The Identity of the Cattle Herdsman
A Study in Ancient Egyptian Private Tombs Scenes

by

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[Ar] هوية راعى الأبقار: دراسة في مناظر المقابر المصرية القديمة الخاصة

[EN] The tomb wall scenes give art historians a glimpse into ancient Egyptian daily life, allowing them to piece together a vision of their civilization. Depictions of animals in scenes of daily life are commonly found in Ancient Egyptian tombs. The image of the cattle herdsman has been regarded as one of the “daily life” scenes. The great collection of iconography portraying herdsmen attests to the crucial significance they played in Egyptian visual culture. The current paper is concerned with the identity of the cattle herdsman. The shape of the paper is divided into four main sections. The first section defines the term of herdsman and reviews the activities in which he participated. The second section presents the different hairstyles in which the herdsmen appeared through the scenes. The third section reviews the shepherd's costume. The fourth section is devoted to the job of the herdsman by showing the different positions of using the grazing tools. Finally, the author will present some examples of captions for herdsman scenes to explore their conversational style, their work-related characteristics, and their knowledge of cows and their innate instincts.

KEYWORDS: Herdsman, shepherd, cattle-drover, herd, animal husbandry, cattle, stick, rope.
I. INTRODUCTION

Throughout ancient Egyptian history, elite members of society carved and painted detailed depictions of the living and divine worlds on the walls of their tombs. Elite tombs, conceived as a «house for eternity» were tasked with a variety of important functions\(^1\). In addition to providing security for the body, tombs served as a ceremonial complex to ensure the deceased’s regeneration and eternal well-being, as well as a space where the deceased’s identity could be projected into the afterlife and remembered by the living, in addition to protecting the body. Tombs were built, their language, and their art were created to support these functions and ease the transition from life to death. The owner displays themselves as they wish through a carefully chosen collection of culturally accepted scenes and inscriptions, with tomb design, text, and images organized to match these tasks and ease the passage from life to afterlife\(^2\).

The portrayal of the natural environment was a crucial element of elite tomb iconography, with a wide range of scene types recording animals attesting to their central role in ancient civilization. Animals were present in practically every element of life, and their frequent occurrence in the culture’s visual records has provided a constant source of evidence for those studying the Egyptian people and the environment they lived in\(^3\). Animal motifs are frequently used as a source of information about Egyptian people’s lives, ideas, and religious beliefs\(^4\). Depictions of animals in scenes of daily life are commonly found in ancient Egyptian tombs\(^5\).

Not only did agricultural output, which is closely related to these animals, grow throughout time, but so did the quantity and size of herds, which, like the soil, were owned by large estate owners and tended by expert herdsmen and shepherds. These herdsmen were supervised and controlled by their own managers, as well as assistants like «bucket carriers» and «fodder men». Cattle, geese, sheep, asses, dogs, oryx, horses and other poultry, and even pigs were all used for specific purposes\(^6\).

II. METHODOLOGY

This paper attempts to provide an analytical-descriptive examination of the many modalities of representation related to herdsmen figures in ancient Egyptian private tombs, the term of herdsmen, their hairstyle, costume, their job and the tools used in their daily work. Moreover, the article will review some of the dialogues between herdsmen. The majority of these examples are from the Old and New Kingdoms, with

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3 Evans 2010: 1.
the earliest relief coming from the 4th dynasty and the latest belonging to the 20th dynasty.

1. The term of herdsman

In ancient Egyptian texts, the terms «herdsman, shepherd, and drover» were expressed in more than one word, as follows:

- \( \text{nr} \) with different determinatives (\( \text{\begin{array}{c} \text{a} \\ \text{b} \\ \text{c} \end{array}} \)) has traditionally been translated as «herdsman»\(^7\). Some dictionaries \(^8\) also mentioned it with: (\( \text{\begin{array}{c} \text{d} \\ \text{e} \\ \text{f} \end{array}} \)) as «herdsman» or «cow-keeper». Furthermore, the term \( \text{nr-ihw} \) has been identified as «herdsman of the cattle».

This term was mentioned through one of the texts of the tomb of Ty-Saqqara 5th Dynasty as follows: In the left (west) part of the north wall, register 2, right-hand part.

A herd of nine cattle is depicted crossing a ford. A warning from someone in the boat is heard above the cattle, as follows\(^9\):

\( \text{nr pw \ 'k hr mw} \)

«Herdsman! your hand is on the water»

The second scene from the tomb of Userhat- TT56, North wall. To the right of, the three sub-registers (devoted to the temple of Amon’s cattle), are the scribes, who record everything. The two at the top sit cross-legged and write their report on the papyrus sheet in front of them, which includes the number, sex, and age of the animals. In the text, there is a comment about the scene, as follows\(^10\):

\( \text{ms \ ht \ nbt \ nfr(t) \ wbt \ in \ n3 \ n \ nrw \ n \ nsw \ s\& \ idnw \ whm.w \ Wsr-hjt} \)

«Let’s return all the good and pure things of the herdsman to the royal scribe Userhat, the reporter’s representative.»\(^11\)

The term \( \text{mnw} \) refers to the «herdsman»\(^12\).

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\(^7\) ERMAN & GRAPOW (Eds.): Wb.2, 1.279.
\(^8\) ERMAN & GRAPOW (Eds.): Wb.2, 2-3, 4279; FAULKNER 1962:135.
\(^9\) WILD 1953: PL.XCIII.A.
\(^10\) PORTER & MOSS: PM, 111-113; BEINLICH-SEEBER & SHEDID 1987 :TAF.15
\(^12\) ERMAN & GRAPOW (Eds.): Wb.2, 11-13, 75.
\(^14\) LESKO 1982: 218
This term was mentioned through one of the texts of the tomb of Nakhtamon (TT341), the «Overseer of the altar». East wall - bottom register of the south wing: At the far side of the animals is a herdsman, whose head of hair has been shaven in a tonsure style. He makes the beasts walk forwards with the help of a stick. He is accompanied by the text\(^{15}\):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dd n p3 mniw nty m s3 n3 iwz w}
\end{align*}
\]

«Spoken by the herdsman who is held behind the cattle»

Lesko mentioned that the term \(\text{szw}\) \(^{16}\) has been identified as «herdsmen, guard, guardian and cow-herd». In addition, he added that \(\text{szw and mniw}\) \(^{17}\) have both been translated as «herdsmen».

Furthermore, some other terms were less used to express the word «herdsman, shepherd or drover, such as:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{wšj ihw}\text{ and nwy}\text{.}
\end{align*}
\]

Artists were concerned with the physical and behavioral aspects of the numerous animals they represented, as shown by a survey of daily life scenes in private tombs. However, the artist’s interest in depicting those characteristics varied from one animal to the next, most likely due to the animal’s importance in Egyptian society.

Scenes of animal husbandry concentrated on large and small cattle, and to a lesser extent, other animals, until the end of the Old Kingdom. Many rulers make mention of the enormous number of cattle they own or care for\(^{20}\). The representations of cattle-herdsmen during the Old Kingdom to the 20\(^{th}\) dynasty focused on their role in agricultural pursuits. Furthermore, the features of their personalities and life cycle in addition to their physical appearance.

Therefore, Herdsmen can be identified by their appearance in tomb scenes. They were usually noticeably thin. They had to scrimp on food and personal comforts because they were continuously working with their charges. Their ages varied between young, old and the elderly and the majority of them were in good health, while a few of them were represented with a particular deformity\(^{21}\) [FIGURE 1].

\(^{15}\) Davies 1948: Pl.XXV.

\(^{16}\) Lesko 1982: 7-8; Gardiner 1957:447.

\(^{17}\) Lesko 1982: 8

\(^{18}\) Ermann & Grapow (Eds.): Wb.1, 369, 7.

\(^{19}\) Ermann & Grapow (Eds.): Wb.2, 5, 220.

\(^{20}\) Kanawati 1980: Fig.14.

Some of the herdsmen appeared with their natural hair, while others are bald or half-bald, whereas others wore wigs. Herdsmen, as Commoners were represented in a very realistic attitude, so natural baldness, if it existed, was exclusively for commoners in ancient Egypt. They carried a long stick and a bundle of pots and food over their shoulders while wearing their kilts folded in. Hairstyles as well as garment fashions could help to identify different social groups, activities and ages.

An examination of wall scenes shows the activities of the herdsmen, they participated in many works such as: Plowing the land this usually appears some of them push on the handles of the plough, while the others encourage the animals. For example, a scene from the tomb Antefoger (TT 60) shows two pairs of oxen pull a plough each. The pair of oxen on the right turn their heads and one of them bends a knee, but two herdsmen, one at the back with a stick and the other in front with a rope linked to a horn, have no intention of allowing the beasts to rest. A herdsmen from each team pushes the plough forward.

Supporting herds in fording rivers: as a scene from Ty’s tomb (Saqqara 5th dynasty), on the left (west) part of the north wall, is depicted the crossing of a ford by a herd of cattle. Six herdsmen are divided among two papyrus craft, who arrange and manage the usually dangerous crossing.

Milking, these scenes appeared in many tombs, for example: The tomb (G 2184) of Akhmerutnisut shows one of the peasants holding the calf, while the other peasant is milking the cow which looks in sorrow at its baby, and they tethered its back legs.

Suckling, the most emotional scene appeared at the tomb of Baket III at Beni Hassan which represented a young boy and a young calf simultaneously drinking milk.

23 Tassie 2008: 136
24 Gardiner & Davies 1920: PL.V.
26 Ziegler1990: 143; Naville 1913: PL.II; Wreszinski 1936: PL.89; Smith 1949: Fig.79

FIGURE 1. The Tomb-Chapel of Ukh-Hotp’s Son Senbi. West wall-lower registers
BLACKMAN 1915: PL.XI
from the cow’s udder, and the cow is represented affectionately licking its baby to be calm\textsuperscript{27}.

Giving birth, the scenes of the delivery of the cow appeared in many tombs with simple differences in the details of each one. For example, the scene from the tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, northern area of Saqqara, this shows the delivery of the young calf in the presence of three of the herdsmen. One kneels behind the cow to pull the frontal legs of the calf, another stands behind him, and the third stands before the cow. The artist here was clever enough to illustrate the cow’s severe pain\textsuperscript{28}.

Feeding young cattle, as a scene from the Mastaba (G2196) of Iasen, in the upper register of the north wall of the chapel, a young bull with a muzzle over its head and a blanket over its back being fed by a squatting man\textsuperscript{29}. In addition, the role that the herdsmen played in hauling the mummy by oxen\textsuperscript{30}, as well as, delivering the animals to the estate owners or bailiffs\textsuperscript{31} [Figure 2].

![Figure 2. The Mastaba of Iasen (G2196) shows the activities of the cattle herdsmen](image)

**2. The herdsmen’s hairstyle**

The herdsmen were usually bearded, while some of them appeared bald or half bald, and others wearing a wig. In one of the scenes, one of the drovers appeared disheveled\textsuperscript{32}. Wigs were regularly used in daily life or for ritualistic performances.

Baldness or greying hair was uncommonly depicted in tomb wall scenes, especially for the kings, princes, and nobles\textsuperscript{33}.

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\textsuperscript{27} DAVIES 1901: PL.XVII; DAVIES 1933: FIG.10; WEEKS 1994: FIG.34; BROVARSKI 2001: PL.42.

\textsuperscript{28} DAVIES 1902: PL.XIX; WREZINSKI 1936: PL.17, 85; MOUSSE 1977: PL.76; ROTH 1995: FIG.204.

\textsuperscript{29} SIMPSON 1980: 30

\textsuperscript{30} TYLOR & GRIFFITH 1894: PL.V; MARCELLE & ETIENNE 1928: FIG.7.

\textsuperscript{31} SIMPSON 1980: PL.XXXVI.


It was radically different for the lowest classes of workers and commoners. They were depicted in a fairly realistic manner to emphasize the social distinctions between them and their lords\textsuperscript{34}. Baldness was known throughout all periods of Egyptian history from the Old Kingdom till the Ptolemaic period\textsuperscript{35}. There are not less than 49 scenes of baldness representatives in ancient Egyptian wall scenes of herdsmen depicted in different contexts. The large number of scenes was situated in the tomb of Ty which had 22 scenes.

The 44 baldness scenes of herdsmen discovered in the Old Kingdom tombs dated from the 4\textsuperscript{th} to 6\textsuperscript{th} dynasties. Two baldness scenes of herdsmen were discovered in Middle Kingdom tombs dating from the 11\textsuperscript{th} and 12\textsuperscript{th} dynasties. Three baldness scenes of herdsmen have been discovered in tombs dating from the 18\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} Dynasties in the New Kingdom.

The scenes, in the Old Kingdom tombs, were divided as follows: (22) scenes from the tomb of Ty\textsuperscript{36}, (6) Niankh-amun and Khnum-hotep\textsuperscript{37}, (5) Kagemni\textsuperscript{38}, (3) Iasen and Penneru\textsuperscript{39}, (2) Meres-ankh III (G7530)\textsuperscript{40}, (2) Idut\textsuperscript{41}, (2) Nefer and Khay\textsuperscript{42}, (1) Ptahhotep\textsuperscript{43}, (1) Ihy. The scenes of the Middle Kingdom tombs, were (2) scenes from the tomb of Senbi I\textsuperscript{44}. The scenes of the New Kingdom were divided as follows: (2) scenes from the tomb of Menna\textsuperscript{45} and (1) Paheri.

There are many models of representation related to baldness figures in ancient Egyptian private tombs, which reflected their different types of portrayal. But the most common: the depiction of baldness on the forehead, while the rest of the head was full of hair. The hair in this style was short cut with heavy locks. This hairstyle was portrayed again in the late period\textsuperscript{46} [FIGURE 3].

\textsuperscript{34} ROBINS 1999: 55-69.
\textsuperscript{35} TASSIE 2009: 459-536.
\textsuperscript{36} WILD 1953: PL.26; JONCKHEERE 1948: 28; WEEKS 1970: 75.
\textsuperscript{37} MOUSSA & ALTENMÜLLER 1977: PL.17; EVANS & WOODS 2016: 55-72.
\textsuperscript{38} WALSEM 2005: 45; YVONNE & PAOLO 2006: 496-7.
\textsuperscript{39} WOOD 2011: 314-319.
\textsuperscript{40} DUNHAM & SIMPSON 1974: FIG.4.
\textsuperscript{41} KANAWATI & ABDER-RAZI 2003: PL.71.
\textsuperscript{42} OSER 2011:42, PL.11.5
\textsuperscript{43} MAHRAN & KAMAL 2016: 169-191.
\textsuperscript{44} BLACKMAN 1915: KANAWATI & EVANS 2018: 18-34.
\textsuperscript{45} HARTWIG 2001: 27
\textsuperscript{46} KANAWATI & WOODS 2009: PL.116
3. The herdsman's costume

Costume can be a powerful tool in the identification of the herd drivers, their function, and even their place in the social hierarchy. Egyptians used clothing in art as significant signs of position and occupation, which would easily have been identified by the viewer.47

The cattle herdsmen are always dressed in either a simple kilt, or are naked.48 If they wear kilts, they are always short and never have the starched pleats or sharp point at the knee shown in higher-ranking clothes.49

In the Mastaba of Ty, central part of the south wall of the chapel, Register 6, the herdsmen are easily recognizable by their looks and their clothes. The third beast of the register is being followed by two aged herdsmen who are dressed in kilts with forwarding projections [Figure 4].

50 HAGSETH 2015: 62; PECK 2013: 56.
This usually signifies their higher status\(^1\). Likewise, on the Mastaba of Iasen (G2196), the upper register of the east wall, the third and fourth characters appeared with their special loincloths of herdsmen; presenting themselves in the attitude of respect\(^2\) [FIGURE 5].

![Figure 5. Mastaba of Iasen (G2196). Simpson 1980: PL.XXXVI.](https://www.osirisnet.net/popupImage.php?img=/mastabas/iasen/photo/iasen_g2196_simpson_fig_31.gif&lang=en&sw=1366&sh=768, Accessed January 13, 2022)

In the Mastaba of Ty, central part of the south wall of the chapel, Register 5, the herdsmen of this register don’t wear much, and their clothing only covers their buttocks [FIGURE 6].


In the Mastaba of Ty, central part of the south wall of the chapel, Register 2, a large «ox» is pushed from behind by an aide. This herdsman wears a projecting kilt with vertical stripes. At the left edge of the register, is a herdsman wearing a striped projecting kilt [FIGURE 7].


\(^1\) Porter & Moss: PM III.2. 468-469; Wild 1959: 101-113; Steindorff 1913: 118

\(^2\) Porter & Moss: PM III.1 82; Simpson 1980: PL.158
THE IDENTITY OF THE CATTLE HERDSMAN: A STUDY IN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PRIVATE TOMBS SCENES

In the *Mastaba* of *Ty*, the north wall of the chapel, Right (east) part of the wall, register 2, the scene of the crossing of the ford shows three naked herdsmen\(^\text{53}\) [FIGURE 8].

[FIGURE 8]. *Mastaba of Ty*. WILD 1953: PL.LXXX.

In the *Mastaba* of *Meryteti* also known as *Mer* chamber C1, five registers are superimposed in the lower left corner. Each register depicts two animals with two or three men accompanying them. These wear short or projecting kilts, with the exception of one (placed at the front of the next to bottom register) who wears the kilt associated with a master herdsman. He is described as «the *ka*-servant, the overseer of the house, *Merinen*»\(^\text{54}\) [FIGURE 9].

[FIGURE 9]. *Mastaba of Meryteti*

\(^\text{53}\)PORTER & MOSS: *PM* II: 468-469; WILD 1966: PL.CLXVII,CLXIX
\(^\text{54}\) PORTER & MOSS: *PM* II: 536-537; DARESSY 1898: 521-74.
In the tomb of Menna (TT69), the south wall -East side of the wall-upper register, there are two pairs of cattle tied by the horns. They are under the control of a herdsman who holds a stick and wears a white kilt [FIGURE 10].

[FIGURE 10]. Left Side, Long Hall, Funeral Procession from the Tomb of Menna (TT 69).
HARTWIG 2013: 68.

In the tomb of Amenemhat (TT 340), the site of Deir el-Medina, dating from the very beginning of the 18th Dynasty, the lower registers of the north wall depicts the funeral procession. There are four porters with chests at the head, six porters with offerings facing the mourners and five men carrying the catafalque preceded by two cattle and a herdsman. All porters and the herdsman are clothed in the same way: very simple short loincloths and short wigs covering their ears55 [FIGURE 11].

[FIGURE 11]: A scene shows a herdsman and offering porters from tomb of Amenemhat (TT 340).

Another scene, from the tomb of Pairy (TT 139) at Thebes, contains the funeral procession to Pairy’s final resting place. The procession consists of twenty-five individuals. Some men with shaved heads and others wear wigs, carrying funerary goods for the deceased. Two cowherds in white kilts lead four oxen of white, brown, and black with the aid of switches raised above their heads. The oxen’s horns are tied together with a rope connected to a wooden sled that carries Pairy’s sarcophagus. Eight

men following closely behind the oxen in rows of two holding the ropes with both hands to assist in pulling the weight of the barque. The herdsman and the other men were both dressed in the same way: basic short loincloths [FIGURE 12].

[FIGURE 12]. A scene shows two herdsman, 8 rope holder and offering porters from the tomb of Pairy (TT 139) at Thebes. O’Neill 2015: Pl.3.27.3.28

4. The herdsman's job and tools

The herdsman appeared in the scenes of daily life as well as funeral scenes in several different situations. Through these scenes, various tools appeared in order to control the herd, such as rope, stick, whip, and vessels for water or milk in the funeral scenes.

The scenes showed different positions for using the stick: the front position, the top of the head (horizontal), and the back position. At the same time, the positions of the hands change either holding a grazing tool or placing it in the direction of the cows belonging to the herd. The following tables show the different positions of using herdsman's tools.

56 PORTER & MOSS: PM, 252; VIREY 1894: 581-90; O’NEILL 2015: 43-44, Pl.3.27, 3.28.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Tomb owner &amp; Scene location</th>
<th>Tomb location &amp; Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="84x31" alt="Image" /> A herdsman holds a tether in his right hand.</td>
<td>A herdsman holds a tether in his right hand.</td>
<td>Lasen, G2196 East wall of the chapel.</td>
<td>Giza 4th dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="84x31" alt="Image" /> A herdsman leads four oxen and holds a tether in his right hand.</td>
<td>A herdsman leads four oxen and holds a tether in his right hand.</td>
<td>Mereruka The north wall of chamber A13, 4th register</td>
<td>Saqqara 6th dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="84x31" alt="Image" /> A herdsman was driving an ox in a husbandry framework. His right hand is on the back of the animal in front of him, while his left hand is holding a tether attached to an «ox».</td>
<td>A herdsman was driving an ox in a husbandry framework. His right hand is on the back of the animal in front of him, while his left hand is holding a tether attached to groups of cattle.</td>
<td>Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 6.</td>
<td>Saqqara 5th dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="84x31" alt="Image" /> A herdsman holds a tether in his right hand while holding in the other hand what looks to be a mat.</td>
<td>The lead herdsman, in left hand, he appears to be holding a reed mat and tethers in his right hand.</td>
<td>Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 5</td>
<td>Saqqara 5th dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="84x31" alt="Image" /> Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 3</td>
<td>Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 5</td>
<td>Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 3</td>
<td>Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

57 Porter & Moss: PM III 2: 525-534; Simpson 1980: PL.XXXVI.
58 Duell 1938: Pl. 152
59 Wild 1966: PL.CLXVII.
60 Davies 1901: Pl.XXI
61 Wild 1966: PL.CLXVII.
62 Wild 1966: PL.CLXVIII.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Ty</th>
<th>Saqqara</th>
<th>Dynasty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>A herdsman holds a tether in his right hand and a small bundle of hay in his left hand.</td>
<td>Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 5</td>
<td>Ptah-hotep</td>
<td>East wall, the right part (south half), Register 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>A herdsman appears, looking left, with his right hand pulling a large fat bull and his left hand holding a bundle of fodder for the bull. Except for his left knee, which is bent backward, the herdsman appears to be in good health.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>A herdsman leads a «young ox». His left hand is on his right shoulder, while his right hand is holding a rope.</td>
<td>Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 6</td>
<td>Ptah-hotep</td>
<td>East wall, the right part (south half), Register 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>A herdsman leads a group of cattle. His left hand is on his right shoulder, while his right hand is holding tethers.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>A bald herdsman, with back knee deformity, was catching an ox by a rope in his left hand, while with the other hand he was holding a bag in an animal husbandry context.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>The herdsman pulls the cow with a rope around his neck to control it.</td>
<td>lasen, G2196</td>
<td></td>
<td>East wall of the chapel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>The animal moves its head away from its shepherd, who faces it with both hands clutching the rope.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

63 WILD 1966: PL.CLVII.
64 PAGET & PIRIE 1896; DAVIES 1901: PL. XXI.
65 WILD 1966: PL.CLVII.
66 DAVIES 1901: PL.XXI.
68 SIMPSON 1980: PL.XXXVI.
69 WILD 1966: PL.CLVII.
A herdsman appears to be being pulled by a «young ox»\(^{70}\). Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 5 Saqqara 5\(^{th}\) dynasty

[Table 1]. Different positions for rope and hands representations © Done by author.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figures that show the stick in the forward position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A herdsman appears to be being pulled by a «young ox»(^{70}).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saqqara 5(^{th}) dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A herdsman wearing a white kilt and holding a stick in his hand in frontal position(^{71}).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saqqara 5(^{th}) dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The herdsman holds the stick in a forward position(^{73}).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saqqara 5(^{th}) dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With his right hand, the herdsman strikes the back end of a white cow with a stick. On his left shoulder, he holds a yoke (a long pole) from which little jars are strung by their handles. On the bend of the same arm, he also has a coiled rope(^{74}).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ty Central part of the south wall of the chapel, register 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saqqara 5(^{th}) dynasty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{70}\) Wild 1966: PL.CLXVII.
\(^{71}\) Wild 1966: PL.CLXIX.
\(^{73}\) Porter & Moss: PM: 461-462; Vernus 1978: 115-146; Abdul-Qader 1966: PL.XXVIII.
### Figures that show the stick in a horizontal position above the head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Tomb</th>
<th>Dynasty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>A herdsman wearing a white kilt and holding a short stick in his hand in a horizontal position above the head.</td>
<td><em>Menna</em>, TT69</td>
<td>Thebes 18(^{th}) dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>The herdsman uses his stick to drive the four harnessed oxen in a semi-horizontal position above the head.</td>
<td><em>Roy</em>, TT255</td>
<td>Thebes 19(^{th}) dynasty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Figures that show the stick in back position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
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<th>Tomb</th>
<th>Dynasty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>A bearded and naked herdsman carries a piece of cloth (a «blanket» or a «mat») diagonally across his chest. He holds a stick, which he uses to attract four horned cattle.</td>
<td><em>Ty</em></td>
<td>Saqqara 5(^{th}) dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>The herdsman encourages the animals with large strokes of a stick.</td>
<td><em>Ty</em></td>
<td>Saqqara 5(^{th}) dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>A herdsman raises his stick to drive forward the last reluctant oxen.</td>
<td><em>Kagemni</em></td>
<td>Saqqara 6(^{th}) dynasty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Figures that show use both hands to hold the stick

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Each of the herdsmen holds a long stick in both hands to encourage the cows to walk.</td>
<td><em>Ty</em></td>
<td>Saqqara 5(^{th}) dynasty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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75 Porter & Moss: *PM*: 151; George, Marcelle & Etienne 1928: Fig.7.
76 Wild 1953: Pl. LXXX; Wreszinski 1936: Pl. 44.
77 Wild 1955: Pl. LXXVIII.
78 Porter & Moss: *PM* III: 521-525; Bissing 1905-1911; Yvonne & Paolo 2006.
79 Wild 1953: Pl. CXII.
During the crossing of a ford, two herdsmen keep an eye on their animals. The one on the left is in the water, while the other is on the other side of the river\textsuperscript{80}.

\textbf{Mereruka}

The east wall of chamber A13, scene 3, 1st register

\textbf{Saqqara}

6\textsuperscript{th} dynasty

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & A disheveled herdsman thinly sprinkles milk from a jar on to the path of the animals\textsuperscript{81}. & Nebamon, TT181 West wall-upper register \\
\hline
 & The herdsman is carrying a water vessel, which could be used to help the sledge runners\textsuperscript{82}. & Userhat, TT56 Chamber b-west wall (long wall, on the right) \\
\hline
 & A herdsman stimulates a couple of oxen by the help of a whip\textsuperscript{83}. & Pahi, West wall -North End: Funeral Rites \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Different positions for stick representations © Done by author.}
\end{table}

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & Nebamon, TT181 West wall-upper register & Nebamon, TT181 West wall-upper register \\
\hline
 & Userhat, TT56 Chamber b-west wall (long wall, on the right) & Userhat, TT56 Chamber b-west wall (long wall, on the right) \\
\hline
 & Pahi, West wall -North End: Funeral Rites & Pahi, West wall -North End: Funeral Rites \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Representations for various drovers' tools © Done by author.}
\end{table}

Finally, some examples of the speech captions will be presented to explore the language of the conversation, their relationship at work, their knowledge of the nature of cows and their ability to lead the herd, whether these conversations are directed at each other, their assistants, or the herd.

\textsuperscript{80}\textit{Duell} 1938: Pl.168

\textsuperscript{81}Davies 1925: PL.XXIII; Mekhitarian 1997: 21-28

\textsuperscript{82}Porter & Moss: \textit{PM} 111-113; Beinlich-Seeber & Shedid 1987: Taf.15

\textsuperscript{83}Porter & Moss: \textit{PM} 5: 177-181; Tylor & Griffith 1894: Pl.V
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The scene</th>
<th>Tomb owner &amp; caption describing the scene</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>In the Mastaba of Ty, two herdsmen are seen engaged in petty theft. They are milking a cow for their own consumption. One of the herdsmen is on the lookout and warns the other(^{84}):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>In the Mastaba of Ty, register 5: Perhaps the small bundle of hay held by the man leading the next animal piques the animal’s attention. The confused animal’s herdsman appears to ask of the animal(^{85}):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>In the Mastaba of Ty, north wall-Right (east) part, register 2- text (2): Things aren’t moving fast enough for a herdsman, so he lashes out at his aide, who is leading three beasts without horns, with these words(^{86}):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>In the same register-text (3): Under the weight of the calf he transports on his back, a naked and bearded herdsman bends forwards. This terrified animal turns around and shouts out to its mother, who is striving to catch up with it while dragging the rest of the herd behind her. She appears to be mooing in confusion. This is most likely why the herdsman in the midst of the scene tells the other to(^{87}):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\(^{84}\) WILD 1953: PL.CXII.

\(^{85}\) WILD 1966: PL.CLXVII

\(^{86}\) WRESZINSKI 1936: PL... 44

\(^{87}\) WILD 1953: PLS. LXXX B, LXXXI & CXTIV.

\(^{88}\) DUELL 1938: PL.168
In the tomb of Waatet-khet-hor, wife of Mereruka, a herdsman helps a cow giving birth under the supervision of his superior, who tells him 89:

\[hs \text{ ṭw} \text{ ṭm.sn r} \text{ d}l \text{ h}j\text{i.sn r} \text{ ḫr-ib.s}\]

«Stay close to them (i.e. the other oxen of the herd). I let them return to the middle of it»

The ploughing scene in the tomb of Senbi. Illustrates quite well a case of laziness: the herdsman suggests to his companion to take a break, saying 90:

\[s\text{ff ṭw t nr pw ḫw ḫs} \text{n r.s}\]

«Pull hard, Oh herdsman! It is too difficult for her»

But the other replies he's busy and by saying so, he calls him to order.

[Table 4]. Examples of the captions describing cattle herdsmen scenes © Done by author.

The participants in these dialogues are either common herdsmen or their superiors, or even animals. The shepherds’ scenes expressed their natural lives and were characterized by realism and simplicity, and indicated their awareness of the nature of the cows and its innate instinct.

The good working relationship between the herdsmen is depicted in the first and sixth scenes. The first scene displays them arranging to get milk for themselves without their boss's knowledge, while the sixth scene depicts one of them inviting the other to take a break and enjoy the beautiful day.

Other scenes demonstrated the shepherd's awareness of the cow's nature and instincts. The herdsman’s question in the second scene, directed at the cow, confirms that he knows the reason for its return, and that is because of the hay. The third scene also depicted his experience with cows' maternal instinct. In addition to the fifth scene, this depicted the shepherd’s mercy toward the cow when the superior instructed the herdsman to assist her throughout the giving birth. Furthermore, the first text of the third scene and the fifth scene highlighted his ability to lead the herd and control its speed.

89 Kanawati & Abder-Raziq 2008: 56
90 Blackman 1914: 3, Pl.III; Kanawati & Evans 2017: Pl.79
The identity of the cattle herdsman: A study in ancient Egyptian private tombs scenes

Most of the conversations between the herdsmen were in imperative form. This is due to the nature of their work, whether collective or individual, which requires constant direction to complete a task, either leading the herd or assisting it, or demanding the completion of a task between the chief and the herdsmen, or the herdsmen and their aides.91

III. Conclusion

From the Old Kingdom to the 20th dynasty, a study of daily life scenes in private tombs reveals that artists were well-versed in the physical and behavioral characteristics of the herdsmen they depicted.

Recording the herdsmen scenes reached its peak during the Old Kingdom, and most of these scenes were dominated by a basic characteristic: simplicity and realism, which in turn is due to the basis of their job as workers.

These herdsmen appeared through the scenes of daily life of all ages: the old, the mature, and the young. These scenes also highlighted their hairstyles, their physical health and sometimes their physical disability, which did not prevent them from performing their job duties at all. Their social rank was evident through their clothes, which played an important role in discovering their roles. Various means for controlling the herd appeared in these scenes, including rope, stick, and whip. These sights are commonly used in a variety of settings, including the front, back, and upper head, for individual cow sightings or in groups to demonstrate the shepherd’s proficiency in controlling the cat’s walks.

Moreover, the scenes depicting the shepherds’ dialogue were crucial in revealing the shepherd’s individual characteristics. Cooperation, compassion, awareness of the nature of animals and their impulses, and the ability to control the herd are all characteristics.

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91 Gardiner 1957: § 313; Malaise & Winand 1999: § 726, 840; Allen 2014: § 16.6; Moussa & Altenmüller 1977: Pl.10; Vernus 2010: 77
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