APPENDIX 11

THE FUNERAL PROCESION OF OSIRIS IN THE NILE MOSAIC
(Ch. IV, n. 130)

Several larger and smaller processions formed part of the ritual of the Khoiak festival. At first sight the procession in the Nile Mosaic seems neatly to illustrate the instruction in the Dendera inscription that the Osiris mummy of the previous year should be buried in the crypt in the funerary grove. This, however, was a minor event which is attested only at Dendera. The great funeral processions were those with the new mummies of Osiris and Sokaris on the 22nd and the 24th of Khoiak respectively. The procession with the Henu-bark on the 26th may be excluded because it was not a boat procession but circled round the temple, and its main feature, the conspicuous Henu-bark, is not present in the Nile Mosaic. In general it was the great funeral procession of Osiris which was associated especially with the inundation. At Philae it is stated specifically that the procession to the Abaton at Bigeh had to take place before the Nile could efflux. In the temple of Opet at Thebes, too, the festive funeral of Osiris is associated with the inundation. The procession in the Nile Mosaic plays an important part in the composition. Its pompous and festive character is indicated by the presence of the divine standards and the train of female musicians. The standards with the animal symbols of the gods and the provinces of Egypt also were part of the great funeral processions of Osiris. At Philae the funeral procession was a real

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1 See in general Appendices 9, 10, and the references in Appendix 9, n. 9 and nn. 4, 6, respectively.
2 See Appendix 9, n. 7; Cauville 31 f., fig. 5; LA II, 1119, s.v. Henu-barke.
3 For the connection between the funeral procession and the inundation see Appendix 9, n. 15; Junker 39 f., 57; the motto at the beginning of this book and in general Ch. IV, n. 113.
4 See De Wit III, 151.
5 See Ch. IV, n. 103; the standards are not mentioned specifically at Dendera but cf. Chassinat 342, 635, where they are mentioned in connection with the procession of Sokaris on the 24th. For the female musicians see Ch. III, n. 189, fig. 70; they are not mentioned at Dendera but compare Cauville 32, fig. 5, where Anubis plays the tambourine on the occasion of the procession of the Henu-bark on the 26th.
boat procession, and a real boat procession is attested also for other places such as Canopus and Sais. We have already seen that in the Nile Mosaic, on the right-hand side of the propylon in section 16, originally there was probably a boat to which the female musicians were looking. It seems therefore that a boat was part of the procession and that it may have carried the sarcophagus of Osiris or a shrine for Isis. The procession in the Nile Mosaic may thus have been a real boat procession which in the original mosaic seemed to come from the Egyptian temple (cf. fig. 8).

With regard to the sarcophagus carried in the Nile Mosaic, the following observations may be made. The fact that it is carried by four priests can be explained by our conclusion that it was not a real sarcophagus but a ritual one (cf. fig. 77). The fact that the priests carry it on poles and not on the usual procession litter suggests a stage in the proceedings where the sarcophagus was carried from the procession litter, which may have remained on the boat, now missing in section 16, to the tomb. The sarcophagus in the Nile Mosaic is plain but may originally have had a figure of a jackal or falcon on top. Regrettably the Dendera inscription does not inform us about the manner in which the corn-mummy was carried in the procession of the 22nd of Khoiak but it was presumably in much the same fashion as the mummy of Sokaris was transported on the 24th, i.e. in a wooden sarcophagus. It may have looked like the ornate sarcophagus which is depicted in the third room of the eastern chapel, where the new mummies had been prepared. This stands on a ceremonial couch and is richly decorated but there is nothing on top of it. In the third room of the western chapel, where the new mummies of Osiris and Sokaris were placed after the procession and remained for the rest of the year, there are pictures of the mummies of Osiris and Sokaris, lying in their sarcophagi. These were again placed on

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6 See Appendix 9, n. 28.
7 See Ch. IV, n. 104; Ch. III, n. 190.
8 See Ch. IV, nn. 131, 133.
9 For the carrying of real sarcophagi see Ch. IV, n. 93, and for the size of ritual sarcophagi Chassainat 60, 66 f; it will not have exceeded 60–80 cm in length, 36 cm in width, and 22 cm in height.
10 Cf. nn. 93, 129, figs. 77 and 84.
11 See Ch. IV, n.102; Ch. III, n. 187.
12 See Chassainat 71.
13 See Mariette IV, pl. 72.