

A STONE VESSEL OF PRINCESS ITAKAYET OF THE 12th DYNASTY FROM TOMB VII AT TELL MIŠRIFE/QAṬNA (SYRIA)

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Abstract

Among the objects found within Tomb VII discovered in 2009 at Tell Mišrife/Qaṭna, one Egyptian stone vessel with a hieroglyphic inscription was recovered. The inscription on the stone vessel references an Egyptian princess with the name of Itakayet, a name apparently attested for several princesses of the 12th Dynasty (Middle Kingdom). The present article concerns the hieroglyphic inscription of the vessel, the princess' identity and the chronological implications pertaining to the vessel's possible dispatch to the northern Levant and ultimately Qaṭna. Additionally, Egyptian finds

from the site of Qaṭna, especially the famous "Sphinx of Ita" found by Robert Comte Du Mesnil du Buisson within the debris of the Bronze Age palace in 1927, as well as Egyptian objects from other northern Levantine sites will be briefly discussed in order to shed more light on the function of these imports within the cultural sphere of the northern Levant during the 2nd millennium BC.

1. INTRODUCTION²

In addition to a large number of imported Egyptian and locally produced Egyptianizing stone vessels, one Egyptian stone vessel bearing a hiero-



Fig. 1 Findspot of stone vessel *MSH09G-i0967* within Tomb VII (lower right) among pottery vessels and other Middle Bronze Age and Early Dynastic stone vessels (Photo: K. Wita)

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² I sincerely thank H. Dohmann-Pfälzner and P. Pfälzner (University of Tübingen) for their kind invitation and permission to publish the stone vessel and its inscription. I also thank I. Stünkel (Assistant Curator in the Department of Egyptian Art, The Metropolitan Muse-

um of Art, New York) for helpful information and critical remarks concerning the pyramid complex of Senwosret III at Dahshur. All figures courtesy of the Qaṭna Excavation Project, University of Tübingen. I thank M. Woodworth (American University of Beirut) for proof-reading the article.



Fig. 2 Stone vessel *MSH09G-i0967* from Tomb VII (photo: K. Wita)

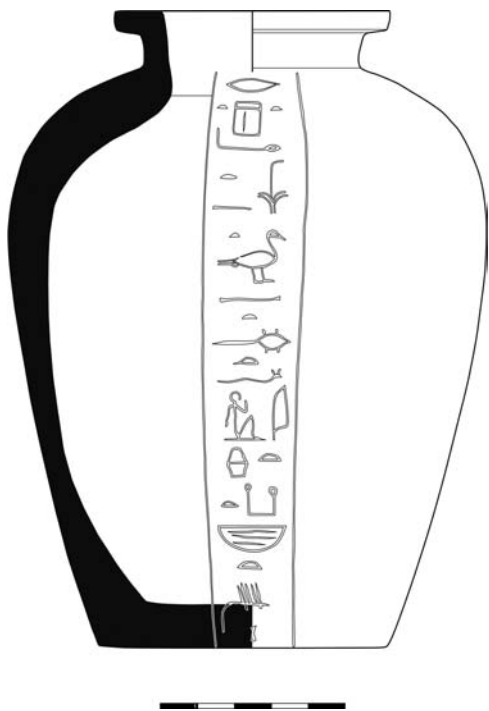


Fig. 3 Stone vessel *MSH09G-i0967* from Tomb VII (drawing: A. Gubisch)

glyphic inscription was found among the grave goods of Tomb VII – discovered in 2009 – located underneath Room DA of the north-western wing of the royal palace of Qatna (Fig. 1).³

The tall shouldered cylindrical jar (*MSH09G-i0967*; height: 17.2 cm; width: 13.3 cm) is made of andesite porphyry (geologically sometimes also referred to as “hornblende diorite”), containing larger crystals of white feldspar within a dark-colored, fine-grained groundmass.⁴ On typological grounds, the vessel can be securely dated to the period of the Middle Kingdom (Figs. 2–3).⁵ A striking parallel for this specific type of Egyptian vessel found in the northern Levant comes from Royal Tomb II at Byblos (tomb of Byblite ruler Ibshemuabi; the stone is labelled as “pierre grise” here, but is probably anorthosite gneiss; height: 19.0 cm; width: 17.0 cm), along with a matching lid naming the personal name Amenemhat (*Jmn-m-ḥ3t*), a name used by several kings of the 12th and 13th Dynasties, here possibly referring to Amenemhat IV, although without definite proof.⁶

Inside Tomb VII, the vessel was found associated with a number of stone vessels typologically dating to the Middle Bronze Age and the Early Dynastic period (1st–2nd Dynasties),⁷ which could either imply a joint deposition or a re-arranging of all the stone vessels at a specific date during the tomb’s period of use.⁸ It is not possible, however, to determine the vessel’s exact date of deposition within Tomb VII on the basis of the stone vessels found associated with it since typologically these can generally only be dated within a very

³ For the tomb see DOHMANN-PFÄLZNER – PFÄLZNER forthcoming. For the Egyptian stone vessels discovered in the royal tomb at Qatna, see AHRENS 2006; AHRENS forthcoming a; forthcoming b.

⁴ ASTON 1994, 13–15, 21–23.

⁵ ASTON 1994, 138 (type 135); SPARKS 2007, 49, type 3A (broad body and mouth, no handles).

⁶ MONTET 1928, 159–160: 614, fig. 70, pl. xci; JIDEJIAN 1971, fig. 48; LILYQUIST 1993, 42–44; SPARKS 2007, 50, fig. 14: 1 (no. 436). The date of the royal tombs is highly problematic and has been a matter of dispute ever since their discovery. Tombs I and II should and must not, however, be dated only on the basis of the hieroglyphic inscriptions found in them; for the problems concerning their date already see TUFNELL 1969; GERSTENBLITH 1983, 39–41, 103.

⁷ The stone vessels from Tomb VII are currently being analyzed and prepared for publication by the author.

⁸ DOHMANN-PFÄLZNER – PFÄLZNER forthcoming.

broad time frame, i.e. the entire Middle Bronze Age (roughly contemporary with the 12th–15th Dynasties in Egypt) and – in terms of typological correlation – possibly even the beginning of the Late Bronze Age; Late Bronze Age stone vessel types, however, are not attested in the tomb. The Egyptian Early Dynastic stone vessels found next to Itakayet’s vessel even date almost a thousand years earlier (ca. 2900–2800 BC), but clearly must have been deposited within Tomb VII during the 2nd millennium BC.⁹

The inscription of the vessel consists of a single column (measuring 2.6 × 15.5 cm). The general execution of the hieroglyphs is very good and the inscription itself is completely preserved. The inscription can be translated as follows (Fig. 4):

𓆎 jrj.t-p^c.t s3.t njswt n.t-h.t=f Jt3-k3<y>.t nb.t jm3h.w

“The hereditary princess, the king’s daughter, of his body, Itakayet, possessor of honor”

While the inscription and the vessel can be assigned to the 12th Dynasty (ca. 1939–1790 BC) with certainty, Princess Itakayet’s exact chronological position within this dynasty is as yet unclear (see in more detail below). The stone vessel from Tomb VII is the only Egyptian object naming Princess Itakayet hitherto attested in the entire Levant.

2. THE STONE VESSEL’S ORIGIN AND ITS HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: PRINCESS ITAKAYET

The identification of the princess mentioned on the stone vessel presents something of a problem. Apparently, two – or maybe even more – royal personages (i.e. princesses) with the name of Itakayet are known from Middle Kingdom archaeological and historical sources, both belonging to the 12th Dynasty (see more detailed below). While one of these princesses probably was a daughter of Senwosret I, a later princess with the same name seems to have been a daughter or sister of Senwosret III. There is, unfortunately, nothing in the vessel’s inscription to clearly indicate for which of these two individuals this stone vessel was manufactured. This leaves us with only a rough date for the vessel’s manufacture, ca. 1939–1852 BC,¹⁰ spanning the reigns of Amenemhat I or Senwosret I until Senwosret III.

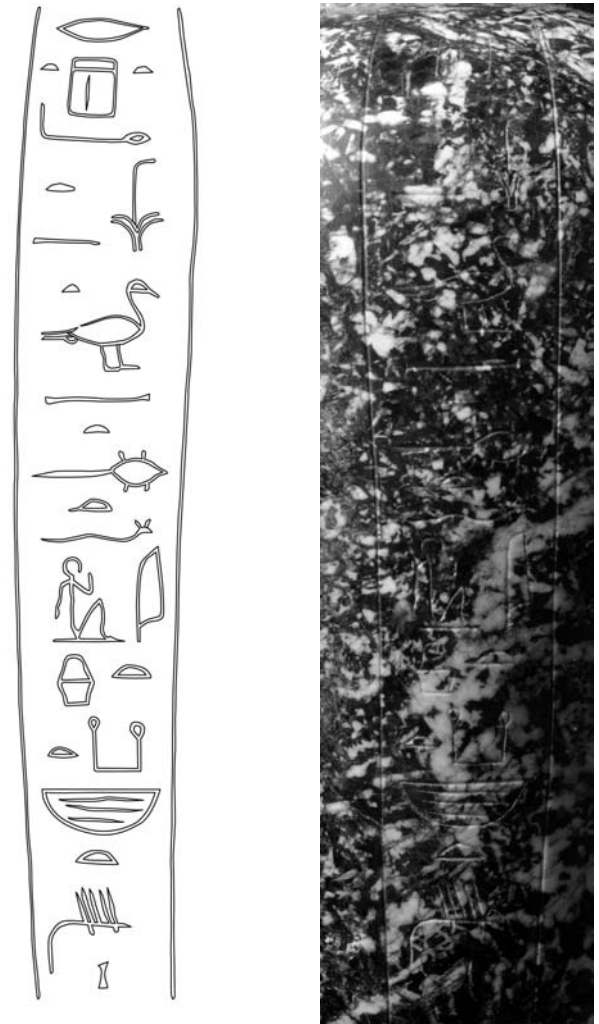


Fig. 4 Hieroglyphic inscription of Princess Itakayet’s stone vessel (photo: K. Wita; drawing: A. Gubisch)

Obviously, the specific find context of Itakayet’s stone vessel within Tomb VII also cannot provide any conclusive answers on this problematic question of chronology.¹¹

As the titles given in the inscription on the vessel from Tomb VII do not allow for a clear identification of the specific individual mentioned, it is difficult – if not impossible – to date or connect Princess Itakayet to the reign of one of the specific kings in question. Furthermore, given the incomplete nature of both the archaeological and historical record pertaining to the princesses in Egypt

⁹ SPARKS 2007, 51–52.

¹⁰ Chronology after VON BECKERATH 1997.

¹¹ DOHMANN-PFÄLZNER – PFÄLZNER forthcoming.

itself, it is even more difficult to give secure and precise answers when discussing the princess' identity.

In Egypt, the first archaeological attestation of a princess named Itakayet can be dated to the reign of King Senwosret I. Located within the outer enclosure wall of the king's burial complex at el-Lisht, one of the secondary pyramids in the precinct ("Pyramid 2") is most probably, given the scanty archaeological evidence, to be identified with the burial place of a princess with that name.¹² Commenting on this pyramid, W.C. Hayes wrote in 1953:

"... Of the others [i.e. the other pyramids] only one, south of the center of the king's pyramid, yielded enough inscribed material to identify its owner, the King's Own Beloved Daughter Itē-kuyet. A pyramid just to the west of Itē-kuyet's, however, belonged to another princess of the royal line, and the two of the remaining tombs were probably those of the King's Daughter Nefru-Sobk,¹³ and the King's Daughter Nefru-Ptah, scraps of whose funerary furnishings were found in the vicinity of

the mortuary temple..." (p. 183) "... Fragments of the stela and the chapel reliefs from the next pyramid to the west of that of Queen Nefru show that it belonged to the "Hereditary Princess and Countess, Great of Grace and Great of Favor, She-who-beholds-the-Horus-Seth, the King's Own Beloved Daughter, Itē-kuyet, possessor of honor..." (p. 195). It is unclear, if the pyramid was ever used as the burial place of this princess. However, the cultic installations and the offering chapel of this pyramid were apparently completed and even a tomb robbers' shaft, which partly cut through the stone blocking of the actual tomb entrance, was discovered. The shaft itself was "only big enough to squeeze through and remove valuable items."¹⁴

According to B. Schmitz, the Princess Itakayet of Pyramid 2 should be considered a daughter of Amenemhat I, who later eventually also became queen under the reign of Senwosret I.¹⁵ L. Troy, however, regards her as a daughter of Senwosret I,¹⁶ while S. Roth believes her to be a wife of the then

¹² HAYES 1953, 195; ARNOLD 1992, 23–26, pls. 16–22; also JÁNOSI 1996, 56, fig. 54. Existing fragments of the offering chapel indicate that at least three versions of Itakayet's titulary existed, two of them being "(...) the king's daughter of his body, whom he loves, Ita-kayet, possessor of honor" and "the king's daughter of his body, the hereditary princess and countess Ita-kayet," see ARNOLD 1992, 24–26, pls. 17c, 20d. According to Arnold, she could have been a daughter of Senwosret I or Amenemhat I, or perhaps even of a later king, see ARNOLD 1992, 26; see also ALLEN 1998, 42.

¹³ It is interesting to note here, that also a statue of this princess was found at Gezer in Palestine, see WEINSTEIN 1974. The hieroglyphic inscription on this statue reads *s3.t njswt n.t-ht=f Sbk-nfr.w ʕnh.tj* ("the King's daughter, of his body, Sobeknefru, may she live"). Also in the case of Sobeknefru, however, two princesses with this name are attested during the 12th Dynasty. While the earlier one was a daughter of Senwosret I, the latter one most probably a daughter of Amenemhat III, who later was to become the last ruler of the 12th Dynasty. There is no hint in the inscription to indicate for which of these two princesses the statue originally was made. Furthermore, three statues and a sphinx of Queen Sobeknefru, as well as a statue of Hotepibre of the 13th Dynasty, were also found in the region of Tell el-Dab^a/Qantir. The objects' inscriptions contain dedications to Ptah of Memphis and the Fayyumic forms of Horus and Sobek and thus most likely seem to originally come from the greater region of the Fayyum–Memphis. Possibly, the objects were removed

from the Fayyum during the Second Intermediate Period and then set up at the royal residence of Avaris, see NAVILLE 1888, pl. 9c; HABACHI 1952, pls. VI–IX; RYHOLT 1997, 133–134; 1998, 2–3. Additionally, a stone vessel found in the royal tomb at Qaṭna, naming Amenemhat III and the Fayyumic god Sobek Shedetj, also seems to come from the Fayyum, see AHRENS 2006, 18–20. Thus, it could well be that this vessel reached Qaṭna via the Hyksos capital at Avaris. See now also BIETAK – FORSTNER-MÜLLER 2009 for the find of a calcite-alabaster lid of a princess of the 12th Dynasty (originally from the princess' tomb?) in the palace of the Hyksos rulers at Avaris (111–112, fig. 29); a fragment of a cuneiform tablet found in the filling of a well connected to the palace also clearly attesting to the far-flung political connections of the Hyksos rulers (108, figs. 21–22); see also VAN KOPPEN – RADNER 2009.

¹⁴ ARNOLD 1992, 25, see also pl. 17a. The actual hole in the stone blocking of Pyramid 2 would have been big enough in diameter to remove the stone vessel found in Tomb VII at Qaṭna.

¹⁵ SCHMITZ 1976, 190: 4.

¹⁶ TROY 1986, 158 (12.7).

¹⁷ ROTH 2001, 153 (fn. 872), 205, 434–435 (XII.Ø.1). If this was the case, then Itakayet and Ita, of whom the famous "Sphinx of Ita" was found within the palace of Qaṭna in 1927, should be regarded as contemporaries. The likelihood of this scenario, however, may be undermined since the tomb of Ita probably dates to the late Middle Kingdom, see WILLIAMS 1976, 43; SABBAHY 1996, 350; FAY 1996, 43–47; ARNOLD 2006, 47 (see below).

crown prince – and later king – Amenemhat II, who died early either in his life or reign as king.¹⁷

A cylinder seal made of steatite of unknown provenience kept in the collections of the Brooklyn Museum (no. 44.123.74)¹⁸ mentions a Princess Itaka(y)t (*s3.t njswt Jḫ-k3t*), apparently in conjunction with King Amenemhat II, although this cannot be proven beyond doubt since no premen of the specific king is given on the seal.¹⁹

Papyrus Berlin 10222a lists provisions for the statue of King Senwosret II and, among others, that of Princess Itakayet (*Jḫ-k3y.t*).²⁰

Finally, yet another pyramid (“Pyramid 3”), this time located within the burial complex of Senwosret III at Dahshur, can apparently be attributed to a Princess Itakayet (relief fragments naming her *s3.t njswt n.t-ḫ.t=f [Jḫ-k3.t]*).²¹ That a burial of this princess actually took place here seems likely since the canopic chest and related vessels were found inside the tomb.²² However, this tomb seems also to have been looted by tomb robbers in antiquity as little of its original inventory remained to be found.²³ The princess buried here seems to have been a sister or perhaps half-sister of Senwosret III, i.e. the daughter of King Senwosret II also mentioned in Papyrus Berlin 10222a (see above).²⁴

Taken altogether, the evidence seems to support the existence of at least two princesses with the name Itakayet. The first Princess Itakayet may thus have lived during the reigns of kings Amenemhat I–Senwosret I, and possibly part of the

reign of Amenemhat II (Pyramid 2 at el-Lisht). The second princess lived during the reigns of kings Senwosret II–Senwosret III (Pyramid 3 at Dahshur). Apart from the archaeological evidence of these two burials, all other references pertaining to a princess with the name of Itakayet (i.e. the cylinder seal and Papyrus Berlin 10222a) may in fact be assigned to either of these two princesses, although clear identifications to specific individuals on the basis of these documents cannot be given.²⁵ The possibility that both pyramids and all other archaeological and historical evidence pertaining to a princess named Itakayet in fact relate to only one princess seems highly unlikely, given the time span of approximately one hundred years, and therefore is probably to be rejected.

As mentioned before, also the stone vessel from Tomb VII cannot provide any conclusive answer to the question of the princess’ identity since the inscription neither provides a name of a king nor any other means of dating Itakayet to the reign of a specific king. Due to the scanty archaeological and historical evidence relating to the princesses in question, it is impossible to decide for which of the princesses named Itakayet this stone vessel was originally manufactured. Additionally, the inconclusive evidence regarding the titles of the princesses preserved at el-Lisht and Dahshur cannot help to settle this question.

The “defective” writing of the name of the princess (i.e. *Jḫ-k3.t* instead of *Jḫ-k3y.t*)²⁶ on the

¹⁸ NEWBERRY 1906, pl. VI: 20; JAMES 1974, 44, pl. 35: 104a; also PERDU 1977, 81; FAY 1996, 45: 4, 47.

¹⁹ JAMES 1974, 44, pl. 35: 104a. James regards Amenemhat II to be the most likely option since he believes this Itakayet to have been a daughter of Senwosret I, Amenemhat II’s immediate predecessor; also FAY 1996, 45, 47.

²⁰ BORCHARDT 1899, 91; SCHMITZ 1976, 193: 13; FAY 1996, 45; STÜNKEL 2006, 149.

²¹ DE MORGAN 1895, 56–58, 73, see also 74 (fig. 176) for a stone vessel from the underground galleries resembling Itakayet’s in shape; ARNOLD 2002, 63–76, figs. 20a–c, 21a; pls. 40, 76, 77a, 79a, b, 82d, 86b, 91–94, 107 (ARNOLD mistakenly presents the name as *Jḫ-k3jt* here; I thank I. STÜNKEL for bringing this to my attention); STÜNKEL 2006, 148–149, fig. 1 (the name of the princess is given on the oright half of a tympanum block which was part of the offering chapel, drawings of the inscriptions of Pyramid 3 and its funerary chapel have not been published yet).

²² DE MORGAN 1895, 56–58, 73; ARNOLD 2002, 65–67.

²³ The plundering of Senwosret III’s pyramid apparently already took place during the Second Intermediate

Period, see ARNOLD 2002, 41–42. It seems very likely, although it is not proven, that the subsidiary pyramids of the precinct were also plundered at that time; see ALLEN 1998, 44; ARNOLD 2002, 65–66.

²⁴ ARNOLD 2002, 64.

²⁵ Accepting the existence of two princesses, the cylinder seal naming the princess together with a king Amenemhat (here possibly naming Amenemhat II) could then be attributed to the first Itakayet possibly buried at el-Lisht. She would then seem to have died during the reign of Amenemhat II, but was buried within the pyramid complex of her father (?) or husband (?) Senwosret I (in this case, her father would then be Amenemhat I). Papyrus Berlin 10222a in turn, naming a Princess Itakayet together with Senwosret II and another princess, would then seem to mention the second Princess Itakayet who was buried within the pyramid complex of Senwosret III at Dahshur (her father being Senwosret II, her brother Senwosret III).

²⁶ Omitting the “double reed” sign (“y”), see GARDINER 1957 (M17).

stone vessel also cannot be regarded as a means to securely date and identify the princess or link her to a certain king, as both writings are actually attested to have been used for both princesses, i.e. the princesses buried at el-Lisht and at Dahshur.²⁷ Rather, the different notations of the princesses' name most probably point to the existence of different workshops carrying out the various inscriptions or the lack of space on certain objects etc.

Apart from the difficulties hampering the identification of the princess, it is highly probable that the stone vessel was part of the princess' tomb equipment or at least related to a funerary context in a more general way, e.g. as part of the mortuary chapel related to the tomb or a cultic installation at a temple.

3. THE "SPHINX OF ITA" FROM THE ROYAL PALACE AT QAṬNA ('SANCTUAIRE'): A FURTHER PRINCESS OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM AT QAṬNA

In connection with Itakayet's stone vessel from Tomb VII, the so-called "Sphinx of Ita", yet another statue of an Egyptian princess of the 12th Dynasty, discovered in 1927 by the French archaeologist R. Comte du Mesnil du Buisson in the central area (within the so-called 'sanctuaire' of the shrine of the goddess Bēlet-ekallim)²⁸ of the Bronze Age palace of Qaṭna should be discussed in more detail.²⁹

Fragmented into more than 400 pieces, the sphinx, made of schist, was found within the debris of the Late Bronze Age palace and thus must have been displayed at the time of its destruction. In the vicinity of the sphinx, several fragments of another statue made of calcite-alabaster were found, belonging to a royal statue,³⁰ most probably that of a king of the Middle Kingdom (12th–13th Dynasty) depicted in a kneeling position, presumably offering *nw*-pots.³¹

An inscription, almost identical to that of Itakayet's inscription on the vessel from Tomb VII, is positioned between the forelegs of the sphinx. It consists of a single column and reads:

⤵ jr.j.t-p^c.t s3.t njswt mr<w>.t=f n.t-h.t=f Jt3 nb.t jm3h.w

"The hereditary princess, the king's beloved daughter, of his body, Ita, possessor of honor"

Also here, the inscription makes it quite likely that the sphinx once was used in a funerary context. In Egypt, the tomb of Princess Ita was discovered in 1895 (12th of February 1895) by the French archaeologist and then Director of Egyptian Antiquities, Jacques de Morgan, within the precinct of the burial complex of Amenemhat II at Dahshur.³² Ita's tomb was part of a double tomb complex, which also contained the tomb of another princess named Chnumit (also: Khenemet).³³

²⁷ The fragments mentioning Itakayet from Pyramid 2 and her mortuary chapel at el-Lisht feature both versions of her name, ARNOLD 1992, pls. 17c, 20d. For Princess Itakayet from Dahshur (Pyramid 3), a defective writing of her name (*Jt3-k3.t*) is attested on the tympanum block of the princess' offering chapel; see ARNOLD 2002, 64; STÜNKEL 2006, 147–148. As already mentioned above, the princess buried at Dahshur may well be identical with the Princess Itakayet featured in Papyrus Berlin 10222a; here, however, her name is given in the full version (*Jt3-k3y.t*), see BORCHARDT 1899, 91. See also RANKE 1935, 49: 11; also see the discussion in FAY 1996, 45: 4.

²⁸ DU MESNIL DU BUISSON 1928, 9–13, pl. VII; VIROLLEAUD 1928; 1930; BOTTÉRO 1949; EPSTEIN 1963; NOVÁK – PFÄLZNER 2001, 167–169, fig. 6; NOVÁK 2002; DOHMANN-PFÄLZNER – PFÄLZNER 2008, 72.

²⁹ For the sphinx and its general findspot, see DU MESNIL DU BUISSON 1928, 10–13, pls. VII, XII; 1934; 1935, 17; also FAY 1996, 32, 44–45.

³⁰ A fragment of what seems to have been a stone bowl bearing the cartouches of Senwosret I was found in the eastern part of the royal palace, see ROCCATI 2002.

³¹ DU MESNIL DU BUISSON 1928, 10 (designated here as 'Pierre 6'), pls. VI: 6, VII, XIV: 1; 1935, 17. The statue's present location is unknown, therefore a secure dating cannot be given.

³² DE MORGAN 1903, 45–55.

³³ DE MORGAN 1903, 55–67. A fragmented statue of a princess with the name or title of Khenemet-nefer-hedjet (*s3.t njswt n.t h.t=f Hnm.t-nfr-hd.t nhl.tj*) was found on the acropolis of Ras Shamra/Ugarit, see SCHAEFFER 1932, 20, fig. 13, pl. XIV: 1; 1939, 20, pl. III: 1; 1962, 214–215, fig. 19; COURTOIS 1974, 113; HELCK 1976, 107–108. It could well be that this statue belongs to Princess Chnumit who was buried at Dahshur. Yet again, it is unclear for which of the many princesses (and future queens) who bore this specific name or title during the Middle Kingdom the statue was actually made, see PERDU 1977; SABBABY 1996, 350; WARD 1979, 801–802 (Ita-weret); 2003; STÜNKEL 2006. Interestingly, a burial of a princess with this name probably also existed within the burial complex of Senwosret III at Dahshur, although the archaeological evidence for this is ambiguous. The princess' pyramid (Pyramid 2) would be located directly west of Itakayet's pyramid, see STÜNKEL 2006, 174–148, fig. 1.

It has been argued that the tombs of Ita and Chnumit, although located within the precinct of the burial complex of King Amenemhat II, cannot date to the reign of this king, but instead later, probably to the late 12th Dynasty (i.e. the reign of Amenemhat III).³⁴ Accepting that the sphinx of Ita found at Qaṭna may have originated from a funerary context – possibly the princess' tomb complex and associated mortuary chapel – such a late date for these tombs would also be of great importance for establishing a possible date of the dispatch of the sphinx from Egypt to Qaṭna. Princess Ita may not have been a daughter of Amenemhat II after all.³⁵

Apart from the difficulties and uncertainties concerning the historical chronology and the exact position of this specific Princess Ita within the 12th Dynasty, her sphinx, in any case, most probably arrived at Qaṭna only at a later date.³⁶ As already mentioned, a later dispatch and a scenario involving the looting of the princess' tomb

or cultic installations also seems likely to have been the case with Itakayet's stone vessel from Tomb VII.

4. A POSSIBLE DATE OF DISPATCH OF ITAKAYET'S STONE VESSEL

While the date of manufacture of Itakayet's stone vessel and the execution of its inscription can be securely dated to the 12th Dynasty, a possible date of dispatch of the vessel from Egypt to the northern Levant – and thus finally to Qaṭna and Tomb VII – cannot be established with ultimate certainty. Generally, the stone vessel could have reached Qaṭna from the 12th Dynasty onwards until the final use of Tomb VII, with the bulk of material recovered from Tomb VII with all probability, based on the preliminary analysis of the finds, spanning the second half of the Middle Bronze Age to the Middle Bronze Age–Late Bronze Age transitional period (i.e. periods MB II–early LB I /Middle-Syrian IA) at the latest.³⁷

Also, the owners of two additional pyramids on the south side of Senwosret's pyramid (Pyramids 8 and 9) are also named Khenemet-nefer-hedjet (Weret I and II), although Pyramid 8 only served as a cenotaph, see discussion in STÜNKEL 2006. Likewise, also the statue of Senwosret-ankh (*jmj-r3 nw.t ʔ3.tj ʔ3j.tj Sn-wsr.t-ʕnh*) found together with the statue of Khenemet-nefer-hedjet (according to the titles given on the statue, the individual is not the same as the Senwosret-ankh prominently buried in the mastaba in the direct vicinity of the pyramid of Senwosret I at el-Lisht) originally may have come from the greater region of Memphis (based on the invocation of Ptah-Sokar in the inscription), see HELCK 1976, 106. The statue would seem to be associated with Senwosret-ankh's tomb or another funerary or religious installation that probably was plundered during the Second Intermediate Period. As the statue dates to the 13th Dynasty, it surely would only have reached the Levant after the collapse of the Middle Kingdom, that is, after the reign of Ay/Merneferre, see SCHAEFFER 1934, pl. XIV; MONTET 1934; BREASTED 1935; HELCK 1976, 109; WARD 1979, 803–805; KUBISCH 2008, 335–337.

³⁴ WILLIAMS 1976, 43; FAY 1996, 43–47; SABBABY 1996, 350; 2003; ARNOLD 2006, 47 (fn. 3); see also ARNOLD 1982, 29–31.

³⁵ See SABBABY 1996, 350; 2003, who is of the opinion that Chnumit and Ita must date later and are not daughters of Amenemhat II, see also WILLIAMS 1976, 43; ARNOLD 1982; 2006. Nothing in Princess Ita's tomb at Dahshur indeed specifies a filial relationship to Amenemhat II. FAY 1996 (43–47), however, is of the opinion that the sphinx found at Qaṭna *stylistically* dates to the interval

Senwosret I/Amenemhat II. Therefore, Fay concludes that the Sphinx of Ita found at Qaṭna must belong to a princess who lived during the reign of Amenemhat II (FAY 1996, 44: 2) while the tomb of Ita at Dahshur, in accordance with WILLIAMS (1976), SABBABY (1996; 2003) and ARNOLD (1982; 2006), is to be dated to the late Middle Kingdom, probably to the reign of Amenemhat III and thus must belong to a different princess with that name (FAY 1996, 44: 1). In the present paper, however, it is maintained that the Sphinx of Ita found at Qaṭna and the tomb at Dahshur actually belong to only one princess with that name, leaving aside the chronological problems pertaining to the date of the princess and her burial at Dahshur for the time being.

³⁶ HELCK 1976, 107; AHRENS 2006, 32. It must be stated here that the tombs of Ita and Chnumit belong to the very few tombs that were apparently not disturbed in antiquity, see DE MORGAN 1903; HAYES 1953, 197–198. This, however, does not necessarily apply to the princesses' cultic installations and mortuary chapels connected with these tombs.

³⁷ Pers. comm. Pfälzner. The overall period of use of the tomb may still be subject to changes once the analysis of all material from Tomb VII is completed; see DOHMANN-PFÄLZNER – PFÄLZNER forthcoming. The chronological system adopted here is that of the northern Levant (Syria), with periods MB I and MB II (incl. subdivisions IA/B and IIA/B) roughly correlating with MB IIA, IIB and IIC/III generally following Albright's terminology (ALBRIGHT 1965; 1966; 1973); see MATTHIAE 1981; GERSTENBLITH 1983, 2–3, tab. 1; NIGRO 2002; 2009, tab. 2; BIETAK 2002, fig. 15; PFÄLZNER 2007, 37, fig. 10.

That the vessel was dispatched to the Levant during the lifetime of the princess, or during the 12th Dynasty in general, seems rather unlikely. However, since both burials attributed to the princesses with the name of Itakayet – and this probably accounts for almost all other tombs of Middle Kingdom Egypt – had been thoroughly robbed or reused at the time of the final collapse of the Middle Kingdom state-authority, it can well be presumed that a large quantity of the objects associated with these original burials and their specific cultic installations were recovered by tomb-robbing, possibly carried out by groups of “private” individuals acting illegally or during periods of political turmoil when state control was weakened (i.e. the second half of the 13th Dynasty and the Second Intermediate Period).³⁸ During these times of political turmoil, a looting of these burials backed by the Egyptian state authorities may seem possible, too.

In this way, a portion of these objects may have reached the Levant well after their original deposition by “re-entering the life cycle” as valuable and prestigious objects. Following this argument, a date sometime after the 12th Dynasty would seem

most plausible, since almost all of the burial complexes of the Middle Kingdom kings and the tombs of their entourage were re-used or plundered as early as the 13th Dynasty and the following Second Intermediate Period, without being able to establish precise dates for the lootings themselves.³⁹

In relation to Senwosret I’s burial complex, which is of prime importance for the date of dispatch of Itakayet’s stone vessel, W.C. HAYES (1953) has already noted that a large number of objects and secondary burials actually post-dated the original tomb structures.⁴⁰

Additionally, D. Arnold notes that also the pyramid of Senwosret III, and thus with all probability the entire pyramid precinct as well, was apparently first looted during the Hyksos period (Second Intermediate Period) as a broken bronze dagger, which cannot antedate the Second Intermediate Period, was found inside this king’s burial chamber.⁴¹ Also, a large number of ancient graffiti featuring “foreign-looking” male profiles were found inside the pyramid, presenting what seems to be compelling evidence for the looting of the tomb.⁴²

³⁸ WEINSTEIN 1975, 9–10; HELCK 1976. Egyptian temples located in the Delta and the Memphite region apparently also seem to have been heavily pillaged during the rule of the Hyksos, see RYHOLT 1997, 139 (fn. 500), 143–149.

³⁹ Archaeological evidence for such re-uses is generally well attested for most of the Middle Kingdom burial complexes. The burial complex of Amenemhat II was reused during the 13th Dynasty (Queen Keminub), see DE MORGAN 1903, 70, fig. 117, JÁNOSI 1994, 94–101; The burial of Amenemhat III was already reused during the late 12th Dynasty (reign of Amenemhat IV) and the 13th Dynasty (King Hor), see ARNOLD – STADELMANN 1977, 16; ARNOLD 1982, 21; 1987, 93–96. ARNOLD (1987, 94) notes that “(...) der Kultbetrieb und Bewachung der Pyramide (i.e. the pyramid of Amenemhat III) bereits zu Beginn der 13. Dynastie vernachlässigt wurde, so dass sich jetzt die ersten großen Einbrüche in die Pyramide ereigneten. Ihnen dürften die ‘besten Stücke’ zum Opfer gefallen sein. (...E)s muss eine Mitwisserschaft der Bewacher vorausgesetzt werden.” On the phenomenon of tomb robbing in Egypt and its chronological implications see also PHILLIPS 1992.

⁴⁰ HAYES 1953, 191–192: “An ancient rubbish heap outside the north gateway leading to the temple precinct contained the sealings, packaging, and other debris of offerings contributed by generations of pious Egyptians to the funerary foundation of king Se’n-Wosret I. Hundreds of the mud sealings from jars, boxes, baskets, and

bundles bear the impressions of seals and scarabs dating from the reign of the founder of the temple to a time late in the Thirteenth Dynasty, almost two centuries after his death. (...) Nearby were found two miniature coffins and shawabty-figures of Prince Wah-Nefer-hotep and the Chamberlain Bener, both of the Thirteenth Dynasty. These objects, which may have been associated with tombs in the vicinity of the temple, indicate that the cemetery continued in use long after the time of Se’n Wosret I and agree perfectly with the sealings of King Sobk-hotpe III found by the temple gateway.”

⁴¹ DE MORGAN 1903, 97, fig. 141; ARNOLD 2002, 41–42.

⁴² ARNOLD 2002, 42–43, pls. 24, 25. D. ARNOLD (2002, 42) believes that “the first trespassers were certainly tomb robbers, who may have entered the pyramid in the Second Intermediate Period.” Since “(i)t is improbable, however, that tomb robbers had enough time and courage to leave their portraits at the scene of their crime [i.e. during the Second Intermediate Period],” he dates these graffiti to the Ramesside period (ARNOLD 2002, 42). It must be noted here that this may not necessarily be the case since at the time of the Second Intermediate Period the burial complex of Senwosret III – if not all burial complexes of the Middle Kingdom – were probably not in use anymore. Thus, already during the Second Intermediate Period the looters literally would have had enough time “on their hands” to leave these graffiti inside the pyramid without having to fear punishment.

For the stone vessel from Tomb VII, a possible date for its dispatch to the northern Levant and its final deposition within the tomb would then be the period of the late Middle Bronze Age (a timespan roughly comprising the 13th Dynasty and the Second Intermediate Period in Egypt),⁴³ a date which generally seems to fit well with the period of use of Tomb VII.⁴⁴ Whether the stone vessel reached Qatna directly from Egypt or via another northern Levantine kingdom is a moot point to discuss since there is no conclusive archaeological evidence to prove or disprove any such hypothesis yet. The important harbor city of Gubla/Byblos, in strong contact with Egypt since the 3rd millennium BC, would certainly be a likely candidate for a “mediator” of Egyptian objects into inner Syria during the 2nd millennium BC.⁴⁵

As Tomb VII may still have been used at the very beginning of the Late Bronze Age (early LB I), a date for the stone vessel’s arrival during this time cannot be ruled out entirely, but at present seems less likely, especially given the parallels for such imports at other sites, e.g. at Tell Mardikh/Ebla or Byblos, which are clearly to be dated to the later part of the Middle Bronze Age.

5. SUMMARY

The stone vessel of Princess Itakayet from Tomb VII at Qatna represents yet another Egyptian import of the Middle Kingdom found in the east-

ern Mediterranean. The vessel represents the first archaeological attestation of a princess of this name in the northern Levant. While the princess’ exact identification, her familiar affiliation as well as chronological position remain yet unclear, since at least two princesses bearing this name appear to be attested, a date within the 12th Dynasty can be established with certainty, most probably within the reigns of kings Amenemhat I–Senwosret III, thus covering approximately one hundred years.

Intriguing is the fact that among the Egyptian royal statuary attested at various sites in the Levant, a large and growing number of inscribed objects actually do not belong to kings, but to princesses of the 12th Dynasty. Without doubt, however, this phenomenon cannot and must not be conceived as evidence for the actual presence of these individuals in the northern Levant or contact of these individuals with the Levantine rulers at this time, despite the evidence for early contacts of the Middle Kingdom with the region of the Levantine littoral.⁴⁶ In all probability, these objects only reached the Levant *after* their initial use in Egypt, most probably as a direct result of tomb robbing of the major burial complexes of the Middle Kingdom during the Second Intermediate Period, possibly even as early as the 13th Dynasty. How these objects finally reached Qatna is difficult to say with certainty. It is possible that at least some of the Egyptian objects found in the

⁴³ See also BEVAN 2007, 101–102; see now also BIETAK – FORSTNER-MÜLLER 2009, 108 (figs. 21–22), and VAN KOPPEN – RADNER 2009 for a fragment of a cuneiform tablet from Avaris/Tell el-Dab^ca. The fragment clearly attests to the political connections of the Hyksos rulers with the eastern Mediterranean and beyond.

⁴⁴ DOHMANN-PFÄLZNER – PFÄLZNER forthcoming. At Qatna, the earliest evidence of Egyptian influence attested from a secure archaeological context is a Levantine pottery vessel featuring a clearly locally executed *ankh*-sign (*ḥh*) on its body. The vessel was part of a tomb assemblage dating to the MB IB–MB IIA periods (*tombeau I*), most probably roughly contemporary with the 13th Dynasty in Egypt. Concerning the tomb and its dating, see DU MESNIL DU BUISSON 1927a, 13–28, pls. 5–6; BAGH 2003, 225–229, fig. 3; see also BIETAK 1998. Although likely, a direct connection with the royal palace cannot be established with certainty for the tomb. Additionally, a silver bowl (TM.78.Q.497) found within the “Tomb of the Lord of the Goats” at Tell Mardikh/Ebla naming a certain *Immeya* also features a locally executed *ankh*-sign on its body, see ARCHI – MATTHIAE 1979, fig. 87. The only other securely strati-

fied Egyptian object from inner Syria during the Middle Bronze Age is the mace of Hotepibre (*Htp-jb-R^c*, 13th Dynasty) found in the same tomb, see SCANDONE MATTHIAE 1979. However, see also the doubts cast on the origin of the object by LILYQUIST 1993 (45–46) and RYHOLT 1998, suggesting that the mace may actually be of Levantine manufacture and might use material of an older object which originally featured the cartouche of Amenemhat I of the 12th Dynasty or even that of yet another obscure king of the 13th Dynasty named Shehotepibre (*Shtp-jb-R^c*). If this were the case, the original object would then probably have come via Gubla/Byblos, where most of the Egyptian imports in the northern Levant are attested and contacts with Egypt during the 2nd millennium were strongest, see RYHOLT 1997, 86–90; DURAND 1999; ALLEN 2008.

⁴⁵ See also DURAND 1999, who suggested that Egyptian objects were possibly termed “gublayu” (“Byblite”, “from Byblos”) in the cuneiform documents of the Middle Bronze Age; see also BIETAK 2010.

⁴⁶ MARCUS 2007; ALLEN 2008; 2009; FORSTNER-MÜLLER – KOPETZKY 2009.

northern Levant, and especially those found at sites in inland Syria, actually were “mediated” via Gubla/Byblos, although this scenario cannot be proven on the basis of the scanty historical and archaeological record. The reason for the presence of Egyptian statuary, royal and private, may be seen in light of their “emblematic” and “exotic” character, regardless of the actual content of the objects’ hieroglyphic inscription, their specific “biographies,”⁴⁷ or whether the statues depicted royal or private individuals. In this regard, the objects naming Egyptian princesses – to which Itakayet’s stone vessel from Tomb VII at Qatna now must also be added – thus actually belong to a larger corpus of Egyptian objects that were “re-contextualized” and primarily served the local Levantine rulers’ need for self-representation and negotiation of status and prestige.⁴⁸

ADDENDUM⁴⁹

1. Introduction

The stone vessel of princess Itakayet which was discovered in Tomb VII at Tell Mišrife/Qatna during the excavations conducted by the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums in Syria and the University of Tübingen in 2009 features three additional signs that refer to the measure of capacity of the vessel.⁵⁰ The three signs were not discovered until the campaign of 2010, when the vessel was once more investigated in detail under special lighting conditions. The stone vessel thus adds to the very limited corpus of Egyptian stone vessels hitherto attested carrying such specific signs.

2. The Capacity Signs

The three capacity signs are located on the shoulder of the vessel, with the writing at a 90° angle to the inscription (Figs. 5, 6). The signs each indicate a volume capacity, each representing unit fractions. The signs are written from right to left, from the largest to the smallest volume. There is no doubt that the signs originated with the pro-



Fig. 5 Measure capacity signs on stone vessel *MSH09G-i0967* from Tomb VII (photo: Marc Steinmetz)



Fig. 6 Measure capacity signs on stone vessel *MSH09G-i0967* from Tomb VII (drawing: A. Gubisch)

duction of the vessel and its inscription, instead of being added at a later date. The signs are all fractions of the standard volumetric measure, the double heqat (²heqat, see below, 3).

⁴⁷ Following KOPYTOFF 1986; see also MESKELL 2004.

⁴⁸ AHRENS 2006; forthcoming c.

⁴⁹ I thank Peter Pfälzner and Heike Dohmann-Pfälzner (Tübingen) for their kind permission to publish this addendum. Tanja Pommerening (Mainz) and Denise Schmitt (Munich) are to be thanked for advise and remarks. Photographs were taken by Marc Steinmetz

(Hamburg), the drawing was done by Andrea Gubisch (Berlin). Angela Schwab (SCIEM 2000, Vienna) helped with the editing of this addendum. All figures courtesy of the Qatna Excavation Project.

⁵⁰ For the detailed presentation of the vessel and its find-spot, see above.

The signs are to be read as follows:

1. $\frac{1}{16}$ (of $^2\text{heqat}$)
2. $\frac{1}{32}$ (of $^2\text{heqat}$)
3. $\frac{1}{4}$ (therefore $\frac{1}{4}$ of $\frac{1}{64}$ of $^2\text{heqat}$, which equals $5 \text{ } ^2\text{Ro}$; = $\frac{1}{4} * \frac{1}{64}$ of $^2\text{heqat}$)

Sign 1: This fraction, represented with this sign, is found in the inscription of Amenemhat II in the Ptah Temple (hieroglyphic), as well as in pReisner II, the Illahun Papyri, and pMoscow E 4676 (all hieratic). A later writing is attested in pRhind, dating to the Second Intermediate Period (hieratic, 17th Dynasty).⁵¹

Sign 2: The fraction is also attested in pReisner and the Illahun Papyri (both hieratic), interestingly though, this fraction is written in a completely different way in the inscription of Amenemhat II in the Ptah Temple (hieroglyphic).⁵² This inscription, which hitherto gives the only attestation of this fraction in a hieroglyphic inscription, should not be overstressed in its relevance due to its singularity. Furthermore, since it is a rather monumental inscription, the measure capacity signs may have been differently executed from those given in papyri or on other small containers. A later attestation of this fraction is again given in pRhind (hieratic), clearly showing that this representation of the fraction was still in use during the Second Intermediate Period.

Sign 3: This fraction is to be understood in relation to another fraction (not explicitly mentioned here),⁵³ which in this specific case serves as the standard volumetric measure, i.e. $\frac{1}{64}$ of a heqat or: $\frac{1}{4}$ of $\frac{1}{64}$ $^n\text{heqat}$.⁵⁴

3. The Capacity of the Vessel

As mentioned above, the heqat is the standard volumetric measurement to which all of the fractions given on the vessel relate. In the Middle

	¹ Heqat (5.016–5.120)	² Heqat (10.032–10.240)
$\frac{1}{16}$	314–320	627–640
$\frac{1}{32}$	157–160	314–320
$\frac{1}{4}$ (of $\frac{1}{64}$ $^n\text{heqat}$)	20	39–40
Total	490–500	980–1000

Table 1 Converted volumes of measure capacity signs (volumes approximated, in cm³)

Kingdom, the “single heqat” and the “double heqat” are the most common volumetric measures used, the single heqat (¹heqat) representing ca. 5.016–5.122 cm³, the double heqat (²heqat) ca. 10.032–10.240 cm³.⁵⁵ Would the capacity signs relate to the (single) heqat, the overall capacity of the vessel – according to the fractions – would then be ca. 490–500 cm³, in case the double heqat was used, the capacity would be 980–1000 cm³ (see Table 1).

A measurement conducted in the campaign of 2010 (using rice as filling material) showed that the capacity of the vessel is ca. 970 cm³ (filling the vessel up to its shoulder, the beginning of the vessel’s neck⁵⁶). The relative deviation (ca. 10 cm³ –max. 30 cm³, i.e. 1%–3% relative error) in relation to the double heqat is most probably due to the general aberrations inherent in ancient measurement systems, as well as – to a lesser degree – using rice instead of a liquid as a means of calculating volume. The capacity measured clearly proves that the double heqat (ca. 10.032–10.240 cm³) was used in the case of Itakayet’s vessel as the base standard volumetric measurement.

4. Summary

Unfortunately, an indication of the contents of the vessel is thus not given. Most probably, the vessel originally contained oils or other aromatic animal- or plant-based essences.⁵⁷ Since the vessel

⁵¹ See POMMERENING 2005, 122, table 5.2.1.

⁵² POMMERENING 2005, 122, tab. 5.2.1.

⁵³ Since “ $\frac{1}{4}$ heqat” is consistently written with a different sign, and would also exceed the capacity of the vessel by far, this possibility must therefore be excluded, see also POMMERENING 2005, 122, table 5.2.1.

⁵⁴ For similar cases, see POMMERENING 2005, chapters 3.2, 8.4, 395.

⁵⁵ POMMERENING 2005, tab. 5.2.3.b.

⁵⁶ It seems unlikely that the vessel was originally filled up to the rim, since then a lid could not have been placed

to seal the vessel or cover the vessel’s mouth. Therefore, a filling of the vessel up to the shoulder or beginning of the vessel’s neck seems most likely. This also roughly corresponds with the placement of the signs on the outside of the vessel. However, since the neck of the vessel could carry another 30 cm³, this still would match the capacity given by the fractions on the basis of the double heqat. I thank Tina Köster (Tübingen) for measuring the vessel’s capacity in the National Museum of Homs.

⁵⁷ See SERPICO – WHITE 2000.

seems to come from Itakayet's tomb, one can assume that the capacity signs of the vessel relate to the princess' funerary cult, and the vessel once contained one of the necessary oils connected with it.⁵⁸ So far, however, only a few vessels carrying such specific signs are known from the Middle Kingdom. Interestingly, almost all of the vessels attested with such signs stem from cultic or funerary contexts, and especially from tombs of

Middle Kingdom princesses (i.e. the tombs of Chnumit/Khenemet and Sathathor).⁵⁹ Such a bias in the archaeological record, however, may also simply derive from the scarce information available, since most of the Middle Kingdom tombs and their inventories were plundered as early as the beginning of the Second Intermediate Period. The stone vessel of Itakayet may be one example of this "re-use" of grave goods.⁶⁰

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⁵⁸ See KOURA 1999.

⁵⁹ See the Middle Kingdom stone vessels in POMMERENING 2005, 394–398, cat. nos. V05–V10.

⁶⁰ The period of use of Tomb VII until the beginning of Late Bronze Age I has now been supported by the find of a scarab made of lapis lazuli naming Queen Ahmes-Nefertari of the early 18th Dynasty.

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