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OPET FESTIVAL
عيد الأوبت

John Coleman Darnell

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Short Citation:
Darnell, 2010, Opet Festival. *UEE*.

Full Citation:
Darnell, John Coleman, 2010, Opet Festival. In Jacco Dieleman, Willeke Wendrich (eds.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles.
http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz0025n765

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Opetfest
Fête d'Opet

The annual Opet Festival, during which the bark of Amun—and ultimately those of Mut, Khons, and the king as well—journeyed from Karnak to Luxor, became a central religious celebration of ancient Thebes during the 18th Dynasty. The rituals of the Opet Festival celebrated the sacred marriage of Amun—with whom the king merged—and Mut, resulting in the proper transmission of the royal ka *and thus ensuring the maintenance of kingship.*

أصبح الاحتفال بعيد الأوبت السنوي احتفال ديني مركزي في طيبة القديمة أثناء الأسرة الثامنة عشرة حيث كان يبحر خلاله آمون بمركبه وتلحقه موت وخونسو وكذلك الملك، من معبد الكرنك إلى معبد الأقصر. وكانت الطقوس الخاصة بعيد الأوبت تحتفل بالزواج المقدس لآمون، والذي قد إندمج معه الملك، وموت مما ينتج عنه انتقال صحيح لـل <<كا>> الملكيه، مما يضمن بقاء الملكية واستمراريتها.

The Opet Festival, eponymous celebration of the month *Paophi* (second month of the *Akhet* season), was an annual event at the time of its earliest attestation during the reign of Hatshepsut (Lacau and Chevrier 1977 - 1979: 158; no suggestion of a pre-18th Dynasty origin is conclusive, see also Murnane 1982: 577; Waitkus 2008: 224). Opet began on II *Akhet* 15 under Thutmose III and lasted 11 days (Sethe 1907: 824, line 10); by the beginning of the reign of Ramesses III, the festival stretched over 24 days (II *Akhet* 19 - III *Akhet* 12; Epigraphic Survey 1934: pls. 153 - 156, lists 29 - 38), perhaps with three days added to the conclusion of the festival by the end of his reign (Schott 1950: 85, nos. 40 - 41; Grandet 1994, Vol. 2: 89 - 90 suggests a 24 day observance at Medinet Habu, with 27 days of festivities on the east bank). The eve of Opet was also observed (Epigraphic Survey 1934: list 28, pls. 153 - 154; Grimal 1981: 15*, lines 25 - 26; Kruchten 1986: 69 - 71), and a Festival of Amun that Occurs after the Opet Festival is also known (Epigraphic Survey 1934: pls. 157 - 158, list 39, III *Akhet* 17). The final day of the festival occurred on III *Akhet* 2 during Piye's visit to Thebes (Grimal 1981: 15*, line 26). The festival appears to have continued into the Roman Period (Herbin 1994: 151 - 153, 299; compare the probable reference at Esna, Grimm 1994: 40 - 41 and 244, n. L15a; see also Klotz 2008), and echoes thereof may have survived in Coptic (Nagel 1983: 45) and Islamic celebrations as well (Legrain 1914: 83 - 91).

The name of the festival, *ḥb ỉpt*, relates to that of Luxor Temple, *ỉp(ɜ)t-rsyt,* which was perhaps the Upper Egyptian counterpart of an earlier Heliopolitan *ỉpɜt* (Postel and Régen 2005: 267 - 268), the "southern" specification relating Luxor Temple to that northern shrine and not to Karnak; the Opet Festival's relationship to Heliopolitan prototypes would explain a number of Heliopolitan toponyms that appear in Luxor Temple as probable references to portions or aspects of Luxor

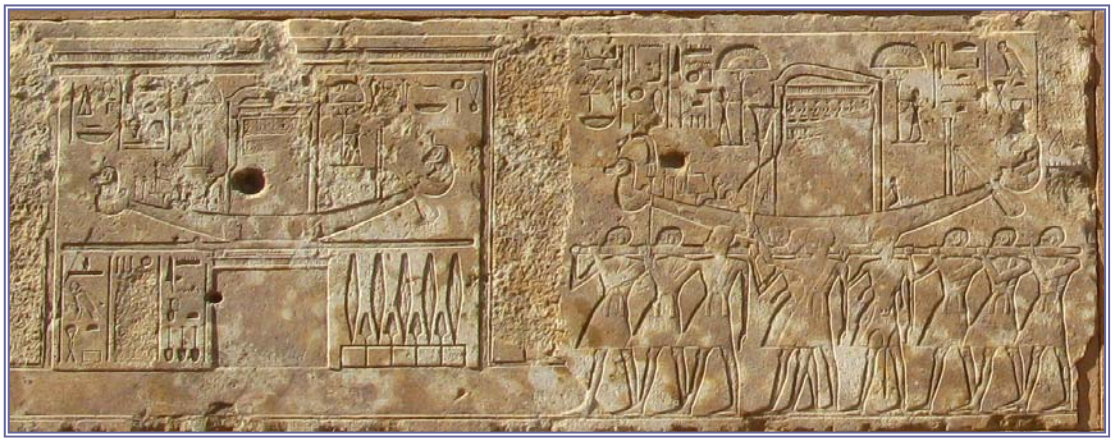


Figure 1. The third bark shrine of Hatshepsut on the processional route between Karnak and Luxor Temples, as depicted in the Red Chapel at Karnak. The name of Hatshepsut in the text beneath the prow of the bark of Amun has been removed, along with depictions of Osiride statues of the ruler at both ends of the shrine.

Temple itself (compare Bell 1985b: 272 - 273; and Epigraphic Survey 1998: commentary booklet p. 23 and pl. 171 B, line 5). The participants may have considered the multiple-day event to consist of various sub-festivals grouped together (Epigraphic Survey 1994: 28 n. a to pl. 78).

The ancient inscriptional sources for the events of the Opet Festival are primarily pictorial and mostly located within Karnak Temple (for most, see Meyer 1998: 135 - 136; Murnane 1982: 577 - 578, n. 15; Waitkus 2008: 224 - 235 and 238 - 254): Hatshepsut and Thutmose III—Red Chapel, Karnak, and Deir el-Bahri; Thutmose III—*Akhmenu*, Karnak; Amenhotep III—third pylon, Karnak; Tutankhamen—colonnade hall, Luxor; Horemheb—court between the ninth and tenth pylons, Karnak; Sety I—hypostyle hall, Karnak; Ramesses II—court between the eighth and ninth pylons, Karnak; Ramesses III—bark shrine in first court, Karnak, and Medinet Habu (Epigraphic Survey 1940: pl. 237); Herihor—Khons Temple, Karnak. Although no text overtly explains the significance of the event, the Opet-procession scenes of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III on the Red Chapel, and those of Tutankhamen in the colonnade hall, reveal a number of otherwise unattested aspects of the festival, with the scenes of Herihor in Khons Temple supplying additional details of the navigation (Epigraphic Survey 1979: pls. 19 - 23); textually, the most explicit and nuanced indications of the significance of the festival are the songs recorded in Tutankhamen's Opet scenes.

The earliest and one of the most informative series of scenes appears on the south side of the Red Chapel of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III at Karnak (Burgos et al. 2006: 46 - 53, reg. 3, and 60 - 65, reg. 5; Lacau and Chevrier 1977 - 1979: 154 - 169, 174 - 204, pls. 7 and 9; Troy 2006: 140 - 141). These scenes reveal the transportation of the bark of Amun from Karnak along a land route (Waitkus 2008: 224 - 227); stopping at six bark shrines on the way to Luxor, Amun's bark then returned to Karnak by water, his riverine barge towed by the royal barge. After a stop in the *wsḫt-ḥbt*, the festival courtyard of the temple, priests carried the portable bark to the chapel of Amenhotep I, *Mn-mnw-Ỉmn*. To the accompaniment of singers, musicians, and acrobats, the bark finally made its way toward the *ḥwt-ʿɜt* ("the great mansion") and ultimately the inner sanctuary of Karnak.

Hatshepsut's scenes attest six shrines (fig. 1)—embellished with Osiride figures of the queen—along some portion of the route between Karnak and Luxor (Cabrol 2001: 528 - 541; Konrad 2006: 134, n. 927; Waitkus 2008: 226 - 227), the first in south Karnak,

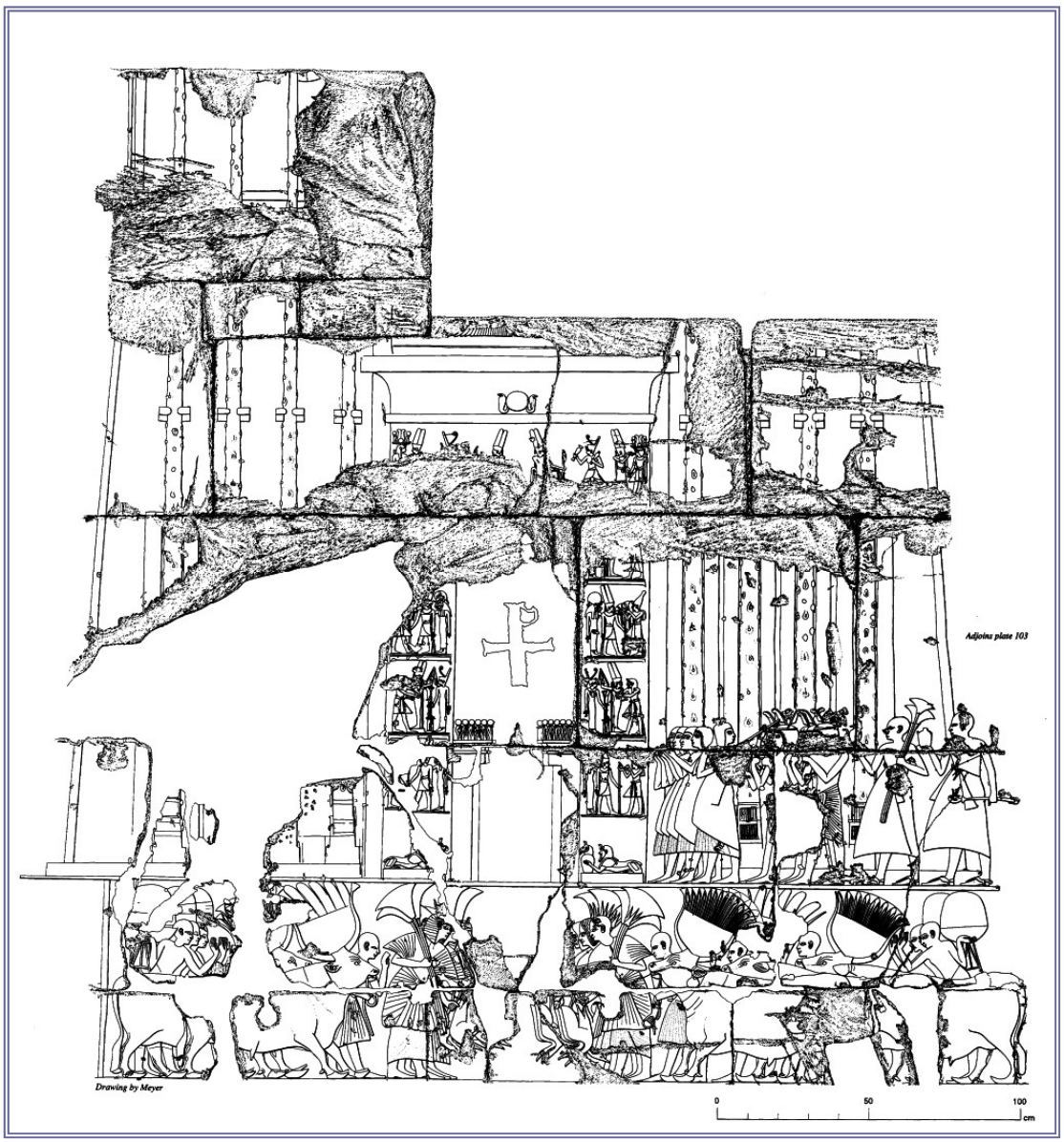


Figure 2. The vanguard of the Opet-procession returning to Karnak Temple at the end of the festival. The musicians are about to enter the third pylon, with the porch of Amenhotep IV. From the festival scenes of Tutankhamen in the colonnade hall of Luxor Temple.

possibly near the temple of Kamutef, the rest as yet unidentified. Portions of a structure of Hatshepsut, probably the shrine nearest the temple of Luxor, were incorporated into the bark shrine of Ramesses II in the first court, perhaps near the shrine's original location (Bell 1986, 1997: 163 - 164, 296 notes 126 - 128; Gabolde 1986; Waitkus 2008: 227). Although the assumed line of six shrines stretching between Karnak and Luxor—indicative of an entirely terrestrial journey—is uncertain, associations between the southern axis of Karnak and the Opet Festival support such a reconstruction (see Cabrol 2001: 540 - 541). Only the bark of Amun appears under Hatshepsut (according to Cabrol 2001: 525, it is not certain if other barks were present at Luxor under Amenhotep III; see, however, Bell 1997: 154 - 156, 290 n. 76, and 293 - 294 n. 108; and Murnane 1985), but by the reign

of Tutankhamen, the barks of Amun, Mut, and Khons, along with that of the king, took part in the festival.

The presence of Opet related scenes in the *Akhmenu* suggests that under the sole rule of Thutmose III, the festival may have begun in that temple (see Bell 1997: 157 - 176 for a reconstruction of the course of the festival; note, however, Waitkus 2008: 240 and n. 1496). The bark of Amun would have exited the third pylon, as in the Tutankhamen scene on the west wall in the colonnade hall at Luxor (fig. 2; Epigraphic Survey 1994: 7, 38 - 39). By the reign of Tutankhamen, and perhaps already under Amenhotep III, to judge from architectural evidence at Luxor Temple, the bark of Khons would have joined the procession in southern Karnak, before the entourage reached the area of the Mut Temple and the first of Hatshepsut's shrines on the land route. Under Tutankhamen, after being joined by the bark of Mut, the procession then proceeded to the Nile embarkation, river west of Hatshepsut's northernmost bark shrine (Bell 1997: 294 - 295 n. 112; Cabrol 2001: 143 - 145; again Waitkus 2008: 243 - 244 disagrees). Although the New Kingdom riverine barge Amun-Userhat existed under Ahmose (Gabolde 2003: 422 - 428) and some sort of vessel participated in the Beautiful Festival of the Wadi already during the early Middle Kingdom (Arnold 1974: 26 - 27 and pls. 22 - 23; Gabolde 1998: 49 - 51, pls. 9 - 10), the Opet scenes of Tutankhamen are the first to depict a river journey in both directions (figs. 3 and 4); the procession disembarked at Luxor (for a possible Luxor dock under Ramesses III, see Cabrol 2001: 607 - 608) and entered the court of Luxor Temple before the colonnade hall, ultimately through the west wall entrance of the Ramesside court (Cabrol 2001: 526). The text on a sphinx of Nectanebo I on the route between Karnak and Luxor (Cabrol 2001: 283 - 296) describes the construction (refurbishment) of the route for Amun, *r jr*[*=f*] *ḥn=f nfr m ỉpt rsyt*, "so that he might carry out his good navigation in Luxor" (Cabrol 2001: 290, text 4), revealing that the basic sense of "navigation" would be the same for the deity traveling within the portable bark, both on the deck of the riverine barge and the shoulders of the priests.

Although the earliest attestation of the festival and the earliest surviving 18th Dynasty constructions at Luxor date to the reign of Hatshepsut (Cabrol 2001: 522 - 523; Habachi 1965; for architrave fragments of Sobekhotep I—possibly from Karnak—reused as statue bases at Luxor, see Eder 2002: 140; Pamminger 1992: 129 n. 201; Ryholt 1997: 336), one expects an ultimate 11th Dynasty origin, as for the three other major nodes of the Theban festival cycle (Darnell fc.; Ullmann 2007). A platform in the area of the ninth pylon at Karnak may date to the reign of Senusret I, suggesting the presence of a processional route leading south from Karnak, along the route of the later north-south axis, presumably connecting Middle Kingdom Karnak with a contemporaneous structure at or near the later Luxor Temple (Van Siclen 2005). The reign of Amenhotep III molded the procession and its architectural destination into the forms we recognize. Amenhotep III embellished Luxor Temple considerably, notably with the colonnade hall, an elaborate bark shrine as columned hall (like the hypostyle hall at Karnak, see Rondot 1997: 151 n. 221; contra Pamminger 1992 that it is a model of the Nile); he may also have constructed a *maru*-temple in association with the Opet Festival (Konrad 2006: 132 - 137; Manniche 1982: 272; but see also Cabrol 2001: 600 - 607; Klug 2002: 404 n. 3160). The architecture of the rooms immediately south of the hypostyle hall of Luxor Temple suggests that the bark of the king, first visible in Tutankhamen's Opet scenes, was already an element of the procession under Amenhotep III (Bell 1985b: 260 - 263; Epigraphic Survey 1994: 29 and pl. 80). The transformation of Amenhotep III from an individual ruler to the personification of the royal *ka* through a blurring of the boundary between the person of the king and the royal *ka*-nature in the rear rooms of Luxor Temple suggests that the Opet Festival under Amenhotep III and his successors became amongst other things a ritual of reconfirming the transmission of the

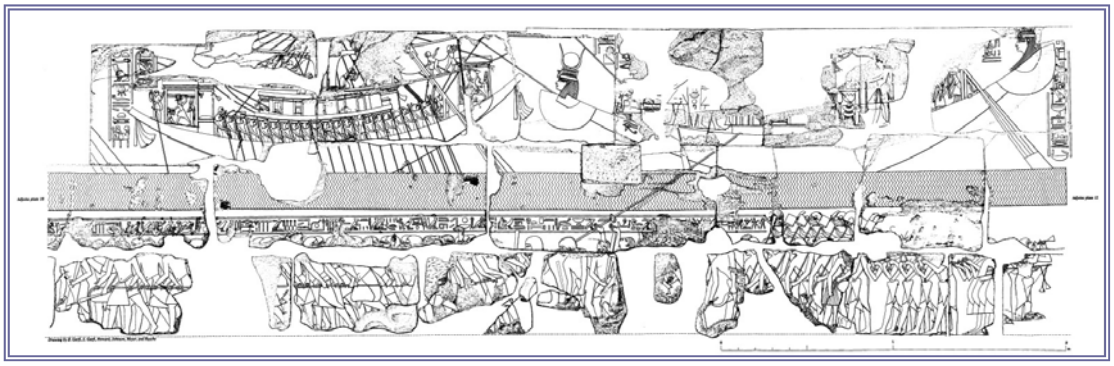


Figure 3. A depiction of the barge of Queen Ankhesenamen (later usurped for Mutnodjmet) towing the riverine bark of the goddess Mut from Karnak Temple to Luxor Temple during the Festival of Opet. Soldiers assist with towing the divine bark, with accompanying Nubian dancers and military escort. Note the images of Ankhesenamen accompanying Tutankhamen in smiting scenes on the fore- and after-castles of the royal barge (she extends her own scimitar in the latter scene). From the festival scenes of Tutankhamen in the colonnade hall of Luxor Temple.

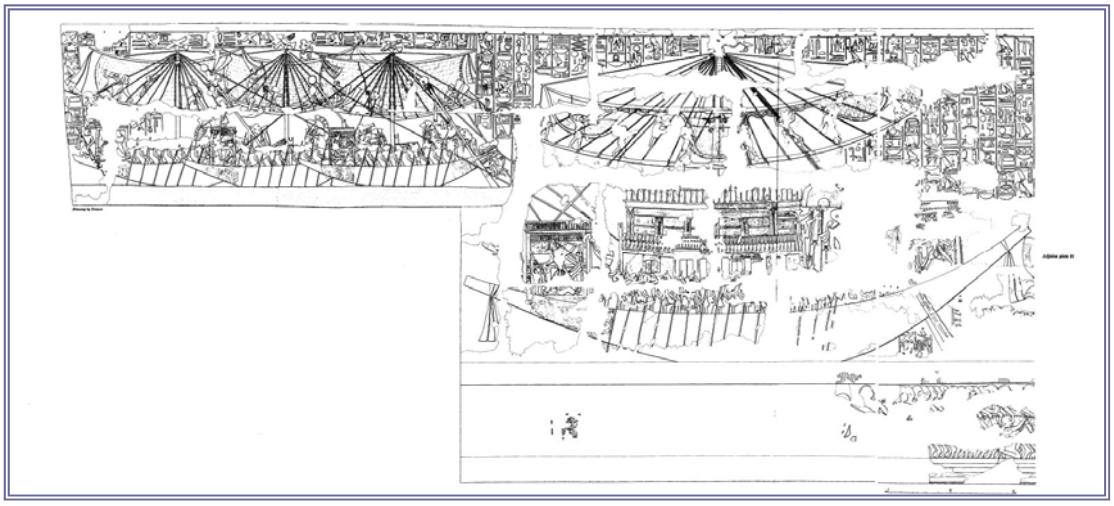


Figure 4. The royal barge, with assisting towboats, hauling the riverine bark of Amun (not visible in this portion of the larger scene). From the Opet Festival scenes of Herihor in the court of Khons Temple, Karnak.

royal *ka* (Bell 1985b; Refai 1998, restating Bell's arguments with comparison to other Theban festivals; Waitkus 2008: 263, 280 - 281, et passim disagrees). A later ruler might also begin to mingle his identity with that of an earlier incarnation of the royal *ka* (compare the blending of Tutankhamen and Amenhotep III in the texts to the scenes on the two southernmost columns in the colonnade hall, see Epigraphic Survey 1998: pls. 188 - 189 and p. 42), and a statue of the celebrating ruler's immediate (legitimate) predecessor may have participated in the festival (see Waitkus 2008: 232 - 233, 240 – 241, and 260).

Opet was not, however, solely a festival of royal identification with Amun. The riverine procession and the divine birth chamber become in late temple ritual the navigation of a god or goddess to the other to consummate the union that will result in the divine birth of the child god depicted—in borrowing from royal iconography of the New Kingdom—in the birth chamber of the temple, the mammisi (Brunner 1986: 213 - 215; Finnestad 1997: 303, n. 13). Opet was also a *hieros gamos*

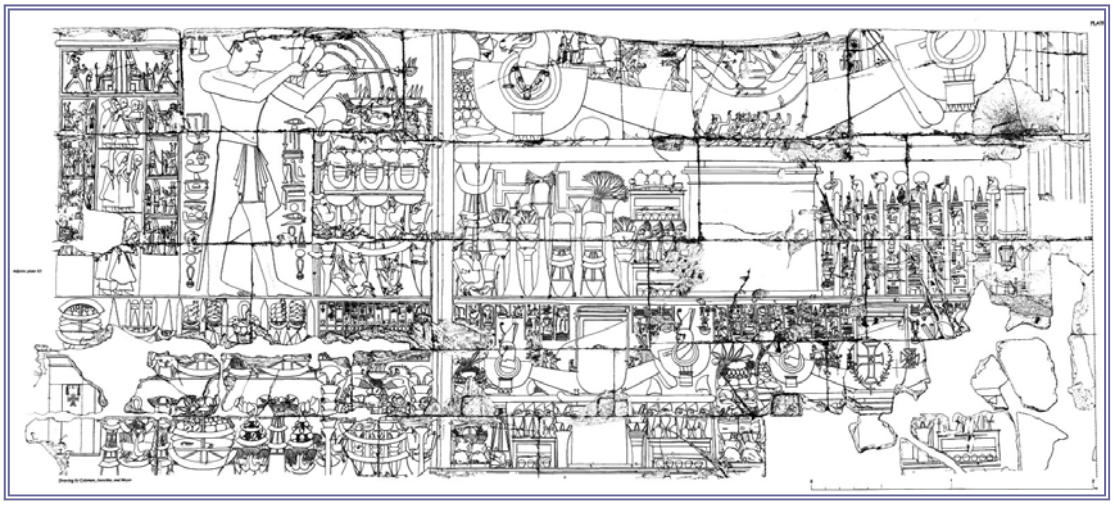


Figure 5. Sety I (with a depiction of the north entrance to the colonnade hall behind him) offers to the barks of Amun, Mut, and Khons in Luxor Temple, during the Festival of Opet. From the festival scenes in the colonnade hall of Luxor Temple. Though carved under Sety I, the scenes appear to belong to an initial cartoon from the reign of Tutankhamen. Note the absence of the royal bark in the depiction of Luxor Temple, although the bark appears in the scene of the divine barks departing Luxor Temple on the return journey to Karnak.

(Pamminger 1992: 94; Wolf 1931: 72 - 73), a divine marriage, the result of which was the renewal of Amun in the person of his ever-renewing human vessel, the reigning king. As the Amun-Min procession related the physical ruler to his predecessors (Epigraphic Survey 1940: pls. 213 - 214; see also Gauthier 1931: 204 - 206; Redford 1986: 34 - 37), so the Opet Festival celebrated the renewal of the *ka*-force of Amun, and the transmission of the spirit of kingship in the eternal present. As a festival of annual renewal, the Opet Festival could reconfirm the royal coronation, which under Horemheb actually occurred at the time of the Opet Festival (Gardiner 1953: pl. II, lines 13 - 15; Spalinger 1995; for the coronation of Arikeamenote coinciding with the Opet Festival, see Kormysheva 1998: 84 - 89). The final major festival of Luxor, the Decade Festival with its visit to Medinet Habu, brought Amun of Luxor into contact with the entropic forces of death through his meeting with the primeval and transcendental forms of Amun and the Ogdoad on the west bank of Luxor.

By the late 18th Dynasty, both legs of the procession traveled on the Nile, with accompanying elements keeping pace on land. Tutankhamen's scenes allude to the terrestrial route by depicting two empty royal chariots, attended by charioteers (Epigraphic Survey 1994: pls. 22 and 95)—elements from the daily Amarna chariot ride of the royal Atenist couple in and out of Akhetaten, transported to Thebes and incorporated into the Opet Festival (Darnell and Manassa 2007; Kákosy 1977: 39 - 40, 80). The bark of the king makes its first appearance in the Opet-procession scenes of Tutankhamen at Luxor Temple (see Epigraphic Survey 1994: pls. 11 and 117) as a carrier for the processional image of the divine ruler (in evidence from the time of the Second Intermediate Period, see Darnell 2002: 104; Pamminger 1993: 85 and n. 16). The bark of the king leaves Karnak and returns thereto, but is not present in Luxor Temple in Tutankhamen's scenes of the festival (fig. 5)—apparently the king has merged with Amun during the procession into Luxor making the royal bark superfluous (Bell 1985a; Murnane 1982: 576). Amun of Luxor appears to have been a fecundity figure, both ram-headed and ithyphallic anthropomorphic, related to Nubia and the inundation (Pamminger 1992, 1996: 437 - 439; Waitkus

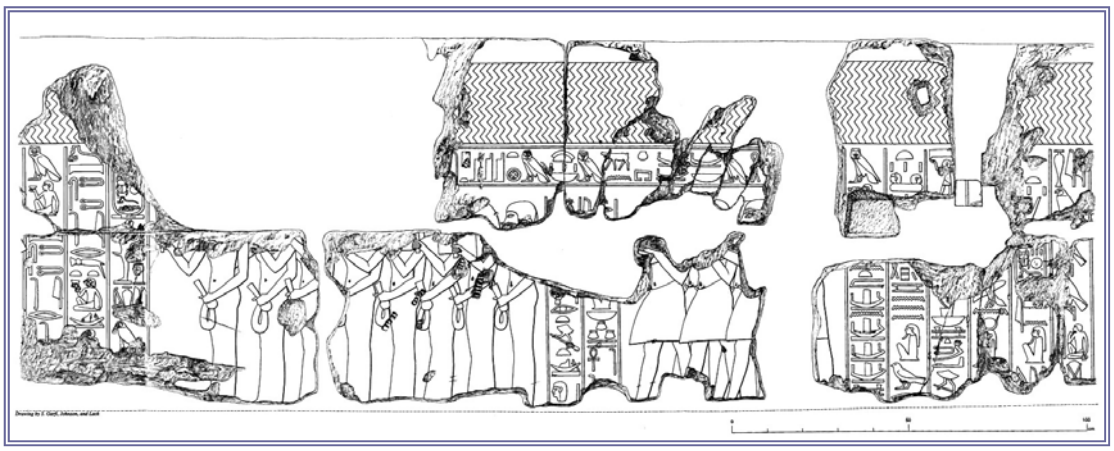


Figure 6. Priestesses and priests singing the "Songs of the Drinking Place" during the Opet Festival. From the festival scenes of Tutankhamen in the colonnade hall of Luxor Temple.

2008: 216 - 222, 264 - 266, 299 - 300), appropriate both to the southern node of the east bank Theban festival cycle and to the ram-form of the deified ruler in Nubia (Bell 1985a; Pamminger 1993).

The union of a god with his temple may appear as a sexual union (Darnell 1994: 40 - 44), and the nautical element of the Opet Festival is appropriate to a divine marriage ritual (Altenmüller 1998: 753 - 765). Although absent from later Opet scenes, Hatshepsut's Red Chapel records a harpist singing a song (Burgos et al. 2006: 64) referring to the ithyphallic form of the double-plumed Amun, raised of arm (*ḏsr-ʿ*). Songs in the tomb of Amenemhat also refer to the appearance of the god from the temple (*wbn*, appropriate for Amun appearing in festival; so regarding the Beautiful Festival of the Wadi in Spiegelberg 1921: pl. 107, no. 968; and for the goddess Mut as well, see Epigraphic Survey 1994: pl. 83) and describe the temple of Karnak as a woman, drunk in religious ecstasy and attired in erotically Hathoric coiffure, awaiting with bed linens the arrival of the god (Darnell 1995: 59 - 62)—although that song is not clearly specific to Opet, the content may mirror that of the unrecorded song of the Red Chapel's Opet harpist.

The Tutankhamen scenes record the texts of three songs accompanying the navigations (fig. 6), chanted by priests and priestesses (see the author's text edition in Epigraphic Survey 1994: 12 - 14; Junker 1942: 43 - 44; Sethe 1929: 1 - 5; Wolf 1931: 16 [7], 35 [6], 56 - 57, 73 - 74; parallel texts for the second song, from the Red Chapel of Hatshepsut and the *Akhmenu* of Thutmose III, appear in Lacau and Chevrier 1977 - 1979: 187 - 189 [§§265 - 268]; see also Altenmüller 1998: 764; Burgos et al. 2006: 60 - 61). The songs are apparently quite ancient (the sky as wings evokes the 1st Dynasty comb of Wadj, see Westendorf 1966: 22 - 24), and the recitation for the bark in the third song appears already in the 6th Dynasty tomb of Mereruka at Saqqara (Epigraphic Survey 1939: pl. 141; cited by Barguet 1962: 176 n. 3; Barta 1983: 102).

First Song:
"Oh Amun, Lord of the Thrones of the Two [*Lan*]*ds, may you live forever!*
A drinking place is hewn out, the sky is folded back to the south;
a drinking place is hewn out, the sky is folded back to the north;
that the sailors of Tutankhamen (usurped by Horemheb)*, beloved of Amun-Ra-Kamutef, praised of the gods, may drink."*
Utterance of Neith.

The directions, south and north, may allude to the southeast to northwest flight of the sun (Westendorf 1966: 23). The implied south to north journey of this song—like the actual return to Karnak from Luxor at the end of the Opet Festival—relates to the royal New Year's Festival and the return of the

wandering solar goddess from the south (Kessler 1988). The drinking place would be one of the booths that celebrants erected during nautical festivals (Darnell 1991: 76 - 80; Epigraphic Survey 1994: pls. 67 and 68; Fischer-Elfert 1999). Such booths are consistent with the aspect of sexual union inherent in the Opet Festival (compare references in the love poetry, see Derchain 1975: 82 - 86; Fox 1985: 14 - 16, 46, and 48 n. q); Neith probably appears in her role as "Lady of inebriation in the (season of) the fresh inundation waters" (Žabkar 1988: 107, pl. 21, fig. 8, and p. 181 n. 25). The journey by land and a return by river—as the Opet Festival appears under Hatshepsut and Thutmose III—would thus evoke the dry period prior to the union of the god and returning solar goddess, the return to the north by river likewise emphasizing the returning flood. The journey to the south by land, and the towing of the barks against the current in the southerly riverine journey, also mirrored the nocturnal journey of the sun in the dry realms of the Land of Sokar (for the bark of Amun on its journey from Karnak to Luxor during the Opet Festival compared to the night bark of Ra, see Epigraphic Survey 1994: 7 and pls. 22 - 23; Herbin 1994: 152). The sails of the barks appear to have been red in color, the return journey to Karnak thus evoking the red light of dawn, the veil of the new born solar deity (for the red cloth, see Darnell 2004: 72, 133 - 137, and 197 n. 139; for the red sail, see Epigraphic Survey 1979: pl. 20, line 6).

Second Song:
Recitation:
"Hail, Amun, primeval one of the Two Lands, foremost one of Karnak,
in your glorious appearance amidst your [riverine] fleet,
on your beautiful Festival of Opet—
May you be pleased with it."

Third Song:
Recitation four times—Recitation for the bark:
"A drinking place is built for the party, which is in the voyage of the fleet.
The ways of the Akeru are bound up for you;
Hapi is high.

May you pacify the Two Ladies, oh Lord of the White Crown/Red Crown.

It is Horus, strong of arm, who conveys the god with she the good one of the god.
For the king has Hathor already done the best of good things."

The ways of Aker allude to the east/west axis of the solar journey, parallel to the first song's "royal" south/north axis (see Cauville 1983; Loeben 1990: 67; compare also the double axis of Luxor, the north/south processional forecourts, and the east/west orientation of Room XVII in the southern, solar temple—see Brunner 1977: 79 - 82). The songs associate the festival journey to the course of the sun (recognition of the solar aspect already by Foucart 1924: 123 - 126; see also the discussion of the first song above), and at the same time allude to sexuality (Barta 1975: 112 relates these songs to a *hieros gamos* intended to release the fertility of the Inundation). The "best of good things" finds echoes in New Kingdom love poetry (Fox 1985: 22), a term for the consummation of sexual union. A further detail confirming the sexual aspect of the festival is a statement of a priest who bends forward and addresses the bark of Amun as it emerges from Luxor Temple at the end of the Opet Festival: "How weary is the cackling goose!" (Epigraphic Survey 1994: 26 and pl. 67). This short statement alludes to the cry of creation uttered by the great cackler in the eastern horizon, appropriate to the *smn*-goose form of Amun as the deity prepares to sail to Karnak.

Accompanying the singing priests and priestesses are dancing foreigners: soldiers dressed as Libyans and using throwsticks as clappers, and Nubians leaping and swaying in a type of military dance with clubs (fig. 7; Darnell and Manassa 2007: 204 - 206; Epigraphic Survey 1994: pls. 25, 28, 32, 38, 91, 94, 96, 99). The presence of Nubians and Libyans is probably meant to evoke the groups amongst whom the solar eye goddess has recently sojourned, members of whom

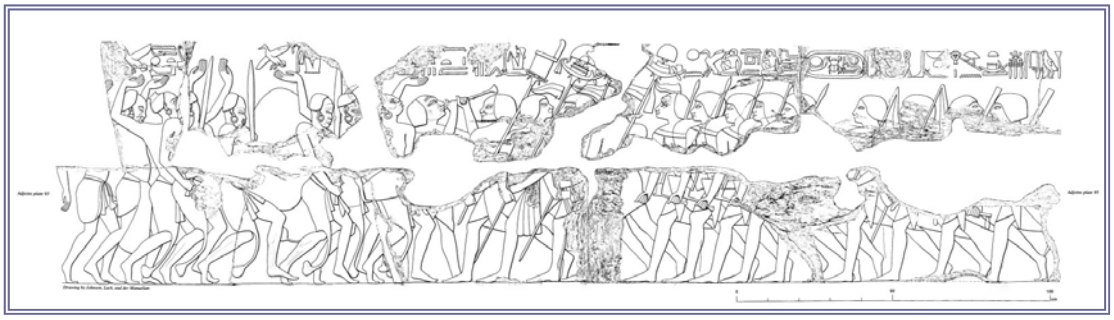


Figure 7. Dancing Nubians and military escort accompanying the Opet-procession. From the festival scenes of Tutankhamen in the colonnade hall of Luxor Temple.

join her entourage for the return to Egypt (Darnell 1995: 64 - 79). Also acrobatic dancers accompany the festival procession (Epigraphic Survey 1994: pls. 37 - 38), the backward-leaning dance at once an evocation of the dance of the four winds (Kurth 1994) and a display of eroticism (compare Sauneron 1968: 286 - 287, text no. 344 on column no. 14; 1962: 41ff.).

Soldiers and sailors are the most numerous of the festival participants in the colonnade hall scenes, and a number of military and civil officials participated in the preparations and execution of the Opet Festival; Ramesses II listed amongst those responsible for arranging the festival: members of the civil administration, provincial governors, border officials, heads of internal economic departments, officers of the commissariat, city officials, and upper ranks of the priesthood (Hirsch 2006: 153, refs. n. 91, and p. 198, tab. 18; contra the objections of Spalinger 1998). In addition to overseeing aspects of the food preparation (Epigraphic Survey 1994: pls. 36 and 40) and rowing and towing the divine barges, at least one military official pronounces a hymn in honor of the king in front of the Opet-procession as it heads to Luxor on the west interior wall of the colonnade hall (Epigraphic Survey 1994: pl. 20; compare an Aswan rock inscription of Sety I: "Nobles and *meshkeb*-officers hurry along the shore, while the king's eldest son is before them, performing *akhu*-beatifications," see Habachi 1973: 119 - 122).

The general populace appears to have been able to observe from the riverbanks (Darnell 2003: 44), and at least some may have had limited access to the forepart of the temple (Bell 1985b: 270 - 271, 275; Kruchten 1986: 257 - 258). Celebrants may also have observed the event at other locations, such as the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu (Haring 1997: 187), and a transplantation to Abydos appears to have occurred (Cabrol 2001: 741). Oracular manifestations of Amun could also occur during the festival (compare Kruchten 1986: 252 - 265, 337 - 354), further relating events of the festival procession to the populace. During the second regnal year of a late 21st Dynasty ruler, the bark of Amun refused to leave his sanctuary for the Opet Festival, which finally took place sixty-five days later than usual, on day 23 of *Khoiak*, after the priest whose offenses occasioned the delay had appeared before a tribunal (Kruchten 1991: 182 - 184).

Bibliographic Notes

The chief pictorial and textual sources for the Opet Festival appear in Burgos et al. (2006), updating Lacau and Chevrier (1977 - 1979), and Epigraphic Survey (1979: pls. 20 - 23; and 1994). The only well documented overview of the festival remains Murnane (1982), with additional commentary on the significance of the ritual events in Bell (1985b, 1997); Waitkus (2008) is overall skeptical of much of the evidence for the festival. The lengthiest texts associated with the

Opet Festival are the "Songs of the Drinking Place," with translations and commentary in Epigraphic Survey (1994: 12 - 14). Discussions of specific aspects of the festival include Cabrol (1999, 2001), Kruchten (1991), Meyer (1998), and Pamminger (1996).

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Figure 1. The third bark shrine of Hatshepsut on the processional route between Karnak and Luxor Temples, as depicted in the Red Chapel at Karnak. The name of Hatshepsut in the text beneath the prow of the bark of Amun has been removed, along with depictions of Osiride statues of the ruler at both ends of the shrine. Photograph by the author.

Figure 2. The vanguard of the Opet-procession returning to Karnak Temple at the end of the festival. The musicians are about to enter the third pylon, with the porch of Amenhotep IV. From the festival scenes of Tutankhamen in the colonnade hall of Luxor Temple. (Epigraphic Survey 1994: pl. 105, reproduced courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.)

Figure 3. A depiction of the barge of Queen Ankhesenamen (later usurped for Mutnodjmet) towing the riverine bark of the goddess Mut from Karnak Temple to Luxor Temple during the Festival of Opet. Soldiers assist with towing the divine bark, with accompanying Nubian dancers and military escort. Note the images of Ankhesenamen accompanying Tutankhamen in smiting scenes on the fore- and after-castles of the royal barge (she extends her own scimitar in the latter scene). From the festival scenes of Tutankhamen in the colonnade hall of Luxor Temple. (Epigraphic Survey 1994: pl. 28, reproduced courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.)

Figure 4. The royal barge, with assisting towboats, hauling the riverine bark of Amun (not visible in this portion of the larger scene). From the Opet Festival scenes of Herihor in the court of Khons Temple, Karnak. (Epigraphic Survey 1979: pl. 20, reproduced courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.)

Figure 5. Sety I (with a depiction of the north entrance to the colonnade hall behind him) offers to the barks of Amun, Mut, and Khons in Luxor Temple, during the Festival of Opet. From the festival scenes in the colonnade hall of Luxor Temple. Though carved under Sety I, the scenes appear to belong to an initial cartoon from the reign of Tutankhamen. Note the absence of the royal bark in the depiction of Luxor Temple, although the bark appears in the scene of the divine barks departing Luxor Temple on the return journey to Karnak. (Epigraphic Survey 1994: pl. 56, reproduced courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.)

Figure 6. Priestesses and priests singing the "Songs of the Drinking Place" during the Opet Festival. From the festival scenes of Tutankhamen in the colonnade hall of Luxor Temple. (Epigraphic Survey 1994: pl. 26, reproduced courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.)

Figure 7. Dancing Nubians and military escort accompanying the Opet-procession. From the festival scenes of Tutankhamen in the colonnade hall of Luxor Temple. (Epigraphic Survey 1994: pl. 94, reproduced courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.)