THE REPRESENTATIONS OF THE FUNERAL PROCESSION OF OSIRIS AND SOKARIS AT DENDERA (Ch. IV, n.129)

The meaning of the scenes at Dendera, depicting a procession with the sarcophagi of Osiris and Sokaris, is uncertain because the inscriptions and reliefs of the roof chapels at Dendera have not been fully published. Several smaller and larger processions were involved in the ritual, and it is not always clear to which stage the reliefs refer. The two scenes reproduced in our fig. 77, flank the door leading to the third room of the western chapel. This position and the fact that the bearers and the mummies are all facing outwards suggest that the procession is leaving the room. If we assume that the order of events suggested by Cauville is correct and that the new mummies were placed in the third room of the western chapel, which served as the upper tomb, then Beinlich and Cauville are probably right in supposing that the reliefs represent the previous year's mummies being brought to the lower tomb. In any case, these reliefs give a good impression how the sarcophagus of Osiris was carried in a procession, or more precisely, how it was carried to or from a procession litter. They thus offer a fine parallel for the procession in the Nile Mosaic.

In another relief at Dendera a boat-shaped procession litter stands beside the tomb of Osiris. The Pharaoh, who acts as high priest, is also present (see fig. 84). The exact meaning of this scene is again unclear. The relief is situated in the third room of the eastern chapel, which also contains the relief with the 'garden' of the corn-mummy, and which is presumably the place where the revival ritual was performed. The litter with the sarcophagus of Osiris at the left forms part of a series of boat-shaped

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1 For the reliefs reproduced in fig. 77 see Ch. IV, n. 99 and cf. Appendix 9.
2 See Beinlich 281, 283; Cauville 31, and cf. Appendix 9.
3 Cf. Ch. IV, n. 93.
4 See Ch. IV, n. 118.
5 See Cauville 27 ff.; and our Ch. IV, n. 127.
procession litters with various shrines and sarcophagi of Osiris and Sokaris\(^6\). The position of this scene in the third room and its presence with the other procession litters may suggest that these scenes refer to the great boat procession of the 22nd of Khoiak in which the Corn Osiris was brought to the upper tomb\(^7\). However, in the tomb we see the falcon-headed mummy of Sokaris and among the other litters appears the Henu-bark of Sokaris\(^8\). This might imply that Sokaris took part in the procession of the 22nd, but we know that Sokaris was only brought to the upper tomb on the 24th\(^9\). The presence of the Henu-bark on the other hand suggests the great procession of Sokaris on the 26th. However, another picture of the Henu-bark and reference to it can be seen in the second room of the western chapel\(^10\). That is a more logical position because the mummy of Sokaris had already been brought to the western chapel before the procession with the Henu-bark took place.

Cauville suggests that the Sokaris procession is represented in yet another picture of a procession, notably in the first room of the eastern chapel\(^11\). It shows rows of priests representing the \textit{nomes} of Upper and Lower Egypt headed by the Pharaoh, and litters with the sarcophagi of Osiris and Sokaris. Here, however, the conspicuous Henu-bark is missing, while the sarcophagi of Osiris and Sokaris suggest a shared procession. This would point to their common burial on the 30th, except that the position of the reliefs is suggestive rather of the beginning of the ritual. For completeness' sake it must be noted that yet two more processions with Osiris are mentioned in the inscriptions, respectively on the 24th and 25th\(^12\).

The position of the second relief in the third room of the eastern chapel and the connection with other litters could suggest that it represents the procession with the new Sokaris mummy to the upper tomb on the 24th. It must be noted, however, that among the other litters there is one with the sarcophagus of Osiris and

\(^6\) See Mariette IV, pls. 64–68.
\(^7\) Thus Cauville 29, cf. Appendix 9.
\(^8\) Mariette IV, pl. 64; cf. Appendix 9, n. 7.
\(^9\) See Appendix 9, n. 6.
\(^10\) For the procession with the Henu-bark see Appendix 9; for the references to it in the 2nd room of the western chapel see Cauville 31 ff., fig. 5.
\(^11\) Cauville 32 f.; \textit{PM} VI, 96; Mariette IV, pls. 31–34, the sarcophagi have not been reproduced in Mariette's plates.
\(^12\) See Chassinat 639.