The Tomb of Sataimau at Hagr Edfu: An overview

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Introduction

Notable among the pharaonic monuments in the necropolis of Hagr Edfu (Fig. 1) is a group of three tombs located at the foot of the main hill of the site (Figs 2–3). They were uncovered by the Egyptian Antiquities Service in 1941 (see Fakhry 1947, 47–48; Gabra 1977, 208–11; Effland 1999, 25–26; Effland et al. 1999, 40–53) and have been the subject of recent detailed documentation by a British Museum expedition. Their location, close to the western enclosure wall of the Monastery of Pachomios, a modern monastery built on the site of ancient predecessors (the earliest of these possibly an Egyptian temple; see Sauneron 1958, 278–79, n. 3; Effland 1999, 30), is shown on the expedition's new map of the site (Fig. 4).

One of the tombs belongs to a high official named Sataimau and is dated by inscription to the reign of King Amenhotep I. The two others were left undecorated by their original owners but bear a large number of secondary motifs and inscriptions (see Effland et al. 1999, 42–45, 65–66, figs 1–3; Davies 2006, 134, 140, fig. 4, 146, pl. 4; Davies and O’Connell 2009, 54, 64, fig. 8; Davies et al. 2011a, 37–38, 54, pl. viii, b; 2011b, 59, 68, pl. iii, b). These unfinished tombs, repurposed over time, became places of destination, operating already in Dynasty 18 as shrines or small temples dedicated to the worship of the local gods (see Davies 2010, 130, 135, fig. 6; Davies and O’Connell 2011a, 105; O’Connell 2010, 5; Davies and O’Connell 2012, 55). The presence of supplicants is also recorded in motifs and inscriptions, dating probably from the Old Kingdom onwards, carved into the rock on the top of the main hill (see Davies 2006, 134, 148–49, pls vi–vii; Davies and O’Connell 2009, 56, 72, figs 21–22; Davies and O’Connell 2011b, 6, 28–29, figs 32–34; Davies and O’Connell 2012, 55, 82, figs 34–35; Davies et al. 2011b, 63, 72, pl. vii, a–b). The evidence suggests that during the pharaonic period Hagr Edfu not only served as an elite necropolis but was regarded as a holy mound (i3f), a ‘heilige Bezirk,’ sacred to the Edfu triad (Horus Behdety, Hathor and Isis) and integral to the wider ritual land- and waterscape centred on the temple of Horus Behdety in Edfu (Fig. 1); it may have been the site of the original Behdet, which appears later to have been centred to the south in the area of Nag’ el-Hissaya (see Alliot 1954, 551, n. 2; Gabra 1977, 221–22; Kurth 1994, 95–99 with n. 13; Egberts 1995, 15, n. 9; Egberts 1998, 799–801; Effland 1999, 27; Effland et al. 1999, 40, 43; Kurth 1999, 269; Effland and Graeff 2010; for recent investigation of the evolving waterscape, see Bunbury et al. 2009; Davies et al. 2011a, 36, 44–46; 2011b, 63–65, 73, pl. viii).

A ground-plan of the group is reproduced in Fig. 5. The tomb of Sataimau, HE Tomb 1, is that on the left (the southernmost). In the middle, almost identical in size and plan and possibly contemporary with HE Tomb 1, is HE Tomb 2. On the right, much larger than the

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1 This paper, an up-dated version of Davies 2009 (in French), will be included in a forthcoming volume containing reports on various aspects of the British Museum expedition's work at Hagr Edfu.
The tomb-chapel of Sataimau

Plan

The plan of the superstructure (Fig. 5, left) is typical for the region and the period. The rock-cut chapel, entered through a single doorway from an open courtyard (Fig. 2; cf. Davies 2009, 29–30, figs 5–6), also excavated from the rock (and yet to be fully revealed), comprises a long rectangular chamber, oriented east-west, with a smaller rectangular niche with a raised floor at the western end (total length of chapel, approx. 10 metres). The niche (Fig. 17) once bore in its rear wall a rock-cut statue, probably a seated dyad of the tomb-owner and his wife, long disappeared. The ceiling is now badly damaged and incomplete but would originally have been of vaulted form. The burial shaft is still to be located and may lie beneath the mound of sand and debris which covers most of the courtyard and extends to the modern monastery wall. A rectangular shaft uncovered in the south-west corner of Sataimau’s courtyard does not access

2 HE Tomb 3, though unfinished, is an impressive monument, the tomb surely of a very senior official, perhaps the governor of Edfu of the period. Worthy of particular note is its double doorway (Fig. 3), a rare elite feature with ritual meaning, the southern door for entering, the northern for exiting (cf. Arnold 2008, 18, pl. 24c; Rosati 2010). These functions were respected in its adapted form, as later motifs on the south wall almost all face inwards, while those on the north wall face outwards. The recording of the secondary decoration in HE Tomb 3 has been organised by Susanne Woodhouse, with hieratic inscriptions studied by Robert Demarée.

3 The work of Lamia el-Hadidy, assisted throughout by Mohamed Badawy and, during various seasons, by Eric Miller and Iain Ralston.

4 The core epigraphic team in the Tomb of Sataimau comprised Vivian Davies, Marcel Maréc, Ilona Regulski and Claire Thorne, who has also prepared drawings for publication. Additional assistance has been provided by Renée Friedman, Sabine Kubisch and Will Schenck. Photographic recording has been carried out by Yarko Kobylecki and James Rossiter and planning by Günter Heindl, Focke Jarecki and Alena Schmidt.
the substructure but ceases at a depth of about 1.5m (and may have had a symbolic function; cf. Dorman 2003, 31–32; Seyfried 2003, 61–63). The brick constructions in front of the tomb are not original. They were probably built during the Christian re-use of the tomb, activity evidenced also in modifications to the interiors of both HE Tombs 1 and 2 (see Gabra 1977, 211; Davies 2006, 134; Davies and O’Connell 2009, 55–56, figs 19–20; O’Connell 2013).

The tomb-owner
The tomb-owner had two names. The first, his official name, was written with the composite hieroglyph **@wt-Hr-m-wi3**, probably to be read either **Hwt-hr-m-wi3** or **Hwt-hr-m-hbt3t**, ‘Hathor in the (sacred) barque’ (Gabra 1977, 212, n. 1; Morenz 1996, 177, n. 781; Effland et al. 1999, 47, n. 15). The second, his family name, was **@wt-Hr-m-xb3t**, ‘son of Ta-imau,’ normally written without the final w. They are usually combined in the double-name formula, ‘Hathoremkhebat called (ddw n.f) Sataimau.’ The first name (and possibly also the second) suggests an affiliation with a cult of the goddess Hathor, which is further reflected in the tomb’s religious iconography (see further below).

Sataimau was a scribe and priest attached to the temple of Edfu, who served under King Ahmose, the first king of Dynasty 18, achieving career advancement with successive appointments to two significant posts in the temple, as recorded in an autobiographical text inscribed within the chapel. He died during the reign of the next king, Amenhotep I, whose names and titulary are prominently located in large hieroglyphs on the chapel’s exterior façade and on the lintel of the interior niche.

Sataimau’s father was named **@wt-Hr-m-xb3t**, ‘Geru,’ and had been in royal service before him. Bearing the title **@tA-im3w**, ‘chief of the ruler,’ otherwise unattested, he may have been a military officer. Sataimau’s wife, ‘mistress of the house, Ahmose,’ was similarly well-connected. Her father, named **@tA-im3w**, ‘Se,’ had been an official (title uncertain) of a queen mother, almost certainly Queen Ahhotep, the mother of King Ahmose. Sataimau’s mother, who had two names, one of them unclear but probably ‘Ahmose,’ the other **@wt-Hr-m-xb3t**, ‘Shere[t],’ also came from an elite background; her brother, named **@tA-im3w**, ‘Djab,’ held the office of an administrative ‘king’s son.’ Sataimau and Ahmose had a number of children, prominent among them ‘lector-priest Amenmose,’ shown in the tomb as the senior son.

Decoration
The tomb-chapel was hewn out of a stratum of soft sandstone which contained numerous faults and fissures. In the preparation of the walls for the artists, these imperfections were filled in with thick white plaster to create an even surface. A thin wash of plaster was then applied, which served as the ground for preliminary drafting, with preparatory squared grids in red used selectively. The final decoration was executed first in pure paint with certain scenes, in particular those depicting the primary figures, subsequently worked in sunk-relief, with raised relief used to model details within the sunk-relief figures, the relief was then

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5 For the name Ta-imau, see Ranke 1935, 353, no. 16; Gabra 1977, 212, n. 2.
7 Like the contemporary Theban official Hery (see Gálan and Menéndez 2011, 147–51, with n. 23, 160, fig. 8).
Painted. Raised relief was used to render the outline of a major figure only once, on the facade. Work on the tomb was well advanced but not completely finished. The decoration is now much damaged and paint, where it survives, is mostly very faded.

Facade and entrance (Fig. 6)
Arranged in columns, the names and titulary of Amenhotep I decorate the jambs of the entrance, the king’s prenomen on the left (south) and nomen on the right. The door is completely weathered. On the facade to the right of the door is a large, unfinished, figure of a cow, sun-disk between the horns, in raised relief. Almost certainly a representation of Hathor, this exterior figure is to be related to a corresponding cow-figure represented within the niche (see below). The one is shown as if entering the tomb, the other as if having emerged from the hill. Together they are probably to be understood as representing the tomb-owner’s cycle of death and rebirth (cf. Pinch 1993, 182–83).

Also unfinished was the decoration of the reveals of the doorway, much re-used and now in poor condition. It comprises in each case the beginning of a scene representing a standing figure of the tomb-owner, located high up on the thickness facing outwards, his arms raised in adoration of the sun (Fig. 7; cf. Davies et al. 2011a, 36–37, 52, pls vi, a–b). The scene was no doubt intended, when finished, to include a figure of the wife of the tomb-owner following behind him and a hieroglyphic text comprising a solar hymn placed directly in front (cf. Assmann 1983, xiii; Dziobek 1992, 121; Kampp-Seyfried 1998, 252; Robins 2010, 136). These are among the earliest dated examples of this type of scene.8

First chamber
East wall (Fig. 8)
The wall bears a number of hunting and fishing scenes, with the two major scenes placed apotropaically on either side of the entrance (cf. Decker and Herb 1994, 1: 431, K2.131; Davies 2009, 31–32, figs 7–8). Both have suffered substantial loss owing to the niches sunk into the walls during the later re-use of the tomb but still contain very interesting explanatory texts, quite well preserved. The main scene to the south of the door shows the tomb-owner standing in a papyrus-boat harpooning two fish (a Tilapia and Lates; see Brewer and Friedman 1989, 74–79), accompanied by his wife and daughter, both named Ahmose, and a son named Amenhotep. A hieroglyphic inscription describes Sataimau as ‘… spearing fish, enjoying himself in his plantation of his funerary estate in the presence of … [his] fathers and his sons,’ a text which places the scene in the domain of the tomb-owner’s eternal afterlife accompanied by succeeding generations of his family (on the symbolism of such scenes in Theban tombs, see, for example, Louant 2000, 30–32; Hartwig 2004, 103–106).

The equivalent scene to the north shows a hippopotamus-hunt (Fig. 9). Of the figure of the tomb-owner, only the front hand survives holding a rope once shown as attached to a harpoon now missing. Before him is a kneeling attendant. The quarry, a large hippopotamus, with head turned backwards, is depicted in the water beneath the front of the boat, held fast

8 Other early Dynasty 18 examples are to be found in the tombs of Djehuty, Hormeni and Ahmose at Hierakonpolis, the first two dated by inscription to the reign of Thutmose I (Friedman 2001, 108, 111). For one of the Djehuty scenes, see Davies 2012.
by ropes and the butt of a harpoon. Cleaning of the scene has revealed a painted inscription in three columns reading: ‘(1) lector-priest, scribe,⁹ Hathoremkhebat called Sataimau (2) overthrowing the enemies of Horus, slaying for him (3) the rebels, so that Horus Behdety might triumph against [his] foe.’ This is an important new text, the first to articulate clearly the symbolic meaning of this scene in the context of a private tomb: that it represents the triumph of order over chaos, with the deceased (adopting the traditional role of the king) slaying the forces of evil, the enemies of Horus, embodied by the hippopotamus (cf. Säve-Söderbergh 1953, 25ff.; Behrmann 1996, 125ff., 164–68; Louant 2000, 32–35; Müller 2008, 485). It anticipates the theme of the ritual drama portraying the triumph of Horus known to have been enacted in the temple of Edfu during the Ptolemaic period though earlier in origin (cf. Fairman 1974, 33–35), and may reflect the existence of a contemporary ritual practice.¹⁰

North and south walls

The chapel’s long walls each bear major offering-scenes associated with a so-called funerary banquet, together with subsidiary scenes depicting the production and storage of food and drink (primarily meat and wine on the north and grain on the south; cf. Davies 2010, 129, 134, fig. 4). The south wall also bears at its eastern end a large stela, its text destroyed. Notably absent is the standard funerary matter (the ‘Butic burial,’ etc) that normally decorates one of the long walls of such tombs, as for example in the contemporary tomb of Reneny at Elkab (Tylor 1900, pls 9–13; cf. Seyfried 2003, 63, Table I). Prioritized here on both walls is the presentation of the generational cycle and of the family within its social and professional context.

The focal scene is that on the north wall (Figs 10–11; cf. Davies 2009, 32–34, figs 9–10) showing the seated figures of tomb-owner and wife surrounded by their offspring (with pet dog), before a pile of offerings. Facing them is a large figure of their senior son, Amenmose, with hands raised, reciting an offering-formula, and behind him a series of registers showing retainers and guests at the feast, the most important among them being ‘his friend, king’s son […], lector-priest [name lost].’ Figured centrally in the register below is a group of younger children or grandchildren (three girls and two boys), each in the charge of a nurse (cf. Davies 2010, 129, 134, fig. 3).

The inscription in front of the tomb-owner gives his two names and the names of his father and mother together with his titles: ‘lector-priest and scribe of Horus Behdety offering-priest (Hnky) of Nebpehtyre.’ The latter title is an abbreviated version of the title ‘offering-priest of the statue of millions (of years) of the person of king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nebpehtyre,’ which is written in full in the horizontal line above (Fig. 12). According to the biographical inscription carved on the niche façade (see below, with Fig. 18), Sataimau was

⁹ Note the writing of sS as sSi (as occasionally also elsewhere in the tomb).

¹⁰ Perhaps involving the slaying of real hippopotami; see the recent discovery in Edfu of hippopotamus-bones in deposits of the Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom (see Moeller 2010, 96, fig. 3; 2011, 113, fig. 3). In view of Egypt’s recent successful ‘war of liberation’ (in which members of Sataimau’s family, including his father, might well have been involved), the scene might have had a certain historical resonance, an example of ‘eine traditionelle königsideologische Form mit einem neuen spezifischen Sinn gefüllt …’ (Morenz 2005, 180, with reference to the late Second Intermediate Period stela of Emhab from Edfu).
appointed to this special post by King Ahmose.

An interesting subsidiary figure in the main scene, located immediately behind the senior son, is that of a military officer. Done entirely in paint and now incomplete, the figure is shown playing a cylindrical kemkem-drum and carrying on his back what appears to be a standard in the form of a stave surmounted by a Horus-head (Figs 13–14). He is identified as sw.f.TTh-ms dd(w) n.f Tsm-dn[?], ‘his commander, Ahmose called Tjesem-djen[ed?]’ (the second name, if the restoration is correct, meaning ‘mad/raging dog,’ an appropriate nickname for a soldier; cf. Vernus 1986, 126, f, on ‘noms d’animaux’ as applied to humans; also Lopes 1998, 710). The scene of which he was part is otherwise lost but may, when complete, have shown a group of musicians (cf. for example, Manniche 1991, 54–56, fig. 31), perhaps in this case a military band (for recent discussion of the cylinder-drum, see Klotz 2010, 231–33, with reference to the military context of the kemkem-drum featured in the stela of Emhab from Edfu). The officer’s association with the tomb-owner (‘his commander’) suggests the possibility that the latter’s duties had at some time during his career included a military role (perhaps following that of his father).

Scenes of the family, now badly damaged, dominate the south wall (Figs 15–16; cf. Davies 2006, 134, 145, pl. iii). On the right, the tomb-owner stands before his seated parents, making offerings ‘[for the ka of] my father and my mother.’ (cf. Seyfried 1995, 223–31). Interestingly, the mother is shown with light red skin distinguishing her from the other female figures in the tomb, which are coloured the conventional yellow,11 possibly here signalling her elevated ancestral status (cf. Seyfried 1995, 229–31).12 In the central offering-scene, two of the three surviving figures, both named Ahmose, are identified as ‘his brother.’ Other ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’ are figured among the seated and squatting guests, which also include ‘his nurse, Henut’ (cf. Davies 2006, 134, 139, fig. 3). On the left, at the bottom of the stela (Fig. 16), the tomb-owner and wife receive offerings from their children (seven sons and three daughters, some of them perhaps grandchildren), led again by the senior son, Amenmose.

On a technical point, the central scenes of both walls were initially drafted with the aid of squared grids, remnants of which survive, most visibly on the south wall. From these it can be estimated that the major seated figures occupied fourteen squares from the bottom of the feet to the hairline, as is usual for the period (see Robins 2001, 60).

Niche, façade (Fig. 17)

The niche façade is decorated with three sets of inscription (all deliberately damaged, but still legible): one on the lintel, comprising two horizontal lines, and one each on the left and right jambs respectively, arranged in four columns (cf. Davies 2006, 133, 143–44, pls 1–2; Davies 2009, 33–36, figs 11–12). The upper line on the lintel contains a winged sun-disc in the centre and on either side the epithets of Horus Behdety. The lower contains a central ankh-sign flanked to right and left by the titulary and prenomen and nomen respectively

11 All except for the figure of a Nubian servant in a subsidiary scene on the north wall, which is coloured black.

12 In terms of skin-colour in the tomb, red is otherwise used not only for male figures but also for the gods (Horus on the south wall of the niche, Shu on the north; see below).

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/online_journals/bmsaes/issue_20/davies2013.aspx
of Amenhotep I together with dedications to Horus Behdety and Isis. The inscription on the right jamb, now incomplete, is an address to the living, ending with the tomb-owner’s genealogy: ‘(4) … Sataimau, engendered by the chief of the ruler, Geru, and born to the sister of the king’s son of the district of the south[erner]s (?), Djab, [mother’s name lost].’ The inscription on the left jamb is a biographical text (Fig. 18):

‘(1) Favours from the king concerning the temple of Horus Behdety. (My) Lord gave to (me) a favour: his causing that I be appointed to be second lector-priest of Horus [Behde]ty. (2) (My) Lord repeated for me a favour: [he] enjoined to (me) his statue13 which is in its hall, which is in this temple, its income having been fixed, (it) being settled and enduring.14 (3) Bread, 180 portions; beer, 6 jars; pure meat, flesh; haunch; back; spine; kidney fat; kheru-fields; 10(?) hectares; kayt-fields, 30 hectares—preserved as an eternal [ordin]ance15 (4) and as a permanent record in a decree of king Nebpehtyre, justified, strong ruler who seized the two lands, in the house of his father, Horus Behdety, the great god.’

This text, one of the earliest ‘autobiographies’ of Dynasty 18, records that King Ahmose twice favoured the tomb-owner with professional advancement. The king first appointed him to be second lector-priest in the temple of Edfu. The title of ‘second lector-priest’ is informative, suggesting the existence of a relatively developed priestly hierarchy, with accompanying infrastructure, in the temple of the period (cf. Morenz 1996, 177–78). The king next appointed him to be the offering-priest of a statue of the king located in its own hall in the temple. This is the statue named in the north wall frieze-inscription as the ‘statue of millions (of years)16 of the person of king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nebpehtyre,’ of which the tomb owner is the henky (Hnky), the title conferred on a priest enjoined to such a statue-cult (cf. Helck 1961, 226–28; Gabra 1977, 215–17; Graefe 1981, ii, 52–53; Helck 1986, 1266; Effland et al. 1999, 52). The hieroglyph which determines the word for statue (twJ) in column 2 shows a figure of the king wearing a short wig with uraeus at the front, seated on a throne holding a stave in his left hand and a cloth in his right. This is not the generic determinative of the word, Gardiner A53, which is present in the frieze-inscription example (Fig. 12) and may possibly point to the form of the actual statue. This statue was endowed in perpetuity with designated quantities of food and drink and with land to sustain the cult by authority of a royal decree recorded and preserved in the temple of Edfu, the essential content of which the tomb-text probably reproduces in main part. A similar, near-contemporary set of endowments also attached to royal statues at Edfu is documented in the stela of Iuf (Cairo CG 34009; Urk. iv, 29–31; Helck 1961, 226, no. 1; Gabra 1977, 217;

This short text contains much interesting information, bearing not only on the tomb-owner’s career progression but also on the institutions, architecture and content of the very early Dynasty 18 temple of Edfu, the patronage of the king confirming the political importance of Edfu to the new Theban dynasty (cf. Vandersleyen 1995, 201–202, with n. 1; Morenz 1996, 178, 180–81; Barbotin 2008, 50), a state of affairs to which the stela of Iuf also bears witness.

Niche, interior

As already noted above, the niche once contained in its rear wall rock-cut figures, probably a seated pair representing the tomb-owner and his wife, of which only remnants of the seat survive. The side walls are also very badly damaged, especially the south wall, but they still bear substantial remains of the original scenes.

South wall of niche

There are two scenes on the south wall (Fig. 19). The one on the right, nearest to the statues, depicts an offering-list and, beneath, a series of male figures carrying out an opening-of-the-mouth ritual (cf. Davies and O’Connell 2009, 53, 63, fig. 7; Davies et al. 2011b, 59, 68, pl. iii, a). The larger, main scene on the left (Fig. 20; cf. Davies 2009, 35–37, fig. 13; Davies et al. 2011a, 37, 53, pl. vii) shows the tomb-owner in an act of so-called ‘personal piety’ (cf. Baines 2009, 12), kneeling and offering to three Edfu deities, identified respectively as ‘Horus Behdet, great god, lord of heaven,’ ‘Hathor who dwells in Behdet, mistress of this perfect mound,’ and ‘Heded(et), mistress of […]’, the latter a scorpion-goddess and local manifestation of Isis. Horus was shown seated holding a wAs-sceptre, with the goddesses standing behind him. The figures, possibly to be understood as representing statues, are mostly lost but a section of Horus’s front foot coloured red (placed on a dais or pedestal), and parts of their headgear survive, a double crown for Horus, sun-disc and horns for Hathor, and a modius supporting an enormous scorpion for Heded(et). Noteworthy is Hathor’s second epithet, nbt iṣt n fr(t), ‘mistress of this perfect mound,’ since it identifies Hagr Edfu as a sacred mound (of creation), possibly Behdet itself, and Hathor as having a special proprietorial interest in the site (cf. Gabra 1977, 219–20, fig. 7, bottom, 221; Kurth 1994, 95, n. 13; Morenz 1996, 177–78, n. 784; Effland 1999, 27; on votive ‘Hathor-jars’ found at the site, see Davies and O’Connell 2012, 56, 85, fig. 39). The whole scene is contained within a frame comprising the hieroglyph for sky at the top supported by two tall wAs-sceptres at the sides, which demarcates the sacred space occupied by the gods. Sataimau’s figure is included within this space.

17 For Hededet, see Wessetzky 1993; Leitz 2002, 597–98; Bryan 2002. This Hagr Edfu image, albeit vestigial, is now the earliest securely dated representation of this deity.

18 For a figure of Isis with scorpion on head in a similar scene from the near-by site of Hierakonpolis, see Friedman 2001, 111, colour plate 37.3 (statue-niche, tomb of Hormeni, temp. Thutmose I).
North wall of niche

Sataimau’s privileged treatment and Hathor’s special funerary role are both confirmed by a unique scene on the north wall (Figs 21–22; cf. Effland et al. 1999, 53; Davies 2008, 40, 43, fig. 2, 45, pl. 1; Davies 2009, 35–38, fig. 14; Davies et al. 2011a, 37, 54, pl. viii, a). It shows three registers of female offering-bearers (the topmost done in paint only, now very faded), among them the tomb-owner’s wife and daughters, identified in turn as ‘his wife,’ ‘his daughter,’ etc, offering to a dominant central image, that of a large cow (already mentioned above in connection with the cow-figure on the façade, Fig. 6) standing within, and emerging from, a shrine on a sacred barque, the cow supported centrally by the arms (the left arm now lost) of a smaller kneeling divine figure, his body coloured red. The barque rests on a narrow, rectangular support. The front of the cow and barque are lost in the crack in the wall (an estimate of the available space suggesting there was little or no room for other elements of decoration like a standing figure to have once been included here). The cow in this case represents a composite deity. She is Hathor in the barque, emerged from the perfect mound. She is also the sky-goddess, the celestial cow, here probably an aspect of Isis, raised up and supported by the god Shu (or a heb-god). This duality is confirmed by the text above the cow’s head (Fig. 23), which labels the figure as ‘[Isis?] beloved of Horus (and) Hathor […] head of the (holy) cows.’ The icon combines two modes of rebirth, terrestrial and solar, for the tomb-owner, his identity, I would suggest, embodied in the image, which functions on one level as a large hieroglyph writing his name, ‘Hathor is in the barque.’ He is thus presented as being one with the deity, an audacious conceit, though clearly ‘authorised,’ as is the unusual offering-scene on the opposite wall, by the presence of the king’s names and titulary, prominently displayed, on the lintel of the niche.

The depiction of the Hathor-cow in her barque in the Hathor-shrine of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri (see Naville [1901], 5, pl. 104; Blumenthal 2001, 35–36, fig. 23) has been regarded as the earliest example of such an image (for example, Müller 2003, 61, 68, 116), while the representation of the celestial cow is otherwise first attested in Theban royal tomb-iconography of late Dynasty 18 (see Hornung 1982, 81–85, fig. 3; Effland et al. 1999, 53; Guihou 2010). The appearance of the two motifs, imaginatively combined, in a private tomb of early Dynasty 18 in Edfu indicates an earlier origin for both and a wider, less restricted sphere of use and deployment. It is unlikely that they were first created for Sataimau. They

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19 A two-dimensional precursor of the famous rebus-sculpture, British Museum EA 43, reading Mwt-m-wi3,’ ‘Mut is in the barque’ (see Fischer 1972, 21–22; Quirke and Spencer 1992, 77–78, no. 56; Bryan 1992, 126, fig. 5.4; Müller 2003, 87; Morenz 2008, 187; Karlshaussen 2009, 50–51).

20 Cf. the unusual scenes in Silsila’s chapel no. 21 of the official Menkh, temp. Tuthmoses I (Caminos and James 1963, 70–71, pl. 54, left and right upper register; Spieser 2000, 240–41 and 333, no. 173), with human figures, probably the chapel-owner, offering directly to the gods Haroeris and Sobek (here shown standing on the base-line), who in turn give life to the king represented by his name, which is positioned directly above the scenes; also Kucharek 2010, 148–56, on the decoration of the later chapel of Senenmut (Silsila no. 16) with its unique temple-like content, an example of ‘Die Verquickung von Elementen privater und königlicher Kultsphären … nur im Rahmen ausserordentlicher königlicher Gunst möglich.’

were surely adapted by the tomb-owner and his designers from current temple-models, elements perhaps in a now-lost decorative programme of Amenhotep I in the temple of Edfu (like that attested at near-by Elkab; see Werbrouck 1940–54, especially pl. 44A; Schmitz 1978, 5, 121–23; Pinch 1993, 175) or in a temple or Hathor-shrine at Hagr Edfu (yet to be located; see Sauneron 1958, 278–79, n. 3; Efland 1999, 30; Gabra 1977, 221–22; Gabra 1984, 7; Egberts 1998, 799–800, with n. 49), the station, it might be surmised, for a processional cult-statue of ‘Hathor is in the barque’ resembling in form the image depicted in the niche-scene and celebrated in the official name of the tomb-owner.22

Conclusion

The tomb-chapel of Sataimau at Hagr Edfu (HE Tomb 1) is rich in data on a range of interrelated subjects of both regional and more general import: on political and personal patronage, career advancement and temple institutions; on expressions of local identity and social status; on religious iconography and the private elite assumption of royal prerogatives; on tomb and site as parts of a wider sacred landscape; on the nature of later re-use. To what extent the tomb’s decorative programme, with its seemingly unusual elements, is representative of the prevailing repertoire, it is impossible to say, as it presently stands alone. There can be little doubt, however, that contemporary monuments, still to be uncovered, are located elsewhere in Hagr Edfu, probably in the vicinity of HE Tombs 1–3. The area immediately to the south of the group along the same terrace (Fig. 4), of which nothing is currently known, has obvious potential and could be a productive focus for future work on this enormously promising site.

Frontispiece: Hagr Edfu from the north, with the modern monastery at the foot of the main hill (Photo: W. V. Davies).

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22 Note that cult-images depicting the cow-in-the-barque are among the motifs carved on the walls of the neighbouring tomb-turned-temple (HE Tomb 3). For a substantial, later structure at Hagr Edfu, sunk deep into the rock and fronted by a pylon, that might have functioned as a barque-shrine for one or more of the local (and possibly visiting) gods, see Davies 2010, 130–31, 136, figs 7–8, 139, fig. 13; O’Connell 2010, 4–7, figs 5–8; Davies and O’Connell 2011a, 105, 126–27, figs 27–29, referred to as ‘pylon-tomb.’
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Fig. 1: Satellite image of the Edfu region (DigitalGlobe).
Fig. 2: View of Hagr Edfu Tombs 1 and 2 (Photo: W. V. Davies).

Fig. 3: View of Hagr Edfu Tomb 3 (Photo: W. V. Davies).
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Fig. 6: Façade of HE Tomb 1 (Photo: W. V. Davies).
Fig. 7: HE Tomb 1, doorway, northern reveal (Photo: W. V. Davies).
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Fig. 9: HE Tomb 1, east wall, left, detail of hunting scene.
Fig. 10: HE Tomb 1, north wall, left (Photo: Y. Kobylecki).
Fig. 11: HE Tomb 1, north wall, right (Photo: Y. Kobylecki).

Fig. 12: HE Tomb 1, north wall, section of frieze-inscription.
Fig. 13: HE Tomb 1, north wall, detail (Photo: W. V. Davies).
Fig. 14: HE Tomb 1, north wall, figure of drummer.
Fig. 15: HE Tomb 1, south wall, right (Photo: Y. Kobylecki).

Fig. 16: HE Tomb 1, south wall, left (Photo: Y. Kobylecki).
Fig. 17: HE Tomb 1, niche (Photo: Y. Kobylecki).
Fig. 18: HE Tomb 1, niche-façade, left jamb, inscription.
Fig. 19: H3 Tomb 1, niche interior, south wall (Photo: J. Roseiger).
Fig. 20: HE Tomb 1, niche interior, south wall, left (Photo: Y. Kobylecki).
Fig. 21: HE Tomb 1, niche interior, north wall (Photo: J. Rossiter).
Fig. 22: HE Tomb 1, niche interior, north wall, centre (Photo: Y. Kobylecki).

Fig. 23: HE Tomb 1, niche interior, north wall, inscription as recorded on transparent acetate (Photo: W. V. Davies).