

Religious Practice and Cultural Construction of Animal Worship in Egypt from the Early Dynastic to the New Kingdom

Ritual forms, material display,
historical development

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Preface and Acknowledgements

The present study is a largely revised version of a doctoral thesis in Egyptology defended in September 2014 at Sapienza University of Rome, entitled ‘Panthe(ri)on: costruzione culturale e sviluppo del culto degli animali. Messa in prospettiva di un motivo costante della pratica religiosa egiziana’. The general ideas underlying that work were briefly presented at the 11th International Congress of Egyptologists, held in Florence in 2015 (Colonna 2017).

Since then, I have had the opportunity to refine the theoretical framework of the research while, for practical and methodological reasons that will be explained later on, I decided to limit its chronological scope to the period until the New Kingdom. The following analysis, therefore, does not provide a narrowly focused presentation of individual cases of so-called ‘animal worship’ nor a general description of the phenomenon at the peak of its development – the Late and Graeco-Roman times – since several such accounts are already available. Instead, it draws on earlier material and comparison with later data to theorise – i.e., to reflect theoretically on – ‘animal worship’, producing a historical-conceptual model that challenges traditional narratives and literary perspectives. The result will be, as with every model, not much a mirror-image as an interpretive framework of patterned data.

In brief, the present study can be read and considered as an essay, an attempt to improve the object of its inquiry by defending the thesis that ‘animal worship’ is better understood as a field of religious practice and display with a historically significant range of distinctive configurations. The notion itself of ‘animal worship’ is methodologically problematised as the historical product of our humanistic tradition, which can be maintained as a traditional label – it is regularly and purposely put between quotation marks throughout this study to highlight its conventional use – posited that the definition of its content is refined and its heuristic function as an operative tool is re-established.

The research, therefore, has the character of a conceptual design and of historical analysis, the articulation of which includes three main parts. The first one (Chapter 1) formulates the core problem – how we can construct a critical understanding of Egyptian ‘animal worship’ and its evidence –, tracing the origins and changes in the use of the category, reviewing the basic tenets of what is here presented as the ‘Standard Model’ of Egyptological interpretation, and expanding discussion on theoretical and methodological grounds.

A second section (Chapters 2-5) is dedicated to collecting and exploring relevant archaeological and textual materials. In seeking to demonstrate the variability and diachronic development of practices of ‘animal worship’ the work of analysis is limited to the sources from the Early Dynastic to the New Kingdom, which are often neglected or only touched upon as antecedents of later manifestations.

The final part (Chapter 6) develops a synthesis that aims at reassessing Egyptian ‘animal worship’ in relation to the three fundamental aspects of religious practice, monumental display and historical change. By combining an *etic* (analytical) perspective with a focused examination of the *emic* expressions attested in the sources, the debated topic of the religious status and meaning ascribed to certain animals (both individuals and groups) is addressed. Particular attention is paid to the Egyptian conceptual strategies and responses to that issue. Likewise, considerations of display and decorum – i.e., exploring the modes and times according to which practices of ‘animal worship’ are integrated within the forms of Egyptian ‘monumental discourse’ (*sensu* Jan Assmann) – provide important caveats in the construction of an ‘Alternative Model’ for interpreting patterns and gaps in the distribution of the evidence, thus producing a more nuanced historical reconstruction.

Thinking, imagining, writing a book are part of an individual, lone enterprise and any omissions or mistakes are my full responsibility. At the same time, the creative, material, even emotional process behind it does not occur in a void, profiting instead from a beneficial series of exchanges and opportunities. So, I cannot but acknowledge the generous intellectual and practical help of various people and institutions.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Paola Buzi (Rome) for her positive interest, inexhaustible support, and continuous encouragement in every stage of my research and career. I am also grateful to other friends and colleagues, with whom I had the chance to share some of the problems and ideas this book is about, and who contributed many stimulating suggestions on various formal and informal occasions: John Baines (Oxford), Emanuele Ciampini (Venice), Francesca Iannarilli (Venice), Martin Fitzenreiter (Bonn), Joachim Quack (Heidelberg). Their comments and feedback, as well as their own works and academic interests, have inspired and enriched my research in multiple and sometimes unexpected ways.

I owe special thanks to Francesca Iannarilli for the drawing and elaboration of many pictures as well as for the tedious time she spent reading the whole text. Her help was also crucial in writing down the final index.

The Library of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome and the Sackler Library at the University of Oxford provided the best environment to carry on my research, and their personnel always offered their kind assistance on every matter.

I am obliged, of course, to David Davison and the editorial staff at Archaeopress for being extraordinarily patient, diligent, and professional in the production of the final book. The completion and publication of this work would not have been possible without the generous support granted by the *Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei* (postdoctoral scholarship ‘Raffaele Pettazzoni’ 2016) and the *Istituto Italiano per la Storia Antica* (postdoctoral research scholarship 2017), to which I would like to show my deep appreciation.

A wor(l)d of love and personal gratitude is due to my family, for always being present and strong even when I was wandering in the troubling wilderness of my thoughts. After all, ‘Home is where one starts from’.

And speaking of home, I would like to make a memory into a wish and offer it to MPI who, I hope, will not stop wondering ‘where do the ducks go when the pond freezes over’.

To those who stand, sleep, and settle near

*Tiger Tiger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?*

William Blake, The Tiger (1794)

Abbreviations

AEIN	Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen
Ael., NA	Aelianus, <i>De Natura Animalium</i>
Ael., VH	Aelianus, <i>Varia Historia</i>
Ael., Fr.	Aelianus, Fragments
AGÉA	<i>Anthroponymes et Généalogies de l'Égypte Ancienne</i> (https://www.ifao.egnet.net/bases/agea/noms/)
ÄM	Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Berlin
Arr., <i>Anab.</i>	Arrian, <i>Anabasis</i>
Ashmolean	Ashmolean Museum
BD	Book of the Dead (after Allen 1974)
BM	British Museum, London
CG	Catalogue General, Cairo Egyptian Museum
CF	Cairo Fragment(s) (after Wilkinson 2000)
Cic., <i>Nat. D.</i>	Cicero, <i>De natura deorum</i>
CT	Coffin Texts (after de Buck 1835-1961)
Diod.	Diodorus Siculus
Hdt.	Herodotus
Juv., <i>Sat.</i>	Juvenal, <i>Saturae</i>
JE	Journel d'entrée, Cairo Egyptian Museum
Kelsey Museum	Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, Ann Arbor
Kestner Museum	Museum August Kestner
KRI	Kitchen, K.A. 1975-1990. <i>Ramesside Inscriptions: Historical and Biographical</i> , 8 vols. Oxford: B.H. Blackwell
Louvre	Musée du Louvre
MFA	Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
MMA	Metropolitan Museum of Arts, New York
OI	Oriental Institute of Chicago
Plin., NH	Plinius, <i>Naturalis Historia</i>
Plut., <i>De Is. et Os.</i>	Plutarch, <i>De Iside et Osiride</i>
PM	Porter, B. and R.L.B. Moss (eds) 1927-2007. <i>Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings</i> , 8 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press
Porph., <i>Abst.</i>	Porphyry, <i>De abstinentia</i>
PS	Palermo Stone (after Wilkinson 2000)
PT	Pyramid Text (spell) (after Sethe 1908-1922)
Pyr.	Pyramid Texts (utterance) (after Sethe 1908-1922)
Pushkin Museum	Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts
RMO	Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden
SMÄK	Staatliche Museum Ägyptischer Kunst, Munich
Strabo, <i>Geog.</i>	Strabo, <i>Geography</i>
UCL	University College London
Urk.	<i>Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums</i> , 8 vols ed. K. Sethe, H.W. Helck, H. Schäfer, H. Grapow, O. Firchow, 1903-1957 (Leipzig/Berlin)
Virg., <i>Aen.</i>	Virgil, <i>Aeneis</i>
WAM	Walter Art Museum, Baltimora
Wb.	Erman, A. and W. Grapow 1926-1961. <i>Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache</i> , 7 vols. Leipzig – Berlin.

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Chapter 1

Introducing Animal Worship

In 1886, at the Royal Academy in London, the British painter and illustrator John Reinhard Weguelin showed *The Obsequies of an Egyptian Cat*. The painting illustrates the funerary rites ('obsequies') performed by a priestess for a deceased, mummified cat. The mummy is set, in the guise of an idol, within a shrine placed upon an altar, before which the female celebrant kneels in adoration, burning incense and presenting food offerings that even include a plate of milk. The walls behind the priestess are decorated with delicate Egyptian frescoes, and a large statue of an enthroned lion-goddess Sekhmet stands at the end of a descending staircase and guards the entrance to the room, all elements that create a fitting ceremonial context for the main action of the scene.

The work belongs to the well-established genre of the archaeological painting so typical of the Victorian age, for which ancient Egypt represented a primary source of inspiration, stimulating a whole series of Egyptian paintings by some of the leading artists of the time, who engaged with the past and with archaeology 'as a source of "visual poetry"'.¹ In particular, Weguelin's *Obsequies of an Egyptian Cat*, in the words of Stephanie Moser, 'is reminiscent of Alma-Tadema's and Poynter's Egyptian pictures of the 1860s and 1870s, where religious rituals took place in small intimate spaces'.²

Literary inspiration likely came from Herodotus, who described the revered status of the Egyptian cats, amongst other sacred animals, and noted the honours and the special attentions they received (in life and death) at his times.³ In addition, the scene combines highly detailed archaeological references – one might only incidentally note precise citations of Egyptian monuments displayed at the British Museum, including a fragment of the wall decoration from the Theban tomb of Nebamun (EA 37978), a New Kingdom statue of Sekhmet (EA 37, 63), and one of the many late cat mummies (like EA 6752) – with imaginative inference, presenting a fascinating interpretation of an ancient Egyptian ceremony. No less significantly, the picture displays a 'playful mixture of the familiar and the bizarre. The scene reminds viewers of the human fondness for domestic animals that might link us to the ancient Egyptians, but also of difference: the female figure kneels in worship as she performs the rites due to the cat, regarded as a deity in Egyptian religion'.⁴ Like other similar compositions,⁵ it was an educated, picturesque, and ironic statement on ancient rituals, at the same time arousing curiosity toward their decadent exoticism and remarking distance from their trivial character. The central act of venerating a dead animal, overemphasised by the ample gestures of the female figure, surely hit the point. It is noteworthy that, in turning on the religious theme, the significant role of animals was selected as representative of Egyptian paganism and, through the artistic citation, recreated as part of a (once) lived practice that could be enjoyed by the modern spectator in vivid details.

1.1 Animal worship and ancient Egyptian religion: articulation of the problem

The brief overview on Weguelin's painting helps introduce the basic problem of so-called 'animal worship' in ancient Egypt. To put it with the words of Martin Fitzenreiter, 'Die ägyptischen Tierkulte leiden unter einem Paradoxon. Während sie in der Ägyptologie als ein Grenzgebiet religiöser Praxis angesehen und eher gemieden werden, gelten sie im allgemeinen Bewußtsein (nennen

¹ Moser 2020: 173.

² Moser 2020: 258.

³ Hdt. II. 66-67.

⁴ Trumble 2001: 88.

⁵ Edwin Long's *Sacred to Pasht* (1886) exploits the same 'feline' theme while Edward Poynter's *Feeding the Sacred Ibis* (1871) focuses on another well-known sacred animal. Moser 2020: 178-181, 258-261.

wir es mit Aleida und Jan Assmann gern das “kulturelle Gedächtnis”) als ein wesentliches Merkmal altägyptischer Religion, ja Ägyptens überhaupt’.⁶ The point might be articulated differently: the notion that animals played a religiously significant role for the Egyptians is something that predates the birth of Egyptology as a discipline and that has long been acquired as a rock-solid matter of fact. The picture just described captures this aspect with inspired creativity but sits at the extremity – and not even at the farthest end – of a chain of transmission that reaches back to the Classical Antiquity. So, while it is easily recognised that animals are a recurrent presence in the mythical, symbolical, and ritual constructions of ancient societies, providing an effective medium to read and establish connections between the human and the divine worlds, ancient Egypt stands out inasmuch as there the association animal-god produces very distinctive and substantial configurations. It actually concerns, to use the well-known distinction posed by Philippe Derchain, both levels of *réel* and *imaginaire*,⁷ meaning that such a ‘animalité des dieux’⁸ affects and permeates the religious practice as much as the creation of a sophisticated imagery.

In Egyptology, however, while the visual, emblematic, and symbolic value of animals in the characterisation of the figure and role of divine beings represents a well-established focus of study, ‘animal worship’ or ‘die Verehrung des Tieres als Gottes’, according to the influential definition of Sigfried Morenz,⁹ reveals major shortcomings in terms of methodological approach and historical understanding. Traditionally, discussion proceeds from the perspective of Classical literary narratives or focuses on cases and contexts from the best represented Late Period of Egyptian history. Earlier periods are rarely taken into consideration and theoretical issues are not properly addressed, thus reinforcing the perception of the phenomenon as a late eccentric aspect of the great pharaonic civilisation. In the following analysis, it will be shown that, in what can be labelled as the ‘Standard Model’ of Egyptological interpretation (*infra*), the commanding influence of the Classical and Biblical tradition and the prevailing textual/discursive orientation of research outline and underpin an interpretive strategy that pushes ‘animal worship’ at the margin (*Grenzgebiet*) of the general reconstruction of the ancient Egyptian religion, where it can only be brought in a *latere*, as a symbolic, metaphoric reference (zoomorphism; animal iconicity) to the higher nature of the gods, and as a mark of religious decline (mass animal burials) in the final stage of Egyptian civilisation.

1.2 Thesis, goals, and limitations of the present study

The present study investigates forms and configurations of so-called Egyptian ‘animal worship’ from the Early Dynastic to the New Kingdom (3rd-2nd millennia BC), using the material reviewed from these periods to test and substantiate a theoretical and historiographic model that challenges traditional understanding, reassess the terms of discussion and data analysis, and prospects an alternative line of historical-religious interpretation. The core idea is that ‘animal worship’ should no longer be viewed, simplistically, as a late phenomenon, marking the end of the pharaonic religious tradition at the time of its (alleged) decline – though, of course, it becomes a distinctive phenomenon of Egyptian religion of Late and Graeco-Roman periods. Rather, it must be positively and explicitly reconfigured as a complex and historically articulated domain of religious practice, with a wider range of expressions and a broader chronological scope than usually acknowledged.¹⁰ To this end, earlier attestations will be first surveyed and discussed, and then interpreted as referring to larger historical patterns of cultural-religious activity.

The driving intention of the research is to theorise Egyptian ‘animal worship’, an endeavour that is here intended as concerned with the definition of a theoretical approach which, drawing on

⁶ Fitzenreiter 2003a:1.

⁷ Derchain 1981: 325.

⁸ Meeks 1986: 171

⁹ Morenz 1962a: 896.

¹⁰ Colonna 2014a; 2017; 2018.

multiple perspectives and concepts (from History of religions, Anthropology, and Egyptology itself), aims at problematising the subject, and so at reconceptualising the scholarly discourse around it. In brief, this work will design an interpretive (etic) framework within which relevant evidence can be analysed and related to a broader context of religious action and display, and to specific issues of categorisation and historical development, while ancient Egyptian views and attitudes can be assessed against this background to provide it with emic content and meaning. The model will address three main goals that can be summarised as follows:

1. Conceptualisation, which is concerned with (a) the reassessment of the notion of ‘animal worship’ as an effective analytic category, reviewing the history of its formation and use in Egyptology, and identifying practice as a focal point in interpretation; (b) the reappraisal of the critical question about the religious status of the engaged animal agencies, exploring modern classifications and ancient terminology. By contextualising patterns of use of Egyptian predications, and focusing on the strategical manipulation of those animals – what is done to/with them – ritual action is brought at the foreground as a salient defining factor of animals’ sacredness, and accordingly a suitable formal categorisation is established.
2. Periodisation, which focuses on modelling patterns and gaps in the distribution of textual and material sources documenting practices of ‘animal worship’ in order to identify significant configurations that can be (a) discussed synchronically, to expand our understanding of the contexts of practical construction of a meaningful animal presence and of its integration within contemporary society, and (b) arranged diachronically, to chart major continuities and changes over the course of time.
3. Historical interpretation, which has to do with the replacement of traditional linear narratives, too often biased by theological/teleological perspectives, with a historiographic scenario that (a) matches the current situation of our evidence, not ignoring its sparse character and uneven distribution but prospecting a plausible articulated picture for explaining that situation, and (b) relocates ‘animal worship’ as practice within the frame of Egyptian religious tradition and system of decorum.

Overall, the study is designed as a research that operates at the macro-level. It is not much concerned with the analysis of specific case studies (individual animal figures or archaeological context) as with proposing a perspective of synthesis that is both conceptual and historical. It argues that practices of ‘animal worship’ can be posited for earlier times, though focus may be different from later periods. Moreover, the evidence appears fragmentary and less clear than it is for later periods and tends to be underrated in scholarship. Accordingly, the work will proceed at a survey of pertinent early material as well as at the construction of a framework within which that material can be evaluated, contrasted, and combined with later evidence into a meaningful reconstruction. Such a reconstruction however is not intended as a univocal description, even less as a full narrative, but rather as an attempt to represent (by formulating hypotheses and modelling the primary sources) an admittedly complex documentary situation, and to restore both religious and historical articulation to a wide arena of practice that was evidently addressed and variously integrated within ancient Egyptian society.

While acknowledging the diachronic character of ‘animal worship’, the chronological focus of the study has been restricted to the periods from the Early Dynastic to the New Kingdom. This restriction, which excludes from the surveyed material both some poorly attested predynastic contexts and the better-known configurations of the Late and Graeco-Roman times, is motivated by practical and methodological reasons. First of all, a full examination of such a vast amount of evidence does not fit the structure and overall intention of the work, as its review would have required a different approach and, most importantly, a coral effort. Secondly, these periods have been (and still are) made the object of detailed studies that provide in-depth insights and valuable discussions. For the Predynastic, the research of Diane Flores on relevant sites with animal burials has reassessed their cultural-religious significance, questioning the traditional assumption that

they attest ‘a cult of sacred animals or of divine powers in animal forms’.¹¹ On the other hand, animal cults during the Late and Graeco-Roman periods represent an established and prolific field of research, with important works of synthesis that have been produced.¹² This set of information, therefore, will be more easily referred to and variously brought into discussion, without needing any preliminary presentation. Instead, and that is the final point, ‘animal worship’ is not usually integrated within the reconstructed religious scenario of the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC, despite some positive attestations are generally admitted in this regard (e.g., the range of bull figures and cults). The paucity of evidence is usually taken at face value and quickly explained by assuming a linear development according to which archaic forms of religiosity became gradually superseded by higher beliefs and kept at the margin of official religion. Here, it is suggested that the distribution is meaningful and that the apparent gap can be differently interpreted, suggesting a more fitting context for both early evidence and the practices they refer to. The alternative proposed will be developed in the following analysis. It will reveal, to a certain extent, a hypothetical character, yet it has the crucial advantage of not considering the available hints as isolated and disconnected from the living society. Rather, as John Baines aptly remarks, ‘hypotheses provide the context for detailed research’ and ‘[o]dd hints of religious practice may help to illuminate gaps in knowledge and to formulate more general models of the context into which such evidence can be fitted’.¹³

1.3 History of research and *status quaestionis*

Outlining a history of past scholarship on ‘animal worship’ is not an easy task because, as it has become clear from the foregoing considerations, it has to do with an aspect that is deeply entangled with the cultural-historical process that shaped our Western perception of ancient Egypt, at least until the decipherment of hieroglyphs and the first successful archaeological enterprises of the new-born Egyptology did replace the ‘hot’ link of memory with the ‘cold’ rigour of modern scientific analysis. Jan Assmann has justly noted how Egypt had long ‘formed part of our own past’ but ‘[a]s the newly emergent science of Egyptology gradually discovered ancient Egypt, Egypt itself disappeared from the general culture of the West’.¹⁴

In both cases (Egypt as an object of memory and Egypt as an object of study), the Classical and Biblical texts represented the *fil rouge* that maintained the link with the culture of pharaonic Egypt, and defined the horizon – first of memory then of research – wherein that culture was retrieved and approached. In this perspective, the role of ‘animal worship’ as a recurrent thematic focus within the Classical and Biblical literary tradition, widely exploited for the construction of a rhetorical debate on identity and otherness, can hardly be ignored, at least for the long-lived consequences it generated.

1.3.1 *The memory-horizon: the role of literary tradition*

In the modern approach to ‘animal worship’, as well as to other aspects of the Egyptian culture, Classical sources have always granted Egyptology with a privileged point of view, though, of course, motivated by different interests and purposes. So, those earliest studies, which collected and commented upon Classical and Jewish/Christian texts as primary and valuable support to the understanding of the phenomenon, have been progressively overlapped and superseded by researches that are more concerned with evaluating how such a specific Egyptian religious element was received and perceived by contemporary Greek, Roman, Jewish and early Christian authors, impacting on the conception of Egypt as a whole during Classical and Late Antiquity.¹⁵

¹¹ Hornung 1982a: 101.

¹² The work of reference is of course Kessler 1989. A full dissertation on the topic also in Charron 1996a (summarised in Charron 1996b). For an informed overview, with a collection of major case studies, see Ikram 2005.

¹³ Baines 1987: 79.

¹⁴ Assmann 2006: 180, 188.

¹⁵ The standard work is Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984, which aims to ‘investigate the conception non-Egyptian had of this part of the Egyptian religion related to their view of Egypt in general’ (Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1855). The two authors especially focus on

From Herodotus (5th century BC) to Late Antique writers (3th-5th century AD), sacred animals are a regular *topos* in the contemporary discourses on the ancient Egyptian religion.¹⁶ As early as the renowned account of the *pater historiae*, those positive themes concurring to a characterisation of Egypt as a fabulous land (venerable antiquity; vast knowledge; great religiosity)¹⁷ are countered by ‘animal worship’ as a disturbing motive. The numerous and variegated explanations flourishing in ancient literature represent, in a way, the history of such background noise.

Modern scholarship usually concludes that, despite the enormous interest they raised, ‘[t]he complexity of Egyptian animal cults escaped the Greco-Roman critics’.¹⁸ On the other hand, the remark of Fitzenreiter – ‘die Beobachtungen der antiken Autoren, sofern sie sich auf primäre Quellen stützen (und davon ist in tatsächlich den meisten Fällen auszugehen), durchaus den Wert ethnographischer Primärquellen haben und daher äußerst hilfreich sind, um ein Bild der ägyptischen Religion und Religiosität zu gewinnen’ – invites us to a more balanced assessment of the informative value of these sources.¹⁹

Without dwelling on this, it suffices here to highlight two basic and complementary points for discussion. First of all, ancient Greek and Roman authors were more or less contemporaries of the phenomenon they described, and so had the chance to grasp (when they did not have direct experience) some of its vivid expressions (like mummies and burial practices) at the time of its largest proliferation (Late and Graeco-Roman periods).²⁰ Moreover, these first attempts to explain the sacrality of certain animals did not happen in a conceptual vacuum but confronted in some way with the Egyptian speculations. At least since the New Kingdom, the Egyptians themselves had developed a sophisticated interpretation that made use of specific forms of predication (*b3*, ‘manifestation’; *whm*, ‘herald’) to express the status of sacred animals and their relationship to the great gods (*infra*, Chap. 6). It appears that such notions, with all the possible limits of translation and understanding, found a correspondence with or even inspired certain approaches, like the symbolic explanation of Plutarch and other Neoplatonic authors.²¹

Secondly, one should not ignore that those authors were indeed outsiders and came from a very different cultural background, so their statements inevitably reflect the categories and beliefs of that context.²² In addition, being literary pieces, the opinions expressed in them were understandably conditioned by the expectations of their homeland’s audience, which of course shared the same values, or by specific ideological purposes. Thus, despite the undeniably positive data that Classical sources provide and the possibility of a confirmation from the Egyptian documentation (both textual and archaeological), the interpretations on ‘animal worship’ they promulgate are however more informative on the mentality and attitude of the Greek and Roman observers than on the actual significance of those practices for the Egyptian actors.

strategies of ‘conceptualisation’, intended as a group of ‘generalizations, stereotypes and conceptions to create a degree of order in our perception of reality’ (Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1856). Stereotypes ‘belong to an inherited set of cultural norms’ (*ibid.*) and ‘are not the product of purposive thinking, but (...) irrational and non-verifiable opinions which have been adopted by the group because of their tried practicability’ (Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1856). When applied to the interaction between different nations or cultural groups ‘it [conceptualisation] reaffirms a nation’s own identity as a culture by contrasting their conception about themselves with that about other peoples’ (Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1856).

¹⁶ Feder 2003: 159–65; Hopfner 1913; Pfeiffer 2008: 363–83; Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1852–2000. See also Colonna 2014.

¹⁷ Hdt. II, 2 (antiquity); II, 77, 160 (wisdom); II, 36, 65 (religious devotion).

¹⁸ Thompson 2001: 331. Similar considerations are expressed by Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984, 1997: ‘For it is very remarkable that the interest in Egyptian animal worship did not lead to a real understanding of this part of the Egyptian religion’.

¹⁹ Fitzenreiter 2003a: 9.

²⁰ Feder 2003: 159.

²¹ In Plut., *De Is. et Os.* 20 (359 B), 43 (368 C), for example, the Apis bull is described as ‘image of the soul of Osiris’ and ‘living image of Osiris’, with a meaningful use of the word *eidolon*. For discussion on Plutarch’s interpretation of ‘animal worship’, cf. Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1961–1965. They also consider that the opinion of Porphyry on sacred animals as well as on the mixed form of the Egyptian gods (especially in *Porph., Abst.* IV, 9) ‘comes closest to the essence of Egyptian animal worship’; Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1961–1965.

²² A major difference, in this regard, seems to concern the general understanding of the animal realm and of the man-animal relationship. The Egyptian Weltanschauung regard that relationship in terms of Partnerschaft (Hornung 1967: 71; see also Dunand and Zivie-Coche 2002: 19; Te Velde 1980: 77–78; Wiedemann 1889: 311). Conversely, the Classical, Jewish, and Christian world shows, with obvious nuances, a more apparent anthropocentric perspective and a more explicit subordination of the animal to the man; cf. Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1858–1860.

Overall, the appreciation of the Egyptian ‘animal worship’ in the ancient world remained imbued of a fundamental criticism toward the religious practice as barbaric and despicable, while its use as a literary *topos* was part of a wider discourse that, in the framework of the developments brought by Hellenism and early Christianity, aimed at establishing hierarchical distinctions (‘Us’ versus ‘Them’) between the engaged parties. Even with the more favourable position of Plutarch, and others with him, ‘animal worship’ continued to represent an ambiguous and disconcerting phenomenon, which could only become tolerable and understandable for a Greek or Roman public when interpreted symbolically. As Klaas Smelik and Emily Hemelrijk put it ‘Plutarch makes it clear that he cannot accept animal worship as such and that his interpretation of it is only an effort to present what was in fact unacceptable to himself and to his public, in such a way that it may be valued’.²³

A full exploitation of ‘animal worship’ as an *argumentum* or *exemplum* within a general thematisation of Egypt as ‘the Other’ recurs abundantly in Latin literature. Cicero, for example, ironically contrasted the ludicrous practice of venerating animal *portenta* with the traditional image of Egyptian wisdom or criticised the Egyptians’ *dementia* (‘foolishness’) within a philosophical discussion designed for a systematic refutation of the religious mores of his contemporary society.²⁴ Such *portenta* were likewise mercilessly mocked by Juvenal in his satire,²⁵ while *monstra* were evoked by Virgil to celebrate the victory of Octavian over Cleopatra and Marck Antony at Actium.²⁶ In all these instances, the presentation of the phenomenon became instrumental to the political propaganda (Virgil) and especially to the moral criticism of present society (Cicero; Juvenal).²⁷ The polemics against the typically Egyptian ‘animal worship’ as a manifest sign of moral and cultural inferiority of that barbaric civilisation served then as a yardstick for measuring the current religious degeneration. In brief, the genuine historical quality of the phenomenon disappeared before its ideological projection as a value category.

The Jewish and early Christian literature pushed this line of interpretation to its furthest consequences. In the works of these authors, whose intellectual efforts were essentially focused on the polarisation between the true monotheism and the false ‘pagan’ polytheisms, the severe criticism against the practice of ‘animal worship’ turned into an unreserved condemnation of what was then seen not just as the lowest form of idolatry but as a true offence against the majesty of the sole god and his laws. In this perspective, the foolish Egyptians were doubly guilty, as they combined the veneration of hollow idols with that of irrational creatures.

At the end of this admittedly quick overview, one can draw three main conclusive remarks. First, ancient interpretations show an irreducible opposition between symbolic conceptualisation (positively evaluated) and ritual practice (disdainfully rejected). While ambiguity remains in the process of thematisation of Egyptian ‘otherness’, the balance usually shifts toward the negative end of the spectrum: ‘When interpreted symbolically it can be included in the conception of Egypt as the source of all wisdom. But it does fit better into the conception of Egyptian barbarism and stupidity: ridiculous Egyptians adoring animals as divine beings’.²⁸

Second, such a dichotomy, which Martin Fitzenreiter aptly formulates in terms of ‘Weisheit beim symbolischen Zugang vs Primitivität beim kultischen Zugang’,²⁹ establishes the broad intellectual framework that still (more or less explicitly) underpins much of modern interpretive strategies, lying at the core of that paradoxical situation noted above: ‘animal worship’ appears as a distinctive

²³ Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1961.

²⁴ Cic., *Nat. D.* I 16, 43; I 36, 101; III 19, 47. In general, on Cicero’s rhetorical use of the them ‘animal worship’, see Pfeiffer 2008, 372; Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1955–1957.

²⁵ Juv., *Sat.* 15. 1–2. Feder 2003, 163; Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1965–1967.

²⁶ Virg., *Aen.* VIII 698–700. Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 1853–1855.

²⁷ Pfeiffer 2008: 377–378 notes how this argument was wisely exploited in the Augustan propaganda to turn a political fight into a ‘clash of civilizations’.

²⁸ Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984: 2000.

²⁹ Fitzenreiter 2003b: 256.

product of Egyptian religion but only marginal to its full understanding when compared to other, allegedly more developed aspects (like theology and discourses about the higher gods).

Finally, besides any moral preconception or ideological bias, the narratives of the ancient authors should nonetheless be properly contextualised and related not just to the cultural *milieu* wherein they were produced but also to the historical setting framing the facts they described, namely Late and Graeco-Roman Egypt, meaning that they cannot be so easily projected backwards onto earlier periods and configurations. This is a crucial point that has important methodological implications, as it will be made clear in the following discussion.

1.3.2 *The research-horizon: problems and perspectives*

The beginning of modern scholarship on ‘animal worship’ can be established quite accurately, though symbolically, as it coincides with the greatly publicised discovery of the Serapeum of Saqqara by Auguste Mariette in November 1851.³⁰ Symbolically because, as stated above, the literary tradition served as the principal (but not only) channel³¹ through which memory of the phenomenon was kept alive in the European mind to the extent that it was a piece of this substantial tradition, in the form of a well-known passage of the Greek geographer Strabo,³² that encouraged the Frenchman to start investigations in North Saqqara.³³

Since then, a number of studies have focused on the topic, though the quick development of the discipline around some major themes and privileged areas of interest have assigned ‘animal worship’ a more and more peripheral position both in the general reconstruction of the Egyptian religion and as a specific field of enquiry. In an attempt to outline a periodisation of the research history on this theme, one might roughly identify three major moments, which also help illustrate what orientations, perspectives, and cultural patterns have gradually shaped the current Egyptological notion of ‘animal worship’.

A first phase, from the end of the 19th to the mid-20th century, developed in keeping with the earliest efforts to systematically collect and arrange the facts and forms of the Egyptian religion, as they re-emerged from the original documentation, and to set them against both the information coming from the Classical tradition and the models defined by the contemporary evolutionary and positivist theories. Within that intellectual framework operated Alfred Wiedemann and his followers Theodor Hopfner and Hans Zimmermann: the former proposed the first Egyptological dissertation on the phenomenon,³⁴ the latter two produced a meticulous review of all the pertinent literary references.³⁵ Combining the use of the Classical sources with ethnological concepts and ideas of his time (migrationism; totemism; fetishism), Wiedemann’s model established that: (1) ‘animal worship’ is a typical feature of primitive religions but in the case of Egypt it remained popular until the very end of its civilisation; (2) a basic distinction occurred between the two categories of the *Inkorporationstier* or *Tempeltier* and *sakrosante Tiere*, of which he found correspondence in the passage of Strabo mentioning *theói* and *ierói* animals;³⁶ (3) the association between animals and high anthropomorphic gods is an artificial construction resulting from the shift of a conquering eastern group over an older ethnic substratum, with related overlapping of religious ideas. No deep relationship there was therefore between them, as the case of the Apis bull and the god Ptah

³⁰ Actually, work started in November 1850, but 12 November 1851 is the date of the discovery of the entrance of the so-called ‘Greater Vaults’, i.e., a section of the underground burial system excavated for the Apis bull (see *infra* § 5.1).

³¹ The other on was represented by the thousands of animal mummies looted and variously reused as souvenirs for tourists, fuel for engines, fertiliser in agriculture, and remedy in traditional medicine. See Ikram 2005: 1.

³² Strabo, *Geog.* XVII 1, 32.

³³ The basic account of the discovery is that of Mariette himself (1856; 1882). Today however it is known that he was not the first person to enter the monumental galleries of the Serapeum nor the first scholar to correctly suggest its localisation, though he was certainly the first to undertake a systematic exploration of the site. Dodson 2000; Lauer 1961; Malek 1983; Marković 2015.

³⁴ Wiedemann 1889; 1905; 1912.

³⁵ Hopfner 1913; Zimmermann 1912.

³⁶ Strabo, *Geog.* XVII 1, 22. A third class of *Fetischtiere* kept in houses for private cult was also postulated.

would show, but the ancient animal-gods was reinterpreted as the incarnation-specimens of the new anthropomorphic deities, while the *sakrosante Tiere* were venerated as conspecifics of the single temple-individual.

While Wiedemann's interpretation remained influential in its fundamental distinction of the two classes of sacred animals, other general works more strongly reinforced the view of 'animal worship' as a discrete unit within a linear development. It is especially in the work of Gustave Jequier that the animistic and evolutionary ideas promoted by Edward B. Tylor found their best Egyptological formulation.³⁷ Set in a general framework in which religious and social forms match each other according to a precise tripartite scheme (fetishism/nomadism; zoolatry/sedentism; anthropomorphism/urbanism), 'animal worship' is reduced to a necessary and temporary stage toward the mature polytheism of urban complex societies, only surviving in full historical times as a secondary and socially peripheral fact.

A differently articulated ethnographic perspective on the topic can be recognised in two seminal studies on the Egyptian religion which, though proceeding from different theoretical and methodological bases, refuted and challenged an overall evolutionary understanding. Herman Kees' *Götterglaube im Alten Ägypten*³⁸ produced a valuable accumulation of religious material and a lucid exposition which, following the trend of studies inaugurated by Adolf Erman in Germany,³⁹ avoided the systematisations of animism and totemism and only trusted the first-hand data provided by the Egyptian textual and visual sources. The result was a 'positivist concentration on the "concrete" (das "Tatsächliche")', on the immediate facts of Egyptian beliefs',⁴⁰ with a detailed geographical presentation of all main aspects characterising local cults (animals, plants, cultic items, and full anthropomorphic deities).⁴¹ This approach (*Kulttopographie*) removed 'animal worship' from the isolation it was placed in by evolutionary interpretation and made it into a part of a wider religious panorama, which gained its meaning from its deep connection with a precise locality. Likewise, Eberhard Otto focused on bull cults trying to explain their original role as a manifestation of local powers related to ideas of fertility and supremacy and fixed to individual cult places.⁴²

On the other hand, Henri Frankfort took on a strong anthropological orientation and was greatly influenced by the phenomenology of religions. He contended that Kees and his followers assumed 'a scientist's rather than a scholar's attitude' that brought them to 'deny – explicitly or by implication – that one can speak of Egyptian religion as such'.⁴³ Instead, he intended to discover the 'unity in the domain of the spirit' behind the variety of temporal and geographical expressions, and look for 'those trends and qualities that seem to have shaped the character of Egyptian religion as a whole', concluding that '[b]efore tracing the history we should establish the identity of Egyptian religion'.⁴⁴

Departing from the modern logical thought, Frankfort claimed that the ancient Egyptian mythopoeic thought worked according to what he defined as 'multiplicity of approaches', thus admitting a combination of different viewpoints that were held simultaneously valid and not mutually exclusive.⁴⁵ The mechanism was especially productive in the conceptualisation of

³⁷ Jequier 1946: 14–25.

³⁸ Kees 1956 (1941).

³⁹ Erman's approach, programmatically outlined at the beginning of his exposition on the Egyptian religion (1907: viii), was very influential over the following generation of German Egyptologist: 'I considered it advisable to present this sketch of Egyptian Religion as it appears to an unprejudiced observer, who knows nothing of the theories of the modern science of religions; the reader will here find nothing of animism, or fetishism, of chthonic deities, nor yet of medicine men. The facts should first be established and without prejudice, before we attempt to fit them into a scientific system'.

⁴⁰ Hornung 1982: 24.

⁴¹ Kees 1956: 1–118.

⁴² Otto 1964 (1938), especially, pp. 1–11.

⁴³ Frankfort 1948a: vi.

⁴⁴ Frankfort 1948a: vii, viii.

⁴⁵ Frankfort 1948a: 3–4.

religious phenomena and divine agency, and animals played a central role in this regard. As a consequence, animal cults were not a marginal product nor the survival of a primitive stratum but an essential, structural aspect of Egyptian religion. Frankfort explained that ‘animals as such possessed religious significance for the Egyptians’, and, drawing on the phenomenological notion of the numinous as *ganz Andere* developed by Rudolph Otto,⁴⁶ identified the key reason behind this peculiar attitude in ‘a religious interpretation of the animals’ *otherness*.⁴⁷ The Egyptian mind would have recognised this otherness in the static mode of life of the animal world participating in the unchangeable fixed order of the whole cosmos, and accordingly interpreted it as a manifestation of their super-human, divine nature.⁴⁸

In his *Kingship and the God*, the scholar framed these ideas within a structural perspective, distinguishing three major domains of divine manifestation: the sun (as the power of creation), the earth (as the power of regeneration), and the cattle (as the power of procreation).⁴⁹ Expanding the latter point through ethnographic comparison with the African ‘cattle complex, the Dutch scholar gave an informed explanation for the outstanding importance of the bull cults in their connection with social institutions (kingship) and theological constructions.⁵⁰

Despite such valuable premises, marked by a severe rigour in the acquisition of data and by a fruitful collaboration with the anthropological and historical-religious studies, at the mid of the 20th century ‘animal worship’ was quickly set aside as a secondary, marginal phenomenon. Under the leading influence of evolutionism, and informed by a teleological perspective that sees religious development as a progressive route from simple animistic forms to the higher experience of transcendence in monotheistic religions, ‘animal worship’ was more easily understood as a primitive stage in Egyptian religion that only survived in historical times as a practice of lower social classes, and exploded in the Late Period as an indicator of cultural crisis. This line of interpretation is exemplarily illustrated by Hans Bonnet, whose entry ‘Tierkult’ in his *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte* summarises and represents the official Egyptological position, focusing on two crucial aspects: (1) the origins and development of the phenomenon and (2) the status of the animals involved.⁵¹ Concerning the historical dimension, he notes that theriomorphism ‘vermag doch nur dem primitiven Empfinden, aus dem sie erwachsen ist, zu genügen. Der Ägypter drängte jedenfalls früh über sie hinaus. Das zeigt die Vermenschlichung der Gottesbilder, die um die Wende zur geschichtlichen Zeit anhebt’: on the other hand, ‘[s]o vollzieht sich im Laufe des N.R. allmählich (...) eine Wendung zum T(ierkult), die der Zurückhaltung, die wir die offizielle Rel. üben sahen, zu widersprechen scheint. Sie ist in der Tat nicht von dieser ausgegangen (...) sie gründet im Glauben des Volkes. Dieser trägt ja immer eine starke Kraft des Beharrens in sich und bleibt gern Vorstellungen verhaftet, die einer Frühschicht angehören’.⁵²

As for the religious meaning of the so-called ‘sacred animals’, Bonnet identifies their difference with other cult objects in that ‘haben die heiligen Tiere den sonstigen Kultobjekten gegenüber doch einen eigenen Charakter. Sie tragen Leben und Empfindung in sich’. Yet, it is exactly their nature of living creatures that represents to him a degrading element because ‘[i]n Wirklichkeit ist die Reinheit der Gottesvorstellung gerade durch die Beseeltheit des Kultobjektes bedroht. Denn um ihretwillen kann sich dieses dem schlichten Frommen nur allzu leicht an die Stelle des Gottesbildes selbst schieben, so daß er nicht mehr diesen im Bild des Tieres, sondern das Tier selbst verehrt. Dieses Absinken in einen reinen, das Tier vergottenden T(ierkult) ist unvermeidlich und allen Zeiten zu eigen’.⁵³

⁴⁶ Otto 1917.

⁴⁷ Frankfort 1948a: 12-13.

⁴⁸ Frankfort 1948a: 13-14.

⁴⁹ Frankfort 1948b: 145-147.

⁵⁰ Frankfort 1948b: 162-168.

⁵¹ Bonnet 1952.

⁵² Bonnet 1952: 812, 816.

⁵³ Bonnet 1952: 813.

Overall, in the Egyptological perspective outlined by Bonnet, ‘animal worship’ came to be strictly revised and disregarded both historically, as a degeneration (*Entartung*) of traditional religion,⁵⁴ and socially, as a domain of popular religiosity that was excluded from official theology and naively confused the high divine agencies with their animal manifestations.⁵⁵

A major turn in the approach to the problem has been generated by the work of three German scholars, who have inaugurated a seminal interpretive strategy – one might call it the *Abbild-These* – that has greatly contributed to the modern understanding of ancient Egyptian religion. They are Siegfried Morenz, Erik Hornung, and Jan Assmann.

Siegfried Morenz set ‘animal worship’ against a wider discussion on the essence of Egyptian religion, which was still the core matter of contemporary Egyptological debate. He aimed to ‘see Egyptian religion as the faith of the Egyptian people’ and to grasp, behind the profusion of manifestations ‘man’s relationship with God’, observing ‘the historical tendency to transcendence in all their deities’. In this perspective, theologically motivated and still informed by evolutionary ideas of religious development as an unescapable movement toward a transcendent conception of the divine, ‘animal worship’ with its late peak became something that needed to be fully explained. Accordingly, if ‘animal worship’ (Tierkult) can be intuitively defined as ‘die Verehrung des Tieres als Gottheit’, he noted that ‘[w]o Gott Gestalt annimmt (...) legt sich daher Verkörperung im T.(ier) nahe, weil hier zugleich Gestalt und numinose Andersartigkeit gegeben sind’. The key notions of his argument are *Verkörperung* (‘incarnation’) and *Gestalt* (‘form’): it is the incarnation of the divine power that allows the relationship between man and god and, on the other hand, this embodiment only concerns the exterior form of a deity, not his/her essential nature, while the animal appearance only provides one amongst various possibilities. In this regard, Morenz is explicit in remarking that ‘es sich stets um eine Verehrung der Gottheit handelte, die im T.(ier), offenbar als der angemessen lebendigen und zugleich fremdartig-numinosen Form begegnet’. The animal form, just like a cult image, served as a representation, an effective sign referring to a distinct divine person that deserved full devotion, while theological expressions like *wHm* and *bA* articulated the relationship between the tangible animal and the invisible superior entity addressed. For Morenz, therefore, Egyptian ‘animal worship’ had to be properly understood as the adoration of a high god through a living medium: ‘die Ägypter haben nicht Bilder und Tiere, sondern Götter verehrt!’ is the position defended in a brief contribution and reaffirmed in his study on the transcendence. The German scholar established a semiotic approach to the phenomenon in which the distinction between the (animal) sign and the (divine) object that the former represents (in the double meaning of ‘being in place of’ and ‘making present’) allowed to reconcile it with his crucial idea of an irreducible historical tendency to transcendence.

Erik Hornung took over and expanded this line of interpretation. His influential synthesis on Egyptian religion (1983 [1971]) questioned earlier theologically-driven studies and focused on Egyptian gods as ‘necessary objects of an inquiry that does not ask about their existence, their essence, or their value, but about their appearance and their meaning for believers (...)’.⁵⁶ Image is the key to interpret the multiform world of the gods and their representations. In this perspective, zoomorphism, hybridism, and anthropomorphism are all different but complementary modes of illustrating and making visible the divine to mankind, though the mixed form emerged as the privileged type. Nonetheless, all such representations should not be interpreted as ‘illustrations or descriptions of appearances, but rather as allusions to essential parts of the nature and function of deities’, in brief as ‘pictorial signs that convey meaning in a metalanguage’.⁵⁷ A deity could be

⁵⁴ Bonnet 1952: 820-821: ‘So zieht das Aufblühen des T(ierkult) zugleich eine Entartung nach sich’.

⁵⁵ Bonnet 1952: 813, 816.

⁵⁶ Hornung 1983: 31.

⁵⁷ Hornung 1983: 114, 117. Cf Frankfort 1948a: 12.

present in any of these signs, whether animate or inanimate (animals, plants, objects), but his/her true essence remained hidden.⁵⁸

Like Morenz, Hornung explained the relationship between living animals and gods in the light of the New Kingdom/Late Period theology, according to which the former acted as the physical support and manifestation of the latter. Moreover, he distinguished the worship of a single specimen (like the Apis bull) from that of a whole species, for which one could properly speak of ‘animal cults’. He considered them in keeping with the typical Egyptian tendency to multiply visible images in order to make a god closer to and more accessible for the believers, noting however that as such ‘[a]nimal cults are therefore part of a popular piety, and (...) their logical extension, which was not put into practice before the late period, teaches us a misunderstanding rather than a genuine comprehension of the Egyptian conception of god. (...) For simple worshippers image and deity may merge, (...) but the theology of the priests always distinguishes carefully, in formulations that vary from period to period, between animal and deity’.⁵⁹ As a symbolic sign, the sacred animal participated in a sophisticated priestly discourse, but religious practice rested upon popular false impressions.

In a second brief essay specifically focused on the meaning of the animal form (1992 [1985]), Hornung insisted on the extensive exploitation of animals in Egyptian religion, both as living creatures and images, to inform about the nature and roles of the gods. The late ‘animal cults’ perfectly exemplify such a tendency, with whole species acting as intermediaries with the divine realms, especially through the widespread practice of mummification. The striking number of animal mummies has, for the scholar, the same value as the many votive bronzes of the time, since both were intended to materialise divine presence and proximity. In this perspective, animals showed an extraordinary religious intensity with a vast range of realisations: in the elaborate theological speculations, in the rich works of art, in the dramatic reality of the burials, they continuously referred to the higher sphere of the gods, thus expanding the possibilities to imagine and approach what they really are and do.

Finally, Jan Assmann has included some valuable comments on ‘animal worship’ in his general discussion on Egyptian religious thought and history. In a seminal study on theological discourse (2001 [1984]), drawing mainly on late textual sources, he built a polished *Theorie des Kultbildes* on the critical concept of ‘installation’ or ‘indwelling’ (*Einwohnung*).⁶⁰ The notion allows conceptualising that active, performative character of the divine presence within the local cultic dimension of the temple statue which the texts condensed in the idea of bA. Accordingly, ‘[t]he gods do not “dwell” on earth, which would merely be a condition; rather, they “install” themselves there, and specifically, they “install” themselves in their images: this is an event that occurs regularly and repeatedly, but with the collaboration of humankind, on whom the cult is dependent’.⁶¹ The distinction god/image, already outlined by Morenz, remains but, in the god’s ability to ‘indwell’ and take on a visible form, Assmann grasps the fundamental theological nexus the Egyptian texts established between the two poles: ‘[t]he statue is not the image of the deity’s body, but the body itself. It does not represent his form, but rather gives him form. The deity takes form in the statue, just as in a sacred animal or a natural phenomenon’.⁶²

Despite introducing the animal form, Assmann does not pursue this point further, but returns on it more diffusely in his monumental *Sinngeschichte* (2002 [1996]), which explores the net of semantic and mnemonic strategies through which the Egyptians organised and gave meaning to their past. In this perspective, the German scholar sees ‘animal worship’ as a long ‘secondary’ phenomenon of

⁵⁸ Hornung 1983: 124-125.

⁵⁹ Hornung 1983: 137.

⁶⁰ Assmann 2001: 40-47.

⁶¹ Assmann 2001: 43.

⁶² Assmann 2001: 46.