

CHILDHOOD TO ADULthood:

A RITE OF PASSAGE IN THE NEW KINGDOM

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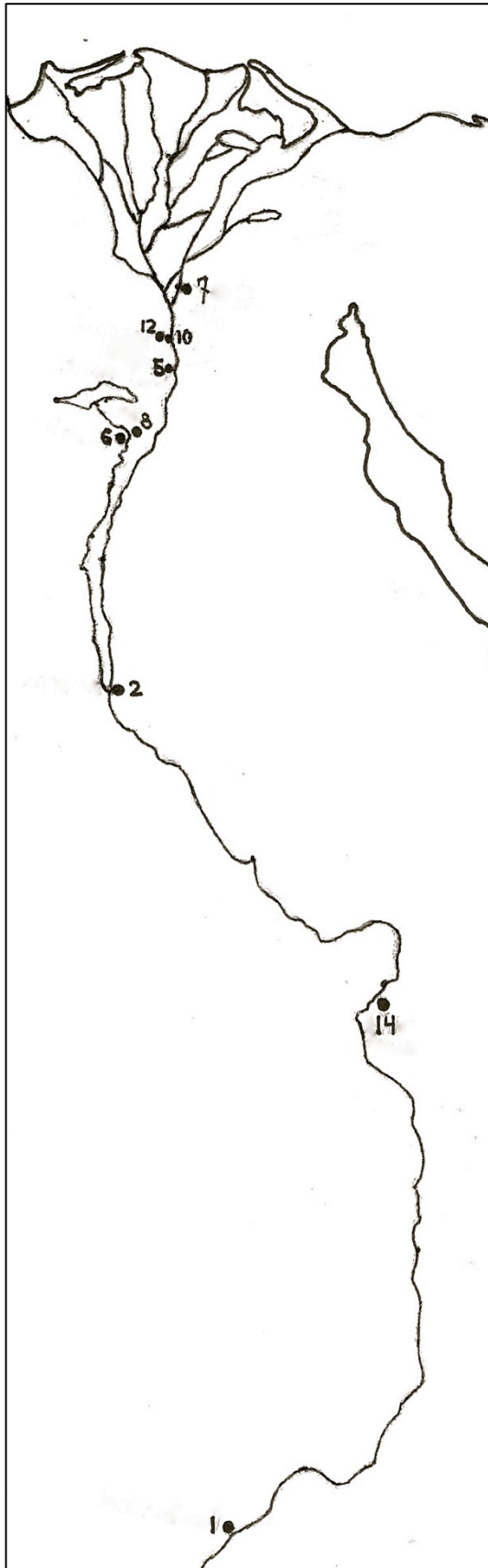
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Cover Illustration: Image of a group of female mourners varying in age from the Tomb of Ramose in Western Thebes, New Kingdom. (Z. Hawass, *Silent Images: Women in Pharaonic Egypt*, 180).

List of Abbreviations

<i>BMMA</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art</i>
<i>CGC</i>	<i>Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire</i>
<i>HÄB</i>	<i>Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge</i>
<i>JARCE</i>	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i>
<i>JEÄ</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
<i>JEgH</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian History</i>
<i>KMT</i>	<i>KMT. A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt</i>
<i>LÄ</i>	<i>Lexikon der Ägyptologie</i>
<i>PdÄ</i>	<i>Probleme der Ägyptologie</i>

Map of Upper and Lower Egypt



1. Abu Simbel
2. Amarna
3. Deir el-Bahari
4. Deir el-Medina
5. el-Lisht
6. Gurob
7. Heliopolis
8. Kahun
9. Luxor Temple
10. Memphis
11. Ramesseum
12. Saqqara
13. Temple of Mut
14. Thebes



Map of Thebes and the West Bank
(J. Baines and J. Malek, *Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt*, 85).

Introduction

The transition into adulthood is less distinct in ancient Egypt than the transition into adulthood today. Although there are a few things that could potentially mark a child to becoming an adult such as circumcision, puberty, hairstyle, clothing and work, these events occur as a rite of passage progressive process within the three previously mentioned phases of *separation*, *transition* and *incorporation*. These main events that occurred as rites of passage were not necessarily determined by a formal ceremony nor were clearly documented as highlighted rites of passage. It is most likely that many of these events were celebrated privately rather than publicly.¹ This may indicate why there is only a small amount of evidence in regards to these rites of passage. Therefore, I will attempt to address the following questions in this thesis: Are there any rites of passage from childhood into adulthood during the New Kingdom in Ancient Egypt? If so, was there a distinct age or age range that these rites occurred during? Were these rites celebrated publicly as a ceremonial rite or privately?

The evidence used to determine information regarding the daily lives of adults comes primarily from sources regarding the elite class. Sources regarding children are even more restricted to the elite class. Many people of the lower classes were illiterate and hence, were unable to leave an inscribed reference to their life. Furthermore, their burials were not as elaborate or lasting as the elite and royal classes. Thus we have very little, if any, information from the burials of the lower classes. Information about the lower classes can be found through some elite sources, however the information will be from the view of the elite and subject to artistic conventions.² Some sources, for example representational sources, were made for a specific purpose and have a certain bias attached to it.³ Therefore, it must be noted that a majority of the following information and sources will be in reference to the elite and royal ancient Egyptians of the New Kingdom period.

¹ G. Pinch, 'Private Life in Ancient Egypt', in J. Sasson (ed.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East I*

² For more information in regards to sources in this manner see R. van Walsem's *Iconography of Old Kingdom Elite Tombs: Analysis & Interpretation, Theoretical and Methodological Aspects*.

³ L. Meskell, *Private Life in New Kingdom Egypt* (Princeton, 2002), 85.

Based upon the limited sources and source material, it will be difficult to answer every question about rites of passage into adulthood from childhood let alone other questions about the lives of children and adolescents. Almost all of the evidence will not be from the children and adolescents themselves, but rather from evidence of adult lives, as through adult tombs and statues. However, in the New Kingdom a modest amount of material evidence exists such as textiles. The everyday lives of children were not recorded explicitly and thus we must make inferences through the evidence available to us. There are many things we do not know for certain and thus have to use what little evidence we have to create as clear a picture of ancient Egypt as can be possible. There are many holes in the information and sources. As a result there will also be holes in our present understanding.

1. Rites of Passage

The primary group I will be discussing is that of adolescents. The period of adolescence is a transition between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence is marked by certain characteristics, which define this phase. Julie Wileman describes these characteristics as maturity (she specifies both sexual and physical maturity) and the ability to perform "social and ritual behaviours alongside adults".⁴ Both of these aspects are important for the study of adolescence and rites of passage related to adolescence in ancient Egypt.

I will discuss the transition into adulthood using many of A. van Gennep's terminology found in his book *The Rites of Passage*. The three main categories that Gennep states that make up a rite of passage are *separation*, *transition* and *incorporation*.⁵ He uses these categories to describe the transitions of one's life, such as birth, death, marriage, etc. I will use these three categories in a more concise and specific manner to describe the rite of passage from childhood into adulthood for adolescents in ancient Egypt during the New Kingdom. This particular rite of passage is considered under the concept of initiation rites in van Gennep's book.⁶

This particular initiation rite deals with the concept of puberty and transition from childhood into adolescence, which later transitions to adulthood. In this transition there are physical aspects, which van Gennep terms "physiological puberty" and social aspects which van Gennep terms "social puberty".⁷ The first aspect, physiological puberty, deals with the biological aspects associated to puberty of both male and female children. Social puberty consists of changes both male and female children go through in a social manner.⁸

⁴ J. Wileman, *Hide and Seek: The Archaeology of Childhood* (Stroud, 2005), 162.

⁵ A. van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago, 1960), vii.

⁶ Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 65.

⁷ Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 65.

⁸ Social puberty and initiation rites may also vary depending on gender and social status. Van Gennep discusses initiation rites in his text *The Rites of Passage*. He states that even when social standing is hereditary, such as in the case of classes, one is not a entirely a member of their given society upon birth. They must go through rites in order to be incorporated into their society.

Van Gennep specifies this rite of passage as "rites of separation from the asexual world, and they are followed by rites of incorporation into the world of sexuality...".⁹ However I think that this rite of passage from childhood into adulthood is more than just a distinct move from rite of separation to rite of incorporation. There is also a transitional stage or in this case adolescence, where a child is no longer a child but not yet an adult. In addition, one may be an adult in either social or physical puberty, but not both. Thus there are three phases of the transition from childhood to adulthood: rites of separation, rites of transition and rites of incorporation.

The aforementioned three phases can also apply to individual rites of passage as well as groups of transitions. It is clear that in a specific rite of passage such as the one discussed here, childhood to adulthood is also split into parts that fit these three phases as well. The first phase, *separation*, will include changes in personal appearance. Social puberty and physiological puberty in this thesis are included in the *transition* category. However, van Gennep asserts that they are a combination of *separation* and *incorporation* phases.¹⁰ However, the biological aspects of puberty and the rituals or ceremonies that go with it mark a transitional state between youth and adulthood, namely adolescence. The final category, *incorporation*, will include education and marriage.

⁹ Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 67.

¹⁰ Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, ix.

2. Changes in Personal Appearance

Many times children are depicted as miniature adults in representational sources. This may reflect that children were brought up in an adult world at a young age. However, there are three primary characteristics that distinguish children from the adults in representational sources.¹¹ The first is the side-lock of youth. This was depicted on both male and female children. The last two characteristics are nudity with the exception of jewelry and represented with a finger to their mouths.¹²

Changes in hairstyle and clothing make up rites of separation. The cutting off of the side-lock of youth "is to separate oneself from the previous world".¹³ By changing one's personal appearance it causes a separation from the previous group, in this case from childhood.

2.1 Hairstyle

Change in hairstyle is an initial phase in the rite of passage into adulthood in ancient Egypt. Hairstyle has always been a personal representation of social identity. It allows people to shape who they are individually, yet also socially as a culture. This includes a distinction in hairstyles between those of youth and those of adults. This distinction is most clearly shown visually through representations in relief and statuary. Although much of the evidence we have for hairstyle comes from reliefs/ paintings from elite tombs, it is important to note that the reliefs are subject to artistic conventions and not necessarily indicative of reality. However, mummies also substantiate the evidence from relief.

One of the visual indicators of youth in representations of children as previously mentioned is the child's side-lock of youth hairstyle. One variation of this hairstyle can be seen in Figure 1. Hairstyle was a key part of social identity in ancient Egypt for not just the adults, but for children as well. The side-lock hairstyle consisted of a shaved head or short, cropped hair with a plaited side-lock. The side-

¹¹ K. Szpakowska, *Daily Life in Ancient Egypt* (Malden, 2008), 51.

¹² Further on the discussion of reliability of representational sources for personal appearances of children and adolescents in reality will be discussed in this chapter.

¹³ Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 166.

lock is usually depicted with a curl falling outward at the end of the lock. The side-lock is shown at the right side of the child's head.¹⁴ During the New Kingdom this hairstyle could come with a few variations such as that of multiple locks or braids.¹⁵ The side-lock of youth was found in ancient Egypt as early as the Old Kingdom.¹⁶ Mummies of children found at the Necropolis of Deir el-Medina give physical evidence of these hairstyles of children.¹⁷



Figure 1: Depiction of Nebamun, his wife and daughter of which the latter is shown wearing a variation of the traditional side-lock of youth hairstyle, Eighteenth Dynasty (J. Baines and J. Malek, *Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt*, 206-207).

In addition to variations in the side-lock, another common hairstyle is the cropped hair or completely shaven style without the plaited side-lock. The non-royal non-elite children are normally depicted wearing this style, although this style may also sometimes be shown in representations worn by the royal and elite children, it is less common than the traditional side-lock.¹⁸ Due to the lack of source material for the non-elite children, it is difficult to determine if the side-lock of youth was in fact restricted to the elite class.

¹⁴ Ch. M Müller, 'Jugendlocke', LÄ III (1980), 273-274.

¹⁵ G. Robins, 'Male Bodies and the Construction of Masculinity in New Kingdom Egyptian Art', in S. H. D'Auria (ed.), *Servant of Mut: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Fazzini* (PdÄ 28; Leiden, 2008), 214.

¹⁶ R. M. Janssen, and J. J. Janssen, *Growing Up in Ancient Egypt*, (London, 1990), 37.

¹⁷ Meszell, *Private Life*, 82.

¹⁸ G. Robins, 'Hair and the Construction of Identity in Ancient Egypt, c. 1480-1350 B.C.', *JARCE* 36 (1999), 57.

The usage of a cropped hairstyle in representations is an artistic convention for the lower classes but that does not necessarily mean that all the non-elite children wore this hairstyle.

During the New Kingdom, the length of the side-lock was commonly varied. The length of the side-lock of youth was indicative of age in comparison to other children in the representations. Typically the longer length locks means the child is older than the children with shorter length locks in the representation.¹⁹ This is logical since as a child ages their hair gets longer. However, this method still is not an absolute indicator of age.

This same side-lock is used as a hieroglyphic symbol for youth.²⁰ The side-lock hairstyle was used as a visual indicator for both male and female children. Although this hairstyle is used as an artistic convention to indicate one's youth and elite/ royal family status, evidence also suggests that this hairstyle was in fact common practice for the royal and elite children of all ages.²¹ As previously mentioned, it is unclear whether or not the non-elite class youth also used this hairstyle. Mummies of children have been found with a side-lock of youth intact.²² Therefore, since we do not see adults with these hairstyles, it is clear that this hairstyle was restricted to children and young adolescents.²³ Therefore, the side-lock of youth represents childhood as a phase. When the side-lock is cut, this shows a clear distinction between the end of childhood and beginning of the adolescence phase. It is suggested that the side-lock of youth is cut at about the age of ten by Julie Wileman in her book, *Hide and Seek: the Archaeology of Childhood*.²⁴ Despite this, there is no clear evidence to support this age and therefore, it is still unclear if there is an exact age at which the shaving off of the side-lock of youth occurred. It is probable that there was not an exact age but was rather cut with the beginning of social and physical maturity.

¹⁹ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 40-41.

²⁰ The usage of the side-lock of youth as a hieroglyphic symbol mostly comes from the Ptolemaic Period.

²¹ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 38.

²² A couple of the most prominent mummies with a clear side-lock of youth intact are two royal mummies from the New Kingdom. Both of these mummies will be discussed further in chapter six.

²³ There are a few exceptions to this rule as will be explained further later on in chapter six.

²⁴ Wileman, *Hide and Seek*, 26-27.

Both adolescent males and females would now wear wigs and differing hairstyles. Mummies of adolescent age have been found in the Eastern Necropolis of Deir el-Medina that shows them growing their hair in style of the adults.²⁵ Elite men wore wigs or had shaven heads. The wigs would be of shoulder-length or less, which differentiated them from adult females. Predominantly in relief and statues, adult men are depicted wearing a wig with fewer instances of shaven and cropped hair. The wigs were quite intricate and could have slight variances from wig to wig. The non-elite men typically wore a cropped or shaven hairstyle and were not shown wearing wigs.²⁶

Elite women also wore wigs. Their wigs were longer than that of men's wigs, usually past shoulder-length. Both elite and non-elite women could also have hairstyles of their own hair. The lengths of these hairstyles would, like the wigs, be longer than shoulder-length.²⁷ A secondary hairstyle for adolescent females is suggested by Gay Robins. This hairstyle is shown with locks of hair around the face with a ponytail-like bunch at the back of the head. She indicates that adolescent females, to show they are no longer children but have not completed the passage into adulthood through marriage, may have used this hairstyle.²⁸ The women who normally wear this style show at least some indications of youthfulness. In this photo the tomb owner and his wife are receiving gifts from their four daughters. The two daughters in the back are taller than the two females in front of the tomb owner. They both are wearing wigs of adult women. The two smaller girls are wearing the hairstyle as proposed by G. Robins. Their size indicates a younger age than the two fully adult daughters. However, since both smaller girls are clothed, it indicates an age post puberty but prior to marriage.²⁹

Upon reaching such an appropriate time, the children would shave off their side-lock of youth as a way of showing their transition into adulthood and away from childhood. From that point on, the older adolescents could let their own natural hair

²⁵ Meskell, *Private Life*, 158.

²⁶ Robins, *JARCE* 36, 58.

²⁷ Robins, *JARCE* 36, 58.

²⁸ Robins, *JARCE* 36, 64.

²⁹ Robins, *JARCE* 36, 61.

grow.³⁰ They also would wear wigs and other hairstyles in the current fashion of the adults in their social class. This is both indicated through findings in tombs as well as relief representations. It is clear that such an event was indeed important as a beginning phase into the rite of passage into adulthood.³¹ By shaving off their side-lock of youth, this action associates them to the adult world rather than to childhood. This same hairstyle transition applies to the royal adolescents as well. This aspect will be discussed later in chapter six.

A common ritual object revolving around hair, are clay mud balls with hair locks pressed into them. Several 'hair balls' have been found in Amarna (Fig. 2). Although the amount of hair varies from ball to ball, none of the clay balls have extensive amounts of hair pressed throughout the ball; they only have several strands comprising a lock of hair. This indicates a ritualistic purpose for the balls.³² Other similar balls have been found in Kahun.³³ The locks of hair are most likely cut off early on in a child's life, thus representing their first haircut. However, these clay balls may also have been made at such a time when a child is deemed old enough to have their side-lock of youth cut. The hairballs have been compared to a hair cutting ceremony from modern Egypt. In this ceremony, a young boy has his "tufted hair"



Figure 2: Image of Nile clay balls with locks of hair pressed into them found in Amarna, Amarna Period.

removed and it is further placed in a clay ball.³⁴ Although unlikely, it may indicate in antiquity a special removal of the side-lock of youth ceremony transitioning the youth into an early phase of the rite of passage into adulthood.³⁵

Most of the evidence indicates that the side-lock was cut after adolescents began wearing clothing. Since there appears to be no set age for the cutting of the side-lock of youth, it is possible that this timing was linked to the beginning of puberty.³⁶

³⁰ G. Höber-Kamel, 'Das Kind bei den Alten Ägyptern, ein Überblick', *Kemet* 20 (4), (2011), 4.

³¹ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 40.

³² A. Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna: The Material Evidence* (Oxford, 2006), 112.

³³ Stevens, *Private Religion*, 113.

³⁴ Stevens, *Private Religion*, 115.

³⁵ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 40.

2.2 Clothing

Clothing style is a clear indicator of gender and status in ancient Egypt. One can distinguish between the elite and adults from lower classes and youth.³⁷ Changes in style of clothing for the gender and status of the individual can be representative of changes in the status, profession and age of said individual. It is possible that both changes in clothing and hairstyle occurred at an age where the adolescents reached puberty and were deemed able to be married or just prior to puberty. The main evidence for the dress of adolescents and young children come from representational sources. These include paintings, relief and statues. This may become problematic for determining reality because the representational sources were created in an idealized artistic manner, following their contemporary artistic conventions. However, this still shows a part of the rite of passage in terms of how they are viewed socially and at what phase they are in their lives.³⁸

Typical adult clothing during the New Kingdom varied greatly in fashion style. The most common dress worn by women was the 'sheath' dress (Pl. I). This style dates as far back as the Old Kingdom and was still present during the New Kingdom. Another type was a 'party' dress, which was a sort of draped dress. This style began in the early New Kingdom. A final style common from the Amarna period was a sort of 'wrapped' dress (Pl. II).³⁹ Other variations of these dresses were also common as well. The main piece of clothing worn by men was a kilt. Like the sheath dress for women, it also dates back to the Old Kingdom. The kilt had different styles throughout different periods. In the New Kingdom 'bag tunics' and pleating were added to the kilt to make different varieties, specifically for special events.⁴⁰ However, these were not the only variances in the kilt (Pl. II and III).

In relief representations you see a distinct change in clothing style between youth and adulthood. The lack of clothing is the main example of this. Typically children and young adolescents, both male and female, are represented naked with the

³⁶ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 40.

³⁷ L. Green, 'Seeing Through Ancient Egyptian Clothes: Garments & Hairstyles as Indicators of Social Status in Old, Middle & New Kingdom Egypt', *KMT* 6 (4), (1995-1996), 28.

³⁸ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 26.

³⁹ Green, *KMT* 6 (4), 34.

⁴⁰ Green, *KMT* 6 (4), 36-37

exception of amulets and other forms of jewelry.⁴¹ This nudity also includes a lack of footwear (Pl. IV).⁴² However, the depictions are not necessarily indicative of reality. In reality it is unlikely that children went around naked all the time until they reached puberty and adulthood due to the climate of Egypt and the archaeological textile finds for varying ages of childhood. Children may have gone around naked during the warmest times of the year, however, during winter months and cooler evenings, it is unlikely that the children did not wear some type of clothing.⁴³ However, it is possible that the children frequently went around without footwear.⁴⁴ We have a small amount of evidence for children's clothing.⁴⁵ In addition we also have a few pairs of children's sandals indicating that they were not always bare-foot, as the representations would have us believe. Further on the sandals will be discussed later in this chapter. Therefore, the nudity of children in representations of them is more likely an artistic convention to imply childhood and youth. However, it is possible that, like many tribes in Africa today, the children, specifically the infants and toddlers are naked during hot temperatures of the year and wear clothing only when it gets colder- in the evenings and winter.⁴⁶

Many children are also shown clothed in tombs at Deir el-Medina. However, those that are naked make it very difficult to determine differences in gender. One such example is the usage of jewelry and amulets as the only "clothing" the naked children wear. Both female and male children wear these adornments. The differences in physical appearance through clothing only come through reaching adulthood.⁴⁷ The adults were depicted with specific clothing styles determined by their social status.

⁴¹ Wileman, *Hide and Seek*, 24.

⁴² It must be noted that it is a frequent artistic convention for the adults to also be depicted without footwear as well as children as is shown in Plate V. This makes it seem even less likely that everyone, children included, went without footwear all the time.

⁴³ Höber-Kamel, *Kemet* 20 (4), 4.

⁴⁴ S. Ferguson, *Growing Up in Ancient Egypt* (London, 1980), 40.

⁴⁵ G.M. Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Tutankhamun's Wardrobe: Garments from the Tomb of Tutankhamun* (Rotterdam, 1999). AND R. M. Janssen, and J. J. Janssen, *Growing Up in Ancient Egypt* (London, 1990).

⁴⁶ Szpakowska, *Daily Life*, 52.

⁴⁷ Meskell, *Private Life*, 85.

The vestiges of children's clothing that has been found are all similar in style to that of the adult's clothing styles.⁴⁸ Although it is likely that as a child became older, the clothing began to match that of the adult styles more. Men wear kilts and women wear sheath dresses.⁴⁹ Examples of children's clothing that still survive today include the following: a pair of children's sleeves that were most likely made to attach to a tunic when the weather became cooler (Fig. 3), a wardrobe of children's clothing from Tutankhamun's tomb⁵⁰ and cloth that closely resemble small tunics for children found in the workmen's village near Amarna.⁵¹ There is also material evidence of children's textiles at Deir el-Medina in the Eastern necropolis. One such piece of evidence includes a child's triangular loincloth. This piece was indicated as being 'well washed'.⁵² Clothing such as this piece proves that children did not run around naked all the time. Although material evidence can give a less skewed idea of daily dress for children during the New Kingdom than representational sources, it can still have some bias in funerary contexts. Some clothes that may not have been worn on a regular basis could be placed in tombs. In addition to clothing, children's sandals have also been found. One such pair of sandals (Pl. V) was found in the capital city of Amarna.⁵³ This indicates that children also did not go around barefoot all the time as the representational sources show.⁵⁴ These pieces would have been most likely for the elite and royal families since the leather the sandals were made from was expensive.

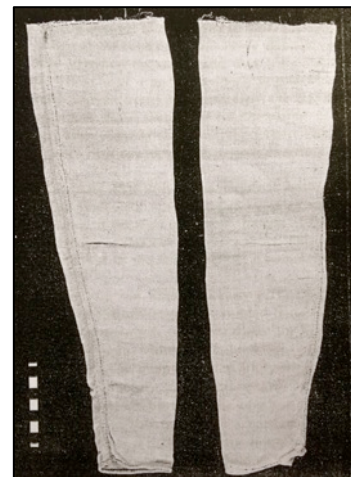


Figure 3: Image of children's sleeves used to attach to another garment when the weather became cooler from Tomb 25, Gurob, New Kingdom (R. M. Janssen and J. J. Janssen, *Growing Up in Ancient Egypt*, 35).

R. M. Janssen and J. J. Janssen describe two statues that were placed in the coffin of a woman. These two statues are of the woman's male children. The statue

⁴⁸ Wileman, *Hide and Seek*, 24.

⁴⁹ J. J. Janssen, *Daily Dress at Deir el-Medina: Words for Clothing* (London, 2008), 92.

⁵⁰ More of the information regarding children's clothing from the tomb of Tutankhamun is found in the section 'Royal Adolescents'.

⁵¹ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 35-37.

⁵² Janssen, *Daily Dress*, 91.

⁵³ F. Seyfried, *In the Light of Amarna: 100 Years of the Nefertiti Discovery*, (Berlin, 2012), 272-273.

⁵⁴ A. J. Veldmeijer and S. Ikram, 'Leatherwork at Amarna', in F. Seyfried (ed.) *In the Light of Amarna: 100 Years of the Nefertiti Discovery* (Berlin, 2012), 139.

of the elder male figure is clothed, while that of the younger male figure is naked. R. M. Janssen and J. J. Janssen states that it "does not necessarily imply that his elder sibling was already fully adult."⁵⁵ However, it is possible that the elder male figure had in fact reached an age that he was deemed more adult than child. Thus the figure may not have been "fully" adult, but on the initial phase of the rite of passage into adulthood nonetheless. In addition the statue of the elder son was larger than that of the younger son⁵⁶ thus indicating an age difference between the two.

Other examples of both clothed and unclothed children occur at the workmen's village of Deir el-Medina. Multiple scenes show children in both states. This indicates those who are older and beginning the first phase of the passage into adulthood are those represented as clothed.⁵⁷ The times when they are depicted in

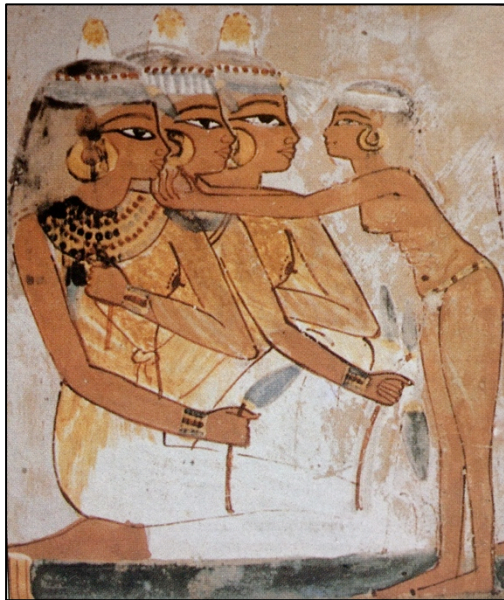


FIGURE 4: Depiction of a naked servant girl serving three upper class women, Tomb of Nakht, Thebes, Eighteenth Dynasty (L. Green, 'Seeing Through Ancient Egyptian Clothes: Garments & Hairstyles as Indicators of Social Status in Old, Middle & New Kingdom Egypt', *KMT* 6 (4), 33).

clothing, they are represented with clothing mimicking the adult style only in a smaller form.⁵⁸ It may just be the artistic license in representations, however it is more likely this indicates they have completed the first phase into adulthood.

Nudity in representational sources was not restricted to just children. Slaves and servants were also depicted naked. In addition, some professions were also depicted naked, such as dancers. The lower class adults were also commonly depicted naked as shown in Figure 4.⁵⁹ These can be distinguished from children through hairstyle and usage of jewelry. Many of these other depictions may indicate a non-

⁵⁵ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 27.

⁵⁶ E. Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten: die Stellung des Kindes in Familie und Gesellschaft nach altägyptischen Texten und Darstellungen* (Frankfurt, 1995), 486-487.

⁵⁷ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 31.

⁵⁸ Green, *KMT* 6 (4), 33.

⁵⁹ Green, *KMT* 6 (4), 32.

elite or non-royal status by using nudity.

Donning a certain type of clothing at a certain age has been suggested as a rite of passage into adulthood for upper class adolescent males. Certain careers required different clothing that distinguished them from other professions.⁶⁰ The donning of this clothing thus indicated a transition into adulthood.⁶¹ Such an example of this is the priesthood.⁶²

⁶⁰ R. David, *Handbook to Life in Ancient Egypt* (New York, 2003), 368.

⁶¹ G. Pinch, *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, 379.

⁶² Further more on this topic will be discussed under chapter four

3. Puberty

This chapter will be discussing puberty rites that are both social and physiological. Circumcision, both male and female, are social aspects of puberty while the last subject, menstruation, is a physiological aspect of puberty.⁶³ Both aspects for their own reasons are difficult to assign a specific age to. Both of these aspects of puberty are part of the transition phase and the beginning of the incorporation phase.

3.1 Circumcision

Another indicator of transition into adolescence is circumcision, although this can sometimes be unclear. The actual practice of male circumcision in ancient Egypt could potentially have two methods. The first method is a v-shaped cut in the foreskin rather than a full removal. The second method consists of a full removal of the foreskin.⁶⁴ Evidence for circumcision of male children is mostly from the Old Kingdom to the Middle Kingdom.⁶⁵ Such evidence includes relief, statues and mummies of men.⁶⁶ One of the earliest and only representations we have depicting the actual procedure dates to the sixth dynasty at Saqqara in the mastaba of Ankhmahor (Fig. 5).⁶⁷ Much of the evidence from previous periods indicates that it occurred during adolescence.⁶⁸ It also suggests that it was part of a ritual completed in large numbers. It is particularly difficult to find evidence for circumcision through relief, paintings and statuary based upon the New Kingdom artistic conventions for men. In previous periods it was quite common to have a male depicted naked and you could see that whether the male was circumcised or not. During the New Kingdom, the nude elite adult male is not commonly depicted.⁶⁹ Therefore it makes it difficult to determine whether or not circumcision was a practice through iconography and

⁶³ Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 68-73.

⁶⁴ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 246.

⁶⁵ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 90.

⁶⁶ For further information on the sources see the following article: Harco Willems "A note on circumcision"- page 553.

⁶⁷ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 91.

⁶⁸ C. A. Graves-Brown, 'Flint and Life Crises in Pharaonic Egypt', in R. J. Dann (ed.), *Current Research in Egyptology 2004: Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Symposium which Took Place at the University of Durham, January 2004* (2006), 73.

⁶⁹ Robins, *Servant of Mut*, 209-210.

statuary. However, there is some scarce evidence to support circumcision in the New Kingdom. Such evidence includes mummies and a rare few representations.



Figure 5: Scene depicting circumcision operation from the Mastaba of Ankhmahor, Saqqara, Sixth Dynasty (F. Trassard, D. Anterion and R. Thomazo, *Leben im alten Ägypten*, 19).

A few of the representations from the New Kingdom are from the Eighteenth Dynasty. One of the scenes shows circumcision of the pharaoh Hatshepsut in the Temple of Deir el-Bahari in a mythological aspect of circumcision (Pl. VI. A). In this depiction the pharaoh is shown as a male child, naked

with a child's side-lock of youth.⁷⁰ Another such scene is from the Luxor Temple (Pl. VI. B). This scene is also mythological in nature and is very similar to the scene from the Temple of Deir el-Bahari.⁷¹ One other scene from the New Kingdom comes from the Temple of Mut in Thebes (Pl. VII). In this scene one can just see the beginning of the operation of circumcision occurring.⁷² These depictions are most likely only representative and are not necessarily indicative of circumcision as a puberty ritual in the New Kingdom. However, they may also show that circumcision was proper for royal male children in order to be pharaoh. Some royal mummies have shown evidence for male circumcision.⁷³ Mummies are hard to determine whether the foreskin has been removed or not. Many of the indications for male circumcision come from Elliot Smith's results of the examination of royal mummies. However, some of his findings have been contested by later examinations.⁷⁴ J. Quack mentions the difficulty in determining whether or not circumcision occurred on a mummy. Quack notes that it is difficult in determining circumcision because you are mostly

⁷⁰ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 92.

⁷¹ J. F. Quack, 'Zur Beschneidung im Alten Ägypten', in A. Berlejung, J. Dietrich and J. F. Quack (eds.), *Menschenbilder und Körperkonzepte im alten Israel, in Ägypten und im alten Orient*, ORA 9, 632.

⁷² Quack, *Menschenbilder und Körperkonzepte*, 631.

⁷³ More on this subject will be discussed in chapter six.

⁷⁴ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 95.

relying on the information supplied by those who have examined the body.⁷⁵ Other bodies have been examined from Deir el-Medina with little evidence to suggest that circumcision was a common practice.⁷⁶

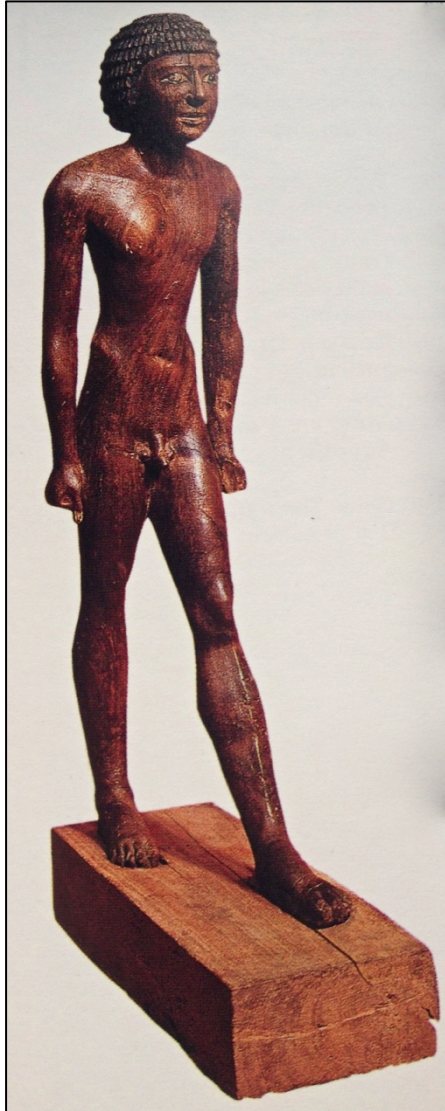


Figure 6: Image of wooden statue of Meryrehashtef from Sedment, Sixth Dynasty (J. Baines and J. Malek, *Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt*, 129).

There was one instance that mentions circumcision during the New Kingdom, the vizier Useramun.⁷⁷ Other than the above listed instances, there is a lack of evidence for circumcision as a rite of passage into adulthood during the New Kingdom.⁷⁸ This indicates that it is unlikely that circumcision was a common practice during the New Kingdom. Despite this, it is important to note my agreement with Janssen that an "absence of evidence cannot be said to be evidence of absence" when it comes to the practice of circumcision during the New Kingdom.⁷⁹ Much of the evidence for earlier periods appeared in representations in statues of naked men (Fig. 6).⁸⁰ However in the New Kingdom, you find less naked adult men and hardly any evidence to support male circumcision.⁸¹

Overall, due to the inconsistency of results and evidence regarding male circumcision, it is difficult to determine whether

⁷⁵ Quack, *Menschenbilder und Körperkonzepte*, 562.

⁷⁶ Meskell, *Private Life*, 88.

⁷⁷ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 94.

⁷⁸ J. Wileman in her text *Hide and Seek: The Archaeology of Childhood* makes an interesting note in regards to the phallus hieroglyph. She notes that the sign is depicted as circumcised and says this may be an indication of circumcision as a practice. Although, I think that it would be unlikely to indicate circumcision as a practice during the New Kingdom, just an indication that circumcision was widely practiced in earlier periods.

⁷⁹ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 95.

⁸⁰ H. Willems, 'A Note on Circumcision in Ancient Egypt', in *Kleine Götter-Grosse Götter: Festschrift für Dieter Kessler zum 65. Geburtstag* (2013), 553.

⁸¹ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 95.

or not the practice occurred in the New Kingdom. In addition, it also then makes it difficult to determine if it did in fact occur, whether or not it was associated and completed at a time related to a puberty ritual or rite of passage. If it occurred at such a time of puberty, there is no evidence to support that the event was celebrated as a special rite of passage ceremony.⁸²

We also have clear evidence to support that not all males partook in circumcision during the New Kingdom. One such example is that of Pharaoh Ahmose. Examinations made it clear that he was uncircumcised.⁸³ Another male mummy distinguished as uncircumcised is that of Nakht from the Twentieth Dynasty. However, Nakht died between the ages of fourteen and eighteen and thus Quack questions whether or not Nakht was uncircumcised because he died prior to a circumcision operation.⁸⁴ Based upon the age range of his death, it is possible either way that he may have been uncircumcised by choice or because he had not had the opportunity yet to become circumcised.

Female circumcision has even less evidence than male circumcision. It is much more difficult to determine whether females in ancient Egypt went through circumcision of any degree as a *rite de passage*.⁸⁵ However, unlike the circumcision of men, it is much harder to see circumcision of women visually and therefore makes it harder to determine from representational sources. Even with mummies it is difficult to prove that female circumcision did in fact occur. There is reference to female circumcision in an earlier period. Uha was mentioned as having been circumcised with a group of men and a group of women.⁸⁶ However, this text makes it unclear what type of female circumcision would have been used on these women. There also is proof upon examination of mummies that if female circumcision occurred not all women participated in it.⁸⁷ There is evidence that female circumcision occurred during the Greco-Roman period⁸⁸ however it is likely that was

⁸² Janssen, *Growing Up*, 98.

⁸³ Graves-Brown, *Current Research*, 73.

⁸⁴ Quack, *Menschenbilder und Körperkonzepte*, 564-565.

⁸⁵ S. Huebner goes into detail regarding the practice of female circumcision in Ancient Egypt in her article "Female Circumcision as a *Rite de Passage* in Egypt- Continuity Through the Millennia?"

⁸⁶ Graves-Brown, *Current Research*, 73.

⁸⁷ J. Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina: A Study on the Status and Roles of the Female Inhabitants in the Workmen's Community During the Ramesside Period* (Leiden, 2001), 194.

⁸⁸ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 250.

due to other influences that native ancient Egyptian. Despite the lack of solid evidence during the New Kingdom and earlier⁸⁹, it is still possible that the practice was in use.

Chastity and fidelity were both important factors for marriage, both of which could be settled through female circumcision, as is seen in many African countries today.⁹⁰ The small amount of evidence that we have regarding circumcision during the New Kingdom mostly references male circumcision, however, since even with male circumcision the evidence is scarce, it is also logical that any evidence for female circumcision would be almost non-existent. Gay Robins also mentions this point going further to mention "it is unclear what form such evidence might take".⁹¹ This additionally shows that if such evidence exists to prove female circumcision one way or the other, it would be difficult to determine such evidence. Overall, the concept of female circumcision as an initiation rite in ancient Egypt is unclear and inconsistent at best.

3.2 Menstruation

Menstruation is referred to in ancient Egypt as *hsmn*.⁹² Due to the nature of this part of female puberty, we have very few references to menstruation in ancient Egypt. Much of the sources for it come from lists of laundry mentioning sanitary towels.⁹³ The sanitary towels are called *sdw (n) ph=mrw ph* which means "bands of the behinds".⁹⁴ A text from Deir el-Medina also includes reference to sanitary towels. This text is a list of laundry that was dropped off to the laundry washing man. It says

"Year 1, third month of winter, day 15. This day, giving clothes to the washer men. What came from/via him in the third month of winter, day 16. Given to them at the riverbank to launder:

⁸⁹ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 90.

⁹⁰ S. Huebner, 'Female Circumcision as a Rite de Passage in Egypt: Continuity Through the Millennia?', *JEGH* 2 (1-2), 154-155.

⁹¹ G. Robins, 'Growing Up in Ancient Egypt by Rosalind M. Janssen; Jac. J. Janssen', Review in *JEA* 80 (1994), 233.

⁹² Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 162.

⁹³ G. Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, (London, 1993), 78.

⁹⁴ R. Hall and J. Janssen, 'The Egyptian Laundry', *Wepwawet* 1 (1985), 16.

kilts	10
loincloths	8
sanitary towels	5" ⁹⁵

Additional evidence comes from references to locations made specifically for women to go to during their menstruation. Ostrakon found in Deir el-Medina refers to a special place restricted for the female gender. This ostrakon mentions that eight menstruating women went to this special place.⁹⁶ This location is thought to be outside of the main part of Deir el-Medina. During the time of women's menstruation, they would come to this special location for separation from the rest of the village.⁹⁷ It is suggested that this special location was used for certain rituals for post-birth, miscarriages and/or an adolescent girl's first menstruation.⁹⁸ However, there is very little evidence to be able to support or deny this suggestion.

Other than this reference, there are very few other cases indicating a special location for women to go to during their menstruation or as a special rite of passage for their first menstruation. Since having children was an important part of ancient Egyptian life, it is most probable despite the lack of evidence that an adolescent female's first menstruation was publicly celebrated to represent her ability to have children regardless if separation was necessary or not.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ A. G. MacDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt: Laundry Lists and Love Songs* (Oxford, 1999), 60.

⁹⁶ MacDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt*, 35.

⁹⁷ T. G. Wilfong, 'Gender in Ancient Egypt', in W. Wendrich and Willeke (eds.), *Egyptian Archaeology* (2010), 175.

⁹⁸ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 166.

⁹⁹ G. Pinch, *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, 379.

4. Education

During the New Kingdom we have a larger amount of evidence for education, training and apprenticeships than in other periods.¹⁰⁰ A main source of this information comes from the workmen's village of Deir el-Medina (Fig 7). Deir el-Medina had a higher literacy rate among males than in other parts of ancient Egypt.¹⁰¹ As a result of the high amounts of evidence in regards to education coming out of Deir el-Medina, we are restricted in our knowledge. The workmen's village at Deir el-Medina was a unique case in which many of the workers were educated. Therefore the information gained from Deir el-Medina may or may not be universal for ancient Egypt as a whole.



Figure 7: Image of Deir el-Medina (G. Pinch, 'Private Life in Ancient Egypt', in J. Sasson (ed.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East I*, 366).

Education began at a very young age for both male and female children. They began learning prior to a formal education from their mother at home. This became

¹⁰⁰ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 227.

¹⁰¹ A. G. MacDowell, 'Teachers and Students at Deir el-Medina', in R.J. Demaree and A. Egberts (eds.), *Deir el-Medina in the Third Millennium AD: A Tribute to Jac. J. Janssen* (2000), 217.

an important aspect upon marriage, for the woman raises and begins education of both male and female children.¹⁰²

Education marks a social transitional period or rite of transition between childhood and adulthood. The child begins learning practical lessons and social responsibilities. This transitional period ends only with marriage and the founding of a household.¹⁰³

4.1 Increased Responsibility from Early Childhood

Adolescence marked a period of increased work responsibility and decreased play. However, these characteristics did not begin when a child reached adolescent age. They began during early childhood with certain games that began to introduce the child into adult life. This age is about seven years old. At this point they are deemed able begin to learn about their personal and social responsibilities, including basic work chores. They continue this process of education on the adult world until they reach late adolescence and make the final transition into adulthood through marriage.¹⁰⁴

In a way to introduce children to the adult world early, the children would play a type of role play game which is similar to children playing house today. As they would get older, the role-play would transition into real chores and more responsibility.¹⁰⁵ In addition to the role-play, unless games were specifically related to becoming more responsible, the use of games began to dissipate as the child became older and transitioned into adulthood. Game play was, thus, only for the more youthful population. One major exception is the scribe.¹⁰⁶ Another such exception is the soldier. Rather than learning much about work through chores and role-play, they learned about their profession through education and apprenticeships.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 35.

¹⁰³ More on marriage as a final rite of passage into adulthood can be found in chapter five.

¹⁰⁴ Ch. Eyre, 'Children and Literature in Pharaonic Egypt', in M. Collier and S. Snape (eds.), *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K.A. Kitchen* (2011), 180.

¹⁰⁵ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 49.

¹⁰⁶ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 99.

¹⁰⁷ Further on this will be discussed in subchapter two and three of chapter four respectively.

Many times the children would copy their parents in the chores and responsibilities that were required of them. On relief representations, there are many cases of children in a similar position to their parents such as in praise towards Osiris or in funerary scenes shown in acts of mourning (Fig. 8).¹⁰⁸ These actions allowed the child to become familiar with the expected social responsibilities that would be required of them upon adulthood. In a review for *Growing Up in Ancient Egypt* by R. M. Janssen and J. J. Janssen, the reviewer points out that there is little evidence for the suggestion of role-play with the children. R. M. Janssen and J. J. Janssen make a larger parallel to modern Egypt than in antiquity.¹⁰⁹ However, although the reviewer's assessment of the amount of evidence is accurate, it is still logical that children did in fact participate in an introduction into the adult world through this manner, specifically in lower classes where the children would have added extra economic value by aiding the parents in the workload. Thus children were an important part of the family unit for the lower classes.



Figure 8: Image of a group of female mourners varying in age from the Tomb of Ramose in Western Thebes, New Kingdom. (Z. Hawass, *Silent Images: Women in Pharaonic Egypt*, 180).

The expected responsibilities would vary between male and female children. As they became older, they were able to help run the household and work, which were important aspects for non-elite families.¹¹⁰ In many representations of the non-elite,

¹⁰⁸ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 50.

¹⁰⁹ Robins, *JEA* 80, 232.

¹¹⁰ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 52.

children were depicted in domestic scenes as servants. The female children would copy their mother's actions while the male children would copy their father's roles. The daughters would take part in watching over their younger siblings and are sometimes represented in working scenes in the fields with other women and men. They would, in essence, would aid their mothers in tasks of the household. The sons would aid the father in labor roles. They could do anything from farming to catching fish.¹¹¹ The sons are also in the field scenes as well. At Deir el-Medina there is textual evidence that proves the children aided their fathers with the building projects. They helped directly with the projects as well as indirectly by having been messengers.¹¹²

4.2 Home and Formal Education

As previously mentioned, the children were progressively accustomed to the adult world. Many did not attend formal education except the education that they received from their parents. On the occasion you will see a father also educating another son as well as his own. During the New Kingdom there was an increase in the potential for non-elite and non-royal children to be educated and gaining higher-ranking offices.¹¹³

Formal education was completed by male youth. The elite male children may be educated either formally at a school, informally at home or both. The main function of formal education was to gain writing skills. Examples of formal education in preparation for a profession would be scribal education.¹¹⁴ The formal education was arduous and detailed. This type of education was directly conforming the children into adults through a severe education system.¹¹⁵ They began their education in an early development version of an apprenticeship with a scribe.¹¹⁶ With further education this led to a more distinguished apprenticeship. Literacy was considered an adult trait and thus by learning this trait, you were transitioning into adulthood.

¹¹¹ Höber-Kamel, *Kemet 20 (4)*, 5.

¹¹² Höber-Kamel, *Kemet 20 (4)*, 5.

¹¹³ E. Wente, 'The Scribes of Ancient Egypt', in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East IV* (New York, 1995), 2214.

¹¹⁴ Robins, *Women*, 106.

¹¹⁵ Eyre, *Ramesside Studies*, 183.

¹¹⁶ Eyre, *Ramesside Studies*, 186.

During this time they would practice penmanship, verbal and reading skills. As part of this training they make copies and memorize texts.¹¹⁷

The goal of this training was for complete literacy. Literacy was a key component of many high offices in ancient Egypt and thus it represented an important step into becoming an adult in the elite and royal classes. Christopher Eyre states, in reference to literacy, "incomplete training had no merit or purpose".¹¹⁸ Although that is likely, I cannot imagine that one who is partially literate was looked upon with equal favor to one who was completely illiterate in such a society where literacy was so prized by the elite. However the relatively small number of literate ancient Egyptians aided in the premise that literacy was decidedly an adult characteristic. A youth who has an affinity for literacy may be considered in the adult world.¹¹⁹ From this point they may begin a formal apprenticeship or begin their profession by an initial appointment.

Formal schooling may have been given either by a parent or through an actual school separate from the family. It is unclear how large or numerous the latter would have been. The word denoted to the term 'school' in ancient Egypt is *'t sb3(y.t)*. According to Viitala, this terminology directly says "a room/house/chamber of teaching".¹²⁰ It is likely that this type of school was more dedicated towards basic education rather than to the more specific professional education. The more detailed professional education likely came from apprenticeships. However, despite being called a 'basic' school that does not necessarily mean that the education was elementary. It only means that this school primarily gave education on general subjects such as writing. The education more specific to a profession came from either a special school for that profession or through an apprenticeship. It is unclear how many students attended the basic school. I think it is likely that there were a large group of students in the basic schools while the apprenticeship was comprised of a one-on-one education. The choice to go to a basic school was primarily chosen by the parents. However, when it came time for the more advanced education, particularly apprenticeship, it was on the part of the student to choose which direction

¹¹⁷ Eyre, *Ramesside Studies*, 183.

¹¹⁸ Eyre, *Ramesside Studies*, 184.

¹¹⁹ Eyre, *Ramesside Studies*, 185.

¹²⁰ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 188.

and field to go into.¹²¹ It is also likely that a portion of the students who began basic education did not complete it.

One of the earliest mention of a type of formalized school dates to the Middle Kingdom. One location is from el-Lisht. This school was for the royal children as well as the children of the highest elite families.¹²² Some evidence regarding local schools also comes from ostrakon located at Deir el-Medina dating to the Ramesside period of the New Kingdom. There is very little archaeological evidence to support locations of these local schools. The schools may have been located in any type of building with very little material evidence left.¹²³ Other educational facilities included temples. Male or female students at a young age were able to go to the temple for education for the priesthoods.¹²⁴ Other possible locations of schools are in the Ramesseum and Temple of Mut.¹²⁵ In both cases of formal education the instructor is viewed in a fatherly role in terms of education. Since the fathers are conventionally the ones who educate their sons, it is logical that the instructor would fill another father-like figure in society.

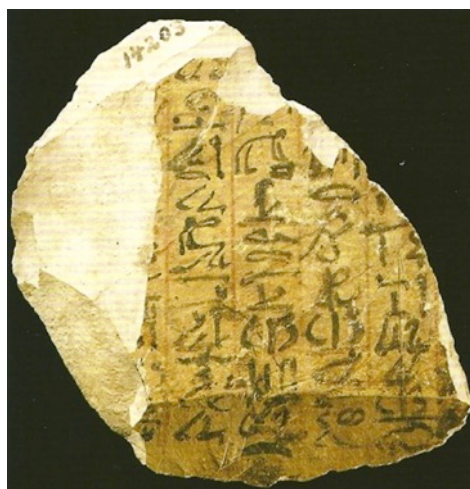


Figure 9: An image of a fragment of the text *Kemit* (G. Warnemünde, "Es geht nichts über die Bücher" Schule und Ausbildung im Alten Ägypten', *Kemet* 20 (4), 17).

One of the main school texts during the New Kingdom was the *Kemit*. This text was used from the First Intermediate period even to the New Kingdom.¹²⁶ One example of the *Kemit* comes from Deir el-Medina. It dates to the Nineteenth Dynasty and is made of limestone (Fig. 9). It is written in cursive hieroglyphic. This specific text was thought to be a beginner's text for copying rather than comprehension.¹²⁷ The school children were introduced to many other texts to practice on

¹²¹ Wente, *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, 2216.

¹²² Wileman, *Hide and Seek*, 48.

¹²³ Eyre, *Ramesside Studies*, 186.

¹²⁴ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 334.

¹²⁵ F. Müller-Römer, 'Mathematikunterricht im Alten Ägypten', *Kemet* 20 (4), 26.

¹²⁶ MacDowell, *Deir el-Medina in the Third Millennium AD*, 218.

¹²⁷ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 79-80.

ostrakon as well with the *Kemit* comprising only the first.

Typically the female youth were brought up by their mothers at home in the ways of running a household. The females most likely remained at home until such time when they were married.¹²⁸ However, there are scarce references to female formal education. One such example is from the Late Ramesside letters. It indicates that a girl is being educated and learning to write.¹²⁹ This appears to prove that, at the very least, some formal education in terms of literacy was available for females. It is possible that females were at least partially educated formally. Despite the lacking evidence for female formal education, this does not necessarily mean that it did not occur. In fact since females were ineligible for government offices, it is likely that this may be a cause for lack of evidence for female formal education. There are a few cases of women depicted with a scribal palette under the chair they are seated on in representations.¹³⁰ This may indicate that those particular women were at least literate. However, it is unlikely that female formal education was widespread and uniform. In addition, they would only have participated in the basic school education rather than continuing on to an apprenticeship with the exception of entertainment jobs such as dancing (Pl. VIII).¹³¹ The apprenticeship role for most adolescent females would have consisted of participating in the tasks at home with their mother¹³² in the preparation for the running of their own household.

Some male children who came from the upper elite families, who were in high favor of the pharaoh, were educated with the royal children. This education would be solely focused on government official and military officer training.¹³³ This training would consist of the physical education royal princes receive.¹³⁴ In addition, there also are cases of students from a more humble background that were educated with the royal children and the upper elite children in a court school.¹³⁵ Many of these children educated with the royal children at a court school gained high offices in the

¹²⁸ More information regarding the concept of marriage is found under the fifth chapter "Marriage."

¹²⁹ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 189.

¹³⁰ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 336.

¹³¹ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 336.

¹³² Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 337.

¹³³ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 138.

¹³⁴ For more information regarding the royal education see chapter six on royal adolescents.

¹³⁵ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 229.

ancient Egyptian government. This way of education allowed the future pharaoh to get acquainted with future officials and have gained some loyalty.¹³⁶ Education was not just comprised of academics. It also comprised of education on societal expectations and responsibilities.¹³⁷ There were also a few specialized schools in certain professions. Erika Feucht mentions a few of these from the New Kingdom including temple schools and professional schools for artists.¹³⁸ There was also the ability for the more modest classes to gain an education and raise their status through placement in a high position. An example of this is Senenmut during the reign of Hatshepsut. He came from a poor background but managed to work his way up to a high position.¹³⁹

Home education was another key component of education. There exist a few evidences of this type of education. One such source is of *The Instruction of Any*. This text is part of a larger group of texts called *Instructions*. These texts normally cover a variety of subjects while taking the form of a conversation between a father and son.¹⁴⁰ This text concerns a father's education of his son in both life and social expectations and responsibilities. The text was written during the New Kingdom, most likely the Eighteenth Dynasty.¹⁴¹ The text spans all fields of educational topics including, but not limited to, marriage, prayers, drinking and offerings.¹⁴² Many of the instructions are for social rules rather than a formal education. Many of such are social rules one tries to follow today. For example, one was not to enter a house uninvited, they were not to gossip, pray but do not shout at the gods, don't drink (in excess), death can come at any age, be careful who you befriend and how to found a household.¹⁴³ The text also shows that the son of Any, the one whom the father is talking to, has not completed the home education of rules his father has set out. Khonshotep, the son, replied to his fathers teachings with "I wish I were like [you], as

¹³⁶ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 229-231.

¹³⁷ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 227.

¹³⁸ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 227-228.

¹³⁹ Höber-Kamel, *Kemet 20 (4)*, 5.

¹⁴⁰ Wileman, *Hide and Seek*, 47-48.

¹⁴¹ M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings Vol. 2: The New Kingdom* (Berkeley, 1976), 135.

¹⁴² For more information on marriage see chapter five.

¹⁴³ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 136-143.

learned as you!"¹⁴⁴ His son is still in the process of being educated on social matters, yet the text shows that he has the title of *scribe* already.

These texts involving instructions and wisdom from fathers to sons were restricted to male social education. There is no current evidence to support a written version of them for mother to daughter education.¹⁴⁵ The education between mothers and daughters was more likely to have constituted a verbal education rather than a written one.

Another source indicates that formal education was important to have prior to becoming an adult. The Papyrus Lansing says that one should be competent in writing (literacy) prior to having sex.¹⁴⁶ This indicates that writing was a critical skill to have undertaken prior to transitioning into adulthood.

After a few years education, the children were then given an apprenticeship. At this time it is unclear whether or not this transition was celebrated by a special ceremony marking this rite of passage. The education gained at this level is geared solely towards the end production of adolescents gaining adult world experience and skills rather than individuality.¹⁴⁷

4.3 Apprenticeship and Jobs

Adolescents normally gained experience for their job through home education from their parents and apprenticeship with their parents. The apprenticeship is where the training and education for the specific profession begins. Normally the apprenticeship is with a member of the family, typically the father. One example of such is the scribal profession. Scribes receive a formal education at first, and continue to learn through an appointment to an apprenticeship.¹⁴⁸ The position of scribe is not a position in which can be gained through hereditary means. One must be proficient in

¹⁴⁴ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 144.

¹⁴⁵ Meskell, *Private Life*, 65.

¹⁴⁶ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 188.

¹⁴⁷ Eyre, *Ramesside Studies*, 187.

¹⁴⁸ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 99.

writing and other literacy skills.¹⁴⁹ When the adolescent is given their first position, this is another major transition into adulthood.¹⁵⁰ The apprenticeship began at the end of a basic general training. The basic general training was that training they received as a child. The apprenticeship consists of educational training with a *master* in the specific field.¹⁵¹

Another profession that required different training from normal is the soldier. A youth was "taken to be a soldier as a child of pole length (i.e., circa 1 metre)."¹⁵² Janssen and Janssen estimate this age to be about ten years old.¹⁵³ The soldiers were recruited, forced or willingly, at a very young age. When such an age the child or adolescent is deemed to be an adult, they were moved from the status of recruit to the status of soldier.¹⁵⁴ This indicates that adulthood was not solely based upon the gaining of a job. It is unclear how long they were to serve as a soldier. It is likely, however, that they were married at a time during their service period. This may indicate such a time where they are finally considered to be in full adulthood having completed the final transition of the rite of passage into adulthood.¹⁵⁵ It is improbable that a form of military service was required by male adolescents to transition into adulthood.

Adolescent girls typically did not have specialized training or apprenticeships. They stayed with their mothers to help with the running of the household and learned the roles required of them once they had their own household. Adolescent girls from the lower classes, however, would often times work in the elite or royal family homes as servants.¹⁵⁶ Additional professions for women could include priestesses, mourners or entertainers such as dancers and musicians.¹⁵⁷ Although men also filled these professions, they were not solely done so. Women during the Ramesside period sometimes worked alongside men, specifically their husbands, in administrative

¹⁴⁹ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 140.

¹⁵⁰ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 99.

¹⁵¹ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 228.

¹⁵² Janssen, *Growing Up*, 103.

¹⁵³ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 104.

¹⁵⁴ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 104.

¹⁵⁵ For more on marriage as a final phase in the rite of passage into adulthood see chapter five.

¹⁵⁶ Höber-Kamel, *Kemet 20 (4)*, 5.

¹⁵⁷ Szpakowska, *Daily Life*, 109.

positions.¹⁵⁸ One example of this is with Henuttawy, the singer of Amun. She appears in the *Late Ramesside Letter* no. 37.¹⁵⁹ In this letter it is clear that Henuttawy had a job helping Nesamenemope with collecting grain.

Throughout this chapter I have discussed mostly professions that required a formal education. However the majority of the population of ancient Egypt was not literate and not formally educated. Men of the lower class and women would fill most of the non-literacy jobs. These jobs consist of everyday working positions such as carpenters, farmers, fishermen and laundrymen to name just a few.¹⁶⁰ Most of the people filling these jobs would be taught the trade of the job and then go into working without a formal education.

At such a time when one starts their job, that was a distinct transition into adulthood beginning the *incorporation* phase. This transition may have come from the first job they have on their own or their apprenticeship. Viitala suggests that a transition point between childhood and adulthood may be in terms of performance capabilities of physical work.¹⁶¹ When one is capable of completing the tasks then one is considered an adult. This is an interesting point to be made specifically in terms of the lower classes. If one is incapable of completing certain physical tasks that full adults are capable of and should be capable of completing, then they cannot fulfill adult responsibilities. Therefore it is likely they were not considered adults.

¹⁵⁸ D. Sweeney, 'Henuttawy's guilty conscience (gods and grain in Late Ramesside Letter no. 37)', *JEA* 80 (1994) 209.

¹⁵⁹ Sweeney, *JEA* 80, 208.

¹⁶⁰ Szpakowska, *Daily Life*, 110.

¹⁶¹ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 192.

5. Marriage

The major and final transition into adulthood came through marriage and creation of a household. Marriage was the pinnacle of the transition into adulthood for both the elite and the peasants. First before continuing to discuss marriage as a final transition, what constituted marriage in ancient Egypt must be mentioned. In ancient Egypt the concept of marriage was not the same as the modern idea of marriage. There is no evidence to support the idea of a marriage ceremony or during the New Kingdom.¹⁶² Therefore marriage or cohabitation consists of the main rite of incorporation into adulthood from adolescence.

The concept of marriage is a relatively recent concept. In ancient Egypt they mention a few phrases that we refer to as marriage. One such phrase is *establishing a household*.¹⁶³ Other references are specific titles for the members of the household such as the wife whose title is typically "mistress of the household", *nebet per* (Fig. 9).¹⁶⁴ These phrases indicate that the primary condition to consider a couple married is through living together or the creation of a household and family. This indicates that at the end of youth, the final phase of marriage is completed through the creation of a household. The wife is then termed the mistress of that household.¹⁶⁵

This is also perpetuated in the text *Instruction of Any*. The text reads "Take a wife while you're young, that she make a son for you; she should bear for you while you're youthful, it is proper to make people...".¹⁶⁶ This shows that it was an important aspect to get married at a young age and begin to bear children. Unlike many western cultures today where you are considered an adult and then get married, by indicating to "when as a youth you take a wife...",¹⁶⁷ it may show that one was in the process of becoming an adult through marriage.

Women also were required to marry young. Since the main reason for marriage was for the procreation of children, it was reasonable that a woman would

¹⁶² Robins, *Women*, 56.

¹⁶³ Robins, *Women*, 56.

¹⁶⁴ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 109.

¹⁶⁵ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 109.

¹⁶⁶ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 136.

¹⁶⁷ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 141.

marry soon after she reached sexual maturity and was able to bear children. The couple wanted the birth of a son as early as possible.¹⁶⁸ The proper marrying age for females was about twelve years old whereas for males the proper marrying age was about twenty years old.¹⁶⁹

It was common for the ancient Egyptians to marry those in the same social class as they were, although it was possible to do otherwise. In the case of divorce and remarriage, they also normally remarried into the same social class as their first marriage partner.¹⁷⁰ In most marriages it appears that they were not arranged by the parents but were chosen by the individuals.¹⁷¹ The main exceptions to this were in royal marriages. The first real evidence of a marriage with witnesses comes from the reign of Thutmosis III. A royal barber married his niece to a slave from a campaign during Thutmosis III's 27th regnal year.¹⁷²

There are very few marriage related texts from the New Kingdom in the same form that comes from later periods concerning marriage rituals such as exchange of gifts, etc. For example, in Deir el-Medina it is likely that marriages were quite succinct and simple. As a result there does not exist any major documentation about the marriages from the village.¹⁷³

Although it is widely agreed upon that a marriage ceremony as we know it today did not exist, there may still have been a few smaller rituals that occurred. Once such ritual would be an exchange of gifts or payments. Evidence exists at Deir el-Medina to support such a ritual.¹⁷⁴ Such evidence can be seen in the multiple texts that are mentioned in J. Toivari-Viitala's book *Women at Deir el-Medina: A Study of the Status and Roles of the Female Inhabitants in the Workmen's Community During the Ramesside Period*.¹⁷⁵ The first text is O. Berlin P.12406. The items in question

¹⁶⁸ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 32.

¹⁶⁹ Meskell, *Private Life*, 90.

¹⁷⁰ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 40.

¹⁷¹ Pinch, *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, 371.

¹⁷² Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 40.

¹⁷³ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 55.

¹⁷⁴ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 61.

¹⁷⁵ For more examples of gift giving as part of a ritual for marriage see J. Toivari-Viitala's text mentioned here on pages 61-69. The references for gift giving are divided into sub chapters based upon where the gifts came from.

consisted of food, natron and clothing. This text refers to the giving of these goods from the groom for the purpose of his marriage.¹⁷⁶

Other formal rituals that revolved around a "marriage" were contracts that dealt with inheritance issues. These issues were discussed in terms of inheritance of the wife in case of divorce or death and inheritance of legitimate children.¹⁷⁷

There is even controversy regarding the terminology of wife, *hemet*, as being a true translation of wife as we understand it.¹⁷⁸ Thus marriage represented the beginning of a formal household and the rearing of children during the New Kingdom. Despite the lack of formal ceremony, the cohabitation of which we call marriage still marked an important part of adolescents becoming adults with the creation of their own household and family.¹⁷⁹ This form of marriage marked the final phase of a youth transitioning into adulthood. For the non-elite adolescents, the most distinct transition into adulthood would be this final step through marriage.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 62.

¹⁷⁷ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 33-34.

¹⁷⁸ For more information on the usage of terminology see Gay Robins page 60-62

¹⁷⁹ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 109.

¹⁸⁰ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 99.

6. Additional Aspects of Childhood¹⁸¹

6.1 Deities and Priesthoods

In ancient Egypt there were also a few child deities. These deities also bore characteristics that were distinctly child-like. The main characteristic is the hairstyle. The most common example of this is the Egyptian god Horus. The child-like form Horus takes in later periods is sometimes called Harpocrates.¹⁸² In this state he is normally sitting on his mother's (Isis) lap, naked and with a side-lock of youth (Fig. 10). This also is the reasoning why this hairstyle is sometimes called the Horus lock. This state of Horus is distinctly different from his other states by his personal appearances in both the hairstyle and lack of clothing. This is another indicator that

these two aspects distinctly signify childhood and youth.



Figure 10: Image of a bronze statue of the god Harpocrates wearing the side-lock of youth, Ptolemaic Period (en.wikipedia.org)

It is important to note that during the New Kingdom certain priesthoods also began to shave their heads as part of their profession. Also, there are some depictions of priests with a cropped hairstyle and a side-lock. These priesthoods are typically Iunmutef priests or sometimes also the High Priest of Memphis.¹⁸³ However, you can distinguish the priests from the children in these representations from their clothing and clothing style. This is likely to show their subordinate status or child-like status in comparison to the deities. In addition, Pharaohs and their queens also were sometimes depicted with the side-lock of youth when in the presence of a deity to indicate their subordinate status to the god. One such example of

this is at Abu Simbel. In the Second Hall there are representations of the Chief Wife of Ramesses II, Nefertari. Here she is depicted facing Amun while wearing a side-

¹⁸¹ Each section in this chapter deals with a topic that a whole book can be written on in itself. However they will only be briefly touched upon, as they are subsidiary to the main topic.

¹⁸² Wileman, *Hide and Seek*, 123.

¹⁸³ Müller, *LA III*, 273-274.

lock of youth with either a completely shaved head or a cropped hairstyle.¹⁸⁴ In other scenes she is not depicted wearing this hairstyle and thus this indicates that this hairstyle is used as a result of showing Nefertari in a subordinate position to Amun. This same concept is also found in the Temple of Luxor. In this scene she is part of a procession that includes the pharaoh and a large number of princes and princesses. Here she also is wearing a cropped hairstyle with a side-lock of youth also attached. In this case it is made clear that she is wearing this wig in a manner of "propitiating her father Amen".¹⁸⁵

6.2 Nicknames

Another aspect of childhood is the usage of nicknames. Nicknames were simpler and often consisted of characteristics.¹⁸⁶ Nicknames are scarcely found when the adolescents reach adulthood. These were sometimes used during childhood as a shortened name rather than the longer formal name they were given.¹⁸⁷

6.3 Artistic Conventions Determining Sexual Maturity

As previously mentioned, prior to the New Kingdom a common artistic convention for the adult elite male was to be represented naked with an erect phallus. G. Robins uses this as a stepping-stone for determining masculinity, indirectly male adulthood, throughout the history of ancient Egypt. She uses the previous periods to make the clear distinct artistic convention differences in the New Kingdom where the adult elite male is scarcely depicted naked. The changes in artistic convention also changed the determination of adulthood through representational sources as well. The erect phallus directly indicates masculinity and indirectly indicates adulthood.¹⁸⁸ Therefore, when the male children are depicted naked with a flaccid phallus, this is making a clear distinction of youth for males.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁴ G. Xekalaki and R. el-Khodary, 'Aspects of the Cultic Role of Queen Nefertari and the Royal Children during the Reign of Ramesses II', in M. Collier and S. Snape (eds.), *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K.A. Kitchen* (Bolton, 2011), 566.

¹⁸⁵ Xekalaki and el-Khodary, *Ramesside Studies*, 567.

¹⁸⁶ Wileman, *Hide and Seek*, 16.

¹⁸⁷ Ferguson, *Growing Up*, 44.

¹⁸⁸ Robins, *Servant of Mut*, 208-210.

¹⁸⁹ Robins, *Servant of Mut*, 214.

Since female children reach sexual physical maturity prior to male children, it is reasonable that the iconography of female children had many indicators of adult females such as jewelry and skin tone.¹⁹⁰ Female children also reached a sort of sexual social maturity at an early age as well.¹⁹¹ Female children are often depicted with post-pubescent features. L. Meskell mentions the use of girdles in visual representations to possibly indicate the female children who have not fully transitioned into adulthood.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Meskell, *Private Life*, 85.

¹⁹¹ Meskell, *Private Life*, 89.

¹⁹² Meskell, *Private Life*, 85.

7. Royal Adolescents

Some aspects of the transition into adulthood varied between non-royal and royal adolescents by the nature of being a member of the royal family. Many sources for royal children are restricted to the sons and specifically the heir apparent. Any information we have regarding other royal children become extremely limited once an heir apparent becomes pharaoh.¹⁹³ In addition, the females would not have been eligible to become pharaoh or to have a government position¹⁹⁴ and sources would be limited for them as well. One exception was the daughters who became wives of a pharaoh or other important governmental officer. Therefore, most of the evidence for the lives of royal adolescents will be in regards to the heir apparent, although not in entirety.

It is possible to see references to other royal children, primarily sons, placed in high positions in government or priesthoods although this is rare. Two such cases are with Dhutimose and with Khaemwese. Both were assigned the position of High Priest of Ptah in Memphis during various times in the New Kingdom. Dhutimose (Eighteenth Dynasty) is thought to most likely be a son of Amenophis III while Khaemwese (Nineteenth Dynasty) is a son of Ramesses II.¹⁹⁵ Another son of Ramesses II is of Meryatum who was the High Priest of Re at Heliopolis.¹⁹⁶ With the exception of Khaemwese, other princes in official positions have very little known about them.¹⁹⁷

A sizable amount of evidence in regards to children and adolescents is found during the Amarna period. The children of Akhenaten are frequently found in a dress style similar to their mother's. However, many times they are also depicted naked. In these cases it is normally the smallest ones that are depicted naked, thus indicating their youth.¹⁹⁸ Similarly to the elite and non-elite children, I find it unlikely that the younger ones went around naked all the time; it seems more likely that this was only the case during extreme weather in Egypt. However there are other cases where royal

¹⁹³ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 119.

¹⁹⁴ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 120.

¹⁹⁵ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 117.

¹⁹⁶ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 117.

¹⁹⁷ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 119.

¹⁹⁸ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 27.

children are depicted clothed yet still are shown with the traditional side-lock of youth attached (Fig. 11).¹⁹⁹ These clothed scenes may merely indicate a heightened status

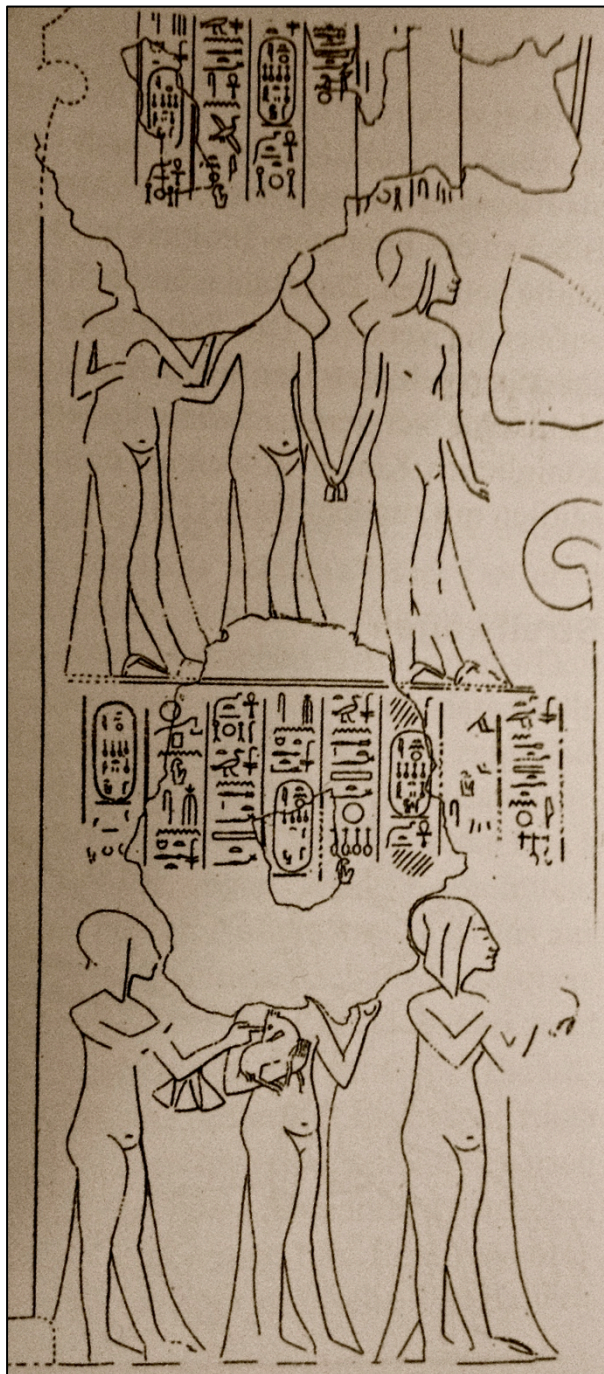


Figure 11: Depiction of the Amarna princesses shown clothed while wearing a variation of the side-lock of youth, Amarna, Amarna Period (G. Höber-Kamel, 'Die Königskinder von Amarna', *Kemet* 20 (4), 34).

and use the side-lock of youth to indicate their position as children.

Another note on clothing of royal children is discussed by G. Höber-Kamel in the article 'Das Kind bei den Alten Ägyptern, ein Überblick'. When royal male children became Pharaoh they were depicted in royal regalia. They were no longer shown naked like other children. However one can still determine that they are considered children through their placement in the scene or statuary. One example used from the New Kingdom is that of Amenhotep II. In this scene Amenhotep II is depicted in royal regalia, including the Khepresh Crown, while sitting on his nurse's lap (Pl. IX). His placement on the lap of his nurse indicates youth.²⁰⁰ Nevertheless based upon the age that he came to the throne it is likely that this image is just indicating that the woman in the depiction had nursed Amenhotep II when he was younger.

¹⁹⁹ Xekalaki and el-Khodary, *Ramesside Studies*, 564.

²⁰⁰ Höber-Kamel, *Kemet* 20 (4), 4-5.

L. Green noted a special type of wig for younger women especially for the royal class. This type of wig is of Nubian influence. The wig was "tightly curled, rounded and reached to the nape of the neck."²⁰¹ This wig then had a side-lock attached to it in the same fashion to that of a side-lock of youth.²⁰² This special wig may have been used as an interim wig for the high elite and royal class between that of a side-lock of youth haircut and an adult wig.

In the case of the Amarna princesses, in such times that all the children are represented naked, the main indicator for age differences and range is through their hairstyles and relative size.²⁰³ Despite the representations, it is clear from material evidence that royal children also wore clothing at least parts of the time. In the tomb of Tutankhamun there were a variety of material textiles that were child sized, most likely from his own childhood.²⁰⁴ Such finds included but were not limited to: child's tunic²⁰⁵, loincloths²⁰⁶, sash²⁰⁷, sandals²⁰⁸ and a variety of objects not of Egyptian origin²⁰⁹. The textile finds from the tomb of Tutankhamun range in sizes for very small children to adults.

Evidence of a side-lock of youth is found on a royal prince from the New Kingdom. Elliot Smith attributes this prince to being a son of Amenhotep II as a result of the location of the mummy in Amenhotep II's tomb. More on this mummy will be discussed later in this chapter. Although there are many representations of the side-lock of youth in both relief and statues, there are only a few cases of documented mummies of adolescents and younger with a side-lock of youth.

There is evidence both supporting and against circumcision for royal children when they hit puberty during the New Kingdom. A few of the royal mummies have evidence of circumcision while others clearly do not. Most of the cases of

²⁰¹ Green, *KMT* 6 (4), 40.

²⁰² L. Green did not have a picture of this wig in her article and thus made it slightly confusing as to what exactly this wig looked like or where this style of wig has been identified.

²⁰³ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 29.

²⁰⁴ For a substantial look at the clothing found in Tutankhamun's tomb, refer to G.M. Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Tutankhamun's Wardrobe: Garments from the Tomb of Tutankhamun* (Rotterdam, 1999).

²⁰⁵ Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Tutankhamun's Wardrobe*, 27.

²⁰⁶ Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Tutankhamun's Wardrobe*, 50.

²⁰⁷ Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Tutankhamun's Wardrobe*, 61.

²⁰⁸ Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Tutankhamun's Wardrobe*, 70.

²⁰⁹ Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Tutankhamun's Wardrobe*, 84-88.

circumcision coming from the mummies are from the royal mummies. Elliott Smith documented an examination of royal mummies. One of the royal mummies was that of Thutmosis IV. During this examination it was noted that Thutmosis IV was circumcised.²¹⁰ It is likely that he became circumcised at puberty. Another mummy of a pharaoh that shows evidence of circumcision is that of Amenhotep II. Despite this evidence, many other mummies of pharaohs show evidence that they were not circumcised.²¹¹ Other mummies determinations have been contested. One example is of Thutmosis II. An initial examination by G. Maspero indicates that he was uncircumcised. However, in a later examination by G. E. Smith this conclusion was not confirmed.²¹²

Another royal mummy also shows indications of circumcision. This is the mummy of the royal prince Sipaari (Pl. X). Sipaari is documented at about five to six years old and dates to the Eighteenth Dynasty. G. Elliott Smith noted about this specific mummy, that if he is indeed circumcised, than this is an anomaly for the time period as circumcision was more likely to occur at puberty. In addition Sipaari was also found with a short, cropped hairstyle. A side-lock of youth was not mentioned in the description, which indicates the mummy was lacking one.²¹³

G. Elliott Smith also made commentary on another mummy of a royal male child mentioned earlier from the tomb of Amenhotep II. This mummy was most likely that of royal prince Ouabkhousenou (Pl. XI). He died at about the age of eleven years old. Although Smith refers to previous controversy over the gender of this mummy, I agree with Smith that this mummy is likely in fact to be male. This mummy is one of the few physical examples of a mummy of a child with the side-lock of youth intact. The rest of the mummy's head had been shaved with the exception of this lock. Smith indicates that his hair was fairly wavy most likely as a result of previous braiding of the side-lock. It is likely that since the side-lock of youth was intact that this prince was not considered to have reached adulthood yet.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ G. E. Smith, *The Royal Mummies* in CGC 61051-61100 (Cairo, 1912), XLIII.

²¹¹ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 247.

²¹² Quack, *Menschenbilder und Körperkonzepte*, 563.

²¹³ Smith, *The Royal Mummies*, 24-25.

²¹⁴ R. B. Partridge, *Faces of the Pharaohs: Royal Mummies and Coffins from Ancient Thebes*, (London, 1994), 85-86.

In addition to having a side-lock of youth, this mummy is also uncircumcised.²¹⁵ Due to the differences in age between Sipaari and Ouabkhousenou with the younger showing indications of circumcision while the other does not, E. Feucht states that this may indicate that circumcision was performed at differing ages during this time period.²¹⁶

During the New Kingdom there was an increase in the representation of the royal children included in official activities of the pharaoh and queen. This is most clearly seen through the Amarna Period and the early Ramesside Period.²¹⁷ These activities would have educated the royal children early on what social and political responsibilities were required of them.

The royal children were formally educated at a royal court school. Their education began at a young age. Janssen and Janssen assign this time "later, during their infancy".²¹⁸ It is logical that this education would begin at such an early age as four or five years of age.²¹⁹ The princes were taught not just literacy skills, but also physical skills such as archery and swimming.²²⁰ One such example is shown through the *Sphinx Stela*. This inscription describes Amenhotep II as being of adolescent age. It continues on to describe his physical feats he had accomplished in categories of horsemanship, archery and rowing.²²¹ The stela states:

"Now his majesty arose as king, as a fine youth, who was well-developed, having completed eighteen years upon his thighs in bravery. He was one who knew every work of Mentu, without equal on the battlefield. He was one who knew horses; one whose like did not exist in this numerous army. There was not one there who could draw his bow, nor could he be approached in running."²²²

²¹⁵ Smith, *The Royal Mummies*, 39-40.

²¹⁶ Feucht, *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten*, 248.

²¹⁷ Xekalaki and el-Khodary, *Ramesside Studies*, 561.

²¹⁸ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 122.

²¹⁹ By naming infancy, Janssen and Janssen make it unclear at what time frame they are assigning infancy, although since babies were nursed up to age three in ancient Egypt (as according to the *Instruction of Any*), it is reasonable to call this age infancy.

²²⁰ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 132-133.

²²¹ Janssen, *Growing Up*, 133-136.

²²² P. D. Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II*, in *HAB* 26 (Hildesheim, 1987), 184-185.

This shows the extent and breadth of education both academically and physically for the royal children. It continues to talk about his strengths. It also mentions that as a youth he was determined and eager.²²³ The basic literacy education most likely spread to the female royal children as well as the male. Despite the pharaoh having officials to conduct correspondence for him, this education makes it clear that specifically the heir apparent royal child was indeed literate.²²⁴ It is likely that a couple of the male royal children in addition to the heir apparent were educated in the duties and responsibilities of becoming pharaoh in case the heir apparent did not survive.²²⁵

In addition, the mothers were also responsible for education to some degree for the royal children, in particular the royal daughters, as well. Evidence for this comes from a boundary stela dating to the 6th regnal year of Akhenaten. On the stela it says that two of her daughters, Meritaten and Maketaten, were both under Queen Nefertiti's leadership.²²⁶

Although most royal children were considered children for a much longer period of time than non-royal children, there are also times when this was not the case. One such example of this is with pharaoh Tutankhamun. Tutankhamun had married at a young age of seven or eight to princess Ankhesenamun. Ankhesenamun was also young being of approximately the age of ten when they married. Shortly thereafter he became pharaoh at approximately the age of nine or ten.²²⁷ However, he continued to attend to his formal education.²²⁸ Both the aspect of an early marriage and gaining the position of pharaoh at a young age would have urged Tutankhamun into an early and rapid transition into adulthood.²²⁹

²²³ Manuelian, *HAB* 26, 184-185.

²²⁴ Wente, *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, 2214.

²²⁵ Ferguson, *Growing Up*, 40.

²²⁶ Höber-Kamel, *Kemet* 20 (4), 6.

²²⁷ Ferguson, *Growing Up*, 64.

²²⁸ Ferguson, *Growing Up*, 66.

²²⁹ It is likely that in this case, the rite of transition would have been minimized or skipped entirely.

8. Conclusion

Determining information about the everyday life of the ancient Egyptians is a difficult task. It becomes even more difficult when trying to reconstruct information about children and adolescents. Most of the information we have comes from adults, primarily the elite and royal class. This causes gaps in the knowledge of the lives of children and adolescents. Therefore, there is still a sizable amount of information currently unknown about them and their passage into adulthood.

The purpose of this thesis was to determine if there is in fact a formal rite or rites of passage that transitions a child of ancient Egypt into adulthood. E. Feucht in *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten* and R. M. and J. J. Janssen in *Growing Up in Ancient Egypt* have conducted a comprehensive study on children and adolescents.

The passage into adulthood for the youth of ancient Egypt can still be categorized into van Gennep's three phases despite the many gaps in knowledge. The three phases of *separation*, *transition* and *incorporation*²³⁰ are still a sound structure for the passage into adulthood for the ancient Egyptians. Children began their transition into adulthood through rites of separation. These are explained in chapter two. It is clear that at least in artistic conventions, separation was completed through changes in hairstyle and clothing. It is unclear how much of this was done in reality as we have evidence for children's clothing. It is also unclear at exactly what age this was completed. It is possible there was not a set age.

After separating themselves from childhood, the children of ancient Egypt would have gone through transition. This included both the physical and social aspects of puberty as well as a basic formal education. It is debatable how much of the physiological puberty aspects were celebrated and whether or not certain aspects of social puberty, such as circumcision, continued to occur during the New Kingdom.

The final stage of passage is the incorporation phase. The final parts of education including an apprenticeship are included. Education whether formally or at

²³⁰ Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, vii.

home was important as it gave an introduction into social responsibility of the adult life. This stage concluded with the onset of marriage. Although the concept of marriage is debatable, what we perceive to indicate a married status was the final part of the passage to adulthood.

Therefore, there does not appear to be a set time or age when one becomes an adult in Ancient Egypt. It is a progressive introduction process beginning early in childhood. The age will also vary depending on status and gender as well as variances in the onset of puberty.

Many aspects of the social puberty rituals are still up for debate or were not necessarily uniformly completed. As a result of the limitations in the sources and inconsistencies it is difficult to assign a specific age or age range to the passage of children and adolescents into adulthood during the New Kingdom. However, as we continue to learn more about the daily lives of the adults in Ancient Egypt, we can continue to learn and find out more about the lives the Ancient Egyptians led prior to becoming adults.

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PLATES

PLATE I



A painting of two female servants wearing sheath dresses, one with sleeves the other without, from the Tomb of Nakht, Thebes, Eighteenth Dynasty (L. Green, 'Seeing Through Ancient Egyptian Clothes: Garments & Hairstyles as Indicators of Social Status in Old, Middle & New Kingdom Egypt', *KMT* 6 (4), 35).

PLATE II



A statue of an official wearing a basic kilt and his wife wearing a 'wrapped' style dress that ties in the front, New Kingdom (N. Scott, *The Daily Life of the Ancient Egyptians*, in *BMMA* 31 (3), 36).

PLATE III



Depiction of another popular kilt variation during the New Kingdom on Papyrus, New Kingdom (F. Trassard, D. Anterion and R. Thomazo, *Leben im alten Ägypten*, 26-27).

PLATE IV



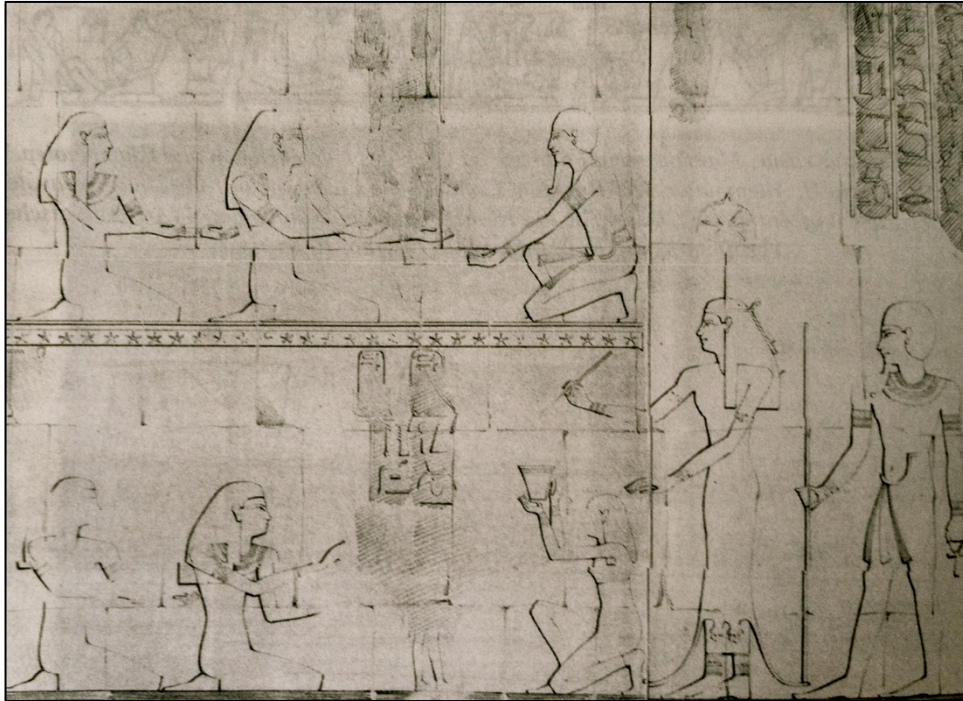
Painting of Inherkhau and his wife receiving offerings from their two sons with four grand children around them all depicted without footwear including the adults from the Tomb of Inherkhau, necropolis of Deir el-Medina, Twentieth Dynasty (L. Meskell, *Private Life in New Kingdom Egypt*, 86).

PLATE V

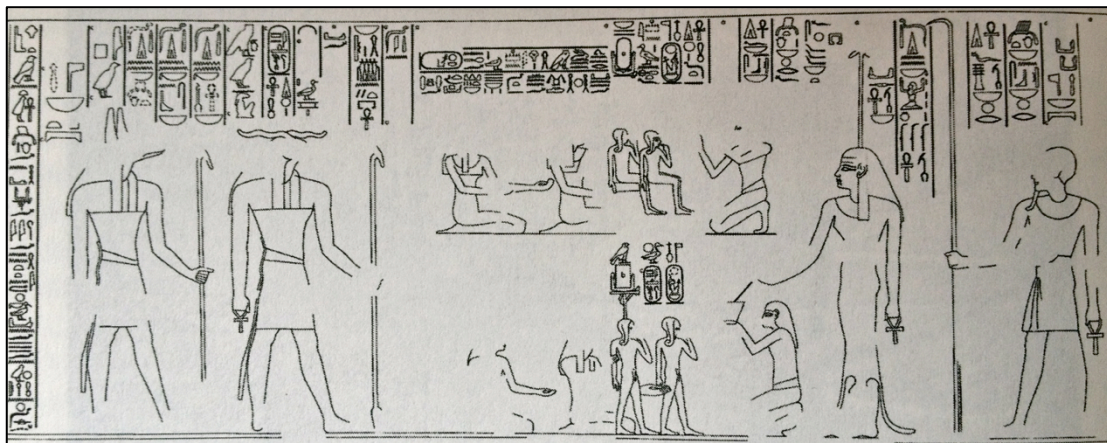


An unmatched pair of children's sandals from Amarna, Eighteenth Dynasty (F. Seyfried, *In the Light of Amarna: 100 Years of the Nefertiti Discovery*, 273).

PLATE VI

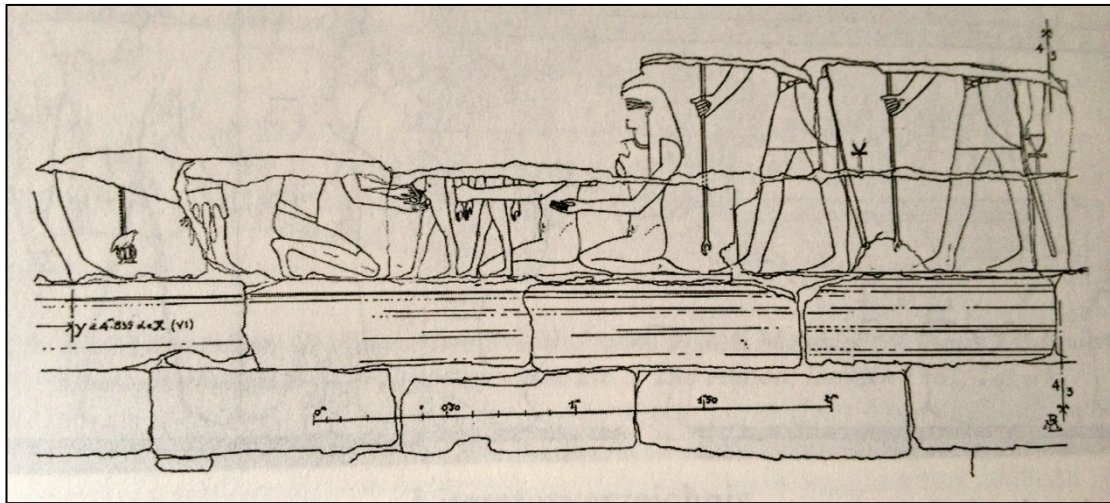


A: Depiction of the circumcision scene from the Temple at Deir el-Bahari, New Kingdom (J. F. Quack, 'Zur Beschneidung im Alten Ägypten', in A. Berlejung, J. Dietrich and J. F. Quack (eds.), *Menschenbilder und Körperkonzepte im alten Israel, in Ägypten und im alten Orient*, 632).



B: Depiction of the circumcision scene in the Luxor Temple, New Kingdom (J. F. Quack, 'Zur Beschneidung im Alten Ägypten', in A. Berlejung, J. Dietrich and J. F. Quack (eds.), *Menschenbilder und Körperkonzepte im alten Israel, in Ägypten und im alten Orient*, 632).

PLATE VII



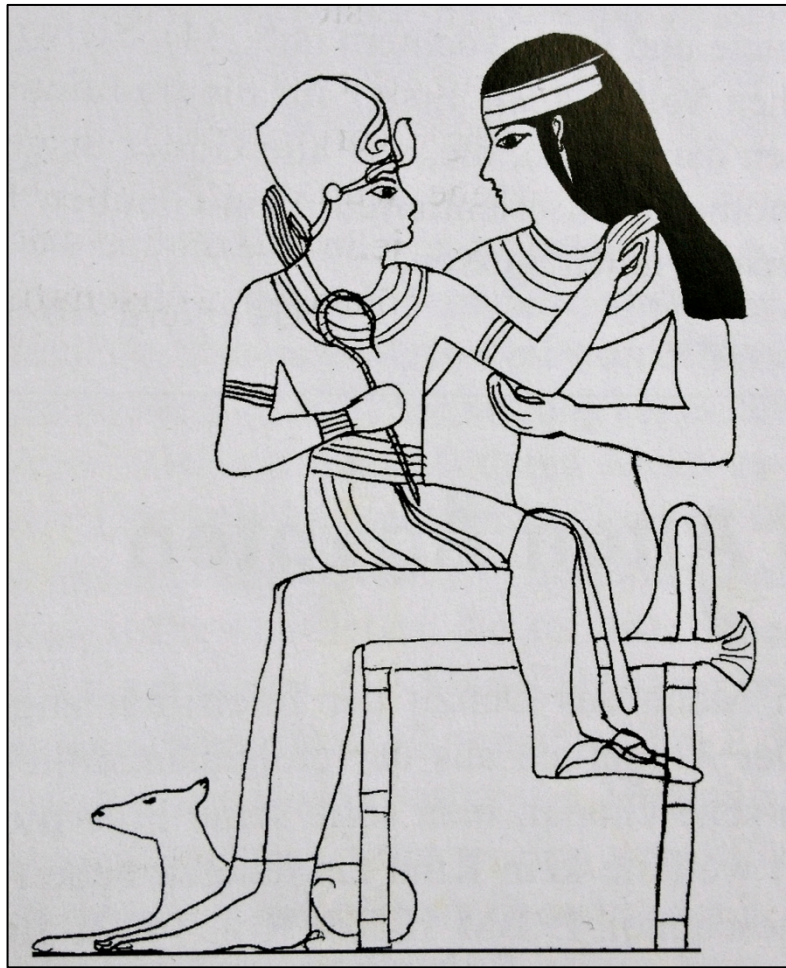
Depiction of the circumcision scene in the Theban Temple of Mut, New Kingdom
(J. F. Quack, 'Zur Beschneidung im Alten Ägypten', in A. Berlejung, J. Dietrich
and J. F. Quack (eds.), *Menschenbilder und Körperkonzepte im alten Israel, in
Ägypten und im alten Orient*, 631).

PLATE VIII



Depiction of female entertainers playing various instruments with an apprentice in the middle, New Kingdom (N. Scott, *The Daily Life of the Ancient Egyptians*, in *BMMA 31* (3), 48-49).

PLATE IX



Depiction of Amenhotep II as a youth on his nurse's lap dressed in royal regalia,
Tomb of Kenamun, el-Qurna, New Kingdom ((G. Höber-Kamel, 'Das
Pharaonische Ägypten: Das Kind bei den Alten Ägyptern, ein Überblick', *Kemet*
20 (4), 5).

PLATE X

A



A: The coffin and lid with the wrapped mummy of the royal Prince Sipaari, Eighteenth Dynasty (G. E. Smith, *The Royal Mummies*, in *CGC* 61051-61100, Pl. XIX).

B: The unwrapped mummy of the royal Prince Sipaari, Eighteenth Dynasty (G. E. Smith, *The Royal Mummies*, in CGC 61051-61100, Pl. XIX).

B

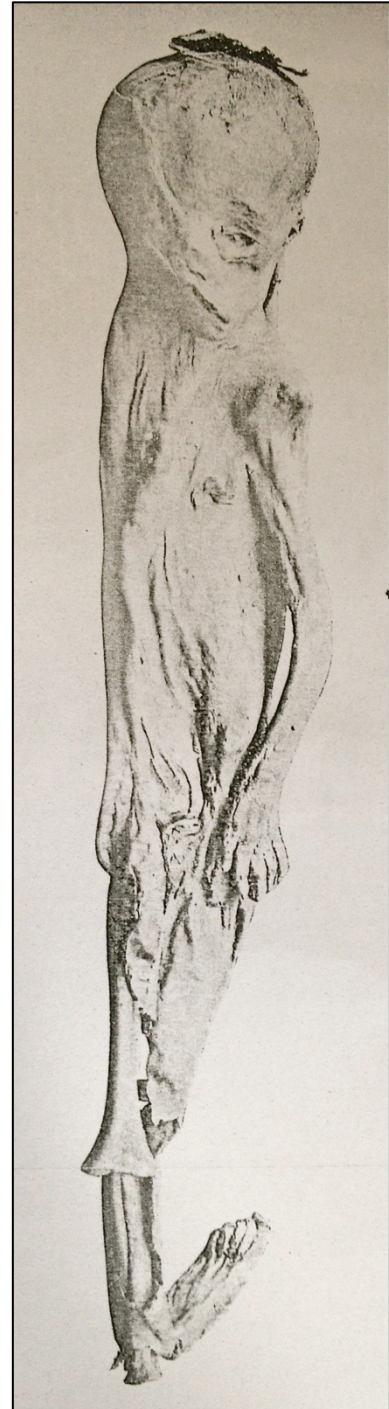
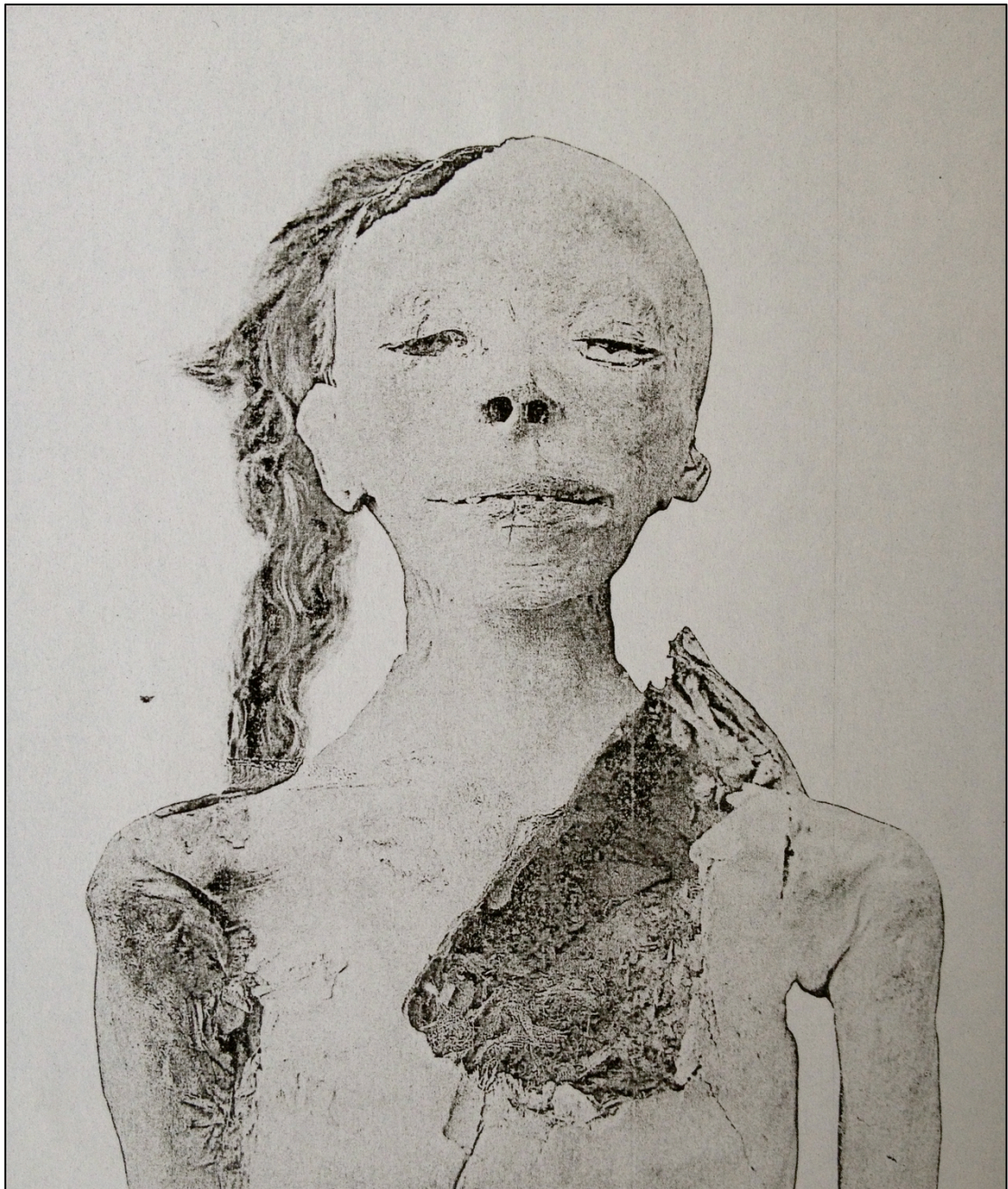


PLATE XI



**Image of the upper torso and head of the mummy of the royal Prince
Ouabkhousenou found in KV35, Eighteenth Dynasty (G. E. Smith, *The Royal
Mummies*, in CGC 61051-61100, Pl. XCVIII).**