DECLARATION

This dissertation is the result of my own work, and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted or is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification, at either the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution, except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or is being concurrently submitted, for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at either the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution, except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS

SOCIALLY-ASCRIBED IDENTITY: CONCEPTUALISING CHILDHOOD AT DEIR EL-MEDINA

FIGURES AND TABLES

ABBREVIATIONS

Černý Unpublished notebooks of Jaroslav Černý, held in the Griffith Institute, Oxford (texts contained therein are referenced by notebook and page number).

DEM Černý, J., Sauneron, S. and Grandet, P. 1935-2010. *Catalogue des Ostraca hiératiques non littéraires de Deir el-Médineh.* 11 Vols. Cairo: Institut français d'Archéologie orientale.

HOP Allam, S. 1973. *Hieratische Ostraka und Papyri aus der Ramessidenzeit.* Urkunden zum Rechtsleben im Alten Ägypten. Tübingen: Selbstverlag.

KRI Kitchen, K. 1975-1990. *Ramesside Inscriptions: Historical and Biographical.* 8 Vols. Oxford: Blackwell.

LEM Gardiner, A. H. 1937. *Late Egyptian Miscellanies*. Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca 7. Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Elisabeth.

LES Gardiner, A. H. 1932. *Late Egyptian Stories*. Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca 1. Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Elisabeth.

LRL Černý, J. 1939. *Late Ramesside Letters*. Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca 9. Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Elisabeth.

LRLC Janssen, J. 1991. *Late Ramesside Letters and Communications*. Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum 6. London: British Museum Publications.

Mat. Helck, W. and Hofmann, I. 1960-9. *Materialien zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Neuen Reiches.* 7 Vols. Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur: Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse. Wiesbaden: Steiner.

O. Ostracon

P.   Papyrus

PDEM Černy, J., Posener, G. and Koenig, G. 1978-86. *Papyrus hiératiques de Deir el-Médineh*. 2 Vols. Cairo: Institut français d'Archéologie orientale.

PM   Porter, B., Moss, R., Burney, E. W., Malek, J., Magee, D., Miles, E., Fleming, E. and Hobby, A. 1960-2012. *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Statues, Reliefs and Paintings.* 8 Vols. Oxford: Griffith Institute.

PT   Sethe, K. 1908. *Die Altägyptischen Pyramidentexte*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs.

Urk. Sethe, K., Schäfer, H., Burkhardt, A., Helck, W., Grapow, H., Schott, S. and Firchow, O. 1932-1957. *Urkunden des Ägyptischen Altertums*. 8 Vols. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs.

Wb   Erman, A. and Grapow, H. 1926-61. *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*. 7 Vols. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY

Egyptian history before the Macedonian conquest of 332 B.C. is conventionally divided into 31 Dynasties. Each refers to a particular group of Pharaohs sharing a connection, often familial. These Dynasties are grouped into larger blocks of time known as Kingdoms and Intermediate Periods. This does not reflect how Egyptians visualised their own history, being one continuum of rulers, but is an academic convention.

Although broadly accepted, the chronology of ancient Egypt is not completely agreed on, with some variance in regnal dates, especially for earlier periods (Kitchen 1991). All Egyptian dates within this study follow the chronology of Shaw (2000: 479-83):

EARLY DYNASTIC PERIOD	**3000-2686 B.C.**
DYNASTY 1	3000-2890 B.C.
DYNASTY 2	2890-2686 B.C.
OLD KINGDOM	**2686-2160 B.C.**
DYNASTY 3	2686-2613 B.C.
DYNASTY 4	2613-2494 B.C.
DYNASTY 5	2494-2345 B.C.
DYNASTY 6	2345-2181 B.C.
DYNASTY 7 / 8	2181-2160 B.C.
FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD	**2160-2055 B.C.**
DYNASTY 9 /10	2160-2055 B.C.
EARLY DYNASTY 11	2125-2055 B.C.
MIDDLE KINGDOM	**2055-1650 B.C.**
LATE DYNASTY 11	2055-1985 B.C.
DYNASTY 12	1985-1773 B.C.
DYNASTY 13	1773-1650 B.C.
DYNASTY 14	1773-1650 B.C.

SECOND INTERMEDIATE PERIOD	**1650-1550 B.C.**
DYNASTY 15	1650-1550 B.C.
DYNASTY 16	1650-1580 B.C.
DYNASTY 17	1580-1550 B.C.
NEW KINGDOM	**1550-1069 B.C.**
DYNASTY 18	1550-1295 B.C.
DYNASTY 19	1295-1186 B.C.
DYNASTY 20	1186-1069 B.C.
THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD	**1069-664 B.C.**
DYNASTY 21	1069-945 B.C.
DYNASTY 22	945-715 B.C.
DYNASTY 23	818-715 B.C.
DYNASTY 24	727-715 B.C.
DYNASTY 25	747-656 B.C.
LATE PHARAONIC PERIOD	**664-332 B.C.**
DYNASTY 26	664-525 B.C.
DYNASTY 27	525-404 B.C.
DYNASTY 28	404-399 B.C.
DYNASTY 29	399-380 B.C.
DYNASTY 30	380-343 B.C.
DYNASTY 31	343-332 B.C.

OBJECTIVES OF THE THESIS

This thesis explores the role of childhood in identity formation. The concept that childhood contributes to an individual's identity—how a person becomes who they are, and how childhood influences this—is universally relevant. However, whilst the influence of childhood is universal, exactly what 'childhood' means is not. Because the existence of children is a common thread linking all societies, it is unsurprising that every society has a different conception of what 'childhood' means, which members were considered children, and the freedoms, restrictions or expectations placed on those at this stage of life. The discussion here is framed within the context of ancient Egypt—specifically, the site of Deir el-Medina—but its approach is also relevant to those studying childhood in other areas.

Today, identity is considered equivalent to how we define and understand ourselves, influenced by our personal experiences. However, these experiences are themselves informed by how society defines and groups us, based on factors such as gender, ethnicity or religion. Identity therefore involves two inter-linked components: how society defines the individual, and how individuals define themselves. In exploring the role of childhood in identity formation, the aim of this thesis is to consider both components as they relate to children. The first reflects how society at Deir el-Medina constructed and conceptualised 'childhood', informing how children were treated, their scope for social participation, and the relationships they engaged in. The second reflects how children as individuals lived within these social structures, and how such personal experiences contributed to a sense of self. Only by considering both elements can a holistic picture be formed.

CONTEXT TO THE STUDY

1. CHILDHOOD ARCHAEOLOGY: AN OVERVIEW

1.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDHOOD ARCHAEOLOGY

Whilst archaeology today recognises children as important for study, it has only recently begun to consider the material record from their perspective. After Crawford and Lewis (2009: 5-6):

> *"Far from being fundamental to any discipline seeking to understand human societies, the study of childhood is usually at best marginalised or, at worst, overlooked completely".*

This is not unique to archaeology; general scholarly interest in childhood is a relatively recent phenomenon. Although calls for an 'anthropology of childhood' emerged in the 1950s (Erikson 1950; Mead 1951; Mead and Wolfenstein 1955), childhood studies arguably only began following Ariès' (1962) suggestion that there was no concept of childhood before the 18th century—children existed as biological individuals, but were considered as any other member of society. Responses to Ariès triggered a body of sociological studies into childhood; these have heavily influenced archaeological treatment of children.

It is not that the lack of archaeological attention to childhood reflects an absence of children in the past. Children are estimated to have formed at least a third to a half of most ancient populations (Chamberlain 1997: 250, 2000; Grimm 2000: 53; Hutson 2006: 104), if not the majority (Hiner and Hawes 1985: 14), although they are often physically under-represented in mortuary contexts (Crawford 1991, 1999: 25; Lillehammer 2010: 30). Their 'invisibility' within archaeological discourse is therefore disproportionate (Sofaer Derevenski 1994b; Roveland 1997; Kamp 2001a; Schwartzman 2006; Djurić *et al.* 2011). It has been argued that difficulties in identifying material traces of children's acts, not children themselves, fostered a lack of scholarly interest (Mizoguchi 2000: 141). However, this is the fault of limitations with archaeological methodologies. Even if a site does not present explicit evidence of children,

they were still present, and therefore users—if not producers—of some of its material, irrespective of archaeologists' ability to identify this (Hutson 2006: 105). After Chamberlain (1997: 249), "children contribute to the archaeological record whether or not we are competent to recognise them".

The first overt archaeological consideration of children occurred in the 1970s. At this time, growing interest in how site formation and geomorphic processes affect the archaeological record led to discussion of children as a factor in site formation processes.[1] However, material was not used to infer about children's lives, nor were investigations explicitly designed to study them. Rather, children were considered an explanation for unusual material find locations (Bonnichsen 1973; Watson 1979; Wilk and Schiffer 1979; Hammond and Hammond 1981; Hayden and Cannon 1983; Deal 1984; Schiffer 1987). Children were considered a disturbance to the archaeological record, using material in unexpected or abnormal ways and locations, and acting as a "distorting factor" to distribution (Hammond and Hammond 1981). The underlying methodological assumption was that adult behaviour is normative; by extension, children could only affect the adult material record, rather than act as creative forces in their own right. Being unpredictable and randomising, they were "unknowable" as members of society (Baxter 2005: 9).

A dedicated archaeology of childhood only emerged in the wake of gender archaeology. Gender archaeology reacted to unwritten academic expectations of an adult male 'norm' in past societies (McNeil 1992: 29). This outlook marginalised other social groups, most notably women. By extension, the perceived close relationship of women and children—especially in infancy—and shared domestic space contributed to the invisibility of children in research (Baker 1997). In short, children, the domestic, and female were all grouped as 'non-male' and denied unique identities. Gender critiques of 'male-centric' biases, and the reappraisal of women, first emerged in the 1980s and 1990s (for example Bertelsen, Lillehammer and Nass 1979; Gero 1983; Conkey and Spector 1984; Sørensen 1988; Engelstad 1991; Gero and Conkey 1991; Wylie 1991; Claassen 1992; Dobres 1995; Wright 1996; Lesick 1997; Hill 1998; Gilchrist 1999). This in turn led to consideration of other marginalised groups such as

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[1] Although Atkinson (1957) and Davies (1959) had earlier realised the importance of taphonomic effects on the archaeological record, it was not until the 1970s that it became a focus of study in its own right (Butzer 1971; Krause and Thorne 1971; Schiffer 1972, 1976; Wildesen 1973; Gladfelter 1977; Gifford 1977, 1978; Sullivan 1978; Wood and Johnson 1978).

children, whose care was acknowledged as impacting on female freedom (Díaz-Andreu and Lucy 2005: 7).

However, arguing that a lack of research into women explicitly led to a lack of research into children could itself be said to deny children an identity beyond an association with females. This is not to say that gender and childhood should be separated; cultural links between the concepts have long been understood (Golden 1993: 3; Arber and Ginn 1995; Lesick 1997: 35; Lucy 1997: 154; Harlow and Laurence 2002: 6). It is rather to suggest that viewing the 'rehabilitation' of children solely as an extension of that of women could be seen to still limit their independence (Crawford and Lewis 2009: 10).

The first childhood studies explored specific themes, such as socialisation, rites of passage, and parent-child relationships (Pollock 1983; Orme 1989; Wiedemann 1989; Golden 1993; Hanawalt 1993). However, children were typically discussed only as the object of parental concern, rather than having an active role in relationships (Crawford and Lewis 2009: 9). Similarly, socialisation was seen as a way of 'moulding' children into members of society, with the child an empty vessel which passively internalised behaviours and norms (Baxter 2000: 27). As with earlier studies of site formation processes, an assumption pervaded that children could not be studied as individuals in their own right, nor that they could meaningfully contribute to society.

The adult-centric approach has since been critiqued (Roveland 1997, 2000; Rogersdotter 2008); even at the time, Schildkrout (1978a: 110) warned that it "trivialised" childhood. Prioritisation of the adult perspective reflected the researchers' own conceptions of childhood, rather than those of the societies under study. In modern Western society, power relations are structured in favour of the adult (Qvortrup *et al.* 1994; James *et al.* 1998), and childhood is viewed as a period of leisure rather than meaningful social contribution. However, to suggest that children could only be interpreted in relation to the adult relegated the child from the subject of study to an object (Lillehammer, 2010: 24). Assuming that children in past societies could not engage in active social dialogues limited the agency that archaeologists allowed or expected them to express.[2]

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[2] In contrast, biological anthropologists have argued that 'childhood' as a period of growth is unique to hominids, possibly evolving to allow caregivers to provision still-dependant offspring with food but freeing the mother from nursing, and is therefore arguably better studied from adult perspectives of the benefits it provides

Fundamental changes in research attitudes occurred in the 1990s-2000s. Rather than viewing children as passive beings, studies began to approach them as individuals with their own social identities and agency (as detailed in Baxter 2005; Crawford and Lewis 2009; Lillehammer 2010, 2015). As this re-evaluation was partly an extension of gender discourse, many works have been closely tied to gender issues (Thomas 1989; Gilchrist 1997; Moore and Scott 1997; Sofaer Derevenski 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, 2000b; Baxter 2000, 2005; Joyce 2000; Laurence 2000; Stoodley 2000; Lucy 2005; Roméro 2009). However, research has also considered arenas for children's social engagement and participation, and the material traces these might leave, both in contexts of work[3] and play.[4] Scholarship now recognises children as active agents, able to shape the material record, participate in social activities, and engage in relationships with other members of society.

This change in attitudes is typified by the concept of the 'Child's World' (Lillehammer 1989, 2000, 2010, 2015), which highlighted the importance of understanding children's own lived experience.[5] A key feature of the Child's World is the recognition that children's identities are informed by more than just their relationships with adults. Earlier research ignored the importance of peer-structured activities, wherein children experiment with their own identities without adult involvement. However, modern sociological research suggests that children still perform effectively as social agents when separated from the adult world (James *et al.* 1998; Wynees 2000), and can make sense of their social environment without adult assistance (Roméro 2009: 20); they learn, innovate and "constantly reconstruct their structure of thought in order to make sense of the world" (White and Notkin White 1980: 53). Archaeological discussion has therefore grown to include consideration of arenas in which children learn to act without adult involvement, that which sociology terms 'peer culture' (Corsaro and Eder

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to them (Bogin 1998: 33-4). Similarly, Jenks (1996: 3) argues that sociologists can only understand childhood with reference to adult society and norms, but this still need not mean that the adult is prioritised.

[3] Much recent work has been devoted to discussing and reconstructing children's involvement in labour activities (Fisher 1990a, 1990b; Pigeot 1990; Finlay 1997; Kamp *et al.* 1999; Høgberg 1999, 2008; Greenfield 2000; Grimm 2000; Crown 2001, 2014; Bagwell 2002; Sharpe and van Gelder 2006; Bamforth and Finlay 2008).

[4] Another key research focus has been reconsidering the nature and materials of children's play (Formanek-Brunell 1992; Sillar 1994; Egan 1996; Park 1998; Wilkie 2000; Egan and Forsyth 2005; Luoti 2007; Lally and Ardren 2008; Rogersdotter 2008; Crawford 2009; Lewis 2009; Kohut 2011; Morrison and Crawford 2013).

[5] However, sociologists had already begun to consider such issues. After Hardman (1973: 87): "Children are possessors of their own autonomous culture which does not necessarily reflect the early development of adult culture...[one must study children] in their own right and not just as receptacles of adult teaching". Sigsgaard (1979) had previously coined the term 'Child's World' to refer to this sphere of activity.

1990). The result of such exploration has been an acknowledgement of children as active in multiple social spheres, having in each the ability to impact their social environment, intentionally or otherwise (Wartofsky 1983: 199; Mayall 1994a: 116-7; Mizoguchi 2000: 142; Wilkie 2000: 107).

This 'turn' in childhood archaeology also reflected a growing awareness that childhood must be approached contextually. As mentioned, earlier research tended to unconsciously project the scholar's own cultural background onto discussion of past societies; research approaches were driven by assumptions reflecting contemporary ideas of childhood. Research now began to stress the difference between 'child', which refers to biological age, and 'childhood'. Physically being a child, and the growth of the body, is a universal human experience. However, 'childhood' is more than this. It is the "package of experiences, attitudes, perceptions, expectations and provisions which are specific to the immature human and which derive from the way in which it is considered different from the mature adult" (Crawford and Lewis 2009: 7-8). In other words, childhood is socially constructed, and therefore unique to specific socio-cultural contexts (Jenks 1982, 1996; James and Prout 1990; James 1998; James, Jenks and Prout 1998; Prout 1999). The points at which childhood is considered to begin and end, and the treatment of individuals of different ages, are culturally dependant. Even the basic assumption that a child is a 'young person' imposes preconceptions. Indeed, being culturally specific, it cannot even be assumed that a distinct condition of 'childhood' actually exists in every culture (Storey and McAnany 2006: 54; Kohut 2011: 154; Bird-David 2015). Nor is childhood homogenous within a society; an individual's experience will differ depending on class, gender, or even developmental capabilities. Any analysis must therefore resolve the need for both macro-scale, societal-level understanding of childhood as a construction, and micro-scale analysis of individual experiences within those broader social structures.

Modern ideas of childhood as a time of innocence and leisure emerged only in the last few centuries, with the growth of the middle-classes and technological changes lessening the need for children to play an active economic role. This understanding of childhood, as a period of recreation rather than contribution, is meaningful only in relation to modern Western ideas of the human life-cycle. It is inapplicable to most past—and even many modern—societies, where children contribute economically from a young age (Nieuwenhuys 1996; McKechnie and Hobbs 2002), yet informed the research approaches of much early scholarship. Furthermore, 'child' as employed in modern English is itself a vague term, encompassing

people at a wide range of developmental stages (Chamberlain 1997: 249; Sofaer Derevenski 1997a: 193; Kamp 2001: 3; Baxter 2005: 96), again reflecting modern, culturally specific boundaries.

Perhaps the most important consideration with childhood archaeology, therefore, is the use of terminology referring to children themselves (Kamp 2001: 8; Halcrow and Tayles 2008; Crawford and Lewis 2009: 7-8). Words such as 'child' or 'infant' are so ingrained that they are unlikely to disappear from scholarship (Lally and Ardren 2008: 74), but they cannot simply be overlaid onto other societies. They are culturally loaded, and can impose modern connotations onto archaeological analysis. Even the most careful definition potentially excludes consideration of individuals at other stages, such as the unborn (Lillehammer 2010: 25). Childhood must be understood within the context of the society under study, and how they divided the life-cycle based on cultural and social norms specific to them.

Although childhood is now approached more sensitively, the use of terminology still requires further refinement. This is because the subjectivity of terms means that they can hold personal as much as cultural connotations. Predominantly in the context of mortuary remains, different reports may label individuals of the same biological age as 'infant', 'juvenile', 'child' or even 'sub-adult' based on the excavators' subjective interpretation of the osteological evidence and their understanding of these terms (Fahlander 2008: 17 compares osteoarchaeological categories employed across various reports).[6] This can occur even within the same edited volume (Tsaliki 2008: 179). It is only recently that universal systems for labelling the osteoarchaeological remains of sub-adults have been proposed (Baker *et al.* 2005).[7]

Subjectivity also arises from the criteria used to define these terms. The same terminology is employed differently across the numerous disciplines which have informed archaeological methods for studying childhood. Depending on which ideas are adopted in an archaeological context, therefore, this terminology can be used to different ends. In biological anthropology, an individual is typically described as an 'infant' until the point of weaning; a 'child' between

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[6] The potential for confusion is demonstrated by McCafferty and McCafferty (2006: 26), whose osteological report uses both 'Children' (those aged 1-13) and 'children' (a blanket term referring to their three sub-categories of Infant, Child and Juvenile).

[7] Others have suggested instead the use of less specific terms, such as "very young body" (Lally and Ardren 2008: 74). However, this equally risks prioritising subjective interpretation, and is unhelpfully vague; what is 'very young'?

weaning and the emergence of the first molar around 5.5-6.5 years; and a 'juvenile' from then until puberty (Bogin 1998: 18-22). This is different to developmental psychology, where 'child' spans from birth until adolescence, but is typically subdivided into 'infancy' (birth-0.5 years), 'young childhood' (0.5-5 years, including toddlerhood), and 'middle childhood' (6-10 years) (Levine 1998: 103). Furthermore, definitions can vary even within a discipline. In psychology, the definitions of childhood stages as presented by Freud (1905), Erikson (1950), Piaget (1953; also Piaget and Inhelder 1956) and Vygotsky (1962) differ widely, their parameters and characteristics being measured by different criteria—a product of differing 'schools' of psychological thought. There is no universal paradigm which can easily serve as reference for archaeology.

The approaches of other disciplines are themselves problematic in an archaeological context. Disciplines such as biological anthropology do not necessarily take into account the variability present in children's lived experience. Social factors play a role in development; studies have shown how different family environments shape a child's formation of relationships (Dunn 1986; Dunn *et al.* 1998). The findings of 'biological' disciplines cannot therefore serve as universal determinants (James 1998: 47). Using such approaches in archaeology prioritises biological criteria in defining what constitutes the child. Furthermore, medical and psychological definitions are clinically strict, and do not necessarily represent general mentality. For example, Leach (1983) divides infancy into 'newborn' (first few days); 'settled baby' (up to 6 months); and 'older baby' (up to 1 year). However, in everyday life, boundaries are far more fluid. Biological disciplines strictly distinguish stages such as infant, toddler, child and adolescent; in practice, different individuals may consider them part of childhood, discrete constructions, or liminal thresholds between birth-childhood and childhood-adulthood (Kamp 2006: 116).

In summary, childhood archaeology has increasingly become a field in its own right, and continues to refine its methodologies (Baxter 2008). However, despite this, childhood archaeology still has little impact on wider archaeological thought (Lillehammer 2008: 105; 2010: 16). Nonetheless, this reflects more the legacy of previous inattention than failings with modern research. In certain areas, treatment remains uneven; consideration of infants is thought to lag behind that of children of other ages (Lally and Ardren 2008: 62; though see Scott 1999; Finlay 2000; Bacvarov 2008; Lally and Ardren 2008; Lally and Moore 2008), and there have been calls for more studies combining both bioarchaeology and archaeology (Halcrow and Tayles 2008). However, almost half a century after Ariès, childhood

archaeology boasts numerous edited volumes (Sofaear Derevenski 1994a, 2000a; Moore and Scott 1997; Scott 1999; Orme 2001, 2009; Kamp 2002; Baxter 2005, 2006; Wileman 2005; Ardren and Hutson 2006; Crawford and Shepherd 2007; Dommasnes and Wrigglesworth 2008; Lally and Moore 2008; Hadley and Hemer 2014; Coşkunsu 2015), a dedicated Oxford handbook (Crawford *et al*. forthcoming), and scholarship spanning global archaeology.

1.2 CHILDHOOD RESEARCH WITHIN EGYPTIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

The above trajectory is not completely applicable to Egyptian archaeology.[8] Here, childhood research has arguably emerged within a slightly different intellectual background; children have been present in academic literature since early in the discipline. However, their presence in early scholarship should not be seen as reflecting the interest in children's lives integral to childhood archaeology. Rather, whilst nominally involving children, these earlier works had very specific aims and methods, which did not consider the children themselves. This stemmed from both the evidence typically employed, and research approaches traditional to Egyptian archaeology.

Both texts, and monumental art and architecture, have formed a focus of research since the discipline began. This is partly because of the high number of visible, standing monuments; partly because preservation of settlement sites, mostly situated on the Nile banks, is notoriously bad; and partly due simply to early scholars' prioritisation of the elite over the quotidien. Due to the nature of this evidence, Egyptian archaeology developed using two core approaches, art history and philology (Graves-Brown 2008: xi, xix). Children and women, especially royal and divine, are comparatively visible in monumental Egyptian art and text. Therefore, material has always been available for study. Egyptian archaeologists did not have to train themselves to 'remember' women or children as elsewhere.

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[8] Whilst considering specifically ancient Egyptian material, this thesis makes frequent use of theories and approaches developed by those studying childhood in other archaeological periods and areas, in the hope of creating a research design that is widely applicable. This reflects the authors' personal approach of considering Egyptology under the wider umbrella of archaeology, rather than as a discipline in its own right. To reflect this, the discipline is throughout consciously referred to as 'Egyptian archaeology' rather than 'Egyptology'. This comes with the caveat that it reflects only the author's own views, and that this banner incorporates those working on textual or artistic material as much as artefactual.

However, they were still visible only in specific contexts; such sources generally concern only 'elite' society, an issue unfortunately prevalent in most aspects of Egyptian archaeology. Furthermore, although children and women were discussed in literature, the aims of research were limited. Regarding research into women, many works before the 1980s were stylistic studies of individual pieces—statuettes and images of queens, goddesses and elites—drawing on both art historical and antiquarian traditions, and the prevalence of such depictions. Other foci included historiographies of royal women (Mahaffy 1915; Newberry 1943; Černý 1958a; Griffiths 1961; Samson 1977); examinations of goddesses (Piankoff 1934; Faulkner 1968; Bosse-Griffiths 1973); and elite titles (Blackman 1921; Fischer 1974; Galvin 1984). Studies considering women and social issues were occasionally offered: marriage (Černý and Peet 1927); adoption and inheritance (Gardiner 1941; Černý 1945; Allam 1972, 1973); and the social and economic positions of women (Edgar 1917; Smither 1948; Shore 1968; Oates 1969). However, these often focused on single documents, without extrapolating further into the wider position of women (though see Westermann 1924; Černý 1954a; Pestmann 1961; Simpson 1974a).

More consistent interest in the place of women is visible in literature from the late 1970s onwards (Lesko 1978, 1989; Allam 1981; D'auria 1983; Eyre 1984; Schoske and Wildung 1984; Schmitz 1985; Troy 1986; Ward 1986; Dodson 1987; Cruz-Uribe 1988; Fischer 1989). However, this still often focused on elites, and had other methodological limitations (see Robins 1993: 14-20). It has been argued that a proper, nuanced archaeology of gender only emerged within Egyptian archaeology from the 1990s (Graves-Brown 2008: x), later than elsewhere within archaeology. The methodological groundwork was largely established by Meskell (1999a, 2002b) and Wilfong (2002; Wilfong and Compton 1997), and has encouraged scholarship considering women in a wider social context (Robins 1993, 1994a, 1994b; Sweeney 1993, 2001, 2006, 2008, 2011; Tyldesley 1994; Capel and Markoe 1996; Meskell 1997; Eyre 1992, 1998; Wilfong 1999, 2007, 2010; Roth 1999; Toivari-Viitala 2001; Quirke 2007; Teeter and Johnson 2009), as well as concepts of sexuality (Parkinson 1995; Montserrat 1996; Reder 2000, 2008) and masculinity (Hare 1999; Parkinson 2008).

Scholarship related to children has largely followed similar trends. Early works favoured discussion of individual artefacts and tomb scenes depicting royal or divine children, studied through art historical approaches (Hall 1929; Glanville 1931; Yoyotte 1958; el-Khachab 1971; Stoof 1978). Material culture related to children would occasionally be presented (Crompton 1916; David 1979), but without discussion; interest in childhood material was not

accompanied by an interest in children themselves. Studies attempting to marry evidence of children to social issues only emerged in the 1990s, as will be discussed in a moment, from which point research into childhood has become noticeably more common. The 1990s can therefore perhaps be seen as the 'dawn' of childhood archaeology in an Egyptian context. In this sense, despite its specific research trajectories, childhood research within Egyptian archaeology was still preceded, if not influenced, by the emergence of gender methodologies.

Before outlining how childhood research has developed within Egyptian archaeology, it is necessary to understand its emergence in the context of wider research trends. There is a stereotype that Egyptian archaeology is resistant to methodological and theoretical developments, and retains elements of antiquarianism, rather than exploring the lives of ordinary people. Though exaggerated, there is arguably some basis to this claim. It is not entirely the fault of researchers; as noted, surviving evidence is frequently biased towards elite society. However, it is not that evidence of daily life is completely absent. Rather, a combination of evidence biases, and a persistent over-reliance on elite evidence, has made the discipline relatively late to explore social issues. As such, the trajectory of childhood research within Egyptian archaeology is one element of a wider research trend, that of a focus on elites turning to inclusion of everyday society. Although this is a somewhat simplified picture, it does seem that a sustained presence of research into 'non-elites' does not appear before the 1970s. The lack of social histories before this time has been widely noted (Redford 1979; Trigger *et al.* 1983; Moreno García 2014a); Häggman (2002: 6) describes early Egyptology as "great men concerned with great deeds".

In this sense, the emergence of social concerns within Egyptian archaeology appears at least a decade after the establishment of processualism, wherein archaeology became increasingly concerned with social questions about past populations. This situation has led to a dichotomy. On the one hand, it has been acknowledged within Egyptian archaeology itself that the field can be insular (Guksch 1989: 41; Meskell 1997; O'Connor 1997; Ucko 2003). It is worth mentioning in this context that Meskell (1998) remains the only Egyptological contribution to the *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*. As Graves-Brown (2008: xi) notes, "Montserrat...and Meskell...are unusual in Egyptological circles in using contemporary theory", and (2008: xviii) "by nature Egyptology is conservative, dwelling upon the elite, with much less work on the silent majority". Here, 'Egyptology' is compared to, and placed within, the wider umbrella of archaeology. However, at the same time, there is often a conscious attempt to reconcile this view with an idea that Egyptian archaeology is somehow different

(Moreno García 2014a); "the discipline is small compared to archaeology or anthropology...the already extensive list of what a trained Egyptologist needs to know, the importance given to learning an ancient language (as well as modern languages) and a chronology of over 3000 years, perhaps leaves less time for learning theory" (Graves-Brown 2008: xviii). This has possibly been influenced by the pedigree that 'Egyptologists' can boast in terms of spearheading early archaeology. However, to misquote Willey and Phillips (1958: 2), "Egyptology *is* archaeology, or it is nothing". That is the approach of this thesis.

Since Egyptian archaeology developed research interests into childhood later than in wider archaeology, its aims and methods are also less developed. There has never been a colloquium dedicated specifically to childhood in Ancient Egypt; perhaps this demonstrates the limited number of scholars actively studying it. Instead, Egypt usually features as a geographical area in conferences about childhood in antiquity (Théodoridès *et al.* 1980; Dasen 2004; Guimier-Sorbets and Morizot 2010; Hermary and Dubois 2012; Nenna 2012a; Beaumont *et al.* 2015). On the one hand, this allows for cross-cultural comparisons and an appreciation of Egypt's situation within the wider contemporary world. However, in the absence of research specific to childhood in Egypt, it risks preventing progression beyond ideas of childhood as 'universal', without adequately exploring the cultural specifics that shape each society's experience.

Dedicated volumes on childhood are also few. Tellingly, Toivari-Viitala's summary of scholarship (2001: 183) required only one short paragraph. There are only two core books dealing with childhood in Ancient Egypt. The first is *Growing up in Ancient Egypt* (Janssen and Janssen 1990). It is aimed at a popular audience, but nonetheless offers an excellent overview of evidence for a range of topics relating to childhood. Furthermore, it is critical of this evidence, noting that many aspects of childhood were not recorded by the Egyptians, and others are presented in a specific manner or with specific biases (Robins 1994c: 232).

The second text is *Das Kind im alten Ägypten* (Feucht 1995). This discusses the child's place in both family and social life, focussing primarily on textual and artistic sources. However, despite containing a comprehensive catalogue of evidence, it has been critiqued for a lack of analysis (Roth 1998: 120; Robins 2000: 148); its diachronic approach, which assumes continuity across time (Janssen 1997b: 228–31; Roth 1998: 121; Robins 2000: 47-8; Toivari-Viitala 2001: 183); and lack of consideration of biases in textual evidence (Roth 1998: 121; Robins 2000: 48). Furthermore, its approach to childhood tends to assume an ascribed

position, discussed from the adult perspective. In part, this is influenced by limitations of the evidence; as with all ancient cultures, Egyptian text and art was produced by and for adults, and therefore predominantly displays adult perceptions of children, and ideals of childhood as a concept, rather than information about children themselves (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 183). However, the treatment of the child as an object of study, rather than an active subject, bears similarity to research attitudes of the 1970s-1980s discussed earlier. Therefore, whilst the book provides a comprehensive list of evidence, it has limited research goals and certain methodological problems.

Research into childhood has been more visible within journal literature. Aspects of this continue to draw strongly on established traditions of art history and research into religion, with studies of child divinities (Quaegebeur 1991; Desroches-Noblecourt 1997; Dégardin 2000; Verhoeven 2002, 2007; Budde *et al.* 2003; Donnat 2012; Peppler 2013) and depictions of children (Mekhitarian 1987; Whale 1989; Abdalla 1991; Goelet 1993; Stadelmann 1999) remaining constantly present. Nonetheless, research into children in social contexts has also emerged.

Pregnancy and birth have proven consistently popular subjects. However, although broadly related to childhood, these can only really be studied from a maternal perspective. Beyond research into pregnant mothers (Robins 1994a; Galpaz-Feller 2000; Feucht 2004; Spieser 2004; Dupras *et al.* 2015), most studies of birth are limited by available evidence. This usually showcases the role of 'magic', medicine and ritual, exploited exclusively by the adult—mother, midwife or otherwise—in such contexts (Altenmüller 1965, 1983, 1986, 1996, 2004; Kolta 1993; Aboubacry Moussa 1994; Leitz 2000; Roth and Roehrig 2002; Wegner 2009). The emphasis on magic in birthing was itself partly an outlet for adult fears for infant wellbeing, which permeated most aspects of conception, birth and rearing (Stevens 2009: 10); studies have also considered the ritual potential of stillbirths for exploitation by adults (Frankfurter 2006; Manniche 2006: 108-9).

The child's place within both family and society has also been explored. In the context of family, discussions include the obligations and expectations imposed on children (Feucht 1995; Huebner 2013: 65-80), and discipline (Feucht 1990; Wheeler *et al.* 2007, 2013). Research into the child's place in wider society tends towards issues of socialisation, growing up and rites of passage (Janssen and Janssen 1990: 90-8; Bailey 1996; Grunert 2002; Graves-Brown 2006); the position of children in society (Feucht 1986, 1995; Montserrat 1993;

Fischer-Elfert 2001; Marlow 2001; Kunz-Lübcke 2007; Harrington 2009: 139-44; Zillhardt 2009; Marshall 2015a); and roles or positions held by children (Kaiser 1983; Feucht 1985, 1995; Mathieu 2000). Once again, such research primarily discusses adult attitudes towards, and treatment of, children (Cole 1986: 29-37). As mentioned, this is partly constrained by evidence; textual sources, especially, stress the importance placed on having children—primarily male—to perpetuate the family, support parents and maintain mortuary cults (Harrington 2007: 55). However, even with the limitations of evidence traditionally employed, adult perceptions of childhood are still prioritised over the children themselves.

Generally, Egyptological scholarship focuses more on death than life; studies of childhood are no different. This is to an extent dictated by preservation—mortuary evidence survives more frequently than settlements, as cemeteries tend to be located further into the higher desert ground. It is also a result of general themes within Egyptian culture, which dwells heavily on the funerary and afterlife. Demography furthermore plays a role; an estimated 20% of infants died before age 1, and a further 30% before reaching 5 (Tristant 2012: 19). Statistical analysis shows that at certain cemeteries, almost half of those interred were children (Patch 2007).

Whereas in many early reports, children's graves were either omitted or passed over briefly, they now form the subject of many works.[9] There has also been statistical analysis of the material culture typically placed with children, its change over time, and how material intersects with gender and age (Meskell 1994a, 1999a; Stoof 1995; Marshall 2012; Nenna 2012b). Wider, theoretical studies of the mortuary treatment of children have also appeared (Lustig 1997; Dunand 2004; Harrington 2007). Nonetheless, though involving children directly, such studies still arguably reveal more about adults than children. A burial combines physical remains with material signifiers of the individual (Gillespie 2001: 75). However, children's graves represent individuals who have not necessarily built up a lifetime of materially-reflected experience, nor passed transitional stages. Children's burial goods are determined by surviving adult kin, and may represent family or lineage rather than individual concerns. Likewise, Meskell (1994a) and Dunand (2004) consider child burial as an emotional act, identifying attachment and concern in funerary treatment, and therefore overt

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[9] Discussion of the problems with early treatment of children's graves can be found in Dunand (2004) and Tristant (2012). A selection of the wide range of studies includes: Hassanein *et al.* (1985); Leblanc and Fekri (1990); Kroeper (1994); Filer (1998); Herold (1999); Janot (2001, 2003); Germer (2003); Roehrig (2005); Patch (2007); Gobeil (2009); Grimm (2009); Górka and Rzepka (2011); Görg (2011); Power (2012); Tristant (2012); Power and Tristant (2016).

adult decision-making. Problems with the use of burials to reconstruct childhood are discussed further in Chapter 6.

Bioarchaeological studies have also become common, exploring issues such as infant feeding and weaning (Dupras *et al.* 2001; Dupras and Tocheri 2007); growth (Kaczmarek 2003; Tocheri *et al.* 2005; Wheeler *et al.* 2011); and health and illness (Rudney 1981; Randl-Gadora and Großschmidt 2001a, 2001b; Jardine 2006; Wheeler 2012). Due to the nature of the evidence—the child's body itself—such studies inevitably address issues which affect the child firsthand, although more could be done to consider them in relation to their impact on daily life and lived experience.

Therefore, within the last decade especially, treatment of children within the study of ancient Egypt has rapidly progressed. However, much of this deals with adult attitudes towards childhood. This is partly dictated by evidence; texts and art are prevalent compared to other sources, but these predominantly display adult perceptions and ideals. Children are studied largely in relation to adults, as 'passive' beings. To illustrate: in his study of Egyptian literature as a tool for socialisation, Eyre (2011: 187) suggests that "education is not understood as targeting a process of individual self-development, but a process of mimicking adult behaviour and adult actions; acculturation into a conventional adult role". Therefore, whilst important work has been done, it inevitably reveals more about social perspectives of what a child is and should be than the children themselves, and even the evidence for this is highly selective. In this respect, Egyptian archaeology is now where much of the rest of archaeology was about twenty years ago.

Perhaps the main obstacle to further progress is that, whilst many studies consider 'childhood', there has been little explicit discussion of what this means in an Egyptian context. There has been limited consideration of how the Egyptians conceptualised and defined childhood (though see Eyre 2011: 181, 187), including possible rites of passage marking 'stages' of childhood (Bailey 1996; Grunert 2002; Graves-Brown 2006), and some studies of the vocabulary used to refer to children (Goedicke 1961; Schenkel 1985; MacDonald 1994; Feucht 1995: Chapter 10). However, when literature discusses a social group of 'children', it typically still does so from a modern Western perspective. If anything, research has missed a step, having delved straight into exploring children without addressing what a 'child' actually was in an ancient Egyptian context.

This ties into a larger issue; there is limited understanding of the Egyptian lifecycle generally (though see Meskell 2000a). In order to discuss whether children were actually acknowledged as a distinct social group from adults, the wider perspective of Egyptian conceptualisations of the lifecycle as a whole must be acknowledged. Although this thesis is concerned with only one element of it, the progression to adulthood, a person's 'becoming' does not stop at majority; it does not end until death. Childhood is one part of a much longer lifetime.

The human lifecycle has increasingly become a scale of study (Gilchrist 2000). Whilst modern Western society envisages a 'life course', a linear progression from birth to death, many societies conceptualise a 'lifecycle', where death is not the end but part of a loop which continues with re-birth in some form. In this case, children might be considered similar to the elderly nearing the end of the cycle, or even the recently deceased (Welinder 1998: 191). How progression through life is conceptualised also varies between cultures. We cannot assume that progression was identical for all members of society; age-related identities may be 'socially controlled', with certain groups either prevented from reaching certain stages, or others given an adult social identity even from birth (Crawford and Lewis 2009: 10). Among the Xhosa of South Africa, an uncircumcised male is considered a child regardless of age; this also affects his children's status, even if they themselves are circumcised (Bugarin 2006: 15). Neither can we assume that all stages of the lifecycle are open to both genders. Meskell (2002: 425) argues that progression in Egypt was marked more distinctly for males, and Beaumont (1994: 86-7) suggests that after "young childhood", the course of Roman males and females differed greatly, with women entering adulthood earlier in preparation for life as a wife and mother.

The Egyptians had a concept of a lifetime, the ꜥḥꜥ.w ('standing'). Each individual accumulated experiences and traits throughout life, which were used to judge their fate upon death. However, death did not mark the end, as the deceased would be 're-born' in the afterlife. The Egyptian understanding seems therefore to have elements of both course and cycle. There are also indications that the Egyptians recognised that this journey contained discrete parts. Several sources depict the same individual at different stages of life (Peck 1978: 73), such as the three Old Kingdom statues of *Mtti* (Brooklyn Museum items 50.77, 51.1 and 53.222), with each depiction presumed to represent a particular stage.[10] However, these sources cannot

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[10] With the exception of Gods and Kings, there are few Egyptological conventions for the transcription of Egyptian personal names into English (see Gardiner 1950: 434-8). Therefore, the convention for this thesis is

be assumed to reflect generally-held perceptions. Little research has been directed towards understanding the specifics of progression within life. Was childhood delineated from adulthood, and when? Within childhood, were further stages marked, and by what means? Robins (1999: 56) suggests that commonly expected milestones within a society are birth, puberty, adulthood, marriage, parenthood and death. However, apart from the passage from death to the afterlife, we know little about how or even whether the Egyptians marked the completion of such stages, and therefore little about how childhood was understood.

To conclude, in recent years, knowledge of Egyptian childhood has unarguably progressed greatly, and there is now a groundwork upon which to build. However, without a better understanding of the fundamental issues outlined above, it cannot progress further.

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that the names of Gods and Kings are transcribed in their recognised English form (Osiris for Egyptian *Wsir*, Amenhotep for *Imn-ḥtp*), but those of individuals remain in transliteration (*Nḫ.t-Mn.w*, *Ḏḥwty-ḥr-mk.t=f*).

2. LOCATION AND DATA-SET

2.1 DEIR EL-MEDINA: HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Whilst grounded in ancient Egypt, this thesis is not a diachronic study of Egyptian material as a whole. It focuses on one specific period, the New Kingdom, and one specific site occupied throughout this time, Deir el-Medina. The village of Deir el-Medina is located on the western bank of the Nile, near modern Luxor (ancient Thebes). It is one of the most well studied sites in Egypt; the sheer quantity of research can be seen in Demarée *et al.* (2007). This is largely due to its unique level of preservation. Unlike most settlements, which were located on the banks of the Nile and have now largely been covered by either the shifting course of the river or modern urbanisation, Deir el-Medina was located two kilometres into the desert, in a small valley beside the hill known as Qurnet Marai, with the valley of the Kings to the North and Valley of the Queens to the West (Fig. 1).
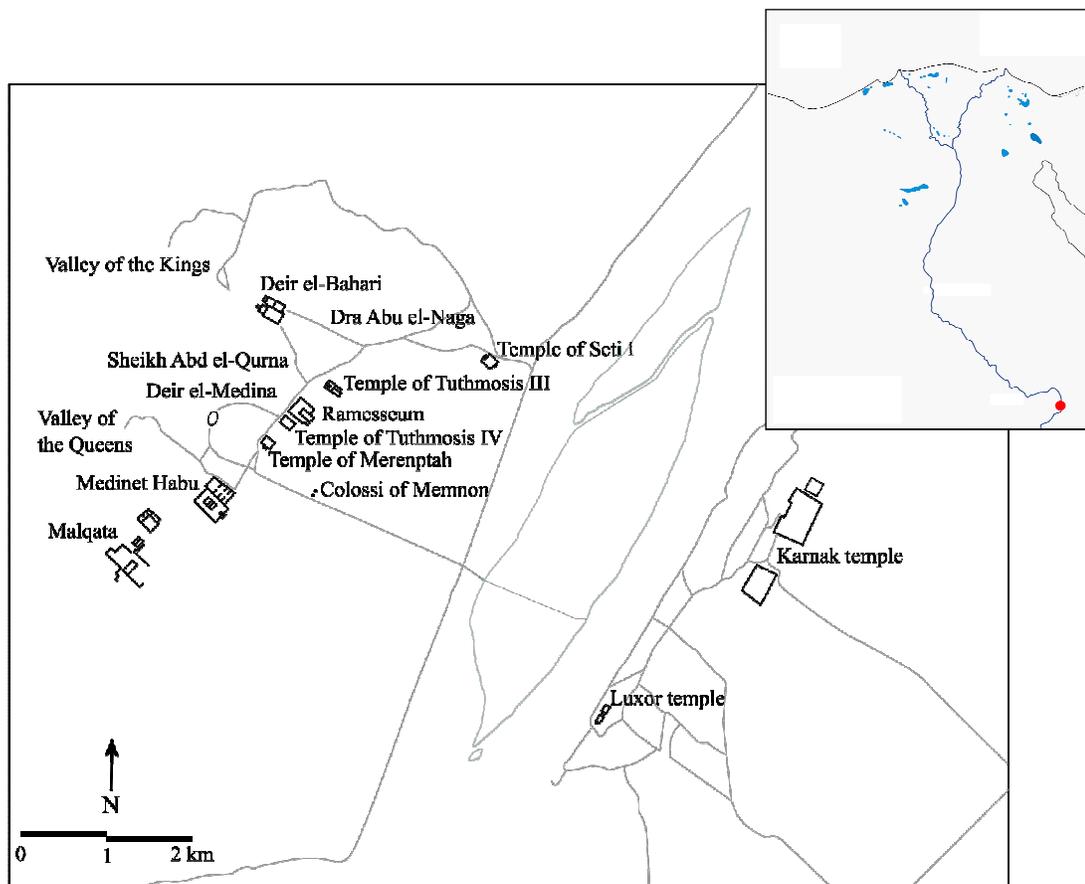
FIG. 1: THE LOCATION OF DEIR EL-MEDINA IN RELATION TO OTHER THEBAN SITES (AFTER BAINES AND MALEK 1980: 85)

The village itself is located in the centre of this valley, flanked by two necropolises to the East and West (Fig. 2). Numerous votive chapels and temples spanning the history of the site's occupation lie to the North of the village, and a 52m-deep pit to the North-East. Termed the *grand puits* ('Great Pit') by excavators, its purpose is debated (Klemm and Klemm 2009; Driaux 2011), though in later times it served as a rubbish pit (Bruyère 1950, 1953: 9-70).

Deir el-Medina was a state-planned settlement, housing the craftsmen working on royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings and their families. Its ancient name was *p3 dmi*, 'the village' (Valbelle 1984, 1985a: 114). The administrative terms for the necropolis region as a whole—including Deir el-Medina—were *p3 ḫr*, 'the tomb' and *st m3ꜥ.t*, 'place of truth' (Černý 1973: 6-67; Ray 1981; Ventura 1986: 1-63).[11] It is from the latter that the craftsmen gained their official title of *sḏm ꜥš m st m3ꜥ.t*, 'servant in the place of truth'.
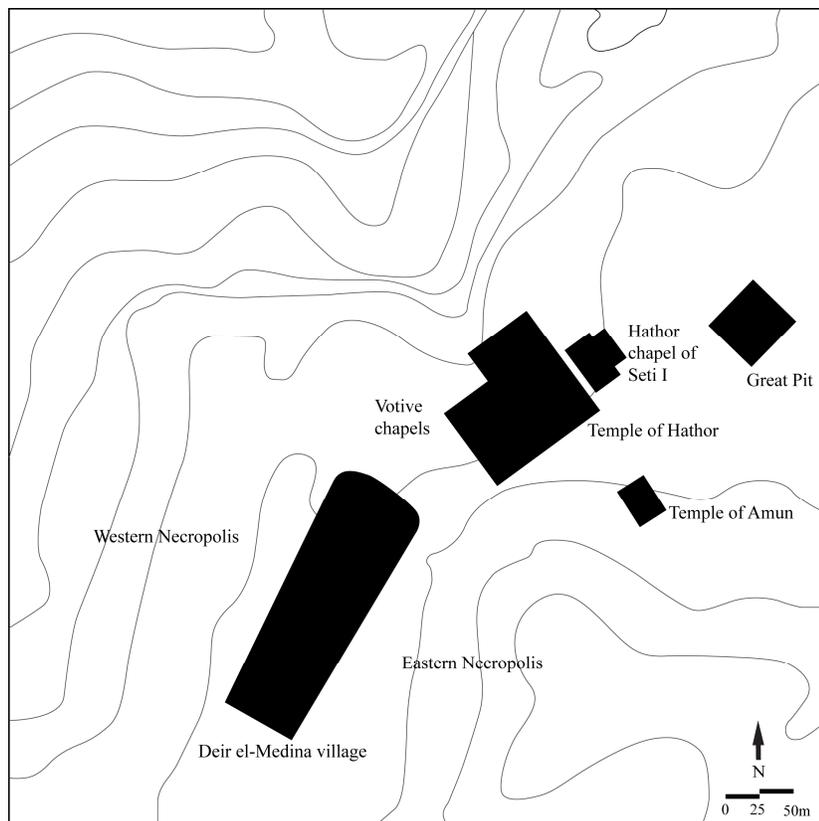
FIG. 2: DEIR EL-MEDINA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS (AFTER TOIVARI-VIITALA 2011: FIG. 3)

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[11] The term *st m3ꜥ.t* was also used to designate other places at other times, suggesting a locational or relational attitude to place (Černý 1973: 37, 40, 64-7).

The location was initially used for mortuary purposes. A tomb to the West, P.1261 (Bruyère 1934: 4-6, Pl. 1) dates to the Middle Kingdom, and another to the North-East, P.1200 (Bruyère 1930: 100-6, Pl. 1) dates to the Second Intermediate Period. The first evidence for a settlement comes from early Dynasty 18; cartouches of Thutmosis I (c.1504-1492 B.C.) were found stamped on bricks of the first phase of the enclosure wall (Bruyère 1939: 30; Anthes 1943: 56). However, little evidence of the earliest occupation remains, consisting only of some votive chapels to the North edge of the village, and a few houses on either side of the road in the Southern part of the site (Fig. 3).[12] The site continued to be occupied throughout the early 18th Dynasty, with stamped bricks of Thutmosis III, Thutmosis IV, Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) found (Bruyère 1939: 30).

Deir el-Medina was possibly abandoned during the reign of Akhenaten, as work on the Valley of the Kings stopped with the court's move to the new site of Amarna in Middle Egypt. It has been suggested that the occupants were transplanted to the workmen's village outside Amarna, though this is debated (Valbelle 1985a: 125; Kemp 1987: 43-9, 2005: 273; Davies 1999: xviii).
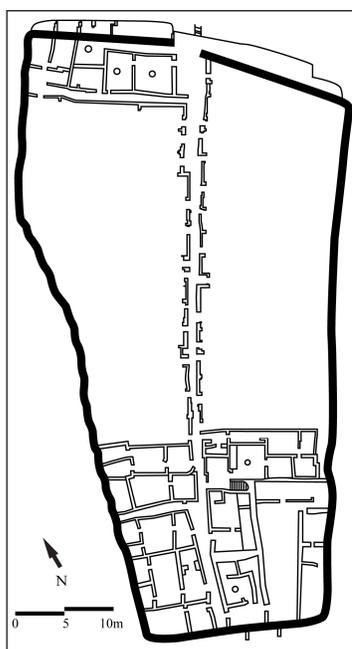
FIG. 3: PLAN OF THE EARLIEST VILLAGE (AFTER TOIVARI-VIITALA 2011: FIG. 4)

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[12] It is possible that the village was actually founded even earlier than Thutmosis, under the reign of Amenhotep I (c.1526-1506 B.C.), as he was deified by the later occupants (Černý 1927b, 1935b, 1942, 1972; Sweeney 2008). However, no direct evidence remains (Davies 1999: xviii).

The craftsmen returned to Deir el-Medina at least by the reign of Horemheb (c.1323-1295 B.C.), when the workforce was reorganised and the site expanded (Bruyère 1939: Pl. 5-6; Černý 1973: 101; Bogoslovsky 1980: 89; Keller 1984: 119; Kemp 1987: 45; Uphill 2000); such a reorganisation is referenced on O.BM 5624. However, documentary evidence only begins in earnest in Dynasty 19. The site was occupied consistently from this point and throughout the Ramesside period (Dynasties 19-20); at its peak, it comprised 68 houses (Fig. 4; McDowell 1999: 9). Dwellings were also built outside the enclosure walls, amongst the tombs and chapels (Valbelle 1985a: 120-1); possibly this reflects an expanding population, or the dwellings belonged to those of lower wealth (Meskell 1994b: 199, 2000c: 267). A votive chapel to Hathor was also founded, later the site of the Coptic monastery which gives Deir el-Medina ('monastery of the town') its modern name.

The site was eventually abandoned during the reign of Ramesses XI (c.1107-1078 B.C.), possibly in part due to increasing Libyan incursions (see Haring 1992, 1993; Moreno García 2014b). Weiss (2015: 23) instead believes that abandonment was gradual, caused by changes in royal burial practices. The villagers are believed to have resettled in and around the mortuary temple of Medinet Habu (Fig. 1), where they were transitioned to more general administrative work (Černý 1973: 370-1; Valbelle 1985a: 123-5; though see Peden 2011: 288). However, Deir el-Medina was still considered an important part of the landscape, and various burials and dwellings were scattered around the site from the Late through to the Coptic periods, often reusing older tombs (Castel and Meeks 1980; Montserrat and Meskell 1997; Meskell 1999b: 195-8; Strudwick 2003: 176-8).
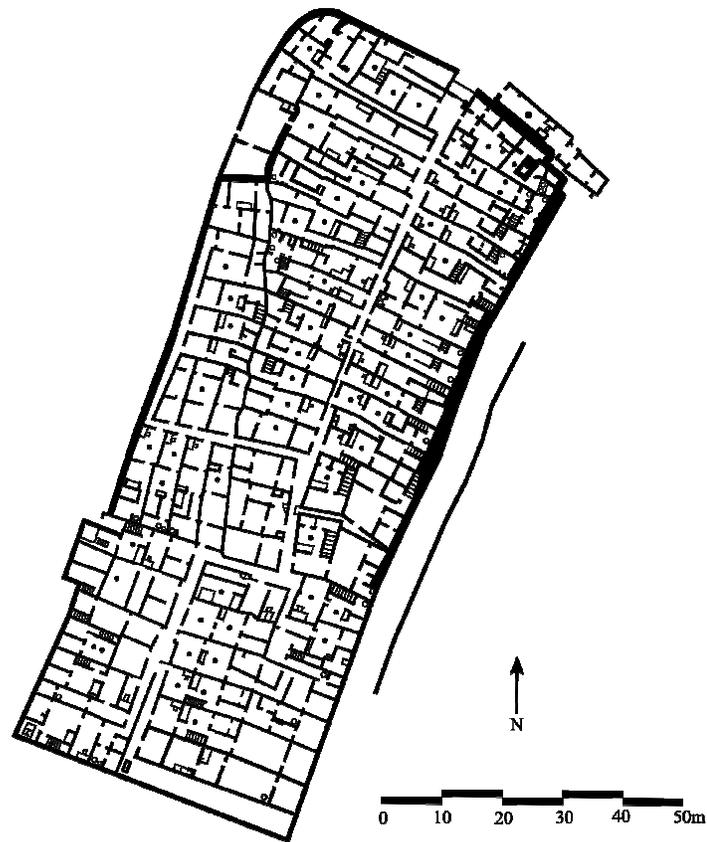
FIG. 4: DEIR EL-MEDINA IN THE RAMESSIDE PERIOD (AFTER BRUYÈRE 1939: PL. 7)

2.2 THE OCCUPANTS OF DEIR EL-MEDINA

The population of Deir el-Medina was a mixture of Egyptian, Nubian and Levantine (Ward 1963, 1989a, 1989b, 1994; Shisha-Halevy 1978; Hulin 1982). They were mostly skilled craftsmen, and had much higher literacy rates than was normal in Egyptian society, especially female literacy (Janssen 1992; Sweeney 1993; for comparative estimates of literacy rates elsewhere in Egypt see Baines and Eyre 1983; Baines 2007: 49-53). Though problematic, they have been termed 'middle class' (Meskell 1999a: 141). Although 'class' is a loaded term, it is difficult to find completely neutral language to describe the social situation of Deir el-Medina; Richards (2005: 13-18) discusses the applicability of the word 'class' when describing ancient Egyptian society. Elsewhere, Meskell (2002: 13) uses 'stratum', and simply a binary distinction between 'elite' and 'non-elite', but that is reductive in its own right.

The workmen received state rations for their work (Černý 1954b, 1973; Shinichi 1990; Janssen 1975a: 455-93, 1997a: Chapters 1-2; Mandeville 2014). These were divided into monthly deliveries of grain, termed *di.w* and *dni*, as well as supplies of pottery, fish, wood, cakes, confectionaries, oil, meat, salt and other luxuries, grouped under the term *ḥtri* (Mandeville 2014: xiv). These were delivered by external teams of *corvée* labourers called *smd.t*, who supplied the various communities in the area (Černý 1973: Chapters 13-16, 20; Valbelle 1985a: Chapter 4; Janssen 1997a: Chapter 3; Janssen *et al.* 2003). The *smd.t* teams covered a wide range of roles, with different groups responsible for bringing water (Cristophe 1953-4; Eichler 1990, 1991; Allam 1994), fish (Christophe 1967; Janssen 1997a: 37-54; Antoine 2006), pottery (Janssen 1975a: 485-8; Frood 2003), wood (Shinichi 1998) and cleaning laundry (Davies and Toivari-Viitala 2000; Janssen and Janssen 2002: 1-12). The workmen also had the scope to supplement their income through farming and 'private-sector' craft activities (McDowell 1992a; Cooney 2006, 2007; Sweeney 2006).

Although the artisans were largely of a similar social 'class', they were overseen by a scribe and two foremen, together known as the 'captains'; the craftsmen were split into two 'sides' for work purposes, *smḥ.y* ('left') and *wnm.y* ('right'), with one foreman per side (Peden 2011 provides an overview of the composition of the workforce). Being intermediaries between the craftsmen and central government, the higher positions of the captains translated into greater material wealth and influence (Davies 1999: xix). Below the official scribe were two *smd.t*-scribes, responsible for recording the deliveries of goods (Ventura 1986: 65, 68; Davies 1999: 123-42). The society was not therefore egalitarian, but the artisans were still wealthier than the majority of the Egyptian population.

At the other end of the social scale, the service of servants is well attested (Černý 1973: 175-81; Valbelle 1985a: 123, 174, 256-7; Janssen 1997a: 23-36; Hofmann 2006). It is unclear exactly where the servants dwelt; they may have lived outside the village (McDowell 1992a: 201), especially as in many cases servants were shared between families, who were allotted 'days' of service. For example, the same servants are mentioned in relation to different groups on O.Glasgow D.1925.83 and O.Ashmolean 90. Similarly, there is evidence that some families had access to large numbers of servants, who could not possibly all have lived in the house. P.BM 10055 line 3 mentions five servants belonging to *P3-nb* (Černý 1929c), and O.BM 5631 mentions twelve servants of the author's father (Černý and Gardiner 1957: Pl. 88). However, there exist cases of servants described as being born 'in house', as in the chapel of *Nfr-ḥtp* (Janssen 1982b: 109-15). It is possible that this refers to children of servants living

with their 'masters'. Furthermore, O.Ashmolean 90 recto 3 distinguishes between servants *nty m niw.t* ('of Thebes') and *nty m-ẖb* ('inside'). It is plausible that this referred to where the servants lived; some were based in Thebes, and others 'inside', *i.e.* within the houses of those they served.

Although many of the occupants of Deir el-Medina had originally come from elsewhere, positions had a tendency to be hereditary; this is most observable with higher ranks such as foreman. However, outsiders were occasionally brought in to fill managerial roles—most famously *Rꜥ-ms*, owner of tombs TT7, TT212 and TT250. *Rꜥ-ms* was 'hired' by the Vizier *Pꜣ-sr*, an event recorded on O.Cairo 25671 (Černý 1933: 55, 75). Similarly, there are indications that workmen could themselves be promoted to higher ranks. Davies (1999: 120, 146-7) discusses the careers of several workmen who seem later to have become scribes responsible for recording *smd.t* deliveries. The hierarchy of the workforce, and specifically how children were introduced and progressed through the ranks, forms the subject of Chapter 5.

2.3 EXCAVATION AND RESEARCH HISTORY

Deir el-Medina and its environs have been consistently excavated for over a century. For an overview of its excavation history see McDowell (1999: 23-7), Toivari-Viitala (2011: 10-11) and Gobeil (2015). The first known artefact to come from Deir el-Medina, a limestone statue, appeared on the Luxor antiquities market in 1777 (Toivari-Viitala 2011: 10), with various more artefacts appearing in private collections over the next century. The first attested actual excavation, of several tombs, was undertaken by John Gardner Wilkinson between 1827-8 (Bierbrier 1982: 127-33). Further excavations, largely of the tombs and temples, were undertaken in the early 20th century by Baraize (1914), Schiaparelli (1923) and Möller, later published by Anthes (1943: 50-72). Following World War 1, the French Institute (IFAO) held a permanent concession to work on the site, the first seasons being led by Gauthier (Foucart 1917; Gauthier 1917, 1920), followed by Bruyère. The area was subsequently excavated systematically from 1922-1951 (Bruyère 1924, 1925a, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929a, 1930, 1933, 1934, 1937a, 1937b, 1939, 1948, 1952a, 1952b, 1952c, 1953). It was early in this period that the site was identified as a workmen's village (Černý 1929a), with the main part of the settlement excavated between 1934-5.

Excavations were halted in 1952 due to political unrest, and would not begin again until 1970 (Castel and Meeks 1980). Castel's main aim was to complete the survey of the site, though he also excavated several Late Period tombs built after abandonment of the village. Further excavations in 1974-5 (Bonnet and Valbelle 1975, 1976) clarified the origin of the village and its developmental phases. More recently, between 2004-6, a joint venture ran between the IFAO and Louvre (Mathieu 2004: 638-44; Pantalacci 2005: 448-50; Pantalacci and Denoix 2006: 376-8), focussing on the *grand puits*. Generally, however, since the early 2000s the focus has turned to conservation work across the site.[13]

In terms of the occupants of Deir el-Medina, most work has focused on the organisation and life of the workmen (importantly Černý 1973; Bierbrier 1982; Valbelle 1985a; Janssen 1997a) and the *corvée* labourers supplying them (discussed above). More recently, dedicated studies have been undertaken into the women of the site (Toivari-Viitala 2001; Sweeney 2006, 2008, 2011; Donker van Heel 2016). Some studies have touched on childhood at Deir el-Medina (Meskell 1994a, 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2000b; Janot 2001, 2003), though these rely solely on burial evidence, and Meskell's works especially are repetition of the same examples. There has to date been no comprehensive study into childhood using all available sources. Estimates of household sizes vary—Valbelle (1985b: 84) and Koltsida (2007: 12) suggest that the average family had 2-3 children at any one time; Kemp (2005: 157) proposes there could be as many as 6; Lesko (1994: 6) that most families had 8-10 children over their lifetime; and Friedman (1985: 97 Note 72) up to 15. However, all estimates concur that children formed at least half of the demography. In the absence of dedicated studies into children at the site, information is missing on half of the population—arguably the most important half, as children were essential for the site's continuation, and the continuity or evolution of cultural practices. We cannot truly claim to understand life at Deir el-Medina unless we understand the experiences of its children.

2.4 DATA-SET OF THE STUDY

As a result of both its sheltered location and subsequently good preservation, and the skilled nature of its occupants, Deir el-Medina provides artistic, textual and material evidence in abundance, with which the lives and identities of children can be explored. Furthermore, the

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[13] Online annual reports of this activity are available on the IFAO website, accessible at: www.ifao.egnet.net/ifao/recherche/rapports-activites/.

lack of later re-occupation means that the material is largely contemporaneous with the occupation proper. Deir el-Medina therefore proves ideal for a self-contained analysis of childhood identity. This study draws upon multiple strands of evidence: textual records detailing both formal business of the craftsmen and their daily correspondence; artistic depictions of children on various media; the burials of children from the necropolises surrounding the site; and material evidence from the village and surrounding dumps.

Textual evidence is discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, and a catalogue of texts which mention children is provided in Appendix 1. Those compiled in Appendix 1 do not have any secondary literature referenced in-text; full bibliographies for each are contained within the Appendix. Other texts have primary references cited. Texts from Deir el-Medina number in the thousands; many were found in and around the village, and others in and around the Theban necropolis, discarded by the craftsmen working there. These are written on both papyri and ostraca, sherds of pottery or limestone repurposed as writing and drawing media. Whilst most texts are published, a significant number still await full publication. Of these, many are transcribed in Černý's notebooks at the Griffith Institute, Oxford. Due to practical constraints, the textual data-set of this thesis includes only those fully published, or within Černý's notebooks. Whilst ideal, it would have been impractical to visit all institutions where Deir el-Medina texts are housed but uncatalogued; the data-set used here still amounts to the majority of texts known, and it is believed that they are representative of yet unpublished material. The primary publications of texts are DEM and PDEM. Texts from Deir el-Medina are also included in many general catalogues of Egyptian texts (for example KRI; Černy and Gardiner 1957) or as publications of individual or small groups of material; a full bibliography of such publications is given in Demarée *et al.* (2007). The online *Deir el-Medina database* (Donker van Heel *et al.* 2007) contains a collated list of all published texts from Deir el-Medina, searchable according to criteria such as subject or individuals mentioned.

Unfortunately, especially for ostraca, due to the nature of the material texts were often found fragmentary, broken or faded. As such, translation of the contents frequently requires a degree of reconstruction, if not interpretation. Many of the discussions within Chapters 4 and 5 rely on a small number of incomplete texts, which creates caveats around any conclusions. Another problem is that few texts come with a secure provenance from within the village. Huge numbers were found in the *grand puits* where they had been discarded, meaning they are completely without stratigraphic context and can be dated only on palaeographic or

contextual grounds. Otherwise, especially in the years before the IFAO concession, some texts were bought on the Luxor antiquities markets rather than being excavated from within the site itself. Only a minority of ostraca bear an excavator's note detailing within which sector or house a text was found; without a specific find context for many texts, a dimension of potential analysis is missing to us. Difficulties with the use of texts as artefacts are discussed in Appendix 1, and also throughout the thesis where relevant to the conclusions drawn from these sources.

Mortuary evidence is discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, and a catalogue of children's graves is provided in Appendix 2. Tombs continued to be explored and published across the site's excavation history. Those of the Western necropolis were featured in all early volumes of Bruyère's *Fouilles de Deir el-Médineh* (1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929a, 1930, 1933, 1934, 1937a), and the Eastern necropolis received a dedicated volume (1937b). Tombs of Deir el-Medina residents follow two numbering systems; many form part of the Theban Tomb series (TT) and are designated accordingly, whilst others form part of a numbering system in the 1000s. Those from the Eastern necropolis are graves 1365-1390. Problems and limitations with this evidence are again discussed in the relevant Chapters.

Artistic evidence comprises two main types: i) images of children on figured ostraca; ii) those on votive and mortuary material such as stelae and tomb walls. However, the first corpus includes parallels of mortuary compositions—possibly as trial pieces or copies, as well as more individual compositions—and many may have been used in votive contexts themselves. Figured ostraca are published in numerous catalogues (Schäfer 1916; Schiaparelli 1923; Werbrouck 1932, 1953; Vandier d'Abbadie 1936, 1937, 1946, 1959; Keimer 1941; Brunner-Traut 1956, 1979; Peterson 1974). They are discussed in Chapters 5 and 7, and catalogued in Appendix 3. Children within more 'formal' artistic sources, tomb scenes and stelae, are used as evidence of familial relationships and interactions, discussed in Chapter 9. These are presented in Appendix 4, with a bibliography of references for each scene. Within the discussion, scenes are referenced by their tomb and scene number as ordered in Appendix 4 (*i.e.* TT10 scene 2 refers to the second scene listed under TT10).

Finally, artefactual evidence comes from the excavations of the village, as well as material discovered in the surrounding rubbish dumps. This material, alongside supporting evidence, forms the primary data-set of Chapters 8-10. A note must go here towards the nature of excavation. The establishment of the IFAO concession, and especially the arrival of Bruyère,

enabled a more organised and systematic level of excavation generally. However, unlike the necropolises, which were excavated across many years, the village itself was dug in one season (Bruyère 1939). Partly, this was due to increased looting occuring around Luxor (Bruyère 1939: 239); as such, the village excavation was undertaken rapidly and with a larger indigenous workforce. This had two significant effects which limit both the usefulness of the excavation report, and the data itself. Firstly, due to pressure and time constraints, the village was not excavated stratigraphically; secondly and subsequently, certain object types were prioritised, typically ritual or inscribed material. Most other finds were typically listed collectively after each house, rather than on a room-by-room basis; this impedes quantitative analysis. Limitations with the artefactual data-set are discussed further in Chapter 8.

The sources of evidence outlined above come from across the site's lifespan, some five hundred years. Since Deir el-Medina was occupied for such a long period, this could be seen as problematic; continuity in practice or mentality over this time cannot be presumed. However, this thesis argues that considering the material holistically is justified. Firstly, with regards to textual evidence, documentary records are scant before Dynasty 19, and so do not represent the entire occupation period in any case. Furthermore, many texts are undateable with precision, and so picking a bounded data-set according to a specific period would be difficult, if not impossible. Secondly, with artefactual and artistic corpora, continuity over time does seem to be present, further justifying a diachronic discussion; instances where change over time can be observed, such as with burials, are noted and discussed when relevant to the study. Thirdly, attempting to focus a study such as this on one specific period would artificially limit discussion, and ignore the possibility for analysis of how attitudes towards children persisted or changed over time. Therefore, bearing in mind that continuity cannot be assumed *a priori*, it is argued that it is reasonable to look at the site across its occupation history.

It is also believed that the findings of this study have wider relevance. Because of the level of material available, Deir el-Medina forms the basis for many reconstructions of daily life in New Kingdom Egypt. However, it is not clear how typical Deir el-Medina was of Egyptian society more generally, given that it was a planned community of skilled craftsmen. That said, despite the unique condition of its residents, Deir el-Medina was still part of the social fabric of New Kingdom society. Its inhabitants worshipped more or less the same Gods—although there are examples of cults seemingly specific to Deir el-Medina, such as the deified Amenhotep I mentioned earlier, this is no different to other settlements which were equally

home to regional or site-specific cults—spoke the same language, and were culturally synonymous with other areas both in the Theban region, and Egypt more widely. Similarly, the inhabitants were in frequent contact with the outside world (see Chapter 10, Fig. 42). Whilst the actual experiences of children could have been unique to Deir el-Medina, given the population and its work, the fundamental nature of childhood to society, and how childhood was defined—grounded in wider Egyptian culture and mentality—means that the evidence from Deir el-Medina likely reflects conceptions similar to other contemporary sites.

Deir el-Medina is therefore an ideal case study. The evidence it provides is varied and plentiful, whilst being situated within a bounded socio-geographic context. However, equally, whilst the data-set is bounded, its conclusions are held to be valid of Egyptian society more widely. Indeed, where appropriate, comparisons with other sites and periods will be made, demonstrating similarities of life at Deir el-Medina to Egyptian society more generally.

3. RESEARCH METHOD AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 IDENTITY AS AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEME

This thesis is informed by the archaeology of identity which has emerged in recent years (amongst others Jones 2000; Fowler 2004, 2010; Conlin Casella and Fowler 2005; Diáz-Andreu *et al.* 2005; Insoll 2007; Dommasnes and Wrigglesworth 2008; Pierce *et al* 2016). Modern concepts of identity are synonymous with the self and personality, grounded in Cartesian ideas of mind-body dualism. However, within past societies, the same does not necessarily apply. The very idea of the 'individual' has increasingly been discussed as a product of Western post-industrial society (Geertz 1974; Shweder and Bourne 1982; la Fontaine 1985; Bender 1993: 258; Spiro 1993; Johnson 1999: 82; Hodder 2000: 23). People in the past were not necessarily individualised in the same manner as ourselves. However, this is not to say that people were not self-aware, nor that there was no concept of the 'self'; individualism is not synonymous with the individual (Meskell 1999a: 9). Rather, it is to say that—although people in the past may have had a sense of self—in contrast to today the self-contained individual need not have been the most important component of identity (Fowler 2004: 3, 16). Individuals might instead be primarily identified through other means, such as their role within a socially-marked group (Gillespie 2001).

Archaeologically, identity is often approached as if it is akin to what sociology terms the 'social persona'. The social persona is formed through an intersecting network of various attributes, such as age, gender, class, ethnicity and religion. These aspects alter throughout life, meaning that an individual goes through numerous identities throughout their lifetime; 'identity' is a fluid process, rather than static condition (Hall 1996). Furthermore, because the attributes which form identity are given meaning through relationships and interactions with others, an individual can have multiple, contemporary identities within different social contexts, based on the activities they perform and the groups to which they belong. This is not, however, to suggest that social identity is informed solely by physical attributes. Materials also create identities, as it is materiality which gives humans certain abilities to

engage with the world (Conneller 2011).[14] Identity is therefore formed through a network of relationships between people and materials (Fowler 2010: 360; Harris 2016: 21).

That said, although 'individualism' may not necessarily have been a feature of past societies, neither is social identity completely separate from the individual. Identities as socially-created still require a level of individual identification; the individual unconsciously has a unique sense of self, from which they perceive the surrounding world (Harré 1998). In order to effectively belong to a group, therefore, "the self knowingly commits itself to the shared values and practices" (Gone *et al.* 1999: 381; Blum 2015: 20-1). The individual "chooses which groups to identify with, which to perceive as 'other', and what meanings and feelings each of these categories elicits" (Grimson 2010: 63). The individual is self-aware and conscious in their membership of a group. Consideration of social identities must therefore also give consideration to the role of the individual in constructing and maintaining these.

The conclusion from this is that identity purely in the sense of the 'social persona' leaves an incomplete picture. Discussion of social identities must also consider the individuals within the social structures. Identification of a cultural group is a halfway-house between two key elements of identity: that as externally determined by society; and that formed within the self through experiences and practices. These elements are mutually informative. However, different theorists label them by different terms. To some sociologists, the elements of identity are *social* or *objective* (belonging to various social groups, and the distinguishing features of these); *self* or *subjective* (the person's unique combination of features or traits); and *ego* (the person's sense of self and where they belong) (Woodward 2010: 134). However, within 'role-identity' theory (Stryker and Burke 2000), the various aspects of identity include *social* (group participation), *role* (social roles) and *personal* (biological components).

Following these principles, and recognising the varying terminology within literature for the same concepts, this thesis approaches childhood identity by dividing it into two spheres. The first is 'socially-ascribed' identity—how childhood was constructed, and how children were grouped according to their bodily attributes, gender, ethnicity and other factors. This informs how children were treated, their scope for social participation, and the relationships they engaged in. The second is 'self-ascribed' identity—how children as individuals lived within

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[14] For example, a bow and arrows do not just reflect that a person is a hunter; they grant the ability to be a hunter (Harris 2016).

these social structures, and how experiences of these structures contributed to a more personal understanding of self and the world, and sense of membership to particular social groups. Neither sphere is given primacy, but both must be considered to form a holistic picture (Meskell 1999a: 22).

The idea of two inter-linked components of identity has received some prior archaeological consideration. Fahlander (2008) has approached similar ideas through the concept of embodiment. He identifies two types of corporeality. The first is how the body is registered by wider society; distinctions between social categories are frequently dictated, consciously or unconsciously, by visual attributes such as sex, age or height. The second relates to how the body physically interacts with its world and its surroundings. Díaz-Andreu and Lucy (2005: 1) likewise distinguish between the self and its characteristics, which they term 'personality', and the individual's identification with broader groups.

Furthermore, the very concept that identity incorporates two levels—that defined externally, and that understood by the individual themselves—is underpinned by similar concerns to those that underlie debates of agency and structure. The relationship between the individual and wider social systems has long been discussed (Durkheim 1912, 1933; Weber 1914). In Durkheim's terms, society is founded upon communal beliefs and values, a 'collective consciousness'. Social behaviour is learned by the individual, and determined by socially-transmitted customs. However, members of society also have a more personal 'individual consciousness', the product of social interactions. In other words, every individual has a dual 'consciousness'—one based on inculcated social behaviour, the other based on unique emotions and experiences (Shilling 1997; Shilling and Mellor 1998; Throop and Laughlin 2002). This mirrors the relationship, and potential for tension, between the identity that society creates for the individual, and their own sense of self within this.

There has been little explicit work on identity within an ancient Egyptian context. The fullest overview is provided by Meskell (1999a: 8-52), whose approach is followed here. She provides a similar definition of identity to that used in this thesis, which encompasses both "the multiplicity of social identities as well as the singularity of individual experience" within these (Meskell 1999a: 50; see also van der Toorn 1996: 3; Meskell 2001: 189; Clark 2003: 320). Ragazolli (2010) discusses 'self-fashioning' and 'self-presentation', comparable to what is here termed 'self-identity'. Elsewhere, the 'individual' is discussed by Weiss (2015: 11-12, following Assmann 1996: 94), who concludes that the "Egyptian individual was never fully

detached from the community relations…[the individual is] a single person acting within that social group within which it is integrated…the smallest human entity embedded within a social group". She concludes that "an individuality as equivalent to uniqueness seems difficult to maintain...such a strong definition would demand that every individual differ from every other in every aspect imaginable" (Weiss 2015: 12). In the context of religious practices, she argues that individual participation was aimed at the well-being and maintenance of the larger social whole. However, this is not incompatible with the individual's ability to have personal experiences within such practices. This is especially important to acknowledge when considering children. Children are ultimately responsible for continuity or change in practices over time, a dialogue which requires negotiation and consideration of personal experience.

Greater attention has been paid to the various individual attributes which inform social identities. The most researched 'strand' of identity has been gender, as discussed in Chapter 1. There has also been discussion of local or regional community identities (see Hagen 2007a and further references therein; Bußmann 2010; Vischak 2014). However, as noted by Sweeney (2011: 2), Egyptian archaeologists have tended to investigate specific groups with a common social background or similar status (for example Roth 2001; Toivari-Viitala 2001), thus overlooking how attributes such as gender may be nuanced by other factors such as class or ethnicity. Little has been done to study these aspects of being holistically—age, gender, or ethnicity do not act in isolation but impact on, and are impacted by, each other—and consider how they contributed together to form identities. Exceptions include Meskell (1998, 1999a, 2002) and Sweeney (2006). These works provide both a precedent for the methods of this thesis, and confirmation that such aspects of identity can successfully be recovered from the archaeological record.

To an extent, this thesis also applies the archaeological framework of identity to a single social group, children. However, it considers children across the spectrum of age, gender and class at Deir el-Medina. Ideas inherent to the archaeology of identity apply very successfully to children. As they are increasingly seen as members of both adult-structured and child-structured 'worlds' (Chapter 1), their identities in each may either overlap or differ. Similarly, childhood is a time of great physiological and cognitive development, and in many societies such development is key to delineating periods of life. Age and identity are therefore inexorably linked; children of different ages will be involved in different activities based on their bodily capabilities (Fahlander 2008: 16-17), making it probable that those of different age categories held different social identities.

Baxter (2006: 81) suggests that an archaeological understanding of childhood involves identifying four components:

    i.   Which members of society were defined as children.

    ii.   The roles and behaviours expected of children in particular settings.

    iii.   Children's physical environment.

    iv.   Children's social environment, including family size and composition.

These components are the backbone of how a society constructs 'childhood', and must also be understood to consider how children lived. They are therefore fundamental to understanding childhood identities. However, as discussed in Chapter 1, childhood has been greatly understudied within Egyptian archaeology. Egyptian archaeologists cannot currently claim to have a formal understanding of any of these four issues. It has been suggested that there is simply not enough conclusive evidence to explore how the ancient Egyptians considered childhood (Meskell 1994a: 42). However, this thesis will demonstrate that such statements are incorrect. Granted, children were neither the primary producers of, nor the target for, the literary and artistic documentation which forms the focus of most discussion. Nonetheless, a thorough scrutiny of the material record reveals much evidence related to children; it has simply not been collated or subjected to rigorous analysis.

This thesis approaches Baxter's criteria by grouping them under the two 'spheres' of identity outlined above. The first criterion is considered under the banner of 'socially-ascribed' identity, or how society defined childhood, and the second, third and fourth under the banner of 'self-ascribed' identity, or children's lived experience. Following this principle, analysis is divided into two sections, each dealing with one element of identity, although their findings are mutually informative.

3.2 SOCIALLY-ASCRIBED IDENTITY

The first section of analysis (Chapters 4-7), comparable to Baxter's first criterion, discusses identity at the 'socially-ascribed' level. Broadly, it considers how society defined and understood childhood as a period of life. Identity, just like the concept of 'childhood', is culturally situated. We cannot begin to consider children as individuals without first

understanding the cultural context within which they lived. Socially-ascribed identity acts as a necessary first step to this, as it reveals the underlying social structures within which children lived, the activities and spheres in which children of different ages participated, and their potential for action within them. Because of the lack of research into childhood within Egyptian archaeology, relatively little has been written about even the most basic concepts of how the Egyptians defined 'childhood', and how and whether periods of childhood were delineated. This was discussed in Chapter 1. However, such issues are fundamental to understanding how society treated children, and must be discussed before progressing.

In order to achieve this, different bodies of evidence will be used to consider how childhood was defined at Deir el-Medina, when and how progression through childhood was marked, and how factors such as age, gender and ethnicity influenced the construction of childhood. It will be shown that, whilst broadly painting similar pictures, aspects of the sources present differing, sometimes contradictory, evidence for how childhood was constructed. However, rather than being problematic, this reflects that 'childhood' is contextually defined, and presented differently within different social arenas. The use of specific terms to refer to children, for example, does not necessarily mean that the idea of childhood embodied by these terms was applicable in all social contexts. Different 'meanings' of childhood contributed to identity within different scenarios.

To pre-empt the findings of this research, it will be suggested that the context within which children were active was a primary determinant for how childhood was defined, as much as more expected factors such as gender. This section of analysis is therefore structured as follows. Rather than being driven by evidence—a comparison of data-sets one after another— it is structured according to social contexts, within each of which several bodies of evidence are discussed. This is believed to offer a more nuanced discussion. The first Chapter considers evidence of children within daily life, and as members of society generally, although admittedly the evidence for this is mostly textual. This is then compared to evidence of children as participants in the workforce, which suggests that childhood was defined differently, as was progression through it. The third Chapter considers mortuary evidence of children, to explore how the presentation of childhood in death matched, or differed from, that in life. Having discussed how childhood was understood and structured within these contexts, the final Chapter considers how progression was marked, such as through rites of passage.

The aim of this is to demonstrate the complexities of childhood. It will be shown that different contexts and activities indicate different identities and ways of defining childhood, and that these were further determined by other factors such as gender, ethnicity and class. There was no single 'childhood' at Deir el-Medina.

A note must go to the research method used within this analysis. Especially for Chapter 5, which discusses children within the workforce, psychological models are employed to reconstruct how children might have learnt their craft. Specifically, this study ascribes to the ideas of Piaget and Vygotsky, which consider the concept of developmental 'stages' of growth. Such models require justification. Piaget (1972) suggested that child development incorporated several universal stages. The ages at which these psychological developments typically occur has been widely accepted by other psychologists. However, Piaget's 'cognitive-structuralist' approach has been critiqued for ignoring both cultural and situational factors. For example, children can perform at different developmental levels working alone as opposed to under guidance or in a group (Minar and Crown 2001: 371), and the location where a task is performed can also affect performance levels (Rogoff 1984: 1). Because of its shortcomings, use is made here of refinements by Vygotsky (1978: 86-7), who developed Piaget's idea to allow for cultural differences and the individual's own abilities, recognising a need to consider the social context of learning.

It goes without saying that psychological and cognitive models cannot simply be overlaid onto past societies without recognition that they assume certain universalities as to how people think. The problems with using psychology especially in the context of childhood were discussed in Chapter 1. However, this does not mean that such disciplines should not be used. They provide a useful framework to explore the evidence from new perspectives; it will infact be shown in Chapter 5 that the ideas of Piaget and Vygotsky translate closely to what is suggested by archaeological evidence for crafts-learning. The above discussion is simply to say that the use of psychological models can be problematic, and is recognised as such. However, when used carefully and with recognition of their modern basis, they provide a powerful lens with which to discuss the evidence. The ideas of Piaget and Vygotsky are not controversial, and have previously been applied successfully to archaeological contexts (Greenfield 2000). This justifies their employment here.

3.3 SELF-ASCRIBED IDENTITY

The second section of analysis (Chapters 8-10) considers 'self-ascribed' identity—how children understood themselves and the world, and their participation within society. It incorporates primarily the third and fourth of Baxter's criteria, but also elements of the second, specifically consideration of how roles and expected behaviours inform how and in what capacity the individual acts. This section of analysis draws directly on the findings from the previous section; socially-ascribed identity influences the potential roles, expectations and restrictions placed on children of different ages and genders. Children are not necessarily constrained by these structures, and may act contrary to societal expectations, but their actions are still informed by social boundaries (Wartofsky 1983: 188; Díaz-Andreu and Lucy 2005: 2; Lucy 2005: 60). In other words, socially-ascribed identity informs—but does not necessarily determine—the scope and potential for children's actions.

This section considers children as active social agents, and attempts to access how their personal identities were informed through lived experience and membership of social groups. It explores this through evidence relating to three arenas: children's participation as members of households; their relationships with other members of society; and play.

Evidence of children's 'self-ascribed' identity is inevitably found more in material culture than texts and art, which were created predominantly by adults and reflect adult ideals and conceptions of childhood. This evidence therefore requires a higher degree of interpretation in order to access the decisions and processes of children who engaged with it. However, this does not mean that such sources are unusable. In fact, materiality is key to self-identity. The actions and relationships which inform an individual's experiences are inherently tied into, and expressed through, engagements with materiality; furthermore, attachment to objects becomes incorporated into a sense of self (Goffmann 1951). Material culture is therefore arguably the best avenue for approaching this aspect of identity. Despite the need for interpretation, such interpretation will remain grounded in the evidence itself, and draw entirely from knowledge of ancient Egypt and its cultural processes.

As far as possible, the evidence for this analysis derives from Deir el-Medina itself. However, the material evidence from Deir el-Medina is less comprehensive than textual or artistic sources. This is for two reasons. Firstly, the archaeological record mostly reflects the abandonment processes of the village; the inhabitants took much with them when they left.

The record is therefore incomplete. Secondly, the nature of the excavation means that much material was only described cursorily, and the find-context of few objects was recorded. Most houses simply had an inventory listed at the end of their entry in the report, rather than even on a room-by-room basis. It is impossible to perform any meaningful quantitative analysis. Therefore, although the themes and ideas discussed in this section of analysis would have been fundamental to daily life, the current state of evidence from Deir el-Medina alone does not provide sufficient scope to explore them adequately. These Chapters therefore take a wider focus, supplementing discussion with evidence from Egypt more widely. It is recognised that this requires an assumption that such evidence is comparable to that of Deir el-Medina; whenever possible, external evidence will be tied to what is known from Deir el-Medina, in order to support this.

In order to consider children as social agents, archaeological approaches to agency must be evaluated. Agency bridges two sociological approaches: individualism, where all social phenomena are the result of individual actions, and holism, where society exists as an entity beyond its members (Gillespie 2001: 74). Explicit archaeological discussions of agency first emerged in the 1970s. The concept was heavily politicised; all societies birthed ambitious individuals whose will inspired social change. This 'big man' approach had little applicability beyond elite politics (Robb 2010: 496-7). Into the 1990s, agency theory developed from seeing agency as a characteristic of an individual's ability to affect others, to a social relationship. This drew heavily on the ideas of Bourdieu (1977, 1990) and Giddens (1979, 1984), whereby the individual and society are in a dialectical relationship. Social 'structures'—wider settings and conditions such as gender or cultural values—determine an agent's ability for action, and action in turn recreates, redefines or transforms these structures. Though aspects of Giddens and Bourdieu have been critiqued (Karp 1986; Kilminster 1991: 99-101; Dornan 2002: 305-8; Robb 2010: 495-6), responses highlighted that agency—and structures—are not universal, but defined within particular contexts. Ancient Egyptian and Viking children did not have comparable agency; indeed, the agency of New Kingdom children possibly differed from that of other Egyptian periods.

Modern agency theory is based on ideas of agency as a tool for social reproduction. However, it considers more the connections between agents, their material and social contexts. Agency is a feature of relationships rather than of individuals; it is dependent on the actor's relationship to the recipient, within a given context. In other words, people modulate and

interpret their actions according to the situation and those involved.[15] Furthermore, the 'scale' of what can be considered an agent is variable (Joyce and Lopiparo 2005: 369), ranging from individuals, to collectives, and even material itself (Hodder 1987; Gell 1998: 17-19).[16]

Despite a common aim, archaeological approaches to agency cover many, sometimes contradictory, perspectives (Ortner 1984: 127; Dobres and Robb 2000a; Dornan 2002: 304; Joyce and Lopiparo 2005: 365). Two key debates are whether agency is demonstrated through intentional or unconscious action, and whether agents have freedom or are constrained by social structure (Dornan 2002: 309). These debates are important, as they underpin the approach taken when discussing children as agents.

Ideas of collective agency, wherein "all actions are socially determined" (Shanks and Tilley 1987: 124), form one end of the spectrum. This approach emphasises structural constraints. Similarly, Pauketat (2001: 80) suggests that social practices embody a society's habitus, instilled unconsciously into people's experiences. Here, again, agency operates at a group level. In contrast, Hodder has advocated the study of agency through "individual lived lives" (2000: 23), proposing that individual actions can be restored from the material record. Others consider the 'generic' individual, forming a middle ground between agential freedom and structural determinism. Johnson (2000b) proposes that individual decisions are predictable under certain social conditions, thus allowing for consideration of structural influence. Likewise, Joyce (2000) suggests that agency represents individual actions embedded within a wider cultural setting. Bell (1992) argues for the 'rational actor'; whilst shared practices are best seen as products of individual decisions, individual ideas and beliefs vary so widely that analysis should be limited to activities where motives are widely shared. In other words, studies should only focus on activities that were the same for most individuals under given conditions. This approach sees the only recoverable evidence of agency to be in situations where responses would be universally similar.

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[15] A simple example is the act of opening a bag of crisps. If alone, the actor is likely just to rip open the top. However, if in a social situation where a bag is likely to be shared, the actor may instead rip the bag wide open for easier access by a communal group. Here, the setting dictates how the actor interacts with the crisp bag.

[16] Returning to the example of the crisps bag, the container itself also exerts its own 'secondary agency' (Gell 1998) in this scenario. It is only the bag's design which enables it to be ripped in various ways. Were the item instead, say, a tube with a lid, the actor would be constrained in how they could manipulate the container and access the crisps, regardless of setting. Both actor and material combine to shape events.

Although these approaches vary, they share a core issue of the 'human scale' (Redman 1987) of analysis—whether to see the individual, or wider structures, as the base unit for study. The individual may be where social change or continuity originates, but a focus only on specific individuals makes it hard to explore relations between agent and structure. However, if only 'generic' individuals, or activities that are identical for most individuals, are studied, this restricts the possibility of exploring creativity beyond or against structuring systems, and thus social change (Chapman 2000). Likewise, how are widely shared and repeated practices themselves any different from structure (Dornan 2002: 315)?

Unlike many past societies, where it is rare that individuals can be isolated, the rich material and textual record of ancient Egypt means the lives of specific individuals can be reconstructed, allowing for consideration of Hodder's 'individual biographies'. Indeed, many of the limitations of this approach do not apply to Egyptian evidence. A common critique is that to gather enough material about specific individuals, studies are usually either reliant on leaders, returning to the 'big man' model, or chance preservation. Whilst Egyptian material attributable to named individuals often also comes from an elite social stratum, the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina—whilst not the 'lowest' social rung—were still workmen, yet have provided plentiful material for reconstructing their histories (Davies 1999).

However, other cautions of Hodder's approach still apply. Even if the ideas of individuals (Hodder 1984a: 25, 1984b) can be recovered from the material record, it risks over-emphasising the individual in social reproduction (Johnson 2000a: 225, 2000b: 213). As such, it is important that individual lives, or 'microprocesses', can be tied to the larger structural 'macroprocesses' within which they are situated (Dornan 2002: 311).

This brings discussion back to the original point. A study of childhood must be reflexive, between micro- and macro-scale, structure (socially-ascribed identity) and individual (self-ascribed identity). These are not discrete, but interlinked. However, analysis of the lived experience of children inevitably has to consider the 'generic' child within social interactions, rather than specific individuals. This is because texts and art are where specific individuals are most visible, but children are typically absent from these. Hodder's 'individual biographies' prioritise the adult—exploring how children engaged with the material world can only realistically be considered generically, by 'children' as a group.

That said, what is a 'generic' child? Age is not the only defining factor of childhood, but also gender, ethnicity and class, all of which would be expected to inform the childhood experience. Furthermore, childhood is a time of great biological development, affecting children's scope for action. Individuals of different capabilities may have different agencies within the same situation. For example, Brück (1998) has examined how the pregnant and disabled negotiated the landscape of certain prehistoric monuments differently to other members of society. Aspects of this relate directly to children; abilities develop with age, and those at different developmental thresholds will physically have different potential for engaging with their material surroundings. Children at different stages of mental and social development will participate differently in, and in a different number of, social arenas (Fahlander 2008: 20). Material engagements studied through the 'generic' child are therefore problematic; what is the 'generic' condition we should prioritise?

This ties into another debate, of whether agency is best demonstrated through intentional or unconscious action (Dobres and Robb 2000b: 10; Joyce and Lopiparo 2005: 368). Intentionalism restricts the possibility for exploring creative or unplanned actions. Furthermore, intentional action is often equated with resistance, pre-supposing the motives for action (Brown 1996: 731). Indeed, agency need not solely lead to change, but also the conscious decision to repeat past action (Hegmon and Kulow 2005). Agency is also demonstrated by unintentional action. Not all individuals, especially the very young, have the same level of knowledge or understanding about society upon which to base their actions; "there is a severe limit to how deeply and critically aware most people are, most of the time, either about themselves or about the underpinnings of their social positions" (Blum 2015: 26). This is especially true of children. Furthermore, children are naturally curious and experimental, and their actions often unconsciously lead to innovation (Ardren 2006: 7). However, excessive focus on unintentional action implies that agents can only change structures accidentally, or at least without explicitly intending to (Dornan 2002: 320). Moreover, to argue that children can only have unintended consequences on the material record itself denies the very agency which childhood archaeologists have spent the last decade arguing for.

When considering children as agents, a balance must again be found between intentionality and unintentionality (Robb 2010: 498). Children blur the argument of whether agents should be knowledgeable. A sensitive treatment of children is therefore complex, as it must be attentive to how children of differing ages may have had differing levels of social knowledge

and awareness. 'Childhood' is not static but a time of constant change, with numerous developmental thresholds which affect the activities the child is involved with, and how they can express themselves and engage with material within these. In order to consider 'childhood' generally, analysis must be both broad-brush and age-sensitive. In this sense, therefore, the 'generic' child is perhaps an incorrect term.

The approach of this section is therefore as follows. To again pre-empt its results, a defining element of childhood seems to have been dependency within another's household. When this analysis discusses 'children', therefore, it simply refers to individuals within this situation. However, whilst we may not be able to access specific individuals, analysis can at least take into account the numerous factors, social and biological, which inform childhood experience. Where possible, therefore, analysis will also consider how different *types* of body—*i.e.* those of different ages or genders—would have had differing experiences (Ortner 1984: 149; Özbal 2007: 322). This still does not account for personal situations within these, such as individual cognitive development. However, these aspects are simply inaccessible. The best that can be done is to account for how biological or social factors cut across the 'generic' experience of children at Deir el-Medina.

In order to best access the experiences and decisions of children within social practices, this analysis develops a research method making careful use of aspects of archaeology, sociology, anthropology and developmental psychology. Given the focus on material culture as evidence here, an interdisciplinary approach offers a wider range of perspectives with which to interpret and study the material; indeed, for such a discussion, interdisciplinary analysis is necessary (Roder 2008). As discussed for psychological models earlier, these disciplines must be used carefully, rather than assuming that children can be approached universally, but the same justifications also apply. The use of especially anthropological parallels for understanding past practices has been important to archaeology for decades, and it is especially pertinent for children who are excluded from other sources. After Roveland (2000: 31): "while, of course, caution must be used when drawing ethnographic parallels, an examination of children cross-culturally…can aid in the evaluation of conditions that may affect children's activities and contributions".

Given that little work has been dedicated to understanding childhood in ancient Egypt, even less work has been dedicated to studying children's lived experience. The three topics forming this section of analysis—household activities, social relationships, and play—have

been chosen because they are among the most fundamental aspects of lived experience. However, given the potential scope for analysis of children as individuals and agents within the archaeological record, this thesis cannot hope to consider every aspect of lived experience, nor does it aim to. It aims rather to demonstrate the validity of interdisciplinary analysis of lived experience, and provide a starting point for future study. To this end, the thesis will close by concluding its findings, and suggesting future directions for research.

SOCIALLY-ASCRIBED IDENTITY:

CONCEPTUALISING CHILDHOOD AT DEIR EL-MEDINA

4. CHILDREN AND DAILY LIFE

4.1 USING TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

Most evidence for exploring children as members of society comes from textual evidence. However, any discussion of textual evidence must consider the degree to which vocabulary reflects social mentality.

The words attested within a language as referring to childhood do not necessarily represent all those known or used at the time, nor can one be certain of the range of contexts within which they would have been understood or employed. For example, Classical Attic texts attest several nouns meaning 'infant', but few were in everyday use (Golden 1993: 14-15). Similarly, references to nursing were common only in sacred or nursing-specific texts in Republican Rome (Manson 1983: 151). This cannot mean that breast-feeding was only practiced by a small stratum of society; rather, it was simply unmentioned in or inappropriate for most textual contexts. The question is therefore whether textual evidence is valid for reconstructing understandings of childhood within general society, or if the contexts of attested vocabulary only reflect preserved evidence.

Beyond context of use, another issue is the conceptualisation of childhood which vocabulary displays. Inevitably, textual sources reflect the authors' biases and intentions. Many Classical authors discussed divisions within the lifecycle, typically dividing stages into four, seven or nine years. However, this did not reflect social attitudes; such divisions were poetic, influenced by superstition, astrology, magic or the 'Four Ages of Rome' (Eybern 1973: 150-90; Parkin 2010: 97-9). Furthermore, the terms used to describe these stages varied between authors. There is therefore no guarantee that the stages ascribed to childhood within textual sources, and their parameters, reflect how childhood was actually constructed within society.

Whilst the problem of the applicability of textual evidence to wider society is generally true of Egypt, where most sources comprise monumental and religious inscriptions, texts from Deir el-Medina arguably better reflect social reality. Granted, given the nature of the site, many texts deal with the work and supplies of the artisans, the subject matter of which inevitably fell outside of the family sphere. We would not expect to hear of the lives of the workmen's children in such contexts. However, due to both good preservation and high literacy, there are also hundreds of texts detailing the villagers' daily correspondences and relationships, inscribed on ostraca and thrown away once used. Such texts are not overlaid with overt religious or ritual symbolism; they reflect the vernacular of the villagers. Nor, unlike many Egyptian textual sources, were they made exclusively by and for an elite male audience, where children were invariably excluded from discussion (Meskell 2002: 424; Roméro 2009: 18). In these texts, vocabulary does reflect the social realities of childhood.

Texts from Deir el-Medina attest two main words for children, ꜥḏd and šri. A thorough discussion of each is presented below, and a full list of attestations is provided in Appendix 1. However, many of these texts are either fragmentary or provide little evidence for analysing the specific context of the words' use. As such, the following discussion considers only a selection of texts, which present the most diagnostic evidence. Additionally, comparisons are made with external sources employing the same vocabulary as at Deir el-Medina, such as literary texts. Although a discrete community, Deir el-Medina still formed part of the New Kingdom Egyptian cultural landscape, and the stories within these texts were known to the villagers, as fragments of many were found at the site.

4.2 THE ꜥḏd

The root of ꜥḏd is unknown, but it is unattested before the New Kingdom. The word is not unique to Deir el-Medina; it is found in texts from across Egypt. It has previously been discussed by Toivari-Viitala (2001: 200-1) and Feucht (1995: 515-8), but with limited analysis. Feucht concluded that ꜥḏd referred to "der jungen, bereits arbeitsfähigen Mann" (1995: 515) and, for the feminine form ꜥḏd.t, "ein junges Mädchen oder eine jung verheiratete Frau" (1995: 516). However, these conclusions were drawn from a limited pool of citations—mainly literary—and do not take into consideration the full, much wider, range of uses for ꜥḏd.

In some texts, *ꜥḏḏ* likely refers to infants—which is used in this thesis to describe pre-weaned individuals—and the very young still under the care of nurses. O.Letellier reads:

> *yꜣ iḫ pꜣy=t tm šm.t n tꜣ rḫ.t ḥr pꜣ ꜥḏḏ 2 ir mwt m-di ḫn=t nḏnḏ m-di n tꜣ rḫ.t ḥr pꜣ mwt ir pꜣ ꜥḏḏ 2 n pꜣy=w šꜣy n tꜣy=w rnn.t*
>
> 'Why did you not go to the wise woman on account of the two *ꜥḏḏ* who died whilst in your care? Inquire of the wise woman about the death of the two *ꜥḏḏ*, [and ask] whether it was their fate or destiny'.[17]

Another text, O.OIM 16974, is believed to record the same matter (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 229). It mentions *pꜣy=i ꜥḏḏ šri 2* ('my two small *ꜥḏḏ*', recto 2) and *tꜣ k.t ꜥḏḏ.t* ('the little *ꜥḏḏ.t'*, recto 4). A third ostracon, O.DEM 984, also records a question to an oracle, in which lines 6-7 mention *nꜣ ꜥḏḏ.w* ('the *ꜥḏḏ.w'*), which may also be related. The implication of this matter is that the *ꜥḏḏ.w* were young enough to require a nurse, so presumably still of breast-feeding age, *i.e.* younger than 3.[18] This nuance is paralleled on P.Chester Beatty I, the Contendings of Horus and Seth, where verso 3.8 (LES: 40) states:

> *tw=k ḥwr.ti m ḥꜥ.w=k ḥr tꜣy iꜣ.t ꜥꜣ.ti r=k pꜣ ꜥḏḏ bin dpt rꜣ=f*
>
> 'You are feeble in your limbs; this office is too great for you, O *ꜥḏḏ*, the taste of whose mouth is bad'.

Shiah (1938) compares this to a Chinese idiom wherein infants are characterised by the smell of milk on their breath. Again, the implication is that *ꜥḏḏ* in this context referred to pre-weaned children.

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[17] Unless otherwise noted, all translations are the author's own. When discussing Egyptians words for children, any translation—infant, child, teenager—inevitably imposes cultural biases based on our use of these words. Therefore, the convention followed here is to leave such terms in the original Egyptian.

[18] In the ancient Near East, weaning occurred later than in the West. This provided more protection against intestinal diseases common in hot countries (Feucht 1995: 137); the practice continues even in modern Egypt (Ammar 1954: 98-100, 105). Ancient Egyptian evidence suggests that weaning typically occurred around age 3, as elsewhere in the Near East (see 2 Maccabees 7: 27; Quran II 233). This is attested textually, such as in the Instructions of Anii (P.Boulaq IV, 20.19; Quack 1994: 110-1, 315) and a late nursing contract from Tebtunis (P.Cairo 30604; Thissen 1984), and also through bioarchaeological evidence. In studies of children's deaths at Saqqara and Abusir, the majority were found to occur around 3-4 years, suggested to be due to intestinal diseases caused by a shift away from breast milk (Strouhal and Bareš 1993: 72).

Further texts also use ꜥḏd in the sense of immaturity and youth. O.Berlin 10627 lines 10-11 read:

> ir pꜣ nty iw mn m-di=f ꜥḏd.w ḥr in=f n=f ky nmḥ sḫpr=f
>
> 'As for one who has no ꜥḏd.w, he brings to himself another orphan, in order to raise him'.

The term ꜥḏd here refers to those of dependant age. Again, this nuance finds parallels; P.Anastasi II, verso 4.1 (LEM: 19) reads bn nmḥ=k mi ꜥḏd ('you will not be orphaned like an ꜥḏd'), and P.Turin A verso 1.10-2.1 (LEM: 122) states m-ir ir.t pꜣy=k ḥꜣ̠ty ꜥḏd ('do not let your heart be ꜥḏd-like').

However, it seems that ꜥḏd could equally be used in reference to older children. On O.Gardiner 13, a letter from a scribe complaining about lack of assistants, recto 7-9 read:

> iw nn wꜥ ḥnꜥ=i m pꜣ imw ḥrw-r wꜥ n … pꜣy=i ꜥḏd 2
>
> 'There is no one with me in the boat except for one of…my two ꜥḏd'.

This suggests that they were old enough to help with work. Whilst it is alternatively possible that this was a sarcastic joke, along the lines of 'all I have are my children to help me', O.Liverpool 13625 also uses ꜥḏd to refer to children performing work, in a tally of goods given as payment for their service.

A final example of ꜥḏd in reference to older children is O.Ashmolean 120, a receipt for pꜣ wḏh i.ir.w pꜣ dꜣi.w (n) tꜣy=f ꜥḏd ('the dying done for the dꜣiw-garment of his daughter'). It seems that the dꜣiw, one of the most common garments attested at Deir el-Medina, was the everyday over-skirt worn by both men and (less frequently attested) by women (Janssen 1975a: 265-71; 2008: 52-4). No evidence associates this garment with young children particularly.

Again, this sense of ꜥḏd is well attested beyond Deir el-Medina. P.Bologna 1094 lines 5.2-5.4 (LEM: 5) outline how instructions were given for three ꜥḏd.w to be placed as priests in the chapel of Merneptah in the temple of Ptah, but they were press-ganged into the army. These children must presumably have been old enough not only to begin training as priests, but to be conscripted. Furthermore, P.Chester Beatty I lines 2.2-2.3 (LES: 38) recount how the God Banebdjed was summoned to judge between Horus and Seth, both described as ꜥḏd. The story

explains that they had been in dispute eighty years already; it is possible that they were simply young from the perspective of Atum, the narrator of this passage. Finally, both line 16.1 of the Instructions of Anii (P.Boulaq IV; Quack 1994: 284) and line 8 of P.Leiden I.371, a letter to the dead (Gardiner and Sethe 1928: Pl. 7-8; Wente 1990: 216-7) mention ʿḏd in the context of marriageable age. The former reads *iri n=k ḥm.t iw=k ʿḏd* ('take yourself a wife whilst you are an ʿḏd') and the latter *iri=i tw m ḥm.t iw=i m ʿḏd* ('I took you as a wife when I was an ʿḏd').

The preceding examples illustrate that ʿḏd cannot be tied to a specific age. Rather, it described children across a wide range of ages. It was equally used to describe infants and older children, and does not seem defined by developmental or biological boundaries. The only consistent criterion seems to be that the ʿḏd was considered a dependent. This can be seen quite clearly on P.d'Orbiney, the Tale of the Two Brothers (LES: 9-30). The youngest brother is referred to consistently as an ʿḏd, yet is old enough to perform most manual fieldwork—however, as their parents are dead, his elder sibling and sister-in-law care for him like parents. Possibly ʿḏd should therefore be understood not in terms of age but social minority, and of placement within the social (familial) unit.[19] This is plausible; in many languages, diminutives from roots such as 'small' are not only applied to the biologically young, but also those of subordinate classes (Golden 1993: 15). This is also known in Egypt; the term *ḫrd*, whilst generally translated 'child', could equally be employed to mean 'servant', signifying a sense of minority in status, not age (compare Golden 1985).

That childhood was considered akin to a social 'state', rather than biologically grounded, has previously been suggested (Eyre 2011: 181, 187). Similarly, Tassie (2005) and Xekalaki (2011: 62, 88-9) have analysed the sidelock of hair typically depicted on children as a motif of subordination, rather than youth. As well as on children, the sidelock is also shown on adults, often when offering to the deceased. The most well-known case is the *ȝwn-mw.t=f* priest (Gregory 2013), who is sometimes an actual priest, and sometimes the deceased's son undertaking this role, as Ramesses II in the tomb of his father Seti I. As the intention of such scenes was to highlight the deceased as key figure, the person presenting offerings was subordinate by extension.

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[19] This might also explain its use on P.Chester Beatty I in the preceding paragraph; Atum referred to Horus and Seth as ʿḏd because they were junior to him in 'rank'.

The Middle Kingdom letters of *Ḥḳꜣ-nḫ.t* also make this idea abundantly clear; letter II, lines 25-6 read that his entire household was *m-mitt ẖrd.w=i ink ḫ.t nb(.t)*, 'just like my children, (and) all its property is mine' (Allen 2002: 41, Pl. 10). This understanding of *ꜥḏd* is therefore in keeping with wider linguistic norms. It referenced those still socially dependant.

Possibly, marriage and establishing one's own family was a criterion for its completion, as in many cultures (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 51 Note 279), although there is no explicit evidence for this. However, it is interesting to note an expression for raising a child, *iri m rmṯ* ('make into a person'), used also of the treatment of wives upon marriage (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 19, 70). This suggests a conscious process of socialisation, wherein the child was not yet 'grown up'. It highlights further how 'child' was not so much a biological but social category, subordinate to adults just as wives were to husbands.

There does, however, seem to be a recognition that *ꜥḏd* blanketed individuals of widely differing ages, who were considered in some ways distinct despite this not being reflected in vocabulary. Especially in reference to infants and the very young, *ꜥḏd* was often qualified further by *šri*, to distinguish it as 'little' *ꜥḏd*. This can be seen on O.OIM 16974 above, but also frequently occurs in letters written to and from the scribe *Ḏḥwty-ms* and his son *Bw-th-ꞋImn* concerning the children of *Ḥm.t-šri.t* and *Šd-m-dwꜣ.t* (Appendix 1 texts 106, 108, 110, 114, 117, 130, 132, 133, 141-143, 146).[20] Another example is O.DEM 764, a set of legal guidelines for property inheritance*:*

> *ir wn nꜣ ꜥḏd.w šri.w ir nꜣ ḫ.t m 3 dni.t wꜣ.t n nꜣ ꜥḏd.w wꜥ.t n pꜣ ꜥḥꜣwty wꜥ.t [n] tꜣ s.t ḥm.t ḥr ir wn iw=f r ir.t ḥr.wt n nꜣ ꜥḏd.w imi n=f pꜣ 2/3 ꜣḫ.t nb(.t) iw pꜣ 1/3 n tꜣ s.t ḥm.t*
>
> 'If there are *ꜥḏd.w*, divide the property into three: 1/3 for the *ꜥḏd.w*, 1/3 for the man, 1/3 for the woman. If he will take care of the *ꜥḏd.w*'s goods, give him 2/3 of all goods, and 1/3 for the woman'.

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[20] There is some debate over exactly who these women were. Sweeney (2008: 155 Note 13) summarises the situation as follows: Cerny (1973: 367) and Janssen (LRLC: 19) both suggest that *Ḥm.t-šri.t* was the second wife of *Ḏḥwty-ms*, and *Šd-m-dwꜣ.t* the wife of his son *Bw-th-ꞋImn*. However, Janssen-Winkeln (1994: 38) instead suggested that *Šd-m-dwꜣ.t* was the widowed daughter of *Ḏḥwty-ms*, and Niwinski (1984: 143) that *Šd-m-dwꜣ.t* was wife to *Bw-th-ꞋImn*, and *Ḥm.t-šri.t* his sister.

Here, children are factored into the division. However, if they are young enough to require a caretaker, he holds their share, with the understanding that it will be given to them when they are grown.[21]

Again, texts from beyond Deir el-Medina support this understanding. P.Chester Beatty II, the tale of Truth and Falsehood, line 4.5 (LES: 32) states how the woman who slept with Truth became pregnant with an *ꜥḏd šri*. The Instructions of Anii lines 17.10-11 (Quack 1994: 290) describe a drunk as *gmi.tw=k sḏr ḥr iwtn iw=k mi ꜥḏd šri* ('you were found sleeping on the floor like an *ꜥḏd šri*'), evocatively paralleling infant behaviour. The *ꜥḏd šri* need not always be an infant specifically; P.Leiden I.370 verso 4-5 mention some who were already undergoing schooling (*mtw=k tm di.t ḫꜣꜥ nꜣ ꜥḏd.w šri.w nty m tꜣ ꜥ.t-sbꜣ.t dr.t m sš*, 'do not let the *ꜥḏd.w šri.w* who are in the classroom abandon writing'), and on P.Leiden I.369 verso 5, *Ḏḥwty-ms* asks that *ꜥḏd.w šri.w* be taken to the temple to pray for his safety. However, it is not impossible that the children in these examples were still considered to be at the younger end of being an *ꜥḏd*, indicating recognition that the word encompassed a wide range.

One text seems an exception to this pattern: P.BM 75016 recto 7 reads *wnn tꜣy=i šꜥ.t spr r=k iw=k sꜥḥꜥ pꜣy ꜥḏd šri* (when my letter reaches you, you shall reprove this *ꜥḏd šri*'). After Demarée (2006: 10), it seems that this *ꜥḏd* is the same person who is mentioned throughout the text as holding a field, and being in a dispute. However, why would an *ꜥḏd šri* own land? One suggestion is that, since the text makes clear that the *ꜥḏd šri* is thought to be in the wrong, it should perhaps not be seen literally but as an insulting or derogatory term for the guilty party, like 'little man'. A possible parallel for this idea can be seen in ploughing scenes in both the tomb of *Pꜣ-ḥry* at el-Kab (Tylor and Griffith 1895: Pl. 3) and *Wnsw* (Manniche 1998: 70), where captions in both use *pꜣy šri* in a light-hearted sense similar to the expression 'kiddo'.

Interestingly, there are almost no instances of the opposite, *ꜥḏd ꜥꜣ*, 'big' *ꜥḏd*. Only two examples could be found. The first is the individual *Nfr-ḥtp* son of *Nfr-ḥtp*, where *ꜥḏd ꜥꜣ* is often found as an addendum to his name; it acts only to distinguish him from his eponymous father, with a sense similar to 'the younger' (Černý 1973: 211; see also Vittmann 2013a: 8). The second instance is P.Berlin 10494 recto 3-4, which warns: *ḥr m-ḏr wꜣwꜣ wꜥ ꜥḏd ꜥꜣ iw*

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[21] This reflects a general Egyptian legal principle whereby very young children, who would be future heirs, were acknowledged as having certain rights upon family property whilst their parents were still living (Pestman 1969: 90; Toivari-Viitala 2003: 91).

iw=k di.t iy=f r ḥms dy irm=n mi-ḳd Ḫr=f-r-niw.t=f ('do not let an *ˁdd ˁз*, which you send to stay here, plot like *Ḫr=f-r-niw.t=f*).[22]

4.3 THE *šri*

The term *šri* (previously discussed in Toivari-Viitala 2001: 198-200) derives from a root for 'little' which is attested as early as the Old Kingdom. It does not specifically refer to children, but can be used of anything small; O.UC 39617 (Černý and Gardiner 1957: Pl. 21.1) concerns a *wзb.t šri.t*, 'little storehouse'. It is also common as a qualifier in personal names at Deir el-Medina, with a meaning similar to 'the younger', or even as an element of names themselves. Two particularly common examples are *Šri.t-Rˁ* (Daughter-of-Ra) and *Ḥr-šri* (Horus-the-younger).

The concept of *šri* was often contrasted with its opposite *ˁз*, 'great'. P.Anastasi IV lines 10.2-3 (LEM: 45) state *nз ˁз.w ˁš n=k Ἰmn nз šri.w ḥr ḫˁḥ=k* ('the *ˁз.w* cry out to you, Amun, the *šri.w* hasten towards you'); P.BM 10375 line 18 (LRLC: Pl. 39-40) describes *nз rmṯ.w pз-ḫr nty ḫз.t=w m pзy=w ˁз pзy=w šri* ('the necropolis workmen who are under their supervision, from their *ˁз* to their *šri*'). Therefore, as with *ˁdd*, *šri* did not refer specifically to one stage of pre-adult life, but was used to describe sub-adult individuals generally. Feucht (1995: 541), recognising the breadth of its use, defined it as "das Kleinkind bis zum reifen Menschen".

That the meaning of *ˁdd* and *šri* overlapped somewhat can be seen in their interchangeability. On P.Chester Beatty I, the young Horus is called *ˁdd* in line 6.9, and *šri* in line 6.10. Similarly, just as with *ˁdd* in P.Turin A earlier, *šri* could also be used in the sense of childishness or immaturity; on O.Berlin 10627, a letter criticising a scribe, line 12 reproaches him as *šri ˁз*, 'a big kid'. However, the parameters of *šri* and *ˁdd* did not completely overlap. Whilst there are many examples of *ˁdd* used in reference to infants, and indeed *šri* used as an adjectival 'little' to qualify *ˁdd* further, examples using *šri* by itself as a noun to describe infants are far less common. Only three examples could be found. The first is P.Berlin 10497,

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[22] The phrase *ˁdd ˁз* is also found in the Story of Wenamun lines 1.38-39 (LES: 65), describing a figure who has visions. Posener (1969) translated it as 'page', and Cody (1979) as 'ecstatic'. However, this word is likely not the same as *ˁdd* 'child'. Hoch (1994a: 86-7) and Görg (1977) discuss its possible relation to a Semitic root *ḥ-z-y* 'seer'. In this case, *ˁdd* did not mean 'child', but was written similarly through visual and phonetic associations.

a letter regarding a deceased nurse, where the author writes *iw=i m-di=t m šri mi-ḳd n nȝy=t ẖrd.w* ('I was with you as a *šri*, like your own children'). In the second example, P.DEM 5, the author complains *sȝꜥ iw=i m šri r pȝ hrw iw=i irm=k* ('ever since I was a *šri*, until today, I have been with you'). However, neither case is definitive. Unlike with examples for *ꜥḏd* quoted above, there is no contextual evidence which would indicate that *šri* here definitely referred to infancy. They could equally just mean 'whilst a child' generally. There is only one unequivocal instance—P.BM 75015 verso 4, where a servant's child is described as *pȝy=s šri m ḳni=s* ('her *šri* at her breast'). Indeed, some texts do suggest an element of distinction between *ꜥḏd* and *šri* in the context of infants. The *Bw-th-Imn* archive fairly consistently describes the children of *Ḥm.t-šri.t* and *Šd-m-dwȝ.t* as *ꜥḏd šri*, yet on P.Leiden I.370 verso 10-11 the daughter of another individual, *H̱nmw-ms*, is termed only *šri.t*. This could suggest that his daughter was older than the other children, and that the author considered this term more appropriate (Feucht 1995: 544). Indeed, on P.DEM 5 verso 2, the *ꜥḏd šri* is noted as still having a wet-nurse.

Despite proposing that *šri* applied from infants onwards, Feucht also noted (1995: 544-5) that most texts use it in reference to older, possibly biologically mature children. On O.Ashmolean 1945.39, a tally of goods and services, recto 20 reads *iw pȝy=i šri ḥr ir.t rnp.t 2 iw=f fȝi nȝy=f mw* ('my son spent two years carrying his water'). The child need not have been very old—although children's capacity to work at different ages will be discussed in Chapters 5 and 8, ethnographies suggest that a child as young as 5 can successfully carry water (Cain 1997: 212), and by age 10 can already manage loads of up to 48 kilograms (Panter-Brick 1998: 86)—but was still beyond infancy. P.Chester Beatty I line 6.5 (LES: 44) further suggests biological maturity; Isis transforms herself into a *šri.t nfr.t*, a 'beautiful *šri.t*' whom Seth desires, implying a level of sexual maturity. Both O.UC 39656 and O.Bodleian Egyptian Inscription 253 provide further evidence, indicating that a *šri* could be of marriageable age. In the first, the workman *Ḥr-m-wiȝ* promises his *šri.t* that she can live in his storehouse in case of divorce; in the second, *Nḫ.w-m-Mw.t* promises not to mistreat the *šri.t* of *Ti-n-r-mnti*.[23] Again,

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[23] There has been debate over who the *šri.t* in this text actually was in relation to the two parties. KRI V understands it as the daughter of both, *i.e. Nḫ.w-m-Mw.t* and *Ti-n-r-mnti* were married. However, Černý (1937: 47) and McDowell (1999: 33) both see the *šri.t* as daughter of *Ti-n-r-mnti* and wife of *Nḫ.w-m-Mw.t*, which is followed here. The confusion has possibly arisen from the point of view from which this text was written. The exact wording is *tȝy=i* ('my') *šri.t*. However, whilst most of the text is from the perspective of *Nḫ.w-m-Mw.t*, the oath in which the word appears is actually from the mouth of *Ti-n-r-mnti*, suggesting that it is her daughter and not his.

this nuance is paralleled in literature; on P.Harris 500, the tale of the Doomed Prince (LES: 1-9), the young hero, the princess he loves and her other suitors are all called *šri*.

Further texts indicate that *šri* could be used of those old enough to be actively involved in social life, with some level of economic and legal independence. On O.DEM 672, the workman *Mnnȝ* queries whether he can extract money owed to him by *Šd-sw-Ḫnsw* from his *šri*. On O.Ashmolean 4, some missing clothes are revealed to have been stolen by the *šri.t* of *ʾImn-nḫ.t*, and on O.Cairo 25725, *Ḳn-ḥr-ḫpš=f* reveals that he gave garments to his *šri.t* when she was ill, who has since not returned them. In these examples, since those termed *šri* were not referred to by their own name or known as the wife of another, it is plausible that they were still dependants of their parents, even if not young children.

Unfortunately, interpreting *šri* comes with difficulties. It was used not just to refer to sub-adults but 'offspring' generally, who could themselves be adults; on O.BM 5624, a dispute over a tomb, the author writes (lines 4-5) that *Ḥnr tȝy=i mwt tȝy=f šri.t r ms=f iw mn m-di=f šri* ('*Ḥnr* my mother was his own *šri.t*, he having no *šri*'). Because of this, it is often impossible to tell whether *šri* actually refers to a child or adult. This confusion might account for why so many mentions of *šri* seem to be in reference to older children; it may be that many instances where it is understood as referring to children need reconsidering. In the preceding discussion, efforts have been made to only use examples where contextual evidence within the text makes it probable or definite that the *šri* was a child, but some cases are simply too ambiguous to tell. Three examples demonstrate this. On O.Turin 57364, a list of payments, verso 1 reads *ḥm.t dbn 5 m-dr.t Ḥr pȝy=f šri* ('5 deben of copper from his *šri*'). On P.Bibliothèque Nationale 196.IV, recto 5 instructs that the recipient of the letter is to work with *pȝ šri ink* ('my *šri*'). Finally, on O. Ashmolean 272, a deposition, it is recorded that *pȝy=i šri* ('my *šri*') is to receive a bonus. In none of these cases is it clear whether the *šri* was an older child, adolescent or adult.

A comparison of the orthography of writings of both *ꜥḏd* and *šri*, particularly their determinatives, makes the preceding points clearer.[24] Fig. 5 tallies the determinatives used

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[24] Because Egyptian language only wrote consonants, not vowels, unrelated words which would have been pronounced differently could look identical in writing. For example, if only the letters t-n were written, it would be impossible to know if the word was tin, ton, tan or tuna. For this reason, an additional sign was written at the ends of most words, called a determinative. This was not read aloud, but acted as a visual marker of the semantic

across all attested writings of ꜥḏd and šri within Appendix 1. They are grouped according to the nature of the 'human' determinative, and whether they include a 'child' determinative 𓀔 (Gardiner sign no. A17), only an 'adult' determinative 𓀀 or 𓁐 (Gardiner sign nos. A1 and B1), or no human determinative. Words may be written with multiple determinatives, but certain only contextualise the word further, such as its number; the nature of the human determinative is the most important for demonstrating the sphere of life to which that word was thought to belong.[25]

Analysing determinatives is an imperfect science. The Deir el-Medina texts were written by multiple authors. Though literacy was relatively high, there were distinctions in skill between the official workforce scribe and others who could write (McDowell 1990: 69). This is demonstrated by the range of spellings for ꜥḏd and šri within Appendix 1. Choice of determinatives may therefore reflect the individual's idea of what was appropriate, or how they had been trained, just as much as social reality.[26] However, when a clear pattern is present, such as the consistent inclusion or absence of a particular determinative, this implies that said determinative was widely accepted as (in)appropriate to the word. Orthography would therefore reflect a general mentality, rather than scribal training or subjective decision-making. Nonetheless, it must be remembered that these texts cover a relatively long timespan. We cannot assume that language remained unchanged over this period, and so consistency across time could simply demonstrate that writing had crystalised, even if spoken vernacular changed.

sphere to which that word was thought to belong; words for family members might have a 'person' determinative after them, or words for precious stones a 'mineral' determinative, for example.

[25] Several texts have written only a determinative to stand in for the whole word, or only the determinative is preserved. In these cases, it is impossible to know whether ꜥḏd, šri, or even another word was intended; they have therefore not been included. These texts are: O.Ashmolean 55 verso 6; O.DEM 569 line 10; O.Qurna 634/3 line 4; and O.Turin 57305 line 4. Other texts not included are O.DEM 111, because it is unclear whether the word should be read as šri, or mr 'ill'; O.DEM 984 line 7, because it is unclear if the word should actually be read as ꜥḏd; O.OIM 16974 recto 4, because the determinative is unpreserved; and both P.Turin 1906+ and O.DEM 361, because in both cases it is possible that the word šri is part of a personal name, Pꜣ-šri-pꜣ-ḥm-nṯr.

[26] For example, O.Cairo 25228 line 1 (Daressy 1901: 56, Pl. 46) is unusual in having the verb msi 'give birth' written 𓁐𓏠𓀔 with the child determinative. Whilst appropriate to the sense of the word, it is very rare to find the verb written with this particular determinative, its usual writing being 𓁐𓏠𓁐. This demonstrates the individual scribe's agency with regards to orthography.
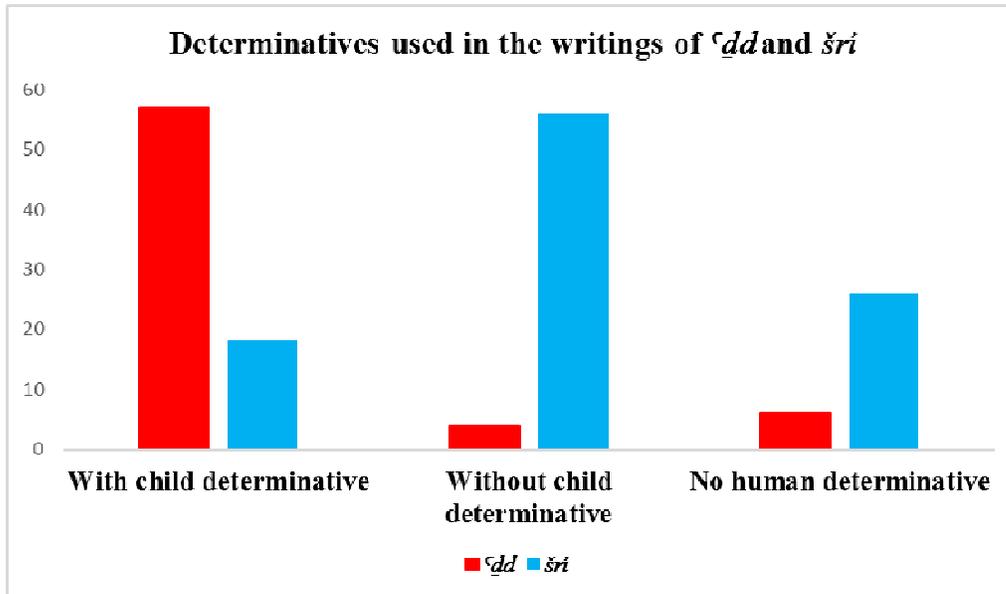
FIG. 5: COMPARISON OF DETERMINATIVES USED IN WRITINGS OF ꜥ*ḏd* AND *šri*

Bearing in mind the above caveats, there is a clear difference in the writing of each word. 85.1% of attestations of ꜥ*ḏd* in Appendix 1 (n=57) include the child determinative. This is unsurprising, illustrating that ꜥ*ḏd* was foremost thought to relate to the sphere of childhood. However, for *šri*, only 18% of attestations (n=18) include the child determinative, whereas 56% (n=56) instead use either male or female adult. It could be suggested, given that *šri* was used of offspring of all ages, that a conscious decision was made in every case; when the *šri* in question was a child, the appropriate determinative was included, and when the *šri* was an adult, it was omitted. However, this is unlikely. On P.Ashmolean 1945.95, where *Ḥꜥ-m-Ỉmn* promises his son a bowl to which no siblings may have a claim, these same siblings are written ⲥ and ⲥ in line 3, but ⲥ and ⲥ in line 5. Indeed, even if the hypothesis that determinatives accurately reflect the age of the individual were true, there would simply be no way of testing it.

There are two potential explanations for this pattern. The first is that, being less frequently found in the contexts of infants, *šri* was generally thought appropriate of older children, maybe those closer to the transition between child and adult. In this way, both determinatives would have been considered appropriate to the situation of the *šri*. The second, more probable explanation is that choice of determinative simply demonstrates that *šri* was not at its heart specifically associated with childhood. Preference of the 'adult' determinatives reflects that

the basic meaning of *šri* was simply 'small', and its use in reference to children was only an extension of that, a 'small person'. This is compounded by the fact that 23.3% of its writings (n=20) include no human determinative at all, only the determinative 𓄿 (Gardiner no. G37), which simply means 'small'. Demonstratives suggest that *šri* was associated primarily with the sphere of 'people' rather than childhood.

The question is therefore how to define *šri* in its association with childhood. If both adult and child offspring were called 'small', what did this mean? It seems that *šri* was used of infants less frequently than *ꜥḏd*, though this may only reflect preserved evidence. It also does not seem that one started as an *ꜥḏd* and passed through a threshold to become a *šri*, as *ꜥḏd* was equally used of older children. It is therefore suggested that, just as with *ꜥḏd*, the use of *šri* reflected the individuals' place in the social order, rather than relating specifically to biological age. Some examples of its use suggest a sense of 'dependant' as with *ꜥḏd*; on P.Geneva D.409, *Ỉmn-ḥꜥ.w* adopts his wife as his *šri.t*, an act paralleled also on P.Ashmolean 1945.96 wherein *Nb-nfr* adopts his wife in the same manner (Gardiner 1941; Cruz-Uribe 1988; Allam 1990; Eyre 1992). However, a *šri* need not have been completely voiceless, as in several examples above they demonstrate economic or legal agency, even if still dependants of another's household. It simply seems that the status of *šri* was again defined from the parental, or at least adult, perspective.

4.4 OTHER TERMS

Although the most frequently found words for childhood at Deir el-Medina, *ꜥḏd* and *šri* are not the only terms. The two most common words for 'child' in ancient Egypt generally, *ḥrd* and *ms*, are also found, but surprisingly infrequently, and their use suggests that they had different and specific nuances compared to *ꜥḏd* and *šri*.

In most cases, *ḥrd.w* refers to the children of specific individuals. Whilst both *ꜥḏd* and *šri* could also refer to specific children, they were equally used of children generally. The difference therefore is that *ḥrd* was used when referring specifically to children of biological relationship through birth. It is also only found in the plural form at Deir el-Medina. A clear example is P.Berlin 10497, a letter to a woman concerning a deceased nurse. In line 18, the author states that he was brought up in the recipient's house: *iw=i m-di=t m šri mi-ḳd n nꜣy=t ḥrd.w* ('I was with you as a *šri*, in the manner of your own *ḥrd.w*'). This demonstrates a clear

contrast between the author, *šri*, and the woman's own children, *ḫrd.w*. Another example is O.Glasgow D.1925.81, a dispute over payments. Lines 7-9 read: *ḫr-ir tw=i ḥms*[*.kwi*] … *iw=f ḥr ḏd n=i mi Ḫꜥ-m-sbꜣ … šri nfr n=i r nꜣy=i ḫrd.w* ('When I was sitting…he said to me "Come, *Ḫꜥ-m-sbꜣ*…[you are like]…a *šri*, better to me than my own *ḫrd.w*!"'). Again, a distinction is made between the two terms.

Further examples demonstrating a biological link between *ḫrd* and parent can be noted:

i) On O.Cairo 25234, a note on a festival of the deified Amenhotep I, lines 2-5 record that the crew celebrated *ḥnꜥ nꜣy=w ḫrd.w m-mitt nꜣy.w ḥm.wt* ('with their *ḫrd.w* and their wives likewise').

ii) On P.Geneva D.409, fragment 1 line 7 mentions the *ḫrd.w* of a lady named *Tꜣ*[*-itḫy*].

iii) On P.Turin 1880 recto 4.18, the policeman *Mntw-ms* advises the striking workmen to come to the funerary temple of Seti I bringing their wives and *ḫrd.w*. On verso 6.4-5 of the same, an unrelated document concerning an oath by *Wsr-ḥꜣ.t*, he requests not to be separated from his three *ḫrd.w*.

iv) On O.BM 50730/50745, a list of absentee workmen, the entry on recto 6-7 records the absence of one workman as *iw=f ir.t ḥꜣ.w m nꜣ ḥbs.w* (*n*) *nꜣy=f ḫrd.w* ('He was making more clothing for his *ḫrd.w*').

v) The recto of P.Boulaq 10 consists of a legal case about the burial of the writer's grandparents by his father. The father's siblings later raised a claim to his property, despite not helping to bury their parents. Lines 5-7 read: *ḫr ptr pnꜥ st nꜣ ḫrd.w n ꜥnḫ*(*.t*)*-niw.t Tꜣ-gmy.t r wḫꜣ ḫt=s* ('Now see, the *ḫrd.w* of citizeness *Tꜣ-gmy.t* contest this').

vi) On the verso of the same papyrus, a deposition by *Ḥꜣy* about his father's property, lines 1-2 read: *ḥsb.t 8 ꜣbd 3 pr.t sw 26 hrw pn sḏm-rꜣ n Ḥꜣy sꜣ Ḥwy ḥr nꜣy=f s.wt n pꜣy=f it r rdi=w n nꜣy=f ḫrd.w* ('Year 8, month 3 of Winter, day 3; on this day, hearing the word of *Ḥꜣy* son of *Ḥwy* concerning his property of his father, in order to give it to his *ḫrd.w*').

vii) On O.Turin 57149, line 4 mentions *nꜣy=k ḫrd.w* ('your *ḫrd.w*'), presumably relating to the guardian *Ḫnmw* who is being talked to in this text.

viii) On P.DEM 12, recto 5 reads *p3y=k ḥrd.w p3y=k d3[mw?]* ('your *ḥrd.w* and your [descendants?]').

ix) On O.DEM 108, a document by *P3-šd.w*, recto 3 records that it is an *imy.t-pr n n3y=f ḥrd.w* ('a transfer-document for his *ḥrd.w*').

x) On O.Turin 57252, a possible division of property, lines 4-5 read … *m-b3ḥ n3y=s ḥrd.w … iw=i (r) di n=s w˓…* ('…in front of her *ḥrd.w*…I will give her one').

It is also possible that in the aforementioned P.Geneva D.409, regarding adoption, a deliberate choice was made to refer to the adoptee as *šri* rather than *ḥrd*, as she was not biologically related.

As with *šri*, *ḥrd* need not refer only to the biologically young, but could be used of biological offspring as adults. In TT250, the tomb of Ramose, a scene in the central chapel (Bruyère 1927: Pl.6) shows five mummies being mourned by women described as *Ti-n-r ḥn˓ ḥrd.w=sn* ('*Ti-n-r* and her children'). In this instance, all figures depicted are adults.

In certain cases, the nuance of *ḥrd.w* is unclear. On O.UC 39677, a letter about a man's failure to deliver bread, verso 5-6 read:

> *tw=i wḥm md.wt m-di=f ˓n iw=f dd n=i iw=i w3ḥ=f n n3 ḥrd.w*
> 'Again I have been speaking with the man, and he told me "I left it for the *ḥrd.w*"'.

In further cases, the use of *ḥrd.w* is unclear because the text is fragmentary and so the word is either in isolation, or at the beginning of a broken line. These instances are: O.Berlin 10645 verso 1; O.Turin 57149 line 5; O.Varille 25 line 3. In these examples, it is unclear exactly who the *ḥrd.w* relate to, and so conclusions cannot be drawn.

In one instance, however, *ḥrd.w* does not seem to indicate a biological relationship. On P.Turin 1880 recto 3.6-13, chief artisan *Ḥnsw* advises the striking workmen to go to the harbour, and for the Vizier's *ḥrd.w* to inform him of this. Whilst these could be the Vizier's actual children, it is also plausible, as noted by Frandsen (1990), that *ḥrd.w* was here a euphemism for 'subordinates'. A euphemism using words for children also occurs on P.Turin

1972, a letter between *Bw-th-ꜣImn* and *Ḏḥwty-ms*, where recto 11 mentions *ꜥdd.w n ꜥ-rsy*. This ambiguous phrase is translated by Wente (1990: 185) as "the little children", but the term 'children of the South' seems more a euphemistic collective for a particular group, whoever they may have been. The association is of belonging to and being born in a time or place, just as we might say 'child of the nineties'. In this way, *ḫrd.w* here might not strictly indicate a biological relationship, but a euphemistic comparison between parent-child dynamics and the hierarchy of job positions, thus still encapsulating the same connotations.

There are few preserved attestations of the word *ms* at Deir el-Medina, and so reaching conclusions about its employment is more difficult. It is found in the context of young animals: on O.Louvre 698, a Letter to the Dead from *Bw-th-ꜣImn*, recto 15-17 read *tꜣ in nꜣy=s iḥ.w bw-pw=w di.t ir=s … ḫrp st n nꜣy=sn ms.w*. This passage is broken and its sense is unclear; Frandsen (1992: 33) translates it as "O she who fetched their cattle, they did not let her make…when she presented their young ones", and Wente (1990: 218) as "you who brought their cattle home; they didn't let you…(after) you had made an offering of their offspring". On O.Cairo 25597, a payment list, lines 6-8 mention sandals from *pꜣ ms n Ḥnw.t*. Apparently meaning '*Ḥnw.t*'s child' or similar, this individual is unusually not identified by their own name, unlike everyone else in the list. Thirdly, on P.Turin 2026, verso 6 records that the recipient should *ptr nꜣ ms.w nty m pꜣy=k* [*pr?*] ('look after the *ms.w* who are in your [house?]'). In this instance, the use of *ms.w* seems comparable to that of *ḫrd.w*. P.Geneva D.409 page 3.1, which mentions four servants and their *ms.w*, also parallels this use.

One particular instance merits discussion. On O.DEM 108, the will of *Pꜣ-šd.w*, recto 3-4 read:

> *ir.t n=f imy.t-pr n ḫrd.w=f iry ḫt nb.(t) iw=w psš=w n ms.w nb.(w)*
> 'The making by him of a transfer-document for his *ḫrd.w*, concerning all property. It is to be divided among all *ms.w*'.

It is interesting that two different words for children were used within such close proximity. This could simply be scribal flair, but the distinction could also be meaningful; perhaps *ḫrd.w* referred to *Pꜣ-šd.w*'s own children specifically, but *ms.w* referred not just to 'children', but 'descendants' (David 2010: 35), with a frame of reference wider than the current generation. This must remain a suggestion, as there is insufficient evidence to test it against further examples. However, it is notable that *ḫrd.w=f* is defined explicitly in relation to *Pꜣ-šd.w* ('his *ḫrd.w*'), whilst *ms.w* is not.

Having discussed terminology for childhood in the context of its employment at Deir el-Medina, it seems that, whilst there were several terms to describe children, they were to an extent interchangeable, and not informed by other factors such as age. Vocabulary suggests a limited distinction between periods of sub-adult life at Deir el-Medina. There seem to have been subtle nuances in the employment of various terms, most notably *ḥrd*, but this was defined by social factors—marking the individual explicitly in relation to another—rather than their age. Similarly, the evidence suggests that childhood was conceptualised as a social category, a 'rung' within the social ladder, rather than biologically defined.

4.5 VOCABULARY AND THE REALITIES OF CHILDHOOD

Having outlined the terminology related to children at Deir el-Medina, this section explores how widely it was applicable. It has been discussed that age was not the sole defining factor for childhood. However, age does not act alone in forming identities; it is one of a suite of inter-relating social attributes (James 1998: 59). The following discussion considers whether use of terminology was structured according to other social factors, such as the gender or ethnicity of the individual.

The first attribute is gender. Besides age, gender is one of the most influential factors underlying how individuals are grouped and recognised socially, and the two are inherently inter-linked (Arber and Ginn 1995; Sofaer Derevenski 1997b, 1997c; Lesick 1997: 35; Lucy 1997: 154, 2005: 58; Roméro 2009). People of a particular gender may be perceived differently at different ages (Diáz-Andreu 2005: 15), and certain age categories may even be prohibited to certain genders (Beaumont 1994: 86-7; Meskell 2002: 425).

There has been limited research into whether and when the Egyptian child was gendered. Certain medical texts, such as the Lahun Gynaecological Papyrus, spell 19 (Griffith 1898: Pl. 6); the Berlin Medical Papyrus, spell 199 (Wreszinski 1909: 47, 110); and P.Carlsberg VIII, spell 3 (Iverson 1939: 13-15) include procedures for determining the gender of an unborn child, suggesting that gendering occurred from a young age, even birth. However, whether these actually reflect wider social mentality is uncertain. Unfortunately, a full analysis of how and whether gender influenced children's social identities must await discussion of other bodies of evidence. Textual sources offer little scope for analysis.

Neither Ꜥḏd nor šri seem to have been gender-specific. Both masculine p3 Ꜥḏd/šri and feminine t3 Ꜥḏd.t/šri.t are found, as on O.Prague H.10 where the witnesses were both sons (šri) and daughters (šri.t) of the main party. Determinatives also illustrate this. O.Černý 15 mentions sandals for n3 [hieroglyphs] 'the Ꜥḏd.w', wherein both male and female determinatives are used, but this particular determinative group was also used for 'collectives' more generally and so may be unconnected to gender. Although in some cases where the individual is a female the corresponding female determinative is missing, such as on O.Ashmolean 120, this should not be considered significant. With the introduction of gendered definite articles in Late Egyptian, more traditional graphic markers of the feminine became less important.

Therefore, vocabulary reflects gender principles in that discrete masculine and feminine forms of the same noun existed. However, there were no apparent restrictions in their use for either gender. Given that the vocabulary for childhood related largely to social position, this suggests that gender was not a determining factor; rather, the position of all children within the social hierarchy was considered similar. That said, the limited evidence only permits broad conclusions regarding vocabulary. There could have been subtler distinctions between the connotations of an Ꜥḏd and what it represented, and an Ꜥḏd.t, which would have been implicitly understood by an Egyptian. However, this cannot be determined based on the sources available. Textual evidence is of limited value for micro-level discussion of gender and childhood identity.

The second principle possibly influencing how childhood was constructed is social class. Although brought together for a specific purpose, Deir-el Medina was not egalitarian; its 'class-structure', and the presence of servants especially, was established in Chapter 2. Despite uncertainty over where exactly these servants lived, their presence was a part of daily life at Deir el-Medina, and these servants included children. We cannot assume that the experience of a child born into servitude was comparable to that of a child born to a craftsman. Therefore, how did the condition of a servant-child differ—if at all—and would this be reflected in terminology?

It is possible that children of different classes, not yet being fully socialised into their future roles, were less differentiated than adults. Robins (1999: 57) notes that in artistic depictions, elites and royals are more visually distinguished as adults than as children. Understandably, texts from Deir el-Medina demonstrate less about other social classes, and servants

themselves have left no primary written records. However, some texts mention the children of servants incidentally. The vocabulary used for children within these is little different to that of the craftsmen. On P.BM 75015, a letter concerning an abducted maidservant and her son, recto 4-5 describe them as *ḥm.t Ti-nt-n-ḏd.t irm ḥm Gm-ʾImn pȝy=s šri* ('the servant *Ti-nt-n-ḏd.t* and the servant *Gm-ʾImn* her *šri*') and verso 4 further mentions him as *pȝy=s šri m ḳni=s* ('her *šri* at her breast'). Similarly, O.Cairo 25640 uses *šri* to describe the son of the servant *Tȝ-wr-m-ḥb*. O.Glasgow D.1925.83 and O.Ashmolean 90 mention the lady *Nḏm.t-ḥmsi* and her *ḫrd.w*. Finally, P.Geneva D.409 page 3.1 mentions two female and two male servants and their *ms.w.* These words have all previously been discussed.

One interpretation of the evidence is simply that there was no distinction between children of different classes. However, given that the children of servants would begin work and have their social position reinforced from a young age, this is unlikely. Rather, terminology reflects the biases of these texts. They were written not by, but about, servants, and reflect the language of the authors rather than the subject matter. This is not to say that servants would necessarily have had a different vocabulary for childhood, but they may have had differing ways of understanding the progression of sub-adult life—especially if originally of a different nationality—which the textual evidence available cannot illuminate. Two illustrations of this idea are O.Cairo 25673 and P.Mayer B lines 8-9, both of which concern a *ms-ḥm* or 'servant-child'. Compounds with *ms-* ('born') can refer to either age or origin (Blackman 1933: 203; Borghouts 1982: 80-1 Note 29), but in both cases define the individual by an aspect of their identity, be that geographical or professional (*ms-Nḥsy* 'Nubian', *ms-wꜥb* 'young *wꜥb*-priest'). In these texts, the individuals were labelled *ms-ḥm*, 'born of a servant', and identified purely by their social status.

A third social attribute to consider is ethnicity. Deir el-Medina included numerous 'foreigners', largely Canaanite, Libyan and Nubian. Foreigners do not seem to have been of lower status than the craftsmen themselves, but did not typically advance to higher bureaucratic positions. They were largely craftsmen and their wives, or acted as gardeners, guards and other roles belonging to the "lower functional levels" of society (Ward 1994: 67). This illustrates how status and ethnicity interact in forging identities. Non-Egyptians are known as holding official roles elsewhere; the positions of foreigners at Deir el-Medina might therefore reflect local prejudices (Ward 1994: 68), or possibly just the desire for the few, local families holding bureaucratic offices to keep them within their families.

The level to which individuals expressed their ethnic identity varied on a personal level; in several families, the children of foreigners had Egyptian names, but foreign names reappeared in the succeeding generation (Ward 1994: 71-2). However, for the most part, Deir el-Medina society appears largely integrated and Egyptianised, and material homogenised. The presence of foreigners can usually only be deduced through personal names; even then, it is often hard to separate Egyptian and foreign names based on consonants alone (Ward 1994: 65).[27] Given the material homogeneity of the site, it might be suggested that there was also homogeneity in how childhood was constructed, and that ethnicity was largely not an influencing factor. Indeed, although numerous texts within Appendix 1 were written by and for foreigners, they still employ the typical vocabulary discussed above. However, it must be questioned whether they were written by the individuals whom they concern, or dictated to scribes—if the latter, they may instead reflect the language of the scribes. The limited textual evidence available indicates no ethnic distinctions in the presentation of childhood, but there is no way of knowing if this reflects social realities in practice. Ethnic differences may have been felt in social relations, but these are masked by the homogenous material culture (Meskell 2002: 49).

Therefore, vocabulary alone reveals little about the heterogeneity or homogeneity of childhood at the site. There is some limited evidence for how factors other than age informed the childhood condition, but they seem to have had little influence. However, the corpus of textual evidence is small, and more examples may allow for a more nuanced interpretation. That texts show little restriction in the use of terminology should not be taken as proof that other factors did not structure childhood, simply that vocabulary does not reflect this.

There is, however, one factor which influenced the vocabulary used to describe children; the context in which children were present. There is evidence to suggest that vocabulary was specifically chosen as appropriate for certain arenas, and therefore different social contexts. A similar idea has already been witnessed with the term *ẖrd.w*. In this way, vocabulary provides information as to how childhood was defined within different social arenas.

In most texts which reflect daily vernacular, such as letters, *pꜣy=i šri* or equivalent is used for 'my child'. However, in certain situations, the word *sꜣ* ('son') or its feminine equivalent *sꜣ.t* ('daughter') is instead used to express familial relationship. Most obviously this is seen in

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[27] Equally, an individual bearing a foreign name may still have been native Egyptian, just as an English child today might be called Isabella. There is no simple equation between names and ethnicity.

tomb contexts, accompanying depictions of the deceased and his family. However, it also occurs in other contexts with a semi-formal element, such as legal texts. It is argued here that in situations where *s3* is used, lineage was the key criterion by which children were defined. This demonstrates a different conception of childhood than in letters and other daily minutiae, where vocabulary described children's placement within social hierarchy more generally.

This can be demonstrated through an analysis of several legal texts. However, legal texts require an introductory comment. Despite the sheer quantity of material preserved, there are surprisingly few comprehensive studies of legal practice at Deir el-Medina (McDowell 1990; David 2010) and so its relationship to practice elsewhere in Egypt remains incompletely understood. Legal cases occurred on an almost daily basis; as McDowell (1990: 1) notes, "the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina found few forms of entertainment as enjoyable as a good law suit". The legal system at Deir el-Medina seems to have been fairly autonomous, answerable only to the Vizier (see Häggman 2002 for Deir el-Medina's place within Theban administration), and legal vocabulary was not specialised but composed of words otherwise found in everyday speech (McDowell 1990: 13). Three arenas are known within which legal cases were settled: the *ḳnb.t*-court which people could possibly spectate (McDowell 1990: 100, 153); petitioning the oracle of the deified Amenhotep I; and, for minor matters, agreeing a settlement with an arbitrator. These suggest that legal cases were simply part of the tapestry of life, resolved between the villagers themselves. Whilst legal texts record a distinct set of activities, it was still part of the daily experience at Deir el-Medina.

However, in certain situations, such as disputes over tombs, external officials from Thebes were called in to adjudicate—as in the case recorded on O.BM 5624, P.Berlin 1046 and O.Florence 2621—suggesting a more formal situation. Similarly, at least some records were intended for external official archives (Valbelle 1985a: 27-85), although many were kept in private family archives (Janssen 1975b: 295-6). Extraordinary cases such as tomb robberies (Peet 1930) were resolved as high as at the royal level. It is unclear whether the Egyptians distinguished between issues settled internally and externally; problems with categorising legal texts are addressed by David (2010: 1-16). Writing material is not necessarily telling in this regard, as papyrus was not prohibitively expensive (Janssen 1975a: 447-8, 1987b; see also McDowell 1990: 5-7; Donker van Heel and Haring 2003: 2-5).

Within legal texts that include children, several examples demonstrate a distinction between the terminology used in 'formal' elements—the opening rubric, and other parts of the 'body

text' wherein the scribe outlined the procedure—and transcripts of direct speech from parties involved (noted already by Toivari-Viitala 2001: 198). In the former, *s3* is generally used to identify someone's parentage, and *ḫrd.w* the word chosen for 'children'. However, in direct speech, which was presumably recorded *verbatim* or as close as possible, *šri* is typically used. There is therefore a distinction between the language used in everyday, more colloquial speech, and official scribal language.

This concept is paralleled elsewhere at Deir el-Medina, with regards to vocabulary referring to women. *Nb.t pr*, 'Lady of the House', is common on monuments, but *ḥm.t*, 'woman/wife' in documents (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 15-29; Meskell 2002: 97). Similarly, in reference to the necropolis region, a distinction was made between *s.t-m3ꜥ.t* and *p3 ḫr*, with the former 'lower register' and found only in hieratic texts, not hieroglyphic (Černý 1973: 28).

A clear example of this idea in relation to children is O.Ashmolean 90, concerning the ownership of servants. Recto 1 opens:

> *ḏd n t3y-ḥm.t Ḳn n s3=f Pn-dw3*
> 'Said by sculptor *Ḳn* to his *s3 Pn-dw3*'.

However, recto 2-4, *Ḳn*'s own statement, reads:

> *ir hrw nb n b3k.w n ꜥnḫ(.t)-niw.t M3ꜥ.t-nfr.t t3y=i mw.t nty m niw.t nty m-ḳ3b iw=w n Pn-dw3 p3y=i šri*
> 'As for every workday of the servants of the citizeness *M3ꜥ.t-nfr.t*, my mother, who are in the city or who are inside, they shall belong to *Pn-dw3*, my *šri*'.

This demonstrates a clear difference from the vocabulary used to affiliate *Pn-dw3* to his father, although both sections refer to the same individual. Another example is P.Geneva D.409, concerning the desire of *Ỉmn-ḫꜥ.w* to leave his property to his second wife. Page 3 lines 2-3 introduce a statement with:

> *sḏd.t n t3ty n wꜥb ḥr.y-k3.wt ꜥh3wty-nfr wꜥb Nb-nfr n3 ḫrd.w n it-nṯr Ỉmn-ḫꜥ.w nty m-b3h=f n3 sn.w ꜥ3.w n3y=f ḫrd.w*

'Said the vizier to the priest and chief workmen *ꜥḥꜣwty-nfr*, and the priest *Nb-nfr*, the *ẖrd.w* of the prophet *Ỉmn-ḫꜥ.w* who stood before him, they being the eldest brothers of his *ẖrd.w*'.

However, on page 3 line 13 and page 4 line 1, *Ḳn's* own speech is recorded as:

pꜣy=i 2/3 … [pꜣ]y=s 1/8 iw bn šri šri(.t) md.t m pꜣy sḫr i.ir=i n=s
'My two thirds [in addition to] her one-eighth, and no *šri* or *šri(.t)* shall question this arrangement which I have made for her'.

This pattern can also be seen in other texts. The opening to P.Boulaq 10 verso reads:

ḥsb.t 8 ꜣbd 3 pr.t sw 26 hrw pn sḏm-rꜣ n Ḥꜣy sꜣ Ḥwy ḥr nꜣy=f s.wt n pꜣy=f it r rdi=w n nꜣy=f ẖrd.w
'Year 8, month 3 of Winter, day 3; on this day, hearing the word of *Ḥꜣy sꜣ Ḥwy* concerning his property of his father, in order to give them to his *ẖrd.w*'.

On O.DEM 108, line 3 reads:

ir.t n=f imy.t-pr n ẖrd.w=f
'His making a transfer-document for his *ẖrd.w*'.

Both cases again demonstrate the use of *sꜣ* and *ẖrd.w* in formal contexts. By contrast, direct speech, such as on O.Geneva MAH.12250 recto 2 and O.UC 39619 recto 6-7, use *šri*, and O.Ashmolean 103 uses both *ꜥdd*—recto 1 reads *pꜣ ꜥdd iw=i ḥr ir.t ḏs=i i.n=f* ('"You, *ꜥdd*, I will do it myself." So he said')—and *šri*—recto 4 reads *iw=w n Nb-imn pꜣy=i šri* ('they are for *Nb-imn*, my *šri*').

At first glance, O.Brussels E.6311 seemingly contradicts the above pattern. *sꜣ* is used in recto 1:

di.t rḫ ḥ.t nty m-ꜥ rmṯ-is.t Ḥwy sꜣ Ḥwy-nfr
'A statement of the property which is in the possession of the workman *Ḥwy sꜣ Ḥwy-nfr*'.

However, recto 4-5, still part of the body text, use *šri*:

> *n pȝ ḥmtiw r in pȝy=f nṯr bd.t ẖȝr 1 ḥr nty tȝy ḥm.t n Nḫ.t-Mnw pȝy=f šri*
> 'For the coppersmith, to bring to his god; one *khar* of emmer belonging to this
> wife of *Nḫ.t-Mnw*, his *šri*'.

However, both HOP and KRI take the lines in which the second quote occurs to be part of a second, separate text, and so there need not be a contradiction in this instance.

One text which does not match the pattern is O.DEM 764, the previously discussed guidelines for property division. Here, *ꜥḏḏ.w* was chosen as the word for children. This is especially unusual as *ꜥḏḏ* is otherwise almost never found in a legal context. A reason cannot be proposed for the decision to employ it here; possibly it was a mistake, possibly the text was a practice by a trainee, or possibly another unknown reason underlay the choice of vocabulary here.

Distinctions in terminology are not always completely clear-cut. *ẖrd.w* was not used only in the official elements of legal texts, but also direct speech. On P.Ashmolean 1945.97, *Niw.t-nḫ.t* uses it throughout to describe her children, as does *Ỉmn-ḫꜥ.w* on P.Geneva D.409, when talking of his children by his first wife (fragment 1 line 7, page 3 line 3). However, that *ẖrd.w* was found in both direct speech and formal rubrics only reflects that it was not itself a particularly 'high register' word; as discussed above, it is frequently attested at Deir el-Medina. Rather, what should be noted is that in the formal body of legal texts, the word for 'children' is only ever *ẖrd.w*, and *sȝ* is always the genealogical marker. *šri* is never found in these instances, being located only in direct speech. Therefore, as a general rule, there was a preference for the words used in the main bodies of legal texts, as opposed to records of direct speech.

To an extent, choice of vocabulary probably reflects different registers of language.[28] Simply meaning 'small [person]', *šri* was more colloquial, and reflected daily vernacular rather than language preferred in formal situations or by officials. The same distinctions can be seen in other types of texts. On O.BM 50730/50745, an absence list, recto 5 reads:

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[28] Late Egyptian writing preserves several registers of language (Israelit-Groll 1975). That legal texts specifically contain different registers has been addressed by David (2010: 18-22, especially p.21).

rmṯ-ist Ḳ3-s3 s3 Pn-ʿnḳ.t m tr rwh r ḏd ḳd wʿ k3 n3 sḥn.w p3y=f šri

'The workman *Ḳ3-s3* son of *Pn-ʿnḳ.t* [was absent] in the evening, saying [he was] providing a bull for the tasks of his *šri* (?)'.

Again, both *s3* and *šri* were used, but by different parties. Difference in register is also found with markers of possession. There is a distinction between more 'traditional' methods of denoting possession such as *s3=i*, with suffix pronoun attached directly to the noun, and the more 'colloquial', using possessive pronouns such as *p3y=i šri*.[29] The latter tends not to be used in formal contexts (Hoch 1994b: 11); indeed, it is the former that is found in the formal textual registers discussed above. Therefore, distinctions in terminology could reflect vernacular rather than different manners of constructing and referring to childhood.

However, it is argued here that choice of language does not reflect vernacular alone. Certain absence lists record that workmen were off duty for matters relating to their children. Given that the scribes or the foremen were responsible for compiling these records, we might expect that higher register terms would be found. Indeed, on O.BM 5634 verso 15, *s3* is used. However, on O.Cairo 25512 recto 11 and O.Cairo 25519 verso 23, *šri* is instead found. Similarly, whilst 'colloquial', *šri* as an epithet is found even in royal contexts, such as for the daughters and granddaughters of Akhenaten (*Mri.t-Itn-t3-šri.t*, *ʿnḫ=s-n-p3-Itn-t3-šri.t* and *Nfr-nfr.w-Itn-t3-šri.t*). Therefore, whilst different registers of language may be reflected in different written contexts, it is not the only explanation.

Indeed, beyond grammatical issues such as possessives, that the actual word *šri* itself is never found in the legal contexts discussed above is telling. Rather than simply reflecting register, it is argued that choice of language also reflects how childhood was defined differently within particular contexts. Intended primarily to identify individuals unequivocally, the word *s3* stressed genealogy; its inclusion in formal documents such as household lists and contracts has been well noted (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 197; Kóthay 2011; Vittmann 2013b: 2, with references). Given that at Deir el-Medina *s3* is most commonly found in tomb scenes and legal documents, this suggests that in such contexts it was important that the child was

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[29] In Late Egyptian, the differences between manners of conveying possession also seem to depend on the 'quality' of the noun. The suffix pronoun, attached directly to the noun, formed a closer link between noun and possessive than when the possessive article was used. Indeed, the nouns which are made possessive by a direct suffix tend typically to be those more inherently linked to the possessor, such as limbs (*i.e. ḥ.t=i*, 'my body', rather than *p3y=i ḥ.t*). In this regard, it is interesting that children are also made possessive by use of the suffix.

defined not by the social position of children generally, but by the familial origin of that particular individual.

The use of *s3* in formal textual contexts therefore had two purposes. Firstly, it reflected the importance placed by ancient Egyptians on having children and continuing one's lineage. This concern was one of the core tenets of Egyptian mentality, and is demonstrated also by the universal use of *s3* and *s3.t* in tomb scenes. This was a basic kin term, designating formally acknowledged kin ties, in contrast to other terms with less formal connotations (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 197). Secondly, it reflected the Egyptian preoccupation with status ascribed through lineage, demonstrating the underlying influence of kinship in structuring Egyptian social organisation (Campagno 2006, 2009; Fitzenreiter 2006; Moreno García 2006).[30]

The use of *s3* requires some closing comments. Terminology for expressing familial relationships was limited at Deir el-Medina, as elsewhere in Egypt. There were six core terms—*it* (father), *mw.t* (mother), *s3/s3.t* (son/daughter), *sn/sn.t* (brother/sister), *h3y* (husband) and *ḥm.t* (wife)—expressing three separate levels of kinship: marriage, descent and collaterality (Lustig 1997: 48; Campagno 2009). These terms were employed both alone, and in compounds expressing extended relationships (such as *sn mw.t*, uncle, literally 'mother's brother'). However, these words were also used to express a range of wider social relationships, and can have several meanings. For example, *it* could be used in the sense of father, father-in-law, grandfather, or even ancestor; *sn.t* could also refer to one's wife; and *s3* one's grandson or descendant more generally. Equally, *it* and *s3* were not always used in a familial sense, and were employed in didactic literature to describe pupil-teacher relationships with no biological basis (Lazaridis 2010: 3; Polis 2017: 92).[31] The ambiguity with Egyptian kinship terms has been well studied (Robins 1979; Bierbrier 1980; Willems 1983). The issue is compounded further in that popular personal names tend to repeat over generations (Vittmann 2013b: 5), and so compiling genealogies is problematic. Therefore, not all cases where *s3/s3.t* are used necessarily mean 'son/daughter'.

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[30] Perhaps a comparison can be drawn between O.Louvre N.2262, a note of the marriage of one of Ramesses II's sons to the *s3.t* of a boat captain, and O.Glasgow D.1925.84, where the daughter of a foreign official is referred to as a *šri.t*. Although we cannot be sure who composed either text, it could be suggested that the different terminology in each reflected the perceived condition of both individuals; in the first, association with a prince afforded the lady higher status than her origins might suggest.

[31] It is possible that these basic terms were sometimes used as abbreviations of longer compounds, such as *sn* standing for *sn it* 'paternal uncle'.

Furthermore, use of *s3* was not restricted to formal contexts. It has been discussed previously that both *šri* and *ʿdd* could denote that an individual was the eponymous son of another person—for example *Knr* and *Knr-šri* his son on stela Louvre C.218, and *Nfr-Ḥtp ʿdd ʿ3* mentioned earlier. Similarly, *s3* and the father's name were frequently appended to certain people, presumably to avoid confusion with another, identically named individual.[32] Given the frequent repetition of names within families (Vittmann 2013b: 5), such as that of *Ḥwy* (Davies 1999: Chart 3), such qualifiers became necessary. A well-known example is *Ḥr s3 Ḥw-nfr* (Davies 1999: 18). In this way, *s3* was simply part of the individual's identity, but its use still defined them through their parental lineage, exactly as with the discussion above.

4.6 CONCLUSIONS

Vocabulary offers a broad, introductory structure for how Deir el-Medina society defined childhood. It provides little evidence for exploring gender or class, but suggests that children's identity as a whole was measured largely by their place within social hierarchy. Childhood was a time of social, not biological minority; its end may also have lain at a social milestone, such as marriage, although this cannot be tested. There is also no indication within the available evidence that biological criteria played a role in defining further sub-stages within this broad period.

The texts collated in Appendix 1 show that childhood was associated with few terms, and that the meanings of these were often synonymous. Interestingly, however, within copies of literary texts known from the site, far more words are used to describe children, none of which were in daily use. For example:

i) O.Hermitage 1125, a hymn to Ramesses IV or V (Matthieu 1930; Bickel and Mathieu 1993: 44-5). Recto 1-2 read:

> *mrw.t=k mrw.t n 3pd ḳi=k ḳi n* 🔣
>
> 'Your love is the love of a bird; your form is the form of a *sfy*'.

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[32] Indeed, *s3* itself often formed part of a person's name, frequently theophoric (such as *S3-Sbk* 'Son-of-Sobek'). In Ptolemaic and Roman times, this was extended to non-theophoric names, actually including the parent in the individual's name (such as *P3-šri-n-P3-di-Mnw*, 'The-son-of-*P3-di-Mnw*'). See Vleeming (2011: 918-35) for such names, and Vittmann (2013a) for structures in personal names more generally.

ii) O.Cairo 25773, a copy of P.Anastasi I (Černý 1935a: 85, 97). Lines 2-5 (equivalent to P.Anastasi lines 1.3-5) read:

sš i.ir=tw mn.t m im=f m [hieroglyphs] *nb ḫbs pw ḥr w3t nt ḫmy.w šsp=f m … ḫtḫt*

m sšs3.t ḳn m sš rḫ iry[.w=f] *… db3.w=f* [hieroglyphs] *stp iḳr ip* [d.t]

'[A teacher of subordinates in] writing; one for whom merit is made in every *ḥwn*; he is a lamp on the path of the demolishers (?) because he illuminates the…who drives back in the night (?); capable in writing, who knows [his duties]…his fingers; a *ḥy* of choice excellence, [self-controlled]…'

iii) O.Cairo 25776, a possible hymn (Černý 1935a: 85, 97). Lines 2-5 read:

ḫ3k.w-ib ḫ3s.t ḳ- … [hieroglyphs] *nfr di.t ḥw3.t … r ḫnn ib=f … ḫw=k sw nr=f mn.ti*

'The evil ones of the land of *ḳ-*…beautiful *rnp* who causes the…to rot so that his heart might alight…[so that?] you protect him, fear of him enduring'.

iv) O.Gardiner 333, a spell for warding off scorpions (Černý and Gardiner 1957: Pl. 100.1). Lines 3-5 read:

… nfr sḏm ʿnḫ wʿ sšm ky … ḫry s3=t [hieroglyphs] *ḥr iw.t n … pḥ.ty=f ḫpr=f di=t ḥtp …*

'It is good to listen; one lives when another leads…[flee] with your *nḫn* Horus in order that [he] return…when his strength has developed, so you may cause him to pacify…'

Certain of these are parallels of compositions known from elsewhere, rather than being composed by the residents of Deir el-Medina. It is possible that the vocabulary within them betrays differing attitudes to childhood. More nuanced divisions of childhood may be class-related; it has been suggested that those of higher classes were "more likely to engage in dividing childhood than lower classes" (Beaumont 1994: 84; also Garland 1990: 20; Marshall 2015b: 52). Possibly, therefore, the vocabulary for childhood within these literary texts reflects social ideas of the elites who composed it, rather than lay society. That said, at least one of the above texts—O.Hermitage 1125—is attributed to the Deir el-Medina scribe *Ỉmn-nḫ.t* known to have composed numerous other pieces (Bickel and Mathieu 1993), and these literary texts were clearly known to the villagers. It is therefore interesting that their

vocabulary does not seem to have influenced conceptualisations of childhood, at least judging by the evidence available. The words above are never found in the transactions and correspondence of the villagers, where the vocabulary for childhood was much more restricted and far less specific.

Although the terminology for childhood at Deir el-Medina was somewhat vague, in certain cases, mainly legal texts, its use and placement suggests that this broad conceptualisation was further nuanced by the contexts in which children were present. In these instances, rather than children being defined simply by social apposition to adults, they were identified through their specific genealogy and family ties, stressing the importance of lineage in such contexts. This reflects that the 'daily life' of this Chapter's title is nothing more than a broad, vague concept which encompasses numerous spheres of activity and social relationships, each of which had the potential to nuance childhood further. This is not unprecedented; the meaning of vocabulary related to childhood often relies on contextual nuance rather than strict definition (Lebegyev 2009: 16; Parkin 2010: 99).

One final note must go to the size of the body of evidence used in this Chapter. Despite the sheer number of texts known from Deir el-Medina detailing 'daily life', and the uncommonly large corpus this provides for discussing children, it must be noted that it is still only a minority of texts which mention children in any capacity. To put this into perspective, the Deir el-Medina database (Donker van Heel *et al.* 2007) includes entries for 4317 texts; those collated in Appendix 1 as referring in some way to children number only 168. This is a reminder that despite the rich evidence for 'daily life' at Deir el-Medina, and the unusually large body of textual sources relating to children, children are still heavily under-represented even in this evidence.

The following Chapters will continue to explore the role of context in defining childhood, beginning with evidence for children within the economic sphere of the craftsmen.

5. THE CHILD AT WORK

As suggested in the preceding Chapter, both through the use of the term *ẖrd* and the composition of legal texts, context seems to have been a primary factor in how childhood was conceptualised. The following Chapter explores this further. It analyses texts and other evidence relating specifically to the presence of children within the workforce, rather than in daily life and as members of society generally. The words *ʿḏd* and *šri* are still found in this context, but their employment suggests that they had specific, more nuanced meanings as opposed to when used of children as members of society more generally. Furthermore, two other terms are found, *mnḥ* and *ms-ẖr*. Used only in the context of the workforce, the first especially seemingly relates to older children actively becoming craftsmen as apprentices. This vocabulary further reinforces that childhood was constructed contextually at Deir el-Medina, and defined by the spheres within which children participated. Within the context of the workforce, childhood was defined differently to daily life, and through specific criteria. These criteria are suggested to relate to progression through the workforce, and how this progression was measured.

The majority of the craftsmen's time was spent not within the village, but in the Valley of the Kings. During work periods, the craftsmen stayed in huts on the road to the Valley (Bruyère 1939: 345-64). Theoretically, the working week was ten days, with the tenth day free, but this varied in reality (Janssen 1980: 132; Toivari-Viitala 2006; Jauhiainen 2009: 300). It is thus unsurprising that the identity of men at Deir el-Medina was defined primarily by their inclusion and position in the workforce. Letters and legal texts frequently refer to males by their title, especially for higher ranks such as foreman. Therefore, depending on the age at which children became involved, membership was a defining feature of an individual's identity for the majority of their life. Indeed, apprenticeship is as much about acculturation—learning to be and belong—as it is craft-learning (Wendrich 2010). Membership of the workforce was, however, a route open only to males, and so this aspect of identity was gender-constrained.

5.1 THE ꜥḏd, mnḥ AND ms-ḥr

This first section provides an overview of terminology relating to children with the workforce; the following sections discuss progression through the workforce itself.

There is some evidence for the procedure by which children joined the workforce community. Several ostraca mention the *ṯsi*, 'binding', of ꜥḏd.w.[33] These are O.Ashmolean 70, O.Cairo 25298, O.Cairo 25800, O.DEM 40, O.DEM 320, and possibly O.IFAO 693. Although the basic meaning of *ṯsi* is simply 'to tie/bind' (Wb V: 405.1-407.15), it occured frequently in work-related contexts, such as the levying of troops, where 'to tie' had a sense of conscription. The very fact that the joining the work community was described as 'binding' indicates how it formed such a dominant component of the child's identity.

'Binding' might suggest some form of ceremony; von Lieven (2007) discusses the 'initiation' aspects of introduction to artisanal training in ancient Egypt. O.Berlin P.12406, verso 6-7 (Černý: 32.3) illustrates that food was given as gifts on appointment to the workforce. It reads *r di.t rḫ.tw tꜣ ḫr.t i.di n=f Nb-Ỉmn m-ḏr ṯs=f* ('list of the good[s] *Nb-Ỉmn* gave him on his binding'), followed by a list of foodstuffs. O.Glasgow D.1925.72, recto 1-2 (KRI VII: 285) possibly records a similar event, but is much more fragmentary. It reads …*ḥsb.t 15 iṯꜣ iḫ.t i.ir…-ꜥḳ.w m tꜣ (?) ṯs=f r tꜣ i[s.t?]*… ('Regnal year 15: taking goods made…loaves upon his binding to the c[rew?]…).

However, beyond such celebrations, the actual practicalities of joining the workforce are unknown, because all relevant documents are heavily broken. O.Cairo 25880 and possibly O.Ashmolean 70 verso 5 suggest that the captains, particularly the scribe, 'recommended' children for *ṯsi*. It has been proposed that the Vizier was involved in this procedure, but the ostraca that are cited as examples of this—O.DEM 320, 352, O.Ashmolean 70 and O.IFAO 693—are fragmentary and the relationship of the Vizier's presence to other events is unclear. O.DEM 40 explains that 'one' promoted the children; Černý (1973: 115) understood this as the common allusion to the King, with the ceremony performed on his behalf by the Vizier, but this remains supposition.

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[33] Borghouts (1982: 96 Note 82) interpreted this as the use of children to fill temporary labour gaps, but it seems rather to have been a permanent position.

Although in most cases, it is ꜥḏd.w who are 'bound', in one case—O.Cairo 25298—šri is used. However, this is probably not significant. Unusually, in this example, the children's parentage is specified, and so šri rather than ꜥḏd was likely used because the reference was to the child of a specific individual. Indeed, in other economic texts where šri occurs, it refers to named individuals or the children of named individuals (O.Cairo 25518, O.Cairo 25640, O.DEM 154, P.Turin 2013+, P.Turin 1945+). The one exception is O.DEM 893, where pꜣ šri ('the šri') is involved in some capacity with what seems to be work on a royal tomb (DEM IX: 67). However, the text is broken beyond this point and so further interpretation is impossible; Pꜣ-šri could even be part of a personal name here. The evidence suggests that šri did not have a specific economic nuance, but was used primarily when referring to specific individuals.

The other group to occur in binding texts are the mnḥ.w (see O.DEM 352 and 888). All evidence suggests that there were two specific points of transition within the workforce: from ꜥḏd to mnḥ, and from mnḥ to adult craftsman or rmṯ-is.t, 'man of the crew' (Černý 1973: 115). The consistent description of transitions as ṯsi suggests that each involved ceremonial aspects. Given the number of craftsmen over time, it is surprising that the binding of ꜥḏd.w is by far the most freqently attested textually. However, a potential explanation is that 'binding' texts have been traditionally misinterpreted. The typical understanding is that they describe the position to which an individual had just risen—the texts listed in the previous paragraphs refer to individuals who had just become ꜥḏd.w, and O.DEM 352 and 888 refer to those who had just become mnḥ.w. However, they could instead be interpreted as describing the position which an individual had just risen *from*. In this way, the 'binding of ꜥḏd.w' would actually record their imminent 'promotion' to mnḥ, and similarly the 'binding of mnḥ' referred to those about to become full craftsmen.

In this context, specific attention should be paid to O.DEM 352. It apparently records two groups of mnḥ.w, those 'newly' bound and those rising to their father's former positions. Typically, this text has been understood as describing two groups of newly-appointed mnḥ.w, some filling inherited positions and some new hires from outside the village (Černý 1973: 114). However, it would make more sense to understand this as referring to two new groups of workmen who had just been promoted *from mnḥ.w*, given what is known about the practice of supplementing the number of crew members with outside hires (Chapter 2). It is far less likely that outside hires would be children requiring training than already-trained craftsmen. The re-interpretation of binding texts in this way would remove the problem of why the

'promotion' of workmen seems less attested. However, it must be remembered that this conclusion is based largely on a single text that has been heavily reconstructed.

Although binding texts make it apparent that certain transitions within the workforce occurred, the question is when each of these transitions occurred. Many references to ꜥḏd.w in economic texts imply that they were young. O.Cairo 25800 suggests that the ꜥḏd there was still under his father's care, and O.DEM 324 implies that the scribe ꜥn-ḥꜥ was responsible for, or at least oversaw, a group of them. Furthermore, P.Turin 1900+ mentions several ꜥḏd.w being reprimanded, presumably for misbehaving. If young, and so still under the care of others rather than being independent, this might explain why the ꜥḏd.w occur so infrequently in economic texts. Particularly, they are never mentioned in ration texts—possibly because they were young enough to be dependent on and subsumed under their father's rations, as wives with their husbands'. Exceptionally, on O.Černý 22, ꜥḏd.w are recorded as having vegetable rations; however, as this is the only example, no wider conclusions can be drawn.

The tasks attributed to ꜥḏd.w do not directly relate to tomb-building, but odd-jobs such as dealing with wood, fish and vegetables (O.DEM 306) and feeding livestock (O.DEM 412). Especially in the second instance, the ꜥḏd was accompanied by an adult, possibly to instruct him, a similar situation to that suggested by O.DEM 324. As will be demonstrated below, ethnographic parallels suggest that tasks of this sort are typically entrusted to young children around 5 or 6, but this cannot be stated definitely here given the limited evidence.

It is however possible that the ꜥḏd.w visited the worksite, even if not permanently stationed there. They may have been responsible for delivering the vegetables which they are mentioned alongside on O.DEM 306, and Černý (1973: 12) understood the events of O.Ashmolean 70—which include the presence of an ꜥḏd—as taking place within a tomb. As a parallel, children's footprints were found at the Early Dynastic Khasekhemwy tomb complex at Abydos (Meskell 2002: 83). However, evidence that the ꜥḏd.w were not always present at the tombs comes from O.DEM 320. Sadly, the text is broken at the critical juncture; this is unfortunate as it is the only instance that might clarify exactly what the ꜥḏd.w were promoted to. It reads: *hrw n ṯsi n3 ꜥḏd.w r p3 s(ḥ?)* ('day of promoting the ꜥḏd.w to the…'). Grandet (DEM IX: 62) restores the final word as *sḥ.t*, 'Field', a common appellation for the Valley of the Kings (Černý 1973: 90-1; Davies 1999: 94 Note 167). This would suggest that before 'promotion', ꜥḏd.w were not permanently stationed with the workmen, although it must be remembered that this is based on reconstructed evidence.

The interpretation of this is that ꜥḏd.w were not fully part of the workforce. They helped with 'odd-jobs' and other tasks, gradually acclimatising them to labour—that is to say, peripheral supporting work not related to tomb-building and decorating itself. At a certain point they were 'promoted', to become it seems mnḥ.w. This therefore suggests that unlike in other texts, where ꜥḏd had little nuance, it took on a much more specific meaning in the context of the workforce, referring explicitly to those who had not yet fully joined. Possibly, this is why ꜥḏd is found in both contexts, *i.e.* texts relating to life both at the village and tomb site; they were in a liminal zone, belonging to life both at the site and as part of the workforce, and thus their identities overlapped these two spheres.

Unlike the ꜥḏd.w, the *mnḥ.w* were considered fully part of the gang, although fewer in number than 'adult' members—varying from 1 to 12 at different periods (Černý 1973: 113-4; Valbelle 1985a: 103-5, Table 2; Janssen 1997a: 20). P.Bibliothèque Nationale 237, Carton 25 fragment 5, verso 1 makes this clear, reading *pꜣ di n nꜣ rmṯ-is.t r ḏd mnḥ r.r=w*, '[Giving] the ration to the workmen known as the *mnḥ*'. Similarly, they received actual grain rations alongside other members (Appendix 1.3). In terms of 'importance' based on ordering of personnel on ration texts, the *mnḥ.w* ranked below 'full' workmen, but above those not involved in craft work such as guards or doorkeepers (Mandeville 2014: 99-103).

Whilst most evidence for the ꜥḏd.w signifies their youth, evidence for the *mnḥ.w*—which will be discussed fully in the following sections—suggests that they may have been around puberty (Feucht 1995: 521). It has previously been suggested that individuals joined the gang around age 15 (Bierbrier 1975: 20; Davies 1999: 35; Hagen 2011: 20 Note II.4). Amongst translations, Brugsch (1876: 71) describes the *mnḥ* as "junger Busche", Edgerton and Wilson (1936: 65 Note 20b) as "young man between boyhood and maturity", and Gardiner (1947: 214) as "stripling". Assuming that the same meaning holds in other contexts, the Instructions of Anii lines 21.1-2 (Quack 1994: 316) indicate that the *mnḥ* was of marriageable age but not yet married, reading *tw=k mnḥ iry n=k ḥm.t tw=k grg m pr=k* ('when you are a *mnḥ*, take a wife and furnish your house). Černý (1973: 113) infact understood bachelorhood as characteristic of the *mnḥ.w*. The example from Anii alone is not definitive; as demonstrated in Chapter 4, an ꜥḏd was also advised to 'take a wife' within this text. However, in many other texts listing categories of people, *mnḥ* stands in apposition to *šri*—the usual order being *s* 'man', *mnḥ*, *šri* (Feucht 1995: 542-3). Examples include P.Anastasi IV lines 7.2-3 (LEM: 41), where a list of wine sellers enumerates *s 7 mnḥ.w 4 iꜣ.w 4 šri.w 6* (7 men, 4 *mnḥ.w*, 4 elders, 4 *šri.w*), and a tally of prisoners at Medinet Habu (Edgerton and Wilson 1936: 65, Pl. 75) listing

both males (*s, mnḥ, šri*) and female equivalents (*ḥm.t, nfr.t, šri.t*). Similarly, in both P.Sallier I lines 3.8-3.9 and P.Anastasi V line 10.6 (LEM: 61, 79), two copies of a critique of the soldier's life, it is said: *twtw ḥr di.t pꜣ s r wꜥw pꜣ mnḥ r mgꜣ pꜣ šri twtw ḫpr=f r nḥm=f m ḳni mw.t=f* ('one places the man as a soldier, the *mnḥ* as a skirmisher; the *šri*, one raises him to take him from its mother's bosom'). Although it was argued earlier that *šri* was often vague, in these examples it clearly had a more specific meaning, denoting the youngest category; *mnḥ* stood mid-way between it and adult.

One final term relevant to children's participation within the workforce is *ms-ḥr*, 'child of the tomb'. It is unclear exactly who the *ms-ḥr* were, and where they fit into the workforce hierarchy. Although *ḥr* was the lower register term for the necropolis, contrasted with *s.t-mꜣꜥ.t*, it was also employed in noun phrases related to the craftsmen—see *is.t n ḥr* 'crew of the tomb'—devoid of status significance (Černý 1973: 28). Černý stated that "the boys of the community who could reasonably be expected to become workmen of the tomb were called *ms-ḥr*" (1973: 117), but this avoids the issue of whether they were equivalent to *mnḥ.w*, or a different rank. They have also been called "les enfants de la nécropole, jeune apprentis" (Bruyère 1930: 79); the "young (employees) of the royal tomb" (Edwards 1960: 13 Note 7); and "younger boys" (Austin 2014: 6).

Besides the name, there is little indication that the *ms-ḥr* were children. The writing of *ms* never includes a 'child' determinative, but this may not be significant. On P.Berlin 10494, a letter of complaint from a scribe, recto 7-8 records *ḥr nꜣ ms.w-ḥr ii st ḥms m niw.t* ('the *ms.w-ḥr* are gone, dwelling in Thebes'), and that they should be gathered and returned. The names of all nine are traceable to gang members at a later date, leading Černý (1973: 119-20) to suggest that they were young here, and possibly fleeing conscription—the text reveals that an army scribe was present. However, this remains speculation. Another text, P.DEM 24 lines 4-5, reads:

> *iw sr.w mḥ 6 ms … [rwd.w] n is.t 3 iw=w ḥr ḏd … i.n=n … iw=w ḥr ii ꜣbd 4 ꜣḫ.t sw 13 iw tꜣ is.t m …bnr s iw=w ḫꜣꜥ bnr 9*

> 'The officials took(?) 6 *ms*…the three [administrators] of the workforce said…we…they returned. Month 4 of Summer, Day 13: The workforce…outside. Men expelled: 9'.

Eyre (1987a: 13) suggested *ms* as an abbreviation for *ms-ḫr*. It has been proposed that this event is related to that recorded on O.Cairo 25264 (Černý 1973: 181; McDowell 1990: 46; Donker van Heel *et al.* 2007), where 9 people were similarly evicted; in that text, it was 6 servants (*b3k.w*) and 3 *ꜥḏḏ.w*. If the two events are the same, this could mean that *ms-ḫr* and *ꜥḏḏ.w* referred to the same group. However, this would require the numbers of each category to have been inverted in one of the texts.

The role of the *ms-ḫr* is also unclear. Černý (1973: 118) concluded that they did not work in the tombs themselves but performed odd-jobs, similar to the *ꜥḏḏ.w*. In graffito 1358 (Černý 1956: 24), one went with some workmen to perform a task in a valley, for an unknown purpose. P.Geneva D.191 lines 10-11 possibly indicate their involvement with measuring rations:

> *iw p3y ms-ḫr ḏd irm p3 wḥꜥ-rm.w 150 ẖ3r p3 ḫ3y=n n=n m p3 ip.t t3 šnw.t pr-'Imn*
> 'This *ms-ḫr* and the fisherman said "150 khar of grain is what we have measured for ourselves, using the *ip.t*-measure of the granary of the Estate of Amun"'.

This could suggest some overlap with the tasks of the *ꜥḏḏ.w*. However, P.Chester Beatty III (KRI IV: 85-8) possibly indicates that they were at least far enough into training to use tools; amongst a list of equipment, verso 5.4 includes *wp šri n ms-…* ('one small double-edged bronze knife for the *ms-…*') which may need reconstructing as *ms-ḫr*. O.BM 5631 similarly uses *ms-ḫr* in the context of tool use.

The role of the *ms-ḫr* is therefore unclear, hindered in part by ambiguous sources. Although scholarship generally concludes that they were 'children', the evidence above suggests little to support this, and certainly very little to suggest that they were as young as the *ꜥḏḏ.w*. Such conclusions seem based mostly on connotations of the translation 'child of the tomb'. If it all related to children, it may be that *ms-ḫr* was synonymous with *mnḥ*, being a literal 'child of the tomb'—i.e. a junior or apprentice within the workforce—rather than a rank itself. Especially in legal contexts such as P.Mayer B, the fact that certain individuals were specifically labelled *ms-ḫr* rather than *rmṯ-is.t* might suggest some difference. Indeed, an association between *mnḥ* and 'child of the tomb' could parallel how workmen were literally termed 'men of the crew'. This would however leave the question of why two terms for the same group existed. It may be that this related to the nature of the work undertaken, such as

sculpting as opposed to draughtsmanship. Alternatively, it may be that one term referred to the rank officially, and the other was simply another, more informal designation.

A more convincing explanation is that rather than referring to children, *ms-ẖr* had a figurative sense more of 'resident of the necropolis community'. There are instances where the plural form *ms.w-ẖr* was used as a collective for the entire workorce (examples are listed in Černý 1973: 119), and in at least one other occasion, O.BM 5631 line 13, the singular form can be understood as having a similar sense of 'resident' (after Wente 1990: 146). Evidence suggests that the *ms-ẖr* were old enough to socialise alongside adult workmen (O.DEM 126) or deal with legal matters (O.DEM 133). A votive stela, now Vienna Museum Inv.122 (Bruyère 1929b: Fig. 58) was either made or commissioned by a *ms-ẖr*, who is depicted upon it as an adult. Furthermore, individuals are occasionally identified as *ms-ẖr* in letters (O.Ashmolean 67, O.Ashmolean 112, O.DEM 126, O.DEM 561); this only otherwise occurs with ranks held by adults. Surprisingly, they are attested as committing crimes such as theft (O.Gardiner 67) and destruction (as described on coffin British Museum EA15659). They were even killed for such; P.Mayer B lines 8-9 discuss the death of a *ms-ẖr* for his association with tomb robberies. None of this suggests that the *ms-ẖr* were particularly young. The term *ms-ẖr* is also found on funerary objects. An individual *ꜥꜣ-ḥtp* is identified as a *ms-ẖr* on three shabtis found in TT357 (Bruyère 1930: 79, Fig. 36); shabtis and a box belonging to the *ms-ẖr Ms* and *ms-ẖr Rꜥ-ms* were found in TT1 (Toda 1920: 155, 160); and *Rꜥ-ms* was also identified as such on a statue-group in TT2 (Černý 1973: 117-8). Interestingly, it is known that *Rꜥ-ms* never became a craftsman even though he apparently died an adult (Toda 1920: 152), and indeed the evidence above has shown little to connect the *ms-ẖr* with specific craft work. This perhaps strengthens the suggestion that the term was more social than economic.

In this case, 'child of the tomb' could have acted as a euphemism for the entire workforce community, irrespective of age or rank. Its lack of use within economic contexts might suggest that it was a term the community applied to themselves, rather than one applied to them; perhaps it specifically referred to those literally born within Deir el-Medina rather than hired from outside, as a claim of status and familial lineage on their part, though this cannot be proven. With regards to all aspects of the *ms-ẖr*, firmer conclusions require further evidence.

5.2 PROGRESSING THROUGH THE WORKFORCE

The above discussion has outlined the various stages of progression to becoming craftsmen. The next issue to consider is how and when progression occurred. Given the proposed age difference between ꜥ*ḏd* and *mnḥ*, this raises a problem, as textual evidence gives no indication of an intermediate stage between the two. This leaves a gap; did the period of *mnḥ* extend from childhood up until puberty and adulthood, or did 'promotion' occur later, and thus the period of being an ꜥ*ḏd* continued until around puberty? Only P.Turin 1884+ recto 2.11 could be interpreted as revealing evidence for a 'younger' *mnḥ*; here the writing of the word features the 'small' bird determinative. However, as this is the only attestation of such a writing, how to interpret it is unclear. It could be taken as a separate word, therefore reading *mnḥ šri*, 'little *mnḥ*'. This might imply that *mnḥ* covered a wide age-range, and *mnḥ šri* referred specifically to those at the younger end. However, given that no other attestations of this phrase exist, it is more likely to simply be the 'small' determinative, signifying the relatively lower position of *mnḥ* within the workforce hierarchy.

Other evidence might help us better identify the age of the *mnḥ.w.* In theory, calorific analysis of rations could suggest the possible age of the *mnḥ.w*, or rather the minimum age of individual a ration of that calorific value could support. Such analysis has previously been undertaken with adult rations (Miller 1991). Grain rations were determined by rank, with different positions meriting different amounts (Mandeville 2014: 86-9). Generally, the average workman's monthly ration was 4 khar of emmer and 1.5 khar of barley; by comparison, a chief workman received 5.5 and 2 khar of each (Černý 1954b). The *mnḥ.w* received smaller rations than full workmen—possibly this reflected their lower status (Leahy 1982: 81; Janssen 1997a: 19), or possibly simply that they were younger and unmarried, as it seems that a workman's ration was intended to cover his whole family.

However, this cannot realistically be achieved in practice. Grain was only one element of the workman's diet and therefore not the only source of calories, but it is the only element analysable in detail. Texts recording other foodstuffs are rarer (Janssen 1997: 41), although grain was not the only item measured in *khar*—sometimes, other commodities were recorded using these units (Janssen 1997a: 19)—and so some grain texts might refer to other goods.[34]

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[34] To illustrate the ambiguity, Černý (1973: 113) and Grandet (DEM XI: 47-8) both understand O.DEM 10162 as referring to grain, but Janssen (1997: 19 Note 33) suggests that it could instead refer to water deliveries.

Beyond this, the texts themselves are unreliable (Mandeville 2014: xiv, 133-42). The *mnḥ.w* do not appear in all accounts, and even these vary considerably (Appendix 1.3). Though wages were nominally paid monthly, this rarely happened at one particular time, but was spread over several days. Payment in instalments makes it hard to establish the full ration, especially if documentation for one part is missing (Janssen 1997: 13). Furthermore, there is only one copy of most deliveries; these could be incorrect, as mistakes were common. In other cases, multiple texts detail the same delivery but have inconsistencies (Janssen 1997a: 14). Moreover, even within the same text, not all men of the same rank necessarily received the same rations. On O.DEM 377, nine men received 4 khar of grain, eight men 3.5, and one individual 2. The reasons for these discrepancies are unknown; possibly, instances where unnamed individuals received smaller rations refer to *mnḥ.w*, but this does not explain all examples (Janssen 1997a: 20). Similarly problematic is O.DEM 387, where subsequent lines list different numbers of *mnḥ.w*, each with different rations.

Ration texts are therefore problematic. The will of *Niw.t-nḫ.t* (P.Ashmolean 1945.97) suggests that 1 *oipe* (roughly half a *khar*) of grain was considered sufficient for an elderly person. A small number of texts, such as O.Cairo 25608, list complete rations for the whole workforce. These illustrate that the 'typical' monthly ration of a *mnḥ* was 1.5 khar of emmer and 0.5 of barley—or as Meskell (2002: 27) equates, 12,852 daily calories.[35] Supplemented with other foodstuffs, this would have been plentiful for a young bachelor with no dependants (Janssen 1975b: 463; McDowell 1999: 232). Even discounting other foodstuffs, the grain ration did not just 'meet needs', but could comfortably feed the individual. Rations are therefore not useful for reconstructing the age of the *mnḥ.w*.

A more profitable line of enquiry may be analysis of the work undertaken by children and how they learned their trade, progressing from performing peripheral tasks through to becoming craftsmen. The following discussion explores this through adapting psychological methodologies used to consider learning—specifically those of Piaget and Vygotsky—to an archaeological context, supplemented with ethnographic studies of labour. A discussion and problematisation of this approach was provided in Chapter 3.

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[35] It is likely, therefore, that the 1.5 khar of barley and 0.5 khar of emmer on O.Ashmolean 184 should be understood as reversed.

Core to this study is what Piaget termed the transition from 'pre-operational' to 'concrete-operational' stage at around age 7, where children undergo several mental transformations such as logical thought, the ability to visualise processes and consequences, and imitate practical instructions. This framework has previously been adapted successfully to ethno-archaeological exploration of crafts learning. Greenfield (2000) found that Maya children practiced weaving on toy looms until around age 6, when they began learning on full-size looms. Whilst there may be a biological component to this—only at a certain age were children's arms long enough to reach the loom—Greenfield argued that winding warp intrinsically involved concrete operational skills, such as being able to visualise the transformations between how the threads are wound and how they end up in the loom (Greenfield 2000: 82-3), and that these developmental stages are implicitly part of craft teaching, structuring how and when skills are acquired.

Giving the idea further credence, many anthropological studies observe that children are introduced to work between the ages of 5-7 (Ammar 1954: 30-1; Cain 1977), though physical constraints limit the age at which they can take on additional responsibilities (Cain 1977: 212). In a survey of around fifty cultures, Rogoff *et al.* (1975) found that the ages of 5-7 are consistently the point at which children are given new responsibilities such as care of animals or household chores. This phenomenon, widely observed, is termed the 'five- to seven-year shift' (Whiting and Whiting 1975; Rogoff *et al.* 1975, 1980; Weisner and Gallimore 1977; Whiting and Edwards 1988; Weisner 1996). It also matches what is known of the introduction to work in other ancient societies (Beaumont 1994: 85; Harris 2000: 6-7; Houby-Nilesen 2000; Becker 2007; Lebegyev 2009: 15-32). Ethnographic and archaeological parallels of the age of introduction to work therefore match broadly universal developmental shifts.

Given these parallels, could it be suggested that 5-7 is the age at which children could begin to participate in the world of the craftsmen, and thus this is when the work of an ꜥḏd could be expected to begin? The 5-7 year shift is often socially unmarked, unlike other thresholds such as adolescence (Weisner 1996: 296), and so evidence of its recognition would not necessarily be expected. However, the overview suggested earlier—that ꜥḏd.w performed peripheral tasks, not related to the tombs themselves, and only began learning the craft with the transition to mnḥ.w—fits strikingly with the learning framework known as Legitimate Peripheral Participation (Greenfield and Lave 1982; Lave and Wenger 1991). The basic principle is that crafts learners master the least dangerous tasks first, progressing to those most likely to result in failure. This learning begins with peripheral tasks such as resource

acquisition, enabling observation rather than full participation within the *chaîne opératoire*, with the individual gradually becoming a full participant. This 'initial' phase has certain consistent elements: even the partial contributions are necessary; the tasks tend to be situated at the ends of branches of work rather than in the middle; however, the engagement is peripheral to the actual craftwork, and the learner is only slightly responsible for finished product (Lave and Wenger 1991: 110-1). This provides a framework for exploring skills-learning at Deir el-Medina.

The idea of Legitimate Peripheral Participation is widely noted ethnographically. Ammar (1954: 30) noted how young children went to the field to help with animals, bring fodder or scare birds, allowing for observation of agricultural work without specific responsibilities, and Cain (1997: 212) similarly noted that children were generally tasked with gathering fuel or bringing water. Interestingly, these are similar to the sorts of activities attested by the ꜥḏd.w on the few texts available. As discussed above, it seems that the ꜥḏd.w occasionally went to the work site, allowing for unstructured observation of the work, but were not permanently stationed there or formal participants in the actual craft activities. This also matches other Egyptian evidence of children's introduction to work, which will be discussed fully in Chapter 8 in the context of household labour. The activities of the ꜥḏd.w therefore meet the criteria of these learning frameworks. Ideally, this approach would be paired with osteological analysis of the physical effects that work of this sort might leave on the sub-adult body (Panter-Brick 1998; Sofaer Derevenski 2006: 105-116; Laes 2008; Roder 2008: 79; Lillehammer 2010: 36). As increasing osteological work is undertaken on the remains from Deir el-Medina (Austin 2014), such avenues become more feasible. The potential age of the ꜥḏd.w also further indicates that they did not spend all of their time with the craftsmen; otherwise, they would be missing out on vital household-level socialisation, crucial during early life for teaching cultural norms and behaviours (Chapters 8-9).

At the transition to *mnḥ.w*, the formal process of learning to become a craftsman apparently began. Interestingly, ethnographic studies again suggest that children around age 12 find their economic contributions change and increase. Rather than peripheral, they become more fully engaged with labour (Ammar 1954: 31). Indeed, Ammar also noted (1954: 29) that in contemporary Egyptian villages, each of the age-groups 7-12, 12-16, and 16+ had different words to describe them, based on the work that they performed; these stages coincided with the three major social groupings (child, adolescent or non-married, and married). In this way, the work an individual could do defined their identity. Perhaps we can see something similar

with the difference between ꜥḏd, mnḥ and rmṯ-is.t ('man of the crew'). It is also interesting that a shift in labour at 11-12 again matches Piaget/Vygotsky's developmental models, matching the transition from 'concrete-operational' to 'formal-operational' stages at this time, accompanied by further developments in abstract thought. Perhaps, therefore, this was the point at which an individual could learn to become a craftsman, being mentally and physically developed enough to engage with the manual tasks required.

There has previously been discussion that, in labour contexts, children were categorised according to their capabilities. In the tomb of Rḫ-mi-Rꜥ, a scene of servant women proffering children of different ages for registration (de Garis Davies 1935: Pl. 22) has been interpreted as them being categorised and taxed according to the work they could perform (Feucht 2001: 263). Similarly, it has been suggested that the distinction between categories of 'adult' and 'child' was simply physically based on the work an individual could do (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 192). It is perhaps worth considering here P.Louvre 3230 (Peet 1926), a letter asking for the return of a servant's daughter, where it is stated (verso 3-4) that she was only a šri.t and so could not yet work. Also of note are the instances above listing categories of šri, mnḥ and s, which indicate some concept of measuring people by physical capability.

The mnḥ seems to have been a junior both socially, and in terms of the workforce. Despite having some features of adulthood, such as being of marriageable age, rations indicate that they were unmarried—they may even still have been dependants themselves. It is therefore tentatively suggested that an individual became a mnḥ around the age of puberty. This is not however to say that mnḥ is synonymous with 'adolescent'. Rather, it was a transitional stage between 'child' (in the Egyptian's own words) and 'man of the crew', with a gradual accruing of knowledge and responsibilities. This suggests a more graded progression than in the previous Chapter. It is possibly significant in this context that, unlike with adult workmen, the word mnḥ rarely includes a 'man' determinative; Appendix 1 contains only three examples (P.Turin 1932 + recto II lines 3 and 5, and O.DEM 10033 line 8). Perhaps here we should again consider the 'small' determinative on P.Turin 1884+ recto 2.11.

It is not known when a mnḥ became a rmṯ-is.t, and it is possible that being a mnḥ extended into adulthood. Possibly, the milestone was social, maybe marriage itself (Eyre 1980: 147-8). However, there are instances of bachelors being 'men of the crew' and living in the village (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 90), and so it may be that mnḥ referred to skill level rather than social position. Any apprentice was considered a mnḥ, regardless of age, and at a certain level of

skill, became a *rmṯ-is.t*. The idea of *mnḥ* referring to a person's level of skill, 'apprentice/trainee', is not unprecedented. The word *mḏḥ* as part of an individual's titles is conventionally translated 'overseer', such as in the title *mḏḥ sš nsw* 'Overseer of Royal Scribes (Jones 2000: 467, No. 1739). However, it has been alternatively suggested that it should be seen as an honorific rather than a title in its own right, something akin to 'master' (Papazian 2016: *Pers. Comm.*). In this way, it marked the individual as an expert in that particular field, just as *mnḥ* might mark the individual as a learner.

Perhaps also of relevance is the fact that one of the features of being a workman was to be given property by the state—a house (*pr*) and hut (ˁ.*t*). These remained owned by the state, leased only for the duration of service (Janssen and Pestman 1968: 160; McDowell 1990: 123-4), as O.Petrie 61 lines 6-7 (Černý and Gardiner 1957: Pl. 23.4) make explicit. Being granted a house was part and parcel of membership of the workforce. In light of this, perhaps another social distinction was that the *mnḥ* were not yet awarded their own property, this occurring only with the transition to *rmṯ-is.t*. This would parallel the discussion in the previous Chapter of childhood as a period of dependence rather than autonomy, further justifying an understanding of *mnḥ* as 'junior'.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to fully verify the above framework, especially the ages at which transitions might have occurred. The above discussion is meant only as a possibility given the little we know of children's involvement in the workforce, though one given credence both by the nature of learning, and common practices elsewhere.

5.3 THE MECHANISMS OF LEARNING

Discussion must finish with what is known of exactly how the *mnḥ.w* learnt. Administrative records attest to the many types of workmen involved in tomb-building (Keller 1984: 119; Kemp 1987: 46). As well as the scribes and foremen, there were draughtsmen/painters (*sš-ḳd*), stone-masons (*ẖrty-nṯr*) and sculptors (*ṯȝy-mḏȝ.t*). It could be that *rmṯ-ist* was the blanket term used to cover all of these workmen, regardless of specific role; alternatively, Cooney (2006: 46-7) suggests that a *rmṯ-ist* was a "workman of lower rank among his peers, one who had not yet earned a specialisation". Either way, different roles were differentiated in terminology, and each required their own skills and associated training, though presumably all workmen began as a *mnḥ*.

The following discussion explores how trainee craftsmen learnt their role, employing the developmental frameworks discussed earlier to reconstruct the crafts-learning process. As this is intended as a case study to establish ground for future research into children's learning and apprenticeship, discussion will focus specifically on one category of workmen, the draughtsmen, through analysis of the figured ostraca found at the site. Future work can build on this approach, applying the framework to the other tomb-building activities mentioned above.

There has been some previous literature on apprenticeship through examination of figured ostraca (Keller 1991; Sesana and Nelson 1998; Bryan 2001; Cooney 2006, 2013; see also Lazaridis 2010 for apprenticeship more generally). Figured ostraca are usually defined either as preparatory sketches, or amusement and simply passing time; both categories presumably do not encompass their full range of functions, such as possible ritual uses. However, given the higher numbers of figured ostraca found around the tomb sites, they may well have featured in the education of trainee draughtsmen, especially those paralleling tomb scenes. How would these have been used in training, and can we access this learning process?

There are several types of learning systems, from self-teaching (trial and error) to hands-on demonstration (Schiffer and Skibo 1987: 597). Broadly, there are two systems by which trainee craftsmen may have been taught. The first is observation and discussion, *i.e.* teaching by another. Structured learning such as this would possibly encourage repetition and a lack of innovation (Wallaert-Pêtre 2001). Certainly, figured ostraca often exhibit similar themes (the catalogues in Vandier d'Abbadie 1936, 1937, 1946 and 1959 are grouped by motif) but at a range of skill levels. This has led to some labelling ostraca as 'school exercises', with an argument for formal training wherein groups were given similar subjects to work upon (Brunner-Traut 1956: 8, 1979: 7; Peterson 1974: 53; Peck and Ross 1978: 31; Keller 1991). However, equating difference in skill levels to a pupil-master relationship is problematic (Cooney 2013: 162-3). Furthermore, such a training method would require someone to be 'off-duty', resulting in decreased productivity.

The second system is relatively independent learning. Some have suggested that this was through copying from either walls, or 'pattern books' of collectively-kept examples (Schäfer 1916: 46). However, relatively few ostraca actually correspond to attested scenes from tombs and temples (Brunner-Traut 1956: 6, 64-5; Peterson 1974: 57-8). Rather, most of the common motifs do not appear in formal art. The alternative is therefore that apprentices began learning

through appropriate skills and motifs specific to the informal sphere. Cooney (2013: 164) suggests that children were encouraged to practice "by constantly repeating and practicing a generalised set of known images". However, it equally cannot be assumed that all ostraca were just sketches. Although most were found either in the work-site or the rubbish dumps around the village, some were found in houses and chapels. Especially for those which were relatively large and incorporated colour, these could well have had votive uses (Backhouse 2011: 3; Robins 2015: 135). Indeed, one found with traces of plaster was possibly built into a house, labelled by Vandier d'Abbadie (1946: 119) as an *ex-voto*. Another, O.MM 14062, was actually shaped like a stela (Peterson 1974: 81 No. 46). This would suggest that they were important, ritually-invested items in their own right.

Whilst it is unlikely that all training was formal and structured, some level of oversight must have been necessary to ensure that craftsmen developed to a high enough standard. Therefore, it is possible that instruction was continuous and informal (Cooney 2013: 163), a middle ground house between the two approaches. Texts such as O.BM 29549 (Demarée 2002: Pl. 77-8), written by the *ḫry-ꜥ*—possibly something akin to a *protégé*—of chief workman *Ḫꜣy*, demonstrate that some form of master-learner relationships existed within the workforce; Bogoslovsky (1980: 107) lists five further individuals identified as *ḫry-ꜥ* of draughtsmen. The term *ḫry-ꜥ* literally means 'one under the arm'; we might compare it to the English expression 'take under the wing'. McDowell (2000) concludes that it typifies a close, one-to-one relationship. As the expression suggests, as well as teaching the trainee, the relationship between teacher and *ḫry-ꜥ* involved a degree of looking after them; the same expression is used to describe tools within a workman's care, such as on O.Gardiner 63 line 2 (KRI VI: 664). This relationship further justifies interpreting *mnḥ* as 'apprentice'.

Certain evidence therefore suggests 'master/apprentice' dynamics within the crew. Ration texts further help us reconstruct how many apprentices might have been present at any one time, although it remains unknown how they were distributed amongst the crew. O.Cairo 25592/O.DEM 384, dated to Ramesses III, lists an unspecified number of *mnḥ.w* receiving 6 *khar* of grain; 17 other men of that side of the crew who are listed before this each received 2 khar, which might suggest there were 3 *mnḥ.w*. This would mean each side had 20 members at this time, 17 *rmṯ-is.t* and 3 *mnḥ.w* (Černý 1973: 107). Elsewhere, the typical number also seems to be 2 or 3, although there are also cases of 7, 11 or as many as 12 (Appendix 1.3; Černý 1973: 114 Note 1; Valbelle 1985a: 103-5, Table 2). This acts as a reminder that we cannot assume that workforce composition and practices stayed unchanging across Deir el-

Medina's occupation. The 'norm' seems to have been around 20 to 30 workmen per side, varying as needs changed (the changing strength of the workforce across time is discussed in Černý 1973: 103-8). In exceptional cases, this rose to as many as 120 in the first years of both Ramesses IV (P.Turin 49 lines 4-5; Černý 1973: 103) and Ramesses V (P.Turin 2044 line I.11; KRI VI: 340-3), possibly to begin work on the Kings' tombs. In any case, the one constant is that there were always fewer *mnḥ.w* than *rmṯ-is.t.*

Beyond the method of learning, discussion must also consider its mechanics. Figured ostraca occur at various skill levels, suggesting that practice on disposable media happened at all skill levels of the community. Peterson (1974) noted that those found at the Valley of the Kings demonstrated higher skill levels generally. This is understandable, as only those capable of working with quality and precision would be entrusted inside royal tombs. When considering figured ostraca, those with 'standardised' formal themes are often overlooked in favour of more unique compositions. However, standardised themes may be more useful for considering skills acquisition, enabling comparisons across a larger corpus.

A useful approach here is 'motor learning' (Minar 2001). At the early stages of motor learning, actions require direct and conscious control, with attention to each movement. Performance is slow and prone to error. However, repetition allows a more efficient process, until the whole task is done fluidly. Although it is important not to base 'quality' solely on modern criteria, there are certain key features which might identify beginner's work, such as thick lines, demonstrating over-control, and no variation in line thickness, showing a lack of finesse and confidence. Furthermore, it is unlikely that beginners had access to coloured pigments. Cooney (2013: 148-52) has previously examined several ostraca which she believes have such hallmarks of trainee learners, dividing ostraca into those by beginners with poor features and an inability to control line weight, intermediate pieces which are still schematic but demonstrate some control and developing attempts at choice within representation, and practiced hands.

This is a useful method for determining the skill level of 'authors' of figured ostraca. To demonstrate Cooney's approach, we might consider O.Leipzig 1660 (Fig. 6). It has numerous traits indicative of beginner learning—the rough curve of the tail suggests that it was drawn slowly, with over-controlling—and the general composition implies it was copied rather than drawn with an understanding of the shapes. Although the collar indicates some control over line thickness, the dividing lines between text columns are rough, uneven and in places over-

drawn. By comparison, O.Berlin 3330 (Fig. 7), whilst still imperfect, suggests a more-practiced hand and greater compositional understanding. Interestingly, this painter had access to coloured pigments, but colouring outside of the lines on the clothing suggests a lack of practice.

FIG. 6: O.LEIPZIG 1660 (BRUNNER-TRAUT 1956: FIG. 90)

FIG. 7: O.BERLIN 3310 (BRUNNER-TRAUT 1956: FIG. 21)

Whilst this methodology has great potential, a full examination of learning practices is beyond the scope of this study; this discussion is intended only to outline possible approaches. It would be interesting to further compare figured ostraca believed to be by beginners with psychological tests of children's drawing capabilities at different ages, to further isolate

consistent elements, and also to explore how we might differentiate between the work of children and unskilled adults—we must remember not to equate 'poor quality' with 'child'. There are also other potential methodologies which could be employed in future to help identify how apprenticeship and age intertwined. For example, one could consider the environment of work, namely the interior of tombs, and how light levels might influence children of different ages' abilities to work compared to adults. Previous studies have used modelled light levels to consider its effect on activities within houses (Dawson *et al.* 2007), and the minimum light levels required for various tasks at different ages (Hancock 1982; Woodson 1992). These studies have shown that children can consistently perform tasks in lower light levels than adults (Philip 2015). With increased attention now paid to the sensory experiences of light within ancient Egypt (Strong forthcoming), this could be a profitable line of enquiry.

Also going forwards—although a full treatment is beyond the scope of this thesis—further discussion of children's training must consider the role of scribal education. It was discussed in Chapter 2 that almost no textual records cover 18th Dynasty Deir el-Medina, especially before the return from Amarna; Soliman (2015) questions literacy levels generally at the site at the time. However, from Dynasty 19 onwards, literacy at the site flourished, with many of the residents able to read, if not write —albeit to varying levels of proficiency—as attested by the number of textual records. Not everyone at the site was literate. Baines and Eyre (1983: 86-91) posit that literacy rates may have only been up to 5%. However, this was still far greater than the average; Baines and Eyre (1983: 65-72) estimate 1% generally for Egypt. Higher levels of literacy from Dynasty 19 onwards may relate to the re-organisation and expansion of the workforce under Horemheb discussed in Chapter 2. From this point, many more professional titles appear, suggesting a greater differentiation of responsibilities within the workforce (Černý 1973: 101; Bogoslovsky 1980: 89; Keller 1984: 119; Kemp 1987: 45). It is possible that greater literacy was required for the new roles and crew structure. However, as well as being economically necessary, evidence also points to a sense of social prestige accompanying literacy. This suggests that, from the 19th Dynasty, literacy formed a significant component of an individual's personal identity.

In Egypt generally, where so little of the population was literate, literacy was central to self-presentation; since the Old Kingdom, titles related to scribal activity featured prominently within mortuary biographies. In the New Kingdom, an emphasis emerged on familiarity with written culture as a marker of social standing (Ragazzoli 2016; Allon and Navratilova 2017),

with an increasingly self-conscious presentation of the scribal world (Ragazzoli 2010, 2011). This appears most overtly within the LEM, which exhort the scribal lifestyle in contrast to other professions. Rather than an impartial description, these texts were composed by scribes for scribes, and so "fashioned by their vision of themselves" (Ragazzoli 2010: 157). However, even so, they speak to the prestige associated with scribal training and ability.

The importance of such training was no different at post-Amarna Deir el-Medina. Ostraca contain plentiful evidence for the training of students in literacy and numeracy, and schooling at Deir el-Medina has received much previous attention (McDowell 1996, 2000; Gasse 2000; Donker von Heel and Haring 2003; Hagen 2006, 2007b; Goelet 2008). On P.Leiden I.370, *Bw-th-ʾImn* is explicit in his desire that his children be literate: verso 5 reads *mtw=k tm di.t ḫ3ʾ n3 ꜥdd.w šri.w nty m t3 ꜥ.t-sb3 dr.wt m sš* ('and do not let the *ꜥdd.w šri.w* who are in school abandon writing'). The ability to read and write was, above all, a pre-requisite for the higher positions, especially that of scribe and *smd.t* scribes. Whether through family or talent, there are many cases of workmen rising through the ranks to either scribe or foreman (see instances in Černy 1973: 127-8 and throughout Davies 1999). Whatever the reason for promotion, such progression could not be achieved without adequate literacy. Therefore, scribal training formed a crucial element of certain children's training just as much as learning other skills such as draughtsmanship.

Literacy was also economically useful beyond tomb-work. Many of the workmen supplemented their income through 'private-sector' work, making funerary material such as coffins and stelae for other residents, much of which incorporated textual content (Cooney 2006, 2007). Scribal education was therefore an important aspect of professional identity at Deir el-Medina.

However, as more generally in New Kingdom society, literacy was valued not only for its economic or functional use, but as a marker of social standing. Indeed, given the evidence for female literacy at the site (Sweeney 1993), such education cannot have been restricted to workforce contexts. P.BM 10326 recto 19 references the existence of private domestic archives, which may have contained literary material (*n3 sš.w nty w3ḥ(.w) t ꜥ.t*, 'the documents that are [in] the house'); indeed, Chapter 4 discussed the copies of many literary works found at the site. It is unclear how widely these were circulated, and whether many were school texts rather than belonging to private libraries, but either way speak to a "literacy and familiarity with the canonical literary texts" (Moreno García 2010: 16). Certain residents, most famously

ʾImn-nḫ.t, are known to have composed literary texts themselves (Bickel and Mathieu 1993; Dorn and Polis 2017; Hassan 2017; Polis 2017). It is clear that proficiency in reading and writing, and a familiarity with literary culture, was a marker of social distinction amongst members of the community.

Given the importance of literacy to self-presentation, there exist possible cases at Deir el-Medina of individuals embellishing their skill. Individuals occasionally referred to themselves as *sš*, 'scribe', when in reality they bore the similar-looking, but less prestigious title *sš-ḳd* 'draughtsman' (examples are given in Černý 1973: 191-3; Davies 1999: 100, 109-110, 112, 130). Being a draughtsman was in no way an unskilled position, but literacy to the same degree was not a pre-requisite. It is unclear, however, whether these instances of mis-titling should be considered accidental, innocent abbreviations, deliberate, or even perhaps represent occasions of 'standing-in' temporarily for another's duty. Alternatively, especially in instances on graffiti, Davies (1999: 142) suggests that it represents "a workman who could write his own name and who employed the title *sš* to indicate this skill".

It therefore seems that prestige was associated with certain titles and skill-sets, notably those requiring literacy, above others. As a parallel, Cooney (2006: 47) notes that in the context of private-sector crafts work, craftsmen often termed themselves *ḥmww* 'carpenter', which is not found amongst the official titles of the workforce; she understands it as a desire to emphasise technical abilities, a form of advertisement demonstrating "higher status, better reputation and greater experience"

Although the above discussion relates literacy at Deir el-Medina to individual presentation, it was also important in forming group identity. Moreno García (2010: 16-18) understands the high literacy of the site and familiarity with literary texts, as well as many of the ritual practices such as ancestor cults (discussed in Chapter 9), as aspects of a wider phenomenon—the adoption of elite culture at Deir el-Medina:

> "…*most of its inhabitants were of modest condition. But, on the other hand, they were heavily involved in activities belonging to the elite sphere…it is no surprise that under these conditions people at Deir el-Medine exhibit a high degree of acculturation and of diffusion of the elite values into a modest community*".

Whether this adoption was conscious or not, literacy acted not just as a source of individual prestige but also group identity, fostering a sense of Deir el-Medina community in contrast to more illiterate areas elsewhere. Indeed, Kemp (1987: 45) describes post-18th Dynasty Deir el-Medina as a community "with a much greater degree of self-awareness as to its unique status". Given this, it is interesting to return to the ideas raised in Chapter 4 that an awareness of more 'literary' registers of language, especially relating to children, did not affect how childhood was presented or described within other textual sources.

From the above discussion, we can conclude that scribal education formed an important part of certain children's training within the workforce, although a minority of the inhabitants were literate, and proficiency would have varied within this. However, despite its importance, literacy is not studied in depth here; this discussion focusses on draughtsmanship, and training through figured ostraca. This is for two reasons. Firstly, this study aims to lay groundwork for future analysis of children's learning using developmental approaches; figured ostraca provide a better case study for testing these. They also allow for consideration of different bodies of evidence, showing the range of sources available for considering training at Deir el-Medina. The previous Chapters have focused heavily on texts, and indeed figured ostraca as a source for training are often overlooked in favour of scribal training. Their use here is an attempt to re-address this balance. Indeed, when it comes to scribal training, the amount of previous scholarship, evidence, and potential scope for discussion would have required a thesis in itself. Apart from anything else, this perhaps demonstrates its importance to life at Deir el-Medina.

Were scribal training to be considered in future, there are many fruitful avenues for exploration. The existing literature on education and training methods (listed above) could be paired with frameworks for skills-learning used here in the context of draughtsmanship. Indeed, the pupil-teacher relationship within scribal training was also described as one of master and apprentice (ḥry-ꜥ), as on P.Anastasi I lines 1.2-4 and P.BM 10755 recto 3.4. Additionally, analysis of scribal hands (Janssen 1987c; Bouvier 2002) could potentially be combined with studies of motor skills development, as applied above to figured ostraca, to help determine learners of different ages.

There are, however, limitations in current knowledge of scribal training, which could hinder further discussions. A notable uncertainty is how and where training took place. P.Leiden I.370 above refers to the ꜥ.t-sbꜣ, 'house of instruction', conventionally understood as a

schoolhouse. Although the ꜥ.t-sbꜣ is frequently mentioned in Egyptian texts, it is unknown precisely where schooling took place; Lazaridis (2010: 5) suggests that locations may not have been fixed. Given the frequent discovery of school exercises in tombs, it has been proposed that tombs and tomb walls may have been arenas for learning (Amenta 2002), possibly indicating a close relationship between artisanal and scribal training. However, the lack of find-spot information for most Deir el-Medina school texts, which were frequently found discarded in either the g*rand puits* or other dumps, means we cannot establish possible school locations based on spatial clustering. The location of schooling in turn affects the size of classes and nature of learning, factors necessary to understand in order to further explore children's learning, although Lazaridis (2010: 7) suggests that it was "informal and circumstantial".

5.4 THE CHILDREN OF THE *smd.t* LABOURERS

Not all children living at Deir el-Medina successfully became craftsmen, as supply exceeded vacancies. O.Cairo 25800 especially raises the possibility that workmen were not above bribery to ensure their children's success. One text, O.Cairo 25566, suggests what happened to those not selected to join the workforce. It reads:

> *iw=sn ḥr swḥ tꜣ is.t ḥnꜥ nꜣ sš-ḳd.w iw=sn ḏd tꜣ md.t n pꜣ 3 ꜥḏd.w r ḏd iw=n r itꜣ=w   r-bnr*
>
> 'They praised the gang and the draughtsmen and they spoke the matter of the three ꜥḏd.w, saying "We will take them outside"'.

Whilst this may seem vague, the same expression, 'to take outside', is found on O.Berlin 12654 (KRI VI: 344-5), verso 2-3, which reads:

> *wꜣḥ pꜣy 60 rmṯ m-di m tꜣ is.t pꜣy=tn stp nb mtw=w di.t ini.tw pꜣ ḥꜥw r-bnr sḥn.w ḫpr=w tꜣy=w smd.t nty fꜣi n=tn*
>
> 'Place these sixty men who are here in the gang, any of your choosing, and take the surplus outside. Instruct them that they will become their *smd.t*, who carry [supplies] for you'.

It therefore seems that ꜥdd.w not selected to become craftsmen could become part of the *corvée smd.t* teams supplying goods to the workmen (Černý 1973: 116), as O.Berlin 12654 suggests occurred with surplus workmen (Černý 1973: 185). However, it must be remembered that these texts are the sole attestations of such a practice, and these instances may have been exceptional rather than the norm; it was discussed earlier how the workforce increased or descreased in numbers as the situation demanded.

The identity and experiences of those selected as *smd.t* as opposed to learning to become craftsmen would have been markedly different. With this work, there was presumably no formal, graded progression or ranks, as it did not rely on the development of skills in the same way. However, despite the history of scholarship into the *smd.t* labourers outlined in Chapter 2, few primary sources discuss the *smd.t* and its organisation, from which we might extrapolate about the role of children. As with draughtsmen, some texts mention the use of ḥry-ꜥ helping the *smd.t*, such as P.Turin 1880 verso 3.12-18 (Gardiner 1948: 45-58). These were probably often their sons (Janssen 2003: 12), suggesting training within the family. Indeed, O.DEM 694 line 2 mentions the fisherman Ỉmn-ḫꜥ.w and his son, and the chief fisherman Stẖ, son of fisherman Ḥꜥ-mtr, appears on O.DEM 397 line 2 (KRI VI: 173), O.Leipzig 14 (KRI V: 603-4) lines 1-2 and 11, and O. Berlin 10634 line 1 (Helck 2002: 317). This led Janssen (1997: 40) to suggest family 'firms' responsible for fishing. Similarly, O.DEM 154 recto 18-verso 3 records deliveries by a woodcutter Ptḥ-ms and his son. However, these apprentices must also have included those children of the craftsmen who for whatever reason were not chosen to join the workforce.

The apprentices of the *smd.t* would still have learnt their skills through on-the-job training, although there is no way of reconstructing, for example, how a fisherman taught his son, nor at what age. Two scenes in TT217 shows children and adults bearing goods, with the children copying the adults through carrying smaller versions of the same (Fig. 8).
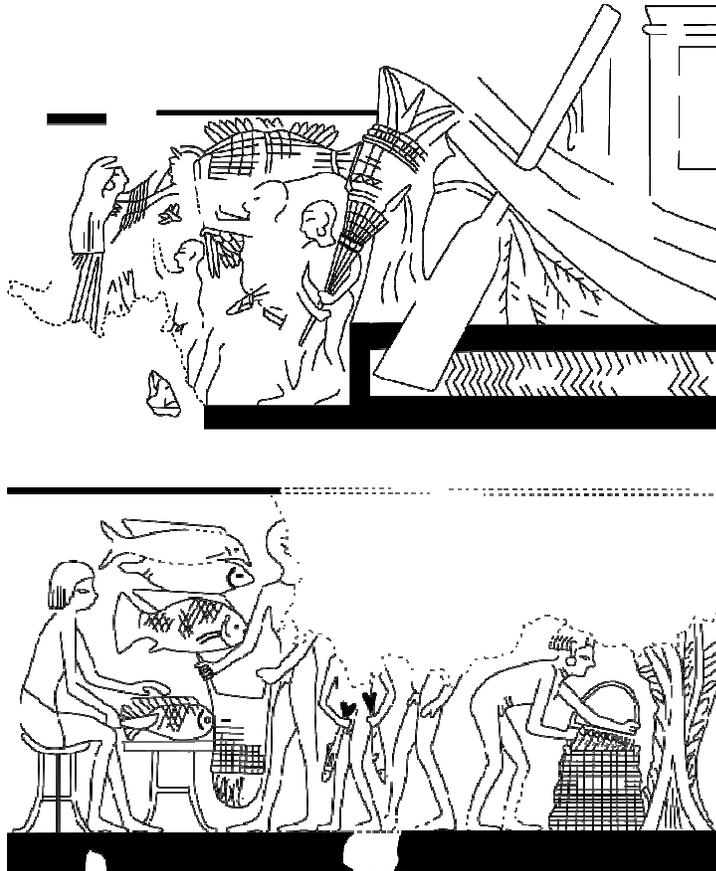
FIG. 8: CARRYING OF GOODS, TT217 (AFTER DE GARIS DAVIES 1927: PL. 30)

Some of the tasks performed by ꜥ*ḏd.w* before joining the workforce also involved bringing supplies (O.DEM 306 and 412), presumably similar to the roles undertaken by the *ḥry-ꜥ* of the *smd.t*, and so a certain portion of the skills and knowledge would already have been learnt.[36] Possibly this was conscious, in part giving the child a wide skill base before their future role had been assigned, and enabling them to observe the craftsmen periodically without being stationed there or being physically involved with the work. This further suggests that the ꜥ*ḏd.w* did not undertake practical crafts training, as this would be wasted time should they not join the craftsmen. It also reinforces the conclusion that the role of an ꜥ*ḏd* was determined around puberty; the *smd.t* were required to carry heavy loads frequently, and so small children would be less efficient in this capacity. It is possible that one was not always responsible for bringing the same supplies; for example, there is some evidence that the gardener *ꞽmn-m-ḥb*

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[36] It is unlikely that these texts actually record activities undertaken by trainee *smd.t*. Firstly, the scribes would likely not have bothered to record this type of activity. Secondly, in the case of O.DEM 412 at least, the child was accompanied by a craftsman.

may also or later have been a wood cutter (Černý 1973: 188). This would require learning a whole new skill, be that catching fish or cutting wood, although again these practical aspects are now invisible.

5.5 CONCLUSIONS

Textual evidence relating to children within the workforce again reveals the contextual nature of childhood. In contrast to vocabulary for children in the context of daily life, children were defined according to specific categories as they entered and progressed through the workforce. The only terminology consistent across contexts is *ꜥḏḏ*, although this took on a much more specific meaning in the sphere of the craftsmen. Otherwise, a completely different set of vocabulary, with its own criteria, applied to children.

A notable problem with this evidence, however, is its fragmentary nature. Many texts relevant to discussions of the workforce are reconstructed from partial remains; as was noted above, this is especially true for those which describe the 'binding' of childen within the workforce, and the specifics of progression within it. These problems are unavoidable, but based on the limited and incomplete evidence, any conclusions must remain tentative. Another issue that must be borne in mind is that the composition of the workforce, and working practices, did not remain constant across the 19th and 20th Dynasties. It was discussed above that at certain times the strength of the workorce rose or fell, and subsequently so did the number of apprentices. This in turn would possibly influence the nature of training and relationship between teacher and pupil.

Despite caveats with the sources, discussion has attempted to explore how progression through the workforce was informed. This is fundamental to consider, as it illustrates children's differing identities at different levels of the workforce, but has not received dedicated treatment in previous studies. Unfortunately, due to the limited evidence, few firm conclusions can be drawn. Rather, issues have been raised here in the hope that future discoveries may allow for more nuanced conclusions.

It is possible that progression was in part biologically informed, based on one's ability to work; this has been suggested and discussed above in the context of how children are introduced to work in other cultures. However, these categories were also in a sense 'social',

in that those of differing levels were literally termed 'child', 'junior/apprentice' and 'man of the crew', and these need not have necessarily been restricted to those of accompanying biological age. Even adults may well have been thought of as *mnḥ* based on their skill level compared to peers. However, either way, it illustrates a different way of defining childhood than in the previous Chapter—position within the skills hierarchy rather than social hierarchy, and through physical rather than social criteria—and with a more pronounced intermediate position between childhood and adulthood.

This suggests a more nuanced picture of social categories than is reflected in common parlance at Deir el-Medina. As stated at the beginning of this Chapter, however, this sphere of identity was one open only to males. The following Chapter returns to a sphere open to all members of society: death.

6. THE CONTEXT OF DEATH

6.1 USING MORTUARY EVIDENCE

The third social context to consider, and perhaps the context most visible in ancient Egypt, is that of death. It is possible that children's burials at Deir el-Medina reveal evidence of age-grades not present in other sources. However, before this can be explored, consideration must be given to how well—if at all—burials reflect the social identity of children in life.

Interest in why individuals were treated differently in death emerged with processual archaeology (see Saxe 1970, 1971; Binford 1971; Tainter 1978). Two basic assumptions were held at that time: difference in status in life was reflected in burial treatment, meaning social organisation was the primary reason for burial differentiation (Binford 1971: 18; Saxe 1971: 39); and display in death was the fullest representation of the deceased's roles and identities (Saxe 1970: 6). However, mortuary differentiation is not dependent on a single variable (Gillespie 2001: 77). Burial variability need not reflect social structure (Huntington and Metcalf 1979; Parker Pearson 1982); in many societies, mortuary ritual actually results in loss of individualised identities, as the dead represent collective social ancestors (Glazier 1984; Chapman 1994).

The 'Saxe-Binford' approach was especially problematic when analysing child burials; it assumed that wealthy child burials indicated ascribed status (Saxe 1970: 7; Rothschild 1979: 661). It is now understood that mortuary treatment reflects more the relationships negotiated between living and dead (Parker Pearson 1982: 112; 1993: 203). Burial is an ideological statement; treatment of the deceased can equally reflect the intention or identity of those who buried them. The identity of the deceased may therefore not be reflected wholly through mortuary display—it can be manipulated, invented, or suppressed by survivors for their own ends (Parker Pearson 1982: 100-1, 112; Halsall 1998). Thus, children's burials might equally reflect the status of the parent, or the relationship between parent and child (Pader 1982: 57, 63; Brown 1995: 8; Hayden 1995: 21; Joyce 1999: 21). Alternatively, treatment might be determined not by family, but wider social ideas of what was considered appropriate for individuals of that life-stage, gender or class. It may even relate to wider themes such as cosmology (Shanks and Tilley 1982), or origin myths (Härke 1997).

Another consideration is that most burials demonstrate an incomplete data-set. The body and its assemblage reflect only a portion of the ritual actions preceding and possibly following deposition, which otherwise leave little to no trace (Hodder 1982: 201; Bourriau 1991: 4). This is especially important for subaltern groups such as children, who may not be represented in other mortuary sources; with the exception of an 18th Dynasty stela dedicated to *Mry-sḫm.t* (British Museum EA804), individual monuments commemorating deceased children are unknown before the Late Period. This does not mean that there were no mortuary rites accompanying child burials, simply that they were not considered appropriate for representation in formal textual or artistic records. It is possible that children's mortuary rites lay within other realms of social expression (Crawford 2000: 174), accompanied by informal rituals which left no material correlates. Such rituals are important for understanding social attitudes and beliefs towards childhood, but are now inaccessible.

Therefore, burials provide a means for understanding how society materialises and differentiates age-grades (Sofaer Derevenski 1997b, 1997c). However, whilst mortuary material can encode important information about such age-grades, and the social- and gender-roles held by individuals at each, a simple relationship between burials and social structure cannot be expected. Nor can it be assumed that all aspects of a child's social identity are recoverable from mortuary evidence. No child burial represents a 'normative' child, but one whose progress through the life-cycle was halted. Mortuary evidence need not therefore be applicable to surviving members of that age-group.

6.2 CHILDREN'S BURIALS AT DEIR EL-MEDINA

This section provides a broad overview of children's burials; a full database of graves, forming the core of analysis, is provided in Appendix 2. However, children's burials must be understood in relation to other members of society, and so consideration is also given here to adult mortuary treatment.

As discussed in Chapter 2, necropolises bordered the site to East and West; graves also initially lay to the south of the village, but were largely destroyed or re-used in the Ramesside period as the site expanded (Meskell 1999a: 143). Across its occupation, the total number of graves lay in the hundreds (see Figs. 11-13 below). However, Appendix 2 includes only a fraction of these; known children's burials comprise a minority of Deir el-Medina graves, and these are weighted

towards Dynasty 18. This is in part due to burial practices, but also the destruction or re-use of graves in antiquity, or more modern looting. The following discussion of the Deir el-Medina necropolises rationalises and contextualises those burials included in Appendix 2.

Children's burials were found in three locations at Deir el-Medina: predominantly individual burials in the Eastern necropolis; as both individuals and part of family groups in the Western necropolis; and as burials within houses. The dates of these locations do not overlap completely. The Eastern necropolis was seemingly in use only during Dynasty 18. The Western necropolis was also in use in Dynasty 18 but continued for the rest of the site's life-span. This is an important caveat; although there is some overlap, the Eastern and Western necropolises are not contemporaneous, and especially for the Eastern necropolis, its use-life predates the period of most textual evidence. Comparisons must therefore be made with caution. The Eastern and Western necropolises also exhibit different burial practices. In the Western necropolis, tombs were dug into the hillside with both super- and substructures; Eastern necropolis tombs were mostly shallow pits covered with stones to guard them from predators. If there were originally superstructures, these are now lost. Bruyère (1937b: 6, 16-19) discusses several stelae fragments and other items dating to Dynasty 18 found in the general vicinity, which might originally have been erected at tombs.

Despite this broad chronology, it is difficult to be entirely certain of the development of the necropolises. Many graves were usurped later (Bogoslovsky 1980: 94; Valbelle 1985a: 6), especially in the Western necropolis, and this mixing of burials makes dating harder. Furthermore, as many foetuses and placentas were buried at the Eastern necropolis—which were generally deposited with no dateable material—that necropolis might actually have been used for longer than datable evidence suggests.

Inevitably, some children—and adults—were also disposed of in ways which have left no archaeological trace. Certainly, more children died than have been discovered; the oracle texts referring to deceased children discussed in Chapter 4 attest to high infant mortality rates. Furthermore, in some cases, especially in the Western necropolis, the children themselves no longer remained, only other contextual evidence (Appendix 2). For example, in graves 1379 and 1382, children's clothing was found in burials containing otherwise only adults.

6.2.1 THE EASTERN NECROPOLIS

The Eastern necropolis, situated on the hill known as Qurnet Marai, is considered to have been segmented into age-zones. The lowest part of the hill, closest to the enclosure wall, was reserved for the youngest inhumations—newborns, foetuses and other organic residue associated with birthing, placed in small pits 40-90cm deep (Bruyère 1937b: 8-9, 11). The age of individuals increased with height up the hill, with Bruyère understanding the middle section as reserved for adolescents, and adults at the top. Both sexes were represented, but women were more prevalent, possibly due to maternal mortality-rates (Harrington 2009: 141). Beyond location, burial type was also distinguished by age. Bruyère (1937b: 11-15) identified five categories:

> i) Foetuses, newborns and placentas in decorated or undecorated domestic vessels.
> ii) Infants in wicker mats.
> iii) Children in round or oval wicker baskets.
> iv) Children in household boxes or chests, usually re-purposed.
> v) Coffins, either anthropoid or box.

It is unclear whether factors such as gender also influenced burial practices. Firstly, few bodies remain; secondly, exploration of this issue requires a better understanding of the age at which individuals were considered to be gendered. However, based on sexable bodies, the type of coffin in category v) burials was apparently not sex related (Bruyère 1937b: 24), and it seems that male and female burials saw broadly equal expenditure (Meskell 1999b: 181; Harrington 2007: 61). However, typically only female coffins contained inscriptions bearing names or offering formulae (Soliman 2015: 120). Based on the two clearest elements, location and manner of burial, it appears that age was the major immediate structuring principle at the Eastern necropolis (Meskell 1999a: 169). Although correspondences between burial practices and the life cycle cannot be assumed, it is held here that because burial practices seem age-related, distinctions between burials might reveal something about social delineations of age, reflected in 'appropriate' manners of burial for that age-group.

Although the 18th Dynasty Eastern necropolis seems informative for understanding childhood, it has traditionally been debated whether it actually relates to Deir el-Medina at all (see Letellier 1978: 16; Dodson 2000: 97; Toivari-Viitala 2002: 386; Pierrat-Bonnefois 2003). Differences with the contemporary Western necropolis have been commented upon. However,

it is now increasingly agreed upon that the 18th Dynasty necropolises and settlement do relate (Näser 2001; Shlögl 2001; Soliman 2015).

Pierrat-Bonnefois (2003) argues that the Eastern necropolis should not be seen as part of Deir el-Medina but re-labelled "the cemetery to the West of Gurnet Marai". She believes that the necropolis is an archaeological construct, and was actually the overspill of other local burial grounds—with the graves specifically belonging to lower-class individuals servicing the Theban elite. However, spatially, there is no reason why the necropolis and village need not relate. As discussed earlier, 18th Dynasty burials initially bordered the settlement to the West, East and South. Although many of the tombs peripheral to the village were gradually covered by rubbish tips and extensions to the site, leaving the exact physical relationship between site and necropolis uncertain, these early burials seem to have surrounded but respected the extent of the village (Figs. 9-10).[37] Indeed, as will be discussed in the following Chapter, the location of infant pot burials seems to have been informed by the presence of the settlement walls. Furthermore—as all evidence indicates that Deir el-Medina was founded early in the 18th Dynasty—the graves are unlikely to have pre-dated it. Given the secluded nature of the settlement and its purpose, it would seem unlikely that unrelated individuals were buried so close to it. Although the site's later expansion over graves suggests that respect for the dead lasted only a generation or two,[38] there are many examples of later re-use or usurpation of graves throughout Egypt, and so Deir el-Medina is not unusual in this respect.

More convincingly, Soliman (2015) has recently studied the 'workmen's marks' found on many burial goods within the Eastern necropolis. He has shown that most of these correlate to those known exclusively as 18th Dynasty workmen's marks (2015: 121), and notes several striking similarities between these burials and those of the contemporary Western necropolis: the frequent inclusion of marked objects correlating to those attested as 'workmen's marks'; a limited amount of textual material generally; and frequent mistakes in what textual material there is, that suggest a limited literacy (Soliman 2015: 122; see also Näser 2001: 382-3).

There therefore seems to be a direct relationship between the Eastern necropolis and 18th Dynasty Deir el-Medina. Whilst this is still not certain, it is very likely that at least some burials

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[37] Note that the reconstructions of the necropolis-site relationship in Figs. 9-10 reflect the original author's own interpretations and measurements

[38] That said, it is difficult to tell whether these early graves would even have been visible any more at the time of the site's expansion.

represent those of the workmen of this Dynasty and their families. More specifically, it is tempting to suggest that the necropolis represents those living in the village before its apparent temporary abandonment in the Amarna period. Several of the burials have been dated to before this point (Brissaud 1979: 24-5; Meskell 2000c: 262; Dodson 2000: 97). If we consider that the Eastern necropolis and earliest Western necropolis burials represent the period of pre-Amarna occupation, and the sole use of the Western necropolis represents post-Amarna occupation, this might also explain the changes in burial practice. It was discussed in Chapter 5, in the context of education, that the return from Amarna saw great changes in the composition and practices of the workforce; it is reasonable to suggest that ritual and burial practices similarly changed. Indeed, the apparently limited literacy betrayed by many of the Eastern necropolis burials matches with what was apparently the more limited literacy of the workmen at this time (Soliman 2015: 122).

| Early Dynasty 18 | Late Dynasty 18 | Early Dynasty 19 | Late Dynasty 19 |

N   0   25   50m
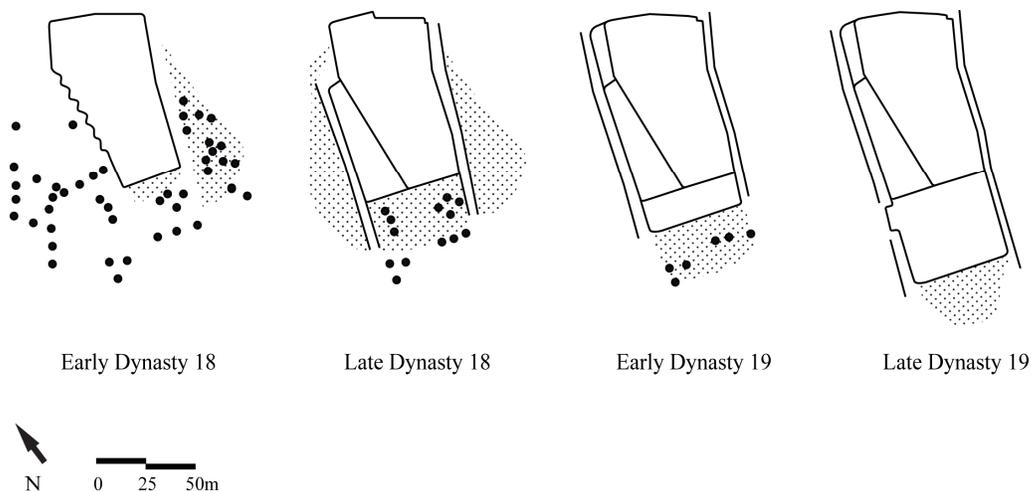
FIG. 9: THE GROWTH OF DEIR EL-MEDINA AND ITS EXTENSION OVER EARLIER GRAVES

(AFTER MESKELL 1994B: FIG. 3)

N.B. CIRCLES REPRESENT AREAS OF BURIAL, AND SHADED AREAS RUBBISH DUMPS
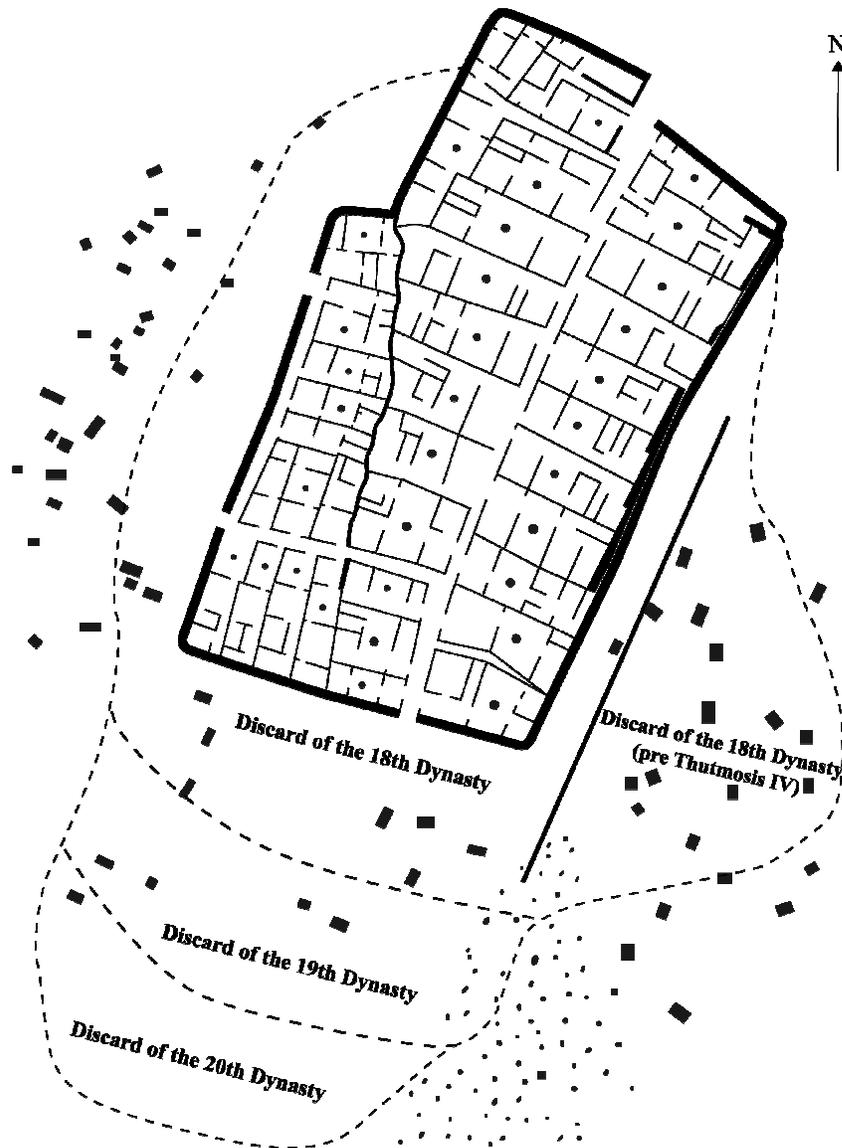
FIG. 10: DEIR EL-MEDINA AT THE END OF THE 18TH DYNASTY, AND LATER DUMPS (AFTER BRUYÈRE 1939: PL. 6)

Unfortunately, the data-set for the Eastern necropolis is incomplete. Before Bruyère's excavations, the necropolis had previously been located and several burials published (Anthes 1943: 51-7). However, they are rarely included in discussion (Meskell 1999a: 163). Bruyère's notebooks for the 1933-4 season show that the Eastern necropolis was swept from 10-11 December (Bruyère n.d. (a): 1-2). Although the entry for Monday 11th says that they found "nombreux trous contenant un vase usagé contenant un foetus, ou des petits puits à coecum contenant une corbeille ou un coffre avec corps d'enfant dans des chiffons", very few of the

many burials were photographed or even individually recorded in either the notebook or final report (Näser 2001: 373). Plans of the necropolis (Figs. 11-12) show how many pits were found; Fig. 12 especially features several not included in the final report. The list of burials available represents only a fraction of the total number, which totalled at least "une bonne centaine" (Bruyère: 1937b: 11).

It is generally perceived that, given the limited published evidence, the Eastern necropolis offers little scope for analysis. As such, few studies use it to explore social dynamics at the site, and even fewer focus on children's burials specifically. Exceptions are Meskell (1994a, 1999a) and Janot (2003), though these still only focus on a discrete few burials of interest. However, the Eastern necropolis is arguably the most important source of evidence for studying children, as it is the only location where individual child burials occur. Both the lack of previous studies and limited available data are unfortunate.
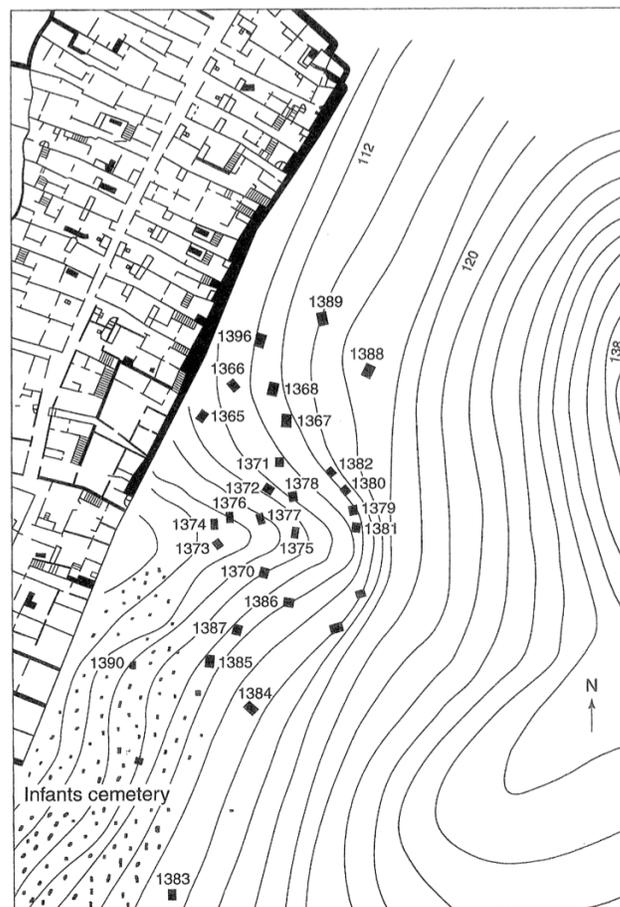
FIG. 11: PLAN OF THE EASTERN NECROPOLIS (MESKELL 1999B: FIG. 4.11)
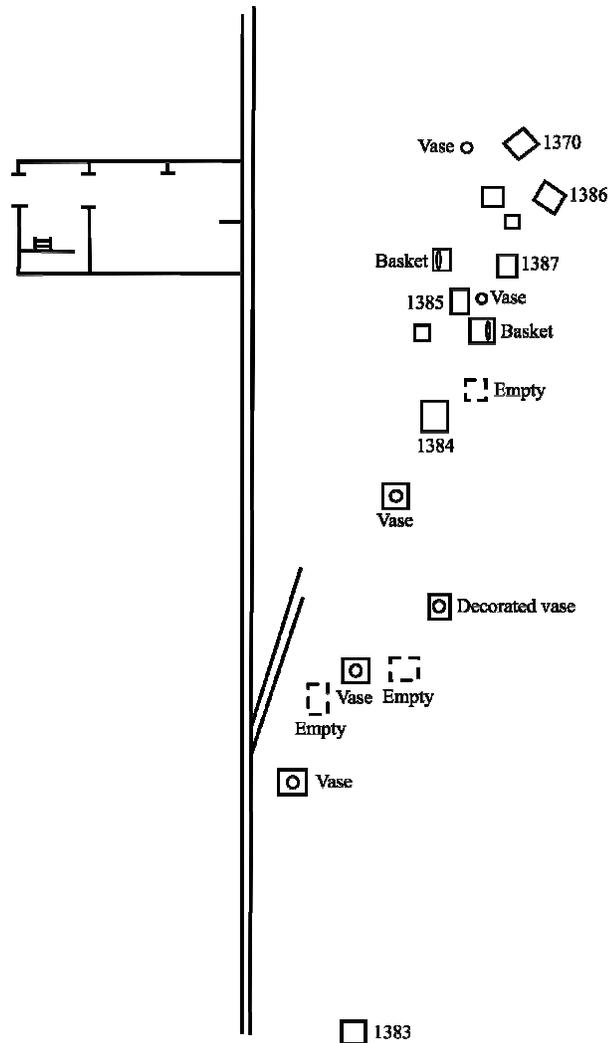
FIG. 12: PLAN OF THE EASTERN NECROPOLIS (AFTER BRUYÈRE (N.D. (A): 1)

6.2.2 THE WESTERN NECROPOLIS

At the Western necropolis, 18th Dynasty inhumations were also largely individual, seemingly not restricted by age or gender (Bruyère 1927: 43), but with some couples or smaller family groups (Meskell 1999b: 181). It is possible that these tombs had superstructures, levelled by later activity (Bruyère 1928: 114-5). Compared to the Eastern necropolis there was more variation, with males, women and then children receiving increasingly less wealthy burials (Meskell 1999b: 182). Wealth was also arguably reflected in location, with shallower and smaller burials at the bottom of the hillside (Bruyère 1934: 6). Meskell (1999b: 181) has

suggested that the occupants of the Western necropolis were wealthier overall—but, in contradiction, has also suggested (1999a: 146) that burial in either necropolis was a choice.

Unfortunately, although the 18th Dynasty burials allow for comparison with the Eastern necropolis, they provide a more limited data-set than later graves. Bruyère estimated that around 180 Western necropolis burials dated to Dynasty 18 (collated in Soliman 2015: 112 Note 21). However, few were intact when excavated. Many were incorporated into later tombs or domestic cellars (Bruyère 1934: 7, 17-21; Bonnet and Valbelle 1976: 328; Meskell 1994b: 199), and re-used tombs were filled with later occupation; tombs 1053 (Bruyère 1928: 14) and 1313 (Bruyère 1937a: 36) contained bodies from various periods, and TT336 contained 74 bodies (Bruyère 1926: 80-113), making it difficult to establish the original occupancy. Others had been looted in more recent times. Few items remained, and the bodies themselves were also frequently missing. Because of these problems, the 18th Dynasty information is limited. The presence of children can often only be identified through corroborating evidence (Appendix 2).

From the 19th Dynasty, the manner of burial transitioned into generational tombs of families, often with larger superstructures. This suggests an increased emphasis on the relatedness of people, and on lineage, rather than the individual.[39] It is unclear what prompted such development—change in social attitudes, economic pressure, or even a desire to enhance one's reputation through associations with previous members of the community (Meskell 1999b: 192). There is evidence for a level of social competition at the site; O.Cairo 25800 possibly describes a parent's attempts to bribe his son's way into the workforce, and in grave 1386, which was relatively poor, a higher quality coffin had been taken from another burial. For comparable social aspirations at other sites, see Shaw (1992).

The nature of bodily preparation also changed, with greater emphasis on embalming; this was not standardised, with multiple methods attested (Bruyère 1927: 57-9). The transition to family burials means that women and children become more prominent in the record, but the focus of burial still lay firmly on the male head, with other family members peripheral. Therefore, at least from Dynasty 19, the Western necropolis was primarily constituted around gender, and age only to a lesser degree. Meskell (1999b: 198; 2000a: 429) suggests that the primary social

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[39] In cases where members of the community seemingly had multiple family graves—for example, TT7, TT212 and TT250 are all attributed to R^c-ms—the reasoning is less clear.

divide at Deir el-Medina should really be seen as wealth, which splintered into age or sex inequalities depending on the necropolis context.[40]

Fig. 13 illustrates the size of the Western necropolis. Because of the higher rates of re-use and disturbance of graves in this necropolis, the data-set for Appendix 2 is smaller than for the Eastern necropolis. Graves have been included only on the basis of physical evidence for children's burial, be that body or grave goods, although it is recognised that the possibility that these relate to later inhumations can never be completely discounted. It is hoped that this still provides data enough to compare with Eastern necropolis evidence.
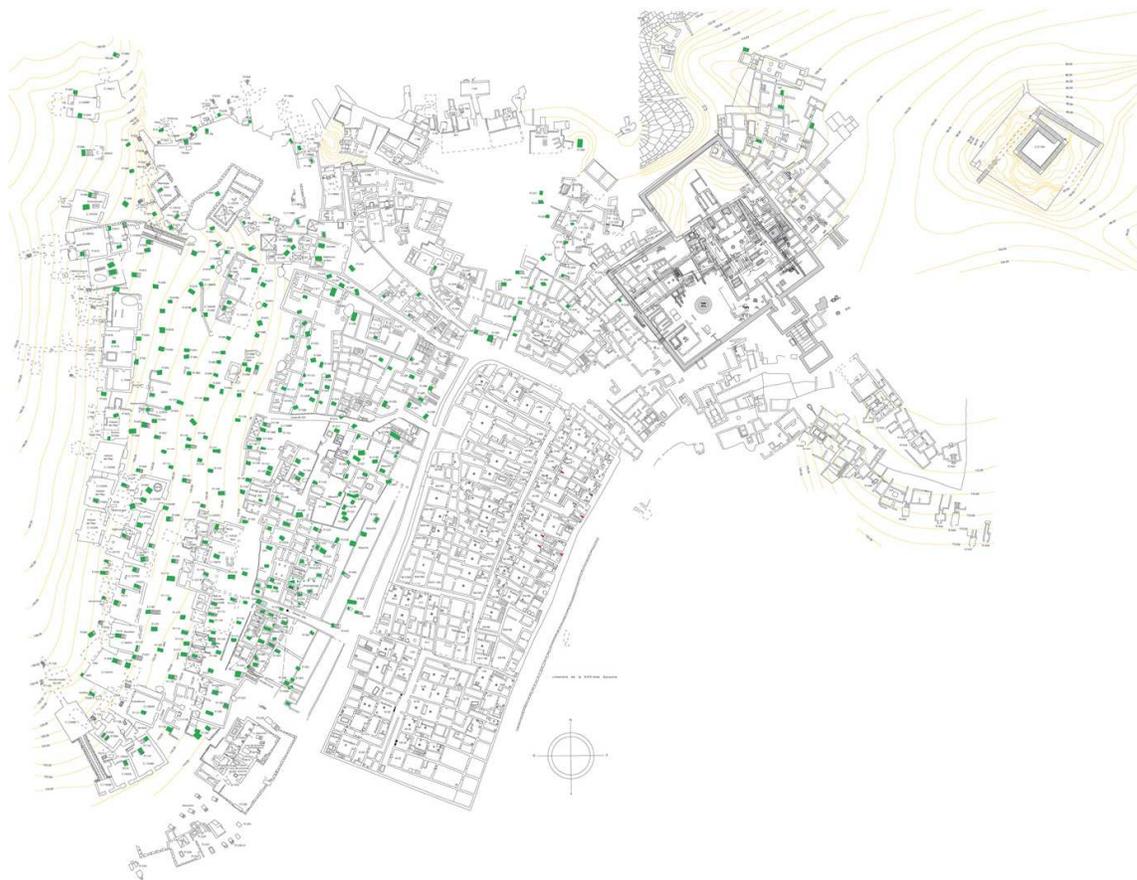
FIG. 13: EXTENT OF THE WESTERN NECROPOLIS (CASTEL AND MEEKS 1980: PLAN 1)

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[40] Although there is limited contemporaneous evidence for both the Eastern and Western necropolises, one of the few intact Dynasty 18 burials in the Western Necropolis was 1159A, that of a man, woman and child. All three were buried in the same tomb with a reasonably wealthy assemblage, rather than individually, suggesting that a range of burial practices were available to the individual depending on their means or preferences.

6.2.3 HOUSE BURIALS

Burials within the settlement formed the least common category. Adults were found with some frequency; however, this is because graves were frequently incorporated into houses and re-purposed as cellars as the site expanded over them (many examples are described in Bruyère 1939). These do not reflect a deliberate choice to bury the dead within houses. Children's burials are far less frequent; only three are known. Should these be understood in the same way—expansion of the site disturbing and covering earlier burials—or as deliberate placement by contemporary occupants?

In one case, it seems that an earlier child's grave was disturbed and reburied. A box burial was found in the rubble of the wall enclosing the late 18th Dynasty village extension (Bonnet and Valbelle 1976: 328-30, Figs. 3-5). It was believed to have originally lain within the Western hill, and covered with stones as in the Eastern necropolis, but was displaced by the new wall and re-interred within it (Bonnet and Valbelle 1976: 328). This led Bonnet and Valbelle to suggest that another dedicated children's necropolis originally existed on the Western side of the valley, disturbed and cleared during the building of the village extension. However, there is no other evidence that this was the case; this burial was probably simply an individual interment, like others of the Western necropolis.

The other two cases are more unclear. A 19th Dynasty burial was found in house SE6, room 5 (Bruyère 1939: 271-2). This house was built during the site's expansion after Dynasty 18 (Bruyère 1939: Pl. 7) and so it is possible that it exposed an earlier burial to the South of the site (Fig 10). However, Bruyère noted that it was apparently buried within a specially-dug pit rather than being covered by later occupation. Similarly, a box burial was found within the area termed 'D' by Möller (Anthes 1943: 57). Area D, houses 1-11 correspond to Bruyère's NE8-NE19, but unfortunately the burial's specific location within this range was omitted. Nonetheless, these houses were present from the site's earliest foundation, and it is therefore uncertain whether they covered an earlier burial. Indeed, despite the limited detail, Anthes and Bruyère both agreed that this burial was also deliberately placed within the house (Anthes 1943: 57). Although it cannot be shown definitively whether these two burials were deliberately interred within houses, or exposed during construction and re-interred within, for the sake of argument they are treated here as a discrete data-set.

Although children's burials come from multiple locations, there have been no studies which consider them all holistically. This discussion provides the first thorough treatment of children's burial practices at Deir el-Medina. The following analysis considers two key aspects of burial: the mortuary equipment, and the nature and location of burial.

6.3 GRAVE GOODS

This first section of analysis considers the material buried alongside children, and what this reveals about their social identities. Material culture is invaluable for accessing past societies' understandings of the life cycle, as it reflects social structures such as age or gender (Hodder 1982; Godsen and Marshall 1999; Gilchrist 2000). However, more than simply reflecting such structures, material culture also influences and reinforces them (Sofaer Derevenski 1997a: 196). Age or gender identities are therefore accessible through grave goods. This allows for examination of how they combine in the creation of childhood identity (Roméro 2009: 21), and how thresholds in a child's social identity are marked materially.

However, what are grave goods? Even the body itself is an object. The skeleton is a "site of articulation between biology and culture" (Sofaer Derevenski 2000a: 9), and differences between bodies signify identity just as much as material culture. This is especially true for children, as the biologically immature body goes through numerous physiological changes (James *et al.* 1998: 156). Arguably, the grave is simply an extension of the body, containing and associating it with surrounding artefacts. Even then, it is one thing to realise that material encodes information about social structures; it is another to decode and interpret it successfully (Sofaer Derevenski 1997c: 876). Furthermore, the importance of an object lies not just in its form or function, but also the context of its use (Giddens 1979: 98). Studies have suggested that subtle differences between individuals in item placement in relation to body positioning also encoded important information (Pader 1982). Therefore, objects do not have one specific 'meaning'. Their meanings are multiple, and can change when combined with individuals of different age, gender or status.

The discussion below argues the following. At Deir el-Medina, studies usually propose that grave goods fell almost universally into the 'adult' sphere. That is to say, there is little visible difference between those in the graves of children and adults. However, this perspective is problematic. It assumes that the adult condition is normative, and that children's own identities

and conditions were ignored; it suggests a society-wide rejection of childhood in death (Meskell 1994a: 40, 1999a: 172). Rather, it should be stated that the goods typically found in Deir el-Medina graves were part of universal Egyptian mortuary ideas, to which most members of society were privy. A lack of material that we might consider 'child-related' does not therefore reflect a suppression of childhood identity, but that all individuals were considered 'Egyptian' and needed certain mortuary equipment, regardless of identity in life.

The general pattern of grave goods at Deir el-Medina is of a focus on worldly experience in Dynasty 18, with burials typically containing food, ceramics and toiletries (Smith 1992), gradually changing to a focus on ritual protection in the Ramesside era, and religious items such as shabtis (Meskell 1999b: Fig. 2). This is not to say that the purpose of burial changed. All burials provisioned for the afterlife, but those during and after Dynasty 18 focused on different aspects of provisioning. However, this pattern is based largely on the Western necropolis, as the Eastern necropolis provides only Dynasty 18 evidence. Can we compare the two? Generally, Eastern necropolis burials had broadly equal expenditure for males and females, whereas contemporary Western necropolis burials demonstrate more variation (Meskell 1999b: 181-2; Harrington 2007: 61). Meskell (1994a: 37) argues that those buried in the Eastern necropolis were concerned more with attaining an afterlife than prestige and social display; Bruyère (1937: 7) argued that the Eastern necropolis housed a lower socio-economic group. However, several Eastern necropolis burials, especially of adults, were comparatively wealthy (for example 1370, 1371 and 1379; see discussion in Smith 1992).[41] Their assemblages, comprising mostly pottery, food and toiletries, seem to correlate both with those in the Western necropolis (compare Appendix 2.2 and 2.3), and elsewhere in the contemporary Theban region. Therefore, both necropolises fall within the same boundaries of mortuary material, but with variation on an individual level, possibly related to wealth in life.

Gender does not immediately appear to have been a structuring principle in mortuary assemblages. In Dynasty 18, coffin type was not strictly gendered (Smith 1992: 198); of sexable Eastern necropolis burials, 83% of anthropoid coffins contained females, and 67% of box coffins. Similarly, in the Western necropolis, tombs 1159 and 1352 contained both males and females, all in anthropoid coffins. From Dynasty 19, only anthropoid coffins are found (Hayes 1978: 414); this similarly suggests that gender differences were unmarked. Other material was also largely non-gendered. For example, toiletries such as razors were found

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[41] 'Wealthy' in this case refers to both amount and quality of grave goods.

both with men and women. However, there are exceptions; for example, only females had rings (Bruyère 1937b: 69).

Nor was ethnicity a major structuring principle. Although the Eastern necropolis was a mix of Nubians, Egyptians and Near Easterners (Bruyère 1937b: 43-4), there were no overt differences in burial. A general homogeneity of material culture masked individual ethnic identities.

Regarding age as a structuring principle, the Eastern necropolis provides the clearest evidence. As Appendix 2 shows, there was little variation in the actual items between children and adults, in that all such items reflected a 'typical' 18th Dynasty assemblage. However, amount and quality of items tended to vary with age, with basket burials typically less furnished than coffins, and being repurposed rather than specially-crafted containers (Appendix 2.2; compare for example burials 1371 and 1373). The most noticeable difference is that basket burials were not typically furnished with the toiletries, such as razors, given to adults.

Therefore, burial provisioning was somewhat age-dependant, affecting the amount and quality of material—but the actual items themselves were fairly consistent, coming from the same mortuary corpus. Provisioning of children's burials with 'typical' grave goods suggests that they were considered as much a social person as adults (Harrington 2009: 141), and the same afterlife was attainable for them, but the specific assemblage provided correlated to the individual's condition in life. Children who did not yet need to shave, for example, had no need for razors.

Unfortunately, we cannot establish the same level of evidence for Dynasty 19, as the dataset is primarily family burials. Although individual material is still found, there was an increase in shared provisioning (see Meskell 1999a: 159-60 for statistical analysis of burials of Dynasties 19 to 21). In these cases, it is possible that all those inhumed would have 'made use' of the general assemblage in the afterlife. In that respect, despite limited evidence, the same attitude to children can be inferred, as children buried with their families again had access to the same mortuary culture as adults.

Although the 'core' elements of 18th Dynasty material, ceramics and food, are found with both children and adults, there seems to have been room for individual choice within

provisioning children's burials with regards to 'other' material. In tomb 1159A, the two adult bodies had pectorals and bracelets, yet the child had none, nor did the child in 1378. However, the child in grave 1373 wore a beaded necklace, and the child in 1375 a bracelet on each wrist. In all four of these examples, the children were presumably of relatively similar age, at least judging by height.[42] The absence of jewellery in at least 1159A was presumably not wealth-related, as the burial was in other accounts well-furnished. Nor was it necessarily gender-informed; unlike adults, children of both sexes are commonly represented wearing jewellery in art, as will be discussed in Chapter 7. Rather, the presence or absence of such material in Dynasty 18 possibly reflects individual decisions, beyond social norms of what was expected materially.

Children's graves typically did not have 'children's goods'; that is to say, material opposed to that found with adults, and unique to sub-adults. Generally, scholarship considers this synonymous with 'toys'. Only a small number of graves had 'unusual' or noteworthy items:

Eastern necropolis:

- 1375: Headless white clay 'doll' (Bruyère 1937b: 124).
- 1378, 1380: Legless bread 'dolls' with raisins for eyes (also a third, not included in the grave register; Bruyère 1937b: Fig. 94).

Western necropolis:

- Spoil of 359: Painted clay group depicting an animal sitting and holding another in its arms (Bruyère 1933: 104, Fig. 5).
- 1137: Clay quadruped (Bruyère 1929: 12).
- 1159A: Flint nodule with red and black paint—possibly a face—with linen tied around (Bruyère 1929: 44).
- 1225: Clay horse's head and harness (Bruyère 1933: 21, possibly shown in Bruyère 1930: Fig. 20.2).
- 1352: Clay female figurine (Bruyère 1937: 97).

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[42] The child in 1159A was 0.76m; that in 1378 0.6m; that in 1373 0.8m; and that in 1375 0.85m.

House burials:

- SE6: Hieratic ostracon, clay horse, clay 'doll', and wooden spoon (Bruyère 1937: 271).

However, are such items toys, or only assumed to be such through their context? Archaeological discussion of children's materiality has persistently been influenced by research assumptions which reflect the writers' own conceptions of childhood, and a tendency to assume that small or crude objects belong to children because they 'look' like toys (Sofaer Derevenski 2000a: 7). However, such an interpretation is a product of modern Western ideas. Children's material culture is discussed at length in Chapter 10; for now, it should be mentioned that such biases are clearly demonstrated in Bruyère's reports. He described clay female figurines found in graves 1352 and 1375 as toys (Bruyère 1937b: 97), as also with a painted flint 'face' in tomb 1159A (Bruyère 1929: 44) and clay animal in tomb 1137 (Bruyère 1929: 12). He even described grave 1380 as of a "toute jeune fille" (Bruyère 1937b: 179) because of the presence of a bread 'doll' with raisins for eyes, although the interred body, at 1.72m long, was of an adult.[43]

Despite assumptions based on the objects' context and size, in none of these cases is the identification 'toy' convincing. This demonstrates how identification of material as belonging to children is usually based on morphology alone (Sofaer Derevenski 2000a: 7). Regarding bread 'dolls', three were found in total (Bruyère 1937b: Fig. 94). The one in grave 1378 was associated with a child's basket burial, and one from an unknown grave was apparently also found alongside a child (Bruyère 1937b: 106). However, grave 1380 was an adult burial. It is unlikely that it originally also contained a child, as the burial was intact. Such objects cannot therefore have been only the preserve of children. Possibly, they were magic or ritual objects; ritual practice is often open to individualism (Kemp 1995: 26), which might explain their uncommonness. It is perhaps important that the example in 1380 was female, as was the interment; the object in 1378 was male but the body unsexable.

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[43] Bruyère's cultural biases also influenced what he considered could *not* be a toy. For example, unlike figurines of women, he thought figurines of Bes could not have been appropriate for children because of their 'erotic' qualities (Bruyère 1939: 102), but this was again based entirely on notions of children and sexuality contemporary to him.

A ritual explanation for the flint 'face' in grave 1159A is also probable. It was not unique; shaped flints were also found in adult graves (Bruyère 1929: 75-6), votive chapels (Bruyère 1934: 69, Fig. 60), and houses (Bruyère 1939: 270, 276-7, Fig. 149; Keimer 1940: 11, Pl. 8). Again, that painted and shaped flints were found in a range of contexts suggests they were not associated solely with children. Occurring in a range of human and animal forms, matching those attested in clay and stone figurines, they may possibly have been crude examples of such votive or protective objects. Certainly, the example from amongst the votive chapels, in the form of a hippo, also bore a hieratic inscription: *Stḫ ꜥꜣ-pḥty ršn.y m pt n nṯr.w nbw*, 'Seth great-of-power, he who rages in Heaven at all Gods'.

Furthermore, the various clay objects mentioned above, both human and animal, all find parallels in ritual objects found in other contexts and should probably be interpreted as such. Regarding the clay quadruped found in grave 1137, although Bruyère did not mention the species depicted, it is possible that this was a clay substitute for a real animal (as in graves 1352, 1376 and 1386) deposited alongside other food. Clay loaves were also found in grave 1352, and so 'substitute' food is elsewhere attested.

The one grave whose objects cannot be clearly interpreted are the spoon and ostracon in SE6. It is possible, though this remains entirely tentative, that the spoon actually was associated with the child, perhaps a plaything, and buried alongside as a reminder of its childhood; the same principle has been suggested elsewhere (Lebegyev 2009: 25). However, again, it is equally possible that the spoon was considered to have some individual ritual significance, now untraceable. The spoon was simply listed as 'wooden' and so presumably undecorated, but it is not otherwise pictured or described so this cannot be verified.

In short, children's graves did not typically contain 'toys' as we would understand them. It is possible that, if toys did exist, they may have been communal and so kept within the arena of the living rather than being placed in graves (Marshall 2012: 252). However, it is more probable that the absence of 'toys' speaks not to a conscious rejection of children's material within the mortuary sphere, but failings in how archaeologists consider 'toys' and 'play' in the past. None of the objects above previously described as toys are convincing. This relates to larger issues of how archaeologists define and understand toys, which fall beyond the scope of the present discussion, but will be examined at length in Chapter 10. For now, the important conclusion is that material culture within children's graves was not overtly differentiated from other members of society.

6.4 MANNER AND LOCATION OF BURIAL

Grave goods indicate few distinctions between children of different ages. All were considered socialised and eligible for 'typical' burial treatment. However, within the Eastern necropolis at least, the location of burials and the container within which the body was placed changed with age. Childhood identities were therefore not suppressed, but accentuated, in this aspect of burial.

Bruyère interpreted five burial types, which remain cited in modern literature. However, these are problematic and should not be understood as indicative of five stages of life. The problems stem from Bruyère's preconceptions. He distinguished children, adolescents, and adults, but this was grounded in modern age categories. He also suggested that both adolescents and adults were buried in coffins; this assumes that adolescents and adults were understood as different categories of individual, but buried similarly. The simpler explanation is that 'adolescence' as we would understand it—a discrete stage between child and adult— did not exist. Rather, all those buried in coffins were considered 'adult' from a social perspective.

Considering Bruyère's descriptions of Eastern necropolis burials (Appendix 2), his interpretations were based partly on the evidence, but partly also his assumptions regarding grave goods, as discussed above. There are more sensitive ways to understand this evidence. Rather than pre-assuming age/sex related patterns and fitting the evidence to those, we should begin with the manner of burial, and relate this to osteology and other evidence where possible. In other words, what kinds of bodies are buried with certain kinds of material, and in certain ways (Fahlander 2008)?

Fig. 14 shows the Eastern necropolis with burials distinguished by type. As is expanded upon below, the age of individuals generally increases up the hill, with those at the base some of the youngest (1373, 1374) and elderly near the top (1379, 1382, 1386, 1389). This has long been recognised. However, the middle of the hill is a relative mix of ages. Rather than a formally controlled system, this suggests an informal understanding of space use. There are unlikely to have been markers formally segregating areas by age, and so some irregularity and overlap is expected.
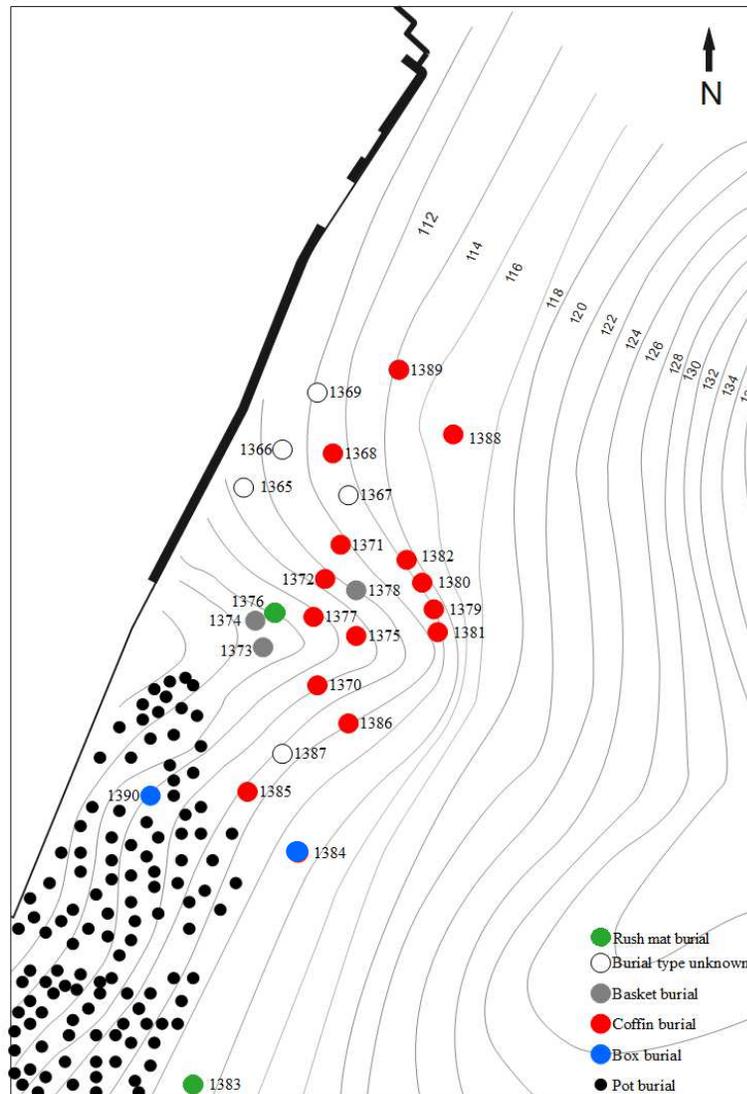
FIG. 14: EASTERN NECROPOLIS GRAVES COLOURED BY BURIAL TYPE

Burial location possibly had ritual connotations, given Qurnet Marai's natural pyramidal shape. However, it also possibly reflects 'pragmatic' importance. Those buried higher up the hill required extra exertion to be carried, demonstrating greater effort put into the burial—a social 'respect' reflecting age within the community. Other evidence also suggests that mortuary decisions were pragmatic. Although the hill-slope faces West, and Egyptian burials typically followed an East-West orientation, the burials were not aligned to any particular pattern (Fig. 15). It seems that direction was informed by the landscape, following the slope contours. This is paralleled at the Southern wadi at Amarna, where burials were also possibly topographically motivated, following the wadi's slope (Kemp 2010: 15). Indeed, pragmatism

was present in mortuary practice for all of society. Unexpected adult deaths also created a need to improvise, such as the woman in grave 1352 buried in a coffin far too large to have been tailor-made (Bruyère 1937a: 105-6).
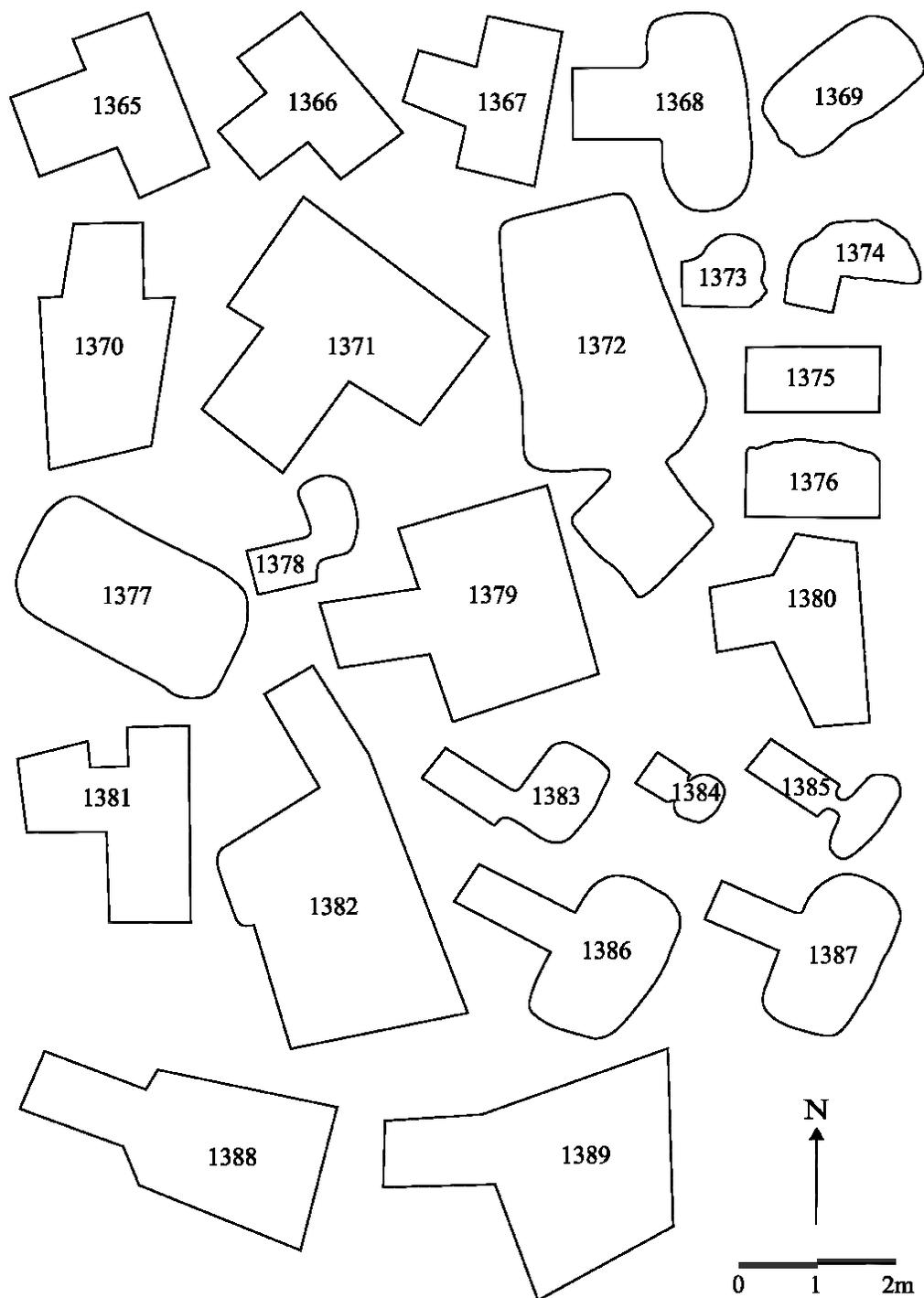
FIG. 15: ORIENTATION OF EASTERN NECROPOLIS BURIALS (AFTER BRUYÈRE 1937B)

Considering the evidence, it is suggested here that the Eastern necropolis was indeed conceptualised as 'areas' reflected by burial type. However, rather than five types as Bruyère proposed, the evidence is interpreted as showing three major areas, each with a burial 'type': coffin burials; basket, mat and box burials; and pots. Rather than understanding 'mat' (Bruyère type 2), 'wicker basket' (type 3) and 'box' (type 4) burials as separate categories, each with its own significance, they are argued to be different manifestations of the same idea, namely burial in 'non-coffins'.

It is further suggested that these three burial types correlate to three social groupings: stillborns and newborns (pots); infants, by which are meant pre-weaned individuals ('non-coffins'); children and adults (coffins). Admittedly, as few burials overall were recorded, and more coffins than others, the pattern is based on limited evidence, and the manner of burials 1365-8 is unclear because the tombs were pillaged.[44] However, the following discussion aims to justify this interpretation. It explores specifically the burials of infants, older children and adults; those of newborns in pots receive extended treatment in the following Chapter.

Such an understanding broadly matches textual evidence. There are no attested words for sub-periods within childhood because they did not exist. Similarly, there was no adolescence, as the beginning of puberty signalled the beginning of adulthood. By adolescence, a person is already biologically mature, and as the child was expected to participate actively in social life from an early age, there was no need for a liminal period where responsibilities gradually accrued. In this way, after a threshold of infancy, children of all ages were buried in the same manner.

Let us first consider infancy. An infant-child distinction includes one more major age-grade than is suggested by vocabulary, where only words for 'child' (ʿḏd/šri) and 'adult' (s/s.t) were employed—unless we re-consider the distinction between ʿḏd and ʿḏd šri in Chapter 4. It is also not necessarily reflected by grave goods, as both basket and coffin burials were furnished with similar material. However, although grave goods largely show consistency, it was discussed earlier that basket and coffin burials varied in both the amount and quality of provisioning. This suggests an informal level of differentiation.

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[44] Based on the size and nature of these tombs (shaft and chamber rather than a simple pit) they are likely to have been coffin burials. However, although a relationship between tomb size/complexity and burial nature generally holds true, it is not a universal rule. For example, coffin burial 1377 was simply one pit, yet basket burial 1378 had both a shaft and chamber.

Although parallels must be used cautiously, studies of other cultures suggest that a regular feature is a distinction between infant and child, with the threshold occurring at the point of weaning (Fahlander 2012: 20). It is not unreasonable to suggest that weaning similarly formed the boundary between infant and child at Deir el-Medina. Whilst socially understood, this threshold would have been individually variable. In ancient societies, it could have been anywhere from age 1 to 3; as discussed in Chapter 4, an age of around 2-3 seems to have been typical in ancient Egypt.

This age of transition can perhaps be corroborated osteologically, by extrapolating age at death from height. When possible, Bruyère recorded the length of bodies, and so data is available. Table 1 displays estimated ages for Eastern necropolis burials, using World Health Organisation (W.H.O) growth charts (W.H.O.: 2013).[45] Methodologically, this is imperfect; modern age/height calculations cannot completely be overlaid onto past populations, where people were generally shorter (for problems with estimating ancient Egyptian heights see Wilfong 2013: 298-9). Indeed, even across an individual's life height will vary, generally decreasing with age, and so the height of even fully preserved skeletons can only be estimated within margins of error. As such, this exercise is intended only to provide a rough estimate of ages.[46]

Two further methodological principles inform Table 1. Firstly, as this exercise is intended to find the youngest potential ages for each burial type, estimates for coffin burials do not include those where the body was confidently labelled as elderly by Bruyère. Secondly, in certain cases, only the length of the container was provided, not the body inside. In the case of coffins, the body would typically be shorter than this; however, with basket and box burials, the container was typically smaller than the body, as it was not made-to-fit. In these cases, since body length cannot reasonably be established, the length of the container has been used. It must therefore be borne in mind that such coffin burials provide a greater height (*i.e.* older age estimate), and boxes/baskets a lesser (*i.e.* younger) estimate than was probably the case.

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[45] The following analysis includes only Eastern necropolis evidence, in large part because its interments were clearly defined; as discussed above, Western necropolis burials often included mass or later interments, and so the relationship between body and location/manner of burial is less clear.

[46] To account for these problems, estimates are taken between the 15th and 85th percentiles, as for this exercise it is perhaps more useful to show a reasonable range of ages within the bounds of a given height, rather than a specific, median age (the 50th percentile). The 15th percentile means that, at a given age, 15% of a population are below this height, and similarly for the 85th percentile.

Burial	Height	Estimated age (by modern comparisons)
Baskets		
1373	0.8m	14-18 months
1374	0.5m (basket length)	0-1 month
1378	0.5m (basket length)	0-1 month
Boxes		
1384	0.6m (box length)	2-4 months
1390	0.8m	1 year (Bruyère 1937b: 202)
Mats		
1383	Unrecorded	'Nouveau-né' (Bruyère 1937b: 188)
Coffins		
1368	1.25m (coffin length)	6 years 8 months – 8 years 9 months
1371	1.59m	Anywhere from 12 years 6 months – 14 years 9 months +
1372	1.3m	7 years 6 months – 9 years 9 months
	1.14m	5 years – 6 years 9 months
	0.99m	2 years 11 months – 4 years
1375	0.85m	1 year 6 months – 2 years 4 months
1380	1.72m	Anywhere from 14 years +
1381	1.53m	Anywhere from 11 years 6 months –13 years 8 months +
1382	1.58m	Anywhere from 12 years 2 months – 14 years 6 months +
	1.6m	Anywhere from 12 years 6 months – 14 years 9 months +
1385	0.95m (coffin length)	2 years 5 months – 3 years 5 months
1388	1.62m	Anywhere from 12 years 8 months +
	1.75m	Anywhere from 14 years +

TABLE 1: ESTIMATES OF BIOLOGICAL AGE FROM HEIGHT FOR EASTERN NECROPOLIS BURIALS

The youngest coffin burials are around 1m, or 2-3 years (1372, 1375, 1385). This increases to around 1.5-1.7m, where, without information about skeletal age, the individual could be

anywhere from 11-12 to adult. Those in boxes, baskets and mats, although a smaller sample, are all younger than any coffin burials, mostly within their first year. This is compatible with other box burials from the site; the body in grave 1159A (0.76m) was estimated at 8-12 months (Matiegková and Matiegka 1931: 327), and the body in the West enclosure wall at 14-15 months (Bonnet and Valbelle 1976: 328). One mat (1383) apparently contained a newborn, but for this we must rely on Bruyère's assessment, as it cannot be corroborated independently. Furthermore, the age of those in boxes, nets and baskets seems to overlap considerably. This strengthens the suggestion that they are all different manifestations of the same burial 'type'.

Although the youngest coffin burials display some variation, all apparently fall within the expected age of weaning, 2-3 years, although unfortunately isotope analysis cannot be undertaken to confirm this. It is hoped that future bio-archaeological and osteological work, such as that by Austin (2014) will enable such avenues to be exploted.

Variation could be explained by individual differences in development and weaning age. Given this, it is proposed that those in baskets, boxes and mats were considered what this thesis terms 'infants', and the point of weaning was the point at which the individual became a fuller member of society, and buried in a coffin just as other members of society. This is not to say that infants were not socialised; they were clearly part of society, as their burials also contained grave goods. However, as discussed above, these were typically fewer and cruder than in coffin burials. It seems that the transition from 'non-coffin' to coffin burial therefore also indicated a change in socialisation. This is not unusual; in many societies, infants are understood as not yet having full social personhood (Lally and Ardren 2008: 63; Sadig 2014: 12), and considered 'liminal' or 'unfinished'.

That infants were considered members of society does not seem to have been influenced by their individual condition. Several children in the Eastern necropolis bore signs of illnesses, sometimes serious enough to be the cause of death. The body in 1390 was highly deformed; that in 1373 had severe scoliosis; and that in 1375 suffered from hydrocephalus (Bruyère 1937b: 139-40, 202). In life, their condition would surely have affected their social roles and abilities, though there is little research into social attitudes towards childhood disability (see Baines 1987: 95 for its possible influence on childhood names). Nonetheless, it seems that these children were not 'excluded' from normative burial practices. Graves 1373 and 1375 were furnished with the expected ceramics and food, and the body in 1390 was buried in a

box bearing (presumably) its name. Care and investment went into these burials, as any other (Meskell 1994a: 39).

A final important aspect of burial differentiation is body positioning. Patterns or anomalies specific to certain groups or individuals often reflect aspects of social identity (Pader 1982). Coffin burials were typically on their backs, with hands on stomach or pubis; some bodies, such as 1380 and 1381, alternatively had one arm by their side. Unfortunately, this cannot realistically be compared with other basket burials given the small sample size published. Bruyère (1937b: 13) noted that basket burials were often on their backs with hands on stomach, similar to coffin burials; that said, it is perhaps noteworthy that in both graves 1383 and 1384, a mat and box burial respectively, the individuals unusually had their heads turned North.

Therefore, an infant-child transition was marked by manner of burial. It must however be noted that burials show a clear differentiation in burial container, which suggests a stark distinction between age-grades. In reality, we would not necessarily expect that the infant-child transition was sudden; Marshall (2015b) discusses how weaning occurred over an extended period. Similarly, an average weaning age of 3 may have reflected ideals rather than reality, with weaning ages varying on an individual basis. That infant burials did not require a purpose-built coffin perhaps explains the seemingly multiple types of infant burial containers, as they reflect individual discretion in the social condition of the deceased, and in finding an appropriate container. Perhaps it was simply the broader conception of using a repurposed rather than specially-made container that mattered.

It is also possible that, whilst basket/box/mat and coffin burials seem superficially different, they should instead be seen as different expressions of a continuum wherein all socialised individuals were buried in 'coffins'—meaning an enclosed container—by concept, but this took the form of baskets, boxes or mats for younger individuals, as they were cheaper and easier to source, being re-purposed from daily life. Transactions such as O.DEM 73 (Janssen 1975a: 10) show that coffins were a considerable investment. Especially for infants, who had a higher mortality-rate than adults, multiple coffins were prohibitively expensive. Therefore,

perhaps neither grave goods nor burial containers should be seen in terms of discrete social categories, rather a continuum of practice involving all members of society.[47]

After infancy, progression to adulthood was less formally marked, with a gradual continuum in amount and quality of goods but no differentiation in burial container. This contrasts with many other societies, where the child-adult transition is as formally marked as infant-child, usually at puberty. Puberty can occur anywhere from 10-14 for girls and 12-16 for boys, and so personal development would dictate when an individual passed to the next stage because this could be observed physically. Again, the transition is unlikely to have been sudden; cultural parallels suggest that the pubescent were considered liminal, hovering between child and adult (Beaumont 1984: 85; Thedéen 2008: 91).

Unfortunately, we cannot at present explore more subtle differences between child and adult coffin burials. Osteologically, based on height alone—the only available information—we cannot tell which bodies were adolescent or adult. Again, future osteological work has the potential to nuance our understanding further. From the available evidence, it appears that society considered children and adults of the same 'stage' in life, but with presumably increasing levels of socialisation as the individual became more involved with society. However, it is possible that burials simply do not reflect what was a more nuanced process of aging and 'becoming'. Vocabulary does suggest a social distinction between child (ꜥḏd, šri) and adult (s 'man', s.t 'woman'), and Bruyère (1937b: 7) noted that adult coffins were individually named whereas those of sub-adults were not, and so it is possible that subtler social processes took place which cannot now be recovered confidently. Based on textual conclusions, and the emphasis on social majority versus minority, possibly the threshold at which the individual became 'adult' was marriage and starting a family. This itself was still to an extent defined by puberty, as it formed the beginning of sexual maturity. The idea of socially-marking the life cycle will be discussed in the following Chapter.

One final caveat is that whilst these conclusions hold for the Eastern necropolis, the Western necropolis was in contemporaneous use, and this may have been structured along different social principles. Unfortunately, with the level of available evidence, this cannot be explored,

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[47] In this regard, there are several attested words for 'coffin' at Deir el-Medina (Janssen 1975a: 213). It would be interesting to know whether boxes and baskets used for burials were also referred to as 'coffins' in a mortuary context, or by their original word.

though if the box burial found in the Western enclosure wall did come from the Western necropolis, it demonstrates a similar manner of treatment for infants.

6.4.1 HOUSE BURIALS

In house SE6, a child was buried underfloor; the reasoning behind this also needs exploring. David (1986: 137-8) suggests that house burial was originally a foreign practice. However, it is known from other sites across Egyptian history (Petrie 1890; Peet and Woolley 1929: 17, 85; Frankfort and Pendlebury 1933: 43; von Pilgrim 1996; Adams 1998; Wegner 1998: 303; Stevens 2006: 209-10) and is occasionally still practiced in modern Egypt (Zillhardt 2009: 70). Intra-house burials are actually found across many ancient civilisations, typically for infants and the very young, but older children are also known (Gowland 2001). However, house burials usually represent a small proportion of a society's deceased young. Arguably, they were therefore selected to represent something other than, or extra to, the reality of infant death. Children were not buried under houses because they were insignificant, but because they had a special kind of significance that expressed itself through the "domestication" of death (Scott 1999: 98). Although presumably within the bounds of social acceptability, house burials were a familial decision. They are unlikely to have been publicly observed; the house represented family, and was not the arena of competitive social display (Lebegyev 2009: 28). Such burials arguably therefore offer insight into personal belief and familial expression (Birney and Doak 2011: 47).

However, a universal mentality behind house burials cannot be assumed. Interpretations vary. Several stress ritual explanations. It has been suggested that many societies viewed the infant spirit as still existing, especially if it died before passing a significant milestone. Those buried within houses therefore acted as a symbol of rebirth, or awaiting rebirth into another body (Humphreys 1983: 103-4; Pinch 1994: 132; Scott 1999: 105, 117; Gottlieb 2004; Laubenheimer 2004).[48] Szpakowska (2008: 34) suggests that, not being members of the adult world, infants may have been seen as closer to the divine, their liminal status offering a channel for spiritual communication. Indeed, in certain cultures, stillborns were apparently deified (Harris 2000: 9; Wileman 2005: 95-117). Alternatively, negative interpretations have been proposed; infant death was seen as an unnatural break with order, requiring special rites to placate and control the angry spirit (Rawson 2003: 358; Moore 2009: 46). Other researchers focus on emotional

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[48] Apparently, this tradition continued in Egypt until at least Petrie's time (Reeves 1992: 20; Meskell 1994a: 40).

reactions to infant deaths, such as intra-house burial as a way of physically protecting the child (Harris 2000: 16; Moore 2009: 45-6). Conversely, house burials have been interpreted as reflecting wider concerns, as an act of familial remembrance serving collective memory and strengthening claims to a particular place (Scott 1999: 108). Generally, whether the reasoning behind house burial is seen as positive (protection of the spirit) or negative (infants representing restless and potentially dangerous spirits) reflects the researcher's own interpretation of parental attitudes towards infants in the past.

The location of burial within the house may also be significant. In reports, most infants are apparently found in 'general domestic rooms', but this probably reflects difficulties in archaeologically identifying room use (Moore 2009: 41). Interpretation of location again varies; burial within walls or close to the hearth—the centre of the household—could be to protect the child, or alternatively to contain and control it (Moore 2009: 45-6). Equally, burial in liminal areas such as doorways could be significant, possibly incorporating the practicalities of continually walking 'over' the burial. At Ashkelon, intra-house burials were mainly in high-traffic common areas, where household tasks and industrial activities were carried out. It has been suggested that this also reflected a type of liminality, using spaces which reflected the transition from public to private domain (Birney and Doak 2011: 33). In certain cases, however, houses were chosen as a location for burial not during use-life, but after abandonment (von Pilgrim 1996; Gobeil 2009: 167). These had different significance to burials in houses still occupied by (presumably) the same family.

Another important element is who buried the infant. In ancient Greece, it seems to have been women (Houby-Nielsen 2000: 152), but we have no comparative data for Egypt. We cannot simply assume female responsibility due to the domestic context. As only two child house burials are known from Deir el-Medina, wider conclusions cannot be drawn. Bruyère gave no indication of the age of the child in house SE6. Although the house was founded in the 19th Dynasty, we cannot even be certain of the relationship between the burial and house occupancy.

Although they may have been considered spiritually liminal, deceased infants are incapable of becoming ancestors themselves (Scott 1999: 102). Given Egyptian concerns with propagating the family and ancestor cults, is it possible that this child was seen as a 'failure' in some sense; or was the reason behind house burial more positive, as the interpretations above illustrate? Or, alternatively, could this burial be a rare case of ethnic differences being materialised, and that this child and those who buried it were not Egyptian but some of the many Nubians or

Levantines at Deir el-Medina, deliberately marking their differentiation through burial custom—an act which might also explain the otherwise unusual choice of material accompanying the burial? All interpretations are feasible; none can be proved. Equally, as discussed above, we must retain the possibility that this burial originally lay in the surrounding necropolis, and was incorporated into a later house. That houses were state-owned and leased, rather than the permanent property of a particular family, does weaken the likelihood of some of the possible reasonings behind deliberate house burial, such as collective remembrance or marking ownership of space.

6.5 CONCLUSIONS

Much of what mortuary evidence from Deir el-Medina is believed to show, and how it has previously been used as evidence for social organisation, has been based on misconceptions and assumptions about the Egyptian life-cycle. This has created the impression that mortuary practice was far more formally graded than in reality.

A thorough re-examination of the evidence has shown that, after infancy, 'age grades' within childhood were not strictly marked or defined materially. All members of society were treated as 'Egyptian', buried in the same manner, and given much the same mortuary material. However, social difference between adults and children was still acknowledged subtly, by the amount and quality of grave goods provided. In this sense, mortuary practice reflected a life-cycle conceptualised as a continuum. This is similar to the conclusion garnered from textual evidence, which suggested that there were no real age-grades defined by biological development within childhood. All children were marked by the same vocabulary, and by the same concept, that of social minority. Both sources therefore suggest that society at Deir el-Medina was defined simply by adult and sub-adult. Within this, however, mortuary practices show room for individual attitudes towards, and treatment of, the deceased. This reflects that, in a society which did not record chronological age, progression through the life-cycle was more informally marked, and so open to individual variation.

That said, comparing textual and mortuary evidence is problematic. Texts present evidence of childhood across a range of contexts; burials present only one, the context of death. For instance, burials correlate less strongly with the evidence as presented specifically of economic roles and identities; there is no apparent distinction in treatment that could be

understood as matching those of *mnḥ* as opposed to *rmṯ-is.t* status. This suggests that whilst one's economic identity played a large role in defining them in life, it did not replace, or disguise, their more general social position of 'adult' or 'minor', male or female, and was not the primary motivator for their treatment in death.

The main conflict between texts and burials is that the clearest mortuary evidence dates to Dynasty 18, and textual records largely from Dynasties 19-21. However, as the two sources paint largely compatible pictures, that of a society with few clearly-defined age grades, this is perhaps not a problem. Although burial practices changed after Dynasty 18, it does not seem to indicate a change in how children were perceived as members of society. Children and adults still received similar mortuary treatment, even if the nature of this treatment changed. This suggests that the same broad ideas about childhood were present at Deir el-Medina across its history. The change to family burials affected the mortuary identity of all members of society, not just children. If anything, both 'periods' of burial practice correlate to different aspects of the textual evidence; Dynasty 18 individual burials match texts in that they demonstrate no clear age-grades, and family burials from Dynasty 19 onwards match texts in that they demonstrate how identity was associated primarily with family and lineage, and that the child was defined through placement within the social (familial) unit.

Where texts and burials do not align precisely is with infancy. Textually, the same vocabulary was applied to children of all ages, unless we see significance in the distinction between *ꜥḏd* and *ꜥḏd šri*. Burials, however, show that infants received differentiated practices from other children in terms of container, location and material culture, perhaps indicating an ongoing rather than completed process of socialisation. However, this difference in sources might also mean that attitudes towards infancy changed from Dynasty 19 onwards; this cannot be explored further with current evidence. It is unusual that infant burials occur less frequently than coffins; peaks in infant mortality would be expected both at birth, and weaning.

Mortuary evidence therefore suggests a society based on three 'grades'—infant, child, adult, with the first two more clearly differentiated than the latter two. However, as discussed above, it is possible that the difference between basket and coffin burials does not reflect formal social divisions, but slightly different manifestations of the same general idea, 'burial in containers', with differences dependant on pragmatic concerns of expenditure. In this way, conflict with textual evidence would be lessened.

The other major source of differentiation, which this Chapter has not dealt with, is the reasoning behind infants of apparently similar age being buried in different containers—some in pots, some in baskets/boxes/mats—and in different parts of the Eastern necropolis. This will be explored in the following Chapter.

More broadly, the practices at Deir el-Medina—and specifically the idea that pragmatism lay behind what at first glance seems like more significant choices in burial practices—can be observed elsewhere and in other periods. Infants were buried in boxes at Middle Kingdom Lahun (Petrie 1890: 24), and pot burials have been found across Egypt. Furthermore, a young man was found buried in a mat in the courtyard of the tomb of *Sn-Mw.t* (Winlock 1932: 22). Although older in date than the mat burials at Deir el-Medina, it demonstrates the same underlying concerns of providing appropriate treatment within wealth constraints. In these respects, concerns at Deir el-Medina reflect concerns in Egypt more widely.

It must however be noted that the number of children found at Deir el-Medina is still far fewer than mortality rates and the site's occupation history would suggest. This implies that either a minority are preserved, or that many children were disposed of in other locations. Either way, it leaves a very limited sample from which wider conclusions can be drawn, as this Chapter has demonstrated.

7. Rites of passage

The evidence discussed in the previous Chapters suggested that, whilst there were few 'age-grades' through which individuals passed, there were broad notions of social difference between 'children' and 'adults', which were nuanced further depending on context. Burials in particular suggest how progression through life was understood at Deir el-Medina. However, despite showing differentiation in death, burials do not indicate how these thresholds were marked socially in life.

This Chapter discusses the lived experience of an individual's development, and evidence for social marking of transitions by rites of passage. This uses predominantly artistic, but also some mortuary, evidence. Firstly, however, it will problematise the use of artistic sources for this purpose.

7.1 Art and rites of passage

The 'rite of passage' is most famously associated with van Gennep (1960[1909]). It describes the process by which a person moves between social worlds, and the ritual actions accompanying this. Rites of passage mark transitional periods, with birth, marriage and death among the most universal examples. Van Gennep describes the process as tripartite: separation from the previous world (preliminal), a transitional phase (liminal), and incorporation into the new world (postliminal).[49]

Little is known of Egyptian rites of passage. Scholarship mainly explores puberty and the transition from child to adolescent. A core element of this discussion is circumcision. Several Old Kingdom tomb scenes depict boys undergoing the operation (Bailey 1996: 20-1; Nunn 1996: 169), traditionally assumed to have been a puberty rite (de Wit 1972; Janssen and Janssen 1990: 90-7; Bailey 1996). However, evidence for circumcision is contentious. It is uncertain how widely it was practiced, and it is now suggested that it may not relate to

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[49] To provide an example, University graduation can be seen as a rite of passage from student to graduate. Prospective graduands are isolated from their families (separation), participate in a ceremony where they are between student and graduate (transition), and emerge as graduates with diplomas and other physical markers, and often acknowledgement of their status by a senior figure (incorporation).

puberty, but priestly initiation and purification (Willems 2013; Booth 2015: 140-2). Certainly, bodies from Deir el-Medina did not seem to be circumcised (Strouhal and Vyhnánek 1980: 25-67), and scenes of the operation are often in ritual or royal contexts. Therefore, it was possibly only practiced in certain ritual contexts, or for certain classes, rather than universally.

Partly, the lack of knowledge concerning rites of passage is due to the omission of younger children from much evidence; textual and artistic sources prioritise adults and older children. However, as discussed in the previous Chapter, the existence of a liminal period of adolescence is itself a modern assumption. Based on evidence so far, the transition should perhaps instead be understood as from non-adult to adult, though puberty likely played a role. For early childhood, little is known, although this is the stage of greatest physical change and might therefore provide scope for rites of passage otherwise omitted from formal sources.

Rites of passage are typically marked physically. This may simply be through the biological changes which herald their onset, or materially. Despite lack of knowledge about Egyptian rites of passage, certain material elements were common to children within artistic depictions, including the sidelock of hair and jewellery such as earrings (Robins 2008, 2015: 126); their removal formed part of the transition to adulthood. Similarly, it has been suggested that puberty is when oracular amulets (Edwards 1960) were removed, similar to Roman *bullae* (Montserrat 1993: 224). These markers reflect the personhood of the individual. Broadly speaking, individuals of different stages of life are invested with different personhood, and this is often displayed visually through attributes such as costume, hairstyle or body modification, or by specific material culture (Beaumont 1994: 85). Therefore, art is a fruitful source for understanding the life cycle and rites of passage, as these attributes, recognised by society as a whole, provide a visual shorthand for 'labelling' individuals.

Egyptian formal art, being conservative in its motifs, provides limited scope for analysis. This discussion instead focusses on what is termed 'non-formal' art, though this definition is imperfect—more specifically, the figured ostraca found in their hundreds at the site (Schäfer 1916; Schiaparelli 1923; Werbrouck 1932, 1953; Vandier d'Abbadie 1936, 1937, 1946, 1959; Keimer 1941; Brunner-Traut 1956, 1979; Peterson 1974). Figured ostraca are broadly divisible into two types: copies of, or preparation for, scenes paralleled in tombs and temples; and scenes unparalleled in mortuary art. Although figured ostraca may depict formal motifs, it is argued that they can be understood separately from formal art itself. The Egyptian word for

ostracon, *n(ꜣ)ḏr*, simply means 'flake' or 'sherd'. Today they are viewed as fine art and displayed as such, but this reflects modern attitudes.

Copies of formal motifs were discussed in Chapter 5, in the context of crafts training. Regarding other compositions, there are two schools of thought. The first is that they represent daily life devoid of any ritual symbolism, and are therefore indicative of personal concerns (Keimer 1941; Peterson 1974: 44; Brunner-Traut 1979: 4). The second is that even simple 'daily life' scenes have symbolic overtones. For example, O.Brussels E.6769 depicts a girl catching a bird; Capart (1941: 190) and Brunner-Traut (1979: 5) argue that it represents sexuality and fertility. Similarly, O.Louvre E.17117 depicts a boy crying as a pig eats the grain he is guarding; Vandier d'Abbadie provides a complex interpretation whereby the scene is symbolic, reflecting either a religious motif of monkeys striking pigs (1940: 482), or a satire of market scenes of buyers and vendors (1940: 487-8).

The correct interpretation may be somewhere between. Many 'daily life' motifs can be interpreted as containing religious messages, and certain of these were codified. These may have been ritualistic on some level, although we may be over-emphasising the level of ritual motivation. Regardless, it is argued that such motifs are still a viable source for considering social realities. Scenes may draw on visual 'archetypes' referring to ritual concepts—for example, depictions of female and child sequestering might reference Isis nursing Horus (Bruyère 1923: 124)—but they still reflect elements of the daily realities of the world around Deir el-Medina. Scenes needed to be visually comprehensible to audiences, in order to effectively communicate information. Therefore, motifs on figured ostraca referenced phenomena and experiences drawn from the daily world, in order to be understandable.

The conclusion to this is that figured ostraca depicting children can potentially be used to explore how their appearance, and markers such as hair and costume, reflect the identities of those of different genders and ages. Egyptology has long used the appearance of figures in formal art to draw conclusions about identity; the principle is no different here.

However, a brief note must go towards to Egyptian representations of children. Whilst it is often stated that Egyptian children were simply portrayed as 'miniature adults', there were distinct pictorial conventions. Their proportions were often unrealistic; they were shown smaller scale; or with visual indicators such as nudity (Harrington 2007: 52-3). However, as discussed in Chapter 4, iconography typically attributed to 'children', such as the sidelock of

hair, was sometimes also used as a visual metaphor for other groups considered sub-adult or socially minor. There were not therefore markers just of childhood, but of subordinate social status (Robins 1999: 58-9; Baines 2007: 26). Childhood and its visual attributes were actually part of a broader social category of 'minority'.

The same extended meaning is also true of the very hieroglyphic symbol 'child'. An illustration of this is the term *nmḥ* [hieroglyphs] (David 2010: 91-3). Although originally meaning 'orphan'—a meaning still visible on O.Berlin 10627—by the New Kingdom it had broadened to the idea of (in David's words) the "simple citizen", both sharing at heart the concept of being independent, whether positively or negatively. When used to mean 'citizen' in Deir el-Medina texts, *nmḥ* was often qualified by the 'child' determinative, as on O.Ashmolean 252 (Černý: 31.53), O.DEM 582 (KRI V: 575-6) and O.Leipzig 3 (Černý and Gardiner 1957: Pl. 33.1). This was partly orthographic, influenced by the word's original meaning, but possibly also semantic. Although the *nmḥ* could have some agency in legal affairs, David concludes (2010: 92) that they were 'voiceless'—"not specifically poor, not enslaved, but uninfluential and in need of a representative…the *nmḥ.w n pȝ tȝ n Pr-ʿȝ* [The '*nmḥ* of the land of Pharaoh', as found on P.Ashmolean 1945.97] is the *infans* of the land of Pharaoh, the simple Egyptian citizen of whom the King takes care". In this way, the idea of minority was encapsulated by the visual signifier 'child'.

7.2 FROM BIRTH TO INFANCY

Birth itself is a rite of passage, with a physical 'cutting' away from the womb. Burials at Deir el-Medina, however, also reflect a change in treatment of the individual at some point soon after birth; as Chapter 6 showed, 'newborns' were found in both pots and other containers, in different areas of the Eastern necropolis. We must consider what distinguished the two. To do so, the following discussion will present background context—what is known of Egyptian attitudes to babies and infants, and when life was considered to begin—before discussing reasons for differentiation in infant burial treatments and potential social thresholds related to this.

Pot burials containing bodies were all of newborns or foetuses (Bruyère n.d. (a): 2; 1937b: 12). Alongside these were burials of placentas, viscera and other birthing material, also in pots. As such, the label 'infant cemetery' is misleading; it should perhaps be re-named the

'birthing cemetery'. However, basket burials 1374, 1378 and 1383 also contained those small enough to be newborns. What reasoning lay behind the differentiation in container and location; is it that those in pots died during gestation or birth? Pot burials far outnumber all other types, which would suggest an unusually large number of stillbirths. However, it is not clear whether all pot burials are contemporaneous with the Eastern necropolis. Given the lack of datable material, it could have continued in use throughout Dynasties 18-21, which might explain the large number of burials. Nor is it clear from the publications exactly how many pots contained bodies as opposed to viscera and birthing material.

The Eastern necropolis was organised not just vertically, but also North-South, with pot burials clustered towards the Southern end. Meskell (1999a: 143) argues that this was in contrast to the East-West orientation of the Western necropolis, implying a deliberate ritual choice. However, it is more likely to have been practical, informed by the placement of the original settlement. Qurnet Marai itself is aligned East-West, but the enclosure wall of the village prevented these newborns—who would presumably otherwise have occupied the base of the hill—being buried in the same alignment. Their burials therefore had to extend southwards. A similar situation—a dedicated area for infant burials which was affected by spatial constraints—occurred at 'Ayn Asil (Gobeil 2009: 169).

However, this itself assumes that Qurnet Marai forms one cohesive necropolis. As mentioned previously, infants are often viewed as not fully socialised. This often manifests in burial treatment different to other members of society, or in locations away from communal cemeteries (Pearce 1999, 2001; Scott 1991; Rawson 2003: 344-6; Lebegyev 2009: 28). The previous Chapter showed that this does not hold true for infants generally, who were buried in alignment with, and in the same manner as, older children and adults. However, compared to other burials, stillborns and neonates were discretely bounded, even if near other age groups (Fig. 13). The reasoning behind these burials, and what they reveal about social attitudes, requires consideration. Were newborns considered part of society like infants, or were they different and potentially 'non-persons'—and if so, at what point did they 'join' society?

Today, there are disagreements over whether life begins at birth. It is similarly possible that life in ancient societies was considered to begin before birth (Lally and Ardren 2008: 64). Foetuses, at least divine, were thought to feel emotion—a Late Period inscribed statue base

describes Horus feeling fear in the womb (Klasens 1952: 55).[50] Furthermore, a word *wnn.w* is attested as referring specifically to the child in the womb. Its sole attestation is within the 18th Dynasty medical text P.Ebers, spell 206 (Wreszinski 1913: 60). However, it is derived from the ubiquitous root *wnn* 'to be', meaning simply 'one who is', and so it was plausibly a commonly known word. Its implication is that even foetuses were considered living entities.[51] Similarly, the verb *iwr* had meanings of both to 'conceive' and 'receive', suggesting that the woman received the child from the male, already fully-formed (Roth 2000: 189), and therefore that the foetus was considered an embodied individual (Meskell 2002: 81; Filer 1998; Feucht 2004: 44-6).

However, there is a difference between embodiment and social personhood. Egyptian burials provide contradictory evidence in this regard. Although often buried in 'abnormal' locations away from other members of society, foetuses and newborns have frequently also been found buried in graves or even mummified (Leek 1972: 21; Filer 1998: 393-5; Meskell 2000a: 429), which could be seen as a deliberate attempt at burial akin to other members of society. However, given the length of ancient Egyptian history, it is problematic to try and craft one general narrative from disparate examples across time. This is especially true given the incomplete data-set; despite high levels of infant mortality, preserved graves represent a fraction of the deceased. Furthermore, it is possible that regional distinctions in practice reflect locally variable traditions.

Possibly 20% or more of newborns in past societies died within their first year (Filer 1998: 391); such high mortality-rates may have prevented parents becoming attached to their child until it was considered to have 'survived' (Stoodley 2000: 459). The main bias in interpreting newborn burials is the researcher's opinion of how emotionally invested parents were towards infants in societies with higher mortality-rates (on the influence of researcher's subjective

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[50] However, this source should perhaps not be extrapolated from more widely. In ancient Egypt, both the King and divinities were often hyperbolically presented as omnipotent and omniscient even whilst 'in the egg' (Spieser 2007), and so it is unclear to what extent this was a religio-royal prerogative or reflected wider social ideas.

[51] There are also artistic depictions of children in the womb, such as O.Cairo 52074. These depict the unborn through the hieroglyph 𓀔, a fully-formed child. However, Egyptian writing contained few symbols relating to children, which were employed indiscriminately regardless of the specific age of the individual. There was no 'baby' hieroglyph. As such, depictions of children in the womb do not necessarily reflect social values but constraints of the pictorial canon.

interpretations see Geertz 1993[1973]: 345-6). One either sees modern sentiment in the evidence, or complete denial of parental attachment (Harlow and Laurence 2010: 3). The problem is that the same practice can often be interpreted in widely differing ways. For example, pot burials at Deir el-Medina were typically covered with stones; was this to protect the body inside from predators, or was it for the benefit of the living community, to stop predators gathering nearby? It is important not to be influenced by modern attitudes; the underrepresentation of infants in commemoration must in some way reflect an undervaluing of them. However, it is also important not to assume that no emotive response was felt. Lack of formal display cannot be seen as indicative of a lack of personal or familial distress. Even though Roman infants were not formally mourned, Cicero (*Tusculan Disputations* I.93) writes "if it is in the cradle there should not even be a lament. And yet it is from the latter that nature has more cruelly demanded back the gift she had given" (translation after Rawson 2003: 104).

Pot burials are widely attested across Egyptian history (Tristant 2012: 27-32; Power and Tristant 2016). Typically, they contain infants, similar to Deir el-Medina; however, adults are also found. Pot burials must be considered within specific socio-economic contexts, not as a universalising tradition. However, being found across time—despite cultural and religious changes—it has been argued that they reflect traditions outside of state ideology (Kilroe 2014: 217), and therefore reflect personal concerns. There are two typical interpretations of pot burials: they either relate to ritual ideas, such as 'pot as womb', or associations between clay and birth; or they reflect pragmatic choice and lack of investment (Tristant 2012: 33). Can we identify the reasoning at Deir el-Medina?

It is often said that pots were used as burial containers because they were ubiquitous and inexpensive, presenting an economic option for poorer members of a community (Richards 2005: 70). Indeed, they often bear signs of re-use, such as traces of earlier cooking (Tristant 2012: 32). At Deir el-Medina, burial pots were usually of types commonly found as food containers in other graves (Fig. 16; Bruyère 1937b: Fig. 2). It is interesting that everyday wares were chosen rather than pots with more overtly symbolic connotations related to children, such as 'Bes jars'. Pots large enough to hold infants, and decorated with the face of Bes, are known from Dynasty 18 (Charvát 1980: 47). Several were found at Deir el-Medina (Bruyère 1937a: 111-6, 1939: 93-108), some even in graves, such as 1348 (Bruyère 1937a: 111, Fig. 47). However, they were more frequently found in the village itself, possibly involved in household libations (Bruyère 1939: 102, Fig. 35). Infant burials in Bes pots are known from elsewhere, such as Third Intermediate Period Saft el-Henneh (Aston 2009: 71); if

pot burials were ritually informed at Deir el-Medina, it is interesting that these containers were not used. However, given the number of infant burials and extra investment required to make such containers, this may not have been practical.
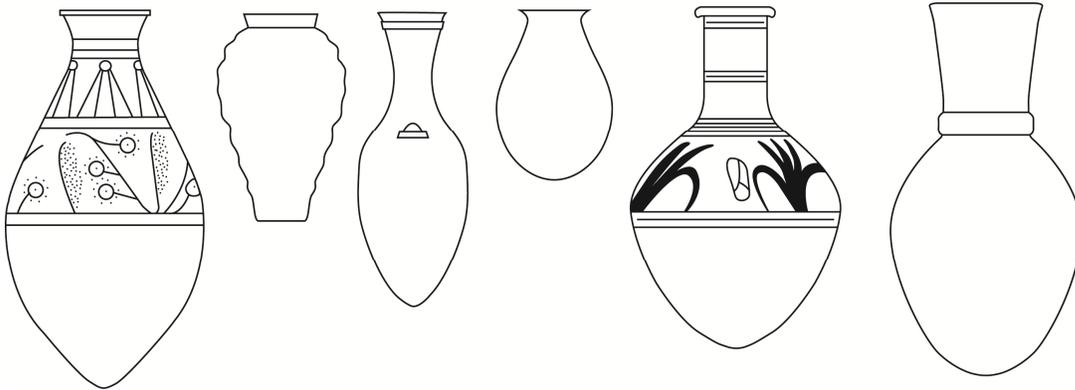
FIG. 16: COMMON TYPES OF POTS USED IN INFANT BURIALS (AFTER BRUYÈRE N.D. (A): 1)

However, we cannot label pot burials as 'cheap', but not do the same for the basket or box burials of older infants. All involved removing the container from circulation. Repurposing a basket for burial is exactly the same idea as with pots, albeit differently expressed; either all held significance, or none did. As some newborns were found in other containers, a conscious decision was made between which container was 'appropriate', based presumably on the social condition of that individual. This is paralleled at other sites, where pots were apparently one of a range of appropriate infant burial containers (Gobeil 2009: 168). Given this, it seems that economic pragmatism cannot have been the only consideration.

An alternative interpretation is that pot burials reflect ritual ideas. The most common ritual interpretation is the 'pot as womb'. Kilroe (2014: 221-2) criticises this in an Egyptian context, arguing that the pots are not usually womb-shaped, and that the idea relies heavily on parallels from African ethnographies, primarily Bantu. However, these arguments are not entirely convincing. Regarding the first, many objects strongly associated with the womb in ancient Egypt were not explicitly womb-shaped, such as the *mni.t* (see Manniche 2006). As for the second, pots are associated with wombs in Bantu culture because pottery making is a female craft, linking procreation, pottery and land fertility (Boeyens *et al.* 2009). Kilroe therefore

argues that the womb-pot analogy is part of a cultural package wherein pots and homes are associated with the female body, a package missing from Egyptian culture. However, this line of reasoning follows exactly the approach cautioned against, assuming a single, normative reasoning behind womb-pot associations and then overlaying this onto other cultures. It is a mistake to take this 'package' in isolation and apply it to cultures where features associated and interwoven with it are absent. In Egypt, pots could have been associated with the womb through separate cultural reasoning.

There is some evidence to suggest an association. Frandsen (2007: 100) argues that both women and tombs were seen as 'containers', permitting creation and regeneration of life respectively, extending to the idea that the tomb and sarcophagus were like a 'womb' wherein rebirth occurred. Indeed, one of the most common words for coffin at Deir el-Medina was *swḥ.t*, 'egg' (Janssen 1975a: 213). Similarly, on P.Salt 825, the womb is depicted as a jar (*št3.t,* possibly from the root *št3* 'hidden/enclosed'); compare the word *šnꜥ*, which had meanings of both 'hidden/enclosed' and 'tomb' (Papazian 2012: 65). Further ideas of womb-as-jar can be seen in the late word *ḳrḥ.t*, Coptic ⲕⲁⲗⲁⲏ, which had both meanings (Sauneron 1961: 116; Manniche 2006: 100). There were apparently therefore Egyptian cultural associations between the womb and other 'containers'.

Possibly related to this are associations between clay and birth. In certain cultures, pot burials are believed to relate to primordial ideas of clay and creation; pots could even be argued to resemble the shapes of pregnant women. In Gaul, newborns have been found buried in pottery workshops (Laubenheimer 2004). At Deir el-Medina, similar ideas can perhaps be seen; a spell on P.Leiden I.348 (Borghouts 1971) recommends that a woman in childbirth wear a *nim n sin*, 'dwarf of clay'. It is possible that the choice of clay is significant, and associated with the birthing process if not creation as a whole; in Egyptian mythology, Khnum created mankind at a potter's wheel. Ideas of '(re)birth' might also explain the occasions of adults found in pottery coffins at some sites (Kroeper 1994: 32).

Another possible significance is associations between infancy and the home. Kilroe (2014: 223) argues that insufficient attention is paid to the container itself in pot burials. The pots used at Deir el-Medina were typically household ware—some decorated, some not, though this does not seem to have been explicitly significant. Whilst these could reflect economic pragmatism, it could also reflect an attempt to 'domesticise' death, as with house burials earlier.

Inevitably, proving the reasoning behind pot burials is impossible without supporting textual evidence. It is quite possible that they had both pragmatic and ritual considerations. Certainly, no infants were buried in specially crafted containers, suggesting a limit to the effort expended. However, a conscious decision was made to bury some infants in pots as opposed to other containers, suggesting an underlying pattern. Similarly, although pot burials are typically considered 'poor', it may need to be considered an act of status in itself to even bury an infant in a more communal setting (Scott 1999: 122), though this would reflect the status of the wider family, not the individual. The idea of 'poor' burials is one that needs further refinement.

Whilst repurposed pot, basket and box burials all to an extent reflect similar processes, one notable difference is the inclusion of grave goods. Pot burials contained none of the mortuary material associated with other infants; the only items found were occasional flint blades (Bruyère 1937b: 12; he unfortunately gives no specific examples). These might suggest that some manner of funerary rite was performed (Stevens 2009: 12). It is possible that the flints buried alongside newborns were either those used in delivery, or represented such (Meskell 1999a: 170). There are two ways of interpreting this:

i) Flints demonstrate similar ideas about securing an afterlife for infants as for other members of society, but tailored for individuals that had not accrued a material presence, just as how children were not buried with razors. They represented ritual (re)birth in the afterlife, as demonstrated on a grander scale with adults.

ii) Flints were buried due to negative connotations. Being associated with a 'failed' life, they were polluted and needed removing from circulation (Pinch 2003: 10; Harrington 2009: 141; Zillhardt 2009: 10).

The second interpretation seems more plausible given that stillborns were buried alongside viscera and other birthing material. The practice of burying viscera should possibly be seen in relation to embalming caches, found associated with several New Kingdom royal tombs (Eaton-Krauss 2008). It is believed that because these materials had come into contact with the body, even absorbing part of it, they needed burying in order to ensure the deceased was whole for the afterlife. Two tombs, KV54 and KV63, contained only caches of embalming material. However, it seems that such material was secondarily moved there after their respective tombs were robbed; originally, the caches lay in the outer tomb corridors (Reeves

1990: 69; Allen 2011). They were therefore kept away from the body itself.[52] The physical separation of cache and body might suggest that this material was seen as unclean or polluted in some way, although still placed within the tomb itself. If a similar idea lies behind the burial of viscera away from other graves at Deir el-Medina, it is significant that it was considered more appropriate to place stillborns alongside this material rather than other inhumations.

A small number of pot burials displayed marks of either a razor, or sandal—in one case six (Bruyère 1937b: 12, Fig. 94; Soliman 2015: Table 3). Interestingly, sandals and razors were also common elements of Deir el-Medina burial assemblages. One interpretation of such marks is therefore that they should be considered comparable to grave goods. This is not unprecedented; in Egypt, depictions of funerary offerings in tombs acted as offerings themselves, the drawing in effect materialising the item it showed. In theory, therefore, it is plausible that the marks found on newborn pot burials were intended or understood as substitutes for the items depicted. This is important because, if so, it would suggest that these individuals were considered eligible for typical mortuary rites.

However, this is unlikely in practice. Pot-marks were not unique to infant burials, and even then occur on a minority (Soliman 2015: Table 3). Many 18th Dynasty objects at Deir el-Medina were marked, found both in burials and around the village (Killen and Weiss 2009; Soliman 2015). It is believed that the purpose of these marks was to identify individual workmen, as discussed in Chapter 6. Placed on objects, these marks identified personal property; they also appear on multiple ostraca found at both the village and Valley of the Kings, which seem to have acted as duty rosters or lists (Haring 2009; Soliman 2013). These ostraca form the main source of evidence for the strength and composition of the workforce in the 18th Dynasty. Both the sandal and razor are well attested as personal marks on such ostraca (Fig. 17).

It is therefore more likely that the examples of sandal and razor marks on infant pot burials denoted specific individuals, perhaps those who donated the container or owned it before deposition. This would explain why such marks were found in both infant and adult burials,

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[52] In two cases—KV36 and KV46—caches were found within the burial chambers themselves. Nonetheless, it has been suggested that this was not typical, and that the unusual location can be accounted for given that both tombs were likely secondary resting places and the bodies and material were subsequently moved there and placed together (Eaton-Krauss 1992: 713; 2008: 289).

as razor pot-marks also occurred in Western necropolis graves 1153-5, 1165 and 1169 (Soliman 2015: Table 2). It might also explain the apparent case of one pot burial bearing six sandal marks (Bruyère 1937b: 12 Note 1). It has been suggested that the frequent occurrence of marked ojects in 18th Dynasty graves at Deir el-Medina demonstrate communal burial practices, where graves where furnished by multiple members of the community (Näaer 2001: 378-9; Soliman 2015: 123). It would therefore be interesting in itself if the pot-marks in newborn graves also demonstrate communal burial rites, unless these marks were already on the containers before being repurposed for burial.

FIG. 17: OSTRACON WITH SANDAL AND RAZOR MARKS HIGHLIGHTED (AFTER HARING 2009: FIG. 2)

The issue is one of whether marks on infant burials linked the object with a specific individual—be that the owner or whoever deposited it—or were for the benefit of the interred. The conclusion has fundamental implications for how society considered newborns. It is tempting to see significance in the fact that those on pot burials are among the minority of 18th Dynasty workmen's marks that correspond to real items, and more importantly items otherwise found in burials. However, it is unlikely that they were added specifically to act as grave goods. Indeed, the items themselves would be surprising choices; it seems unlikely that razors were considered appropriate for newborn burials when they are consistently missing from those of older children.

The above discussion has highlighted contradictory evidence as to whether newborns at Deir el-Medina were considered full social persons, or if their burials reflect social exclusion. On the one hand, that newborns were properly buried at all should perhaps be seen as significant. However, at the same time, newborns were buried alongside viscera and other material which

was seen as unclean or polluted—suggesting an association by location—and with a lack of mortuary material. On balance, it is difficult not to conclude that, although buried, those in pots were clearly not considered full members of society. They may have been embodied, but not invested with personhood, and so were not eligible for the same practices as the rest of society.

Given the above discussion, attention should perhaps return to burial 1390. Although buried at the same height as others of a similar 'age', it was uniquely found in the midst of the 'birthing cemetery'—assuming that it was in contemporary use—and therefore seemingly spatially separated. Although the areas of the Eastern necropolis were not cleanly segregated, should we see this instance as a deliberate decision to bury the child amongst stillbirths rather than those his own age—perhaps a sign that his social condition was considered closer to them, regardless of his biological age? The manner of the burial, in a box, was appropriate for those his age, but its location contradicts this.

7.3 ENTERING SOCIETY

Pot burials suggest that those interred within were not yet fully accepted into society. As basket burials show, however, the transition into society happened soon after, if not at, birth. The question arising from this is what formed the point of transition, that determined whether an individual was buried alongside other members of society or alongside birthing material. Many ancient cultures held rites soon after a child was born; in Rome, a ceremony called the *lustratio* was held when the child was 8-9 days old, where it received its name (Rawson 2003: 110). This celebration possibly held an element of being 'accepted' into the family, as with the Mycenaean rite of *amphidromia* at 5 days (Beaumont 1994: 85; Muskett 2009: Lebegyev 2009: 28) and practices suggested in the Mesopotamian world (Stol 2000: 178-9). A similar naming ceremony at 6 days is also found amongst certain Muslim populations (Gottlieb 2000: 123); parallels might also be drawn with Christian infant baptism. Considering the above parallels, could it be suggested that the difference in burial treatment at Deir el-Medina lay in whether or not that child survived long enough to be 'accepted' into the family and society? This would presumably happen soon after birth, which might explain the biological similarities between those in pots and baskets.

Because there is little Egyptian material culture specifically associated with infancy, evidence for an 'admission ceremony' is limited. However, of possible relevance is the 'isolation period' which new mothers apparently underwent. Scenes of mother-and-child seclusion, the so-called *Wochenlaube*, are found frequently on visual media at Deir el-Medina, both on household emplacements (Brunner-Traut 1955; Kemp 1979; Raven 2014) and female figurines (Vandier d'Abbadie 1946: 85; Pinch 1983: 406), both to be discussed in Chapter 8, and on figured ostraca (Brunner-Traut 1956: 67-72; Backhouse 2011). On ostraca, seclusion scenes take two forms, showing women lying either on beds or in pavilions, although these are seen as manifestations of the same broad idea (Backhouse 2011: 27).

The nature, location and indeed existence of the *Wochenlaube* is disputed. It is unclear where it was placed—either within a room, or possibly on the roof (as Brunner-Traut 1955: 20; Loose 1992: 23; Pinch 1994: 126-7), as several depictions show vines trailing around the bower. However, such vine motifs are possibly symbolic, and need not represent a real structure. Birthing itself likely occurred in private areas away from potential dangers (Szpakowska 2008: 26). However, we must also remember that modern ideas of privacy and isolation for birth do not necessarily reflect Egyptian concerns, with limited and crowded space (Meskell 2000a: 426). It is alternatively possible that the birthing arbour was not actually a real space, but limited to ritual representations; several iterations of the scene depict divine suckling by Goddesses (for example O.MM 14006, O.Louvre E.27661, and O.Gardiner 49), and one by animals (Brunner-Traut 1970: 7 Note 43), though this need not mean that the actual practice of sequestering did not occur.

If it does represent a post-partum ritual, many elements of the rite of passage are present. The mother and child were separated from the family, and then re-joined. The procedure also seems associated with specific material. On several ostraca, items are presented (O.Berlin 21451, O.BM 8506, O.IFAO 2339, 2344) or otherwise present (O.IFAO 2337, 2338), consistently mirrors, kohl jars and jewellery. These items are typically interpreted as relating to beautification and the end of the purification (Kemp 1979: 52-3; Backhouse 2011: 28). Similarly, the figures in these scenes bear particular hairstyles. There is a distinction between women on beds, typically with full wigs and perfume cones, and those in pavilions, with tripartite wigs; the latter especially might relate to some element of the post-birth rites (Brunner-Traut 1955: 24-6; Staehelin 1978: 80-4; Pinch 1983: 405; the hairstyle in these scenes is discussed also in Bruyère 1939: 139-50; Vandier d'Abbadie 1957; Schulman 1985). The servants occasionally depicted also bear distinctive hairstyles (O.Berlin 21451, O.BM

8506, O.IFAO 2339, 2858), which again seem specific to this context (Vandier d'Abbadie 1957: 23; Backhouse 2011: 32).

If these interpretations are correct, it seems that the end of this period, and the mother's readmission into society, was accompanied by celebration (Wilfong 1999: 423). The length of the potential seclusion period, however has been a topic of much debate. The source most commonly cited is the literary P.Westcar, lines 18-19, where after birthing, the mother *wꜣb.n=s m wꜥb n hrw 14* ('purified herself in a purification of 14 days'). However, this papyrus is from the Second Intermediate Period and the story itself likely dates to the Middle Kingdom. Nonetheless, one text from Deir el-Medina, O.DEM 952, records a list of celebrations in relation to a birth which might corroborate this source. Recto 1-2 read *rdy.t n=f m pꜣ ms n tꜣy=f šri.t* ('Given to him at the birthing of his daughter'), followed by a list of food and other items. Following from this, verso 1 and verso 10 record further celebrations at both 3 and 14 days, and on verso 11 a final celebration at the *bw pꜣ swri ꜥꜣ*, 'the place of great drinking', highlighting that this was likely a public celebration. It is tempting to see the timing of these multiple celebrations as marking the birth, beginning and end of a seclusion period, especially as the 3 day event is recorded as specficially 'her' 3 days, but this one text alone is not conclusive proof. Another text, O.Michaelides 48, also lists objects delivered for certain feasts; recto II.2 lists those for *pꜣ swꜥb n tꜣy=f šri* ('the purification of his daughter'), which could again possibly refer to the end of a seclusion period.[53] Either way, it seems that celebrations surrounded events related to birth (Jauhiainen 2009: 255-6).

Although the confinement period and its completion would have been overtly related to the mother, it seems plausible that it also reflected in some way on the child, providing its first 'exposure' to society. The female is the focus in all media depicting confinement, but children are consistently included. Little can be gleaned from their depiction; unlike mothers and servants, there are no overt characteristics or material associated with the children in such depictions. They are typically bald (except for those on O.BM 8506 and O.IFAO 2339) and

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[53] Two further possible examples are less secure and so are not included in the above discussion. On the absence list O.Cairo 25221, recto 11 records *ꜣbd 1 pr.t sw 21 Nꜣẖy pꜣy=f ḥb…tꜣy=f šri.t.* ('Month 1 of Winter, day 21: *Nꜣẖy* for his celebration…his daughter)'. This could be interpreted as the festival *for* his daughter, although Černý (1927b: 191) reads it as "his fete (avec?) sa fille", and may also relate to the end of a purification. Feucht (1995: 115) alternatively interprets it as a birthday celebration, but this is disputed (Janssen 1997b: 230). O.Cairo 25597 also records the birth of a *Ḥnw.t*, but it is possible that this relates to a religious feast (Jauhiainen 2009: 255, Note 7).

nude, and therefore difficult to age from visual appearance (Pinch 1983: 408). However, assuming the point at which the child was named was marked, it might have occurred at this juncture. It is thought that naming happened at or soon after birth (Feucht 2001: 262; Vittmann 2013a: 2), and the end of 'isolation' would provide a convenient time. It must be stressed that this is only supposition. Nonetheless, if the period did last around 14 days, this would both allow the mother to be ritually cleansed, but also establish the child's survival. Possibly this marked the distinction in new-born burials; those in pots had not survived past the first possible 3 or 14-day milestone, had not been named, and had not 'entered' the community.

Even then, infants were not yet fully part of society, as their burial treatment compared to other children suggests, demonstrating some level of liminality.

7.4 THE END OF INFANCY

The next 'social' milestone reflected in burials, but seemingly not within vocabulary to refer to children, occurred at around 2-3 years, coinciding with the typical weaning age. It is therefore presumed that this reflects the end of 'infancy'. The end of infancy is a fundamentally important rite, as it is typically one of both separation from babyhood, but also often full incorporation into the family group (Tassie 1996: 63)

Depictions of hair are a possible way to explore this milestone. Hair is a vital component of personhood (Berg 1951; Leach 1958; Firth 1975). In Egypt, it was highly symbolic, used to encode social information (Gauthier-Laurent 1935; Derchain 1975; Haynes 1977; Naguib 1990; Robins 1999). Whilst formal art demonstrates few styles, figured ostraca depict a relatively large range, some of which are unattested elsewhere. This possibly demonstrates that formal art preserves only a fraction of social reality, and that in practice many different hairstyles encoded important social information. For example, distinctive hairstyles are worn by (what are assumed to be children and catalogued as such in Appendix 3) on O.Lepizig 42 and O.IFAO 2950, both magic spells related to the *sḥꜣḳḳ*-demon, and O.IFAO 2706, a ritual dance or similar activity. These hairstyles are unknown elsewhere, and seem to be related to that specific context.

Discussion of hair on figured ostraca has largely considered adult styles. For example, O.BM 8506 and O.IFAO 2858 (Appendix 3) depict Nubian servants with long hair, what Vandier d'Abbadie (1957: 23) termed "la mèche de la temple". These are considered an element of the birth and purification rituals depicted in these scenes (Brunner-Traut 1955: 24-6; Vandier d'Abbadie 1957: 23; Staehelin 1978: 80-4; Schulman 1985: 101; Backhouse 2011: 32). Furthermore, Capart (1928: 40) argues that the unkempt hair seen on herdsman drawings (Fig. 18) encapsulates the idea of a subordinate trade or status.

FIG. 18: O.IFAO 2524 (VANDIER D'ABBADIE 1937: PL. 68)

Children's hairstyles have received far less attention. The hairstyle most common to figured ostraca is three 'tufts' with shaved space between. The exact style varies; on O.IFAO 2072 the tufts are closely cropped, but on O.IFAO 2080 they are longer. However, this probably reflects differing artistic styles. The tufted hairstyle is found across the various motifs in Appendix 3, especially the 'human with monkey' and 'animal herder' scenes. It is also depicted on children within tomb scenes, as will be discussed below.

These figures have not always been interpreted as children. Peterson (1974) and Brunner-Traut (1979: 51) label them "Mann". Vandier d'Abbadie (1937) interpreted the figures as "un homme", but later (1946) "enfant", "petit garcon" or "jeune garcon", and in the following volume (1959), the same figures were interchangeably labelled "homme" (O.IFAO 2473) and "petit garcon" (O.IFAO 2744). Schulman (1985: 101) interpreted O.Brussels E.6314 as a "young (?) herdsman". There is some ambiguity; although the tufted figures are typically nude, they are clothed on O.IFAO 2004, 2069 and O.Berlin 20441. Furthermore, several 'animal herder' scenes show individuals with tufted hair wearing *ib*-amulets (Malaise 1975;

Sousa 2007), which plausibly identifies them as children, given the associations of this amulet with child divinities (Sousa 2007: 61-2). However, the same amulet is found on ostraca depicting the goddess Astarte, such as O.Fitzwilliam EGA 4290.1943 (Brunner-Traut 1979: No. 5) and O.Berlin 21826 (Brunner-Traut 1956: 29). It does not therefore itself indicate that the individual was a child. However, these instances aside, the majority of figures with tufted hair on media from Deir el-Medina are either nude, or unequivocally small children—such as the infant in a sling on O.IFAO 2447—and so an association with young children seems more common.

Within scholarship, the tufted hairstyle is typically assumed to be Nubian in origin (Vandier d'Abbadie 1946: 9, 17; Säve-Soderbergh 1957: 14; Peterson 1974: 44, 82, 89, 97; Brunner-Traut 1979: 13, 51, 109; Pinch 1983: 410). Children sporting it are identified as Nubians on, for example, O.Munich A4 (Brunner-Traut 1956: 109); O.Brussels E.6775 (Werbrouck 1953: Fig. 21); O.Berlin 21444 (Arnold 1993: Fig. 15A); O.IFAO 2723 (Vandier d'Abbadie 1946: 157) and O.MM 14059 (Peterson 1974: 82). However, Peterson identified the figures on O.MM 14066 as Nubian yet those on O.MM 14065 as Egyptian, despite both being portrayed identically. Alternatively, the figure on O.Ashmolean AN1938.914 was interpreted by de Garis Davies (1917: 239) as Semitic. In none of these instances was the hairstyle identified as Egyptian.

In some cases, a Nubian identification is probable. The figures on O.IFAO 2010, O.IFAO 2037 and O.Brussels E.6775 are black skinned, although admittedly the last ostraca is monochrome. Black child-like figures are also present in two scenes of mother and child seclusion, O.IFAO 2344 and 2858, which Vandier d'Abbadie (1937: 71) understood as the *k3* of the newborn. However, a Nubian dancer shown in TT78 (Annelies and Brack 1980: Pl. 87) has similar hair and posture, and it has therefore been posited that the figure on seclusion ostraca represents a black dancing attendant, with a Nubian or even dwarf acting as Bes and performing a protective dance around mother and child (Brunton and Engelbach 1927: 17; Pinch 1983: 410). Similarly, Vandier d'Abbadie (1946: 157) understood the children occurring alongside monkeys on many ostraca as Nubian slaves.

There are also numerous instances from beyond Deir el-Medina where Nubian children are shown with tufted hair. Examples include 18th Dynasty tombs TT40 (de Garis Davies and Gardiner 1926: Pl. 23), TT78 (Annelies and Brack 1980: Pl. 87) and TT100 (de Garis Davies 1935: Pl. 22); and the 19th Dynasty Beit el-Wali temple (Ricke *et al.* 1967: Pl.7-8). Similarly,

a statuette of a Nubian serving girl (UC 14210) depicts her with tufted hair. However, this style is also found on adults. One example is the 9th Dynasty tomb of ꜥnḫ.ty=fy, where a Nubian archer drives a bull (Vandier 1950: 57); in TT 78, the same scene shows both infants and an adult female dancer with the same hairstyle (Annelies and Brack 1980: Pl. 87). The style also has modern central African parallels; a similar style is described in Beja ethnographies (Murray 1935: 138).

However, although in many cases the hairstyle is associated with Nubians, this does not mean it was universally a marker of Nubian identity. 20th century Egyptian Arabs were also recorded as using a similar style (Blackman 1927: 27; Ammar 1954: 105). Granted, this could have been influenced by Saharan cultural ideas over time. However, on a great number of examples from Deir el-Medina, the figures seem Egyptian (de Garis Davies 1917: 239; Vandier 1950: 58 Note 1). Most clearly, this can be seen on O.IFAO 2447, showing a woman, older daughter, and infant with three tufts of hair. These figures are definitely Egyptian, shown both through the depiction, and the manner in which the child is carried, in a sling (Janssen and Janssen 1990: 20; Szpakowska 2008: 49). It also occurs on children painted on two 18th Dynasty linens found at Deir el-Bahari (D'Auria 1996). The style being sported by Egyptians can be seen even earlier; a faience bowl from Middle Kingdom Gurob (Petrie 1890: Pl. 18.35) shows the common Egyptian motif of a boy with tufted hair climbing a tree to collect dates. Indeed, despite arguing that the hairstyle was associated with Nubian children, Vandier d'Abbadie (1946: 10) acknowledged that "bien que les artistes, se contentant du detail charactéristique de la coiffure, aient mis de préciser leur type racial et la couleur de leur peau".

More tellingly, the tufted hairstyle is shown in numerous New Kingdom Theban tombs, where the children and their families were definitely Egyptian. Examples include TT3 scene 1; TT4 scene 1; possibly TT250 scene 2; TT290 scenes 2 and 3; TT336 scene 1; a processional scene in TT40 (de Garis Davies and Gardiner 1926: Pl. 16); two festival processions in TT49 (de Garis Davies 1933b: Pl. 1); on children mourning in TT259 (Feucht 2006: Scene 1); and also O.Cairo 25116, possibly a preparatory drawing for a processional scene.

Therefore, the 'tufted' hairstyle was apparently equally appropriate for Egyptian children. It may originally have been Nubian, but if so had become more broadly adopted. It is also possible that, although often shown on Nubians, the style was Egyptian in origin. By way of

parallel, Levantine children were often depicted with a sidelock of hair, like Egyptian children (Anthony 2017: 26), as in TT86 (de Garis Davies and de Garis Davies 1933: Pl. 4). However, rather than meaning that Levantine children wore similar styles to Egyptians, it has been argued that such depictions reflect ideas of childhood recognisable to an Egyptian audience rather than being culturally accurate (Anthony 2017: 83).

It therefore seems possible that this hairstyle was related to, and signified, an aspect of the individual depicted, irrespective of ethnicity. The question is what aspect of self this hairstyle illustrated. The most probable explanation is age; in the vast majority of cases, individuals with tufted hair are shown as children. Age and hair are often inter-linked. In Beja ethnographies, the tufted style occurred when the child had its hair cut for the first time, at 2-3 years (Murray 1935: 138). The timing of this is similar to the practice observed in studies of Egyptian Arabs by Blackman (1927: 27) and Ammar (1954: 105), with the hair being cut at the end of the second year. Indeed, on O.IFAO 2447, a distinction is made between the tufted hairstyle of the infant in the sling, and the sidelock of the older girl beside the mother, suggesting an association with greater youth.

The exact purpose of the style is unclear. Blackman's study offered several reasons for the same ritual outlet: children could have their hair cut off when ill, in the hopes of being cured; to show that they were birthed after a childless woman prayed for a son; or simply as protection to ensure survival past childhood. In ethnographies from the Fayyum, the style could signify that they were the only son (Ikram 2003: 249-50). These various cultural reasonings all share a core idea of child welfare—either marking the survival of a milestone, or ensuring that the child survived to the milestone. Given the age at which it typically occurs, and what has previously been noted about stages of life in ancient Egypt, the tufted hairstyle might therefore be associated with infancy. Indeed, the distinction in hair between the two children on O.IFAO 2447 suggests that two stages of life were depicted by differing hairstyles, and the fact that the motif of tufted hair is so prevalent at Deir el-Medina, on both ostraca and tomb walls, suggests that it represented information relevant to a general audience, rather than anything arcane.

If this is true, is unclear whether the tufted hairstyle may have been associated with those in infancy—with the end of infancy marked by a change to the well-known sidelock—or those who had just passed infancy. The sources are ambiguous; some examples clearly depict infants, such as O.IFAO 2447, TT49, and TT 3 scene 2, where the same child is shown bald

in scene 1 and therefore very young. Similarly, the Nubians sporting this style in TT40, TT78 and at Beit el-Wali were all infants being carried. However, in other cases, such as O.Berlin 21444 and O.MM 14056, the children are shown performing labour activities. Similarly, examples where the hairstyle is depicted on adults have been noted above.

Relevant to this is a possible variant of the tufted hairstyle including both sidelock and tufts, as on O.Chicago 13951, O.MM 14059, O.MM 14060, and also on a depiction of a young *Nfr-ḥtp* on a chair in TT216 (Bruyère 1925a: 41 Fig. 1). Another hairstyle shows what are either several longer locks with shaved space between, or possibly a sidelock with its constituent braids simply unplaited, as on one of the children on O.IFAO 2447 and also those in TT359 scenes 1 and 4-5. Interestingly, similar styles can be seen on Roman period mummy portraits (Ikram 2003). It has been suggested that the ostraca on which this style appears were not intended to depict children *per se*, but religious figures shown as children (Peterson 1974: 90). However, on O.Chicago 13951 at least, a caption on the reverse reads *t3 mi.t pr.w p3 ʿdd* ('the cat, the mouse and the *ʿdd*') and so—even if this motif was ritualistic or related to parables (Brunner-Traut 1970)—the figure was at least intended to be a child. Possibly, all of these styles were considered distinct and so encoded different information; possibly, they were different representations of the same basic tufted style. The Egyptians often depicted the same hairstyle several ways—the 'sidelock of youth' could be shown either as a single braid, or a series of them (Robins 1999: 57, 2015: 126). No firm explanations for what this style signified can be proposed.

In summary, the 'tufted' hairstyle must have encoded some information, but its specifics elude us. It has been suggested here that it relates to rites of passage involving infancy. However, the hairstyle is also in certain cases found on older children and adults; if the hairstyle did relate to infancy, perhaps the intention in such instances was to visually relate the figures to infancy, and associated ideas of purity—or even ignorance. It is also problematic that the style is depicted on both Egyptians and Nubians; perhaps some relevance should be seen in the fact that Deir el-Medina was known to house many Nubians (Chapter 4), although this cannot be explored further. Either way, the style occurs with such frequency at Deir el-Medina that it must have been some recognised element of daily life.

It is realised that much evidence for this discussion comes from ethnographic parallels, whose use can be problematic. Only suggestions have been put forth here, based on both the plentiful examples of the motif on ostraca, and common ideas about hair. However, the idea that the

tufted hairstyle was used to mark that a child had survived infancy and entered early childhood finds parallels in other Egyptian practices with hair. It is often cited that the 'sidelock of youth' was cut off when an individual entered 'adulthood', and in Ptolemaic Egypt, hair cutting was associated with initiation into priestly roles (Goette 1989: Montserrat 1993: 218-9), proving that hair styles marked rites of passage. Indeed, this is not unique to Egypt, but a widely observed social phenomenon (van Gennep 1960: 166-7; Montserrat 1991, 1993; Dolansky 1999, 2008; Rawson 2003: 111, 144).

7.5 RITES OF PASSAGE AND GENDER

In principle, rites of passage are often affected by class or gender (Rawson 2003: 111). It has been suggested that the Egyptian life cycle varied for those of different genders; Meskell (2000a: 434, 2002: 89) argues that girls were sexualised and involved in domestic life-cycles from a younger age than males, but once sexual maturity was reached the female life-cycle was generally less marked. At the same time, Quirke (2014: 60) has argued that male puberty is generally less marked in the material—especially mortuary—record than for females, especially if the possible depictions of circumcision relate not to secular activity but something more specific and ritualised.

The figures on ostraca used as evidence in this Chapter are predominantly male, and so discussion has inevitably been biased. It is possible that this reflects that the activities depicted were more associated with males, rather than reflecting something about the gendering of depictions. Certainly, there are instances where tufted hair is shown on female children—TT3 scene 1, TT4 scene 1, and possibly the scenes in TT49 (de Garis Davies 1933b: Pl. 1), although the gender of the children in these is unclear. This would seem compatible with the mortuary and textual evidence discussed in the previous Chapters, which give little indication of gendered differentiation. Also of note is that examples of Nubians with tufted hair are also male and female, as in TT78 (Annelies and Brack 1980: Pl. 87).

It will be discussed at length in the following Chapters that children became more prominently marked for gender as they aged, and were placed more into their expected social positions. However, it is worth introducing here. Artistically, younger children especially are shown with less prominent gender distinctions than adults. Robins (1999: 57) has noted that depictions of children are often ambivalent. Whilst they are typically shown naked, and so

without the gendered distinctions in dress of adults (Robins 2008, 2015: 125), boys are typically coloured darker than girls. Nonetheless, children of both genders are often shown wearing jewellery such as earrings and bracelets, which are otherwise usually reserved only for adult females (Robins 2008, 2015: 126). This can be seen clearly on figured ostraca, with jewellery worn by male children on O.IFAO 2080, 2450 and 2452, O.MM 14055, and O.BM 8506. It is also seen in tombs; in TT3 scene 1, both the son and granddaughter of *P3-šd.w* are shown as naked children with earrings.

This is not to suggest that all children were 'female' by gender, but that gender was not completely defined in early childhood. As will be discussed in the subsequent Chapters, this is unsurprising; young children of both genders were predominantly associated with caregivers, and therefore part of the domestic, and female, spheres—especially at Deir el-Medina, where the craftsmen were away for extended periods. For rites of passage dealing with the first few years of life, therefore, we might expect little gender differentiation. This may explain why both boys and girls are shown with the tufted hairstyle. Unless it is a product of artistic style, it may also explain why the children on *Wochenlaube* ostraca are shown without any overt gender identifiers, such as genitalia, rendering them ambivalent. As the child progressed through life—and males became associated with the craftsmen, and females with domestic life—gender identities became more firmly constructed.

One final note should go towards the use of this hairstyle on ostraca. Being shown in tombs as well as figured ostraca, it seems to reflect an aspect of actual daily life. However, on ostraca, it occurs mostly in activities such as leading monkeys, driving livestock and making pottery, and it is possible that these had ritual overtones. A brief discussion should be made of why this hairstyle was so prevalent in such motifs.

Scenes of humans and monkeys take two main forms: monkeys being led, usually to pick nuts or fruit; monkeys dancing to music, or, satirically, monkeys making humans dance (see Vandier d'Abbadie 1946: 6-21). Regarding the first motif, the animal depicted is not always a monkey—others, such as jackals, are known (O.IFAO 2039, 2745). Equally, the human is not always a child but sometimes an adult, be that Egyptian (O.IFAO 2003, 2039-40, 2043, 2051-60,[54] 2061, 2743-4) or Nubian (O.IFAO 2038, 2046, 2735). Examples where both figures are monkeys also occur (O.IFAO 2288). The same is true of the second motif, with examples

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[54] Listed but not pictured in Vandier d'Abbadie (1936).

including adults (O.IFAO 2042, 2845, O.Munich 1541), Nubians (O.Munich 1540) and solely monkeys (O.Brussels E.6836).

That the specific figures vary, but the actual composition remains constant, suggests that these were stock scenes with some, possibly ritual, significance. A caption on O.IFAO 2035 reads *ḥwi kȝkȝ ḥwy* ('beating the monkey'), implying that this was a set motif.[55] It was not restricted to Deir el-Medina, having been found also on Amarna stelae (Peterson 1974: 44). However, especially with the 'humans leading monkeys' motif, it is possible that it parodied, or reflected, actual elements of daily life. Monkeys are well attested as pets (Vandier d'Abbadie 1964), often being shown as such in tombs. Furthermore, they were actually seemingly used to pick fruit, as shown in Beni Hasan tomb 3 (Newberry 1893a: Pl. 29). Numerous texts suggest that monkeys were considered trainable. P.Boulaq IV lines 23.3-4 (Quack 1994: 334) read:

> *pȝ ssm.t ḥr ꜥḳ ḥry nḥb=f pȝ sḏm ḥr šm r-bnr pȝ ṯsm pn sw ḥr sḏm mdw.t sw ḥr šm m-sȝ nb=f tȝ kȝry.t ḥr fȝi pȝ mḳr iw bw fȝi sw mw.t=s*
>
> 'The horse enters into its harness, the obedient [animal] goes outside; the dog obeys commands, it follows its master; the monkey carries the stick, though its mother did not carry it'.

Similarly, P.Bologna 1094 recto 3.9 (LEM: 3) reads *pȝ kry ḥr sḏm mdw.t* ('the monkey obeys commands'), and P.Anastasi III recto 4.1 (LEM: 24) reads *tw.tw ḥr sbȝ kȝiry r ḳšḳš* ('one can teach a monkey to dance').

Vandier d'Abbadie (1946: 6-22) collects numerous examples of the 'human leading monkey' motif from the Middle Kingdom onwards, showing that the idea had a long tradition predating its appearance on ostraca. That the human figure in such scenes could be either a child, man or woman (as Vandier d'Abbadie 1946: Fig. 11), Egyptian or Nubian, suggests that the identity of the humans themselves was unimportant to the scene, rather the combination of human and monkey. Potentially, it relates to ritual concepts of the taming of, and mastery over, nature and the wild.

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[55] The word ⟨hieroglyphs⟩ is elsewhere written as *kyky* (Wb V: 116.12; Vandier d'Abbadie 1946: 8). Both are in turn related to *ky* (Wb V: 110.4) and *kȝiry* (Wb V: 116.8-10), also words for the same. A spelling *kȝry.t* occurs on O.IFAO 2042 (Vandier d'Abbadie 1936: Pl. 7), where a monkey makes a human dance.

Although the driving of livestock occurred in reality, depictions of it on figured ostraca also show variation on a stock motif, suggesting it had become a specific part of the artistic repertoire in its own right (Vandier d'Abbadie 1946: 22ff). Again, it is not only young individuals depicted driving livestock, but also adults of all ages; see for example O.Fitzwilliam EGA 4288.1943 (Brunner-Traut 1979: No. 34) and O.MM 14084 (Peterson 1974: 96 No. 93, Pl. 49). The herder is once also possibly a woman (IFAO 2077). Again, the herders are usually Egyptian, but can be Nubian or Semitic.

Although depicting realistic activities, these motifs suggest that ritually codified information was also conveyed through them. Therefore, the activities performed by children on these probably reflect less the actual age of the children, and the activities they could perform, but ritual undertones. As suggested above, possibly this was related to ideas of youth and innocence, and so a choice was made to depict the hairstyle associated with youngest children, but this issue unfortunately cannot be determined.

7.6 CHILDHOOD INTO ADULTHOOD

The final shift in a child's social life was the transition to adulthood. This was more markedly reflected in texts, with different vocabulary for each social category, and less so in burials, with a gradual increase in the quality and quantity of grave goods as the individual aged, but no distinct transition. Possibly, this reflects that whilst vocabulary suggests a sudden change, the reality was more one of an extended and ongoing process of socialisation.

However, some activity or moment must have formed the point at which a child was no longer such. Puberty may have played a part in this, although there is limited evidence for puberty rites, as discussed above. It is often assumed that especially female puberty, and the onset of sexual fertility, acted as a rite of passage. The first period is associated with a variety of rites and beliefs (Buckley and Gottlieb 1988), although it is unknown if it was publicly acknowledged in Egypt (Booth 2015: 142). Equally, menarche may have informed the point of eligibility for marriage (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 51, with references in Notes 283-4). Old Kingdom instruction texts mention the ideal marriage, but as these are projected through male ideals, we cannot assume that women viewed marriage the same way (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 51). The 'ideal' moment for marriage ranges from the ambiguous *ir iḳr=k* 'when you are excellent' in the Instructions of *Ḥr-ḏd=f* (line I.4; Helck 1984) and *Ptḥ-ḥtp* (line 197; Žába

1956: 31) to ꜥdd/mnḫ (P.Boulaq IV lines B 16.1, 21.1). The Late Period Instructions of ꜥnḫ-ššnḳ (line x+11, 17) suggest marriage at 20, but this may have been an upper limit; other Late Period evidence for marriage suggests an age of around 12 (Bagnall and Frier 1994: 111-2; Montserrat 1996: 81). This would broadly match the onset of puberty. The frequent depiction of pubescent serving girls suggest an early age of acceptable sexuality (Meskell 2000a: 434, 2002: 89; Anthony 2017: 33).

Whether or not puberty was a factor in determining social status, it was suggested in Chapter 4 that marriage itself may have formed one transition from 'child' to 'adult'. Unfortunately, marriage sources are limited; analysis often has to use later evidence to reconstruct backwards (Allam 1981: 117; Eyre 1984: 97). There were seemingly no formal acts to instigate marriage (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 49), nor are there examples of formal marriage certificates or ceremonies (Pestman 1961: 24-32; Allam 1981: 117-9, 122, 132; Eyre 1992: 210; Toivari-Viitala 2001: 86; Jauhiainen 2009: 247). The one possible instance of a marriage ceremony, P.Turin 2070 verso 2-3 (KRI VI: 426-8), is debated (Janssen 1974: 25-8). Nore are there indications of specific visible attributes, such as clothes, jewellery or hairstyle, which might be associated with a public ceremony. However, it might have been that the process of marriage was so self-evident that no there was no need for elaborate documents describing it (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 55). Equally, there appears to have been no specialised terminology for marriage (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 55, 70; Janssen 1975b: 294). Marriage is typically explained as a purely private matter, which, lacking any formal requirements, was brought about simply by consent and cohabitation (Eyre 1984: 100-1). However, this compares marriage to a western legal framework (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 84). Rather, it is possible that 'formal' marriage was one of a continuum of practices for living together, with—at the most basic end—a simple decision to co-habit (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 84-90)

It does not however seem that marriage was completely unmarked. Some texts suggest a practice of gift-giving at marriage (Janssen 1982a: 253-8, 1988: 16, 1997a: 55-86; Toivari-Viitala 2001: 61-9), and terms related to marriage such as *iri m ḥm.t* ('take as wife') especially could be interpreted as reflecting some formal or public act. Furthermore, several phrases for marriage, such as *ꜥḳ r pr* 'enter a household' and *grg pr* 'found a household' suggest that marriage was still a change in state or status (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 70). In this way, the transition from bachelor(ette) to married person, and quite possibly from social 'child' to social 'adult', still reflected a rite of passage and celebration, be they publicly or

privately observed. This again demonstrates how texts and burials do not fully reflect the lived experience of individuals at Deir el-Medina.

7.7 CONCLUSIONS

The sources discussed in Chapters 4-6 broadly suggest that Deir el-Medina differentiated between infants, older children and adults, although different bodies of evidence emphasise different aspects. If these social groupings were recognised, the transition between them may have been marked socially. This is what this Chapter has aimed to discuss.

Unfortunately, there is little conclusive evidence of rites of passage. This is possibly because, being presumably domestic affairs, they were not considered appropriate for the formal or economic context of most documentary evidence. That said, the occasional textual references to celebrations relating to marriage and birth suggest that not only did some form of event occur at important junctures in the life-cycle, but that these were socially acknowledged. Beyond this, much reconstruction relies on anthropological parallels and extrapolation from the (limited) evidence.

The problem with this is that, whilst rites of passage which match important junctures can be proposed, they cannot be verified. For example, the possible existence of a 'seclusion' period post-partum would explain why some newborns were differentiated in burial treatment. However, as the evidence for this comes from figured ostraca, it is unclear how much it represents a real activity as opposed to a ritual concept. Furthermore, the artistic evidence for seclusion also post-dates the infant burial record. That said, even if the specific nature of seclusion depicted on ostraca does not reflect reality, this does not mean such an event did not occur. Given the evidence available, it seems the most logical event to explain the distinction in newborn burials between those in pots and other containers.

Similarly, discussion of the hairstyles found on depictions of children across figured ostraca and within tombs has suggested that mortuary art does not reflect the full range of social realities relating to children's appearance. It has been proposed that differences in hairstyle might reflect differences in age. Specifically, discussion has focused on the 'tufted' hairstyle. Certain sources, such as O.IFAO 2447, strongly suggest that this hairstyle represents younger children, and it has been proposed that it therefore differentiated infants from older children.

However, this hairstyle is problematic as it is also found depicted on Nubian children and adults, and the origin of the style itself is unknown. Similarly, its appearance on ostraca occurs mostly in scenes which could be understood as ritualistic. However, it occurs surprisingly frequently in Deir el-Medina tombs, and—given their general freedom from the constraints of Pharaonic artistic canon—it would be unsurprising were these depictions of hair to reflect actual elements of daily life.

In short, much of the evidence for rites of passage discussed here comes from artistic representations. It may therefore be that apparent evidence for rites of passage reflects specific ritualistic, rather than widely practiced, activities. That said, as discussed at the start of this Chapter, such depictions presumably had to relate to, or draw on, phenomena witnessed in daily life, in order to be meaningful. The intention in this Chapter has not been to definitively state anything as to rites of passage, but to propose potentialities as a start for future work. The questions raised in this Chapter are fundamental to daily life at Deir el-Medina; the very act of discussing them is important.

Discussion should finish by briefly considering one other matter: given the absence of rites of passage from formal sources, it is entirely possible that more rites of passage than discussed here occurred throughout the individual's life, simply going unrecorded in documentary evidence because they were considered 'obvious'—just as how sources are silent on such important events as 'marriage'. Texts and burials suggest that there were few formal age-grades. However, it is possible that multiple stages within an individuals' development were noted, especially in the first few years of life, the time of greatest physical change. In other words, texts and burials do not necessarily reflect all transitions that may have been informally recognised and celebrated (Golden 1993: 22; Harris 2000: 3; Houby-Nielsen 2000: 151; de Lucia 2010: 609). Although this may seem counter to ideas that rites of passage occur at major thresholds, these stages need not necessarily have been accompanied by changes in social position or terminology to describe the individual.

We cannot discount the possibility that such rites of passage occurred; the problem is knowing what material may have been associated with them. Indeed, if rites of passage were reflected by changes in hairstyle or costume, these would not necessarily preserve. It is important therefore not to assume that textual or even mortuary evidences paint the full picture of childhood progression, but to avoid veering into speculation. A future line of enquiry may be to continue exploring the existence of 'informal' rites of passage through

exploration of material ritually associated with children, and how it may have been employed within ceremonial as opposed to daily contexts.

In summary, the previous Chapters addressed primarily the first of Baxter's (2006: 81) criteria for studying childhood—which individuals society defined as children. The following Chapters address the remaining three, which relate to the child's lived experience within these social structures. As this relies heavily on an understanding of point one, little work in this direction has been undertaken within Egyptology. A notable exception is Szpakowska (2008); although a study into daily life at Lahun generally, it was written from the perspective of a child and so required consideration of how children might understand and engage with the surrounding world. The following Chapters discuss three elements of the child's lived experience accessible to archaeologists: their role as members of households; interactions with family and wider society; and play.

SELF-ASCRIBED IDENTITY: THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF CHILDREN

8. CHILDREN AND THE HOUSEHOLD

8.1 THE HOUSEHOLD

The household is the core social unit. The household is not equivalent to the house itself (Bender 1967; Hingley 1990: 127), nor is it equivalent to the family; households in Egypt often contained not just blood relatives but dependants, and even possibly deceased relatives, if ancestor cults are considered. The organisation of the household—the "size of the resident group and the allocation of activities and responsibilities between gender divisions and generational groups" (Hingley 1990: 128)—reflects cultural norms and practices more generally (Rapoport 1990). Households therefore offer a micro-scale picture of society (Koltsida 2007:2).

Households are fundamental when considering children. They are where children are born and raised, and in many societies, most socialisation and teaching happens at a household level (Souvatzi 2007: 17). Households are at once social spaces, living spaces, and sites for knowledge acquisition (Roméro *et al.* 2015). Children enter a world where spaces are already named, given meaning, and considered (in)appropriate for certain activities (Baxter 2005: 78). The acceptable locations for behaviours may vary with age and gender, and children may be encouraged or discouraged from certain areas (Kent 1984: 1; Spencer *et al.* 1989: 107-8; Baxter 2006: 79). Moreover, as children make up a significant portion of most households, their presence influences adult decisions and motivations, and shapes the structure and organisation of household space (Roveland 2000: 31). Ignoring children leaves an incomplete picture of household processes.

Furthermore, a child's relationship with the physical space of the house is one of its most formative encounters; engaging with their surroundings allows the child to develop self-awareness and incorporate the environment into their sense of self (Hutson 2006: 110). Indeed, children carry an imprint of their early built environments, which affects how they build, renovate or maintain as adults. Bailey (1990) and Kuijt (2001) argue that stability in

physical house form develops a collective memory across generations. Whilst the reutilisation of walls through time might be partially functional, continued occupation of the same space across generations would nevertheless create social memory, and provide the inhabitants with a sense of social continuity (de Lucia 2010: 613). Children are vital in this perpetuation, as they are the future agents of (re)production (Baxter 2005: 10; Lopiparo 2006: 136). Therefore, built environment and lived space are powerful avenues for exploring childhood experience.

In the 'typical' Deir el-Medina house, a main entrance led to a front room, several steps lower than street level. Behind this was a second room, the largest in the house, sometimes with a cellar below. Off the second room opened one or two smaller rooms, sometimes with a joining corridor, with a staircase (Fig. 19). As a planned town, all houses followed this basic pattern. However, despite common features, no house was identical, encouraging personal attitudes to space (Koltsida 2007: 140).[56] Understanding them as uniform in form and function masks the complexity of personal relationships with, and experience within, houses.

Space use within houses was informed by different social principles than today, where homes are characterised by discrete rooms and internal separation of domestic activities. At Deir el-Medina, whilst houses contained numerous rooms, a number of activities occurred within each (Koltsida 2007: 2). Multi-functional space use allowed greater efficiency, especially with fluctuating household-demographics and limited room (Szpakowska 2008: 18).

An understanding of how children engaged with physical space requires an understanding of household activities, where they occurred, and who participated. Architecture alone reveals little beyond whether space was public or private, and this still requires interpretation. Size and shape of space is practical as much as symbolic; a large room might demonstrate status, or that many activities occurred there. Even then, certain architectural features are missing at Deir el-Medina. Doors are vital in creating the experience of household space; they contribute to accessibility or privacy, light levels and openness. All that remained at the time of excavation were emplacements; we cannot reconstruct the nature of the doorways, nor their permeability.

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[56] In one house (SW1) a partition wall divided the front room; in several, there was a corridor between front and second rooms (NE7, NE14, NW6, NW7, NW1); in others, another room lay between first and second (for example NE8, NW9, C4, SW2). O.Varille 13 (KRI VII: 238) attests as to the practice of further individual modifications of houses.
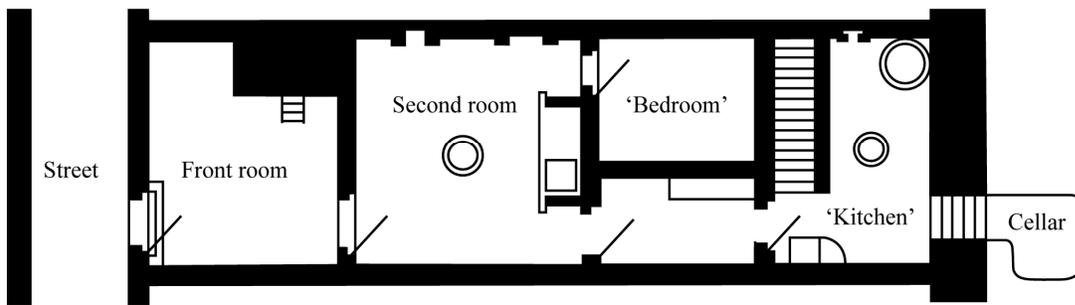
FIG. 19: TYPICAL DEIR EL-MEDINA HOUSE PLAN (AFTER BRUYÈRE 1939: FIG. 15)

Equally important is the household assemblage. However, the Deir el-Medina assemblage reflects the abandonment processes of the village, rather than household activity (Weiss 2009: 193). The inhabitants did not intend to return so generally left larger or less valuable items. It is difficult to tell how much material represents the original 'systemic inventory' of houses—what was there during primary occupation, and how much of household activity this represents—and what represents abandonment or even later squatters. The limited evidence makes interpretation difficult; is a single appearance of an artefact an anomaly, or indicative of individuality and innovation in space use? The excavation recording strategy complicates things further. As discussed in Chapter 2, the excavation was not performed stratigraphically, and objects were not always recorded with specific find-spots. This makes quantitative analysis problematic. Nor, as excavation occurred a half-century ago, can we perform any microstratigraphy or microdebris analysis which might reveal traces of household activities.

Supplementary sources may help; possibly, tomb assemblages reflect typical household furniture (Koltsida 2007: 5). However, secondary sources have limitations. As the craftsmen were often away working, women, children and the elderly were the predominant occupants of households for much of the time—precisely the groups most invisible in text and art. These sources, which largely describe men's lives, cannot be relied upon (Meskell 2000a: 428). The picture of household life at Deir el-Medina will therefore always be incomplete.

8.2 CHILDREN'S ENCULTURATION THROUGH HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES

Enculturation is the process by which cultural heritage and norms are transmitted across generations (Fortes 1938: 15). Wilbert (1976: 22-3) understands enculturation as encompassing three elements: socialisation (transmission of the knowledge required to become part of society); moral education (cultural behaviours, rights and wrongs); and skills development (the physical and mental capabilities required to take up adult roles).[57] This can be conscious; Roman education included imitation of adult roles, preparing the child for public life (Bloomer 1997). Alternatively, especially at the household level, enculturation can be unconscious. Family are the main agents for enculturating children, but they do not necessarily think about how or why they raise their children in a certain way (Baxter 2000: 30).

Children's acquisition of culture begins at birth (Keith 2006: 30). However, especially at a young age, much of what is passed on is intangible and therefore not necessarily recoverable, even if it fundamentally shapes the child's understanding of the world. For example, psychological studies suggest that mothers and fathers speak and act differently with their children, and parents treat their child differently depending on its gender, even when they believe they do not (Leaper *et al.* 1998; Ruble and Martin 1998; Leaper 2000; Halim and Ruble 2010), experiences formative to the child's understanding of socially-constructed concepts such as gender. Nonetheless, a key element of enculturation that is accessible is children's participation in household activities. The following discussion demonstrates this through two aspects: children's participation in household ritual, and household economic activities.

8.2.1 CHILDREN AND HOUSEHOLD RITUAL

Religious traditions were crucial in transmitting social practices and information in the past (Lewis 1999; Garver 2005; Prescendi 2010; Katajala-Peltomaa and Vuolanto 2011: 80), especially in cultures where religion was fundamental to daily life. Through daily practices

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[57] This is not to say that enculturation is simply the process by which children become adults (Katajala-Peltomaa and Vuolanto 2011: 83); 'becoming' only ends with death.

and experiences, the child developed an understanding of the surrounding religious world, teaching them the rules of society.

Religion permeated all aspects of Egyptian society; the sheer importance of religion and ritual to daily life at Deir el-Medina is shown by number and frequency of festivals and other religious celebrations within the village (Jauhiainen 2009). Children needed to be socialised into religious practice from a young age, because much emphasis was placed on the heir as propagator of family cults. The presence of children at religious activities is attested textually—O.Cairo 25234 references them alongside parents at a festival dedicated to Amenhotep I—and visually, as the number of mortuary scenes depicting children offering to the deceased alongside adults (collected in Appendix 4) attest. Egyptian religion at a local level operated differently from the state-sponsored temple-cults (see Szpakowska 2008: Chapter 7). However, at Deir el-Medina—as at other planned sites—local and personal rituals intertwined with the formal aspects of temple religion (Stevens 2003; Cruz-Uribe 2010: 135). Friedman (1994: 95) argues that although Deir el-Medina shared religious culture with Thebes more widely, religion within the village focused primarily on personal concerns, with the workmen adapting formal practices for family or community-centric needs.

The following discussion does not exhaustively consider ritual practices at Deir el-Medina (for this see Jauhiainen 2009; Weiss 2015), especially as the frequency and nature of many ritual emplacements is uncertain. For example, 21 'niches' were found in houses, and only 5 small altars (Weiss 2015: Tables 2-3), and so it is unclear how widely ritual activities involving these were practiced. This discussion instead isolates and analyses some of the more common elements seemingly shared by most—if not all—houses, as an illustration of how to consider children's involvement within these practices. Materially, both figurines and ritual emplacements can be used to understand such practices, how children's participation might have been structured, and how this contributed to their religious enculturation.

Figurines demonstrate the cultic practices of those either too poor for more permanent media, or whose religious experience lay in a different realm from the elite (Teeter 2010: 3). They should possibly be understood as 'folk art'. Figurines are a type of miniature; following Bailey (2005: 29), miniatures are not a completely accurate replica of a larger item, but an abstraction, emphasising its attributes. Miniatures select certain elements, and gain force through the fact that they condense and highlight these (Kiernan 2015). Scaling down requires a manipulation of reality, with abstraction and compression of detail; "values become

condensed and enriched in miniature" (Bachelard 1992: 150). The selectivity of features means that what is and is not displayed are equally important.

The nature of figurines makes them fundamentally important for enculturation (Flegenheimer *et al.* 2015: 119).[58] Engagements with figurines present a different experience than engagements with the same themes on larger media. Firstly, they democratise experience; everyone can engage with them, yet they maintain the capacity to reference more elaborate or complex ideas that may otherwise have been inaccessible for some individuals (Meskell 2015: 14). Secondly, figurines are designed intrinsically to be manipulated and handled, enabling a closer and more personal relationship. This makes them more suitable for private engagements (Kohring 2011: 36). Engagements with figurines are not only informative for children; adult production of, and interaction with, figurines reproduces and reinforces the same information in them (López-Bertran and Vives-Ferrándiz 2015: 89). Nonetheless, children and adults will instinctively have different physical and emotional engagements with figurines.

Although they may have been used in ritual contexts, figurines are not solely symbolic items with no functional use. For children, engaging with figurines enables them to act as 'teaching aids', enculturating information into the user (Bailey 2005: 28). Play and learning are abstracted and enacted through ritual (Sillar 1994: 55), and whether through participation or observation, domestic figurines might be used to teach children ways of being through ritual (Lopiparo 2006: 136; de Lucia 2010), or certain values and behaviours (Kohut 2011). These behaviours are then retained through future responses to the object. However, the information conveyed through figurines need not just relate to behaviours relevant to that situation, but also information encoded into the object itself. For example, miniatures from Iron Age Iberia are argued to relate to values important to contemporary society—land resources, feasting and warfare (López-Bertran and Vives-Ferrándiz 2015: 89). Similarly, Old Kingdom models of

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[58] Because figurines are part of a larger genre of 'miniatures', they should possibly be understood with reference to a larger ceramic body, including both miniature and life size pots (Kohring 2011: 34; Meskell *et al.* 2008: 140). There is a tendency to identify a single, homogenous category of archaeological 'miniatures', and a common process of miniaturisation (Kiernan 2015: 46), but it is possible that each type of miniature object has its own, individual significance (Kiernan 2009). This study holds that figurines can be studied without specific discussion of their relationships to other miniature corpora, but they should still be recognised in reference to the broader process of miniaturisation.

copper- and stone-working equipment have been argued to relate to themes of access to, and conspicuous consumption of, costly materials (Odler and Dulíková 2015). Interaction with figurines therefore inculcates two layers of social information—that learnt through the figurine itself, and that learnt through the context of its use.

There is therefore rich potential for exploring figurines as tools of childhood enculturation. Although many figurines which were once understood as toys are now acknowledged to have been ritual objects, modern studies tend to assume limited dissemination of their ideas, placing them firmly within the 'adult' sphere (Quirke 1998). There is little consideration that children may have encountered figurines through participation in rituals, or that they may still have had a pedagogical purpose, even if not designed for play; even then, figurines could have been appropriated and used secondarily for play, as will be discussed in Chapter 10. In this case, children could interpret and manipulate figurines as they saw fit, and even negotiate and experiment with their own social identities through engagement, regardless of the ideas originally intended to be transmitted (Langin-Hooper 2015).

Figurines from Deir el-Medina took numerous forms, including both humans and animals, predominantly in clay (Bruyère 1933: 7). The most common animal figurines were monkeys, cattle, horses and donkeys, and also animal heads (Bruyère 1933: 15-16). Bruyère suggested different purposes for each—horses as toys, cattle as ritual objects, and the heads of animals as decoration for ceramic vessels—but also acknowledged the difficulties with assigning a single specific purpose (1933: 16).

In order to understand their purpose, and how children may have engaged with them, two factors must be considered. The first is location. Figurines were found in rubbish dumps (Anthes 1943: 59), houses, and chapels (Bruyère 1930: 49, Fig. 20). It is presumed that those in dumps came originally from domestic contexts, later discarded; human-shaped figurines were typically broken, as will be discussed later. Dating these figurines is impossible. However, when figurines were found in both chapels and houses, it is unclear whether their purpose was affected by the context of their use. This is a difficult topic, and falls beyond the scope of this study. Most animal figurines at Deir el-Medina are found widely across Egypt, where they are also attested in a range of contexts, such as temples, shrines and graves. Whilst other uses of figurines cannot be ignored, when placed in, for example, temples, figurines were presumably depositional, ending their active use life and 'fixing' their message. Similar could be argued for their placement in graves, although this may indicate that they represented

similar messages for both the living and dead (Roth and Roehrig 2002). Domestic contexts imply a continual use, one which increased the range of potential encounters with household members and also movement around the domestic space. It is not therefore that there is necessarily a distinction between votive and domestic figurines; rather, their use in depositional contexts reflects one of a continuum of possible uses. There are too many unknown variables to be able to consider these contexts adequately, such as whether children were allowed in tombs and chapels, and if so whether they were allowed unaccompanied— factors which would influence the scope for children's engagement with figurines. For these reasons, only figurines from domestic contexts are considered here.

A second issue is the message conveyed by the form itself—especially for animal-form figurines, whether a difference existed between those depicting 'everyday' animals, and those with overt ritual links. Arguably, in principle, each type transmits different information. At Middle Kingdom Lahun, animal figurines frequently depicted hippos and crocodiles, which played an important local cultic role (Szpakowska 2008: 58). Interaction with these objects enculturated children to important religious icons—perhaps even helping to pass on myths through storytelling. However, some represented desert animals which were considered dangerous (Quirke 2005: 99). Whilst again transmitting cultic information associated with these animals, there was also a practical pedagogical element, training the child to be cautious. The problem is one of overlap. Most animals in ancient Egypt had religious associations in some way; without written explanation, it is unclear whether a figurine represented the animal itself, or a religious figure or concept with which it was associated.

Possibly, since the form of figurines was integral to their purpose, their features can be diagnostic. For example, clay donkeys have been found in several New Kingdom Theban tombs (Carter 1912: 31, Pl. 2.1), Balat (Boutantin 1999: 54, Fig. 20-1) and Diospolis Parva (Hayes 1978: 26). It is possibly significant that these were all in mortuary contexts; they also had certain features which might signify a ritual purpose, such as emphasised phalli, and in some cases white paint. The temptation would be to link them with Seth, with whom the donkey was associated. However, all of these figurines were additionally furnished with packs, or attachments for the same. It is hard to see how such a detail would be important if not representing the donkey as a secular pack-animal.

To consider this with relation to Deir el-Medina: horse figurines were relatively common. It has been suggested (Weiss 2015: 148) that later figurines of horses may have been

misidentified as Pharaonic. There is no way to verify this, but horses were known to the villagers and so there is no reason not to believe that the figurines are of New Kingdom date. Bruyère found examples in chapel 1194 (1930: 49 item 2), tomb 1225 (1933: 21) and house SE3 (1939: 269, object 5), but only the former was illustrated (Fig. 20). Further examples were found with no precise find-spot given (Weiss 2015: Items 10.9, 10.19, 10.63). The horse was introduced to Egypt in the Second Intermediate Period. Although known to the occupants of Deir el-Medina—a vase (Bruyère 1926: 42 Fig. 28) depicts them repeatedly painted around the body—horses were rare, a military and elite symbol rather than pack-animals. This is reflected in an artistic unfamiliarity with how to depict them (Brunner-Traut 1979: 7). On figured ostraca, horses are found in military contexts, leading chariots or being ridden by Astarte, goddess of war (Leclant 1960); Egyptians themselves are rarely shown riding (Schulman 1956).[59] Similarly, horse figurines were typically always harnessed, apparently sometimes with riders still intact (Bruyère 1933: 16). Such elements reflect the military themes invested in such figurines. Unlike other animals, horses themselves did not have an overtly cultic function of representing a God or concept, besides their association with Astarte who took 'Great Mistress of Horses' as one of her epithets (Brunner-Traut 1979: 30; Schmitt 2013). It is therefore believed that such figurines were intended to represent Astarte (Teeter 2010: 111).

These figurines reflected two 'tiers' of information. At the broadest level, they reflected the military and expansionist views of the New Kingdom, and the pantheistic changes and adoption of foreign deities which characterised this period. This may itself relate to ritual concepts of expansion as a way to maintain Egyptian 'order' (Matelly 1997). Engagement with figurines in turn perpetuated and inculcated these broad social values within the user. More specifically, the visual attributes—horses and reins—introduced the user to the military purpose of horses, and the specific religio-royal figures with which they were associated. There was a suite of ritual components invested in Astarte as an Egyptian-adopted goddess (Ranke 1932),[60] and such figurines provided a visual shorthand, a container for such

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[59] Examples of Astarte on ostraca can be seen in Vandier d'Abbadie 1936: Pl. 19; Brunner-Traut 1956: No. 16, 1979: No. 5; Peterson 1974: No. 31. The motif is also found in temple contexts (de Garis Davies 1917: 237 Note 5; Schulman 1956: 269). Images of horses pulling chariots are collated in Vandier d'Abbadie (1936: Pl. 19-23).

[60] Astarte was closely associated with the Pharaoh. In a poem to the King's chariot, O.Edinburgh 916, lines 13-14 associate the two 'hands' of the chariot with Astarte and Anath (Dawson and Peet 1933). Similarly, in an inscription of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu (Edgerton and Wilson 1936: 75, Pl. 80), lines 10-11 read *Mnṯw Stḫ r ḥnꜥ=f m sk.w nb ꜥnṯ.t ꜥsriṯ.t n=f m ikm* ('Montu and Seth are with him in every battle; Anath and Astarte are as

information, which would be explained and enacted through their practical use in rituals and other situations.

FIG. 20: CLAY HORSE'S HEAD (AFTER BRUYÈRE 1930: FIG. 20)

Another common figurine was the monkey, found in various forms—alone, holding children, or in groups parodying human actions (Bruyère 1933: 15-16, Fig. 5, 1939: 102), similar to figured ostraca. Similar figurines were found at Amarna (Fig. 21). Given their frequent copying of elite motifs, it was suggested there that they were used to parody and subvert social order during the Amarna hegemony (de Garis Davies 1917: 237; Frankfort and Pendlebury 1933: 99). However, the use of monkeys as social parody was not innovative to the New Kingdom. Their 'comic' potential had been exploited since the Old Kingdom (Bosse-Griffiths 1980: 74). Furthermore, although the use of monkeys to reference elite motifs may have involved elements of satire, this need not have been intended as insulting; animal fables were well known in Egypt (Loeben 2009; for differing opinions on the use of such scenes as satire see Brunner-Traut 1970: 21ff and Kessler 1988: 171-96).

The actual meaning of monkey figurines, especially within a domestic context, is unclear. The baboon was associated with various Gods, most commonly Thoth and Ra, and indeed Thoth as a baboon was worshipped in several Deir el-Medina tombs. However, evidence of Thoth worship within houses was relatively uncommon (Weiss 2015: 150). Furthermore, it cannot

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a shield to him'). Astarte was also linked with other deities, such as Seth as a God of foreign lands. P.Chester Beatty I (The Contendings of Horus and Seth) line 3.4 (LES: 40) reads *i.k3b Stḫ m ḥ.t=f imi n=f ʿnti.t ʿstr.t t3y=k šri 2* ('Enrich Seth, give him Anath and Astarte, your two daughters [as his wives]'). Although Astarte later took on other attributes, notably as a Goddess of healing (Pritchard 1969: 250), horses presumably reference her warlike attributes foremost.

be assumed that those mimicking human actions were used or deposited in the same way as 'simple' baboon figurines. The range and intention of meanings behind 'parody' scenes, in all media, are simply not fully understood.

Analysis of both types of figurine discussed here is limited because it is unclear how rituals involving them were performed. However, regardless of purpose, the use of everyday animals in ritual would make it easier for children to engage with and understand the themes they referenced. This is not to say that they were necessarily designed or used foremost as teaching tools, but they would psychologically be a powerful means of teaching children if they were exposed to such items. Engagement with figurines would theoretically enable them to access and view complicated ritual ideas, which they would possibly encounter in later life, in a more accessible manner. That said, it is itself an assumption that all of the information encoded in figurines would have been explained or illustrated through ritual activities. Animal figurines may have had multiple meanings, all of which can be considered as potentialities for pedagogical encounters, but this cannot be taken further given the current state of evidence.

FIG. 21: MONKEY FIGURES FROM AMARNA PARODYING ELITE ACTIVITIES (FRANKFORT AND PENDLEBURY 1933: PL. 31)

Animal figurines are difficult to analyse because of their wide range of potential meanings. Human figurines provide an easier means to analyse religious enculturation. As children are naturally attracted to human-form things, they provide powerful teaching tools. At Deir el-Medina, females were most common (Bruyère 1939: 109-50), either on beds, standing, or sitting and nursing (Figs. 22-6). Some were found in tombs (Bruyère 1928: Fig. 5H, 1929: 26-7, 1937: 60 item 4, 63 item 2, 97 item 6); however, the majority were found in houses and dumps, suggesting that their purpose was predominantly domestic (Bonnet and Valbelle 1976:

341). Although mostly clay, examples were also found painted onto flints and pottery sherds (Bruyère 1939: Pl. 45). Being found across the site, such figurines—and their messages—held community-wide significance.
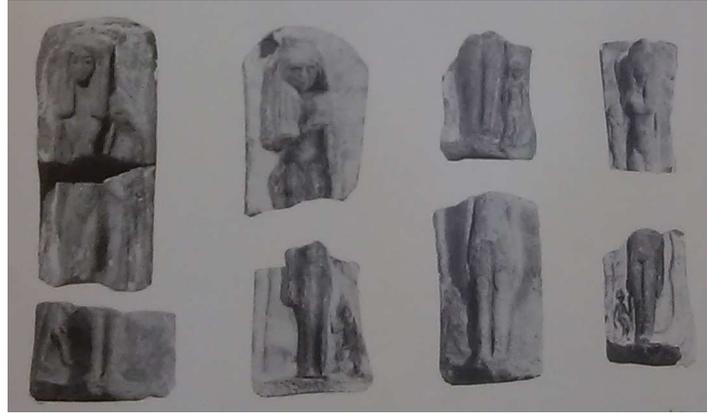
FIG. 22: WOMAN-ON-BED FIGURINES FROM DEIR EL-MEDINA (BRUYÈRE 1939: PL. 44)

FIG. 23: FURTHER WOMAN-ON-BED FIGURINES FROM DEIR EL-MEDINA (BRUYÈRE 1939: FIG. 59)

FIG. 24: STANDING FEMALE FIGURINES FROM DEIR EL-MEDINA (BRUYÈRE 1939: PL. 43)

FIG. 25: STANDING FEMALE FIGURINES FROM DEIR EL-MEDINA (BRUYÈRE 1939: FIG. 58)

FIG. 26: NURSING FEMALE FIGURINE FROM DEIR EL-MEDINA (BRUYÈRE 1939: FIG. 60)

Despite typically being labelled "poupées en terre cuite" (Bruyère 1939: 269, 300), the themes of these figurines match those typically depicted on the *Wochenlaube* scenes discussed earlier (Pinch 1983: 410). This can be seen through both the hairstyles of the figurines, and the occasional inclusion of items presented on ostraca, such as mirrors (Fig. 27). These elements, alongside emphasised biological features such as breasts, hair and pubis (Pinch 1993: Waraksa 2008: 1), acted as a visual shorthand. These motifs were also painted within houses (see below); the significance of these images was repeated and reinforced across multiple media.

FIG. 27: WOMAN-ON-BED FIGURINE, SHOWING CHILD, MIRROR AND RAZOR (BRUYÈRE 1933: FIG. 4)

Social information was transmitted partly by these explicit visual criteria. However, it was also imparted by the nature of physical engagement. Universally amongst female and baby figurines, the mother looks out at the holder, creating a visual as much as tactile interaction. The mother's gaze connects more with the user than child, offering the potential to identify with the figure like a reflection (Langin-Hooper 2015: 71). When children are included, such as on beds, they are typically separate, at the mother's side; there is no overt physical attachment, though sometimes the mother touches the child's head (Pinch 1983: 409). The children have no features themselves, and so cannot engage the viewer (Fig. 27). Their shape resembles the child hieroglyph 𓀔; their presence is treated more like an element of decoration, similar to the toiletries. The focal point of such figurines is therefore the social identity represented by the adult, with the child relegated to a visual 'prop', highlighting and emphasising this role.

These figurines materialised acceptable and available gender roles, such as spouse or mother. Female figurines may have been associated with rituals to many goddesses—possibly, the generic appearance of these figures was deliberate, allowing them to be associated with different deities as the situation demanded (Waraksa 2008: 4). However, beyond the specific identity of the female, they also relate to broader themes of fertility. Some see this as explicitly erotic, others as relating more generally to conception and birth (Pinch 1983: 411) and family continuation (Weiss 2015: 141). However, by the very nature of such themes, both erotic and biological ideas were encapsulated. Modern observers might find the idea of socialising children into ideas of sexuality problematic, but this is a product of modern Western mentality.[61] Through depictions such as these, children were exposed to sexual themes from a young age, within a domestic context.

This might suggest that such figurines were intended to be engaged with primarily by females. However, this cannot be assumed; it is unknown who had control of the knowledge and technology of their manufacture. Caution must be taken drawing conclusions from their location; female figurines were sometimes found in kitchens (Bonnet and Valbelle 1975: 445), but such locations could also be attributable to displacement during abandonment, or even secondary repurposing for play. As is discussed further below, much decoration at Deir

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[61] There is an interesting contradiction in mentality concerning ancient Egyptian children and sexuality. On the one hand, the idea that children were exposed to sexual themes is considered unpleasant; on the other, those who suggest that ritual emplacements (discussed below) were used for conjugal relations seemingly forget that in the cramped, enclosed houses, children must have heard or seen all such activity.

el-Medina related superficially to female themes, but the whole community, men and women, lived alongside these.

Because most ritual records concern the male heir, the presence of females is little recorded. That said, as females spent the most time within the domestic sphere, it would seem logical that they undertook a significant portion of daily religious practice (Bierbrier 1982: 52-3; Friedman 1985: 97; Pinch 1993: 343; Lesko 2008: 201). This is not however to say that the female sphere was *only* domestic; texts attest to their activities beyond the village itself, such as at the riverside markets.

There is some supporting evidence for female 'spheres' of ritual knowledge. At Amarna House N.49.21, a cache of ritual items was found including a stela of a woman and young girl worshipping Tawaret (Peet and Woolley 1929: 24-5, Pl. 12; Capel and Markoe 1996: item 16b). This demonstrates that children observed, if not participated in, ritual actions, but also suggests some level of activities which were solely the domain of females. Another example is mourning. Professional mourners (*dry.t*) were hired to perform at funerals (Werbrouck 1938; Fischer 1976; Robins 1993: 164; Capel and Markoe 1996: 94; Volokhine 2008). Whilst usually adult, they are shown accompanied by children, always female, in several Theban tombs: TT4 scene 1; TT49 (de Garis Davies 1933a: Pl. 23); TT55 (de Garis Davies 1941: Pl. 25) and TT57 (Malek and Miles 1989: Fig. 1). In TT4 and TT49, children of several 'ages' are shown; babies are present in slings, being carried by older children, and one child is imitating the mourning action (Fig. 28). Millward (2012) argues that those of different ages represent children at differing stages of introduction to the process. This suggests a level of religious activity within which knowledge was gendered and transmitted from a very early age; this will be returned to later.

FIG. 28: MOURNERS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN IMITATING, TT49, THEBES, DYNASTY 18
(AFTER DE GARIS DAVIES 1933A: PL. 23)

Interaction is only one element of engagement with figurines; another is their creation. Especially with unfired examples, it may be that the actual act of making was important, as they were not intended to endure (Kemp 1995: 30; Meskell 2015: 7).[62] It is possible that children were involved in the creation of figurines; even just by gathering raw materials and watching their moulding, children were exposed to information about who made figurines, why, and how (Szpakowska 2008: 56). In many societies, figurines tend not to be found around areas where children may have been prohibited, such as hearths, but in workplaces, which would enable children's observation or participation (de Lucia 2010: 619-20).

Bruyère (1939: 214) discovered moulds for the bed figurines frequently throughout the site, and so their production was not a specialist task, but democratised so that anyone could potentially contribute. Weiss (2015: 145) has suggested that the absence of figurines from transaction texts suggests that most were purchased externally, perhaps at temples. However, if figurines were so easily creatable, they would not be expected to feature in transaction texts. Given that children tend to combine work with recreation (Baxter 2005: 67), their contributions would in themselves be play. Perhaps the act of forming miniatures even created a new category of plaything (Sillar 1994). The benefits of children's active involvement in the creation process was two-fold, inculcating both cultural beliefs, and the skills associated with craft production (Lopiparo 2006).

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[62] Considering the figurines in Figs. 22-5, the most common break was along the torso. This might suggest a deliberate breakage, as there are weaker areas which would be more likely to break naturally.

Whilst young children may have been involved in peripheral elements of production, they would rapidly need to learn the processes involved in creating figurines, in order to continue their reproduction. Knowing this, is it possible to identify the work of children among the figurine corpus? This could be explored through visual characteristics. Brown (1975) tested how children's cognitive skills manifest in three-dimensional media, through asking 450 children (aged 3-11) to make clay humans. At age 3, the figures were rarely recognisable—common responses to the material included simply pushing, pulling, squeezing or piercing (Brown 1975: 51)—and those aged 4 tended to make simple shapes such as snakes and balls. However, at age 5, there was a noticeable jump in abilities, correlating with the 'five-to-seven-year shift' discussed in Chapter 5. Realism then progressively increased until the end of the age range tested.[63]

The methodology for this test was imperfect; judgement of the models was based on the Harris-Goodenough 'draw a man' test (Goodenough 1963) which was designed for two-dimensional media, rather than developing a new test for three-dimensional media. More modern comparisons between two- and three-dimensional media suggest that children are generally less accomplished with the latter (Bagwell 2002: 92-3). However, despite limitations, Brown's model provides enough information to suggest that an individual could realistically be expected to be productive in figurine making from around age 5 (Bagwell 2002: 94). Interestingly, Bruyère found numerous unfired clay objects (1933: 16-17), which unfortunately cannot be located today. These did not have recognisable shapes or forms, but were hand-moulded, several having small holes or twigs imprinted. Although Bruyère suggested that they had a ritual purpose, it is entirely possible that these were formed by children experimenting with the material, possibly in the context of watching or participating in figurine production.

In conclusion, figurines were multivocal, combining ritual, pedagogical and other purposes. Their 'life-histories' included multiple roles and social meanings, which could take them between ritual and non-ritual spheres (Whitehouse 1996: 12). Depending on their social and physical context of use, these were displayed either at different points of their use-life, or

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[63] Nonetheless, we cannot assume that past societies valued realism in human depictions as much as we do (Golomb 1993: 3). With ritual figurines, accuracy might have been less important than emphasising key features. What a modern viewer might consider 'poor quality' may not therefore be indicative of age of artist, but a lack of concern for features we would consider important.

concurrently, but the distinction between their purposes need not have been clear-cut. Therefore, the key to interpreting figurines correctly is contextual information (Flegenheimer *et al.* 2015: 120). Without textual explanations, analysis of figurines is entirely interpretative. This is problematic for Deir el-Medina. Firstly, the assemblages primarily reflect abandonment; we assume the inhabitants did not intend to return, and items of personal religious practice were taken with them. It is interesting therefore that figurines were found as frequently as they were; either their ritual importance has been fundamentally misunderstood, or, being simple clay objects, figurines could easily be recreated. Secondarily, placement of figurines within houses is key to understanding their use. However, limited recording means that this information is missing, and many were found in dumps rather than houses themselves.

Because of these limitations, we cannot know the full range of uses and meanings of figurines in the context of domestic ritual. Unlike temple cults, domestic religion responded to the needs of the moment, and so may have been more irregular (Stevens 2009: 10l; Baines 1991: 150). Being non-formal and personal, it cannot even be assumed that figurines had the same uses between all households. Furthermore, children of different ages and physical capabilities would have had differing scope for participation in ritual practices. All of these factors affect the reconstruction of ritual as a pedagogical arena.

Given these limitations, the analysis of immobile features used in ritual is possibly a more reliable source of information (Weiss 2009: 193). However, what defines an 'immobile feature'? Material need not be indicative; several figured ostraca, with cultic scenes similar to those on wall paintings, were found in both houses and votive chapels (Vandier d'Abbadie 1946: 1). It is possible that these were considered permanent religious fixtures—although technically movable, some were quite large and coloured, possibly acting as stelae (Backhouse 2011: 32). One even had traces of plaster (Vandier d'Abbadie 1946: 119). This discussion defines 'immobile feature' simply as an emplacement where cultic interactions with figurines or the feature itself regularly occurred, regardless of its manner.

The most well-known emplacement at Deir el-Medina is the *lit clos* (for a general discussion see Kleinke 2007: 18-24). These were mainly located in the front room (Koltsida 2006: 24) but their orientation was inconsistent (Weiss 2009: 204); possibly it was as much spatially informed as ritualistic. Several were decorated—a marsh boat (NW12); dancing female (SE8); toilet scene (C7, SE1) and Bes (NE10, NE12, NE13, SW6, possibly SE9 and C5). The

lit clos has seen much scholarship (most importantly Koltsida 2006; Weiss 2009; Brooker 2009).[64] Interpretations vary from beds—secular or ritual conjugal places—to seats, altars, or multifunctional spaces. They are often assumed to be related to childbirth or its celebration, due partly to the decorative themes (Kemp 1979: 53), and possibly related to the *Wochenlaube* depicted on ostraca (Brunner-Traut 1955; Kemp 1979; Pinch 1983). However, their public location, height and enclosed walls make this unlikely. Their location is at odds with a single, specific purpose, and their decoration is not necessarily indicative; similar decoration was also found in Amarna front rooms, without such emplacements (Koltsida 2006, 2007: 24).

Friedman (1994), Koltsida (2006) and Weiss (2009) argue that the *lit clos* served as a house altar, on which various daily religious actions were performed, possibly including celebration of successful births. Weiss (2009) especially argues that it was based on a specific type of formal altar transferred to the domestic sphere, allowing the villagers to address the Gods personally in domestic contexts. If so, the *lit clos* would have formed a core for both household religious ceremonies, and by extension the child's religious enculturation.

Kemp (1979: 53) notes that the decoration of Deir el-Medina houses was female focused. It is unclear if this reflects reality or artistic conventions; scenes of birth prioritise females as it was a female activity. However, men still lived in the houses. In that case, it is interesting that a practice surrounded by "customs and observances wholly the prerogative of women" (Kemp 1979: 53) was so prominently displayed by the community as a whole. It has alternatively been argued that the decorative themes on the *lit clos* do not reflect a predominantly female use (Kleinke 2007: 75; Weiss 2009: 202), although a prophylactic function of protecting women in childbirth could have been one of a multivocality of uses. Only two examples have explicitly 'female' themes, a childbirth scene and a dancer, which is not enough to suggest a definite connection between the *lit clos* and the female sphere. The majority depict Bes; whilst he acted as protector of children and women in childbirth, he was also a protective god for the household more generally. The motifs instead relate more widely to fertility and regeneration, possibly suggesting that rituals performed here focused on such themes. Domestic fertility cults and regeneration cults in general could then be interpreted as maintaining the cosmological order on a smaller, household scale.

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[64] A full list of scholarship can be found in Koltsida (2006: Note 15) and Weiss (2009: Notes 25-31).

In short, the *lit clos* probably had a range of functions, but played some focal role in household rituals and ceremonies. Being in the most public area of the house, children would have observed, if not participated in, these rituals. Through this, the child became informed about proper ritual practice, and also the religious concepts underlying such practice—especially if rituals related to wider cosmological ideas, adapted for household-level performativity. That the visual motifs surrounding these rituals were continually repeated across figurines, emplacements and other visual media would only have strengthened the acquisition of knowledge.

Another key ritual aspect of Deir el-Medina households was the ancestor cult (Demarée 1983; Friedman 1985; Harrington 2004; Keith 2011), wherein offerings were made to both ancestor stelae and busts of the *3ḫ.w*, spirits of the deceased who acted as intermediaries between the performer and the Gods. It is not entirely clear where these offerings were made. Some houses had busts, or niches presumed to be for such, in the front room (Bruyère 1939: 309, Fig. 66); in others, niches were found in the second room (Weiss 2009: 201 Note 57). It cannot be presumed that all niches were ritualistic; some may have had secular functions, such as lamp holders (Weiss 2015: 62). Additional possible support for the performance of ancestor rituals in the second room comes from the occasional occurrence of false doors.[65] These may have served as transitional doors, a point of contact between the living and ancestors (Meskell 2002: 119). There was therefore no clear division of space use for the purpose of ancestor cults (Demarée 1983: 281).

Less can be said about children's role in ancestor rituals because there is limited knowledge of the accompanying rites. Some stelae show offerings being presented, and the 19th Dynasty P.Sallier IV gives an indication of what was expected in these rituals: *iri pr.t-ḫrw n 3ḫ.w m pr=k*, 'make voice offerings to the *3ḫ.w* in your house' (Posener 1981: 400). However, further information is missing. No artistic depictions of ancestor worship explicitly show children, because the focus was on the bust and the performer, but children would presumably still have been present for these rituals, as it was vital to learn how to perform them for their future continuation. It is worth considering that—assuming the busts relate to specific individuals—they may have been transported to the deceased's chapel or tomb for rituals (Friedman 1985: 97; Bomman 1991: 69; though see Harrington 2009: 57). There is no certain evidence for this, but if ancestor rituals did occur beyond the household, it would affect children's presence and

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[65] Houses SE5, SE7, SE8, NW6, NW12, NW20, SW5.

participation. Those accompanying the procession would have been introduced to a wider ritual landscape; certainly, tomb scenes of offerings being presented to the deceased frequently show children accompanying their relatives (Appendix 4), assuming this reflects reality.

It is possible that ancestor rites were gendered. Harrington (2004, 2009: 49) has suggested that busts represented females, and were part of a female religious sphere, complementing the males typically shown on the *ȝḫ iḳr n Rˁ* stelae (Demarée 1983; Friedman 1985: 84). Indeed, women are shown making offerings to similar busts on stela British Museum EA270 (Bierbrier 1993: 18, Pl. 54-5) and another from Abydos (Vandier d'Abbadie 1946: 135). In this case, busts represent another example of female-centred religious activity, and possibly children's interaction with either busts or stelae was also informed along these lines.

Although the above discussion considers two key loci for household religious practice, religious images were painted on a range of domestic decoration, such as lintels, frames and wall recesses (Stevens 2009: 6). Many more houses had painted decoration than is now preserved (Bruyère 1939: 40); for example, O.Michaelides 14 (KRI IV: 328-9) verso 6 records that payment for a coffin included a *sbḫ.t sš.ti* ('decorated doorframe'). These images had several purposes: possibly they provided a protective backdrop to household activities; possibly they even acted as focal points for certain ritual activities themselves. However, no matter their purpose, children were surrounded by religious imagery on a daily basis. Houses were full of cultic material, including offering tables, stelae and ceramics (Bruyère 1939: 193-211). SW6, the house of *Sn-nḏm*, contained statues and shrines to multiple Gods (Bruyère 1939: 329-35). Even this, without active engagement, would gradually inculcate the child with religious concepts. Religious enculturation was a constant process, absorbed both actively and passively.

Unfortunately, despite broad discussions of the purpose and materials of ritual, few specific conclusions can at present be drawn of children's participation. The potential range of meanings and uses of ritual paraphernalia can be discerned, but it is not clear how or whether these meanings would have been illustrated through ritual practices. This speaks to shortcomings in current knowledge of ritual performativity. It is important to consider that children would have observed and participated in household rituals, be enculturated through this, and gradually join the community of practice. However, the specific mechanisms of this

enculturation—and how children of differing ages and bodily capabilities would have engaged (Fahlander 2008)—require further study.

That said, daily ritual—and children's participation in such—is a rich area for future exploration. As increasing attention is paid to the specific activities for rituals and festivals at Deir el-Medina, as well as their locations (Jauhiainen 2009), there is plentiful scope to consider children's participation within these. However, it must be remembered that conclusions relevant to children and religious practice at Deir el-Medina need not necessarily be more widely representative. The high numbers of inscribed stelae, offering tables and other emplacements used in religious practice speak to a ritual world which revolved heavily around literary material; this recalls Chapter 5's discussion of literacy at the site. As such, children at Deir el-Medina would have had a different engagement with ritual practices than might be found elsewhere (Moreno García 2010: 18). In this respect, the childhood experience at Deir el-Medina is not necessarily applicable more generally.

It should further be noted that although certain ritual emplacements such as the *lit clos* were common, suggesting some standardisation, it does not mean that all households engaged with them in the same way. There is scope for personal and individual practice within ritual activity, but the level of evidence available simply cannot demonstrate this. Not all those living in the village originally came from there, so there may have been regional variation in practice, and the range of Gods worshipped suggest that certain families had more affinity to certain figures (Weiss 2015: 109). For example, Mut was rarely worshipped within the village, but she is depicted on part of the door frame to a cultic emplacement in house SW6 (Bruyère 1939: Fig. 204). Perhaps not coincidentally, the family associated with this house, of *Sn-nḏm*, was particularly affiliated with her (Weiss 2015: 92); his son *Bn-nḫ.t=f* was a *šms.w Mwt*, 'Follower of Mut'. Similarly, worship to Sobek was emphasised in houses SW6 and SE9, and he was depicted on the frame to an emplacement in house NW15 (Bruyère 1933: 71). These examples speak to wider levels of personal variation in the style and perhaps purpose of household rituals, none of which is accessible today, but which would have led to different children participating in differing fields of ritual action.

Finally, whilst children's scope for agency, expression and experimentation would have been constrained by the limits and purposes of ritual activities, this is not to say that children could not engage and negotiate with religious material on their own terms. This will be discussed in Chapter 10.

8.2.2 CHILDREN AND HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY

Even just by watching daily activities, children experienced the social norms embedded in them. Practices occur within what Barrett (1988) terms the 'field of discourse', and Rapoport (1990) 'systems of settings'. These are the unwritten understandings about how activities should be undertaken, with what material, who is permitted to participate, and where, which reflect wider social values (Kent 1984: 1-8). It is through such activities that intangible social structures are materialised. However, more than reflecting social structures, household activities also reinforce them (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984). Children's participation is therefore vital for the maintenance of such values.

In Egypt, although not actively participating, children's exposure to work—and the social values invested in work—began from birth, as they were carried around (Figs. 29-30). Psychological studies show that children can follow another's line of attention from around 4 months (Bruner 1978: 70); from 10 months, they become increasingly aware of how others interact from objects; by 2 years, they can manipulate objects within their physical and cognitive limits (Trevarthen 1988: 55); and by age 4, can understand specific functions of objects (Kelemen *et al.* 2012).

FIG. 29: WOMAN PICKING FRUIT WHILST CARRYING A CHILD, TT69, THEBES, DYNASTY 18

(DETAIL FROM HARTWIG 2013: FIG 2.3)

FIG. 30: WOMAN TENDING A FIRE WHILST SUCKLING, TOMB OF *NY-ꜢNḪ-ḪNMW* AND *ḪNMW-ḤTP*, SAQQARA,
DYNASTY 5
(MOUSSA AND ALTENMÜLLER 1977: PL. 26)

However, they cannot yet actively begin learning. Wendrich (2010) defines the elements of crafts-learning as dexterity (the right motions); skill (the right motions in the right order); endurance (repeated actions over an extended time); and concentration. These elements prohibit the participation of those below a certain age. Therefore, as with the discussion of trainee craftsmen in Chapter 5, children could realistically begin to become economically 'productive' from around age 5. To recap, typically around the ages of 5 to 7, children undergo several psychological developments that enable them to begin participating productively in economic activities. As well as increased motor skills, children at this age are considered 'teachable', better able to retain information and imitate, and keep track of multiple tasks (Weisner 1996: 298). The concept of LPP (Greenfield and Lave 1982; Lave and Wenger 1991) was introduced in this context. The basic principle is that, ethnographically, children's craft-learning begins through peripheral tasks such as gathering fuel or raw materials (Granqvist 1947: 131; Ammar 1954: 30-1; Cain 1997: 212; Storey and McAnany 2006: 54); it is a stage of observation without specific responsibilities (Ammar 1954: 30), but still incorporates the child into the *chaîne opératoire*. As the child ages, they become gradually more involved with the *chaîne opératoire*, until full participants. The actual method of teaching might depend on both the nature of the task and the teacher, ranging from structured learning, informal demonstrations, to simply performing activities whilst children are nearby (Kamp 2001a: 13).

It should be recognised that children's involvement is not always productive. For example, a scene in TT60, the Middle Kingdom tomb of *ʾIntf-iḳr*, depicts men occupied with various tasks, and a child holding out a bowl to a brewer, saying *di=k n=i srmw.t mk ḥḳr.kwi*, 'give me some *srmw.t*, look, I'm hungry' (de Garis Davies *et al.* 1920: Pl. 11). Similarly, in the tomb of *Ny-ʿnḫ-Ḫnmw* and *Ḫnmw-ḥtp*, one scene (Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 23) depicts a woman grinding whilst her child grabs at her, a distraction to which she replies *mk wi mk wi mry* ('Look, I'm [here], look, I'm [here], my love'). Furthermore, a scene in TT217 (Fig. 31) depicts two boys scaring off birds from some grain, with one sat eating the grain rather than assisting.
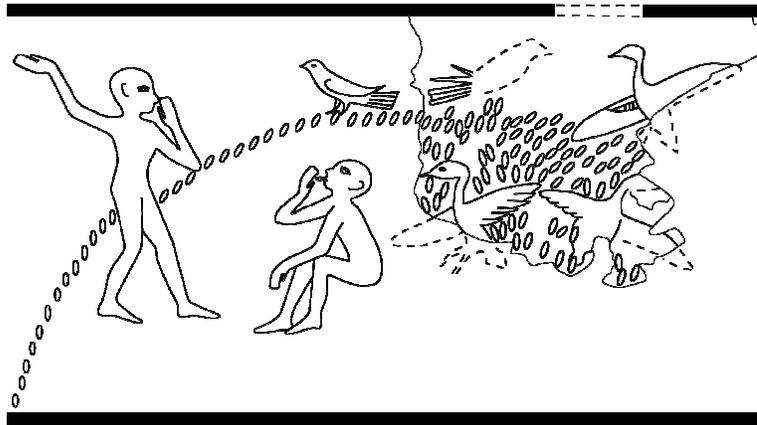
FIG. 31: TWO BOYS SCARING BIRDS, TT217 (AFTER DE GARIS DAVIES 1927: PL. 30)

Ethnographic examples alone cannot be used as evidence for how children at Deir el-Medina learnt domestic or economic roles. However, ethnographic evidence of the age of introduction into work does seem to match broadly universal developmental thresholds. As with trainee craftsmen, it is therefore taken here that practice at Deir el-Medina was for children to begin domestic economic involvement from around age 5. Whilst in part biological, this could also have social underpinnings. It has been suggested that children were born on average every 5 years (Koltsida 2007: 12 Note 72); at this point, the new child would require the mother's attention, transferring elder siblings to the daily routines of adults and other peers.

Apprenticeship and child learning are usually discussed in the context of pottery production (Deal 1998; Crown 1999, 2001, 2014; Kamp *et al.* 1999; Kamp 2001b; Bagwell 2002; Wendrich 2010). Skills would have been taught as early as possible, with the need to train children greater the more pottery a household produced (Hayden and Cannon 1984: 360). When searching for examples of children's work, attribution of pots to children is usually based on crudity, unevenness, or small size, which are considered indicative of still-developing motor skills and conceptual abilities (Smith 2006: 67-8). There are two main elements to learning pottery production: cognitive skills, or understanding theoretical templates, and motor skills, learning to work with the material (Baxter 2005: 53). However, without contextual evidence such as fingerprints (Kamp *et al.* 1999; Bagwell 2002) it is difficult to know if the creator was a young trainee or simply a trainee; poor quality still results from undeveloped fine motor skills, but the difference is between physical limitations and lack of practice (see Ferguson 2008 for problems with equating 'novice' and 'child'). The type of teaching provided to learners can perhaps be traced through learner's pottery styles, with 'scaffolding and observation' encouraging tradition and conservatism, and 'independent trial and error' more likely to foster innovation (Greenfield and Lave 1982).

Although the above is a basic framework for exploring children's involvement in making pottery, this is not discussed further here. Partly, this is because of lack of access to a physical corpus to undertake visual analysis such as for fingerprints. Partly, it is because this study is concerned with the child's role as member of an average Deir el-Medina household, and it does not seem that pottery making typically occurred in houses. Potters formed part of the *smd.t* labourers, bringing regular supplies of ceramics to the village (Janssen 1975a: 485-8; Frood 2003). This may have been accompanied by private production and trade, but evidence is inconclusive. Remains of a pottery workshop were found at only one house, SE1 (Bruyère 1939: 264).

Of greater relevance here are the initial stages of learning—the peripheral tasks such as observing and gathering raw materials—as these relate to the production of other clay items which occurred within a domestic context, such as figurines. Although 'learner-pots' form the focus of most archaeological exploration, they are actually a relatively small part of the learning sequence. The child's introduction to the process, and progressing through peripheral supportive tasks, is just as fundamental. However, being harder to find evidence, it is often overlooked. The peripheral tasks related to clay-based activities have partly been discussed previously, in the context of figurine production, with potential evidence of children's

experimentation such as the clay 'shapes' found by Bruyère (1933: 16-17). Also worth discussing are figured ostraca O.MM 14056 and O.Berlin 51 (Appendix 3). These seemingly depict children helping to finish pots by smoothing or burnishing (Peterson 1974: 89; Lesko 1994: 25). The hairstyle of these children, as discussed in Chapter 6, indicates that these scenes were intended to depict young children. These ostraca therefore provide a visual demonstration of the principles of LPP, with young children performing peripheral tasks at either end of the *chaîne opératoire*—which still allowed them to observe, and physically engage with, the material—rather than contributing to the manufacturing proper.

In order to further understand children's roles within household economy, the nature and locations of household activities must be understood. This relates to broader social structures. Space use in ancient Egypt was shaped by various aspects of identity, with areas structured dependant on gender or class (Sweeney 2011: 4). Grøn (1991: 2) argues that certain universal habits affect space use; for example, household members might have fixed positions for seating, reflecting age, sex or familial hierarchy. Children's experience of domestic space is therefore informed by, and in turn reinforces, their gender, class or even ethnicity, as the social structures dictating the location and membership of household activities also underline the scope for children's participation.

Given the limited evidence from Deir el-Medina, the following analysis of household activities also draws on supplementary evidence from the 18th Dynasty Amarna workmen's village, a comparable planned settlement with houses arranged along a similar floor plan.

Much labour occurred in the front room, of which weaving was a large component. This is true not just of Deir el-Medina; TT104, the tomb of *Ḏḥwty-nfr*, depicts a house with weaving and spinning occurring on the ground floor (Fig. 32), though such depictions must be used cautiously as they represent idealised houses (Roik 1988: 54). Material related to weaving was commonly found in the front rooms of houses at the Amarna workmen's village, including holes and posts for looms, spindle whorls, needles and pins (Peet and Woolley 1929). Although statistical comparison of provenanced assemblages from the two sites suggests similarities in material found within front rooms (Koltsida 2007: Fig 2.4a-b), there is simply not the same level of information about material from Deir el-Medina, and houses did not have permanent weaving emplacements. However, even without these, weaving was an intensive activity at Deir el-Medina. Many texts reference garments being produced, bought

and sold independently of the state (Valbelle 1985a: 249-50; Eyre 1987b: 220-1, 1998: 182). It was an important industry.
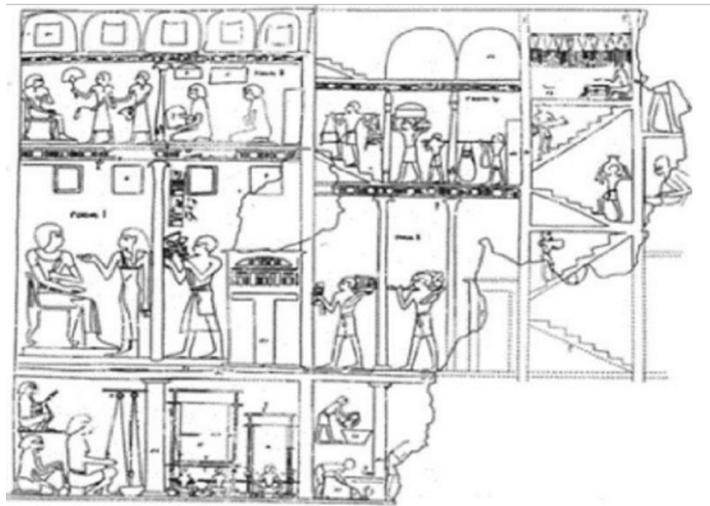
FIG. 32: DEPICTION OF A HOUSE WITH WEAVING ON THE GROUND FLOOR, TT104, THEBES, DYNASTY 18 (DE GARIS DAVIES 1929: FIG. 1)

Textile production incorporated two main stages: preparing the raw material through growing and harvesting, and manipulating the material into a finished product. Much evidence suggests that these stages were gendered, with men involved in the first agricultural stage, and women in the second (Szpakowska 2008: 82). Regarding the first stage, several of the workmen owned land (McDowell 1992); it is possible that children helped with farming. Indeed, harvesting scenes in tombs often depict men and boys together. Typical tasks shown being performed by children include gleaning and sweeping, as in TT38 (de Garis Davies 1963: Pl. 2), TT69 (Hartwig 2013: Fig. 2.3), and the tomb of *P3-ḥry* at el-Kab (Tylor and Griffith 1894: Pl. 3), all 18th Dynasty. Other tasks are also shown, such as scaring birds away. This motif is found as early as the Old Kingdom, in the tomb of *Ny-ꜥnḫ-Ḫnmw* and *Ḫnmw-ḥtp* (Moussa and Altenmüller 1977: Pl. 22); it appears frequently in the New Kingdom, as at the tomb of *S3-Mw.t* (Wilkinson 1878: 381 Fig. 156; Manniche 1988: 96-7) and TT217 (Fig. 30).

However, whilst agricultural scenes typically show male children, one of the figures in TT38 appears to be a young girl, and two young girls are also shown fighting in the harvesting

scenes in TT69.[66] Although of Late Period date, a scene in the tomb of *P3-di-Wsir* (Lefebvre 1923: Pl. 13) also shows a young girl gleaning alongside a man, presumably her father. In ethnographic studies, whilst older children tend to perform labour based around gender divisions, that of young children is less structured, and young girls are often found in the fields alongside fathers (Granqvist 1947: 131; Ammar 1954: 31; Janssen and Janssen 1990: 49). Possibly, a similar principle can be seen here.

Regardless of gender, the tasks shown are all peripheral, helping with subsidiary elements of the harvesting process rather than the main task. The scene in the tomb of *P3-di-Wsir* especially demonstrates the role of such peripheral tasks as a form of practical teaching, through explaining the purpose of the material and the job. The caption reads *iw nt nty m ꜥ.wy=t sḏ3[m]=f ḥꜥ.w=t* ('that which is in your arms will clothe your body').

For the second stage, at least artistically, a strict gender-separation seems mainly to apply to earlier periods. Before the New Kingdom, evidence firmly connects women with weaving (Cartwright *et al.* 1998); from the New Kingdom, depictions often show men (Lorenz 2009: 100; Graves-Brown 2010: 78). This difference has been suggested to be connected with the change from horizontal to vertical looms in the Second Intermediate Period (Cartwright *et al.* 1998: 92-3; Lorenz 2009: 100). However, Deir el-Medina texts imply that there at least it was largely women who continued to weave (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 233-4; Sweeney 2006: 140, 142; Lorenz 2009: 100) as a form of cottage industry. The question is therefore whether Deir el-Medina is unrepresentative, or if depictions do not reflect reality and in practice weaving continued to be a predominantly female activity.

Evidence for reconstructing children's involvement is limited. Although it is unclear whether weaving knowledge was entirely female-controlled at Deir el-Medina, young boys did not necessarily learn to weave. By the point at which they would developmentally be able to learn (Greenfield 2000: 81), they would already be engaging with the work of the craftsmen, who were often away in any case. Regarding evidence, a scene in TT133 (de Garis Davies 1948: Pl. 35) shows a weaving workshop, in which the top register depicts women and a child bringing bundles of thread to be weighed. Otherewise, two First Intermediate Period tombs

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[66] However, the fighting girls in TT69 reflect a motif more than agricultural reality. An identical scene appears in TT34, the Late Period tomb of *Mnṯw-m-ḥ3.t* (Kantor 1960). Interestingly, another motif, that of the woman picking fruit whilst caring for a child (Fig. 26 above) is also shared specifically between these tombs (Cooney 1960: Pl. 14).

from Beni Hasan, 15 and 17 (Fig. 33; Newberry 1893b: Pl. 4, 13), depict children alongside female weavers.[67] These scenes are not entirely comparable to Deir el-Medina, as they are of much earlier date and involve the earlier horizontal loom, but they still offer insight into how children were introduced to weaving. Children cannot begin weaving straight away; they need to gain an understanding of the material and processes, both through watching others work, and learning to tactically engage with the raw materials. The Beni Hasan scenes possibly suggest how children started learning. Their activity is captioned *dkr*, which has been interpreted as making the string stronger in preparation for the loom, by doubling the thread drawn out of the bowls and twisting it around a spindle (Miller 1989: 249).[68] This was still necessary for vertical looms, and so it is entirely possible that this was the sort of task entrusted to small children at Deir el-Medina (see McDowell 1986: 234-8 for a summary of the weaving process). Furthermore, at several sites, balls of thread have been found wound around pottery sherds (Cartland 1918) or clay cores (Petrie 1917: 53, Pl. 65). Although none were recovered from Deir el-Medina, it is not impossible that a similar means of gathering thread was employed; if all that remained was the repurposed sherd, this would not necessarily be visible.
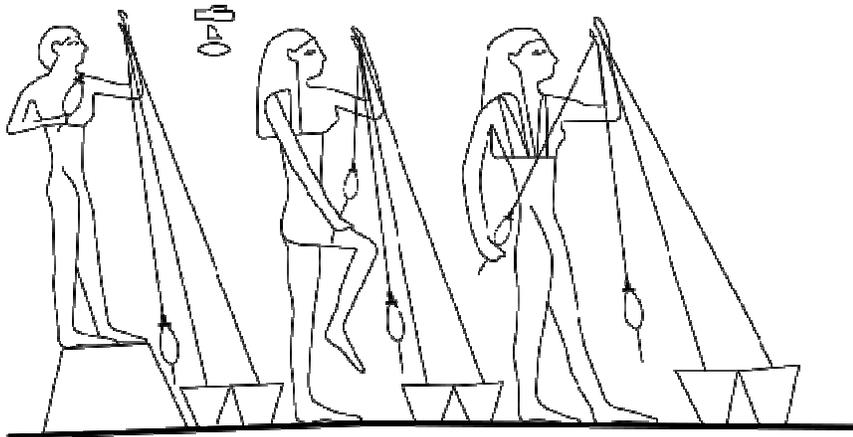
FIG. 33: WEAVING SCENE, TOMB 15, BENI HASAN, DYNASTY 11 (AFTER NEWBERRY 1893B: PL. 4)

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[67] These have traditionally been interpreted as male, but Vogelsang-Eastwood and van Haeringen (1992: 95) convincingly argue that they are female.

[68] The process is likely related to the medical term *dkr*, which refers to the process of removing the guinea-worm by gradually winding it around a stick (Miller 1989: 249-50).

Before beginning to learn how to use looms, it is probable that these sorts of tasks were entrusted to young children. They form an early part of the *chaîne opératoire,* enabling the child to observe and contribute without risk of derailing the process. It also enabled them to physically engage with the material and build relevant motor skills, as well as the general dexterity that was unconsciously encouraged by such tasks. Although generally a female sphere, it is possible that boys also participated in these peripheral tasks whilst still young enough to be based around the home and care-givers. In this way, the skills taught would also be relevant to their futures—for example, learning to make rope (Barber 1994: 194; Szpakowska 2008: 85; for rope at Deir el-Medina see Janssen 1975a: 438-40). Men are frequently depicted spinning in the New Kingdom, using fibres which seem to be heavier duty than for weaving, perhaps indicating rope (Capel and Markoe 1996: 188).

Weaving was not the only economic activity occurring in front rooms. Evidence for animal keeping was relatively common at Amarna (Peet and Woolley 1929: 60), and it is possible that it was also more common at Deir el-Medina than remaining evidence suggests. Texts indicate that pigs, fowl, cattle and donkeys were kept within the village (Janssen 1975a: 165-79). Care of small livestock has traditionally been a role undertaken by women (Eyre 1998: 186-7); O.DEM 569 (KRI V: 568-9) and O.DEM 582 (KRI V: 575-6) indicate that women were involved with care of donkeys. At the Amarna village, many other tools were also found in front rooms—axes, mallets, blades and drills, suggesting a wide range of activities. Peet and Woolley (1929: 60) called the front room a "general utility room" because of this. However, these may relate to discard during abandonment rather than typical activity; although the front rooms were multi-purpose, this was a lot of concurrent activity for such a small space. Koltsida (2007: Fig 2.4a-b) illustrates that tools and weaving equipment were actually outnumbered by 'ritual' items such as figurines. Possibly, this reflects recording biases; ritual items were given greater importance by excavators and therefore recorded more accurately, creating a larger provenanced sample. However, possibly, such figurines reflect ritual activities occurring in the front room, given the discussion above. This again highlights the versatility of space use.

Directly behind the front room, the second room was typically the largest, and generally had a divan or bench. These had no clear orientation, but in more than two thirds of examples, lay against the front wall (Koltsida 2007: 50). Although hearths were typical at the Amarna workmen's village, there is little comparable information for Deir el-Medina. However, this

could simply reflect careless publication. The publication of NE7 shows a possible hearth, but it is not mentioned in the report (Koltsida 2007: 51 Note 181).

These emplacements suggest that the second room was primarily a 'living' rather than work space. This is corroborated by Koltsida (2007: Fig. 3.9a), where drinking and dining equipment, ornaments, games and ritual figurines were common, but comparatively fewer tools. It is likely that socialising and eating occurred here, and possibly even sleeping, as the number of beds could not accommodate all presumed occupants (Koltsida 2007: 85, 91). We might assume that whilst children used these communal living areas, their circulation was controlled because of potential dangers. The most obvious danger would be a hearth if present, but entrances to cellars could also be a potential hazard. Many houses had staircases into a cellar, sometimes under a wood or stone trap-door, and access may have been restricted.[69] However, as discussed below in the context of kitchens, modern ideas of children and danger do not necessarily apply to Deir el-Medina.

Although a living space, this is not to say that no work occurred. At other sites, the second room is believed to have been a location for transactions and meetings with the head of the household (Spence 2010: 291), and practice is likely to have been the same at Deir el-Medina. P.Cairo 65739 (Gardiner 1935) indicates that the sale of servants sometimes took place within houses; it is likely that such matters occurred in this room. If children were present, they would have witnessed and learnt about transactions, and also had social ideas about relative social status reinforced, enculturating the child about their place in society.

The rear rooms varied greatly in size, but were typically the most private area of households. They usually numbered two, though some houses had more.[70] These rooms are generally described as a 'kitchen' and 'bedroom'; one usually had a dais which is typically interpreted as a bed. However, this again reflects modern assumptions of single-purpose rooms; the labels 'kitchen' and 'bedroom' colour interpretation. House NE15 had two niches and a false door in the 'bedroom', so sleeping cannot have been the only activity. It is possible that one use of these rooms was for storage; the back room in NE8 incorporated a storage pit, and several houses had steps down to a cellar from these rooms.[71] At Amarna, precious objects were kept here, and tools were rarely found, though spinning may have taken place (Koltsida 2007: 98).

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[69] NE1, NE4, NE5, NW5, NW10, NW12, NW15, NW16, NW24, C3, SW2.

[70] NE3, NE5, SW5, SW6.

[71] NE9, NE10, NE15, C7, SW1, SW5, SW6.

It is probable, however, that sleeping was a primary activity in the rear, most private part of the house. It is unknown if sleeping locations were socially informed—after Grøn (1991), we might expect them to be regulated by age or 'importance' within the household, but spatial constraints might have overruled this.

The other room is typically interpreted as a 'kitchen' (Bruyère 1939: 72-8). Mortars were found in many houses,[72] and items associated with food preparation such as jars or cooking tools were found in the highest quantities here (Koltsida 2007: 115, Fig. 5.4-5.5). Grinding and storage equipment was typically aligned along one long wall, and the oven either in front of the other, or in a corner. This was presumably functional, allowing circulation in a constrained space (Koltsida 2007: 121).

Food preparation was vital for children to learn, in preparation for adult life. It is highly complex, involving multiple stages; Goody (1982: 36-7) groups these as procurement, storage, preparation, consumption, and disposal. Of these, preparation and disposal are the most likely to leave traces; preparation is particularly relevant, as its location and participation reflect social relations (Samuel 1999: 125).

Although texts reveal what supplies families received, we have little knowledge of what was cooked, or how. The one area that can be reconstructed with some certainty is breadmaking. As the most basic foodstuff, bread was invested with social meaning, but also an important part of daily life (Samuel 1999: 125). The inhabitants of Deir el-Medina were given grain rations, from which bread and beer were made, but some villagers also had access to private agricultural resources (McDowell 1992) allowing a certain level of self-sufficiency. Although impossible to trace, it is possible that, given the ethnic diversity of the village and relative range of wealth, certain ingredients or preparation facilities were not available to all.

Food preparation such as bread-making is typically associated with females, with young girls gradually being trained to bake (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 224). In modern Egypt, this happens around 9-10 years (Fakhouri 1987: 63; Hoodfar 1997: 167). Although depictions of bread-making in tombs show both male and female involvement, the individual processes such as grinding are most associated with women (Tanner 1965: 68), as illustrated by O.Prague 1826 (Černý and Gardiner 1957: Pl. 70.2), a request that the sister of the writer grind some emmer

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[72] NE3, NE5, NE7, NE9, NE10, SE2, NW2, NW9, C4, SW5, SW6.

and make bread. At Deir el-Medina, it is believed to have been one of the roles of the female servants (Černý 1973: 177; Robins 1993: 118). However, like most depictions, those of baking come from an elite milieu. As demonstrated with weaving, it cannot be assumed that depictions accurately reflect the practices of society more generally. Men clearly accessed the 'kitchen', even just to use the staircase. Similarly, the official title 'baker' (*rtḥ.ty*) is only ever associated with men in surviving evidence (Robins 1993: 119) and so there is some contradiction.

Again, it is possible that, as with weaving, young children of both genders—who had not yet been formally socialised into their roles—would have assisted in bread-making. Fig. 34 summarises two possible reconstructions of the process. In both, there is room for children's involvement in peripheral tasks. Ammar (1954: 30) noted how mothers would begin teaching their children by allowing them to form and bake loaves from scraps, which they could then eat, combining work and play. This sort of practice would not necessarily be recoverable. P.Anastasi II also attests to children's involvement in baking. Lines 8.3-4 (LEM: 16) read *p3 rtḥ.ty ꜥḥꜥ ḥr ḳnf ḥr ḫ3ꜥ ꜥḳ.w r t3 ḫ.t iw ḏ3ḏ3=f m-ẖnw t3 trr mḥ s3 rd.wy=fy sp n why m-dr.t s3=f h3y=f im m mḳꜥr* ('the baker stands baking, throwing loaves into the fire, his head inside of the oven. His son holds his feet. On the occasion that he slips from his son's hands, he falls into the fire-box'), although presumably the son in this instance was older, illustrating how children of different ages would have different engagements with the baking process. As with hearths, we might assume that children would have been restricted from being near open ovens; although hyperbolic, P.Anastasi II shows that this was not the case, and children were around and involved with these emplacements.

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┌─────────────────┐              ┌─────────────────┐
│ Cereal winnowed │              │  Grain cleaned  │
└─────────────────┘              │   by sieving    │
         │                       └─────────────────┘
         ▼                                │
┌─────────────────┐                       ▼
│ Pounded and ground │            ┌─────────────────┐
│ on saddle quern;   │            │ Ground to flour │
│ crushed grain obtained │        │   in mortar     │
└─────────────────┘              └─────────────────┘
         │                                │
         ▼                                ▼
┌─────────────────┐              ┌─────────────────┐
│ Cribbled and sieved with │     │ Sieved to remove│
│ rush or papyrus sieves;  │     │   impurities    │
│ largely wholemeal        │     └─────────────────┘
│ flour obtained           │              │
└─────────────────┘                       ▼
         │                       ┌─────────────────┐
         ▼                       │     Milled      │
┌─────────────────┐              └─────────────────┘
│ Kneaded by hand │                       │
│    or foot      │                       ▼
└─────────────────┘              ┌─────────────────┐
         │                       │ Flour mixed with│
         ▼                       │ water (leavened │
┌─────────────────┐              │  at some stage) │
│ Add salt or spices │           └─────────────────┘
└─────────────────┘                       │
         │                                ▼
         ▼                       ┌─────────────────┐
┌─────────────────┐              │  Dough baked    │
│ Yeast added; semi- │          └─────────────────┘
│ solid preparation  │
└─────────────────┘
         │
         ▼
┌─────────────────┐
│  Dough baked    │
└─────────────────┘
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FIG. 34: POSSIBLE FORMS OF THE *CHAÎNE OPÉRATOIRE* FOR BREAD PRODUCTION (AFTER SAMUEL 1999: FIG. 22.1B)

Most preparation probably took place in the 'kitchen'. If servants performed most of the work, it has been suggested that this location would reflect and reinforce their lower social status (Meskell 1998: 235). However, grinding emplacements were inconsistently placed within houses (for querns at Deir el-Medina generally see Bruyère 1939: 75-8, 1953: 96-101). In some, a quern was found in the second room, either freestanding or sunk into the floor,[73] and in some cases they were even in the front room. Assuming this reflects use-life and not abandonment, Koltsida (2007: 140) hypothesises that this location reflects a desire to keep servants from entering the inner house and finding reasons to gossip about the families' private lives. Unfortunately, these elements of the 'performativity' of bread making cannot be reconstructed, although they would influence children's involvement and who they engaged with. However, if children were involved in preparatory tasks, given spatial constraints it might have made practical sense to have different stages occur in different parts of the house (Samuel 1999: 138).

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[73] NE6, NE10, NE19.

A final, fundamental element of houses was roofs. Roofs fundamentally alter space use, especially when interior space is limited, but are often omitted in analysis (though see Spence 2004). No roof fragments were found in front rooms, and few houses (NE15, SE3) had staircases there. Bruyère (1939: 54-5) suggested there were thin, light-permeable roofs made of palm trunks, and Koltsida (2007: 40, 43) no roof at all, though Weiss (2015) argues the opposite.[74] Second rooms were generally columned and roofed, with the access presumably being the stairways found in the back rooms. Not all houses had stairs, however, and so it is unclear whether roofs would have been used in these instances, or maybe accessed externally. As will be discussed in Chapter 10, the dimensions of streets and alleys suggest somewhat restricted movement, so it has been proposed that roofing was contiguous, connecting households (Bonnet and Valbelle 1975: 444; Meskell 1994b: 199, 2002: 40).

The activities taking place on roofs are unclear. At Amarna, deposits were sometimes found atop roof layers, assumed to have come from collapse events. They were probably used for sitting, perhaps under a canopy (Peet and Woolley 1929: 56), and possibly sleeping in warm weather. Storage also occurred, as shown in Fig. 31. Whilst in such depictions rooms such as cellars were shown abnormally large, reflecting the owner's ideal house, the use of roofs as a storage space is unlikely to have been completely fabricated. Today in Egypt, animals are often kept on roofs, and they are used for drying clothes (Fakhouri 1987: 18; Hivernel 1996: 23-4). However, reconstructing such activities archaeologically is impossible. Ultimately, the activities performed on roofs depend on available space, and this is simply unknown. It has even been suggested that atop the roof was another room (Koltsida 2007: 133-4), but this is completely speculative (McDowell 1999: 12).

To finish, children's economic involvement also extended beyond the household space. One example of this is acting as couriers. Because the crew were often away, they sent letters back to the village, or the valley, asking for goods (Wente 1990: 133). Doorkeepers frequently acted as couriers, carrying messages (O.UC 39661 73 lines 3-4; KRI VI: 170), or bringing gifts (O.Berlin 12654 verso 8; KRI VI: 345). Policemen also acted in this capacity. P.BM 75020 verso 8 (Demarée 2006: 20, Pl. 19) reads *iw=i ḥꜣb r rdi.t ꜥmꜣ=tn m-dr.t mꜥḏꜣy Ḥd-nḫ.t n pꜣ ḫr* ('I have sent [a letter] to let you know, with the policeman *Ḥd-nḫ.t* of the necropolis'), and on O.Wente lines 3-5 (Wente 1990: 143 No. 188, 1996) the 'chief of police' (*ḥry-mḏꜣy*)

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[74] It is more accepted that kitchens were unroofed, in order to allow smoke to escape. At the Amarna workmen's village, very few kitchen walls were blackened, implying either no or a very light cover; whilst there is no real evidence at Deir el-Medina, the same is assumed (Koltsida 2007: 114).

Mntw-ms is asked *wḫȝ wˁ ˁnḫ n tȝy=i rmṯ.t nty mr.ti mtw=k mḥ im=f* ('find a goat for my wife who is ill, and take it [for me]').[75]

Several texts reveal that children were also entrusted with delivering letters or running errands, increasing their sphere of activity beyond the household. This activity contributed to the economy of the site in a substantial way, given the number of transactions and conversations preserved on ostraca; children's contribution here was possibly even more important than that within households. Depending on the level of work given to children in this way, they might have been outside the immediate space of houses for significant periods of time.

The use of children for small tasks is common in non-modern Western societies; our very word 'errand boy' comes from this idea. In a community as close-knit as Deir el-Medina, gift-giving between families and neighbours was a common part of daily life (Janssen 1982a; Jauhiainen 2009: 258-64), and for the myriad questions which needed asking, children were a ready-to-hand resource. Texts attesting to the use of children as couriers are: O.DEM 123; O.Qurna 634/3; O.UC 39627; and P.DEM 2. There are three further possible cases: P.BM 75019 and O.DEM 608, but as the individuals here are called *šri* rather than *ˁdd*, it is unclear whether these were children or just 'the son of'; and P.DEM 33, if the arrival of the *ˁdd* was to deliver the message of which the writer speaks.

It is only by unintended chance that second-hand mentions of this work are preserved; it was not a level of activity otherwise seen as worth recording. Similarly, acting as a messenger is never explicitly depicted visually in tomb scenes of economic activities. However, a possible parallel can be seen in the First Intermediate Period tomb of *Ppy-ˁnḫ* at Meir, where one scene shows a child handing two workmen various items. He ordered to summon the others to eat, to which his response is *iry=i*, 'I will do' (Blackman and Apted 1953: Pl. 30). Similarly, in the 5th Dynasty mastaba of *Ḥtp-ḥr-ȝḫ.t* at Saqqara (Boeser 1905: 11-19, Pl. 5-21) a child is shown giving an adult a vessel to drink from, possibly having been tasked with bringing it. It is not therefore that child couriers were unique to Deir el-Medina; they are also referred to on P.Cairo 58059 (KRI III: 251-2) line 5 and P.Anastasi IX (KRI III: 504-8; Wente 1990: 122-3) verso 2. Rather, it was an activity that typically left no physical traces, as even the messages

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[75] It is unknown whether these were personal favours, or simply part of the policeman's duties.

themselves were usually verbal. The frequency of its mention at Deir el-Medina is due only to the unusually high number of texts.

The identity of these children is uncertain. Ethnographic examples suggest that those around 5 to 7 are typically tasked with delivering errands, as part of their peripheral introduction to work. Indeed, this age group are often seen as ideal messengers, being less easily embarrassed, more inquisitive, and likely to repeat messages faithfully (Ammar 1954: 30). As was discussed in Chapter 4, there is little way of reconstructing biological age from vocabulary. However, perhaps of interest is the forgetful child on O.DEM 123. McDowell (1999: 29) has previously suggested that they were young—as her translation of *bw ir.t p3 ꜥḏd gm=f* as "the boy is too muddled to find it" implies, this incidental detail perhaps suggests something as to the youth of the child. It is not unbelievable that a young child sent on an errand would find their attention wandering, or not listen fully, and thus be 'unable to find' what was said upon his return. Similarly, on O.DEM 608, the writer thought it necessary to check that the goods had been delivered by his *šri*; perhaps this also suggests that they were young, and not entirely reliable. Psychologically, giving this role to young children would enable them to both exert some independence, but also enact adult role-play, both of which are developmentally important.

It is unclear if the children were rewarded for their services; only O.UC 39627 suggests some form of payment. If rewarding did occur, there would have been some level of trust placed in the courier to successfully complete the errand, unless they were paid upon return. It is possible that the age of the child entrusted depended on the scale of task or distance involved, but this may also be biased by modern ideas about not letting children stray too far from the house. In Granqvist's study (1947: 131-2), those as young as eight or nine were allowed to travel far distances alone when delivering messages. The geographical remit of children will he discussed further in Chapter 10.

Considering gender, ethnographically, both boys and girls are often entrusted with errands, as those tasked are before the age of formal gender divisions in labour (Granqvist 1947: 131; Ammar 1954: 31). it is interesting that all references at Deir el-Medina are to males (*p3 ꜥḏd*). However, this could simply be a chance of preservation, given the small sample size. That boys were employed might also suggest that they were young enough to still be around the domestic sphere, rather than becoming integrated with the craftsmen. After this point, and as boys began learning to become artisans, errands would presumably be tasked increasingly to

female children by those in the household, and to males by the workmen, reinforcing gender separations.

8.3 Conclusions

Both primary evidence from houses themselves, and secondary sources, offer a surprising scope for discussion of the roles of children as household members. Religiously, they would have observed and participated in ritual activities, gradually inculcating them with the knowledge to continue these in their own lives. Economically, they were involved in the *chaîne opératoire* of many crafts, with sources suggesting a practical introduction through 'peripheral' tasks. That these same ideas are displayed in art and text across Egyptian history suggests an enduring way of introducing children to labour.

Children's participation in household activities was important not only for daily life, but also cultural perpetuation, and so the very act of discussing these themes is important as it reframes investigation to consider typically ignored, but fundamental, aspects of life. However, analysis has also highlighted the limitations of reconstructing children's involvement practically, especially in the context of ritual activities.

A key structuring element of household activities seems to have been gender. The strongest interpretation comes from Meskell, who argues that the front room of houses was predominantly associated with female themes, and the second with male (1998: 221-6, 229-31, 2002: 125, Table 4.1). However, this interpretation is not universally agreed upon. Kleinke (2007: 73-5) argues that use of rooms cannot have been restricted to one sex or the other, and that one of Meskell's main strands of evidence—emplacements for fertility and ancestor cults—were the domain of both sexes. Weiss (2009: 202) suggests that decoration does not reflect a primarily female sphere in the front room, and Koltsida (2007: 92) argues for use by both men and women of the second room, especially as men were away so often. Even if domestic spaces were *more* associated with one gender, this would not exclude the occurrence of activities by both (Sweeney 2011: 4). Rooms were multi-functional, and used by both genders, even if females were the primary house occupants.

Although a 'formal' segregation of space by gender is unlikely, a gendered distribution of knowledge within domestic tasks themselves might be expected. After Hutchins (1991: 306),

"even the simplest culture contains more information than could be learned by any individual in a lifetime". The amount of separation between male and female spheres of daily activity would in turn affect distribution of information and child care (Keith 2006: 27). It seems that most household crafts were the preserve of females, simply by virtue of their being the main occupants most of the time, and daughters would learn and continue these. The male's role lay beyond the household, with the craftsmen. However, ritual activities overlapped gender spheres. There is evidence for activities undertaken by both genders, most noticeably the ancestor cult. Nonetheless, most female involvement went unrecorded, as artistic and textual sources emphasise male activities. There is a lack of explicit textual records for ritual procedures generally; this itself might suggest that a significant portion of the daily ritual knowledge was the preserve of females.

As children aged, their enculturation into gendered activities became more pronounced. However, it seems that for the very young, participation was not so strictly gendered. In early life, as children of both genders relied more heavily on caregivers, the focus for both was the domestic sphere. Male infants would learn through observation of the mother's activities before being socialised into the 'male' world, and it is possible that young male children also helped with domestic labour, in some cases developing skills and training that would be usable in later life. This is entirely in keeping with ethnographic studies (Granqvist 1947: 131; Ammar 1954: 31; Janssen and Janssen 1990: 49).

Discussion has also emphasised how children's participation in domestic activities took them beyond the household sphere. It is important here to consider that, especially for males, most of the time was spent working in the Valley. During the working week, the craftsmen slept in huts on the route; a large portion of mens' lives would have been spent here, and there is evidence that both craft and ritual activities occurred in these spaces (Meskell 2000c: 266). There is also some indication that the nature of these activities was also different to that within households; for example, the goddess Meretseger is far more commonly found on stelae from huts than in the village (Dorn 2011: 105). Given the scope of this study, and limited evidence, the workman's huts have not received dedicated discussion, but future work could profitably consider them as arenas for the enculturation of older male children, and how this might have differed from the domestic experience of females and younger males.

Inevitably, the gendering of knowledge is hard to reconstruct entirely, given the inherent male bias to documentary evidence. That said, the preceding discussion has highlighted the

existence of female knowledge control in several areas, both economic and ritual, attesting to a wider female world invisible within documentary sources. It is unfortunate that aspects most fundamental to daily life are often the least accessible archaeologically.

The following Chapter maintains analysis predominantly at the household level. However, moving from activities involving children, it will consider children's relationships with other members of the household and society, and how these influenced their development and social knowledge.

9. THE CHILD AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Most socialisation, especially in early life, occurs at the familial level. As today, the family was the fundamental social unit in ancient Egypt. This dynamic was reflected in wider society; in didactic literature, the word *it* 'father' was often used of teachers, and *sꜣ* 'son' their pupils (Lazaridis 2010: 3; Polis 2017: 92). The family therefore formed a crucial element of a child's 'becoming'.

The fundamental relationship for young children is with their parents. Parents provide various important stimuli for development: cognitive and linguistic experiences—encouraging communication and providing visual and auditory stimuli; emotional well-being through physical contact; and continuity and stability through routines (Rebello Britto *et al.* 2002: 117). The parent-child relationship continued throughout life in ancient Egypt; O.UC 39619 (KRI VI: 430-1) describes how a man's son cared for him during illness. However, these dynamics are not static. As the child grows and progressively gains autonomy, the dialectic with other family members changes (Lett 2001: 391). Unfortunately, there is inevitably more evidence for relationships between parents and adult children than parents and younger children (Harlow and Laurence 2010: 5-6).

The basic unit at Deir el-Medina was not the nuclear family. Large extended families and dependants often co-habited the same space. Estimates of family size vary; Valbelle (1985b: 84) suggested 3 to 5 occupants, and Kemp (2005: 157) up to 6. Davies (1999) shows that families had numerous children, but it is impossible to tell relative ages; not all may have lived in the same house at the same time. Koltsida (2007: 12) agrees with around 2 to 3 children plus parents at any time. However, when dependant relatives are factored in, and possibly servants as discussed in Chapter 2, households could have anywhere between 5 to 8 occupants, if not more. Although the Egyptian ideal was to marry and start one's own family—P.Boulaq IV line 19.6 reads *iw ḳd n=k pr gm=k*, 'build yourself a house or find [one]' (Quack 1994: 300)—the reality was often different, with multiple generations living together. Indeed, Bonnet and Valbelle (1975) argue that although houses were assigned to workmen on a temporary basis, retirees and widows sometimes continued occupancy.

This exposed the child to a wider network of social relationships, and discussion of enculturation within the home must take this into account. Grandparent-grandchild, or even sibling-sibling relationships, are often ignored in discussion of past families in favour of

parent-child dynamics (though see Lett 2001, 2004; Rawson 2003: 239-40; Goldberg 2008; Harders 2010; Davidoff 2012). These may not all be recoverable in detail, but all contributed to the child's sense of membership to the family and social worlds, and must be recognised.

Problems with Egyptian kinship terminology were discussed in Chapter 4. Despite these limitations, this Chapter explores how children interacted with members of the family, and the influence of such relationships. In practice, relationships interconnect, rather than those with each family member being isolated. Numerous domestic activities required communal effort; as many as three spinners might be needed to prepare thread for a single loom worked by two weavers (Szpakowska 2008: 84), and families may have co-operated in bread production (Samuel 1999). Children involved in these processes would engage in several extended relationships concurrently. However, for ease, analysis will discuss these relationships separately.

9.1 FAMILIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Analysis of parent-child relationships is biased by the evidence—which, at least textually, is male-focused. There is a much clearer idea of familial relationships for, and expectations of, male children. It is possible that, just as there existed a corpus of literature in the form of advice from fathers to sons (Fischer 1982; Parkinson 1991), a similar body of wisdom existed for mothers and daughters, but transmitted orally (Robins 1994c: 234). Although boys could emulate their father's position, girls could not, and so another woman must have acted as a social role model. Analysis of female relationships must therefore look to other sources of evidence.

It is typically presumed that parent-child relationships were gendered. The previous discussion of labour at Deir el-Medina illustrated that the females' sphere was primarily within the village, and the males' in the world of the craftsmen beyond the household. Although women had many social freedoms, it suggests a society of distinctions between domestic and non-domestic, male and female, which colours perceptions of social relationships.

Gendering is probably true of older children. For males, a large part of socialisation was learning and preparing to take over the family, similar to the Roman concept of *pater familias*

(Harders 2010). O.Berlin 10627 line 11 indicates that fathers were expected to *sḫpr* ('cause to grow') their sons. Having children to continue one's lineage was vital, and there are cases of adoption by (presumably) childless couples (Davies 1999: 81-2). On O. Berlin 10630, the author praises the recipient for having acted as a father to him; in one instance, an adopted child *Ḥsy-sw-nb=f* named his own children after his surrogate parents (Janssen 1982b). However, there are also instances of wives being adopted as heirs, such as P.Geneva D.409 and P.Ashmolean 1945.96 (Gardiner 1941; Cruz-Uribe 1988; Allam 1990; Eyre 1992; Donker van Heel 2016-2017), demonstrating how individual situations could overrule social norms.

However, with younger children, infants of either gender were primarily cared for by the mother. The period of 'seclusion' post-partum, if reality, indicates that the child's strongest initial bond was with the mother; as discussed, the length of isolation is unknown, but estimates range from 14 to 40 days (Meskell 2002: 74). However, *Wochenlaube* scenes represent a ritualised motif, with the 'experience' of childcare distilled down to simple, visually recognisable elements. Indeed, it is important not to conflate 'care-giver' with 'woman'. In infancy, interactions need not have been strictly gendered; Roman evidence suggests that fathers were actively involved in caregiving (Rawson 2003: 140), and Mesopotamian incantations for sleepless children indicate that both parents shared responsibility (Harris 2000: 11). At Deir el-Medina, P.Turin 1880 suggests that a male widower cared for his three children with a wet-nurse (McDowell 1999: 36). This could be individual need overruling social norms, but possibly also reflects wider freedoms in child-care. The instructions of *Ḥr-ḏd=f* (P.Anastasi I, 11.1-12; Brunner-Traut 1940; Posener 1952) which are for *sꜣ=f mnꜥ=f* ('his son who he nurtured'), suggest that fathers were ideally involved in upbringing. That said, active and constant paternal involvement would seem incompatible with the male workforce being away from the site for extended periods of time.

Therefore, for all children in the first few years, the main parental dynamic was presumably female, but fathers would not have been absent from their children's lives, and presumably involved when present. There are indications that family events superseded work. Several workmen are recorded absent for their wife's birthing: *Ḥsy-sw-nb=f* (O.Cairo 25516 verso 17; KRI IV: 328, 384-7); *Kꜣsꜣ* (O.Cairo 25517 verso 6-7; KRI IV: 320-1); and *Mn-nfr-m-ḥb* (P.Turin 2044 verso II line 9; KRI VI: 340-3).

However, this may also be related to uncleanliness rather than familial attachment. In absence lists, men were also often off-work as a result of the *ḥsmn* of their wives and daughters

(examples are compiled by Wilfong 1999: Table 40.1; for absence lists generally see Janssen 1980). It is typically understood as menstruation (Frandsen 2007), but might instead relate to ritual purification, miscarriages, or even post-birth seclusion (Janssen 1980: 141-3; Toivari-Viitalal 2001: 162-8, 419-34; Jauhiainen 2009: 226, 285-6). In short, ḥsmn is an unclear word. Ḥsmn only occurs in relation to the wives and daughters of workmen, never mothers or sisters. Possibly, this is because mothers had already gone through menopause or died and sisters were already married and in the care of another (Frandsen 2007: 95), or because this event carried no sibling obligations (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 164). Equally problematic is that, regardless of the event to which ḥsmn refers, there are fewer instances recorded than would be expected (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 63). Granted, the absence lists do not cover all days, only those when individuals should be working, and the record is incomplete, but ḥsmn still accounts for less than 1% of absences (Austin 2015: Fig. 1). Possibly, poor recording is responsible, as in many lists the workmen are stated as absent without specific reasons. However, it may also be that ḥsmn was only recorded under special conditions (Wilfong 1999: 424). Janssen (1980: 141) alternatively suggest that the limited instances may be because women were usually either pregnant, or malnourished, affecting their menstrual cycles.

Whatever ḥsmn refers to, it seems that it had some effect on women and their environment, although it is unclear if they were seen as a danger, or *in* danger. In many cultures, menstruating women are considered dangerous (Frandsen 2007: 81), but the Satire of the Trades (P.Sallier II) column 8 lines 4-5 state that washermen were so lowly that they even had to wash the clothes of those menstruating (Helck 1970: 108).[76] This suggests that menstruation was considered negative, but not necessarily contaminating.

It is not clear whether women would stay in the house and men go elsewhere, or *vice versa*; several texts mention the 'place of women' in association with ḥsmn (Jauhiainen 2009: 285), and Wilfong (1999) and Colin (2001) argue that menstruating women went under the stairs. Either way, the picture is one of seclusion and separation. Frandsen (2007: 10) has suggested that this was specifically because of the nature of the craftsmen's work in the royal tomb—be that because of fears of contaminating its sanctity by workmen who had been in contact with menstruating women, or because menstruating women could themselves become

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[76] However, the line in question (*dd=f m dꜣiw s.t ḥm.t ḥr wnn.t m ḥsmn=s*) could alternatively be translated as 'he puts on the garment of a woman who was menstruating' (Janssen 1975a: 265). Either way, it indicates that washermen came into close contact with clothes of those menstruating.

contaminated through those who worked in a place of death. It is also unclear if contamination was considered a threat to all individuals, or if the workmen alone were concerned because of their nature of their work. In other words, were children also secluded from those menstruating? The answer to this is unknown, but fundamentally affects the amount of childcare time with the mother. Furthermore Frandsen (2007: 97) has suggested that absence during *ḥsmn* may have occurred when the women involved were away from home and so unable to do domestic work, requiring fathers or husbands to pick up their responsibilities; this would then lead to greater engagement with their children. Much about *ḥsmn* is unknown, but it has a significant impact on both the practicalities of child-rearing, and the extent of children's involvement in household labour during this period.

Tomb scenes including children (Appendix 4) corroborate the above principles. When depicted as deceased receiving offerings alongside their parents, children of either gender are predominantly situated beside the mother, as in TT 1 scene 1a-c and TT217 scene 3. In TT1 scene 2b a young girl *Tꜣ-iꜣ* stands with her father, but this is because the mother is not shown; the only other situation where a young child is placed with the father in this context is *Nbw-nfr.t* seated with her father *Imn-m-ḫꜣ.t* in TT340 scene 1. This suggests a stronger link to the mother in such contexts. It is tempting to suggest that, as the individuals receiving offerings were all deceased, the children were more likely to be younger, and so possibly still infants, which might explain stronger maternal associations. In processions of both children and adults carrying offerings, children are typically shown alongside relatives of the same gender. This can be seen in TT3 scene 2: *Pꜣ-šd.w* is alongside his son *ꜥꜣ-pḥ.ty,* whilst *Pꜣ-šd.w*'s wife *Ndm-bḥd.t* is alongside their granddaughter *Wr-n-r*. The same occurs on TT4 scene 3. Similarly, captions for children are typically gendered, reading either *sꜣ=f* ('his son') or *sꜣ.t=s* ('her daughter').

However, in some cases, daughters are shown alongside fathers. In TT3 scene 2, *Pꜣ-šd.w* worships alongside his young daughter *Nbw-nfr.t*; in TT 5 scene 2, a young girl is shown between the draughtsmen *Nfr-rnp.t* and *Mꜣꜣ.n=i-nḫ.t=f*, one of whom who is presumed to be her father. Similarly, there are infrequent cases where captions identify children in relation to the other parent, such as TT217 scene 3, TT250 scene 2, and an offering table of *Piꜣy* (KRI VII: 34-6). It is unclear what governed parental identification; in tomb 1138, a stela records captions as *sꜣ.t=f* and *sꜣ.t=s* ('his daughter and her daughter'), and Bruyère (1929:18) suggested that some of these identified children from of previous marriage, but this probably

does not account for all cases. More work is needed into the reasoning behind parental affiliation and association in tomb captions.[77]

Tomb scenes therefore suggest that even for young children, gender principles were present, but young boys especially were in an ambiguous state, often positioned alongside mothers. In certain respects, young males are artistically identified more closely with females; they often wear jewellery (TT 3 scene 1; TT 216 scene 2; TT 250 scene 3; TT 359 scenes 4, 5), which is typically not associated with adult males, only female and male children and female adults (Robins 2008, 2015: 126). This is not to say that all young children were gendered as 'female'. Rather, especially for males, their gender identities were not yet fully formed, and they were not fully incorporated into the male sphere. This possibly reflects their more domestic, care-given associations, in keeping with the previous Chapter.

The naming of children is worth considering here. In many cultures, name-giving is the role of a particular relative. In Rome, the maternal uncle bestowed it (Rawson 2003: 111), though presumably acting as an agent of the parents. In Egypt, it is uncertain who bestowed names, though it is assumed to have been the parents (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 186; Feucht 2001: 262). If so, presumably both parents provided input, but there is more evidence for maternal agency (Ranke 1937: 24; Posener 1970). That said, there are also examples of names seemingly chosen not by parents but others, such as *Sn.t=n-pw* 'This is our sister' and *Sn=i-ms.w* 'My brother is born' (for names relating to siblings see Ranke 1937: 308-11).

This leads to sibling interactions more generally. Especially in societies with high infant mortality and thus birth rates, these relationships are an intrinsic part of children's socialisation. Koltsida (2007: 12 Note 72) suggests that women at Deir el-Medina gave birth on average every five years, factoring in infant mortality and breastfeeding length; over the course of a woman's fertile life, Lesko (1994: 6) proposes that an average family had 8-10 children, though not all would necessarily survive. Siblings could therefore have had

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[77] Feucht (1995: Chapter 8) considers patterns of identification in children with their mothers and fathers. She finds that during the Old Kingdom, only children of mothers connected to royalty are known as 'her son/daughter', with one exception. She also considers filiations using the mothers' name, and other methods of displaying affiliation such as *ms n* and *ir n* ('born to').

significant age differences; those further apart in age would have a different relationship than those closer together.[78]

There is also evidence of peer interactions between children beyond a family level. Most obviously, this is seen in the case of play, as will be discussed in Chapter 10. Several figurines have been found from the Old and Middle Kingdoms depicting women—presumed to be nurses—managing several children at once (Fig. 35), as is also alluded to on P.Berlin 10497 from Deir el-Medina. Should the relationships between such children be understood differently to those between blood siblings? In Arabic ethnographies, those nursed by the same woman are considered as close as siblings (Granqvist 1947: 111). Certain cuneiform letters also demonstrate a close bond between those nursed by the same woman; JRL 887 lines 13-16 (Kraus 1985: 4-5) read *[I]DUMU-[D]Taš-me-tum šu-ú ú-ul na-ka-ra-am iš-ti-ni-iš tu-li-a-am* ('Mār-Tašmētum is not a stranger; we drank together on the breast').

FIG. 35: OLD KINGDOM FIGURINE (MMA 26.7.1405); MIDDLE KINGDOM FIGURINE (MMA 15.3.887)
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[78] Age differences must also be considered with parent-child relationships. A child's parents may have had considerable differences in age between them; it is suggested that *Niw.t-nḫ.t* was 42 years younger than her husband (Černý 1973: 333). A child's relationship with each parent would in these instances have been markedly different, although we cannot access such elements of social dynamics.

Sibling relations between adults can be accessed textually. O.DEM 560 (KRI III: 539) is a request that two individuals look after their brother; on O.DEM 587 (Wente 1990: 154 No. 219), the author reminds the recipient that he has been a good brother to her. Nonetheless, relationships between children are more visible than might be presumed. A house painting from Amarna shows the royal princesses playing together (de Garis Davies 1921), and a scene in TT49 shows two young children accompanied by their nurse (de Garis Davies 1933b: Pl. 1). Furthermore, TT359 scene 4 shows two siblings holding onto a bird together.

However, most evidence for sibling interaction centres on child caregiving. Psychological studies suggest that those between 6-10 years old are most suited but also keen to look after siblings (Weisner and Gallimore 1977; Whiting and Edwards 1988). For the infant, there is little difference in response to siblings and parents (Reed and Leidermann 1981), although the nature of caregiving obviously differs. Indeed, sibling care alone is insufficient; in the Gambia, adolescent caregivers have been termed 'incompetent nursemaids' (Lawrence *et al.* 1985), lacking adequate skills or knowledge of food preparation. However, sibling caregiving in a supporting position performs a vital economic as well as social role (Weisner 1982). Especially in societies with domestic economies, shared care-giving provides more time to the mother and other adults for work. In a cross-cultural study, it was found that children were primary caretakers in 35% of cases (Barry and Paxson 1971).

It is likely that communal caregiving was also a feature of Egyptian family life (Szpakowska 2008: 53). Sibling caregiving presumably fell predominantly on sisters rather than brothers, as a means of introducing them into domestic responsibilities; girls are shown carrying infants in tombs TT4 (Bruyère 1926: 180, Fig. 121), TT49 (de Garis Davies 1933a: Pl. 23), TT57 (Malek and Miles 1989: Fig. 1) and TT259 (Feucht 2006: Scene 1). Whilst all of these examples occur as part of mourning scenes (Malek and Miles 1989: 228), there is no reason to believe that this does not reflect reality.

Relationships also occurred beyond the nuclear family. Alloparenting—care by those beyond immediate parents—is important for children's development (Sommer and Sommer 2015; Golden 2016: 141). However, although children would equally have interacted with grandparents, aunts, uncles, family friends and neighbours, especially in a close-knit community like Deir el-Medina, analysis of these is more difficult. Partly, this is because of problems with kinship terminology and difficulties in reconstructing family dynamics; partly, it is because artistic depictions rarely show children interacting with those other than parents

or siblings. However, enough evidence can be gleaned to begin discussing wider family dynamics. Children are shown alongside grandparents in TT3 scenes 1 and 3, possibly TT6 scene 1, TT10 scene 3, TT210 scene 3, TT359 scene 1 and TT361 scenes 2 and 3. In some cases, this is because all were deceased, and receiving offerings (TT3, TT359, TT361 scene 2 lower register). However, in others, the figures are identified as living. Similarly, in certain scenes—TT328 scene 1, TT 361 scenes 1 and 2—children are shown alongside their aunts and uncles. It is also suggested that in some instances children were named after their uncles, such as *ꞽy* and *P3-šd.w*, the sons of *Mry-Sḫm.t* (Bruyère 1929: 40; Davies 1999: 161 Note 163). The many instances of repetition of personal names within families should perhaps be reconsidered in light of this possibility.

Given the conservative nature of the Egyptian artistic canon, it might be assumed that tomb scenes cannot be used to reconstruct family dynamics. Although scenes of the Amarna royal family famously depict tender contact between the royal couple and their children, they are considered anomalous. This is not to say that parents did not interact lovingly with children, rather that formal art prohibited its depiction. Whale (1989) analyses that only 2 of the 45 typical poses for couples in New Kingdom art show spousal reciprocity. However, an examination of mortuary art reveals that scenes of familial tenderness are more common than might be assumed. At Deir el-Medina, such vignettes are particularly common. In TT1, *Sn-nḏm* and his wife *ꞽi-nfr.ti* are consistently shown with linked arms; in TT219 scene 1, *Ḫꜥ-bḫn.t*'s daughter holds his shoulders whilst he plays senet; in TT250 scene 3, a child *P3-šd.w* holds his mother's hand; in TT359 scene 4, *ꞽn-ḥr-ḫꜥ* plays with the hair of her granddaughter *B3k(.t)-Ptḥ*; and in TT361 scene 2, a child *Mry-w3s.t* has his arm linked through his grandfathers'.[79] Although it is possible that these depictions had ritual undertones, depicting the 'ideal' family life, it would seem plausible that such motifs were still grounded within reality, and that social norms and taboos influenced presentation on artistic media just as much as religious or ritual concerns. Therefore, they are representative of—and valid as

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[79] These moments are not unique to Deir el-Medina. An Amarna period relief from Crocodilopolis (MMA11.150.21) depicts three generations of males together, holding hands and with arms around one another. The concept can be traced as far back as the old Kingdom; the relief of *Nfr-sšm-Ḫwfw* and wife (British Museum EA1282) shows their children apparently pulling on their clothing in a bid for attention; the stela of *ꞽn.t-k3s* (Strudwick 1987) shows her daughter *Nfr-pḏs* wrapping her arms around her leg; and the chapel of Princess *Ḥm.t-Rꜥ* at Giza (Hassan 1950: Fig 41, Pl. 26c) similarly depicts her holding her father's leg.

evidence for—social relationships. Whilst the nature of these familial dynamics cannot be reconstructed, such depictions show that they existed.

9.2 NON-FAMILIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Children's social engagements, especially in a small community such as Deir el-Medina, would not have been limited to the family; it was discussed in the previous Chapter that activites such as carrying errands took them beyond the immediate household. Similarly, the many festivals and other community events within the village, within which children participated, fostered and strengthened extended social relationships (Jauhiainen 2009).

The presence of servants at Deir el-Medina has been discussed previously. Children would have encountered them from birth; Fig. 36 shows a Middle Kingdom or Old Kingdom statue of a child being breastfed whilst a servant attends to the mother. Although this piece is not from Deir el-Medina, similar ideas can be seen there; several of the *Wochenlaube* scenes also contain servants attending to the mother. Even if the child did not directly interact with them, the presence of others has an effect on development. Many servants were foreigners; the child may have been exposed to several languages from a young age. The ideal Roman nurses, for example, were Greek-speakers who would accustom the infant to "best speech" (Bradley 1987: 220-2, 1994: 138-48). Developmental studies suggest that those exposed to foreign languages at birth retain subliminal linguistic knowledge that can facilitate its learning in future (Choi *et al.* 2017).

FIG. 36: FIGURINE OF A CHILD, MOTHER AND SERVANT (MMA 22.2.35)
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The most plentiful evidence for childhood interactions with those other than family relates to wet-nursing. Nurses spent a large amount of time with the young child, which would leave a strong attachment. They would not just have fed children, but played, told stories and communicated (Bradley 1994: 148-51). When nurses were present, therefore, they played an active role in children's development.

Egyptian had three words for 'nurse': *mnꜥ.t*, *ꜣty.t* and *ḫnmt.t* (Ward 1986). These words could also be used verbally. The word *ḫnmt.t* was the most common in the New Kingdom generally, but seems usually to refer to divine nurses. The meanings of the other two are less certain, but they appear together in texts and so presumably had different nuances. The word *mnꜥ.t* usually has a breast determinative, and so is assumed to mean 'wet-nurse'. However, *mnꜥ.t* is also occasionally found in reference to males, and may have a second use akin to 'nanny' (Ward 1986: 8; Janssen and Janssen 1990: 18; Szpakowska 2008: 36). Although *ꜣty.t* can appear in contexts with *snḳ* 'to suckle', its determinative often depicts a child seated on the lap rather than breastfeeding, and so is frequently translated 'dry-nurse' (Graves-Brown 2010: 83). Indeed, *mnꜥ.t* and *ꜣty.t* are found together in some contexts (Ward 1986: 3) and must have been distinguished.

Nurses were present at Deir el-Medina, as attested on O.Letellier, P.Berlin 10497 and P.Leiden I.370. Not all families made use of wet-nurses, but P.Leiden I.370 especially

suggests that in some instances both a wet-nurse and the mother could act as primary caregivers to infants (assuming the mother and nurse were different individuals). Possibly this occurred when the mother could not breastfeed herself, but might equally have been a marker of status (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 187).[80] Beyond these examples, however, identifying textual references to nurses is difficult. The word *mnꜥ.t* could also form part of personal names (Toivari-Viitala 2001: 187 Note 39), such as the lady *Mnꜥ.t-ꜥnḫ.ti*, daughter of *Niw.t-nḫ.t* (Davies 1999: 255). In many documents, another woman *Mnꜥ.t*—or possibly the same, simply abbreviated—is also known (examples collated in Davies 1999: 255 Note 676). It is not therefore apparent whether mentions of *mnꜥ.t* should be taken as referring to a profession or person; on P.Turin 1880, Donker van Heel *et al.* (2007) understand the reference as to a personal name. It may be significant that explicit mentions of nurses are so few; perhaps it has to do with the size or nature of the community, or a greater involvement by mothers in child-care.

It has been argued that wet-nursing acted as an emotional distancing for the parent, cushioning against potential emotional trauma in times of high infant mortality (Bradley 1987: 220). However, the use of a wet-nurse does not mean the mother would take no interest in her child (Rawson 2003: 124); nursing contracts often stated that the mother would be shown her child at regular intervals, to monitor its health (Wileman 2005: 21). Nonetheless, the influence of shared care-giving would drastically alter the 'normal' mother-infant dynamic.

In Egypt, nursing was honoured both in an abstract, mythological sense—most famously Isis and Horus—and also in reality. This can be seen as early as the Old Kingdom; Pyramid Text spell 470 (PT 910a-919c) is from the perspective of a child demanding and being given milk. In both Pyramid Text spell 661 (PT 1873a-c), and a New Kingdom inscription relating to the Hathor-cow from Deir el-Bahari (Naville 1901: Pl. 96), milk is likened to water, a life-giving substance, illustrating the persistence of such ideas across time; similarly, in TT336, the goddess Meretseger is shown suckling the tomb owner, who is reborn through its restorative powers (Bruyère 1927: Fig. 57). It was believed that the relationship between child and nurse was established through the milk; by suckling from goddesses, Kings gained some of their divinity (Feucht 2001: 261-2; for royal nurses see Roehrig 1990; Capel and Markoe 1996: 16-

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[80] It is assumed that a child would usually have had only one wet-nurse, if any. However, this is not certain; in Rome, it was advised that children have several nurses, to give the infant a variety of milks (Rawson 2003: 122).

19). Nurses were seemingly valued for their service at Deir el-Medina; on P.Turin 1880 verso 5.13-18, a nurse was paid a total of 30.5 deben, compared to 22 for a doctor on verso 5.2-12. However, the higher wage might also reflect that nurses were employed for a longer duration (Janssen and Janssen 1990: 17).

Presumably, wet-nurses were required only as long as the child needed breastfeeding. However, they may have stayed on longer and transitioned into a more tutoring role; in Rome, there are many cases of nurses remaining after weaning (Bradley 1987: 220-2, 1994: 138-48; Rawson 2003: 122-3). It was mentioned in Chapter 4 that breastfeeding generally lasted around three years in ancient Egypt. As well as limiting the risk of intestinal diseases caused by a move to other food, longer breastfeeding acted as a form of natural birth control (Granqvist 1947: 247ff.; Gruber 1989; Stol 2000: 181-2). However, the point of weaning was also open to personal choice (Rawson 2003: 126; see Fildes 1986: 354). Given the constant contact with the child over several years, and its significant development across this time, the nurse was a fundamental formative influence.

The relationship between infants and nurses, and its impact on the child, cannot be traced at the level of the infant. However, it can theoretically be traced through attitudes towards nurses by adults who were nursed as children. Evidence for the child's lasting attachment to their nurse, even into adulthood, is clearly demonstrated in Akkadian sources. The Mari texts sometimes refer to wet-nurses as *ummu*, 'mother', and some Aššur texts detail presents given by the King to their nurses (Stol 2000: 189).

Although the presentation of personal experience can be masked by formal ritual constraints (Joshel 1983), evidence of nurses within the Egyptian mortuary record can similarly be used to extrapolate as to the lasting, life-long impact of nurses on their charges. Middle Kingdom mortuary stelae often included the nurse's name alongside other family members, granting them the same level of immortality afforded to other relatives (Feucht 1995: 154; Szpakowska 2008: 36). They are also often depicted; stela Munich GL WAF 34 (Simpson 1974b: Pl. 63) shows the deceased's wet-nurse opposite them, and stela Queen's College Oxford 1113 (Robins 1993: Fig. 25) has the deceased receiving offerings from his brother, who is in turn followed by his nurse. Nurses also appear in tombs, though when included amongst relatives, decorum stated that they be positioned at the end (Janssen and Janssen 1990: 17). In TTA11 (Manniche 1988: 50-2, Fig. 8), nine women are shown nursing small children, and the tomb of *P3-ḥry* at el-Kab shows his children alongside their respective nurses (Tyler and Griffith

1894: Pl. 7). Furthermore, the tomb of *Bbi*, also at el-Kab, includes a scene wherein three figures (one of whom is identified as a *ẖnmt.t*) hold magical items before the tomb owner (Wreszinski 1927: 27, Pl. 36; Ritner 2006: 212), and stela Louvre E.3447 depicts the family's nurse alongside other relatives, in the act of suckling. However, respect was not just seen in death. A letter from Middle Kingdom Lahun (Wente 1990: 78-9 No. 96) includes the request to write about a nurses' welfare, and Thutmosis III married *S3.t-Iᶜḥ*, daughter of his nurse *Ipw*, again illustrating the esteem in which they were held.

The nurse-child bond can also be seen from the nurse's perspective. Many statues depict nurses holding royal children (see Saleh 1998: 358-61), and it is frequently shown in New Kingdom tombs (Manniche 1988: 163). Examples include TT63 (Dziobek and Raziq 1990: Pl. 40); TT85 (PM Ii: 172 text 16.II); TT93 (de Garis Davies 1930: Pl. 9); TT109 (Virey 1891: Fig. 4); TT226 (de Garis Davies and de Garis Davies 1933: Pl. 30); TT350 (PM Ii: 417 text 1.I)

However, especially for royal nurses, such presentation must be seen through the lens of its audience. The motif is as much about demonstrating closeness and familiarity to royalty—thus enhancing the status of the tomb owner and their family—as genuine love and attachment (Robins 1977: 22).[81] The sources discussed above possibly demonstrate an evidence bias; there may have been just as many neutral or even negative nurse-child relationships as there were positive, but those with a lack of affection would not be expected to be commemorated (Bradley 1987: 220-1).

Indeed, there is a risk of seeing a 'romantic' view of the nurse-child-mother dynamic. As mentioned, nursing could be an emotional safeguard for the mother, but it could also be emotionally exploitative towards the nurse. In many ancient societies, nursemaids were of a lower class than those they nursed. Such power relations contrast with the essentially intimate nature of nursing (Joshel 1986: 3). An equal and intimate dynamic between nurse and child

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[81] The same is true of other officials. Numerous elites were known as *ẖrd.w n k3p*, 'Children of the Royal Nursery' (Feucht 1985). Individuals who had been raised in the *k3p* were well acquainted with future Pharaohs as children, and stressed this closeness through highlighting the title in their professions (Murnane 1998: 215-6; Russo 2012: 51-2). Emphasising contact with future Kings is also demonstrated with other officials, such as male tutors. *W3ḏ-ms*, a son of Thutmosis I, is shown on the lap of his tutor *P3-ḥry* in his el-Kab tomb (Tylor and Griffith 1894: Pl. 6), and a son of Thutmosis IV, possibly the future Amenhotep III, is depicted on the lap of his tutor *Ḥk3-r-nḥḥ* in his tomb, TT64 (illustrated by de Garis Davies: MSS 10.22.5, held in the Griffith Institute).

cannot be assumed; nurses could have essentially been forced into a relationship with a child by virtue of their inferior status. The nurse's feelings towards the child would have influenced the child's feelings back; unfortunately, especially when the nurse was of a lower class, there is little to no evidence of this half of the dialectic. Furthermore, if nurses rotated service amongst houses like servants, it would be harder for social or kin-like bonds to form with those they nursed (Meskell 1998: 235).

The social 'class' of nurses at Deir el-Medina is not fully understood. O.DEM 256, verso II line 7 (DEM IV: Pl. 5) lists nursemaids as receiving the same amount of rations as everyone else present. Similarly, as discussed above, P.Turin 1880 lists a nurses' payment as more than a doctors'. However, this instance may reflect length of service rather than value placed upon it. It is unclear how nurses were chosen (Robins 1997: 311-7). For royal nurses, Xekalaki (2011: 55) suggests that their high status was in part through their nursing the King, but also in part due to a pre-existing condition that led to their being chosen. By contrast, it is possible that nurses at Deir el-Medina were selected from amongst the female servants at the site. Unfortunately, none of these factors can be explored.

To conclude, we can discuss broad ideas of nurse-child relationships at Deir el-Medina, but reconstructing specific examples is more difficult, based on their absence from most documentary evidence. We are forced to assume that nursing at Deir el-Medina was similar to elsewhere, and use this evidence to supplement analysis. Nursing was honoured in principle, and it follows logically that nurses themselves were afforded some level of respect, though this assumption may be nothing more than modern sentimentality. Although the above discussion is specific to wet-nurses and infants, it may also be worth considering other influences on the child as it aged, such as 'dry-nurses' (Nunn 1996: 132) and tutors. Further analysis could proceed in this direction, examining different socialising influences on the child at different ages.

9.4 CONCLUSIONS

The Deir el-Medina household was socially complex, including extended relations and dependants. However, such aspects of life are often excluded from documentary sources. Given the biases in evidence discussed throughout this thesis, certain relationships are accessible in greater detail than others—the relationship between an aunt and niece is

invisible in a way that that between a father and son is not—but even then, evidence usually highlights interactions within specific contexts, often mortuary.

As such, a primary source for reconstructing family dynamics is artistic. On the one hand, this is a more viable source for Deir el-Medina, and the New Kingdom generally, than in earlier periods. The previously restricted nature of mortuary art, highlighting primarily the deceased, had expanded to allow the inclusion of other relatives. However, although such depictions illustrate the size of families, they are not unproblematic. The often-repeated names and vague kinship terminology hinder reconstructions of the exact relationships of the figures; their mortuary context make it difficult to know how the lives of such figures overlapped; and, more generally, artistic depictions might reflect an idealised life rather than social realities. That said, in depicting the family, mortuary art still reflected real social dynamics and relationships, and is therefore a viable source for their discussion.

Beyond this, however, it is harder to access the specific nature of the various relationships in which children participated. Artistic sources attest to their breadth and complexity, but they will never be fully recoverable. Analysis here has attempted to find certain expected commonalities, using generally-observed developmental and cognitive phenomena and parallels from other cultures, but this does not take into account the culturally-contingent nature of such relationships. That said, enough evidence has been gleaned to consider children's relationships not just with parents and siblings but grandparents, extended relatives and even servants. Most evidence here pertains to specific figures, such as nursemaids; perhaps this attests to their formative and lasting influence on children.

The final Chapter takes a broader view beyond the household, considering evidence for children's play. This activity incorporates not only the domestic and household spheres, but also the wider environment. It will be demonstrated that, although the previous two Chapters have considered children in relation to households, their scope for social action extended far beyond this. It will also consider that children are not passive, understandable only in relation to adult-structured activities. Play offered scope for children to engage with their identities and social roles without adult participation, either alone or with peers. Consideration of play offers an entirely different perspective of children's lives.

10. THE CHILD AT PLAY

Although childhood is culturally specific, play is considered a "cultural universal" (Hughes 1999). It is regarded as an activity unique to children, and so reinforces the child's place in the world (Crawford 2009: 57). Although found worldwide, play materials often show culturally specific elements; toys, and play, are an important means of imparting social norms and behaviours. Therefore, they are fundamental to how children learn to become part of society. However, at Deir el-Medina, toys were generally absent from children's graves. Does this mean toys did not exist, they were not considered grave-appropriate, or we simply do not know what children played with?

Play is typically divided into two types: adult-structured, and child-structured (Schwartzman 1976). Baxter (2005: 41) describes these as the "imperial practices of adults" and the "native practices of children". Adult-structured play typically uses artefacts made or given by adults. These generally—even if unconsciously—have a pedagogical element, introducing the child to social norms, or providing physical development. Child-structured play may use materials created by the child independently of adults, and "falls beyond cultural conventions for the use of social space" (Baxter 2005: 63). This form of play is harder to access, but more indicative of the child's own experience and identity. It is a place for them to engage with the world they are part of, and practice or re-invent social behaviours on their own terms.

This Chapter discusses how play contributed to children's understanding of themselves and the world at Deir el-Medina. It will consider how appropriate the above framework is to exploring play in an Egyptian context, and the possible mechanisms, nature and experience of play at Deir el-Medina. Given the limited evidence, cautious use is also made of evidence from elsewhere in Egypt. This is not to suggest that the same specific conclusions can necessarily be drawn of Deir el-Medina, but to provide illustrative examples of how the experience of play may have been shaped.

10.1 ADULT-STRUCTURED PLAY

In the modern sense, a toy is as a formal category of object, made or purchased by adults for children (Baxter 2005: 42), often in the form of a miniature version of material used by adults. As such, 'toys' often incorporate a pedagogical role. They may structure and reinforce social

norms, gender roles, behaviours, or prepare the child for future work (Dawe 1997; Park 1998; Wilkie 2000; Trachman and Valdez Jr. 2006; Luoti 2007; Layne 2008; Kohut 2011; Walls 2012). Especially for younger children, a key aspect of play is in improving cognitive and developmental abilities (Schwartzman 1978; Johnson *et al.* 1987). Toys are therefore vital for enculturation, and are a particularly important source because they impart behaviours disguised as amusement. Toys are definable in opposition to tools; they allow children to mimic adult actions without real-world consequences (Fortes 1938: 58; Sutton-Smith 1986).[82]

Enculturation and cultural perpetuation were vital in ancient Egypt. Elites especially needed to take positions in adult society quickly, as the male heir was expected to act as propagator of family cults, but children also needed to begin helping as early as possible in lower-class families. However, the assumption that 'toys' as we would understand them were used for such enculturative purposes in ancient Egypt reflects modern Western assumptions of childhood as a time of play and social preparation rather than meaningful social contribution. Trying to distinguish a category of 'toy' in ancient Egypt is misleading. This is not to say that children did not play; it is to say that play was not restricted to its own self-contained sphere of activity, enacted through material made specifically for them. It has been discussed throughout this thesis that children entered economic and social life from a young age. They did not need to practice and develop skills with 'imitation' objects before enacting them in real life.

Unfortunately, discussion of play in ancient Egypt has persistently been influenced by research assumptions which reflect the writers' own conceptions of childhood. This has typically led to misidentification of material as belonging to children. Most commonly, size or crudeness are taken as evidence than an item was associated with children, through ideas that "since children are by definition smaller than adults, only children interact with small objects" (Sofaer Derevenski 2000a: 7). The usual extension of this is to class such items as toys. Today, children are synonymous with toys (Wilkie 2000: 101); this has historically led to assumptions that the same must be true of the past.

The influence of cultural background in interpretation is explicit in early reports. For example, Petrie (1890: 30) identified certain wooden items at Lahun as toys called 'tipcats', because

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[82] However, it could be argued that children's intentionality blurs the lines between toys and tools. Is a child imitating adult behaviours, such as pretending to bake with a spoon, using it as a toy or a tool?

they resembled items used in games of his era (Szpakowska 2008: 54). Similarly, he understood a collection of stone blocks and balls in Pre-Dynastic Naqada grave 100 as a bowling game (Petrie and Quibell 1896: 35), although their reconstructed purpose is entirely hypothetical. The explanation of small items as 'toys' is especially prevalent in mortuary contexts. This is true even for items found both with adults and non-adults; "objects in child graves are interpreted in a fundamentally different way to the same artefacts with adults" (Sofaer Derevenski 2000a: 6). One example of this is female figurines. Attested in various forms from the Middle Kingdom onwards, these were traditionally interpreted as 'dolls' when with children (Robins 1994c: 235), and 'concubines' when with adults (Desroches-Noblecourt 1953). The assumption that objects buried with children are toys seems especially frequent with human- or animal-form figurines, as both their size and form parallel modern playthings. This was seen already in Chapter 6. It was also demonstrated there that such items often had alternative explanations, demonstrating how identification of material as belonging to children was based exclusively on morphology. Indeed, the very expectation that 'toys' will be naturally be found in children's graves reflects misconceptions about their nature; it assumes that the material corpus reflects the child's own life and experiences, rather than the motivations of those performing the burial.

There has been occasional re-evaluation of material previously associated with children. For example, crude clay animal figurines found at Middle Kingdom Lahun (Petrie 1890: Pl. 8) and Buhen (Emery *et al.* 1979: Pl. 51-4) were traditionally discussed as toys (David 1979). However, rudimentary clay animals are simple to form, so it is hard to distinguish the work of children from untrained adults (Wileman 2005: 59-60). These objects have been re-considered in recent years; the find contexts of similar examples suggest at least a multivocal use, and many are unlikely to have been associated with children at all (Quirke 1998; Szpakowska 2008: 126). Female figurines have also received re-analysis; rather than being 'dolls' or 'concubines', they are now believed to have a complex range of ritual uses related to women and fertility (Pinch 1983, 1993; Robins 1988; Waraksa 2009; Morris 2011).

However, for the most part, there has been limited recognition of the cultural assumptions upon which scholars based their interpretations. This has two impacts. Firstly, it means that past interpretations are still repeated and persist in modern literature. Bruyère's interpretation of the bread 'dolls' at Deir el-Medina (Chapter 5) is still unquestioningly accepted in literature eighty years later (for example Meskell 1994a: 41; 1999a: 173; Booth 2015: 135), as are Petrie's 'tipcats' (Szpakowska 2008: 54). Secondly, it means that cultural assumptions

also continue to influence modern analysis. For example, Weiss (2015: 147) argues that horse figurines with riders must have been toys.

Two further examples of 'assumed identification', and plausible reinterpretation, will demonstrate this point.

i) So-called 'feeding bowls' were found at Middle Kingdom Lahun and Lisht (Petrie 1890: 20, Pl. 13). They are generally today assumed to be for feeding infants (Allen 2005: 31), based partly on size, and partly on their decoration, which bears similarity to that found on magic 'tusks'. However, in practice, their spouts are too wide—0.5cm diameter—to provide a safe flow of liquid for infants (Marshall 2015b: 56-7). Despite their decoration, they are unlikely to have been used for feeding babies. The religious figures depicted on such items, such as Bes and Tawaret, were not solely associated with children, but domestic apotropaia and protection more generally. Such bowls could equally have been used for feeding the unwell or elderly (Szpakowska 2008: 47).

ii) Another example is rattles. Examples exist from most periods (Hickmann 1954). Rattles commonly took animal-forms, with everything from fishes (UC10748) to hedgehogs (UC45081), but the most common shape is piriform, often with the head of a gazelle or other livestock (Fig. 37). The same is true across the ancient world, with rattles found from Mycenae (Lebegyev 2009: 26) to Mesopotamia (for example Legrain 1930: Pl. 43.310-11; Mustafa 1949: Pl. 4.1; Ziegler 1962: Pl. 44.553-6; Woolley and Mallowan 1976: Pl. 90.237), taking the same animal forms.

FIG. 37: POTTERY RATTLE FROM AMARNA (FRANKFORT AND PENDLEBURY 1933: PL. 34.2)

It is often assumed that rattles were associated with infants, given modern uses. Especially for young children, colour and noise are psychologically appealing, but the noise could also have been apotropaic, warding off evil spirits (Rawson 2003: 128; Hinson 2018). The forms commonly taken would also be educational, accustoming the infant to common animals. Many examples are painted with stripes and spots, which could be interpreted as enhancing the visual accuracy. Frankfort and Pendlebury (1933: 22) stated that a rattle they found at Amarna, house U.36.48, was in the 'women's quarter'; however, a domestic function cannot be assumed, especially as many Egyptian examples are from unknown find contexts. Most of those from Mesopotamia, taking the same animal forms, were actually found in temples and shrines, suggesting ritual purposes. Many ancient rattles are also too large to have been held by an infant (Layne 2008: 24)—although this does not preclude their use by adults towards a child—or too fragile. UC45072, UC45081 and UC71965 are all faience, for example. Although the most common Egyptian rattle forms were not of explicitly cultic animals, those such as gazelles were commonly sacrificial, and so it is possible that they were shaken at festivals—especially as Egyptian ritual tradition made great use of shaken instruments (Kozloff and Bryan 1992: 432; Thomas 2011: 529).

As the above examples show, few objects traditionally associated with children can unequivocally be shown to have been employed in this capacity. Most could equally have been employed by adults in ritual or secular contexts (Eady 1990; Tooley 1991; Quirke 1998; Froschauer and Harrauer 2004; Horstmann 2004; Morris 2011; Velasco Pirez 2012). Indeed,

given that one function of toys is to introduce the child to social norms, how can we even isolate specific criteria by which ritual objects, and toys which impart ritual knowledge, can be distinguished? (Quirke 1998: 144; Thomas 2011: 529; see also Tooley 1991 and Huizinga 1938 for the relationship between play and ritual more generally). This is not to say that such items definitely *were not* toys. It is to cast reasonable doubt, and to state that an association with children cannot be assumed based solely on morphological criteria. Size and crudeness alone are not indicative.

One problem with children's materiality is therefore incorrectly attributing material to children. The mirror to this, as a result, is not understanding what *should* be attributed to them. The misidentification of items as 'toys' reflects misunderstandings about the materials, nature and purposes of play in the past. The idea that children's material inevitably takes the form of toys implies that there is a 'stock' material culture of childhood identifiable in any given material record; this ignores the culturally-specific nature of childhood. However, this is not to say that children in the past did not play, nor that they did not engage with material. It is merely to say that the traditional approach to play, of trying to distinguish a discrete category of 'toy', is misleading; children engaged and played with, and learnt from, the same material world as the rest of society, rather than one created specifically for them. As has been shown, ideas of 'toys' rely on a modern work/play dichotomy, wherein a period of recreation and learning free from consequences or responsibility precedes children's engagement in social life. By engaging in social arenas sooner, children at Deir el-Medina presumably did not have a 'preparatory' period where enculturation occurred entirely through leisure.

It should instead be understood that play was not restricted to its own self-contained sphere of activity, but enacted through other arenas. Children's activities blur the boundaries between work and play; they would have found entertainment within economically productive activities. Psychologically, many of the tasks discussed in relation to children in Chapter 8—especially those occurring beyond the domestic sphere, such as letter carrying or scaring birds—allowed independence and fostered imagination, but also responsibility and enabling adult role-play. Even within domestic activities, there was scope to combine amusement with productive activity. This can even potentially leave material traces; it was discussed in Chapter 8 that the unrecognisable clay shapes found by Bruyère (1933, 16-17) could plausibly be interpreted as the results of children's experimentation with raw materials, possibly in the context of watching or participating in pottery or figurine production.

'Play' was therefore enacted within these arenas, through engagements with the same material world as adults. Alongside work, play potential can be considered in other social activities in which children observed and participated, such as household ritual. As discussed in Chapter 8, several studies have previously discussed 'play' in the context of children's engagements with figurines, and ritual and religious socialisation (Sillar 1994; Park 1998; Luoti 2007; Kohut 2011), providing a framework for its exploration in Egypt.

A full treatment of these arenas falls beyond the scope of this discussion, which has intended only to problematise existing approaches and outline directions for future research. The salient point is that children's materiality should not be sought as a discrete sphere, but considered in the context of wider social practices. It is perhaps therefore more accurate to talk of a 'material culture of children' in the past, *i.e.* the materials with which children interacted whatever they might be, rather than a 'material culture of childhood', implying a material world created specifically for them.

10.2 CHILD-STRUCTURED PLAY

Were discussion to end here, it would have considered only children's activity in arenas structured by adults. This would be to suggest that children can only be archaeologically 'identified' and interpreted in relation to adult-led activities (Dozier 2016, 61). Any discussion of children's materiality must also consider their activities independent of adults, and the material traces these might leave.

Play is often seen through a functionalist perspective, what Schildkrout (1978b) termed the 'traditional socialisation approach'; it fulfils the roles of enculturation and social preparation. However, enculturation through play is not just an "imitative or preparatory activity" (Schwartzman 1976: 291, 1978: 100). Children do not passively absorb the norms learnt through play; they consciously experiment and test boundaries (Sillar 1994: 49).

Child-structured play is more indicative of children's own concerns, but is still informed by the world they belong to. Some see child-structured play as a form of active rebellion against adult constraints (Ward 1978: 96; Buckingham 1994; Mayall 1994b: 2-5; Scott 1997: 7). However, vocabulary of resistance colours interpretations of the purposes and outcomes of play. Play is not just about escape, but mimicking and practicing skills for use in later life

(Hutson 2006: 123). It provides a chance for children as individuals to either reproduce, subvert or reinvent culture (Corsaro and Eder 1990; Corsaro and Molinari 2001: 197). Not only do children often take notice of elements of the world that adults fail to (Brice Heath 2012: 105), but children as future adults are ultimately responsible for choosing which aspects of culture to maintain or reject. If enough children reject a certain aspect, it eventually disappears (Shimahara 1970). Child-centric interactions can be independent of the ethnic or rank based interactions of adult society (Cannizzo 1979), and allow children to create their own social and moral taboos (Burns 1984) or develop their own personalities (Heine 1984: 122). In short, child-structured play is a culture free from adult supervision (Opie and Opie 1959, 1969) and can "run counter to formal socialization" (Meckel 1984: 417). It is here that we need to consider again the notion of the 'child's world' (Sigsgaard 1979; Lillehammer 1989, 2000), although the lived experience of the child extends beyond the autonomous activities enveloped by this.

Therefore, child-structured play is not completely separate from the adult world. However, it is not dependent on it. Adult-structured activities introduce social norms, which children can experiment with and adapt in their own play. These activities have their own structures and hierarchies, even if they are unrecognisable to us (Connolly and Ennew 1996: 135).

Identifying the materials of child-structured play are difficult. If we try and identify play materials with reference only to adult perceptions of what constitutes such, the child's world becomes inappropriately integrated into that of the adult (Crawford 2009: 62). Archaeology must instead attempt to access the child's perspective of play. Children do not just interact with materials created for, or given to, them, but can in theory interact with anything; the material culture of childhood, and material culture of children, need not overlap (Sigsgaard 1979: 128; Lillehammer 2010: 36).

The problem is that, except for those who explicitly work on 'childhood archaeology', children are instinctively overlooked in interpretation unless overt reminders of their existence—such as graves or artistic depictions—are present. Aside from materials misidentified as toys, they are typically 'forgotten' when interpreting the material traces; material is inherently assumed to have been made by and for adults. This is because childhood archaeology is in many respects still considered a niche field, with limited impact on the research methods of wider archaeology (Lillehammer 2010: 16). Archaeologists are not

'programmed' to think of children, nor the different perspective that children have towards material culture (Crawford 2009: 58; for a demonstration of this see Bonnichsen 1973).

However, even if a site even does not present any explicit evidence of children, they were still present, and therefore users—if not producers—of some of the material automatically ascribed to other members of society (Hutson 2006: 105). The difficulty in identifying these traces speaks primarily to problems with current methodologies; shortcomings in the questions asked of material have resulted in a limited ability to discern how children's presence manifests materially.

A further issue is that different people define and group play activities differently. Roméro (2009) divides material into three types: items obtained from adults; items imitating adult material; and items designed solely for play. The first reflects adult-structured play, and the latter two play items created by children themselves. However, this does not reflect the complete range of potential play activities. Lewis (2009: 92) divides activities into those using no objects; 'purpose-made' objects; repurposed existing objects; and activities that adapt the physical environment. Given this variability, this discussion considers the materiality of child-structured play as encapsulating three types of activities, although inevitably any structure imposes boundaries on what is a potentially limitless sphere of activity:

i) Those using pre-existing materials from the 'adult' world, repurposed by children for their own ends, be that by mimicking adult use or using it in a new way.

ii) Those using the natural environment, either unmodified or using natural materials transformed via craft or imagination into a new object.

iii) Those which involve no physical objects.

Archaeologically, types two and three are harder to find. Especially for play using the natural environment, materials would not necessarily survive or be recognised as such (Callow 2006: 67). Medieval sources depict children using household items and the natural environment for play (Crawford 2000, 174; Lewis 2009, 93); without secondary depictions, such activities are inaccessible to archaeologists. Given the environment at Deir el-Medina, children could have played with ephemeral materials such as sand, sticks or limestone. However, there are no depictions of such activities in secondary sources from which we could reconstruct uses of the

natural environment. Nonetheless, when play modifies the environment, it is the intentionality of the player which is crucial; the choice of material is secondary and could be substituted (Rossie 2003: 3). A potential avenue for future enquiry might therefore be to consider the *types* of play activities children might imagine given the environment.

Games without material are even harder to trace, but fundamental to child development. They improve physical skills, dexterity, co-operation, responsibility and socialisation (Rossie 2001: 1-2). Team-games especially force players to envision choices and consequences (Brice Heath 2012: 125). Team-games (Fig. 38) are depicted in tombs of both the Old Kingdom (de Garis Davies 1900: Pl. 21; Duell 1938: Pl. 162-5; Simpson 1976: Pl. 24), and First Intermediate Period (Newberry 1893a: Pl. 13, 1893b: Pl. 4, 7, 16, 32; Blackman 1914: Pl. 3).
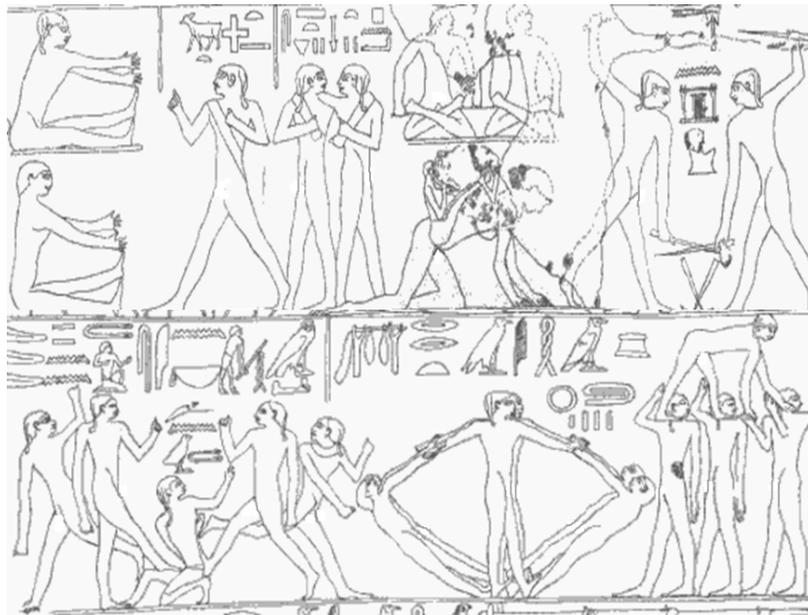

FIG. 38: TEAM-GAMES, MASTABA OF *Ptḥ-ḥtp*, SAQQARA, DYNASTY 5
(DETAIL FROM DE GARIS DAVIES 1900: PL. 21)

The purpose and rules of these games are unknown; the captions are often short, with obscure vocabulary (Decker 1992: 117). If real games, they involve co-operation, competition, physical agility and strength; several resemble games played by modern children (Eaton 1937; Saad 1937; Rossie 2001: 8). It has been suggested that, beyond physical skills, these games also imparted morals and norms (Janssen and Janssen 1990: 65; Decker 1992: 119).

However, a relationship to actual children's activities cannot be assumed. Firstly, the figures are of ambiguous age. Those of the Old Kingdom are naked with sidelocks, but comparable First Intermediate Period figures often have loincloths and full heads of hair, possibly depicting adult professionals (Szpakowska 2008: 116). Secondly, tomb scenes were always carefully composed, with multiple layers of meaning. Such scenes could therefore depict ritual ideas of strength, fertility and vitality, or struggles between order and chaos, represented through children. It has further been suggested that the 'hut game' represented in several locations, such as the Old Kingdom mastaba of *ꜤIdw* and First Intermediate Period Beni Hasan tomb 15, actually depicts an adolescence ritual (Decker 1992: 122-3; Pinch 1994: 122). Indeed, that a limited 'corpus' of games is known, from which all examples draw, strengthens the suggestion that they depict stock, ritually-invested motifs.[83]

Another line of inquiry is material culture repurposed by children for their own ends. Although children have only recently been acknowledged as users of 'non-children's artefacts' (Wilkie 2000: 100), they continually act with everyday objects. Therefore, being a toy is a potential characteristic of any material in the child's environment, be that for a few moments, repeatedly, or the object's entire use-life (Crawford 2009; Morrison and Crawford 2013). This concept relates to fundamental ideas that an object may have multiple meanings depending on the context of use, and its user (Hodder 1982). Meaning is not inherent within an artefact itself; whether or not an object was designed specifically for children to play with, it technically becomes a plaything as soon as they do (Rossie 2003), be that alongside its primary use, or as repurposing after it has been discarded. In this respect, 'toy' is more of a concept than a material category (Roggersdotter 2008: 143-7).

Any object has a potential 'toy-stage' in its use-life (Crawford 2009; Morrison and Crawford 2013). Here, materials might be used in activities replicating their original purpose, or reimagined into something new. A scene at Beni Hasan tomb 15 shows an activity similar to lifting weights (Newberry 1893b: Pl. 7), whilst tomb 17 shows adults using similar objects to drive in a mooring post (Newberry 1893b: Pl. 12). It is possible that the scene in tomb 15 demonstrates imitation and adaptation of adult material culture. However, whilst it is important that material interpretation is re-framed to consider children, it is not enough that

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[83] That said, whatever the purpose of such games, the visual information encoded needed to be understandable to viewers. It is possible that they would have been played by contemporary children, and therefore known and understandable to an audience—assuming these scenes were intended to be seen. Having ritual connotations does not necessarily negate a reference to actual activities, but this cannot be ascertained.

any object *could* be used in play. The question is whether this transient 'toy-stage' within use-life is recoverable. Without caution, analysis is meaningless; any object could be labelled a toy.

Two possible criteria can help structure discussion. The first is find-location. Items in unusual or unexpected locations may have been deposited there by children (see the range of site-formation studies cited in Chapter 1). Similarly, successive episodes of children's activities in the same location can produce concentrations of material over time (Baxter 2005: 72). For example, broken faience objects were found dotted around Amarna. These were interpreted as being too high-quality for the households they were found beside; it was even hypothesised (Frankfort and Pendlebury 1933: 17) that they were collected by children playing near the rubbish dumps. Distribution patterns should be viewed for their potential for understanding children as intentional agents—although children are not the only possible explanation for material movement, especially at sites such as Deir el-Medina where much of the material inventory represents abandonment processes.

A second possible criterion is object condition. Studies suggest that objects are more likely to be repurposed by children towards the end of their primary use-life (Crawford 2009: 63). Archaeologists might overlook these as 'useless' or broken, but even the most unlikely of objects may have been used in play. For example, chipped and rounded pot fragments could have been used as gaming counters. Games were popular at Deir el-Medina, and many boards made of clay or traced on ostraca are known (Fig. 39); they were probably also simply traced ephemerally into the ground. *Ad-hoc* counters were probably used in these situations; indeed, at Lahun, oddly rectangular fragments were found (Quirke 2005: 105). Archaeologists would not automatically assume that a broken sherd has inherent value, but studies have shown several uses, such as for winding thread around in weaving (Petrie 1917: 53; Cartland 1918). It is a modern assumption that broken means worthless; current analyses possibly overlook a whole dimension of secondary use and repurposing by children. These avenues require much further consideration.
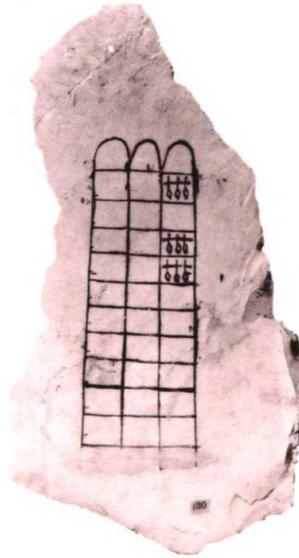
FIG. 39: GAME BOARD TRACED ON AN OSTRACON (DARESSY 1901: PL. 31)

To again briefly consider this concept with material from beyond Deir el-Medina, another illustration of this idea is 'buttons', rounded pieces of shell or pottery with one or two central holes. Such items could potentially be rudimentary buzzdisks. These toys *cum* instruments, attested since prehistory (Balen-Letunić 2014: 13), are circular objects, centrally-pierced; a piece of string through them is spun, causing the object to hum. Given their visual similarities, many reports have mistakenly labelled buzzdisks as buttons (van Beek 1989: 53), though Petrie (1928: 18) did analyse those he found at Gerar as toys, and Ptolemaic examples have been published from Mit Rahina (Anthes 1965: 134 No. 320, Pl. 50a). Equally, buttons could have secondarily been repurposed as such objects (van Beek 1989: 54). A possible distinction is the amount of wear around the central hole, especially in pottery examples, as the friction of the moving string causes greater erosion than would be caused by being held in place as a button. The direction of the wear is also indicative. UC37208, from Third Intermediate Period Kafr Ammar, is extensively worn around the lower side, off-centre from the hole; use as a button alone would be unlikely to cause such focused erosion. Another interesting example is British Museum 1906,0301.12, a shell button from an unsecure provenance. It could be argued that shell would be too fragile a material for buttons; indeed Petrie (1886: 72) discusses the rareness of shell buttons. This example has a design on one side; if spun, this would create an additional dimension to the noise, forming colour patterns.

As well as materials used in child-structured activities, another factor is participation. Although child-structured interactions can be independent of social restrictions (Cannizzo 1979), both adult-and child-structured play are informed by, and ultimately reinforce, social structures. The norms and values taught to a royal prince differed entirely from those of famers. For example, a scene of a young Amenhotep II on his nurse's lap shows him playing with a toy depicting bound foreigners (de Garis Davies 1930: Pl. 9). Through this, the prince was inculcated with royal values of superiority over foreigners. In households with occupants of multiple classes, such as servants, would children of these different classes have played together, or would social distinctions have been encouraged from a young age?

'Palatial' houses such as those at Lahun have been analysed as having separate quarters for servants and for the family (wife and children) of the owner (Bietak 1996; Quirke 2005: 55-73). Although the family quarters had an access route to the servant's quarters, access through and out of the house was far easier if avoiding these. Furthermore, this access route would take the children through the 'main' living and business quarters, cementing their right of access. However, for areas believed to belong to staff and servants, there was quick access out of the building without going through the 'main' house. This suggests spatial distinctions based on class, which might have been reflected in restricted social communication. However, this would contradict the discussion of household activities at Deir el-Medina in Chapter 8, wherein children had relatively free access to households. Indeed, as suggested in Chapter 4, there is evidence that children were less inculcated with ideas of social class (Robins 1999: 57). Lahun is perhaps not an appropriate a comparison to Deir el-Medina, where houses had a single access route, but it was discussed in Chapter 4 that certain households possibly also included live-in servants. Their children, and those of the family, would inevitably have engaged; an interesting question, albeit unanswerable, is to what extent, and how this was structured.

Gender is also a factor in children's experience of play. We do not know if both genders played together, or whether different skill-sets were encouraged of different genders. Ethnographic examples suggest that play groups are often mixed-gender at a very young age, but become more gendered over time (Park 1998: 279; Rossie 2003: 5-6), which parallels what was suggested for children's economic involvement in Chapter 8. Old Kingdom scenes of games—if they are such—tend to be strictly gendered. Girls are typically shown juggling and dancing, whilst boys are involved in contests of strength and agility. Inter-gendered play is known only from one scene in Beni Hasan tomb 15 (Newberry 1893b: pl. 14), where boys

and girls are shown playing a spinning game together. However, because scenes of play are so rare generally, it is unclear whether this scene is unusual or indicative of wider gender interactions. Gendering of play activities might also be reflected in object distribution (Baxter 2000; Morrison and Crawford 2013: 62). However, without a clearer understanding of play materials in ancient Egypt, the influence of gender here cannot be explored as it can for other aspects of lived experience.

Rather than an exhaustive treatment, the above discussion has aimed to outline avenues for a more nuanced understanding of play activities in ancient Egypt. Although no 'toys' as we would understand them were found at Deir el-Medina, it is highly unlikely that children did not play. Current methodologies are simply unable to recognise these processes (Chamberlain 1997: 249, Mizoguchi 2000: 141).

10.3 THE LOCATIONS OF PLAY

As well as the manner of child-structured play, another dimension is its location. By nature, it requires somewhere with minimal adult supervision or imposition (Connolly and Ennew 1996: 135). This is true of both group play and individual activities. Sobel (1990, 1993) talks of 'secret spaces' for children, which they visit frequently and keep carefully guarded (see also Dovey 1990, Chawla 1992, Kylin 2003). This is important for psychological development, as it is one of the few places wherein children can exert control over their environment, and also allows a quiet place for reflection (Wals 1994: 188). Such 'secret spaces' seem to be a cross-cultural phenomenon, suggesting that they are universally important in children's development (Baxter 2005: 72).

The locations of play at Deir el-Medina were informed by different socio-spatial norms than today. The inception of new social ideas of class in the last few centuries co-incided with changes to the domestic plan. As discussed earlier, homes are now characterised by discrete, segregated rooms, and internal separation and division of domestic activities. This has enabled the segregation of a separate 'child's realm' (Buchli and Lucas 2000: 134). The process began in the 19th century, when, especially in middle class houses, children were often provided with their own nursery (Stevenson and Prout 2013: 138). Today, most houses have a 'play room'. Therefore, in the modern world, the child's sphere is often their own room, where they are (usually!) free to play without adult interference. Play is now more

domestically-focused, but this does not encapsulate the potential experience of play in the past (Baxter 2005: 69).

At Deir el-Medina, it is unlikely that the crowded houses allowed children the freedom and privacy to play independently. Nor was there enough room for effective play; the average floorplan was c.70m^2 (McDowell 1999: 12). Possibly, liminal areas such as porches could have been appropriated by children (de Lucia 2010: 616). Quirke (2005: 76) suggests that at Lahun, children or elders may have sat by the doorway to keep watch. Similarly, roofs may have been locations for play (Ricke 1932: 12). Children see and understand space use differently to adults, and—especially if roofing was contiguous (Bonnet and Valbelle 1975: 444; Meskell 1994b: 199, 2002: 40)—they may have manipulated routes or areas not known or used by adults (Baxter 2005: 68).

However, in none of these locations was the child free from adult visibility. We may therefore need to look elsewhere to find the child's world. Medieval coroner's reports show that children's deaths occurred both in houses and around the landscape, but that domestic deaths were far more frequent, suggesting that the majority of time was spent at home (Hanawalt 1986). It is probable that in ancient Egypt also, child-structured play was more likely to occur in areas outside of the home, where children spend less time (Lillehammer 2008: 108). Abandoned buildings are often favoured (Wilk and Schiffer 1979; Wilkie 2000; Hutson 2006). These areas are appealing because of their state, allowing often otherwise unsanctioned activities such as digging or building. Furthermore, although understandable as a house from the child's own experience, its meaning is open to speculation, fostering creativity (Hutson 2006: 121). However, it is unknown whether and when individual houses at Deir el-Medina were abandoned—belonging to the state, un-used properties may have immediately been given to new owners, and it is difficult to chronologically map successive periods of occupation.

Streets are another possible location for play (Connolly and Ennew 1976: 135). Biblical passages (Matthew 11.16; Luke 7.32) mention children playing in the streets, and it is possible the same occurred at Deir el-Medina. However, even at its peak, Deir el-Medina only had two main streets (Fig. 40). Unlike Lahun, where streets were 4-5m wide (Quirke 2005: 48) and so could accommodate play activities, those at Deir el-Medina were much narrower; access was hindered further by obstacles such as emplacements for water jars (Bruyère 1939: 5); and if roofing was contiguous, light would have been limited.
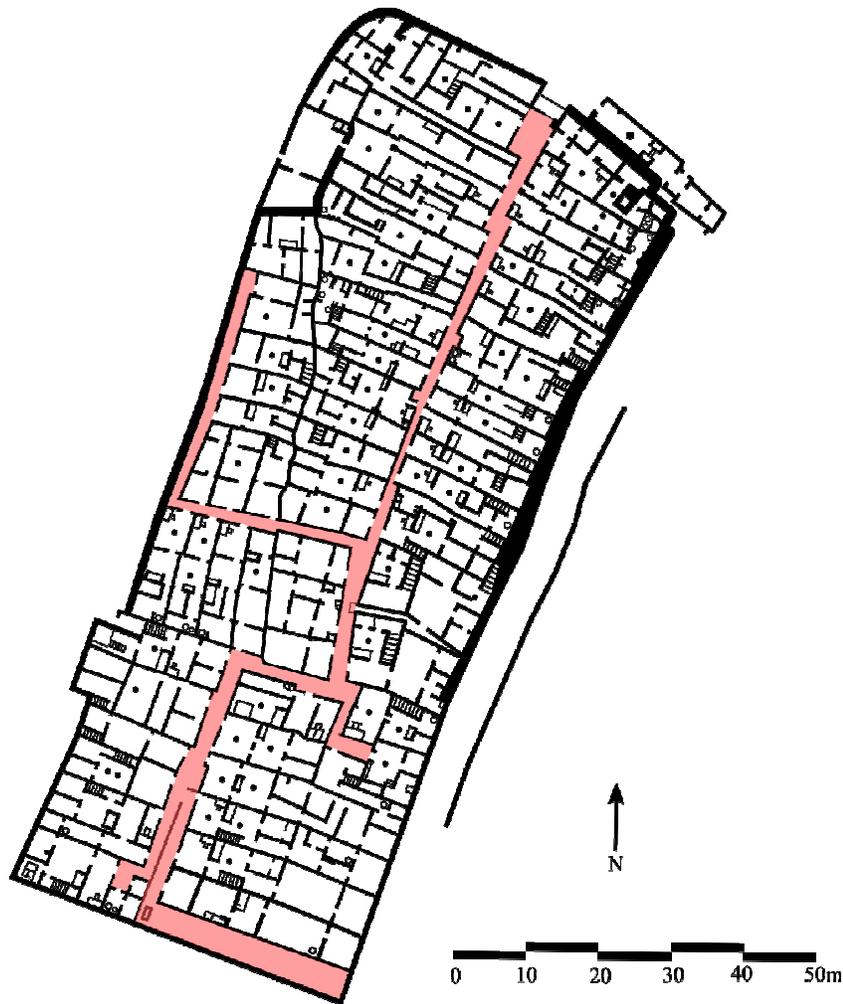
FIG. 40: PLAN OF DEIR EL-MEDINA WITH PUBLIC ROUTES HIGHLIGHTED (AFTER BRUYÈRE 1939: PL. 7)

Because of difficulties in accurately reconstructing the material traces from Deir el-Medina, a parallel case study to demonstrate the viability of street play can be made for the Amarna workmen's village. Even if the complete range of activities occurring on the streets cannot be rebuilt, reconstruction of the emplacements and materials permanently located in the streets (Fig. 41) shows that that space for play was limited. Furthermore, although some elements were found in only certain areas, such as awnings across the street (Peet and Woolley 1929: 5, 68), they were probably present more widely, further reducing light and visibility. Similarly, in several locations, pegs were placed into exterior walls, which through ethnographic comparisons and depictions in workshop models, were used for hanging or drying thread.

Therefore, the streets were full of activity and, by extension, people. Despite caveats regarding extrapolation from and comparison to other sites, the ideas and concepts discussed here are transferable to Deir el-Medina. It is unlikely that play activities, at least group-play, would find room in the streets.
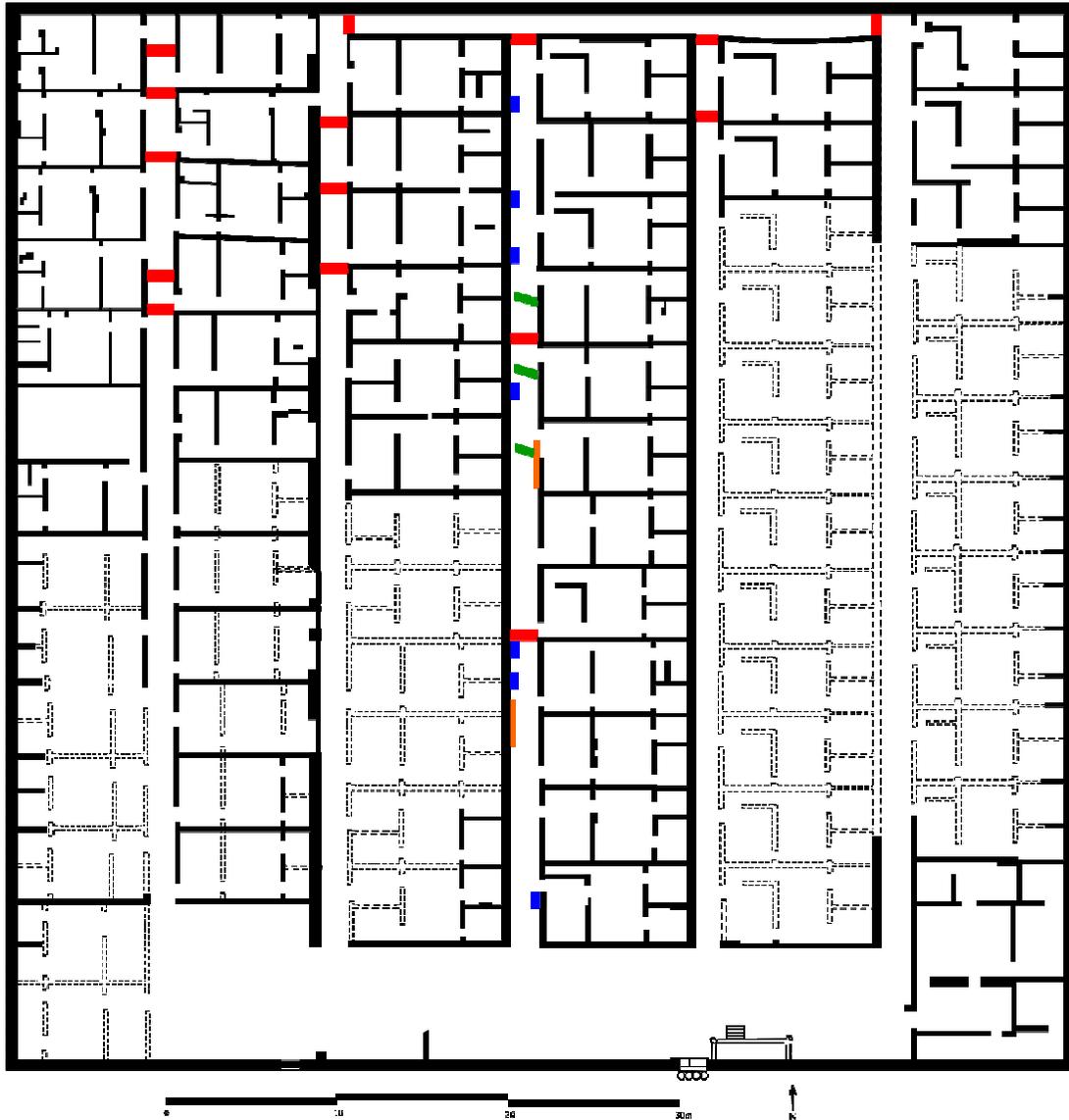

FIG. 41: RECONSTRUCTION OF STREET 'OBSTACLES' AT THE AMARNA WORKMEN'S VILLAGE
(AFTER PEET AND WOOLLEY 1929: PL. 16)

BLUE AREAS INDICATE ECONOMIC EMPLACEMENTS SUCH AS ANIMAL TROUGHS AND JAR STANDS; RED AREAS INDICATE TRIP HAZARDS SUCH AS KERBS, AND GREEN CELLAR ROOFS; ORANGE AREAS INDICATE TRACES OF AWNINGS

An alternative location for play might be natural areas beyond domestic zones—in the case of Deir el-Medina, the valley beyond its enclosure walls. Such 'unstructured' areas allow children to feel ownership and empowerment in their activities (Sobel 1990: 10; Trimble 1994: 27; Crain 1997: 43). However, we cannot assume that children have unrestricted access to a whole area. The graves and shrines surrounding Deir el-Medina would have held rich potential for hidden and unsanctioned activities, but we cannot be sure how freely accessible these were (see Harrington 2009: 137-9).

It is unclear how readily individuals were allowed beyond the walls at Deir el-Medina. There are two disagreeing schools. Wente (1990: 133) and Burkard (2003) argue that, given the nature of the craftsmen's work, movement generally was controlled. It has also been suggested, based on locations of graffiti, that different ethnic groups were restricted by different amounts (Ward 1994: 69). Even more strongly, Ventura (1986: 17-18; 1987: 149ff., especially 157-60), proposes that the workmen were completely isolated, and allowed beyond the site only when authorised and accompanied. 'Isolated' was also used by Kitchen (1982: 189) and 'imprisoned' by James (1984: 46). However, Valbelle (1985a: 115), McDowell (1994) and Meskell (1994b: 205-6) argue the opposite. Contemporary settlement lists reference numerous sites in and around the mortuary landscape (Kemp 2005: 308), and those supplying the craftsmen came to and from frequently, so Deir el-Medina was certainly not isolated (Fig. 42).

Although the level of freedom and interaction with other communities is unknown, it is unlikely that children would not have been allowed immediately beyond the walls, where opportunities for play with natural materials were plentiful. By way of parallel, Kemp (2015) has suggested that children played in the shallow ritual pools beyond the walls of the Amarna workmen's village. Indeed, the use of children as couriers (Chapter 8) would necessitate frequent movement between the village and the workplace. Gender might also have played a role in relation to play locations; might we expect boys to stray further from the household (Harper and Sanders 1975; Webley 1981), with girls more domestically tied (Rossie 2001: 9)?

Correspondence
in and out

Daughters move for marriage,
sons move for employment

To and from
the Valley of the Kings

Visits by officials

Scribes sent out for
other duties

New recruits brought
for work

Outside disputes
and local court

External business
and trading at
markets

Going on strike

Robberies and
circulation of goods

Supply deliveries

Movement of slaves
and prostitutes

N

0   10   20   30   40   50m

FIG. 42: PATTERNS OF MOVEMENT AT DEIR EL-MEDINA (AFTER MESKELL 1994B: FIG. 7)

10.4 CONCLUSIONS

Inevitably, rather than offering conclusions, this Chapter has mostly formed a critique of past approaches to studying play. This has been necessary, in order to deconstruct assumptions and create a framework for future research treating play in a more sensitive, contextually-situated manner. Re-evaluations of play have been performed elsewhere in archaeology (Sofaer Derevenski 2000a; Harlow 2013; Dozier 2016), but the topic has received no dedicated prior treatment in an Egyptian context (though see Hinson forthcoming).

It has been shown that the standard adult/child-centric framework for understanding play is not completely appropriate to an Egyptian context. It relies on modern ideas of both what childhood is—a time of leisure and social preparation—and of play as a discrete, preparatory sphere of activity preceding active social involvement. Indeed, the very language used in literature, such as 'toys', colours interpretation of the nature and materials of play, based on modern attitudes. It is not appropriate to consider children's play as a self-contained activity; for children at Deir el-Medina, engaging in productive activity from a young age, much play was subsumed and enacted through other social activities, using the same material world as other members of society. Discussion of play at Deir el-Medina is less about considering specific types of material than it is understanding the social contexts which included children, and how these were materialised.

This is not to say that play was enacted entirely in relation to adult activities. Play amongst children offered them an opportunity to engage with, and re-negotiate on their own terms, values and ideas introduced in other spheres of activity. More than the social arenas discussed in Chapters 8 and 9, play offered children scope for individual agency. However, because such play inevitably used either natural materials or items repurposed from the 'adult' world, identifying its traces is harder.

This Chapter has aimed to create an approach and framework for studying play at Deir el-Medina, rather than consider it exhaustively. Given the range of ritual and economic activities undertaken at the site, and their material components, there is vast scope to consider children's play within these. However, two methodological principles should be noted before future enquiry. If a dedicated material world was not created for children, children's materiality largely looks identical to that of adults. If experience is negotiated through materiality, does using what is considered 'adult' material culture make the child's experience that of an adult or child (Sofaer Derevenski 2000a: 5)? Indeed, should we even attempt to ascribe the material world of children its own ontological status, or does this itself impose modern distinctions between child and adult? The second consideration, which has not received full treatment here due to limitations of space, is that even if the material world of children is considered as its own ontological category, it is not a homogenised world. As discussed in the context of household activities, childhood experience—and scope for action—would be expected to vary depending on gender, age or physical capabilities, and such nuances must be taken into account within future analysis.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This thesis has explored how children's identities were formed at one social environment, in one time period of Egyptian history. However, it has intended to do so in a way that archaeologists working in all other periods and regions may find useful. To explore 'identity' in a structured manner, analysis considered two discrete, but inter-linked components. The first was 'socially-ascribed' identity, or what being a child at Deir el-Medina actually meant—who were considered children, for what reasons, and what freedoms, restrictions or expectations were placed upon them. It was, in effect, an exploration of the social structures informing children's scope for action. The second section, 'self-ascribed' identity, drew heavily from this framework. It considered the activities and relationships engaged in by children within—and sometimes counter to—these structures, and how such experiences fostered a sense of identity and belonging within social groups, be they adult or peer-organised. It also considered how those of different genders, ages or bodily capabilities may have had differing potential for action within these arenas.

Inevitably, to approach a concept such as 'identity' in bounded terms imposes somewhat artificial constraints, but it is hoped that approaching analysis in this manner has helped to demonstrate how both external structures, and lived experiences, symbiotically contribute to make a person. In essence, identity is the relationship between society and the individual at its most personal scale.

In considering how Deir el-Medina society understood childhood, it seems that social hierarchy was broadly defined simply by 'adult' and 'non-adult', with few intermediate thresholds. The findings from various bodies of evidence have largely supported this general conclusion, although different sources have offered different nuances. For example, burial evidence suggests a greater distinction between infants and young children than in textual sources, even if both groups fell under the broader umbrella of 'non-adult'. The limited evidence for rites of passage also suggests that the life-cycle was only broadly defined.

As a period of life, childhood was socially rather than biologically determined. This is not to say that biological adults could be considered children, but that many of the elements by which children were characterised were social, most prominently minority. It is possible that puberty, marriage and the foundation of one's household played a role in determining

'adulthood', though at a site such as Deir el-Medina, household 'ownership' was also state-controlled, itself dependant on accession to the workforce. The other key social attribute which has emerged throughout discussion is gender. Gender values are most apparent in relation to the child's lived experience and their participation in social activities, as these relate to broader social norms. In many societies, children are gendered from birth (Welinder 1998; Thunmark-Nylén 2006); at Deir el-Medina, there is limited evidence for the gendering of infants. The individuals' gender became more strongly pronounced with age, as they became more associated with their future roles.

In contrast to gender, although Deir el-Medina was an ethnic mix, there is little indication that ethnicity was a structuring factor for childhood. However, this comes with the caveat that the material corpus is largely homogenised. This may well mask what would in practice have been complex social relationships and engagements based on ethnicity, as well as variation in personal practices, but these remain inaccessible today.

That said, there was not one 'childhood' at Deir el-Medina. More than age or gender, context influenced how childhood was conceptualised. Evidence of children from different social contexts have all presented different ideas of what constituted a child, and how childhood was defined. Generally speaking, childhood was marked by social minority. However, in legal and funerary contexts, lineage and biological affiliation were emphasised; as members of the workforce, children were defined by their physical capabilities for work, passing through an intermediate stage of 'junior' specific to this arena, before becoming 'men of the crew'. This hierarchy was still conceptualised in terms of social categories, but physical and developmental factors played a larger role. This reflects how different 'meanings' of childhood contributed to identity within different scenarios.

Having defined the social context for being a child at Deir el-Medina, analysis turned to children's lived experience, and their roles as individuals within broader social structures. This has not aimed to be comprehensive; the lack of prior treatment the topic has received has necessitated the creation of a new research method in order to best explore children's social lives. To demonstrate this, three arenas considered fundamental to life were considered—children's participation within household activities; children's relationships with other members of society; and children's play activities.

In order to create a sensitive analysis, specific social conditions within the broader category of 'childhood' were considered when possible; given the inability to reconstruct the lives of specific individuals, a methodological middle-ground was to consider 'types' of childhood bodies, of differing ages and genders. This is still imperfect, as it assumes homogeneity of experience within such categories. However, it would be impossible to access more specific conditions, such as individual developmental capabilities.

The limited material available for study of these themes, and their absence from most documentary evidence, has placed constraints on how much can be discussed without either veering into speculation or relying on sources from beyond Deir el-Medina. Indeed, the research method itself is imperfect; cognition, anthropology and developmental psychology offer interesting perspectives with which to consider the evidence, but we can never fully reconstruct the intangible, unwritten, culturally-situated norms and values which influenced, for example, parenting and childcare. However, this does not mean that such approaches should not be used, nor that it is a futile exercise. Indeed, given the fundamentality of these themes to daily life, it is maintained that the act of simply recognising and discussing them is an important endeavour in its own right, drawing long-overdue attention to them in archaeological discourse. It is hoped that this study will create dialogue within Egyptian archaeology, and that future discoveries will allow for more nuanced analysis.

That said, there has been surprising scope for discussion. Consideration of household activities explored their role in teaching children the economic skills and religious knowledge for societal continuity, and discussion of household dynamics revealed the complex range of social relationships within which children participated. However, whilst much of this discussion considered children's learning to become, and how this fostered a sense of 'belonging' within social groups, this is not to suggest that children are passive. The situation is not as Eyre (2011: 187) proposes, wherein "education is not understood as targeting a process of individual self-development, but a process of mimicking adult behaviour and adult actions; acculturation into a conventional adult role". Indeed, as discussion of children's play has highlighted, children's peer-structured activities offered an avenue to negotiate and experiment with values imposed by wider society, and even create more individual identities contrary to societal expectations.

As only certain aspects of childhood experience have been covered here, many avenues remain open for exploration; as more evidence comes to light, some of the themes considered

here may themselves require reconsideration. The discussion has already highlighted areas where future work in childhood studies could be directed; these include greater examination of the range and nature of domestic ritual practices, and attention to the workmen's huts as arenas for male enculturation parallel to the domestic sphere.

However, another avenue for future work might not involve children at all. Just as the archaeology of gender began specifically with the 'search for women', perhaps the logical extension of childhood archaeology, and the 'search for children', is to widen perspectives to consider a broader 'archaeology of age' (Hutson 2015). Childhood is not an isolated construction, but one part of the life-cycle; the individual continues to be socialised, and their identities change, up until death. Furthermore, the elderly carry the physical effects of a lifetime of labour. The end of childhood is not a 'completion'; it cannot fully be understood except in relation to aging as a whole. In striving for a more nuanced understanding of childhood, scholarship unconsciously tends to render its natural opposite, adulthood, as a homogenous category. However, from the onset of majority until death also covers a wide range of social roles and identities. The identity of the elderly need not be consistent with that of those in their physical prime, and their social position and even gender may be more fluid than that of other adults. For example, although senior males might have a lifetime of social and practical wisdom, being unable to participate as fully within physical labour activities means they are often domestically-bound, assisting with activities such as childcare. Does this implicitly render them part of the female domain? There has been some discussion of aging (McDowell 1998; Sweeney 2006), but more needs doing to untangle the complex social positions and experiences of the elderly, repainting adulthood—just as childhood—as fluid rather than static. The archaeology of old age is perhaps a natural next step for the archaeology of childhood; indeed, in many societies, aging itself is seen as a reversion to childhood.

Having summarised the findings of this thesis and outlined areas for future work, a final note should go to its placement within the field. A constant caveat for Deir el-Medina, given its unusual nature and purpose, is its representativeness to life elsewhere in Egypt. Discussion of the experiences of the tomb craftsmen, for example, has limited applicability to elsewhere. That said, it has been demonstrated that the approaches to skills-learning at Deir el-Medina transcended the specific work of the craftsmen, and reflect frameworks for children's economic involvement elsewhere. Furthermore, despite their situation, the residents at Deir el-Medina were part of the social fabric of New Kingdom Thebes, and Egypt more

generally—many had families and original lives elsewhere. It is likely that social understandings of something as fundamental as childhood were broadly universal, even if actual lived experience was specific to the site.

Irrespective of Deir el-Medina, however, the primary purpose of this thesis has been its approach to studying and considering childhood. It is hoped that this approach can find applicability not just in Egypt, but archaeology more widely.