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SANCTUARY OF HEQAIB

هيكل (حرم) حقا إيب

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Sanktuar des Heqaib
Sanctuaire de Heqaib

Pepinakht, called Heqaib, was an expedition leader of the late 6th Dynasty. Recent fieldwork in Elephantine has revealed some objects that suggest it was customary to perform processions, which started at the ka-chapels in the administrative center of Elephantine, for the mortuary cult of a number of late Old Kingdom officials, among them Pepinakht/Heqaib. Heqaib's sanctuary is an excellent example of the cult of a private person who had the characteristics of a saint, within a settlement context in the Middle Kingdom and the early 2nd Intermediate Period. The sanctuary was a place of pilgrimage of supra-regional importance and has revealed a well-dated series of extraordinary Middle Kingdom sculpture, stelae, and shrines.

كان ببي نخت والمعروف بحقا إيب قائد بعثه خلال نهاية الاسرة السادسة. ولقد كشفت الحفائر الحديثة بجزيرة الفنتين عن بعض القطع الاثرية والتي تقترح انه كان من المعتاد القيام بمواكب للطقوس الجنائزية لعدة موظفين رسميين من الدولة القديمة من ضمنهم ببي نخت الشهير بحقا إيب، وكانت تلك المواكب تبدأ بمقاصير الكا بالمركز الاداري لجزيرة الفنتين. ويعد هيكل (حرم) حكائيب مثال ممتاز لطقوس تختص بفرد غير ملكي حاصل على خصائص قديسية وذلك بمنطقة سكنية خلال الدولة القديمة وعصر الانتقال الثاني. كان الهيكل (الحرم) وجهة هامة للحج وكشف عن مجموعة من التماثيل ولوحات ومقاصير محمولة.

I n the late Old Kingdom, it was not uncommon for officials to receive a mortuary cult at their tomb as well as at so-called *ka*-chapels within a settlement (Franke 1994: 118-124; Soukiassian, Wuttmann, and Pantalacci 2002: 313). In the case of the expedition leader Heqaib, two locations in the settlement of Elephantine can be connected with such a cult.

The Earlier Sanctuary

Within the settlement of Elephantine, Heqaib was worshipped at two *ka*-chapels. The earlier sanctuary was probably located in "House 2" in the building complex of the 6th Dynasty (fig. 1) (von Pilgrim 1999: 85-90; Franke 1994: 118), which was situated at the intersection of two of the town's main roads: the direct access to the southwest gate and a street leading north in the center of the city (Raue 2008: 76: fig. 3; von Pilgrim 2006: 403-405).
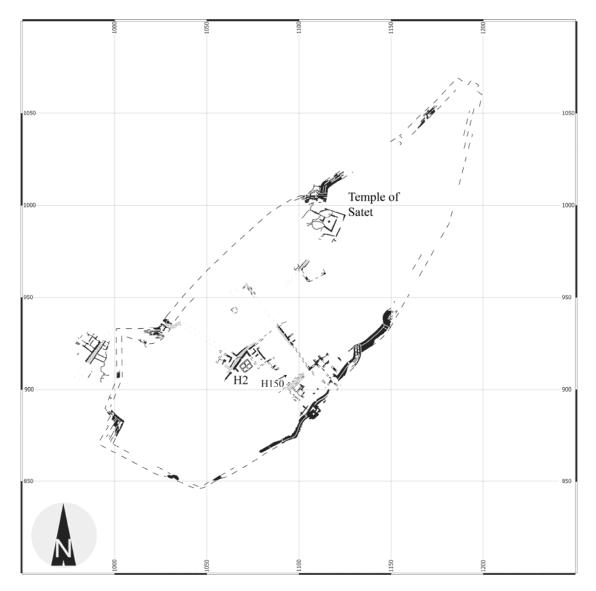
Figure 1. Elephantine in the late third millennium.

Many of the expedition leaders who dealt with the south were buried in what is today West Aswan (Qubbet el-Hawa). Two tombs, QH35 and QH35d, have owners named "Pepinakht/Heqaib." Habachi and Edel argue that QH35d should be seen as an extension of QH35 and that both belong to the man "Heqaib" who was subsequently venerated in the abovementioned sanctuary in the settlement of Elephantine (Habachi 1981: 11-27; Seyfried 2008: 697-698, 776-786; Dorn fc.). Heqaib held offices in the mortuary

foundations of Pepy I, Merenra, and Pepy II, and probably died late in the reign of Pepy II. His mortuary cult was performed mainly by relatives and subordinate people, organized in and alimented by his endowment. Along with Heqaib, a number of other expedition leaders (Sabni, Sobekhotep, Mekhu) received their cult in the *ka*-chapels in the center of Elephantine (Dorn fc.).

The finds from House 2 were extraordinary and included wooden relief-decorated door-panels at the entrance and, in

a narrow corridor, two superimposing depositions of wooden caskets and shrines (fig. 2) to be used in processions to the tombs on the west bank, a wooden statuette, and other objects. The inscriptions on the objects substantiate the cult of several expedition leaders, among them Sabni, Sobekhotep, and, quite prominently, Heqaib. An unstratified find from the area attests a wooden casket for Mekhu (Dorn fc.).

Figure 2. Wooden shrine with libation vessel of Heqaib, from deposition in House 2.

The layout of the town of Ain Asyl in Dakhla Oasis (Soukiassian, Wuttmann, and Pantalacci 2002: 14-19, 45-47, 56, 95), with sanctuaries close to a main entrance, would render it plausible to locate the one or more sanctuaries on Elephantine close to where the objects were found, although alternative locations, as well as House 2's general characterization as a palace, have been debated (Dorn fc.; Raue fc.). The date of the two deposition phases of the objects can be set in the First Intermediate Period and the early Middle Kingdom (Dorn 2005: 130, 138, figs. 2 and 3; fc.; von Pilgrim 2006: 410-411; for seals found there, see von Pilgrim 2001).

Private ka-houses are well attested in Egypt in the advanced 6th Dynasty, while epigraphic evidence points to an even earlier date in the 6th Dynasty (Dorn 2005: 134; fc.; Franke 1994: 119-123). The popularity of such cults should not be excluded in earlier

periods: it is inherent in a society in which each person may receive a mortuary cult (Seidlmayer 2005: 305-306; Franke 1994: 127, 131). It can be assumed that these sanctuaries were the starting point for processions that left the city and headed towards the necropolis of Qubbet el-Hawa. They are testimony of repeated festival events for the *ka* of the deceased, carried out by relatives, the personnel of the foundation, and, during the First Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom, the citizens of Elephantine (Dorn 2005: 134; 2015; Habachi 1981: 11-27; Seyfried 2008: 670, 847-848; Franke 1994: 140). This may be one of the reasons why the entrance of House 2 was kept accessible by staircases, although the level of the surrounding city rose substantially from 2200 – 1900 BCE (von Pilgrim 1996: 39-40, 43-44; 2006: 406). In the late First Intermediate Period, the decorated door-panels were moved over time to higher levels (Bauschicht XVI) (von Pilgrim 2006: 403, 408; Junge 1976: 98-107; Dorn fc.).

The processions, honoring collectively various expeditions leaders of the Old Kingdom, would have also evoked ancestral allusions, a feature that would be of utmost relevance for the ancestral aspects of the cult in the later Heqaib sanctuary of the Middle Kingdom (Franke 1994: 127; a slightly later date of the first veneration of Heqaib in the First Intermediate Period is proposed by von Pilgrim [2001: 164], who argues in favor of a more personalized reason for the cult [2006: 412]).

East of the House 2 area, in House 150, immense activity is attested by a large kitchen-complex. It is possible, but far from certain, that House 150 contributed to the infrastructure of the cult installations for the expedition leaders in the center of Elephantine (Raue 2005: 22-23; 2008: 77-78; fc.).

No votive objects have been identified so far with certainty in the settlement of Elephantine. The fragment of a private stela of the 11th Dynasty was found close by, but an attribution to the earlier sanctuary of

expedition leaders cannot be confirmed (Raue 2005: 24-26).

The Later Sanctuary

The later sanctuary of Heqaib was built in the northern part of the main north-south junction of the town, west of the temple of Satet (Kaiser 1999: Abb. 56). The excavations of 1932 were prompted by sculpture finds in the course of *sebakh*-diggings. The entire structure was excavated in 1946 by Labib Habachi (fig. 3) (1985: 15-16, 19; Kamil 2007: 97-145; for reinvestigations see von Pilgrim 2006). The city had two parallel cult places during the 11ᵗʰ and early 12ᵗʰ Dynasties (von Pilgrim 2006: 406, 412).

In contrast to "House 2," the later sanctuary of Hekaib provides no evidence for the cult of other expedition leaders of the Old Kingdom. Here, the connection to a mortuary endowment was replaced by the support of the community's elite in a framework of festival activity, with participation of the local citizenship: Heqaib's *bꜣw*-powers were expected to be beneficent for the town. Increasingly, he acquired the position of patron of expedition leaders, acting in the other life as "Living God" and rewarding dedicators with durability (Franke 1994: 27, 135-139, 156-157 (line x+19)). Heqaib was venerated as *sꜣḫ*, an expression that designates dignitaries who received cult, though in a hierarchically lower position compared with that of the gods (ibid.: 31, 133-134), and also, starting in the Middle Kingdom, as *ṯnj,* "the august one." Both designations are an established part of the naming system on Elephantine, as ostraca as well as dedications from Heqaib's later sanctuary show (ibid.: 71, 130, 136, 140; Fischer-Elfert 2002: 215).
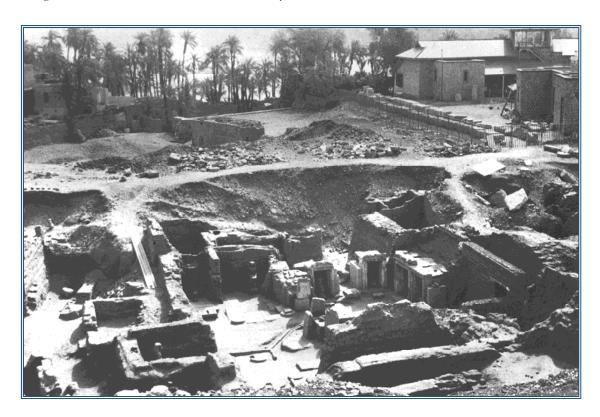

Figure 3. Area of Heqaib's sanctuary during the excavations of Labib Habachi, 1946.
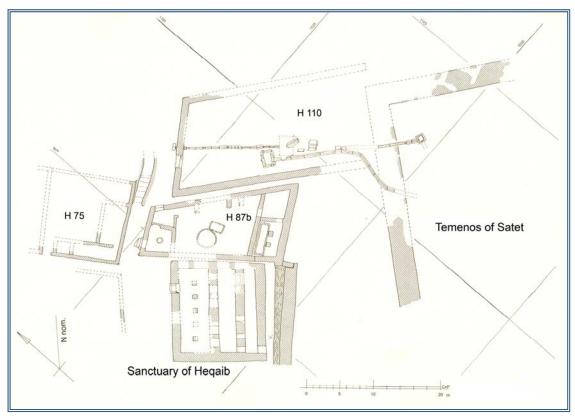
Figure 4. Sanctuary of Heqaib and surroundings, reign of Sesostris I.

The cult of Heqaib may have had special significance in the Middle Kingdom since Heqaib's name, *Ḥqꜣ-jb* ("master of [his] heart"), represents ideals of self-control. Furthermore, his biography discusses successful military engagement with Nubia, which may have been valued in the Middle Kingdom when a more aggressive military and political posture was taken (Franke 1994: 141). The only depiction of Heqaib outside the settlement of Elephantine may possibly be found in the tomb of Sarenput I (ibid.: 25 n. 84).

The earliest phase of the building (Sanctuary IV) can probably be dated to the First Intermediate Period (von Pilgrim 2006: 413-417). The earliest royal inscription in the sanctuary of Heqaib dates to the reign of Intef III (reinscribed by Amenemhat III in year 34, Habachi 1985: 111-112, n. 100, pl. 190c). This text (a lintel inscription) mentions a building that Intef III restored, which may be the building in which the find in the sanctuary

was placed. The dedicator of this statuette might be identical with Setka, the expedition leader of the 9th Dynasty (Seyfried 2008: 1715-1815; Franke 1994: 31; Habachi 1985: 87 n. 59, pl. 141c). A second early statuette is the only attestation for a female dedicator in the cult of Heqaib (Habachi 1985: 86-87, n. 58, pl. 140, 141a and b; Franke 1994: 61, 97).

A collection of three statuettes depicting kings of the 11th Dynasty was found close by the sanctuary, but their original placement as well as their date is still a matter of debate (Habachi 1985: 109-111 ns. 97 - 99, pls. 191-192). Franke noted that the feature of ancestor worship would indicate a dedicator of Theban descent, e.g., of the 11th Dynasty (Franke 1994: 32-34), while stylistic arguments point to a date in the reign of Senusret I (Junge 1985: 118, 121 ns. 43 and 52). Morenz (2005: 117-119) argues specifically in favor of dating them to the reign of Mentuhotep II.
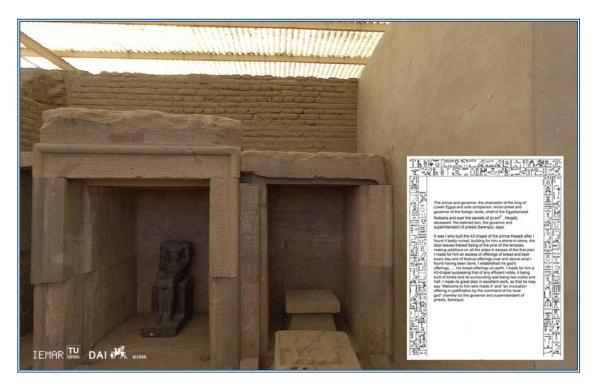
Figure 5. Chapels of Heqaib and Sarenput I.

All phases of the sanctuary bear remarkable features. "Sanctuary II," for example, included in the northeast a platform that was approached by a staircase. The phase also featured a limestone relief displaying an official in front of an offering table (von Pilgrim 2006: 416).

"Sanctuary III" and "Sanctuary II" are dated to the 12th Dynasty (von Pilgrim 2006: 413-415). Most finds of Habachi's excavations can be ascribed to "Sanctuary I," built under Senusret I by Sarenput I, and its various sub-phases; they include several shrines, offering tables, about 50 statues and statuettes, and 26 stelae (Franke 1994: 30-104). Today most of these are kept in Aswan. A few objects housed in other museums (e.g., in Berlin, Vienna, London, and Cairo) may be attributed to this sanctuary (see Franke 1994: 63-64, 68 n. 228, 69 n. 233, 110 n. 319; 2013). A couple of stelae can also be added due to recent fieldwork (Franke 2001: 22-34; 2008-). The most recent dedications can be dated to the early 17th Dynasty.

Sarenput I, nomarch in the time of Senusret I, was responsible for a major change in the layout of "Sanctuary I": he introduced a tripartite plan in which the first room was a pillared hall (fig. 4) (von Pilgrim 2006: 416-417; Franke 1994: 10-29, 119, 210-214). In the northeastern corner, he dedicated chapels with reliefs, stelae, sculptures, and offering tables to Heqaib, himself, and to his father, Hapi (fig. 5). His achievements on behalf of the deified Heqaib are the subject of a long account on two of his large stelae and in the texts on his shrines (figs. 6 - 8)(Franke 1994: 154-191; 2007: 38-39, 48, 54). Besides the embellishment of the proper sanctuary (*r3-pr*), he took care of facilities for the preparation of offerings (House 87b) and a festival installation called *st-swr* "place of drinking" (H 110)—all locations that have been identified by recent fieldwork (von Pilgrim 1997: 152-157).
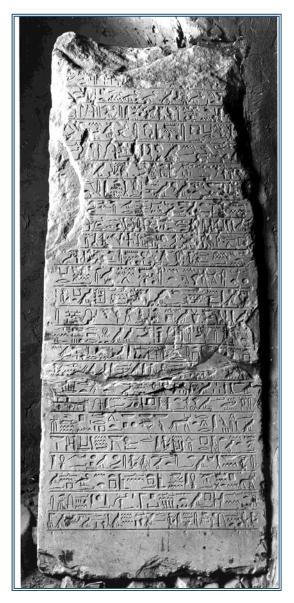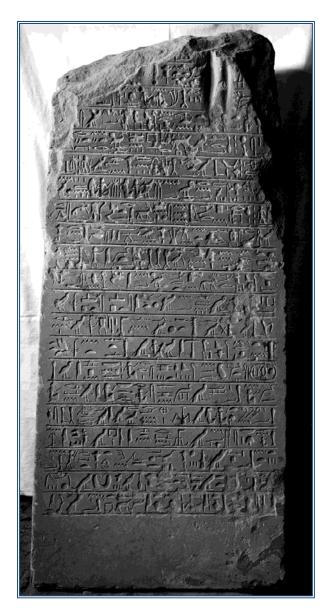
Figure 6. Stela of Sarenput I.

Figure 7. Stela of Sarenput I.

Figure 8. Stela with ritual texts of Sarenput I.

Further sets of chapels of this nomarch's family were donated by his son Heqaib, his son-in-law Khema (fig. 9), and his grandson Sarenput II (fig. 10; Franke 1994: 35-39). As is the case at other places of pilgrimage, e.g., Abydos, the donation of chapels and stelae was an exclusive privilege of the elite in the earlier part of the 12th Dynasty.

In the reign of Senusret III and Amenemhat III, the erection of three major chapels was commissioned by a new dynasty of nomarchs: Heqaib-son-of-ZatHathor (fig. 11), Imeniseneb, and Khakauraseneb (Franke 1994: 40-42; von Pilgrim 1996: 119, 126-129). The last major building activity was commissioned by Khakauraseneb (fig. 12), featuring the sanctuary's final architectural addition (figs. 13 - 17), for which Franke (1994: 43-44) proposed a date early in the 13th Dynasty.

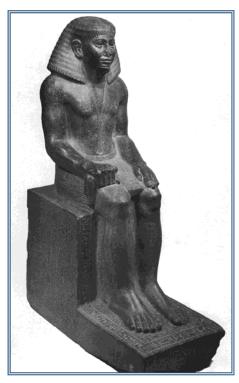Figure 9. Statue of Khema, reign of Senusret II.

Figure 10. Statue of Sarenput II, reign of Senusret II.

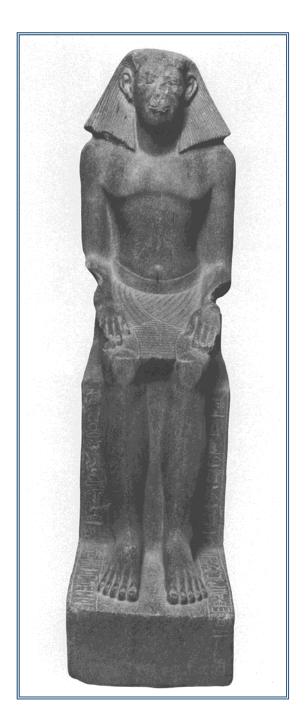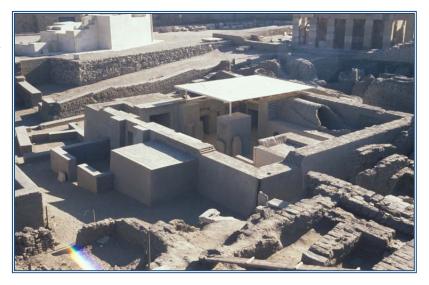Figure 11. Statue of Heqaib Son of ZatHathor, reign of Senusret III/Amenemhat III.

Figure 12. Statue of Khakauraseneb, early 13th Dynasty.

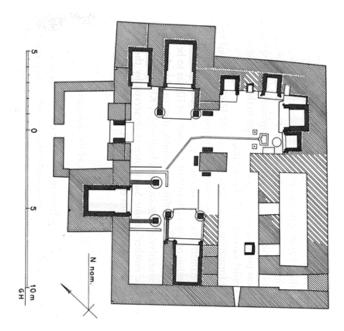Figure 13. Sanctuary of Heqaib: view from the southwest.
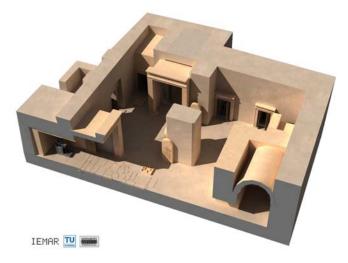

Figure 14. Sanctuary of Heqaib: plan.

Figure 15. Sanctuary of Heqaib: model.

Figure 16. Sanctuary of Heqaib: reconstruction.

Figure 17. Sanctuary of Heqaib: reconstruction.

It is the stratum of officials associated with expeditions to Nubia, the administration of royal estates, and regional administration that began dedicating stelae (fig. 18) and statuettes. Special workshops produced stelae during the 13th Dynasty in the "Elephantine style" (Franke 1994: 7, 94-98, 107-115). An additional building—a private *ka*-house—was found opposite "Sanctuary I," built by a priest of Khnum, Sobekemzaf (Budka 2006; von Pilgrim 1996: 149-158). These latest attestations of dedications to the sanctuary also point to non-local dedicants traveling, for example, from the vicinity of Gebelein (Franke 1994: 84-85).

The northern (later) sanctuary of Heqaib was probably not part of an economic institution with separate personnel; no priesthood or estate property is known to be associated with it. The service may have been organized by the temple of Satet or by mortuary cult foundations, such as that of Sarenput I (Franke 1994: 46, 126, 130).

Access to the sanctuary was limited, as it was mainly the elites' stage for displaying their relationship with the saint (Franke 1994: 145). It was not an open center of "popular religion," in contrast to the stone temples for the gods; a channel, which carried libations to the street, was visible to more people outside than it was to the audience within the sanctuary.

The major ritual context of Heqaib's later sanctuary in the Middle Kingdom was the "Feast of Sokar," celebrated on Elephantine by a procession with the statue of Heqaib; the people of Elephantine wished to see his statue on the morning of this celebration. The feast was basically structured in analogy to the rites of death and resurrection of the cult of Osiris: it was the southern variant of the festive events in Memphis/Saqqara and Abydos (thus the sanctuary was attractive to members of the elite from outside Elephantine). Sokar/Osiris/Heqaib enjoyed—in the place of the ancestors—regeneration with the special role of Sokar as protector of the deceased (Franke 1994: 128-131; Habachi 1985: 88 n. 61). The ancestral worship

conducted within the sanctuary, and the feasts celebrated there, constituted further analogous aspects of this cult (Franke 1994: 127-128).

Figure 18. Stela of Amenemhat, 13th Dynasty.

It has been suggested that the conclusion of Heqaib's cult may be related to the raids by Nubian coalitions, known to be associated with statue robbery and destruction (Davies 2005: 55 n. 19; Habachi 1981: 19-20 and pl. 3b). A couple of objects were published as finds from the sanctuary, but their attribution remains doubtful or has been proven incorrect (Franke 1994: 84; von Pilgrim 1996: 149-158). The royal statuary ascribed to the sanctuary was not discovered in proper contexts and, at least in the earliest phases, there does not seem to be a respectable area designed for such monuments as, e.g., the statuary of Senusret III and Amenemhat V. A placement in the temples of Satet and Khnum is more probable (Franke 1994: 60-61, 65;

Morenz 2005: 117; Habachi 1985: pl. 193 n. 101). There does not seem to have been a special votive custom for the wider public of the settlement (Franke 1994: 98).

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The finds and features of the earlier sanctuary are covered in Andreas Dorn's forthcoming publication (2015). Dorn also provides a preliminary overview and convincing interpretation (2005). The tombs of Heqaib were published in detail by Karl Seyfried (2008). After the essential publication by Habachi (1985), an exemplary contextualization was achieved by Franke (1994), whose study offers the relationship of the sanctuary to Egyptian culture of the Middle Kingdom. The excavation work of von Pilgrim, the main results of which were published in a preliminary report (2006), brought indispensable insight into the sanctuary's development and its early phases.

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Figure 2.   Wooden shrine with libation vessel of Heqaib, from deposition in House 2. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

Figure 3.   Area of Heqaib's sanctuary during the excavations of Labib Habachi, 1946. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

Figure 4.   Sanctuary of Heqaib and surroundings, reign of Sesostris I. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

Figure 5.   Chapels of Heqaib and Sarenput I. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

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Figure 8.   Stela with ritual texts of Sarenput I. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

Figure 9.   Statue of Khema, reign of Senusret II. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

Figure 10.   Statue of Sarenput II, reign of Senusret II. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

Figure 11.   Statue of Heqaib Son of ZatHathor, reign of Senusret III/Amenemhat III. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

Figure 12.   Statue of Khakauraseneb, early 13th Dynasty. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

Figure 13.   Sanctuary of Heqaib: view from the southwest. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

Figure 14.   Sanctuary of Heqaib: plan. (Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

Figure 15.   Sanctuary of Heqaib: model. (*IEMAR Technical University Vienna* with the friendly support of *Animators;* reconstruction in cooperation with Cornelius von Pilgrim; the 3D-print was provided with the support of *BIBUS Austria GmbH.* Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

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Figure 17.   Sanctuary of Heqaib: reconstruction. (*IEMAR Technical University Vienna* with the friendly support of *Animators;* reconstruction in cooperation with Cornelius von Pilgrim. Copyright German Archaeological Institute.)

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