chief of Nekheb and the keeper of the diadem." Translated by Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 311-2.

[166] About the temperature of the *ib* see Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, *A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência*, 1:52-3.

(350) May you not repeat a slander (*imi=k wḥm mski n*(*.i*) *md.t*);

(351) You will not listen to it (*n sḏm=k sw*).

(352) It is the utterance of the hot belly (*pr.w pw n*(*.i*)*t t3 ḫ.t*). (Maxim 23).[167]

And so may the *ib*:

(378) The flame of the hot *ib* is spread (*iw ns.wt n*(*.i*)*t t3 ib sḫr=f*).[168] (Maxim 25).

Although the expression *qbb ib* does not occur in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, it occurs in other Middle Kingdom Texts such as the *Coffin Texts* and in the tales from the Papyrus Westcar[169]. Additionally Ptahhotep uses a similar concept, "to wash the *ib*" (*iʿi ib*), as in maxim 17: The one who is under an injustice wishes his *ib* to be washed (*mr ḫr*(*.y*) *iw iʿ.t*(*w*) *ib=f*) (line 268). It is interesting that in the preceding lines the *ḫ.t* is again paired with the *ib*:

(265) Be peaceful when you listen to a speech from the petitioner (*hr sḏm=k mdw spr.w*)

(266) Do not rebuff him, until he has wiped out his belly[170] (*m gnf sw r sk.t*(*=f*)[171] *ḫ.t=f*)

(267) Of that which he thought he had to say (*m k3.t.n=f ḏd.n=f st*).

(268) The one who is under an injustice wishes his *ib* to be washed (*mr ḫr*(*.y*) *iw iʿ.t*(*w*) *ib=f*)[172]

(269) More than the realisation of that which he came for (*r ir.t ii.t.n=f ḥr=s*). (Maxim 17).

In this maxim both the *ib* and *ḫ.t* require cleansing and may therefore be construed as synonyms.

Returning to the hot temperature of both elements, it is noteworthy that the participle *t3* is common to both passages. It is interesting that the related noun *ṯ3.w* is used in the medical texts, probably to refer to the burning sensation caused by infections – as in urinary infections, for example.[173] It is also noticeable that, according to Herodotus, "the Egyptians were obsessed with their bowels, and much of their

[167] This is the only example from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep.* For an example from the New Kingdom see the *Instruction of Amenemope*, chapter 9.

[168] I followed the interpretation of Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 151, in rendering this sentence as a complex verb form *iw=f* + Passive *sḏm=f*.

[169] See Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 90 with n. 499.

[170] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 251, understands this idiom as meaning "pour out one's heart," i.e. express one's feelings. Compare also with the *Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*, B1, 310: "I have vented what was in my belly (*snf*(*3*).*n=i ntt m ḫ.t=i*)." In James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*[2], 150, 482.

[171] I followed Christian Jacq, *Les maximes de Ptah-Hotep*, 155, in the emendation.

[172] The L2 variant of this line is formulated in a less dramatic tone: "the one who pleas wishes his speech to be considered (*mr spr h*[*nn*] *ṯz.w=f*)."

[173] See John F. Nunn, "Disease," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 1:399.

pharmacopeia was devoted to facilitating bowel movements"[174]. Would the "hot-temper" – Faulkner's translation of both *t3 ib* and *t3 ḥ.t*[175] – be considered a psychosomatic condition, perhaps in a similar way to the Greek *cholera* which comes from *cholon*, "liver"[176]? A direct relation is difficult to prove, but since that in the English language, for example, the very adjective "inflammatory" may qualify either an infection or something that induces anger, without there being any relation between both situations, it may be suggested instead that once more it is the physical experience that fuels the metaphorical conceptualisation. About the intensive investment in pharmacopeia to the bowels, it is not clear how it would relate to the emotional state described by *t3 ḥ.t* or *t3 ib*, particularly because wisdom texts do not establish such a relation.

1.2.4. **The structuring cause of the *ib*:**

As we have just seen in the previous section, the *ib* can be the mental cause of one's actions. The philosopher F. Dretske[177], in attempting to construe the phenomenon of mental causation, has proposed to divide mental causation into two types of causes: a "triggering cause," and a "structuring cause." The author illustrates this theory with a thermostat designed to turn on the furnace when a low temperature is detected. This low temperature is the triggering cause which leads the thermostat to activate the furnace. But this could only happen due to wiring from the thermostat to the furnace which constitutes the structuring cause[178]. Applied to the Egyptian notion of conscience, the triggering cause is the *ib*, whereas the structuring cause is made of the person's formative circumstances and personal history. This is a very similar issue to the "condition of Ultimate Responsibility" which we have already addressed in relation to character. If the structuring cause is made up of the agent's life, then the agent itself is the structuring cause. When it is said in the wisdom literature and biographies that one should ignore the speech of the *ḥ.t*[179], in those instances the individual is building his

[174] The statement is Nunn's. See ibid.
[175] *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 293.
[176] This relation between bad temperament and the liver is still expressed in the Portuguese language by the expression "estar com os azeites."
[177] "Reasons and Causes," *Philosophical Perspectives* 3 (1989): 1-15, and "Mental Events as Structuring Causes of Behavior," in *Mental Causation*, ed. J. Heil and A. Mele (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 121-36, quoted in Julie Yoo, "Mental Causation," section 3.b.iii.4.
[178] See Julie Yoo, ibid.
[179] See, for example, the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, maxim 14, line 235, translated above.

own history. Conversely, the individual who listens to his *ḫ.t*[180] hinders his *ib* as it will deviate from the path hoped for in the epilogue to the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*:

(628) Act until your lord says in your respect (*ir r ḏd.t*[181] *nb=k r=k*):

(629) "How good is the teaching of his father (*nfr.wy sbȝ n*(*.i*) *ỉf=f*).

(630) (When) he came forth from him, from his body (*pr.n=f ỉ*(*ȝ*)*m=f ḫnt*(*y*) *ḥ*ʿ*.w=f*)

(631) He spoke to him when he was entirely in the womb (*ḏd.n=f n=f ỉw=f m ḫ.t r-ȝw*).

(632) What he did was greater than what was said to him (*wr ỉr.t.n=f r ḏd.t n=f*)."

(633) See, a good son is a gift of god (*mk zȝ nfr n ḏḏ nṯr*),

(634) One who does more than (lit. "puts excess") what was said to him by his lord (*rḏỉ ḥȝ.w ḥr ḏd.t n=f ḫr nb=f*).

(635) May he do *maat* (*ỉr=f mȝ*ʿ*.t*),

(636) His *ib* having acted according to his actions (*ỉr.n ỉb=f r nmt.wt=f*),

(637) As you reach me, your body being complete[182] (*mỉ pḥ=k wỉ ḥ*ʿ*.w wḏȝ*(*.w*)).[183]

Line 636 may be a reference to the structuring cause as it is wished for that the individual's *ib* had acted in accordance with his actions, i.e., that *ib* and individual had been synchronised. Still in the epilogue, after stating that the one who listens is loved by god and that the one god hates cannot listen, Ptahhotep states that to be a listener or a non-listener is a matter controlled by the *ib*:

(550) It is the *ib* that makes its possessor (*ỉn ỉb sḫpr nb=f*)

(551) One who listens, or one who does not listen (*sḏm m tm sḏm*).

(552) For a man his *ib* is life, prosperity, and health (ʿ*nḫ wḏȝ snb n z*(*ỉ*) *ỉb=f*).

As suggested by Rogério Sousa, this passage may be an acknowledgment that the ability to listen may be a natural predisposition outside the individual's control[184]. Maulana Karenga, in commenting on this excerpt, states that "[t]his is both rational and emotional hearing, in a word, *moral responsiveness*."[185] In fact the Egyptian sources

[180] See the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, maxim 14, line 248.
[181] I interpret this verb as a *sḏm.t=f* with an active sense following the preposition *r* (see Boyo G. Ockinga, *A Concise Grammar of Middle Egyptian: An Outline of Middle Egyptian Grammar*, 2nd rev. ed. 42). However, the phrase following *ỉr* is usually rendered as a purpose clause. See Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 171.
[182] I followed Christian Jacq, *Les maximes de Ptah-Hotep: l'enseignement d'un sage au temps des pyramides*, 215, in rendering *wḏȝ* as "complete."
[183] Translated with resort to ibid., 214-5.
[184] *A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência*, 1:cxxvii.
[185] *Maat, the moral ideal in ancient Egypt: a study in classical African* ethics, African Studies (London: Routledge, 2004), 248. Emphasis as in the original.

convey the idea that there was not a sharp distinction between rationality and emotionality but instead a complementarity[186]. However, the emotionality entailed by this complementary relation is a constructive one, as it were, since the opposition between *ỉb* and *ḫ.t* implies an axiological distinction. But then again *ỉb* and *ḫ.t* interchange in the Egyptian account of human behaviour. This seeming contradiction may actually be understood in light of the philosophical doctrine of paraconsistent logic[187].

Even if there is a natural predisposition implied in the passage from the epilogue (lines 550-552), it may have still been believed that the individual was responsible for the formation and evolution of his *ỉb*. Evidence for this is presented not only by the above quoted line 636, but also by the conceptualisation of the *ỉb* as a vase:

> Tal como um vaso que nada vale por si mesmo, mas sim pelo conteúdo que guarda, o coração humano transforma-se em função das emoções e dos pensamentos que o habitam. Ao preencher o seu coração com emoções e pensamentos positivos, ou seja, com os preceitos que regem a ordem cósmica, o homem purifica-se e regenera-se. Caso contrário, o indivíduo cava a sua própria perdição.[188]
>
> [Just as a vase that has no worth for itself, but for the content it houses, the human heart transforms itself according to the emotions and thoughts that dwell on him. By filling his heart with positive emotions and thoughts, i.e., with the precepts that rule the cosmic order, man purifies and regenerates himself. Otherwise, the individual digs his own doom].

Therefore the individual might have been held responsible for the formation of his *ỉb* just as he was responsible for the moulding of his character. When the *ỉb* is said to act independently from the individual, as in the following passages,

> It was my heart that furthered my rank; it was my character that kept me in front." (Stela CGG 20543 of the steward Rediu-Khnum from Dendera, reign of Wahankh Intef II (Eleventh Dynasty).[189]

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[186] As noticed by Rogério Sousa: "Não restam dúvidas que, no pensamento antropológico do antigo Egipto, pensar, querer, e agir emanavam de uma mesma força. Para os antigos sábios, o pensamento não estava marcado pela cisão entre a racionalidade e a emoção, manifestando uma clara união entre o pensamento, o desejo, a emoção e o próprio corpo" [There is no doubt that, in the anthropological thought of ancient Egypt, to think, to wish, and to act issued from a single force. For the ancient wise men, thought was not shaped by the cleavage between rationality and emotion, manifesting a clear union between thought, desire, emotion and the very body]. In *A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência*, 1:56.

[187] For an introduction see Zach Weber, "Paraconsistent Logic," in *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://www.iep.utm.edu/para-log/#SH3f (accessed September 19, 2010).

[188] Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "Os Amuletos do Coração no Antigo Egipto: Tipologia e Caracterização," 116.

[189] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom* ..., 43.

It was my heart that advanced my position and I conformed to the deeds of my fathers. [...] [W]hose heart conducts his affairs. (Stela of the chief priest Wepwawet-aa, from the reign of Senuseret I-Amenemhet II (Twelfth Dynasty).[190]

it might be a direct consequence from the way the individual structured his *ib* as a mental cause. The advice given in the *Instruction for Kagemni* "to control the *ib*" (*ḏr ib*) and "to fortify the *ib*" (*smn=ib*)[191] also supports this interpretation.

1.2.5. **Heart loss:**

There is another topic which is important to understand the heart's role in free will. It is about what we may call "heart loss," by way of analogy to the term "soul loss" used in anthropology to refer to one of the theories of disease in Shamanism[192]. This feature, which is not unique to Egyptian thought[193], is attested both in medical papyri – although in this case the heart is not lost but instead shifts position inside the body – and in literary texts. In Egyptian medicine, if the *ḥꜣ.ty* was in its place (*s.t=f*) then the person's cardiovascular system was working properly as explained in the Ebers Papyrus: "[q]uant à l'expression "le coeur (*ḥꜣty*) est à sa place," c'est que la masse du Coeur est du cotê gauche; il ne monte ni ne descend étant donné qu'il demeure à sa place" (855p)[194]. But when the *ḥꜣ.ty* was said to leave its place, it created a pathological condition which Rogério Sousa has suggested to be an abnormal heartbeat increase[195]. And in more extreme cases it could refer to death[196].

In literary texts the heart loss is usually due to feelings of fear, anxiety, and also to ignorance or senselessness. Examples of the first case are found both in the *Story of Sinuhe* and in the tale of the *Eloquent Peasant*:

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[190] Ibid., 76.
[191] See translation above in section 1.2.2.
[192] See Sam D. Gill, "Shamanism: North American Shamanism," in *Encyclopedia of Religion* ed. Lyndsay Jones, 2nd rev. ed., 12:8288.
[193] In Tibetan beliefs, for example, one's soul (*bla*) may also be lost. See Geoffrey Samuel, "Healing and Medicine: Healing and Medicine in Tibet," in *Encyclopedia of Religion* ed. Lyndsay Jones, 2nd rev. ed., 6:3865).
[194] Translation in Bernard Long, "Le *ib* et le *ḥꜣty* dans les texts médicaux de l'Égypte ancienne," 489.
[195] "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência," 1:49.
[196] See Alexandre Piankoff, *"Coeur"* ..., 23 n. 1.

"My *ib* grew weak, and as for my *ḥ3.ty*, it was not even in my body (*ḫ.t*), and on the ways of flight it brought me" (*ib=i 3ḏ.w ḥ3.ty=i n ntf m ḫ.t=i in.n=f wi ḥr w3.t wꜥr*) (*Sinuhe*, B 38-40).[197]

"My *b3* fled and my body shook. My *ḥ3.ty* was not in my (*ḫ.t*) body: I could <not> tell life from death. (*b3=i iz.w ḥꜥ.w=i 3d.w ḥ3.ty=i n ntf m ḫ.t=i <n> rḫ=i ꜥnḫ r mw.t*). (*Sinuhe*, B255).[198]

Now, my body was full, my *ib* was heavy-laden, and it came out from my body/belly (?) (*ḫ.t*) due to its condition (*iw gr.t ḫ.t=i mḥ.t*(*i*) *ib=i 3tp*(*.w*) *pr is m ḫ.t=i n ꜥ iry*). (*Peasant*, B1, 276).[199]

Evidence for the second example is found e.g. in the New Kingdom penitential texts such as the one of Neferabu who says of himself: "(I am) an ignorant man who does not have his *ḥ3.ty* (*z*(*i*) *ḫm iw.ty ḥ3.ty*)"[200].

It is noteworthy that both the *ib* and *ḥ3.ty* are able to come out of the body in similar contexts, particularly in the cases of fear or anxiety in the *Story of Sinuhe* with the addition of frustration in the *Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*. And it is also noticeable that both the *ib* and *ḥ3.ty* are contained within the *ḫ.t*. As we have seen above *ḫ.t* can mean both "body" and "belly." Given the dialectic of *ib* with the belly, we may deduce that in the quoted passage from the *Eloquent Peasant* this dialectic is maintained. Therefore, on a smaller scale the *ḫ.t* houses the *ib*, and on a bigger scale it stores the *ḥ3.ty*. *Ḥ.t* is thus the fixed element in the heart loss.

If Sousa's interpretation of the shifting of the heart as being an increased heart rate is correct, then the heart loss in the metaphorical sense may be connected to its somatic counterpart as a rapid heart rate is one of the symptoms of the "fight or flight" stage which characterises anxiety[201]. Another Egyptian expression that may refer to this

[197] Translation by Rune Nyord, "Taking Phenomenology to Heart ...," 70. Text in María Isabel Toro Rueda, "Das Herz in der ägyptischen Literatur des zweiten Jahrtausends v. Chr. Untersuchungen zu Idiomatik und Metaphorik von Ausdrücken mit *jb* und *ḥ3tj*," 283.
[198] Translation by William Kelly Simpson, "The Story of Sinuhe," *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 64. Text in María Isabel Toro Rueda, "Das Herz in der ägyptischen Literatur des zweiten Jahrtausends v. Chr. Untersuchungen zu Idiomatik und Metaphorik von Ausdrücken mit *jb* und *ḥ3tj*," 288. About some grammatical problems raised by this passage see Michael Rhodes, "Sinuhe B 255," *JNES* 32 (1973): 485-6.
[199] Text in Adriaan de Buck, *Egyptian Readingbook: Exercises and Midlle Egyptian Texts* (Leiden: Nederlandsch Archaeologisch-Philologisch Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1948), 1:97. Translated with resort to Vincent Arieh Tobin, "The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 40. For examples from the New Kingdom see Louis V. Žabkar, "Some Observations on T. G. Allen's Edition of the Book of the Dead," *JNES* 24 (1965): 84.
[200] Translation and transliteration in Miriam Lichtheim, *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, 45.
[201] See *The Gale Encyclopedia of Psychology*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Anxiety/Anxiety Disorders."

condition is *ḥbs ib*[202], literally "narrow/constricted *ib*," since it may allude to the shallow breathing which constitutes another symptom of anxiety.

As noticed by Rune Nyord the heart loss is an extreme feeling of narrowness: "the experience is one of extreme tightening to the point where the heart is felt as being absent."[203] Narrowness is opposed to expansion in a dialectic relation[204]. The feelings of expansion may be characterised by the expressions *ȝw.t ib*[205], *ʿȝi ib*, and *wr ib*[206].

We have seen above that one's *ib* should be taken care of, and that such investment would be reflected in the *ib* as the mental causation of one's actions. Without his heart the agent is deprived of the centre of his conscience which on some occasions is guided and on others guides the individual. The individual is therefore not responsible for his subsequent actions. This seems to be acknowledged in the *Story of Sinuhe* as the protagonist is not held responsible for his flight by the king. And it is also interesting that although Sinuhe lost his *ḥȝ.ty* he indulges himself by saying that "this flight which the servant made was not planned, it was not in my *ib* (*is wʿr.t tm ir.t.n bȝk nn ḫm.t nn s*(*y*) *m ib=i*)."[207] However, if the individual's health depends on the harmony between *ib* and *ḥȝ.ty*, as recognised by Rogério Sousa[208], it is possible that the same is true on the intellective level, i.e., that both the *ib* and *ḥȝ.ty* are present within the individual so that he can will according to his conscience. It is also noteworthy that, still

[202] Attested e.g. in the stele of the Overseer of Districts Intef, from the reign of Amenemhat II. Translation in Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom: a study and an anthology*, 112. See also ibid., 113 n. 10.

[203] Taking Phenomenology to Heart ...,"

[204] According to Nyord's phenomenological approach, "[n]arrowness is found in experiences where the islands of the felt body (*Leibesinseln*) are contracting and becoming small and tight, especially characteristic of feelings of fear and pain, while expanse is the opposite tendency of opening and projecting outwards." Rune Nyord, "Taking Phenomenology to Heart ...," 65.

[205] See Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, *A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência*, 1:xci.

[206] Both *ʿȝi ib* and *wr ib* may be used positively, e.g. as epithets to gods (see Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God* ..., 186 ff.). However, in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* they are antonyms. As noticed by Miriam Lichtheim, "Ptahhotep distinguishes between *ʿȝi ib*, 'big-hearted,' in the sense of 'proud, arrogant,' and *wr-ib*, 'great-hearted,' in the sense of 'high-minded, magnanimous'" (*AEL*, 1:76 n. 6.). Although they denote expansion, which implies feelings of joy and well-being, *ʿȝi*, as used by Ptahhotep, stands for "overexpansion." Therefore *ʿȝi ib* characterises the reproachable mindset and *wr ib* the one to follow. It is noteworthy that a similar distinction between "big" and "great" is found in the English language; whereas "big" may allude either to generosity or to excessive proud – particularly in the idiom "be too big for your boots" –, "great" may describe someone as pleasant but not as arrogant or proud. See *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, s.vv. "big," "great." See also a brief discussion of the compound *ʿȝi ḥȝ.ty* in Rune Nyord, "Taking Phenomenology to Heart ...," 70.

[207] Text in María Isabel Toro Rueda, "Das Herz in der ägyptischen Literatur des zweiten Jahrtausends v. Chr. Untersuchungen zu Idiomatik und Metaphorik von Ausdrücken mit *jb* und *ḥȝtj*," 287.

[208] "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência," 1:44.

according to the Portuguese author[209], the *ḥ3.ty* stood for the volitional centre, whereas the *ib* represented one's interior life, which could account for the seeming discrepancy in the *Story of Sinuhe*. However, although the *ḥ3.ty* may be endowed with volition and assessment of alternative courses of action in the *Story of Sinuhe*, Ptahhotep focused on the *ib* in detriment of *ḥ3.ty* possibly because his main concern was for one to be in harmony with his *ib* and thus make it function as a mental cause in a constructive way. Therefore Ptahhotep does not deal with the heart as the centre of decision but with the choice to care for one's *ib* in order to act properly.

As a closing remark of this section, it is interesting to notice that whereas in Shamanism soul loss may be healed by carrying out a journey, on the metaphysical level, to recover the person's soul[210], it is uncertain whether such practice was employed in ancient Egypt. However, the *Story of Sinuhe* may suggest otherwise[211]; as we have just seen, Sinuhe fled from Egypt due to the emotional turmoil that was metaphorically described as heart loss. While exiled in Syria-Palestine and achieving success there, Sinuhe realises that in order to heal his feeling of guilt due to his flight abroad and to be granted a proper burial – the prospect of being buried in a foreign country was also a source of apprehension and anxiety to him – he must return to the courtly life in Egypt. It is therefore implied that upon his reintegration in Egyptian society Sinuhe eventually gets in harmony with his heart.

1.2.6. *Šms-ib*:

The expression *šms ib*[212] is relevant to this discussion since its root meaning is "follow the *ib*." What is entailed by following the *ib* is what we shall attempt to define here. But before proceeding I should like to remark that the expression **šms ḥ3.ty* is not attested[213]. And it is noticeable that, although from the Late Period onwards the use of

[209] Ibid., 51.
[210] See Sam D. Gill, "Shamanism: North American Shamanism," in *Encyclopedia of Religion* ed. Lyndsay Jones, 12:8288.
[211] As pointed out to me by Harold M. Hays on a personal note.
[212] It is remarkable that
[213] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 267, and Adolf Erman, Hermann Grapow, *Wörterbuch* ..., 489, list only *šms ib*.

ḥ3.ty started to increase in detriment of *ib*[214], in the mortuary stele of Taimhotep, from the reign of Cleopatra VII[215], the formulation *šms ib* is still used[216].

The *Instruction of Ptahhotep* dedicates a whole maxim to the expression *šms ib*:

(186) Follow your *ib* during the time of your existence (*šms ib=k tr n(.i) wnn=k*)

(187) And do not do more than what was said (*m ir ḥ3.w ḥr mdd.wt*).

(188) Do not neglect the chance to follow the *ib* (*m ḫb tr{ḫ}*[217] *n(.i) šms ib*),

(189) Since to waste its moment is what the *k3* hates (*bw.t k3 pw ḥḏ.t 3.t=f*).

(190) Do not turn toward everyday events (*m ngb zp ḫr(.y)t hrw*)

(191) Beyond setting up your house (*m ḥ3.w n(.i) grg pr=k*).

(192) As things happen, follow the *ib* (*ḫpr ḥ.t šms ib*),

(193) For there is no profit when it (the *ib*) is abused (lit. "there is no completion of a matter while it is hated") (*nn km n(.i) ḥ.t iw sf3=f*). (Maxim 11).[218]

As noticed by David Lorton[219], besides the root meaning "to follow," *šms* may additionally mean "to serve" and "to make use of," and, when forming this expression, *ib* may have two meanings: "conscience" and "desire." Piankoff has also proposed to understand the *ib* in this specific context as a protective *daemon*[220].

As pointed out by Zbyněk Žaba[221], the focus of this maxim is not the *šms ib* alone, but also the advice to "N'exagérez rien"[222]. This advice is explicitly conveyed by line 187. It is also meaningful that besides being urged to do no more than what was prescribed, the individual is also exhorted to not waste his time to follow his *ib* and to not waste time with mundane affairs. Additionally it is said that failure to do so is abominated by the *ka*. This particular instance will be discussed in the next section. On the whole the general meaning of this maxim seems to be that working too much is not beneficial. This is made explicit in line 193 which literally reads "there is no completion of a matter while it is hated." Furthermore, the L2 variant of line 188 replaces *šms ib* for

[214] Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, *A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência*, 1: 42, Rune Nyord, "Taking Phenomenology to Heart …," 67 with n. 15.
[215] See Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. 3, *The Late Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 59.
[216] For translation and commentary of the passage which includes the expression *šms ib* see David Lorton, "The Expression *Šms-ib*," 41-2.
[217] The {*ḫ*} is a misspelling of the sung disk determinative, which is corrected in the L2 version.
[218] I thank Harold M. Hays for this translation and for allowing me to use it.
[219] "The Expression *Šms-ib*," *JARCE* 7 (1968): 41.
[220] *"Coeur"* …, 87.
[221] *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 127.
[222] Ibid. The author provides similar statements from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* itself, from the *Eloquent Peasant*, and from the *Instruction for Kagemni*.

ḫr.t ib, which means "desire" or "wish"[223]. Still concerning the L2 version, it is interesting that the variant of line 186 replaces *šms ib* for *šms kꜣ*. To my knowledge the latter construction is not attested elsewhere and therefore it might be a scribal error[224].

Despite the maxim's tone to not go beyond the call of duty, David Lorton[225] interprets the expression *šms ib* in this passage as meaning "follow your conscience," as opposed to "follow your desire" in a hedonistic sense. And the author justifies this interpretation with the fact that the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* is a sapiential text and therefore such interpretation would fit the context better[226]. However, the opposite view is held by Jan Assmann and Adriaan de Buck.

According to Assmann's argument, *šms-ib* was a synonym to *sḫmḫ-ib*[227], a term which can be translated as "distract the heart," "take recreation," or "enjoyment"[228], and which may be found in love songs from the New Kingdom[229]. Therefore *šms-ib* refers to what the author calls "aristocratic leisure (*aristokratische Musse*)"[230]. In this sense it was in tune with the Harpist Songs and was a written counterpart to the visual hunting scenes depicted in tomb walls.[231] The interpretation of the above quoted maxim 11 made by the author is that it exhorted one to enjoy one's free time ("*Freizeit*").[232]

De Buck holds a similar view, and in commenting on the referred maxim states that *šms-ib* is a technical term to enjoy life but not in a lawless or frivolous sense.[233] The author also argues that several texts appealed to the *šms-ib* because life was too short and one's existence in the afterlife was liable to be bleak. To support this view the author quotes the dialogue between Atum and Osiris in BD 175 which deals with the solitude and asceticism Osiris has to face upon entering the "Silent Land".[234]

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[223] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 195.
[224] However, see Herman te Velde, "Some Remarks on the Concept 'Person' in the Ancient Egyptian Culture," in *Concepts of Person in Religion and Thought*, ed. Hans G. Kippenberg, Yme B. Kuiper, and Andy F. Sanders, Religion and Reason 37 (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1990), 94.
[225] Ibid., 42.
[226] As observed by the author, in ibid., 43.
[227] Jan Assmann, *Altägyptische Totenliturgien*, Band 1, *Totenliturgien in den Sargtexten des Mittleren Reiches* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2002), 48.
[228] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 241.
[229] Jan Assmann, *Altägyptische Totenliturgien*, 48. This expression is attested at least since the reign of Neferirkare (Fifth Dynasty) in the tomb biography of Washptah: "one who distracts the *ib* of his lord with good music inside the palace (*sḫmḫ-ib n*(*.i*) *nb=f m ḥz.t nfr.t m-ḫnw pr-ꜥꜣ*)." *Urk* I, 45, line 14.
[230] Jan Assmann, *Altägyptische Totenliturgien*, 48.
[231] Ibid., 49.
[232] Ibid., 48.
[233] "*Het volgen van het hart, het is de technische term in deze literatuur voor een genieten van het leven dat geenszins losbandig of lichtzinnig is*." Adriaan de Buck, "Egyptische philology," *JEOL* 7 (1939): 300.
[234] See ibid., 301-2. See also Jan Assmann, David Lorton (trans.), *Death and Salvation in Ancient Egypt* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2005), 113-27.

Rogério Sousa favours a mixed interpretation combining "follow your conscience" with "follow your desire"[235]. However, the text does not support the former rendering. And since this *ỉb* is not the conscience, in a solemn tone, but rather one's desire, Piankoff's hypothesis of a transcendent *daemon* or *genius* also does not apply to Ptahhotep's maxim. But the tendency to regard this expression in this maxim as "follow your conscience" is understandable, because the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* is, after all, a moralistic instruction. A hedonistic exhortation would therefore seem out of context. And it is here that lies the problem. As stated by de Buck, this exhortation does not need to be construed as frivolous or as an invitation to debauchedness. Instead, it seems to be an acknowledgment of the importance of time off from work and of leisure, although, as pointed out by Assmann, this recognition probably applied firstly to the ruling elite. But this does not mean that the *šms ỉb* according to Ptahhotep is irrelevant to our discussion; quite on the contrary. Just as the harmony between *ỉb* and *ḥ3.ty* was important, so was, according to this maxim, the mental equilibrium generated from the dynamics between work and leisure. In this sense the advice to follow desire (*ỉb*) is in tune with Ptahhotep's concern with the way one cares for the *ỉb*.

1.3. *K3* and *b3*:

Both the *k3* (*ka*) and the *b3* (*ba*) are incorporeal elements that are part of the person. They are better known from the funerary literature and representations – notice, however, that only the *k3* of the king was pictorially depicted as a separate entity[236]. The division established between the *k3* of the non-royals and the *k3* of the king is certainly a valid one, since the prerogatives and abilities ascribed to the king were necessarily different from the ones attributed to the rest of the population[237] – including the ruling elite. However, some descriptions of the royal *k3* also apply to the *k3* of the non-royals, meaning that a core field of meaning was shared by royalty and commoners.

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[235] *A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência*, 1:82.

[236] "Unlike the royal *ka*, the human *ka* was never represented as a separate figure, because any representation itself is the *ka*. This explains the indifference of Egyptian artists to rendering individual features. They did not reproduce the portrait of an individual, but that of his *ka*, who was eternally youthful and in perfect shape." In Andrey O. Bolshakov, "Ka," in *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, 180. See also Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (1948; repr., Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 63.

[237] See ibid., 62.

A similar distinction concerning the *bꜣ* occurs in the Old Kingdom, which led some scholars to state that in this period only the king possessed a *bꜣ* and that it only became accessible to non-royals with the "democratisation of the afterlife" ensuing the First Intermediate Period[238]. However, some texts contradict this claim:

> May he be united with the land, may he cross the heavens, may he ascend to the great god, may his *kꜣ* dwell in the presence of the king, may his *bꜣ* endure in the presence of the god.[239]

It is a fact that the *bꜣ* was seldom mentioned in non-royals' tombs, a feature that is akin to the lack of mention of the individual's heart in the Old Kingdom, but nonetheless it might have been considered a "universal"[240] component of human nature in the Egyptian worldview.[241] It is nonetheless uncertain whether the *bꜣ* was considered to be part of a person during her life in the Old Kingdom[242]. But from the Middle Kingdom onwards the *bꜣ* is referred to as being a component of a living person.

Apart from their role in the afterlife, both the *kꜣ* and *bꜣ* played a role in the individual's intellective structure. And it is this role that we will exploit here.

1.3.1. *Kꜣ*:

As argued by Andrey O. Bolshakov[243], a distinction should be made between the internal, or "non-figurative," *kꜣ*, and the external, or "figurative," *kꜣ* for the sake of methodological clarity – such distinction was not clearly made by the Egyptians

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[238] For a sum up, with references, of the arguments against this thesis see Harold M. Hays, "Funerary Rituals (Pharaonic Period)," in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, ed. Jacco Dieleman, Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles, 2010), http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/1r32g9zn (accessed March 27, 2010)1-2.

[239] Inscription from the tomb of Herymeru at Saqqara dated from the Sixth Dynasty. Translated by Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 219. See also Louis V. Žabkar, *A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 34 (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1968), 60-1, and Andrey O. Bolshakov, *Man and His Double in Egyptian Ideology of the Old Kingdom* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 1997), 284.

[240] It should be taken into consideration that we see the Egyptian "universal" through the evidence left by the elite, since beliefs from the remaining population are almost impossible to attest.

[241] Andrey O. Bolshakov, *Man and His Double in Egyptian Ideology of the Old Kingdom*, 295, proposes the following explanation to the generalised absence of the *bꜣ* among private tombs of the elite: "The notion of the 'figurative *kꜣ*' ousted in the Old Kingdom the concept of the *bꜣ* which was not recorded by private monuments until the end of the period. Most probably, this was not the result of a prohibition: the Doubleworld so perfectly substituted the posthumous world of the *bꜣ* that the latter simply lost its significance."

[242] See Louis V. Žabkar, *A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts*, 56-61.

[243] *Man and His Double in Egyptian Ideology of the Old Kingdom*, 292, and "Ka," in *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, 179.

themselves. The external *kꜣ* was the one associated with the placenta and which was understood as a person's "double"[244], since it could be represented in murals and statues[245]. This feature is one of the overlapping points between the "internal *kꜣ*" and the "external *kꜣ*," as noted by Bolshakov about the representations of the *kꜣ*: "[t]hese images were objectified, turned from a part of the psyche into a part of the medium, and identified with the external *ka*"[246] Another shared feature between both categories of the *kꜣ* which constitutes one of its core meanings is animation.

The *kꜣ* was one's "vital force"[247] in the sense that it animated the being to which it belonged. This characteristic is best exemplified by the amputation of the foreleg from a living bull calf to be offered in sacrifice[248]. A possible reference to such offering from the Old Kingdom clearly associates the leg with the *kꜣ* of the person to whom it was offered: "Turn round the head of this ox quickly; let me get this leg off for the *ka* of Zezi, my lord, the *imakhu* of Anubis."[249] As macabre as this practice may seem to us, it was rooted in the distinction between live (*ꜥnḫ*) and dead (*wꜣḏ*) flesh[250]. The type of leg most suitable to be offered in a religious ritual apparently was the one still animated by the *kꜣ*, and therefore still possessing life. In essence *kꜣ* was offered to *kꜣ*, in a somewhat similar way to present day medical transplants where the organ to be transplanted has to come from a living body – even when the donor has suffered brain death.

As suggested by Henry Frankfort, it is possible that the *kꜣ*, as one's vital or animating force, was considered to vary in intensity from individual to individual and during one's life[251]. Furthermore the *kꜣ* expressed one's individuality and personality in the intellective sense[252]. The range of uses of the *kꜣ* in the intellectual domain is varied. Therefore, as Bolshakov points out, depending on the context the *kꜣ* may mean

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[244] About the adequateness of this translation see Andrey O. Bolshakov, *Man and His Double in Egyptian Ideology of the Old Kingdom*, 152-4.
[245] Andrey O. Bolshakov, "Ka," in *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, 180.
[246] Ibid. See also Andrey O. Bolshakov, *Man and His Double in Egyptian Ideology of the Old Kingdom*, 151.
[247] See e.g. Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* ..., 62-3.
[248] Arthur E. P. B. Weigall presents one example where the calf is being amputated and two examples where the calves only have three legs in "An Ancient Egyptian Funerary Ceremony," *JEA* 2 (1915): 10-12. These examples are dated from the New Kingdom.
[249] Translated by Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 403. See also ibid., 421 n. 5.
[250] Andrew A. Gordon, "The *Kꜣ* as an Animating Force," *JARCE* 33 (1996): 34.
[251] *Kingship and the Gods* ..., 62-3.
[252] Andrey O. Bolshakov, "Ka," in *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, 179, and Andrey O. Bolshakov, *Man and His Double in Egyptian Ideology of the Old Kingdom*, 153, and Herman te Velde, "Some Remarks on the Concept 'Person' in the Ancient Egyptian Culture," 95.

"character," "nature," "temperament," or "disposition."[253] This variety of meanings is expressed in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*:

(119) If you are a man of those who are seated (*ir wnn=k m z*(*i*) *n*(*.i*) *ḥms.w*)

(120) For a banquet of one who is greater than you[254] (*r s.t ṯ.t wr r=k*),

(121) Accept what he gives you (lit. "his giving (even) a piece against your nose"[255]) (*šsp ḏi.t=f ḏi.w r fnḏ=k*).

(123) When you look at what is before you (*gmḥ=k r ntt m-bꜣḥ=k*),

(124) Do not pierce him with much staring[256] (*m sti.w sw m gmḥ ʿšꜣ*)

(125) To be bent thereupon[257] is what the *kꜣ* abominates (*bw.t kꜣ pw wdi.t i*(*ꜣ*)*m=f*)

(126) Do not speak until he calls (*m mdw n=f r iꜣš.t=f*)

(127) As one does not know what is displeasing[258] (lit. "bad in the *ib*) (*n rḫ.n=tw bin.t ḥr ib*)

(128) When you speak in response to his addressing you[259] (*mdw=k ḫft wšd=f ṯw*)

(129) You shall talk according to what is pleasant on the *ib*[260] (*iw ḏd.t=k r nfr ḥr ib*).

(135)As for the great one who is at the meal (lit. "behind the breads") (*ir wr wnn=f ḥꜣ tꜣ.w*),

(136) His conduct (shall be) in accordance to the command of his *kꜣ* (<*ir=f*>[261] *sḫr*<*=f*>[262] *ḫft wḏ kꜣ=f*)

(137) He will give to the one he favours (*iw=f r rḏi.t ḥzzy=f*).

(138) It is the counsel of the night that comes to being (*sḫr pw n*(*.i*) *grḥ ḫpr*).

(139) It is the *kꜣ* that stretches out his (its?) arms (*in kꜣ dwn ʿ.wy=f*(*y*)).

(140) The great one, he shall give, (but) one man cannot advance[263] (*wr ḏi=f n pḥ.n z*(*i*)). (Maxim 7).

Do not speak against anyone (*m mdw* <*r*>[264] *r*(*m*)*ṯ*.(*wt*) *nb.*(*w*)*t*),

Great or small, it is the abomination of the *kꜣ* (*wr kt.t bw.t kꜣ pw*). (Maxim 8, lines 159-160).

(341) As for the one who fails in pleasing his friends (*ir whh m sḥtp ʿḳ.w=f*)

(342) One says: "it is a selfish *kꜣ* (*jw ḏd=tw kꜣ pw ʿꜣb*(*.t*)). (Maxim 22).

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[253] "Ka," in *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, 179.
[254] That is, superior in rank.
[255] Hans Goedicke, "Ptahhotep Maxim 7: Only Etiquette?," *GM* 189 (2002): 41.
[256] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 289.
[257] See John L. Foster, *Thought Couplets and Clause Sequences in a Literary Text: The Maxims of Ptah-hotep*, 37.
[258] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 81.
[259] Hans Goedicke, "Ptahhotep Maxim 7: Only Etiquette?," 43.
[260] Ibid.
[261] According to Hans Goedicke the construction *ir=f sḫr* is well attested, and since *sḫr=f* is a noun and not a verb construction, the author proposes the introduction of *ir=f*. See ibid., 44.
[262] The L2 version suggests this emendation: *iw sḫr.w=f ḫft wḏ kꜣ=f*. See Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 27.
[263] Hans Goedicke, "Ptahhotep Maxim 7: Only Etiquette?," 45.
[264] The insertion of the preposition *r* was proposed by Christian Jacq, *Les maximes de Ptah-Hotep: l'enseignement d'un sage au temps des pyramides*, 136.

(414) See, it is the *kꜣ* that loves to listen (*mk kꜣ pw mrr sḏm*). (Maxim 27).

In maxim 7 the *kꜣ* may be equated with "temperament" or "disposition," and in maxims 8, 22, and 27 both the readings "nature" and "character" are possible. Furthermore it becomes apparent from these passages that the *kꜣ* can be either passive or active. The epitome of its passive character is the expression *bw.t kꜣ pw*, "it is the abomination of the *kꜣ*." In this quality the *kꜣ* appears to be an element that appraises action. In the case of line 189[265] the *kꜣ* is connoted with self-appraisal. The same is true for line 160 which condemns calumny. In both cases the translation "well-being"[266] would be suitable. But in the case of the impolite staring mentioned in line 125, another translation is required; here "discomfort" would fit the context better.

Line 342 which deals with the selfish *kꜣ*, indicates that the *kꜣ* was also credited with a socialising function. A *kꜣ* too centred on itself points out the lack of the expected pro-social behaviour.

As a general rule, the *kꜣ* in its passive role seems to deal with one's mental balance or harmony. Consequently when the *kꜣ* abominates something, the person might be said to be upset which in turn might influence her choices. This is what is suggested in maxim 7 since a polite behaviour will prompt the host to be beneficent. Furthermore, it is the host's *kꜣ* that lies at the origin of his actions – although *in kꜣ dwn ꜥ.wy=f*(*y*) may be construed as "it is the *kꜣ* that stretches its arms", in which case the actions would be ascribed to the *kꜣ* itself.

In its active role the *kꜣ* resembles the *ib*. And just as the latter was involved both in the intellectual creation and physical reproduction, so might have been the former. According to Andrey Bolshakov the root **kꜣ* is shared by the verbs *kꜣi*, "think about, intend, plan," *kꜣ.t*, "thought, plan," *nkꜣ*(*i*), "think about"[267], *kꜣ.t*, "work"[268], *kꜣ*, "bull," and *kꜣ.t*, "vagina"[269]. In the same way that bull and vagina relate to fertility and reproduction, and work "means creating something new, i.e., augmenting the existent"[270], so is thinking a form of creation – a perception we still hold today by qualifying the emergence of new ideas as "creativity." Notice that the word *kꜣ.t*

[265] See above section 1.2.6.
[266] As proposed by Erik Hornung, *L'esprit du temps des Pharaons* (Paris : Phillipe Lebaud, 1996), 190, quoted in Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, O coração e o homem no antigo Egipto: Contributos para a compreensão de uma 'Psicologia' antiga," 55.
[267] *Man and His Double in Egyptian Ideology of the Old Kingdom*, 163.
[268] Ibid., 161.
[269] Ibid., 160.
[270] Ibid., 161.

pervades the three dimensions of creation. However, this does not mean that thought processing was believed to be rooted in physical creation; instead it tells us that physical creation and mental creation were considered to be two pieces of one whole. As pointed out by Henri Frankfort, "[t]here is no separation between intention and execution"[271].

Therefore, when it is said e.g. "'how I wish that this *ka* of yours, beloved of Re, would order that a stone false door be made for that tomb of mine in the necropolis!'"[272], it is this relation between thought and creation that was at work. It may thus be said that the *kꜣ* was also considered to be a mental cause. But, contrary to the *ib*, the origination of thoughts or actions within the *kꜣ* reached back into the past.

According to the ancient Egyptians' beliefs, the *kꜣ* was transmissible from generation to generation, being "the total of hereditary qualities that an individual human has received from the ancestors, his typical personal structure."[273] This transmission is attested since the Pyramid Texts:

> Recitation: Atum-Khepri! You became high, as the hill; you rose as the *benben* in the Benben Enclosure in Heliopolis. You sneezed Shu and spat Tefnut. You put your arms around them as *ka*-arms so that your *ka* might be in them. Atum, put your arms around Pepi Neferkare as *ka*-arms so that the *ka* of Pepi Neferkare might be in it, firm for the course of eternity. Ho Atum! May you extend protection over this Pepi Neferkare [...] like you extended protection over Shu and Tefnut.[274]

And even though this transmission is first attested in a corpus exclusive to the royalty, it is also present in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*: "he is your son, he belongs to the seed of your *kꜣ* (*zꜣ=k pw n*(*.i*) *sw sti kꜣ=k*)" (maxim 12, line 204). Thus, when in maxim 7 it is said "his conduct (shall be) in accordance to the command of his *kꜣ*," the command of the *kꜣ* may refer to an ancestral tradition. The same is possible for line 414 (it is the *kꜣ* that loves to listen). In this sense the *kꜣ* constitutes an acknowledgment of the influence of what we call now family "genes" in one's behaviour.

Although it was related to the creation of thoughts, the *kꜣ* does not seem to have been particularly connected to volition. However, it is still relevant in free will as it was associated with a person's mental balance and might have been believed to determine, at

[271] *Kingship and the Gods* ..., 68.
[272] Inscription of Nyankhsekhmet, from Saqqara, dated from the early Fifth Dynasty. Translated by Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 303.
[273] Herman te Velde, "Some Remarks on the Concept 'Person' in the Ancient Egyptian Culture," 95.
[274] Spell 359 of the *Pyramid Texts* from the pyramid of Pepi II (PT 600). Translation by James P. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 269.

least to some extent, one's actions since it made up an inherited natural predisposition. And, interestingly, it conjugated inheritance from the past with creation of the new.

Although the internal *kꜣ* is similar to the *ib* in the issue of mental causation, and although it might have filled in for the role of the *ib* in the Old Kingdom – but only among the elite –, both concepts were conceptually different. Especially from the Middle Kingdom onwards the *ib* assumed a greater preponderance – a phenomenon which is well attested in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* where the *ib* occurs significantly more often than the *kꜣ*. And whereas the *ib* is fundamentally the centre of man's conscience, the *kꜣ*, encompassing its internal and external dimensions, above all embodied one's animation both physical and intellectual.

1.3.2. ***bꜣ*:**

The *bꜣ* is mentioned as being part of the individual during life[275] in the epilogue to the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*:

> (524) It is the wise man (lit. "one who knows") that helps his *bꜣ* (*in rḫ sm bꜣ=f*)
> (525) Through what perpetuates his goodness in him on earth (*m smn.t nfr=f i*(*ꜣ*)*m=f tp tꜣ*).[276]

As pointed out by Louis Žabkar, the goodness of the individual that is perpetuated on earth "will be of advantage to the Ba."[277] Indeed, reputation among the living was a concern of the elite at least since the Old Kingdom:

> I carried out Maat which is what the god loves; I propitiated the god in respect of all that which he loves; I made invocation offerings for the *akh*s; I was respectful of my father and kind to my mother. I buried him who had no son; I ferried him who had no boat; I rescued the wretched man from (more) powerful one; I gave the share of the father to his son. It so happens that men say when I pass them by: 'Look, he is an *imakhu* and the beloved one of the god,' so they say.[278]

This becomes more comprehensible when we bear in mind that an individual's name was paramount to his survival in the hereafter[279]; thus some of the means to annihilate

[275] Louis V. Žabkar, *A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts*, 120, presents a different view.
[276] See alternative translations in ibid., 118 n. 16.
[277] Ibid., 118.
[278] From the tomb of Mehu at Saqqara, dated from the Sixth Dynasty. Translation by Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 295.
[279] See e.g. the *Tale of the Eloquent Peasant* B1, 310: "his name will never vanish upon the earth, / because of his goodness." Translated by Vincent Arieh Tobin, "The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant," in *The*

one's existence in the afterlife and punish a criminal consisted on erasing or changing one's name, respectively[280]. Ptahhotep's exhortation to help the *bꜣ* aims for the opposite, i.e., to a good reputation so that the individual's name would be respected and not erased – which would render the *bꜣ* somewhat useless as a successful existence in the afterlife was believed to require the reunion of all the components which constitute the human nature; the loss of but one would cripple the individual's person.

The caring for one's reputation brings us to one of the most important features of the *bꜣ* both as the personification of the deceased and as a component of one's self during life. This feature is "manifestation," a term that could be used to translate *bꜣ*[281]. This sense was reinforced in the abstract *bꜣ.w* which may be rendered as "impressiveness," "effect," and "reputation"[282]. Consequently the *bꜣ* of a living person was related to the impact and impressions she caused on others.

Even though the *bꜣ* apparently was not directly connected to volition, it was still important to free will since the survival of the *bꜣ* in the hereafter depended on the person's choices and actions. And as manifestation, the *bꜣ* was probably understood as the manifestation of one's personality; in the above cited passage from the *Story of Sinuhe* (B255) the protagonist, before saying that his *ḥꜣ.ty* was not in his body, stated that "my *bꜣ* fled (*bꜣ=i iz.w*)". As with the heart loss, the *bꜣ* loss had to do with one's ability to be oneself, and in the metaphorical absence of the *bꜣ* – which in this case also conveys the feeling of anxiety[283] – one would lose such ability.

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As we may infer from the foregoing discussion, man's moral conscience was formed by several components, the most important of which was the *ib*. In the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* the several elements of human nature – moral character, *ib*, *kꜣ*, and *bꜣ* – do not actively participate in volition, i.e., the process of decision making is not directly dependent on any of these elements. The process of willing is either attributed

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Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 42.

[280] Herman te Velde, "Some Remarks on the Concept 'Person' in the Ancient Egyptian Culture," 87. See also David Lorton, "The Treatment of Criminals in Ancient Egypt: Through the New Kingdom," *JESHO* 20 (1977): 30.

[281] Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* ..., 64.

[282] James P. Allen, "Ba," in *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, 27.

[283] See also Louis V. Žabkar, *A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts*, 118-9.

to the *ḥ3.ty*[284] or to the agent himself. Miriam Lichtheim refers to the agent who wills as the "I":

> The verse[285] also makes clear that the Egyptian viewed his "I" as his integrated person, fit to make choices among the promptings of heart and belly, and ruling over the constituent parts of his nature. Thus, while heart and belly initiated, and character stabilized, it was the "I" that carried out intentions and judged their consequences – an "I" that was writ large.[286]

But, even though it is the agent who takes his decisions, the constituent elements of human nature we have just listed are nonetheless important in the agent's volition. They form the basis that allows the agent to choose correctly – by "correctly" I mean in accordance with the moral precepts current in the Egyptian society, such as the ones advised in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*. If these components are not watchfully cared for by the agent, he will risk what we may call "mental unbalance." Certainly the *ib*, *ḫ.t*, and *k3* constitute a creative mental causation, but they appear to mostly empower the agent with the ability to perform an action. Therefore the core feature which is shared by all the elements surveyed above is *ability*. And it is noteworthy that this is one of the most important features in free will[287], since free will entails that the agent has to be able to will and perform an action. Thus, whereas it is the Egyptian agent who wills, he needs to be in harmony and to take care of the constituents of his nature in order for the choice to originate in himself. Loss of the *ib* or *ḥ3.ty*, for example, will, as we have seen, impair this origination of the decision from the agent.

2. DIVINE INTERVENTION:

In any community where religion plays an important role, supernatural intervention – especially from divine or divine related entities – will be a given. More ubiquitous types of intervention include control of natural phenomena – such as the proper flooding of the Nile River – as well as intervention in one's life. The latter is

[284] See section 1.2.5 above.
[285] Lichtheim is commenting the passage from the *Instruction of Any* which was cited above in section 1.2.3.
[286] "Didactic Literature," in *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms*, ed. Antonio Loprieno, 255.
[287] For a brief discussion on what is implied in the terms *can* or *able* see Peter van Inwagen, "The Problems and How We Shall Approach Them," in *Free Will*, ed. John Martin Fischer, vol. 1, *Concepts and Challenges*, Critical Concepts in Philosophy (New York: Routledge, 2005), 28-32. See also Thomas Pink, *Free Will*, A Very Short Introduction, 28 ff, and Robert Kane, "Excerpt from 'Responsibility,'" in *Free Will*, ed. John Martin Fischer, 2: 147-8.

often requested by the individual, through prayers for example[288]. However, there are instances where the gods, or a god, intervene without being summoned. And besides intervening in the life of the individual, at certain occurrences they intervene directly on him controlling his actions thus rendering him unable to choose for himself. This kind of threat to free will is known in philosophical discussions as "Determinism"[289].

A deterministic intervention by the gods is featured in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, as well as in other texts such as the *Story of Sinuhe*. I propose to analyse divine intervention under two categories: "determination," and "control of fate." But first I should like to address the issue of the anonymity of "god" and "they."

2.1. The anonymous god:

In several texts – including literary texts, tomb biographies, and mortuary corpora, as well as in personal names, the generic term "god" (*nṯr*) is employed instead of the name of a particularly deity and sometimes alongside named deities. The *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, for example, names Osiris and Horus. Based mostly on the sapiential texts, several authors have interpreted the use of the anonymous term as a reference to a "philosophical monotheism," as against the "polytheism of the people"[290]. Although in the New Kingdom instructions specific gods are named more often, Joseph Vergote argued that:

> Ces passages, de même que ceux mentionnant Osiris, Rē, Thot ou Khnoum, prouvent, selon lui, que leurs auteurs professaient sans réticence la religion polythéiste de leur milieu. Tous les autres textes, au contraire, où Dieu est nommé sans détermination, sons les témoins de la croyance en un Dieu unique, tout-puissant, maître des événements, providence des hommes, juge et rétributeur des bonnes et mauvaises actions, en un mot le Dieu de la croyance monothéiste.[291]

[288] See an example of a prayer in Jan Assmann, David Lorton (trans.), *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 223.
[289] See e.g. Thimothy O' Connor, "Free Will," in *Free Will*, ed. John Martin Fischer, 1:8, and Thomas P. Flint, "Providence and Predestination," in *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Philip L. Quinn, and Charles Taliaferro, Blackwell Companions to Philosophy (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 569-72.
[290] Erik Hornung references this argument in his *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt* ..., 52. For a discussion of theophoric names not specifying the deity see ibid., 44-9.
[291] "La notion de Dieu dans les livres de sagesse égyptiens," in *Les Sagesses du Proche Orient ancient*, colloque de Strasbourg, Bibliothéque dês Centres d'Etudes supérieures spécialisés: Travaux du Centre d'Etudes supérieures spécialisé d'Histoire des religions de Strasbourg (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963), 160.

However, current opinion is that the anonymity of god in the instruction texts is explicable by context[292]. Given that an official, taught with resort to the instruction texts which use the generic term "god," could be required to work in several areas of Egypt, he would face different deities in different locations. Therefore reference to a specific god was avoided in order to encompass any god needed at a given location and at a given circumstance. Thus, it was the occasion and location that revealed the hitherto undisclosed god to the official.[293] This explanation is also valid for private tombs, since they could be visited by people devoted to different gods, as is made explicit in the following inscriptions:

> With regard to a man who shall work or quarry in this hill of the lord of the two banks, the ancient one[294], he shall not die if he pours water on the land and cultivates his grain. May his god make his *ka* live. (Graffito from Hindallab, north of Qubbet el-Hawa, probably from the late Old Kingdom).[295]

> O you who live upon earth, servants and peers, he who shall say "a thousand of bread, beer, oxen, fowl, alabaster and clothing for Djau, son of Djau" is one whom the king loves and whom their local god favors. (*i ꜥnḫ.w tp.yw tȝ bȝk.w mi.ty mrr.w n*(*.i*)*-sw.t pw ḥ*[*zz*]*.w nṯr=sn niw.ty ḏd.t*(*y*)*=sn ḥȝ tȝ ḥnq.t kȝ ȝpd* {*šn*} <*šs*> *mnḫ.t n ḏꜥw zȝ n*(*.i*) *ḏꜥw*). (Inscription from the tomb of Djau at Deir el-Gebrawi, dated from the reign of Pepy II).[296]

Although the former inscription is a graffito and not a tomb inscription, it is still relevant here as it addresses passers-by who worship different gods in a similar way to tomb inscriptions; its tenor even suggests some form of private piety.

While maintaining the validity of the argument advanced by Erik Hornung and other scholars[297], one may also turn things around and propose that the anonymity of god was employed in the instruction texts in order to be accessible to students coming from different places of Egypt. This teaching strategy would thus be in consonance with the two references from the Old Kingdom just quoted. Furthermore, what is entailed in

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[292] See Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt* ..., 50-60. For a survey of other interpretations see Michael V. Fox, "Two Decades of Research in Egyptian Wisdom Literature," *ZÄS* 107, (1980), 123-6. See also Frank T. Miosi, "God, Fate and Free Will in Egyptian Wisdom Literature," in *Studies in Philology in Honour of Ronald James Williams*, ed. Gerald E. Kadish, Geoffrey E. Freeman (Toronto: SSEA Publications, 1982), 83-6.

[293] About this view see e.g. Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt* ..., 57-8.

[294] Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 164 n. 4, suggests that the "ancient one" is Khnum.

[295] Translation from ibid., 164. Text in *Urk* I, 147, lines 9-12.

[296] Translation from ibid., 365-6.

[297] In fact it was first proposed by Hermann Kees, *Der Gottëglaube im Alten Ägypten* (Berlin: 1956, 1977), 273, quoted in Michael V. Fox, Michael V. Fox, "Two Decades of Research in Egyptian Wisdom Literature," *ZÄS* 107, (1980): 124.

these interpretations of the undefined term god is that, if this undetermined god alludes to any god depending on the context or on the place of origin of the person, then the traits ascribed to the anonymous one are shared by all. This would not be an isolated feature within the Egyptian religion, since at a given time a god might move from his area of influence to other locations and acquire new attributes[298], and several epithets, including *nṯr ꜥ3* (possibly "greatest god"[299]), are shared by different deities, including lesser ones[300]. These phenomena imply a fluid concept of divinity and show that the "god of the wise men" could not be a monotheistic god. This view is also supported by John Baines:

> The tension between the universality of many characteristics of Egyptian deities on the one hand, and the particularity of their forms, manifestations, and spheres of efficacy on the other, accentuates the issue of unity and multiplicity. Deities in Egypt seem to be less specifically focused on a domain than are deities in many polytheisms. There is also relatively frequent reference to a singular "god," notably in instruction texts where it may mean "whichever god you may have in mind," or in other cases where a general deity or the creator is envisaged.[301]

It should also be noted that in some maxims the use of the term *god* may refer to the king. Such passages would thus constitute "loyalist teachings."

A similar problem to the anonymity of god is presented by the suffix pronoun *=sn*, "they," which is interpreted by some authors as referring to the gods[302]. The identity of "they" is relevant for our discussion, as in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* there are passages where *they* seem to intervene directly on the individual and consequently impair his ability to will freely. But to which agency the suffix pronoun *=sn* refers to is a matter far from settled. As Frank T. Miosi[303] pointed out, in the *Instruction of*

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[298] For a brief introduction to this subject see Marie-Ange Bohême, Elizabeth Schwaiger (trans.), "Divinity," in *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, 109.
[299] Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt* ..., 186.
[300] See ibid., 186-9, and Marie-Ange Bohême, "Divinity," in *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, 109.
[301] John Baines, "Egyptian Deities in Context: Multiplicity, Unity, and the Problem of Change," in *One God or Many?: Concepts of Divinity in the Ancient World*, ed. Barbara Nevling Porter, Transactions of the Casco Bay Assyriological Institute 1 (Chebeague: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute, 2000), 30-1. The issue of unity and multiplicity in the Egyptian wisdom literature is also addressed by Michael V. Fox: "The desire to discover simple structures behind the multiplicity of phenomena is a basic drive of wisdom literature. It is this drive that gives wisdom literature its abstract, transtemporal character, and it is this that underlies the preference for the term (*p3*) *nṯr*, which unites the multiplicity of gods without obviating their individuality." "Two Decades of Research in Egyptian Wisdom Literature," 126.
[302] Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt* ..., 53-4.
[303] "God, Fate and Free Will in Egyptian Wisdom Literature," 80.

Ptahhotep the plural "gods," *nṯr.w*, occurs only once in line 32 and in the L2 and C variants the term *nṯr.w* is replaced by *tp.yw-ʿ*[304], "ancestors." Nonetheless, if the plural form "they" refers to the gods, it can be assumed that it refers to all the gods in the sense of any god – which constitutes the counterpart of the singular "god" applying to the god most relevant to the person. Conversely, even if "ancestors" or the deceased are meant, it does not affect the relevance of the passages we will study, as they unequivocally refer to metaphysical interventions which impact on the liberties of the individual.

There is another important implication stemming from the usage of the anonymous terms "god" and "they." This implication, which has already been admitted by acknowledging direct divine intervention, is a direct relation between individual and god(s) without any sorts of intermediaries – be it the king, priests, oracles, intermediary statues, etc. However, for most sapiential texts this relation does not entail a pious relationship like the one characterised by henotheism, which Hornung considers to be difficult to identify in these texts[305], or even some form of private piety, because there is only a direct relation between the characters of the instruction and god instead of e.g. an interpellation to the reader to address god directly. But there are two exceptions: the *Story of Sinuhe*, and the *Instruction for the King Merikare*. Whether *Sinuhe* and *Merikare* developed a sense of private piety will be discussed within this chapter and in the conclusion respectively.

For now I propose to amplify the analysis of divine determination by addressing two texts besides the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*: the *Instruction of Dua-Khety* and the *Story of Sinuhe*.

2.1. Divine determination in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*:

In the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* there are instances where god or "they" intervene directly in the individual apparently withdrawing any possibility of choice from him. In this section I will attempt to answer the following queries: how does god intervene on man and for what reasons? I shall start with the following passages from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*:

[304] See Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 18.
[305] *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt* ..., 60.

(216) The one who was hostile towards you is one whom they hated (*wḏi r=k m ḫbd.n=sn*)

(217) He is one to whom[306] ill-will was implanted in the belly (*ḥ.t*) (*wdd sḏb n=f pw m ḥ.t*).

(218) Their guidance does not/cannot err (*n nnm.n sšm=sn*),

(219) The ones whom they leave boatless are not/cannot be able to cross (*n gm.n ỉw.w=sn ḏ3.t*). (Maxim 12).[307]

(545) The one who listens is the one whom god loves (*mrr.w nṯr pw sḏm*);

(546) The one whom god hates does not/cannot listen (*n sḏm.n msdd.w nṯr*).

(550) It is the *ib* that makes its possessor (*ỉn ỉb sḫpr nb=f*)

(551) One who listens, or one who does not listen (*sḏm m tm sḏm*).

(552) For a man his *ib* is life, prosperity, and health (*ʿnḫ wḏ3 snb n z*(*ỉ*) *ỉb=f*).

(553) It is the one who listens who listened to the one who spoke[308] (*ỉn sḏm.w sḏm ḏd*);

(554) The one who does what is said is the one who loves to listen (*mrr sḏm pw ỉr ḏd.t*). (Maxim 39, Epilogue).

Line 217 of maxim 12 presents three grammatical and semantical problems. First of all, it is not certain whether *wdd* is a gemination of *wḏ* or *wḏi*. This issue is important not only to ascertain the exact meaning of *wdd*, but also to determine which verb form it actually is. Zbyněk Žaba presents a cogent argumentation in favour of *wḏ*: *wḏ* does not interchange with *wḏi* before the New Kingdom; the writing of the verb *wḏi* employed in line 216 is carefully distinguished from *wdd*; the form *wdd* reappears in line 222 clearly being a gemination of *wḏ*[309]; and the context would require a perfective passive participle – of the two verbs only *wḏ* would geminate in this verb form – instead of an imperfective passive participle – in which only *wḏi* would show gemination[310]. However, whereas *wḏi sḏb* is attested elsewhere, *wḏ sḏb* is not[311]. Furthermore in order to eliminate the ambiguity the scribe of the L2 version replaced *wdd sḏb* by *ḥwỉ.n nṯr*

[306] About the apparently misplaced dative plus suffix pronoun see Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 132.

[307] This maxim may be divided in two halves. In the first Ptahhotep teaches his disciple that should he father a good son he should be benevolent and kind to him. In the second half, Ptahhotep deals with the possibility of his disciple being father to a rebel son. The excerpt cited is part of this latter half.

[308] As noticed by Pascal Vernus, *Sagesses de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 132 n. 239, both verbs are probably active participles. In my understanding the first one is an imperfective participle and the second is a perfective participle alongside with *ḏd*. The sense is therefore the one who regularly listens (the imperfective participle denotes incomplete or ongoing action) has listened to the one who spoke (conversely, the perfective participles refer to completed action), probably Ptahhotep. Throughout maxim 39 Ptahhotep uses the forms *sḏm*, *sḏm.w*, and even *sḏmỉ*, not necessarily to distinguish between different verb forms but rather to make a subtle distinction in their meanings. See the remarks by Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 163, and Pascal Vernus, *Sagesses de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 132 n. 238.

[309] "Stand up or sit down according to your procedure / that was decreed to you on the first day (*ʿḥʿ ḥms r nm.tt=k / wdd*(*.w*) *n=k hrw tp*." (Maxim 13, lines 221-222).

[310] *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 131.

[311] See ibid.

sḏb.w=f pw m ḥ.t ("he is one whose obstacles god implanted in the *ḥ.t*"). Despite Žaba's argumentation, the emendation by the L2 scribe and the fact that *wḏ sḏb* is not attested, strongly suggests that *wdd* refers to *wdi* and that it is therefore an imperfective passive participle.

A further problem is raised by the exact meaning of *sḏb*. It has the additional meanings of "obstacle," "impediment," "evil," and, possibly, "guilt"[312]. This term occurs at two more instances in maxim 26 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*; lines 391 and 397b read "his ill-will will manifest against the one who opposes him (*ḫpr sdb{i}=f r šnt sw*)", and "but ill-will comes from an enemy (*iw sdb{i} ḫr ḫft.y*)"[313] respectively.

A comparison may be drawn between the implanting of ill-will in the Egyptian culture and the intrusion of a foreign object in some shamanic tribes. In these latter ones it is believed that such object intrusion is responsible for illness and is frequently considered to have been implanted by an antisocial sorcerer. As with soul loss, the object must be removed by a healer, who may have to contend with the sorcerer, and then presented by him under the forms of stones or poisoned arrows, for example[314]. The similarity is that in both cultures, Egyptian and shamanic, an exterior object, concrete or abstract, may be placed in a person and affect her either somatically or psychologically. But contrarily to the shamanistic tribes' belief, in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* the responsible for implanting ill-will was not a sorcerer but seemingly the gods.

Before stating that ill-will was implanted in the rebel son's belly, Ptahhotep affirmed that he was hated by "them." Who "they" are is not made clear, but as we have just seen, in the L2 variant the agent responsible for the implant is god. One may argue that this is a reflection of a closer proximity between god and man in the New Kingdom – an example of such proximity is the fact that a person could see her fated time of death postponed several years by her personal god[315]. However, the following lines clearly refer to supernatural beings which may range from the gods to the deceased kings[316]. But given that god is mentioned in the L2 version, and that god is mentioned in

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[312] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary*, 258. See also Christian Jacq, *Les maximes de Ptah-Hotep: l'enseignement d'un sage au temps des pyramides*, 225 n. 64.
[313] I followed Raymond O. Faulkner, "The Maxims of Ptahhotpe," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions and Poetry*, 169, in translating *sḏb* for "ill-will."
[314] About this subject see Brian Morris, *Religion and Anthropology: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 31, D. Gill, "Shamanism: North American Shamanism," in *Encyclopedia of Religion* ed. Lyndsay Jones, 2nd rev. ed., 12:8288, and Mischa Titiev, João Pereira Neto (trans.), *Introdução à Antropologia Cultural* (1959; Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1969), 302-3.
[315] See Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion*, 71.
[316] Frank T. Miosi, "God, Fate and Free Will in Egyptian Wisdom Literature," 80.

other maxims in the Prisse version, it is probable that Ptahhotep also had the gods in mind.

Regarding the *m ḫ.t* part of the sentence, it can have several meanings depending on the implications of the two following lines, particularly line 219. In this latter line it is said that the ones who are left boatless will not be able to cross. *ḏ3i* certainly refers to the metaphorical crossing of the deceased from this world to the hereafter which had its counterpart in the funerary procession where the deceased was ferried in a coffin from the western shore to the eastern shore[317]. Crossing to the afterlife is an expression attested since the Old Kingdom[318], and, at least from the Middle Kingdom onwards, it had a moral component[319], i.e., only through the observance of ethical norms could one cross to the afterlife and be able to partake of a comfortable existence there – it is uncertain whether the Egyptians ever conceived of the complete destruction of the deceased; even the condemned ones (*mwt*) would still exist as what we call today "ghosts"[320]. The ones who could not cross might have fallen under this category. Although Ptahhotep is saying that the rebel son will not lead a happy existence in the Beyond, he however does not explicitly state that such fortune is due to the son's actions; rather, ill-will was implanted in the *ḫ.t* and he is among the ones left without a boat by the gods. The motive for this seems to be provided in line 216 which states that the gods hated him. Depending when exactly they hated him – it could have been either

[317] See Harold M. Hays, "Funerary Rituals (Pharaonic Period)," 3. David Lorton suggests that these lines may be viewed as bearing funerary connotations alone, in Review of *Der Vorwurf an Gott in den "Mahnworten des Ipu-wer"*, by Gerhard Fecht, *JARCE* 12 (1975): 107 n. 3.

[318] This metaphor occurs in several biographical inscriptions from this period. Two illustrative examples are: "Proceeding to his house of eternity in a very perfect manner, for his state of *imakhu* exists in the sight of Anubis, […] after crossing the canal/pool, after having been transfigured by the lector priest and the embalmer; for his state of *imakhu* is very great in the sight of the king and of Osiris, the first under the king, Ptahhotep", from the tomb of Ptahhotep II (not to be confused with the supposed author of the instruction), late fifth dynasty. Translation by Nigel Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 213; "An offering which the king gives and an offering which Anubis […] gives that he may cross over to the perfect West among the *imakhu* who love the Great God", text of Bia from Saqqara, late sixth dynasty. Translated by Nigel Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 269.

[319] As in the *Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*:

> Maet is the final end of falsehood,
> And (falsehood) will diminish and be seen no more.
> If falsehood walks, it goes astray;
> It does not cross in the ferry, and it makes no headway.
> As for him who prospers through it,
> He will have no children, he will have no heirs upon earth.
> As for him who sails with it, he does not reach land,
> And his boat does not arrive at its mooring-place.

Translation in Vincent A. Tobin, "The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant", in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, 43. For examples from the New Kingdom see Jan Assmann, *Death and Salvation in Ancient Egypt*, 304-5.

[320] As explained by Geraldine Pinch, the *mwt* were "harmful ghosts who have failed to achieve rebirth and transfiguration." *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (1994; reprint London: British Museum Press, 2006), 180.

before his conception or after his birth – we may be before a case of retribution or of predestination. In the first case, due to the son's insolence the gods would have implanted ill-will in his belly; "belly" would be the most suitable translation for *ḫ.t* in this case since, as we have seen[321], the belly was the counterpart of the *ỉb* in its role of producer of thoughts which could then be verbalised or materialised through action. Therefore the implanting of ill-will in the belly might have been understood as a conditioning on the person's conduct imposed by the gods as retribution. Conversely, in the second case ill-will would have been implanted on the womb (another possible translation for *ḫ.t*) of the rebel son's mother and therefore his inability to cross would have been dictated by arbitrariness rather than by his conduct. It might be more sensible to go with the interpretation of retribution, because, as John Baines pointed out,

> [i]n a context such as Egypt it is [...] inappropriate to speak of a rigid "predestination" comparable with that of some forms of Christianity. Notions such as "grace" may circumvent that predestination to some extent; Egyptian conceptions are generally still more flexible.[322]

It is noteworthy that this kind of determination of the individual's actions, even though being part of a retribution scheme, removes him any opportunity to amend himself. What is also entailed is that responsibility for the individual's actions is held by the gods who determine him.

Let us now analyse lines 545-552. These lines are part of maxim 39, within the epilogue[323], which elaborates on the topic initiated in the previous maxim that opens the epilogue and which deals with the importance and benefits of listening to the maxims which make up the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*. However, lines 545 and 546 might introduce another topic: despite the benefices from listening, one might be unable to listen due to divine constraint. But whether god constrains the human individual or not depends heavily on how one renders these lines which present several grammatical problems.

In the translation proposed above I interpreted *mrr.w nṯr* and *msdd.w nṯr* as imperfective relative *sḏm=f*s having god as subject of both verbs. A different verb form

[321] See section 1.2.3. above.
[322] "Contexts of Fate: Literature and Pratical Religion," in *The Unbroken Reed, Studies in the Culture and Heritage of Ancient Egypt in Honour of A. F. Shore*, ed. Christopher Eyre, Anthony Leahy, and Lisa Montagno Leahy (London: The Egypt Exploration Society, 1994), 36.
[323] The epilogue consists of several sections that we may term maxims in order to provide continuation with the main text, and that are demarcated through rubrication.

which suits the morphology of the verbs is the imperfective passive participle[324], but a similar translation would be obtained: "the one who listens is beloved of god; / the one who is hated by god does not/cannot listen." Another alternative, also supported by morphology, is the imperfective active participle, and this would in fact alter significantly the meaning of the two sentences: "the one who loves god is the one who listens; / the one who hates god does not/cannot listen."

Because line 545 is an A *pw* B nominal sentence the identification of subject and predicate dictates how the sentence is rendered; if A is the subject and B the predicate then it reads "A is B," but if the opposite is true then the sentence will read "B is A"[325]. If *mrr.w nṯr* is an imperfective relative *sḏm=f,* then it is the predicate as it is commenting on *sḏm*, the subject. However, if *mrr.w* is either an imperfective active participle or an imperfective passive participle, either *mrr.w* or *sḏm* can be the predicate or subject.

Although the verbs *mri* and *msḏi* show alterations to their roots under any of these verb forms – which is a clear advantage over verbs that show no alteration at all –, the fact that the three forms are closely related causes the endings attached to these verbs to be identical[326]. Thus, even though a weak verb is expected to almost always show the *.w* ending when it is used as an imperfective passive participle this is not always true in the written record. Conversely, a weak verb which would be expected to not show the *.w* ending when used as an imperfective active participle may do so in a given text. This flexibility of Egyptian language makes it difficult to distinguish between similar verb forms, and it is precisely that difficulty which we face here. But despite this hurdle there are several elements that suggest that *mrr.w nṯr* and *msdd.w nṯr* are imperfective relative *sḏm=f*s.

First of all, in lines 414[327] and 554[328] *mrr* is clearly an imperfective active participle and, notwithstanding, it has no *.w* ending. An exception to this rule is found in maxim 39 with the verb *sḏm*, but the usage of this verb suggests that the forms *sḏm* and *sḏm.w*, while probably being imperfective active participles, aim at providing a subtle

[324] This was the form identified by Miriam Lichtheim in her translation of line 545: "He who hears is beloved of god". *AEL*, 1:74.
[325] See James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, 2nd ed., 75-7.
[326] As acknowledged by James P. Allen, "[t]he perfective and imperfective relative generally look like the perfective and imperfective passive participles". Ibid., 354.
[327] Translated above in section 1.3.1.
[328] Translated above in this section.

contrast between different meanings rather than indicating different verb forms[329]. Second, in line 182[330] *mrr.w=sn* is most probably an imperfective relative *sḏm=f*[331] and it displays the same morphology that in line 545. To my knowledge, the verb *msḏi* does not occur in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* either as *msḏḏ.w* or *msḏḏ* outside line 546, which provides no direct element of comparison. *Msḏḏ.w* is attested elsewhere as an imperfective active participle[332], but then again the ending *.w* is common both to the imperfective active participle and to the imperfective relative *sḏm=f*. Therefore the comparison made above between *mrr.w* and *mrr* may be indirectly applied to *msdd.w nṯr*. Furthermore, in line 219 *iw.w=sn* is clearly an imperfective relative *sḏm=f*[333] and is used in a sentence similar to the one formulated in line 546, consisting of the grammatical construction *n sḏm.n* imperfective relative *sḏm=f*. Additionally, the very fact that in line 219 the gods determine who may not successfully cross to the afterlife strongly suggests that in line 546 god determines who cannot listen because both statements would tally with one another. It is also striking that the formulation of both sentences negates "action, ability, or necessity"[334]; therefore, besides "he does not listen," *n sḏm.n=f* may also mean "he cannot listen"[335]. As we have seen in the final remarks to the first chapter, the several components of human nature mentioned in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* are mostly related to the agent's ability to perform a given action, and seemingly it is precisely that ability that is denied in lines 219 and 546, thus making both sentences closely related.

Lines 545 and 546 thus create a "thought couplet"[336]; the former line states that god is pleased with the one who listens, and the latter line declares that the one god hates is unable to listen. Maxim 39 becomes somewhat confusing with what follows

[329] See n. 309, above.
[330] "It is their law for the one whom they love (*ḥp=sn pw n mrr.w=sn*)."
[331] Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 127, argues against this view and instead proposes that it is an imperfective active participle. Žaba also mentions that Hermann Kees and Adriaan de Buck interpret *mrr.w=sn* as an imperfective relative *sḏm=f*. For references see ibid. The same rendering is supported by Vincent Arieh Tobin, "The Maxims of Ptahhotep," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 135.
[332] See James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, 2nd ed., 330.
[333] This interpretation is supported by Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 132.
[334] James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, 2nd ed., 239.
[335] This latter meaning is the one conveyed in Pascal Vernus's translation: "Celui que le dieu déteste ne saurait écouter." *Sagesses de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 107.
[336] About this concept see John L. Foster, *Thought Couplets and Clause Sequences in a Literary Text: The Maxims of Ptah-hotep*, 8 ff.

these two lines. As we have seen above[337], in lines 550-552 the *ib* is said to make his possessor a listener of a non-listener. As was argued, this active role of the *ib* is possibly a consequence of the individual's investment on it. But lines 553-554 return emphasis to the individual as one who listens. Therefore we have three agencies here at work: the individual himself, his *ib*, and god. Since the *ib* is part of the human conception of the individual, we might narrow down the agencies involved to the human person and god. What stands out as striking is that there is no apparent dialectic between god and man as there is in lines 216-219. Whereas in these latter ones retribution is what justifies divine intervention, lines 545-546 do not present a misdeed committed by the individual that would bring divine punishment upon him. However, both verbs *mri* and *msḏi* are semantically charged with an axiological hierarchy. In these lines the relation between man and god is defined as one of love-hate[338] – a characterisation we still use today to describe our relation to certain people, objects, etc.

Another important matter is whether "the one whom god hates" has a passive or active role. David Lorton, who renders lines 545-546 as "One who listens is one (i.e., the sort) whom the god (customarily) loves, while one (i.e., the sort) whom the god (customarily) hates does not listen"[339], makes the following interpretation:

> Far from referring to predestination, therefore, the passage states only that practicing the virtue of "listening" elicits the reaction of "love" from the *nṯr* (the king or a god), while not practicing the virtue causes the *nṯr* to "hate."[340]

This interpretation is also shared by Christian Jacq: "God loves the man who listens but detests the one who does not."[341] And by Frank T. Miosi: "This passage could also indicate that the god loves (imperfective) a person because that person listens, but he hates (imperfective) a person who habitually does not listen."[342] These interpretations assume that god's hate is a reaction to the individual's reluctance in hearing. However, other authors interpret it the other way round. Miriam Lichtheim commented that: "Once again the note of determinism is sounded; and it is quickly

[337] In section 1.2.4.
[338] For other meanings of *mri* and *msḏi* see Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 111 and 118 respectively.
[339] Review of *Der Vorwurf an Gott in den "Mahnworten des Ipu-wer"*, By Gerhard Fecht, 106.
[340] Ibid.
[341] Christian Jacq, Marcia de Brito (trans.), *The Wisdom of Ptah-hotep: Spiritual Treasures from the Age of the Pyramids* (London: Constable, 2006), 43.
[342] "God, Fate and Free Will in Egyptian Wisdom Literature", 81.

countered by the assertion that it is a man's own heart that determines his behaviour."[343] In discussing the granting of wisdom to man, in the wisdom literature, as an "individual endowment"[344], Michael V. Fox compares the "fear of God" with the ability to listen in Ptahhotep:

> Ben Sira (i 14) says that the fear of God is given to the faithful before birth. To be precise, he calls this gift the beginning of wisdom, not wisdom itself. Like Ptahhotep's "hearing", the fear of God is prerequisite to wisdom. The ability to hear is given to those whom the gods love and denied to those they hate (U. 545-46; 217).[345]

This comparison is enlightening since to listen requires being silent[346], and the silent man was extremely valued in the ancient Egyptian wisdom literature. However, if he was considered to be a wise man or not is uncertain as pointed out by Miriam Lichtheim:

> The equation is, however, at best half valid, only insofar as the "wise man" would possess the qualities of the "silent man": patience, calm, and control over feelings and passions. But the reverse does not hold: the "silent man" need not be a "sage".[347]

The connection between wisdom and listening in the ancient Egyptian culture is summed up in the following statement by Jan Assmann: "La sagesse en égyptien est le silence."[348] It should be noted, notwithstanding, that, according with what one infers from the Egyptian wisdom literature and as pointed out by Michael Fox in the quotation above, to be silent and to listen were understood only as means of attaining wisdom instead of being synonymous with it. To not listen implies being ignorant, a state that has a whole maxim dedicated to it in the epilogue to the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* (maxim 41).

Returning to the active or passive role of "the one whom god hates," it is important to establish whether god here refers to the king, as a vicarious representative

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[343] *AEL*, 1:80.
[344] "Wisdom in the Joseph Story," *Vetus Testamentum* 51 (2001): 37 n. 41.
[345] Ibid., 37-8 n. 41.
[346] However, to be silent is not always synonymous with listening. Cases in point are maxims 2-4 in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* where the purpose of being silent is to expose the disputants to bystanders; the former ones will thus be held in low regard by the latter ones. This strategy resembles the use of the opponent's momentum against himself in eastern martial arts such as *Aikidô* (see William J. Long, "Aikidô," in *Martial Arts of the World: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Thomas A. Green (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 2001), 1:12-6).
[347] *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, 6.
[348] *Maât, L'Égypte pharaonique et l'idée de justice sociale* (Fuveau, La Maison de Vie, 2003), 44.

of the gods associated to kingship – namely Horus –, or to another god. According to David Lorton, the god in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* is the king[349]. The author supports this view by evoking the fact that "loyal and competent officials" were rewarded with a burial near the royal necropolis and that private individuals were "said to be *mry* 'beloved' of the king and others as a result of their good conduct and beneficent deeds"[350], whereas the verb *msḏi* is sometimes used to describe the king's reaction to someone's misdeed[351]. In short, the authors argument is that the terminology Ptahhotep uses in describing the individual's relation to god is the same that is used in other texts to describe the king's reactions towards his subjects. Certainly there are passages in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* where god is the king. A conspicuous one is present in line 36 in the prologue: "Then the majesty of this god said (*ḏd.in ḥm n*(*.i*) *nṯr pn*)", while there are more veiled occurrences where the god may also be the king: "it is the god who advances/promotes the seat" (maxim 13, line 229) in the court of law (*rwy.t*). The two most ubiquitous terms to refer to the king were *ḥm* and *n.i-sw.t*. Both terms appear in conjunction in line 5: "under the majesty of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt[352] Isesi, alive forever and ever[353] (*ḫr ḥm n*(*.i*) (*n.i-*)*sw*(*.t*)*-bit.t issi ʿnḫ*(*.w*) *ḏ.t r nḥḥ*)". It has been argued that *ḥm* refers to the human and physical aspects of the king – in fact it means "servant"[354] –, whereas *ni-sw.t* refers to his office of divine origin[355]. This latter term is employed in the epilogue to the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* (lines 638, 642, and 644), where it is determined with the sign of the falcon of Horus on a standard (G7 in Gardiner's Sign-List). This allows us to conclude that in certain passages god refers *de facto* to the king[356]. But in no way does it make it forceful that god is always the king.

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[349] This view is counterposed by the one presented by Richard B. Parkinson: "*Ptahhotep* refers little to the king, drawing more on the biographical theme of an individual's self-fashioning rather than that of royal advancement." *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*, 258.

[350] Review of *Der Vorwurf and Gott in den "Mahn – Worten des Ipu-wer" (Pap. Leiden I 344 Recto, 11,11-13,8; 15,13-17,3): Zur Geistigen Krise der Ersten Zwischenzeit und ihrer bewalti-gung*, by Gerhard Fecht, 106-7 n. 3.

[351] Ibid., 107 n. 3. The author gives examples of the verb *msḏi* employed by the king, without mentioning its relation to the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, in "The Treatment of Criminals in Ancient Egypt: Through the New Kingdom," 8, 30, and 62.

[352] Literally "The One of the Sedge and the Bee".

[353] About *ḏ.t* and *nḥḥ* see Jan Assmann, *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*, 74-9.

[354] See Tobias Hofmann, "Majestät und Diener – zur Dialektik des Begriffes *ḥm*," *ZÄS* 128 (2001): 116-32, quoted in Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 61 n. 53.

[355] The argument exposed was proposed by Hans Goedicke, *Die Stellung des königs im Alten Reich* (Wiesbaden: 1960), 89-90, quoted in J. Gwyn Griffiths, *Divine Verdict: A Study of Divine Judgement in the Ancient Near East* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991), 162.

[356] For specific examples see Joseph Vergote, "La notion de Dieu dans les livres de sagesse égyptiens," 162.

The terminology argument, proposed by David Lorton, does not necessarily entail that the god is always the king either. For example, the expression *bw.t kꜣ pw*, "it is the abomination of the *kꜣ*," which Ptahhotep uses in some passages[357], is akin to the expression *bw.t nṯr pw*, "it is god's abomination"[358]; and in line 552 the *ib* is said to be "life, prosperity, and health", an expression that is commonly employed in mentions to the king and in letters to refer to the recipient[359]. These examples demonstrate that formulae often associated with a specific context could in fact be employed in different contexts and with different entities. Another feature not considered by Lorton are the mentions to "they." Even if "god" would refer to the living king, "they" could not possibly have the same connotation. Due to this fact and to the semblance between lines 546 and 219, in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, a god distinct from the king must be meant in lines 545-546. And thus being it is plausible to infer that the individual in line 546 plays a passive role.

2.2. Divine determination in the *Instruction of Dua-Khety*:

This text may be divided into two parts, the first consisting of the description of several trades and the hardships they carry, and the second comprising advices that fall under the scope of conventional instructions. This text has been deemed satirical by several authors[360], whereas other authors claim that it is a serious text[361]. As argued by John L. Foster, whether one interprets the text as being a satire or instead a way to persuade students to make the most of their opportunity to study, impacts on how one

[357] See line 125 in maxim 7 (translated in section 1.3.1.), line 160 in maxim 8, and line 189 in maxim 11 (translation provided in section 1.2.6.).
[358] The similarity between both expressions was noticed by Hans Goedicke, "Ptahhotep Maxim 7: Only Etiquette?," 42.
[359] About this latter usage see Richard B. Parkinson, *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*, 264-5 n. 24.
[360] See for example Miriam Lichtheim, *AEL*, 1: 184, and Richard B. Parkinson, *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*, 273. William Kelly Simpson, "The Satire on the Trades: The Instruction of Dua-Khety," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 432, adopts an intermediate stance, acknowledging that the qualification of text as a satire might not be the most accurate, on the one hand, and, on the other, that the composition contains some satirical elements notwithstanding.
[361] E.g. Wolfgang Helck, *Die Lehres des Dwꜣ-Ḫtjj, Textzusammenstellung* Teile 1-2, Kleine Ägyptische Texte 3 (Wiesbaden: 1970), 161-2, quoted in Richard B. Parkinson, *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*, 273 n. 29, and John L. Foster, "Some Comments on Khety's Instruction for Little Pepi on His Way to School (Satire of the Trades)," in *Gold of Praise: Studies in Honor of Edward F. Wente*, ed. Emily Teeter and John A. Larson (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1999), 121 ff.

translates and understands the text[362]. It is difficult to accurately assess whether the text was thought out strictly as either satirical or serious or as a combination of both tones. What may seem humorous to modern readers might have not seemed so to ancient authors, and vice versa. It is also uncertain whether there was any exaggeration in the description of the several trades[363] – impartial accounts of the conditions of work in ancient Egypt would be required, although the state of some skeletons may sometimes provide an insight to those conditions –; the dangers faced both by the washerman and the fisherman, for example, are quite credible[364]. Even if some of the professions are parodied, I share Foster's opinion that the text aims primarily at talking the young student into giving his best to succeed as a scribe because the alternative could be one of the overviewed trades with all the misery they involve.

Two of several elements pointed out as satirical by Miriam Lichtheim[365] are the fowler's lack of a net and the fisherman's fear of crocodiles. But the description of both these occupations differs from all the others in the following characteristic: they involve god, and in the case of the fowler god interferes directly with his activity. The fowler's and fisherman's lot is described in the following manner:

> The fowler is one who is entirely miserable (*wḥˁ ꜣpd.w sfn r-sy*),
>
> Looking for the guardians of the sky (birds) (*ḥr gmḥ iryw p.t*).
>
> If a flock of birds (lit. "united birds") passes over him (*ir swꜣ ꜣpd.w ḫnm.w m ḥr=f*)
>
> He cries, "if only I had a net!" (*ḫr=f ḏd=f ḥꜣ=n rˁ(ꜣ) n=i m iꜣd.t*)
>
> God does not allow the coming into existence (of the net (?)) into his hand (*nn rḏi.n nṯr ḫpr m-ˁ=f*),

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[362] John L. Foster, "Some Comments on Khety's Instruction for Little Pepi ...," 122.

[363] If even in modern developed countries there are professions which involve a great amount of physical effort and have poor conditions of work, it would not be surprising that this would be the case in ancient Egypt where the ruling class does not seem to have been particularly concerned with the lower social strata; as Toby Wilkinson, *Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt: The History of a Civilisation from 3000 BC to Cleopatra*, 86-7, remarks about the construction of Khufu's pyramid, "[w]orkers sustained frequent injuries on the Guiza plateau, their skeletons showing evidence of broken bones, severe lower-back stress and painful arthritic joints. Accidents must have been common, often resulting in fatalities. The official record is predictably silent about how many died in building the Great Pyramid."

[364] "The Nile crocodile has a somewhat deserved reputation as a vicious man-eater. The proximity of much of its habitat to people means run-ins are frequent. And its virtually indiscriminate diet means a villager washing clothes by a riverbank might look just as tasty as a migrating wildebeest. Firm numbers are sketchy, but estimates are that up to 200 people may die each year in the jaws of a Nile croc." "The Nile Crocodile," in *National Geographic*, http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/reptiles/nile-crocodile/ (accessed September 16, 2010). In the description of the washerman Dua-Khety points out that: "The washerman launders at the riverbank in the vicinity of the crocodile" (stanza 19). William Kelly Simpson, "The Satire on the Trades: The Instruction of Dua-Khety," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 435.

[365] *AEL*, 1: 184.

And he is miserable because of his condition (*sfn=f ḥr sḫr.w=f*). (Stanza 20).[366]

I will tell you how it is to be a fisherman (*ḏd=i n=k mi wḥˁ rm.w*)

It is more miserable than any trade (*sfn=f r iȝ.t nb.t*).

His work is on the river (*wn bȝk.w=f ḥr itrw*),

Mixed with the crocodiles (*šbn.w hnˁ msḥ.w*).

If the collection of his dues takes place (*ir ḫpr n=f dmdyt n*(*.i*)*t ip.t=f*),

He gets miserable (*ḥr wnn=f ḥr nḫ.w*).

He cannot say "crocodiles are surfacing!"[367] (*nn ḏd.n=f iw msḥ.w ˁḥˁ*),

And his fear blinded him (*šp.n sw snd.w=f*).

The aggressor (sc., the crocodile), if he bursts through the water (i.e., surfaces) (*ir pr=f ḥr mw pw pȝ ȝd.w*),

He (sc., the fisherman) says: "(it is) like the manifestation of a god!" (*ḫr=f mi bȝ.w nṯr*). (Stanza 21).[368]

Whereas the fisherman's description is plausible, i.e., it is credible that his work could be disturbed by crocodiles, the same cannot be said about the fowler. Indeed it sounds strange that a fowler would not have a net to catch birds, but it is relevant that god is made responsible for his lack of equipment. The question then is why? Is it possible that Dua-Khety is voicing a subtle ecological concern akin to the modern conception of animal rights? The text does not appear to support this view, as it does not explicitly state that to harm animals is morally wrong. Is it then possible that god is being used here as part of a joke? Again I believe the answer is negative. In a votive stele from Deir el-Medina, the scribe Neferabu leaves a clear warning: "Beware of falsely pronouncing the name of Ptah, because the one who pronounces it unjustly will experience punishment"[369]. Although Neferabu's interpellation dates from the New Kingdom and despite the fact that in the *Instruction of Dua-Khety* god is not named, it is possible that the notion that using a god's name in vain would result in punishment

[366] Translated from the transliteration available in "Teaching of Khety – the 'Satire of Trades,'" in *Digital Egypt for Universities ...*, http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/literature/satiretransl.html (accessed September 16, 2010), and made with basis on the text edited in Wolfgang Helck, *Die Lehres des Dwȝ-Ḫtjj, Textzusammenstellung* Teile 1-2. I also benefited from the translation by John L. Foster, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: An Anthology* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 39.

[367] This probably means that he cannot spot the crocodiles until they are already on the surface and too close for comfort.

[368] Translation made from the transliteration of the text in "Teaching of Khety – the 'Satire of Trades,'" in *Digital Egypt for Universities ...*, http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/literature/satiretransl.html. Cf. the translation proposed by Joris F. Borghouts, "Divine Intervention in Ancient Egypt and its Manifestations (*bȝw*)," in *Gleanings from Deir el-Medina*, ed. R. J. Demarée and J. J. Janssen (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1982), 41 n. 5, and 70 n. 5.

[369] Translation by Antonio Loprieno, "Theodicy in ancient Egyptian texts," in *Theodicy in the world of the Bible*, ed. A. Laato and J. C. de Moor (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003), 52.

might have been present not only in this instruction but also throughout the whole Egyptian history.

I propose to seek the answer to god's presence in the description of the fowler and of the fisherman through another point of view. The close connection between the fowler and the fisherman in this instruction – expressed by the fact that both trades are termed *wḥꜥ*[370] and that the description of the fowler is immediately followed by the description of the fisherman – seems far from random. In fact, fowl and fish are often referred in conjunction[371], and their hunting is part of the fishing and fowling motif present in several tombs and is epitomised by the literary pieces known as the *Sporting King* and *Fishing and Fowling*[372]. According to some authors[373], from the New Kingdom onwards this motif, which was present in the iconographic programs of elite tombs since the Old Kingdom[374], acquired a symbolism of the defeat of chaos elements, but in the tomb of Nakht (TT 52) a more pragmatic purpose is still present in the caption to the fishing scene: "Travelling across the marshes, / traversing the marshlands, / distracting the *ib*[375], spearing / the fish (*ḫns šꜣ.w / hbhb sḫ.wt / sḫmḫ ib st.t / mḥy.t*)[376].

Although the professions of fowler and fisherman are attested for ancient Egypt[377], the activities underlying them were also part of the elite's entertainment. It is therefore plausible that Dua-Khety is not satirising these two trades but, instead, is warning the young aspirant to scribe that should he fail in his studies and wind up either as a fowler or a fisherman he will not be able to enjoy these occupations as leisure, in the same way that scribes are, but will instead face constant adversity. The intervention

[370] The fowler is the *wḥꜥ ꜣpd.w*, whereas the fisherman is the *wḥꜥ rm.w*.
[371] In the New Kingdom votive stele made by Nebre for the benefit of his son Nakhtamun, it is said: "I shall praise Amun, / I shall compose hymns in his name: / I shall praise him / to the height of the sky and the breath of the earth [...]. Speak of him to the fish in the river and the birds in the sky!" Translation from Jan Assmann, *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*, 225. See also Boyo G. Ockinga, "Piety," in *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, 314.
[372] For a discussion of both discourses see "The Sporting King and Fishing and Fowling: Recreational Discourses," in Richard B. Parkinson, *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*, 226-34.
[373] E.g. Betsy M. Bryan, "Pharaonic Painting through the New Kingdom," in *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, ed. Alan B. Lloyd, Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010), 2:1002-3.
[374] For a depiction from an Old Kingdom tomb see Alan B. Lloyd (ed.), *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, vol. 2, pl. 12, and for an example from the Middle Kingdom see ibid., pl. 17.
[375] We have seen this expression in connection to *šms ib* above in section 1.2.6.
[376] Charles W. Wilkinson, "Egyptian Wall Paintings: The Metropolitan Museum Collection of Facsimiles," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 36 (1979): 52.
[377] According to Christopher Eyre, "Economy: Pharaonic," in *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, ed. Alan B. Lloyd, 1:293.

of god in the activity of the fowler may thus be construed as a metaphor for that adversity. And this metaphor also has theodic implications.

A theodic comment in the stanza dealing with the fowler was noticed by Richard B. Parkinson. However, his interpretation is different from the one I will present here because his translation is also different – as John Foster remarked, given that there is not a copy of this instruction that can be considered closer to the original and that there is a considerable level of corruptness in several copies, any translation proposed is tentative[378]. Parkinson's translation of the last thought couplet reads: "God does not let this happen to him, / so that he is made feeble by his own plans."[379] According to this rendering, despite god's intervention the fowler is responsible for his lot because he has so planned[380]. My rendering differs from Parkinson's in understanding *sḫr.w* not as a plural but as an abstract noun (And he is miserable because of his condition (*sfn=f ḥr sḫr.w=f*)); hence I propose to understand the passage as a divine sanction of the social hierarchy. Moreover, since god is said to keep a net away from the fowler, he does not only endorse social differentiation as he also foments it – an attitude that is juxtaposed with the creator's apology in CT 1130[381].

The stanza about the fisherman introduces us to a concept that is best known from the New Kingdom community of Deir el-Medina. This concept is the *bȝ.w* (*nṯr*) *ḫpr.w*, "the manifestation (of a god) has occurred"[382]. In most references to this kind of theophany the *bȝ.w nṯr ḫpr.w* is said to cause fear and awe among the ones who experienced the divine manifestation[383]. This is clearly the case in the description of the fisherman; he is frightened with a surfacing crocodile and compares it to a *bȝ.w nṯr*. Since the description of the fisherman's plight appears particularly realistic, it is possible that *mi bȝ.w nṯr* was a phrase uttered when a person would experience extreme fear, perhaps similarly to our catch-phrase "Oh my God!" But the usage of the phrase *bȝ.w nṯr ḫpr.w* in the Deir el-Medina confessional texts suggests that the phrase *mi bȝ.w nṯr* was not merely a cliché, but a deliberately used phrase. What the fisherman's comparison of the menacing crocodiles to a divine manifestation implies is that a *bȝ.w nṯr ḫpr.w* would be characterised by a similar frightening situation. The insight yielded

[378] "Some Comments on Khety's Instruction for Little Pepi ...," 121-2.
[379] *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*, 276.
[380] Ibid.
[381] See e.g., David Lorton, "God's Beneficent Creation ...," 135.
[382] This expression was studied by Joris F. Borghouts, "Divine Intervention in Ancient Egypt and its Manifestations (*bȝw*)," 1-70.
[383] Ibid., 32.

by the material from Deir el-Medina is also significant: the *bꜣ.w nṯr ḫpr.w* usually occurred after some sort of infraction was committed and not assumed[384]; as inferred by Joris Borghouts, it is god's manifestation that prompts the person to tell others about her infraction[385]. This is very significant, as the expression *bꜣ.w nṯr ḫpr.w* is not used in a context of reward but is instead employed in contexts of punishment and retribution.

Regarding the fisherman in the *Instruction of Dua-Khety*, it is not apparent that he has committed any infraction, unless fishing in the Nile River was considered to be a trespassing of Sobek's territory; in the *Book of the Heavenly Cow* the crocodile is said to be the *bꜣ* (i.e., manifestation) of the god Sobek[386]. But if in the account of the fisherman *mi bꜣ.w nṯr* refers to the manifestation of Sobek, why keeping the god's identity unveiled? Perhaps the expression *bꜣ.w nṯr* was already fixed as an idiom. And the fact that the fisherman only compares his situation to a *bꜣ.w nṯr*, instead of saying that it is *de facto* a *bꜣ.w nṯr* indicates that he might not be committing an infraction but rtahter just being stalked by crocodiles as part of routine.

Although it is uncertain whether officials would in fact risk themselves in the river to fish for sport or instead watch their servants doing it, what was said above about the social differentiation still stands; and it is possible that there is another innuendo that Dua-Khety was trying to convey to future scribes: should they indeed become scribes they would have tombs as props to fish and fowl as they would please in the afterlife, whereas the real professionals of these activities would not have that chance but instead would have to face the difficulties of this life.

The main contribution of the foregoing for our discussion is that god is said to impact negatively on the life of the fowler, on the hand, and, on the other, that god could become manifest in a terrifying situation[387]. This is similar to divine intervention in Ptahhotep which, as we have seen, also has negative effects on one's life.

2.3. Divine determination in the *Story of Sinuhe*:

[384] Ibid., 33-4.
[385] Ibid., 8.
[386] Ibid., 40-1 n. 5.
[387] About the fear provoked on human beings by deities see Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt* ..., 197.

In the *Story of Sinuhe*[388] god is mentioned several times, either as referring to the king or to the god who Sinuhe makes accountable for his roaming in Syria-Palestine. It has been suggested that the "god of the flight," as he may be called, is to be identified with the king[389]. Although at the second climax[390] of the narrative the royal children indeed state that Sinuhe had fled due to his fear of Senusret I, earlier at B 156-157 Sinuhe had made a plea to the gods: "O gods who ordained this flight, may you be satisfied (with me) and send me home! (*nṯr.w nb(.w) šȝ wʿr.t tn ḥtp=k ḏi=k wi r ḫnw*)" (B 156-157)[391]. Therefore, even though the king is also called a god in this text[392], he is not the god of the flight. But this text is especially difficult to interpret because its author has given rise to several and important questions while not providing unequivocal answers to them.

One of these not clearly answered questions, and perhaps the most important of all, is why did Sinuhe flee. Apparently Sinuhe was in Lybia accompanying the king in a military campaign when messengers from the Egyptian capital arrived to inform the successor of the death of Amenemhat I[393]. Faced with this news Senusret hurried to the capital, but without letting his army know. This reaction by Senusret is another mystery. Although it could be proposed that the army logistics would have slowed him down, it is also true that if he was hasting because he was suspicious of a conspiracy, having the might of his army with him would only have been an asset[394]. Another possible reason for leaving his army in the dark might have been that Senusret believed that it was involved in the conspiracy[395]. The exact relation between the future king and his army may also impact on what the royal messenger and a prince (*ms.w-n.i-sw.t*) conversed

[388] I am very grateful to Harold M. Hays for showing me a draft of his forthcoming study entitled "Sinuhe the Coward."

[389] Rogério Ferreira de Sousa argues that the divine will of the former "identifica-se, no final do conto, com o próprio rei que parece, desde o início reger secretamente a teia de todo o enredo" [identifies itself, at the end of the tale, with the king himself who seems, from the start, to secretly rule the web of the whole plot]. "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência," 1:126 n. 317.

[390] I follow David Lorton's suggested possibility that there is a first climax at the fight with the powerful one (*nḫ.t*) of Retjenu, and a second one at Sinuhe's arrival at the palace where he is brought before the king. See his article "Reading the Story of Sinuhe" (1982), http://fontes.lstc.edu/~rklein/Documents/Sinuhe.htm (accessed September 21, 2010).

[391] Translation and transliteration by Harold M. Hays, "Sinuhe the Coward."

[392] At R 13 he is said to be a "good/junior god (*nṯr nfr*)". Transliteration at "Tale of Sanehat," *Digital Egypt for Universities: A learning and teaching resource for higher education*, http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/literature/sanehat/text.html (accessed September 21, 2010).

[393] According to the text known as the *Instruction of Amenemhat I for his son Senusret*, the king was assassinated.

[394] As remarked by Vincent Arieh Tobin, "The Secret of Sinuhe," *JARCE* 32 (1995): 171.

[395] These hypotheses are discussed in ibid. and in David Lorton, "Reading the Story of Sinuhe."

about and which Sinuhe overheard or eavesdropped[396]. The content of the conversation is not disclosed by the author, but whatever it was that the messenger or the prince[397] said it threw Sinuhe into a blind panic. This is another important feature of the story. Sinuhe is portrayed as a fearful character throughout; in fact the verb *snḏ* ("to fear, be fearful") is one of the most used words in the text[398]. An early justification given by Sinuhe to flee is that "I did not plan to approach this Residence, having reasoned that a political disturbance would occur. I did not think I would survive him!" (B 7)[399]. However, when later enquired by Amunenshi, the ruler of Upper Retjenu who took him in, about his reason to abandon Egypt he answered with an "untruth" (*iw-ms*)[400]. It is thus left unknown whether Sinuhe fled because he overheard a conspiracy plot to murder Senusret and was afraid to be killed as well, or because he was actually involved in a conspiracy and suspected he would soon be discovered. David Lorton[401] has made the interesting suggestion that perhaps Sinuhe was unaware of Senusret's departure to the royal palace and, if there were indeed conspirators among the leaders of the army, he might have become convinced that Senusret would be killed in the military camp alongside with his supporters – among which was Sinuhe. The several paeans exalting the might of the new king uttered by Sinuhe throughout the text suggest that his loyalty to Senusret was not compromised. The most probable explanation for Sinuhe's desertion of his master and the royal family is thus his fear of being eliminated due to his association with the successor to the throne.

In describing his flight, Sinuhe focuses at first on the physiological symptoms of the extreme anxiety that made him desert his post[402], but as the plot develops he ascribes the responsibility for his running away to the god of the flight. In my view it is very important to ascertain at exactly what point the deity controls Sinuhe's escape to Syria-Palestine. Did the god trigger his flight? Or rather did he only take control of Sinuhe's path of flight as a punishment for his failure in keeping himself collected and in fighting for his king if necessary? It should be noted that Sinuhe not only abandoned

[396] This latter possibility was proposed by Vincent Arieh Tobin, "The Secret of Sinuhe," 173.
[397] The text is unclear as to who was speaking. See e.g. Richard B. Parkinson, *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*, 151 with n. 8.
[398] It features in eighth place in a total of 49 verbs counted by Harold M. Hays, "Sinuhe the Coward," table 1.
[399] Translation by David Lorton, "Reading the Story of Sinuhe." According to Lorton "him" refers to Senusret, whereas Richard B. Parkinson infers that the third person pronoun refers to Amenemhat I. *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*, 154.
[400] This concept and its connotations are discussed in Harold M. Hays, "Sinuhe the Coward."
[401] "Reading the Story of Sinuhe."
[402] See an example above in section 1.2.5.

his master but also his queen and princes[403], since his duty was related to the royal harem.

As David Lorton remarks, the first association between the flight and the god was tentative. According to Sinuhe at B 43, "it was like the plan of a god (*iw*(=*s*) *mi sḫr nṯr*)"[404]. The word *sḫr* has the further meanings of "counsel" and "determination." The rendering "counsel" entails that it would be up to Sinuhe to accept it, whereas "determination," as well as "plan," involve a total passivity on Sinuhe's part. The latter attitude is what is described in his flight, for in the Nile River he sails on a rudderless boat and is carried off by "a west wind, the 'wrong' quarter for a wind in Egypt."[405] Sinuhe later proceeds to connect his complete lack of control in his runaway with the control of fate by the deities: "O gods who ordained this flight (*nṯr.w nb*(*.w*) *šꜣ wꜥr.t tn*)" (B 156). The verb *šꜣ* appears other five times in this text[406]. In B 126, 156, and 229, the subject of this verb is god or the gods; in B 121 *šꜣ* is used as a noun, and in B 51 and 262 it is employed as a participle[407]. In this latter occurrence Sinuhe refers to his flight simply as something that was fated: "Fear (lit. "terror") is in my body just as the ordained flight was made to happen (*ḥr*(*i.*)*t wnn=s m ḥ.t=i mi sḫpr wꜥr.t šꜣꜣ.t*)"[408]. We may thus see how Sinuhe shifts the responsibility for his flight completely away from him. John Baines describes this phenomenon in the following terms:

> The hypostatization of "god", or, in other versions within *Sinuhe*, of the "heart", is a dramatization of guilt and an exculpation of the guilty party. The problem of motivation is treated in terms too inconsistent for the ascription to outside agencies to be interpreted as conceptual realism or reification; it is certainly a literary device.[409]

But two alternative views may be proposed: first, the heart is part of the human nature and, even though it may be described as an alter ego, it may be viewed as an aspect of the individual which is being given particular attention rather than an outside agency; second, the ascription of responsibility for Sinuhe's flight to a god does not need to be

[403] As noted by Harold M. Hays, "Dereliction of Duty," "Sinuhe the Coward."
[404] I am thankful to Harold M. Hays for the transliteration of this phrase.
[405] John Baines, "Interpreting Sinuhe," *JEA* 68 (1982): 36. Sinuhe's renaming as *sꜣ-mḥy.t*, "Son of the Northwind," at his return to the palace, signals that he is no longer a passive wanderer.
[406] See Harold M. Hays, "Sinuhe the Coward," table 1.
[407] In a praise of Senusret Sinuhe says that whereas his father was in his palace, the future king (if he was not already a co-regent) was out on campaign subduing the foreign lands, "with him reporting what had been assigned to him to happen (*smi=f šꜣ.wt n=f ḫpr*)" (B 51). Translation and transliteration by Harold M. Hays, "Sinuhe the Coward."
[408] Translation and transliteration by ibid.
[409] "Interpreting Sinuhe," 41.

seen as an hypostatisation of his motivations, or even as a plea for "temporary insanity"[410]. By making the god responsible for his roaming about, Sinuhe was most probably engaged in looking for answers to his present condition rather than attempting to exteriorise his guilt to a divine agency, as David Lorton suggests[411]. This search for an answer is very similar to the conduct adopted before affliction in practical religion: "Response to affliction should ideally include discovering its cause – in the broadest terms, divination – and suitable action to overcome it."[412] And both these elements seem to be present in the *Story of Sinuhe*. John Baines argues that:

> His [Sinuhe's] recourse to a god is [...] relevant here because of the assumption it implies about the role of the gods in human affairs and the difficulty of knowing who the god was and what he did. [...] Sinuhe's motivation may have been direct inspiration – if one thinks his narrative is presented as being in good faith – but the putative search for its meaning and source belongs better in a context of divination.[413]

Although Sinuhe is not said to resort to the typical means of divination – communication with the dead, divine oracles, or seers/mediums[414] –, it is possible that Amunenshi is acting as a substitute for a "wise woman" (*rḫ.t*), for example; the Syrian ruler inquires about his moral past, namely his reason for leaving Egypt, which, as Joris Borghouts suggested, might have been one of the steps in the process of identifying the agent responsible for the affliction[415]. And it is precisely in the reply to this inquiry that Sinuhe declares that his flight was "like the plan of a god." It is interesting that this god is not specifically identified, which matches the anonymity of god in the wisdom literature and other sources.

Regarding the action to reconcile himself with the agent of his affliction, sc. the god(s), it is obviously the fight to the death with the powerful one (*nḫ.t*) of Retjenu. This *nḫ.t* plays a similar role to Judas in the New Testament and Seth in Egyptian mythology; they and their reputation must be sacrificed so that the hero's purpose might be fulfilled. The victory of Sinuhe over this *nḫ.t* redeems him before the king[416] and

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[410] Vincent Arieh Tobin, "The Secret of Sinuhe," 172 n. 50, and Frank T. Miosi, "God, Fate and Free Will in Egyptian Wisdom Literature", 100.
[411] "Reading the Story of Sinuhe."
[412] John Baines, "Practical Religion and Piety," *JEA* 73 (1987): 85. I use the term "practical religion" as defined by the author, i.e., as "religious action in everyday context." See ibid., 79.
[413] Ibid., 90.
[414] About these three categories see ibid., 86-93.
[415] "Divine Intervention in Ancient Egypt and its Manifestations (*bȝw*)," 31.
[416] The *Story of Sinuhe* establishes a contrast and then a parallel between Sinuhe and Senusret. An example of the contrast occurs when Sinuhe overhears the conversation between the royal messenger and a prince and then flees, whereas Senusret had departed to the capital without the support of his army and

reconciles him with god: "Thus does the god act in order to be satisfied with the one with whom he had been angry, the one whom he led astray to another land: today his *ib* is clean (lit. "washed") ((*i*)*ḫr ir nṯr r ḥtp n ṯz.n=f i*(*ȝ*)*m=f th.n=f r k.t ḫȝs.t iw min ib=f iˁ*)" (B 147-149)[417]. This passage strongly suggests that Sinuhe's affliction, i.e., his exile in a foreign land while longing for his life at the palace and facing the prospect of dying without a proper burial, was a divine punishment for his reckless flight.

Even though Sinuhe states that his flight was ordained by god, it is possible that he is referring only to the course he took and not to the action of deserting. This inference is supported by the statement at B 229-230, "the god who ordained this flight was dragging me away (*nṯr šȝ wˁr.t tn ḥr stȝ=i*)"[418], and by the fact that Sinuhe first announced that he was going south and then, through the rudderless boat and the atypical west wind that were mentioned above, wound up going north to Syria-Palestine. It is thus interesting that although the flight was rooted on Sinuhe's inability to choose otherwise, sc. to face adversity, he was punished notwithstanding. Still, Sinuhe was indeed at fault; being an attendant of Senusret's wife and their children at the royal harem, Sinuhe deserted them by fleeing to Syria-Palestine[419]. Furthermore, leaving the new king might also have been understood as not recognising him as the rightful heir.[420] It is uncertain whether Senusret considered Sinuhe's flight to be a crime worthy of punishment or not. Although in the exchange of correspondence between the king and Sinuhe the former implies that the latter will suffer no punishment, upon his return Sinuhe is clearly fearful of an extreme punishment – the declaration "to you belongs life (*ntk ˁnḫ*)" (B 263) suggests the death penalty – which is apparently only thwarted by the intervention of the royal children, who ascribe Sinuhe's flight to fear of the king, implying that Sinuhe deserted his functions because of his loyalty since the king is expected to provoke fear in his subjects.

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with the possibility of being ambushed by conspirators ("Physical Coward," in Harold M. Hays, "Sinuhe the Coward"). And the parallel is found e.g. on Sinuhe's description after defeating the powerful one of Retjenu which resembles the description of Senusret throughout the paeans (David Lorton, "Reading the Story of Sinuhe"). It is certainly not by chance that Sinuhe only coincides with the king after a victorious fight and after having become a powerful leader abroad. This probably conveyed a message to the elite, that fearful officials would not be welcomed whereas the brave ones would be valued. In this sense the propaganda of the *Story of Sinuhe* is similar to the idea communicated by Senusret III to his soldiers stationed at the fortress of Semna; in the Semna stele the king states that: "Valorous it is to attack, vile to retreat" (Toby Wilkinson, *Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt: The History of a Civilisation from 3000 BC to Cleopatra*, 179).

[417] Translation and transliteration by Harold M. Hays, "Sinuhe the Coward."

[418] Translation and transliteration according to ibid.

[419] See "Dereliction of Duty," in Harold M. Hays, "Sinuhe the Coward."

[420] About further implications of exile see John Baines, "Interpreting Sinuhe," 40-42.

It is also noteworthy that Senusret does not give any credit to Sinuhe's claims that his exile in Syria-Palestine was the working of a god[421]. But then again, the king focused on Sinuhe's flight and his motivations, not on the specific route he took. Therefore, and resuming the idea sketched above, it is conceivable that god intervened only to punish Sinuhe. But if Sinuhe was at fault particularly with the royal family, why would a deity intervene? Paula D. Zwicker suggests an interesting possibility:

> This remark [i.e., god's intervention] may be intended to recall the connection between the kingship and the divine, i.e., as punishment for Sinuhe's supposed crime, the gods, who were historically associated with the figure of the monarch, intervened and drove him away from Egypt.[422]

This hypothesis of Sinuhe's divine punishment for a transgression is not alien to Egyptian thought. In another text from the Middle Kingdom, the *Instruction for King Merikare*, king Khety mentions the apparently unauthorised plundering of Abydos and This by his army and remarks that: "Affliction will be requited in kind, / and every deed committed has its consequence."[423] The conceptualisation of the direct relation between transgression and punishment is also expressed in a stele of Neferabu from the New Kingdom: "I committed a sin against the goddess of the Western peak, and she taught me a lesson."[424]

One may also pose the question: was the god of the flight Sinuhe's personal god? This is uncertain, primarily because private piety is a phenomenon better attested from the New Kingdom onwards. It is possible that evidence for this religious manifestation was irreversibly lost, not yet recovered by archaeologists, or severely limited by decorum[425]. But while it is tempting to posit complex ideas attested in later periods on earlier periods, thus attributing a greater, and more prestigious, complexity to these earlier periods, one must also accept that the lack of evidence for a particular phenomenon in a given period may very well express its scarcity, or even non-existence, in such period; after all if one ascribes major New Kingdom phenomena not attested frequently in previous periods to those periods, one risks concluding that in the New Kingdom and later stages of Egyptian history there were no cultural developments

[421] As noticed by David Lorton, "Reading the Story of Sinuhe."
[422] As quoted in Vincent Arieh Tobin, "The Secret of Sinuhe," 177 n. 70.
[423] Translation in Vincent Arieh Tobin, "The Teaching for King Merikare," in William Kelly Simpson, *An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 164.
[424] Translated by Antonio Loprieno, "Theodicy in ancient Egyptian texts," 52.
[425] As suggested by John Baines, "Practical Religion and Piety," 96.

whatsoever. This is not to say that such phenomena may not have been inchoate, or simply less exploited, in earlier periods. And this might very well be the case with private piety.[426] In the *Story of Sinuhe* there appears to be no strong evidence to support pietism. In the only occurrence when Sinuhe makes a plea that would resemble pietistic prayers from the New Kingdom[427], he addresses the gods (B 156-157). This is the only instance where the god of the flight gives place to "gods," and it is possible that this sudden shift is intentional; the author's purpose might have been to eschew a too personal relation between Sinuhe and a single god – the reasons for this are unclear, but given that after the appeal to the gods Sinuhe addresses the king, the author might have intended to shift a closer relationship between Sinuhe and the god of the flight to the relationship between Sinuhe and the king who is after all the ideological referential of the story.

So far I have been developing only the hypothesis that the god punished Sinuhe after his inability to remain in his duty. But it is equally possible that when Sinuhe states that the gods ordained his flight, he is referring to the crucial moment where fear overwhelmed him and made him flee, rather than to the direction his flight took. The former possibility deals only with the outer aspects of Sinuhe's life – namely to where he flew, the circumstances of his exile, and his confrontation with the powerful one of Retjenu –, whereas the latter concerns the inner dispositions of Sinuhe. The former entails that Sinuhe was fearful by nature, whereas the latter does not necessarily entail it. The most prominent element in Sinuhe's flight, and which is recurrent throughout the story, is his fear. And if Sinuhe was fated by god to flee, this is an indication that under normal circumstances Sinuhe would not have felt a panic so deep to the point that he was urged to extract himself from that situation. Therefore, this abnormal behaviour triggered by god entails that Sinuhe's moral character was tampered with by the god. The same applies to the two cases in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* that we analysed above. These situations where a god intervenes directly on the individual, rather than just influencing his surrounding environment – as in the description of the fowler in the *Instruction of Dua-Khety* –, are akin to beliefs in spirit possession in traditional cultures, as well as in present day mainstream religions and new religious movements. Once

[426] For a brief discussion about early evidence for private piety see ibid., 94-7.

[427] Compare B 156-157 ("O gods who ordained this flight, may you be satisfied (with me) and send me home!") with the already cited votive stele from the New Kingdom (see n. 372, above): "You are Amun, lord of the silent, / who comes at the call of the poor. / I called to you when I was in sorrow, and you came to save me." Translated by Jan Assmann, *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*, 225. The subject matter of both texts is different, but they share the same tone.

more I will use shamanism as an element of comparison, since spirit possession is an integral feature of several shamanic groups. Brian Morris describes this phenomenon in the following way:

> The term *spirit-possession* generally denotes the incarnation or possession of an individual by some spiritual being and not by some vague "external forces". According to the culture, the spirit may "possess" or control the individual person in a number of different ways – it may reside in the head, "ride" the individual as a horse, or a spirit might fully incarnate the person, taking full control of his or her body – and the person is "seized" by the divinity or spirit. He or she then becomes a "vessel" or "temple" or the embodiment of the spirit.[428]

Spirit possessions properly said are attested for ancient Egyptian religion. The most notorious case is probably the possession of princess Bentresh by an *ꜣḫ* which is described in a stele from the Ptolemaic period recovered from a chapel located near Khonsu's temple at Karnak. The text focuses more on Khonsu's ability as an exorcist god, giving very meagre details of the possession itself. Furthermore, its late date of composition might imply that it uses concepts not available at the time of the Old and Middle Kingdoms. Additional evidence for *ꜣḫ* possessions comes from the New Kingdom worker town of Deir el-Medina. Geraldine Pinch mentions that: "One text implies that *akhu* might be the cause of discord in the home by possessing people and making them bad-tempered and quarrelsome."[429] Old Kingdom threats to potential tomb robbers also suggest some kind of influence on living persons:

> [I will seize] him like a bird, and I will place fear in him so that the *ꜣḫ.w* and those who are on earth see and are fearful of an excellent *ꜣḫ* ([*iw*(=*i*) *r iṯi*].*t*=*f mi ꜣpd dy*(=*i*) *snḏ i*(*ꜣ*)*m*=*f r mꜣꜣ ꜣḫ.w tp*(*i*)*w tꜣ snḏ*=*sn n ꜣḫ iqr*). (Inscription from the Sixth Dynasty tomb of Ankhmahor at Saqqara).[430]

It is relevant that the deceased is threatening to place fear in a living person, because that might be how Sinuhe believes his flight was fated by god, i.e., that god has placed fear in him. In ancient Egypt the relation between the living persons and metaphysical agencies, including the king as the upholder of a divine office, is often marked by fear – as we have seen with the *bꜣ.w nṯr*[431]. Another possible meaning for *snḏ* in this context is

[428] *Religion and Anthropology: A Critical Introduction*, 22.
[429] *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 45.
[430] Text in *Urk*, I, 202, lines 6-8. Translated with resort to the translation presented by Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 264.
[431] See previous section.

respect. As regards Sinuhe, however, fear is still the most appropriate rendering since it is fear that triggers his flight.

There is another feature of spirit possession in shamanic cultures that might also be present in the *Story of Sinuhe*:

> Soul loss too may or may not be linked with spirit-possession. Among members of the vodou cult in Haiti [...], it is believed that the loa spirits incarnate a person only after first displacing the *gros bon ange* (the big good angel), one of the two souls a person is said to possess.[432]

As Joris Borghouts remarks, there are no explicit statements about a god entering someone's body[433]. But it is noteworthy that at the moment of his flight, Sinuhe claims that his *ḥ3.ty* was not in his body (B 38)[434]. It is uncertain which constituent element of the human nature would be required to leave the person's body in order for a god (possibly through his *b3*, i.e., his manifestation) to enter[435] it, but it is possible that the absence of the *ḥ3.ty* would be enough. However, there is a major caveat: the heart loss described at B 38 is again repeated at B 255 with the addition that, when Sinuhe meets the king after his long exile, he also loses his *b3*; taking the speculation further to suggest that in this case too Sinuhe was "possessed" in some form by the god of the flight one is prompted to ask: if *ḥ3.ty* loss was enough for the god to enter, why would he later also suffer *b3* loss? Moreover, why would the god of the flight still be involved if Sinuhe had already redeemed himself before this god? These questions render the connection between *ḥ3.ty* loss and divine possession improbable. If there was any kind of divine intervention on Sinuhe's nature, it is preferable to describe it simply as some kind of influence. And it is reasonable to assume that this influence ended with Sinuhe's victory against the powerful one of Retjenu, for Sinuhe claims that: "Thus does the god act in order to be satisfied with the one with whom he had been angry" (B 147-148). It is interesting that in the hypothesis of divine punishment as well as in the possibility of divine influence on Sinuhe's moral character, Sinuhe's redemption is also the work of the god of the flight. This use of the powerful one of Retjenu by god resembles the resort to foreign nations by God to punish the Hebrew people in the Bible.

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[432] Brian Morris, *Religion and Anthropology: A Critical Introduction*, 24.
[433] "Divine Intervention in Ancient Egypt and its Manifestations (*b3w*)," 30.
[434] See section 1.2.5. above.
[435] This difficulty was pointed out by Joris Borghouts, "Divine Intervention in Ancient Egypt and its Manifestations (*b3w*)," 30..

Since there is evidence to support both the possibility of Sinuhe being punished by the god of the flight and the hypothesis of the same god influencing Sinuhe by interfering with his nature, it is difficult to tell which interpretation, if any, the author of the *Story of Sinuhe* had in mind – notice however that the semblance between Sinuhe's search for the cause of his flight and the quest for the cause of affliction in practical religion is valid for both interpretations. But then again, this text presents more riddles than answers.

As a final comment to this section I point out an interesting similarity between lines 546-552 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* and the *Story of Sinuhe*. Ptahhotep states, on the one hand, that the one whom god hates does not or cannot listen and, on the other, that it is the *ib* who makes his possessor someone who listens or someone who does not. Similarly, in the *Story of Sinuhe* Senusret identifies Sinuhe's *ib* as the origin of his flight (B 182), whereas the protagonist later pinpoints god as the responsible[436] – the fact that the king does not adhere to Sinuhe's ascription of responsibility for his flight to god is even more relevant as it juxtaposes both explanations. This semblance between both texts epitomises the intertextuality of the "dilemma of human responsibility" as Richard Parkinson put it[437].

2.4. **Fate:**

In modern academic discussions the concepts of fate and fatalism are generally distinguished from determinism, because whereas the latter concerns all events, the former ones involve only specific events[438]. But, as Richard Taylor suggested, such an acute differentiation may not be necessary[439]. This suggestion appears to hold true to the Egyptian material, as is observable in the *Story of Sinuhe*[440] where divine determination and divine control of fate coincide – conversely the gods' determination in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* of the son who is among the ones who cannot cross because ill-will was implanted in him, and of the one who cannot listen (lines 217-219 and 546

[436] In B 182 the king says that Sinuhe has travelled from land to land by counsel of his *ib*. This certainly encompasses the moment of the flight until Sinuhe finally settled down in Amunenshi's territory. This view juxtaposes with the divine determination of Sinuhe's flight path.
[437] *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*, 155-6.
[438] See Kees W. Bolle, "Fate," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, 2nd ed., 5:2998, and Richard Taylor, "Fate," in *Free Will*, ed. John Martin Fischer, 1:212.
[439] "Fate," in *Free Will*, ed. John Martin Fischer, 1:212.
[440] This text will not be analysed in this section, since it was subject to scrutiny in the previous section.

respectively) may also be understood as a feature of fate[441]. What then justifies my separate treatment of divine determination and fate? Whereas in ancient Egyptian there appears to be no specific word to refer to the former phenomenon, there are a few words for the latter. The criterion for my differentiation is thus a linguistic one. For the purposes of the present discussion on free will I do not intend to conduct a thorough study on the concept of fate in the Old and Middle Kingdoms[442], but solely to address passages from different texts in order to answer the following query: in which way could one's actions be fated by a divine agency[443]?

The primary connotation of fate seems to be one's time of death. This is perhaps most visible from the New Kingdom onwards[444]. But Hans Goedicke advanced material from the Old Kingdom which might also support this view, even though none of the vocabulary later associated with the idea of fate is employed. Goedicke cites two biographical inscriptions that read:

> I have appointed an heir for the day on which I go to the West – may it be delayed. (*ink ir iwʿ.w r hr ḫpi.w m {r} imn.t wdf.t*). (Fifth Dynasty inscription of Nykaiankh from Tehna).[445]

> I shall cause that all living upon earth are afraid of the spirits (= dead ones) who are in the West – may it be far. (*iw*(=*i*) *r rḏi.t snḏ ʿnḫ.w nb*(*.w*) *tp*(*iw*) *t3 n 3ḫ.w imy.w imn.t ḥri.t*). (From the tomb of Nenki at Saqqara dating from the reign of Pepy II)[446].

These references do not necessarily imply a notion of fate; but then again, such notion may be implicit in them. What they tell us for sure is that the authors of these texts shared a pessimism regarding death[447], an attitude which will be further developed in the New Kingdom and is epitomised in chapter 175 of the *Book of the Dead*.

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[441] See Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion*, 66-7.

[442] Such a study encompassing the full length of the Egyptian history has been performed by Jan Quaegebeur, *Le dieu égyptien Shaï dans la religion et l'onomastique*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 2 (Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1975). See also Siegfried Morenz and Dieter Müller, *Untersuchungen zur Rolle des Schicksals in der ägyptischen Religion*, Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philologisch-historische Klasse 52/1 (Berlim [Leste]: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1960).

[443] That one's actions could in fact be fated is supported by the *Story of Sinuhe*. See previous section.

[444] See Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion*, 71.

[445] Translation by Hans Goedicke, "Early References to Fatalistic Concepts in Egypt," *JNES* 22 (1963): 187-8. Text in ibid., and *Urk* I, 162, line 12. For information on the inscription see Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 195.

[446] Translation by Hans Goedicke, "Early References to Fatalistic Concepts in Egypt," 187-8. Text in ibid., and *Urk* I, 260, lines 17-8.For information about the text and an alternative translation see Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 226.

[447] It is interesting that the texts refer to the tomb owners as if they were still alive.

A possible reference to fate as the time of death appears in the maxim 33 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*:

(463) Should you probe the character of a friend (*ir ḏr=k qd n*(*.i*) *ḫnms*),

(463) Do not inquire one who is close to him (*m šnn r=k tkn i*(*ȝ*)*m=f*).

(465) Deal with him alone (*ir zp ḥnʿ=f wʿ.w*)

(466) Until you are finished with troubling about his affairs (*r tm.t=k mn ḫr.t=f*).

(467) Argue with him after some time (*ḏȝis ḥnʿ=f m-ḫt ʿḥʿ.w*),

(470) And test (?)[448] his *ib* in an occasion of speech (*wšm ib=f m zp n*(*.i*) *md.t*).

(471) If what he has seen comes out from him (i.e., if he tells you what he has seen) (*ir pri mȝȝ.t.n=f m-ʿ=f*)

(472) And should he commit a fault (omit something?) over which you get angered (*ir=f zp šp.t=k ḥr=f*),

(473) Befriend him, or (*ḫnms sw r-pw*)

(474) Do not turn the face (*m itw ḥr*)!

(475) Pull yourself together and do not reveal a matter[449] to him (*sȝq.w m wbȝ n=f md.t*).

(476) Do not answer through an act of hostility (*m wšb m zp n*(*.i*) *zhȝ*),

(477) Do not separate yourself from him[450]; do not humiliate (?) him[451] (*m wi*(*ȝ*) *tw r=f m hb.w sw*).

(479) His time has never failed to come[452] (*n pȝ zp=f tm iw*),

(480) One cannot escape from the one who ordained it (*n wh.n=tw m šȝ sw*).

This passage introduces us to one of the principal words that refer to fate: *šȝ*. As remarked by Jan Quaegebeur it can be translated into several modern words:

Quelle que soit la traduction adoptée: déterminer, prédestiner, ordonner, décider, fixer, imposer, attribuer, le sens profond est toujours celui d'une idée, d'un projet, d'une dé cision qui es prise dans l'esprit et s'exprime dans un ordre ou sous la forme d'une loi.[453]

The reference to death occurs in line 479. Although there may be doubts concerning the exact meaning of *zp* in this case, the L1 version of this line makes it clear by replacing

[448] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 70, is hesitant about the meaning of this word. Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 156, is also uncertain about its meaning.
[449] The L1 version replaces *md.t* by *ib*. See Zbyněk Žaba, ibid., 53.
[450] Here I follow ibid., 157, who identifies the verb spelled out only as *wi* as being the verb *wiȝ*.
[451] Because of what follows next, tn the reading of *hb.w* I opted for the bilateral *hb* (of whose meaning Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 158, is not completely certain), as opposed to the *tertiae infirmae hbi*, "to tread," favoured by Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 157.
[452] About this sentence see Alan H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar: Being an Introduction to the Study of Hieroglyphs*, 3rd ed. rev., 266.
[453] *Le dieu égyptien Shaï dans la religion et l'onomastique*, 45.

zp=f with *pḥ*(*.wy*)*=fy*[454], "his end," the same word used in maxim 5: "The end comes, Maat remains (*wn pḥ.wy mɜꜥ.t wɜḥ=s*) (line 97). In both cases *pḥ.wy* clearly refers to the moment of death[455]. However, it does not seem entirely clear which one is the referent of *sw*. As I remarked elsewhere[456], if it is *=tw* then the sense would be "one cannot escape from one who ordained him[457]"; conversely, if it is *zp=f* then "the one who ordained," ordained the death of the crooked friend[458]. The proximity of *=tw* in relation to *sw* suggests that *sw* refers to it. Consequently this passage would not employ *šɜ* as a reference to death, but rather as a reference to the control of one's actions by a deity – although there is no indication of the subject of *šɜ*, it probably is a god as was pointed out by Zbyněk Žaba and Jan Quaegebeur[459]. Support for this interpretation is found in the *Story of Sinuhe* where Sinuhe's actions are ordained by the gods as in e.g. "O gods who ordained this flight (*nṯr.w nb*(*.w*) *šɜ wꜥr.t tn*)" (B 156).

The retributive tenor of line 479 is similar to the one of lines 217-219; even though the individual may not be entirely responsible for his actions, he is still punished on account of them. Contrarily to lines 217-219 and 546, where the time of the determination was not rendered explicit, in line 479 the verb *pɜ* indicates action in the past, and its negated perfective denotes "not once," or "never"[460]. The construction *n pɜ* suggests a predetermination that took place in a distant past. It is conceivable that this distant past is the moment of birth.

Associated to birth are two deified concepts: Meskhenet and Renenutet. The role of Meskhenet, whose name may be translated "birth brick," is to assign one's profession and, therefore, one's social position[461]. Renenutet's function, on the other hand, appears

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[454] See Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 54.

[455] For the first case see ibid., 120, and for the second see Frank T. Miosi, "God, Fate and Free Will in Egyptian Wisdom Literature," 81.

[456] "O problema do livre arbítrio e da intervenção divina na instrução de Ptah-hotep," 23.

[457] This is the sense favoured by Frank T. Miosi, "God, Fate and Free Will in Egyptian Wisdom Literature," 81.

[458] What his fault is the text does not render clear. Apparently he either lies or omits something in a report.

[459] *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 157, and *Le dieu égyptien Shaï dans la religion et l'onomastique*, 44, respectively.

[460] See James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, 2nd ed., 270.

[461] Ann Macy Roth and Catharine H. Roehrig, "Magical Bricks and the Bricks of Birth," *JEA* 88 (2002): 88. Meskhenet features in a story of the West Car Papyrus where the goddess assigns the office of king to Ruddedet's three children. For an interpretation of its ideological propaganda see José das Candeias Sales, *A ideologia real Acádica e Egípcia: representações do poder político pré-clássico* [The Egyptian and Akkadian royal ideology: representations of the pré-classical political power] (Lisboa: Estampa, 1997), 133-9.

to be particularly connected with one's physical development and material wealth[462]. The two deities appear together in the *Instruction of Dua-Khety*:

> Look, Renenutet is on the path of the god (*mk rnn.t ḥr w3.t nṯr*)
> And Renenutet is written on his shoulder (*rnn.t sš ḥr qʿḥ=f*)
> On the day of his birth (*hrw n(.i) ms.t=f*).
> He reaches the palace portal (*spr=f ʿryt*),
> And that court of officials is the one allotting people to him (*t3 qnb.t ỉr n=f rmṯ*).
> Look, no scribe will ever be lacking in food (*mk nn wn sš šw m wnm*)
> Or the things of the House of the King, may he live, prosper and be well (*3ḫt n(.i)t pr nswt ʿnḫ wḏ3 snb*)!
> Meskhenet is the prosperity of the scribe (*msḫn.t w3ḏt n(.i)t sš*),
> The one placed before the court of officials (*ddy ḫr-ḥ3t qnb.t*). (Stanza 30).[463]

In this passage both Renenutet and Meskhenet are associated with social position and material prosperity. Evidence that connects at least Meskhenet, and therefore social position, with moral responsibility may come from the Eighteenth Dynasty vignettes to the chapter 125 of the *Book of the Dead* that show birth bricks over the balance[464]. Their meaning is not entirely clear, but Ann Macy Roth and Catharine H. Roehrig related the presence of these bricks with the demotic story of Setne II[465] where one is judged after death not only with basis on one's actions but also on one's fate; in two other demotic texts one's fate is inscribed by Thoth on a *meskhenet* (the "birth brick," as it may be translated, that was deified as Meskhenet)[466]. The authors' conclusion is that the social position allotted to a person was taken into account at the judgment of the dead[467], implying that individuals with a higher status among society and with more wealth were held to higher standards of moral expectations. The idea that the wealthier are in a more suitable position to will more freely is also present in Middle Kingdom texts:

> (483) It is the bread for the sharing out that one is greedy about (*in t(3) n psš.t ḥnty ḥr=f*).

[462] See Frank T. Miosi, "God, Fate and Free Will in Egyptian Wisdom Literature," 75-6.
[463] Translation and transliteration from "Teaching of Khety - the 'Satire of Trades,'" in *Digital Egypt for Universities: A learning and teaching resource for higher education*, http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/literature/satiretransl.html.
[464] For an example see Ann Macy Roth and Catharine H. Roehrig, "Magical Bricks and the Bricks of Birth," 137.
[465] For an introduction and translation of this text see Robert Kriech Ritner, "The Adventures of Setna and Si-Osire (Setna II)," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 470-89.
[466] Ann Macy Roth and Catharine H. Roehrig, "Magical Bricks and the Bricks of Birth," 137 with nn. 85-7.
[467] Ibid., 137.

(484) The one who is empty in his belly is the one who plots (*sḫr.y pw šw m ḫ.t=f*),

(485) While the opponent becomes a grumbler (*ḫpr ỉtn.w m sꜣhhw*). (*Instruction of Ptahhotep*, maxim 34).

The one who possesses bread should be merciful (*sf nb t(ꜣ)*),
Whereas strength belongs to the criminal (*nḫt(.w) n(.i) ḫnr*).
Theft is natural for the one who has no possessions (*twt tꜣw.t n ỉw.ty ḫ.t=f*).
Things are robbed by a criminal (*ḫnb ḫ.t in ḫnr*),
An evil act of the one who has nothing (*zp bin ỉw.ty šwỉw*).
Thus one is not angry with him (*nn r=f ṯsi=tw i(ꜣ)m=f*),
(Because) he is seeking (something) for himself (*ḥḥy n=f pw*).
But you are sated with your bread, (*ỉw=k sw.t sꜣ.t(y) m t(ꜣ)=k*),
And drunk with your beer (*tḫ(.ty) m ḥ(n)qt=k*)
You are rich in all kind of clothing (*ỉw=k ḫwd.t(y) m sšrw nb.w*). (*Eloquent Peasant* B1, 120-125).[468]

Promote your officials that they may fulfil your decrees,
For he whose house is wealthy will not take sides,
And he who wants for nothing is a wealthy man.
A poor man does not speak honestly,
And he who says "Would that I had!" cannot be upright.
He will be partial towards the one who pays him. (*Instruction for the King Merikare*, 40).[469]

It is interesting that in all these three passages the poor is exculpated from not abiding to moral expectations. But, in stark contrast, the wealthier man has the obligation to abide by these expectations because he *can*. This difference is particularly emphasised in the *Eloquent Peasant* through the use of the enclitic particle *sw.t*, which means "but, however"[470]. This "but" entails that because the wealthier man, who in the story is the Chief Steward Rensi, has access to food, drink, and clothes[471], he has no excuse to

[468] Translated from the hieroglyphic version available at "The Eloquent Peasant," Ancient Egyptian Language Discussion List, http://www.rostau.org.uk/ep/ep13.html, lines 152-156 (accessed 02 September, 2010), and with resort to the translation in Vincent Arieh Tobin, "The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 32-3.
[469] Translation of Vincent Arieh Tobin, "The Teaching for King Merikare," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, (2003), 156.
[470] See for example Boyo G. Ockinga, *A Concise Grammar of Middle Egyptian: An Outline of Middle Egyptian Grammar*, 2nd rev. ed., 21.
[471] Notice that in some tomb biographies these are part of the items provided to the poor. In the biography of Neferseshemre, from his tomb at Saqqara and dating from the reign of Teti (Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 300), these basic goods are listed: "I gave bread and beer to the hungry and clothes [to the naked] (*rḏi.n(=i) t(ꜣ) ḥ(n)ḳ.t n ḥḳr ḥbs* [*n ḥꜣy*])." *Urk* I, 198, line 3.

deviate from what is expected from him. In other words the one who has material comfort appropriate for his office and hierarchical position may choose to be corrupt or to abide to moral expectations, whereas the one who lacks this comfort has no choice but to steal or to be corrupt. In modern Law this would correspond to extenuating circumstances. Whether Egyptian Law would also condone a petty robber as in the tale of *The Eloquent Peasant* or not is difficult to ascertain. Small thefts would usually be punished with the obligation to give back the stolen items and in addition provide the double or triple of what had been stolen, or its equivalent[472]. It is thus probable that the genre of sapiential texts express only a tolerant understanding of the motivations of desperate thieves instead of mirroring Egyptian legal attitudes towards such thieves.

According to Roth and Roehrig the connection between one's social position assigned at birth and one's ethical judgment afterlife could not be earlier than the Eighteenth Dynasty. But, nonetheless, the relation between social position determined by Meskhenet and one's freedom of action certainly goes back to the Middle Kingdom as it is suggested by these three texts and by the passage of the *Instruction of Dua-Khety* quoted in this section. And once again, this conceptualisation seems to conflict with the *Coffin Texts* spell 1130 where the creator god claims to have created all people alike without social stratification.

Answering the question posed at the beginning of this section, a divine agency could fate one's actions either by acting directly on the individual's nature or by influencing him somehow – this ambiguity is present not only in the *Story of Sinuhe*, but also in maxim 33 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* – and by assigning one's social position; according to the sapiential texts, individuals in higher strata were believed to be able to choose to pursue an ethical conduct, as well as its opposite, whereas persons in lower strata or feeling unrewarded by their superiors could not have such option.

[472] David Lorton, "The Treatment of Criminals in Ancient Egypt: Through the New Kingdom," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 20 (1977), 47. An exception to this rule appears to be indicated in Papyrus BM 10335 from the Ramesside period which[472] records an oracle concerning five *mss*-shirts stolen from the servant Amenemwia by a thief identified as Petjauemdiamun. According to Jaroslav Černý's interpretation of *bn šd*(*=i*) *ṯ3w.t m ḏi=f*, Amenemwia said "I will not exact a penalty from him," implying that she would have been satisfied with the restitution of the shirts alone. See Jaroslav Černý, "Restitution of, and Penalty Attaching to, Stolen Property in Ramesside Times," *JEA* 23 (1937), 188-9. But cf. David Lorton, "The Treatment of Criminals in Ancient Egypt: Through the New Kingdom," 48.

CONCLUSION: MORAL RESPONSIBILITY:

In the previous chapter I have focused mainly in the negative divine intervention. But in the relation between man and god the former was not always subject to harm. There are also instances where divine intervention is positive. In fact, the very maintenance of the created world by the gods is an example of a beneficial intervention. And maxim 6 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* may refer to this type of intervention:

(99) May you not practice terror among the people (*imi=k ir ḥr m r*(*m*)*ṯ.w*).

(100) God will punish accordingly (*ḫsf nṯr m mi.tt*).

(101) A man says: "I will live thus" (*iw zi ḏd=f ꜥnḫ*(*=i*)[473] *i*(*ȝ*)*m*),

(102) And he will be lacking breads because of an utterance (*iw=f šw=f m tȝ.w n tp*(*y*)*-r*(*ȝ*)).

(103) A man says: "I will be wealthy (*iw zi ḏd=f wsr*(*=i*)[474]),

(107) And he will say: "I snared for me what I saw" (*iw=f ḏd=f sḫt=i r=i siȝ.t=i*).

(111) A man says: "I will rob another" (*iw zi ḏd=f ḥwtf*(*=i*) *ky*),

(112) And will end up giving to someone he does not know (*iw=f pḥ=f rḏi.t=f n ḫm.n=f*).

(115) Never people's terror[475] came into being (*n pȝ ḥr n*(*.i*) *r*(*m*)*ṯ.w ḫpr*(*.w*));

(116) It is that which god commanded[476] that comes into being (*wḏ.t nṯr pw ḫpr.t*).

(117) Think of living amidst peace (*kȝ ꜥnḫ m-ḫnw hr.t*),

(118) And that which they give comes by itself (*ii ḏḏ.t=sn ḏs iry*).

Here there is an opposition between man's intentions and god's command. The thought couplets[477] introduced by *iw zi ḏd=f* and *iw=f* are an unfolding of what is said in the first two lines and in lines 115-116. The practice of evil will inevitably fail; lines 103 and 107 are not entirely clear but, in my view, the meaning is that one thinks he will be rich only to find out that he will need to forage. This maxim is indeed a condemnation of evil performed by man and of easy solutions. The general meaning of this maxim is that there is no point in engaging in theft or any other easy way because god will not allow it and in addition, if the individual refrains from such activities, god

[473] Alteration proposed by Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 121.
[474] See previous note.
[475] *Ḥr* can also be translated by "intention" as noted by Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 120. However, the meaning "terror" seems to fit the context better.
[476] *Wḏ* may also be translated as "to ordain," or "to decree." See Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 73-4.
[477] See n. 337.

will provide for him[478]. The god mentioned here does not raise any particular question, as it certainly is not the king.

However the pronoun "they" definitely raises doubts regarding their identity as we have two possible referents. As noted by Zbyněk Žaba[479], its grammatical referent is *r*(*m*)*t.w*, the "people," or "men." And it is with basis on this referent that Faulkner translates this line: "what men give will come of its own accord"[480]. However, god is mentioned twice; it is god that punishes evil, and it is god that commands what comes into being. It would thus make sense to understand "they" as being the gods. This view appears to be supported by the L2 variant which reads: "that which they commanded comes by itself (*iw wḏdd.wt=sn ḏd=sn ỉry*)"[481], since the verb *wḏ*, "to command," is used in line 116 of the Prisse Papyrus: "that which the god commanded (*wḏ.t nṯr*)."

The theme of evil being destined to failure is also raised in maxim 5 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*:

(84) If you are a leader (*ir wnn=k m sšmy*)

(85) With command of the affairs of the multitude[482] (*ḫr wḏ n*(*.i*) *sḫr n*(*.i*) ꜥ*š3.t*)

(86) Seek for yourself every occasion to be excellent (*ḥḥy n=k zp nb mnḫ*)

(87) Until your governance is without injustice[483] (*r wn.t sḫr=k nn ỉw i*(*3*)*m=f*).

(88) Maat is great[484], its effectiveness is enduring (*wr m3ꜥ.t w3ḥ spd.t*(*=s*)).

(89) It was not disturbed since the time of Osiris (*n ḫnn.t*(*w*) *s*(*t*) *ḏr rk wsỉr*).

(90) One punishes the one who transgresses the laws (*ỉw ḫsf=tw n sw3 ḥr ḥp.w*),

(91) That is what escapes the sight of the one who is avid of *ỉb*[485] (*sw3.t pw m ḥr n*(*.i*) ꜥ*wn-ỉb*).

(92) It is baseness that takes hold of wealth (*in nḏy.t ỉṯỉ.t ꜥḥꜥ.w*),

(93) (But) never did wrongdoing moor its venture (*n p3 ḏ3y.t mnỉ zp=s*).

(95) A man says:[486] "I will snare for me myself" (*ỉw=f ḏd=f sḫt=ỉ r=ỉ ḏs=ỉ*),

(96) He does not say: "I will snare for my office" (*n ḏd.n=f sḫt=ỉ ḥr ḥn.t=ỉ*)

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[478] See also Pascal Vernus, *Sagesses de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 119 n. 84.
[479] Ibid., 122.
[480] Raymond O. Faulkner, Maxims of Ptahhotpe," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), 162.
[481] See Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 25.
[482] Translation of this line according to John L. Foster, *Thought Couplets and Clause Sequences in a Literary Text: The Maxims of Ptah-hotep*, 36. The L2 version supports the reading "affairs," since it has *shr.w* instead of *sḫr*. See Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 23.
[483] Cf. the translation by James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, 2nd ed., 317. The term *sḫr* may also be translated by "conduct."
[484] The L2 version replaces *wr* for *3ḫ*. See Zbyněk Žaba, *Les Maximes de Ptaḥḥotep*, 23.
[485] The L2 variant replaces ꜥ*wn-ỉb* for *ḫm ḫ.t*, "ignorant." Literally it means "the one who does not know a thing," as opposed to the *rḫ ḫ.t*, "the one who knows things," usually translated as "wise man."
[486] This is the same construction found in maxim 6.

(97) The end comes, Maat remains (*wn pḥ.wy mɜꜥ.t wɜḥ=s*).

In this maxim Ptahhotep emphasises the proper working of justice – expressed through the concepts of Maat and *hp*, "law". Although god is not mentioned here, the end result is the same: there is no point in choosing to perform evil or to be selfish because such attitudes will inevitably fail. This faith in temporal and spiritual institutions, indicated by "one punishes" (line 90) and Maat respectively, prompted Miriam Lichtheim[487] to date this instruction from the Old Kingdom since the Egyptian author was apparently unaware that official order could collapse. However, this conviction is on par with the loyalist teachings, such as the *Story of Sinuhe* which proclaims how well Egypt is ruled by Senusret I[488]. Even the tale of the *Eloquent Peasant* acknowledges the existence of corruption in the Egyptian administration, but it too has an ending favourable to the peasant thereby reasserting that evil will profit no one[489]. In fact, there is a very similar passage to Ptahhotep's maxim 5 in the *Eloquent Peasant*:

> Maet is the final end of falsehood,
> And (falsehood) will diminish and be seen no more.
> If falsehood walks, it goes astray;
> It does not cross in the ferry, and it makes no headway.
> As for him who prospers through it,
> He will have no children, he will have no heirs upon earth.
> As for him who sails with it, he does not reach land,
> And his boat does not arrive at its mooring-place.[490]

It is interesting that both texts make reference to the afterlife. The evildoer is not punished only in this world; he will not have access to the desired life in the hereafter as well. Whereas Ptahhotep states that "the end comes, Maat remains," the author of the *Eloquent Peasant* claims that "his (the evildoer's) boat does not arrive at its mooring-place." Ptahhotep's statement may be understood as a reference to the judgement of the dead[491]. According to Siegfried Morenz[492], Ptahhotep is ambiguous because he

[487] *AEL*, 1:62.
[488] See the paean extolling the king at B 51-75.
[489] See B2 120-135.
[490] Cf. Vincent A. Tobin, "The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant", in *The Literature Of Ancient Egypt* (2003), 43.
[491] Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion*, 127 and 130, argues that the idea of universal judgment of the dead emerged from a reinterpretation of the fifth maxim of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*.

concomitantly speaks of earthly and divine justice. However, both views do not need to exclude one another. In fact, given that the king was the vicar of the gods it makes sense that temporal institutions work alongside spiritual ones. But Morenz[493] is certainly right in assuming that a universal judgment of the dead takes justice to a much deeper level of significance because if earthly justice fails, divine justice will hopefully make it right.

These passages just quoted are marked by a deterministic tone. One may choose to pursue wrongdoing, but the result will always be the same: punishment in this world and condemnation in the other. This is what we may indeed call positive determination and, since it deals with divine justice, positive theodicy. And it is interesting that the verb *wḏ* employed in maxim 6 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* is also used in the *Coffin Texts* spell 1130. Thus, whereas Ptahhotep says that "it is that which god commanded that comes into being," the creator god claims that:

> I created every man like his equal. I have not commanded[494] that they make *izf.t*; it was their *ib.w*[495] that disobeyed what I have said (*iw ir.n=i z*(*i*) *nb mi sn.nw=f n wḏ=i ir=sn izf.t in ib.w=sn ḥḏ ḏd.t.n=i*).[496]

This passage has been cited within the categories of theodicy[497] and free will[498], as it states that responsibility for evil among men belongs to the human beings themselves and not to the creator god. In fact it is ascribed to their *ib.w* through the same grammatical construction that is used in line 550 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*: "it is the *ib* that makes its possessor (*in ib sḫpr nb=f*) one who listens, or one who does not listen."[499] As with Ptahhotep's passage, a natural disposition outside the individual control might have been implied in spell 1130, but then again the action originating in the *ib* might have been a direct consequence of how the person formed and structured her *ib*. Whereas in the former case the persons would not be accountable for their disobedience, in the latter case they would. The responsibility for disobedience is also

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[492] Ibid.
[493] Ibid., 127-8.
[494] About the construction *n wḏ=i* see David Lorton," God's Beneficent Creation: Coffin Texts Spell 1130, the Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aton", *SAK* 20, (1993): 127 n. 12.
[495] Plural form of *ib*.
[496] CT VII, 463f-464b.
[497] See e.g. Antonio Loprieno, "Theodicy in ancient Egyptian texts," 27.
[498] See for example Maulana Karenga, *Maat, the moral ideal in ancient Egypt: a study in classical African* ethics, 253.
[499] See section 1.2.4. above.

stressed in Ptahhotep's maxim 6, as we have seen which suggests that in spell 1130 free will was indeed at work.

The *Coffin Texts* spell 1130 introduces an interesting subject: the *ib*, as one's moral conscience, was considered to be the upholder of moral responsibility. The prominence of the heart in moral responsibility may be due to the fact that it houses memory – a feature that may also be related to the structuring cause of the *ib* inasmuch as the heart "remembers" the actions of the individual. The connection between memory and heart is particularly explicit in the Book of the Dead spell 30B which reads:

> My *ib* of my mother, my *ib* of my mother, my *ḥ3.ty* of my being
> Stand not against me as witness. Oppose me not in the council.
> Outweigh me not before the keeper of the balance.[500]

The earliest inscription of this spell is attested on a heart scarab pertaining to the Thirteenth Dynasty official Nebankh[501], who served under the king Sobekhotep IV[502], which means it may be included in a time period close to the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*. It is significant that the heart scarab was required to replace the mummy's *ḥ3.ty*-heart, but "in practice the heart scarabs appear to have been placed at random anywhere on or within the mummy's torso."[503] It is also noteworthy that, in the spell 30B of the Papyrus of Ani, Thoth states "I have judged the *ib* of Osiris (*iw wḏ.n(=i) ib n(.i) Wsir*)",[504] which might account for the apparent randomness in the scarab's placement.

Spell 30B characterise the heart as the witness of man's actions. In fact this spell has been interpreted as an attempt to silence the heart and keep it from revealing any of

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[500] Translation from Thomas George Allen, *The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day: Ideas of the Ancient Egyptians Concerning the Hereafter as Expressed in Their Own Terms*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 37 (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1974), 40. Cf. Spell 30A:

> Formula for not allowing the *ib* of N to be removed from him:
> My *ib* of my mother, my *ib* of my mother, my *ḥ3.ty* of my earthly being
> Do not stand against me as witness beside the lords of the ritual
> Do not say against me, he did it, about my actions
> Do not make a case against me beside the great god.
> Hail to my *ib*, hail to my *ḥ3.ty*, hail to my entrails (*bsk.w*).

Translation from "Book of the Dead Chapter 30A," in *Digital Egypt for Universities: A learning and teaching resource for higher education*, managed by Stephen Quirke, (University College London, 2000-2003), http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/literature/manforson.html (accessed August 31, 2010). Transliteration is provided in ibid.

[501] But see Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "A simbólica do coração no antigo Egipto: estudo de antropologia religiosa sobre a representação da consciência," 250 with n. 250.

[502] Carol A. R. Andrews, "Amulets," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, ed. Donald B. Redford, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1:80.

[503] Robert Steven Bianchi, "Scarabs," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 3:180.

[504] See hieroglyphic text in Raymond O. Faulkner, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: The Book of Going Forth by Day*, 2nd rev. ed. (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998), pl. 3.

his possessor's misdeeds on earth[505]. The titles of spells 30A and B translated by Thomas George Allen[506], "Spell for not letting N.'s *ib* oppose him in the god's domain," support this interpretation. However, spell 30 translated by the same author presents a different title: "Spell for not letting a man's *ḥ3.ty* be kept away from him in the god's domain"[507] – spell 30A from the papyrus in Kestner Museum designated as 1970.37[508] bears the same title but replaces *ḥ3.ty* for *ib*. CT 113 is also titled "Not to let a man's *ḥ3.ty* cause opposition against him in the necropolis"[509], but its content is different from BD 30B. Nonetheless CT 715, which is titled "[Not to let the *ḥ3.ty* of a man be taken from] him in the necropolis" presents a version which may be considered a counterpart to BD 30B:

> O you who [take away] *ib.w*,
> Who accuse *ḥ3.tyw*
> [...]
> Do not turn away my *ib*,
> Do not accuse the *ḥ3.ty*,
> You who cause [this my *ib*] to create a bad [accusation] against me![510]

As noted by Rune Nyord[511] what is important here is control of the heart, which is re-established through identification of the deceased's *ib* with the one of the demiurge[512]. Both in CT 715 and BD 30B the *ib* functions as an alter ego outside the individual's sphere of influence. Especially in the latter text it is made explicit that the heart will witness every action of the individual. This view may be illustrated with

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[505] Proponents of this interpretation are e.g. Carol A. R. Andrews, "Amulets," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 1: 80, and Rogério Ferreira de Sousa, "A Noção de Coração no Egipto Faraónico: Uma Síntese Evolutiva" [The notion of heart in pharaonic Egypt: An evolutionary synthesis], in *Percursos do Oriente Antigo: Estudos de Homenagem a José Nunes Carreira na Sua Jubilação Académica*, comps. José Augusto Ramos, Luís Manuel de Araújo, and António Ramos dos Santos (Lisboa: Instituto Oriental, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 2004), 543.
[506] *The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day: Ideas of the Ancient Egyptians Concerning the Hereafter as Expressed in Their Own Terms*, 40.
[507] Ibid., 39.
[508] For text and reference see n. 501.
[509] Translation and transliteration in Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 121.
[510] Translation and transliteration in ibid., 124.
[511] Ibid., 126.
[512] Ibid.

Polybius's famous statement that "there is no more terrible witness, or more formidable accuser, than the conscience which resides in each man's breast"[513].

As mentioned by Rogério Sousa[514], the heart amulet may have served as a token of the conscience to remind its owner to abide by moral precepts because his moral conscience was permanently watching his actions and would, after death, been scrutinised in the judgment of the dead. Furthermore, when others hold an agent to moral expectations, failure to comply with those expectations will probably trigger "reactive attitudes," in Peter F. Strawson's terminology[515], such as resentment. But when the agent holds himself to moral expectations and fails to them he might feel guilty. Another purpose of the heart amulet, worn in life, might have been precisely to induce this feeling should its carrier commit a misdeed.

Another agency before whom man is held responsible is god. The dynamics ruling the relation between man and deity within the scope of moral responsibility are perhaps best attested in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, for it is said:

> Act for the god that he may do the like for you, with offerings that enrich the offering-table and with carving: that is the proclamation of your name, and the god is aware of the one who acts for him.[516]

Thus, while there is a theodic aporia on the one hand, created by the ruthless control of the individual, on the other man is free to exert his anthropodicy and respond with an ethical conduct that will be appraised not by the gods but by the justice principles embodied in the goddess Maat[517]. One may therefore conclude that, except in the cases

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[513] *Histories*, 18, 43. Translation in Polybius, *Histories*, trans. Evelyn S. Shuckburgh (London, New York: Macmillan, 1989; reprint: Bloomington, 1962), quoted in Gregory R. Crane (ed.), "Perseus Digital Library," Tufts University, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0234:book=18:chapter=43&highlight=conscience (accessed September 1, 2010).

[514] "Os Amuletos do Coração no Antigo Egipto: Tipologia e Caracterização," 129 n. 49.

[515] "Freedom and Resentment," in *Free Will*, ed. John Martin Fischer, Critical Concepts in Philosophy, vol. 1, *Concepts and Challenges* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 39 ff. Previously published in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 48 (1962): 1-25.

[516] Translation by David Lorton, "God's Beneficent Creation: Coffin Texts Spell 1130, the Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aton," 130. For an interpretation of this passage see ibid., 130 nn. 20-22.

[517] As J. Sainte Fare Garnot remarked, [u]ne seconde tendance, non plus spéculative mais très conforme à la psychologie humaine, s'efforce d'assurer aux créatures de Dieu la plus large initiative possible, et de leur donner confiance en leur propres forces. Ce n'est pas une tendance purement "laïque". Bien au contraire, car elle implique et favorise la liberté humaine; et les croyances religieuses, en faisant une grande part au Jugement des Morts, admettent et encouragent cette liberté. N'est responsable, en effet, que celui dont les actes son libres." In "Discussion de la communication de M. H. Brunner," in *Les Sagesses du Proche Orient ancient*, 118.

where god interfered or one’s nature was deviated or not properly looked after, one was able to will freely.

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