



Representation of Female Lute Players in the 18th Dynasty tombs and other Related-Objects

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ABSTRACT

Music was played an important role in ancient Egyptian society, and the lute was among the stringed instrument known in ancient Egypt like a harp and a lyre. Lute was introduced to Egypt during the new Kingdom, due to the Egyptian contacts with Asia and, played by men and women alike. Female lutenist was part of ancient Egyptian musician ensemble playing usually in banquets. This paper focuses on female lutenists as professional musicians especially in the tomb scenes during the 18th dynasty and other related objects. Moreover, the paper deals also with the scenes of female lutenists shown on banquets and represented in the marshes and drawing on ostraca. These lutenists were professional young girls, playing music and dance at the same time. They commonly appear in scenes as nude or nearly nude. This representation is an artistic motif preferred by the artist to portray female lutenists, and it had also its religious connotation that benefited the deceased by regenerating and rebirth him after death. The main objective of the paper is to highlight the female lute player as a professional musician and dancer in the tomb's scenes, fragmented stone blocks, ostraca, a votive bed, and carved unguent spoons. Besides, it is an attempt to explain their nudity comparing with other musicians in ancient Egypt with their artistic and religious connotations.

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1. Introduction

Music has always been played an important part in the lives of the Egyptians. In ancient times the wealthy had their own companies of musicians and dancers, and the less wealthy could hire independent troupes for special occasions (Scott, 1944). However, a great deal of Egyptian religious and secular celebration was marked by the performance of both music and dance (Shaw, and Nicholson, 2002). Secular music seems to have been in the hands of professionals, as no official is represented performing on a musical instrument.

(Murray, 1984). Meanwhile, musicians appear in the scenes of daily life, at the banquets and festivals, and in the palace, where music was thought to have the ability to please and appease the gods. Even Egyptian gods seemed to enjoy sharing human their fondness for music (Ayad, 2009). Gods and goddesses could function as musicians, such as Hathor, Ihy, Meret, Bes, and Beset who represented playing with musical instruments (Teeter, 1993; Emerit, 2013). On the other hand, the ancient Egyptians were known for various kinds of stringed musical instruments like

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harp, the lute and lyre, (David, 2003; Ruiz, 2000; Emerit, 2013). The lute was unknown to Egypt in the time of the Old and Middle Kingdoms, and it may have come to it during the Hyksos period (Bosse-Griffiths, 1980; Hayes, 1990; Bunson, 2012; Davied, 2003; Ruiz, 2001). Some scholars dated the introduction of the lute to Egypt during the 18th Dynasty when Syria came under the Egyptian influence, and the Egyptians were contacted with an exciting sort of music and its instruments (Scottie, 1973; Graves-Brown, 2014). The first appearance of the long-necked lute in Egypt was at that time and it was one of several imports from Asia, (Manniche, 2011; Scott, 1944). Many of the female musicians must have been brought back from Asia, as they were highly skilled and can sing and dance as they played. At the same time, Egyptian musicians must have been professional as well (Scott, 1944). Therefore, in the tomb of Ay at El-Amarna, an older woman was shown in the harem of the foreigners inside the royal palace, instructing two younger girls to play a duet on the lyre and lute (Davies, 1908: pl. XXVIII).

During the New Kingdom changes in social habits are evident from the tomb scenes. Entertainment became more advanced with musicians playing several instruments accompanied by the young dancers (Kanawati, 1999; Manniche, 19881). In that period, dancers and musicians are always portrayed together and often dancers are shown playing instruments as they dance like the lute player. An example can be seen in the tomb of Nakht (Kinney, 2000). Generally, tomb scenes show the owner and his wife watching the performances where their guests are entertained by musicians and female dancers (David, 2003)

2. Literature review

The lute was an important stringed instrument during the New Kingdom; therefore, previous studies treated the lute in its technical and artistic side while some studies focused on a specific lute as a musical instrument found in the tombs of 18th dynasty, or portrayed on the tomb's scenes, like the lute-player in the tomb of Rekhmira (Manniche, 2011). Another study on a ring bezel fragment shows a girl playing the lute (Graves-Brown, 2014). The unusual depiction of a lutenist in Rekhmire's Tomb scene was discussed by Krejčí, and Zamarovský (2010) Furthermore, there was a study of two lute player of the Amarna era

by Bosse-Griffiths (1980), and a technical study of the lute as a musical instrument held by Hickmann (1949 and 1953). Another study by Teeter (1993) which concentrate on female musicians in ancient Egypt

2.1. Female Musicians

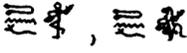
The number of musicians' titles is more difficult to establish because some of them the translation is even uncertain whether they are musicians (Emerit, 2013: 8). The ancient Egyptians had many expressions about music, singing and, dancing for males or females. Sometimes one word refers to a

different meaning, such as  *smc*,  *smcw*,  *smcyt*, Musician, (Gardiner, 2007: 594; Faulkner, 1964: 266; Erman, & Grapow, 1971b: 479), it could mean also the singers and musicians (Budge, 1920b:741: Hanning, 2000: 873; Ward, 1986: 22), likewise  *hsyw*, means singers and musicians (Erman, & Grapow, 1971a:165; Budge, 1920a: 509; Hanning, 2000:1085). Moreover, the three-lute players accompanying the Opet procession from Luxor to Karnak are described according to

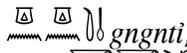
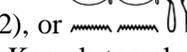
the text as *hsyw*  (The Epigraphic Survey, 1994: pl. 99). Here *hsw* is musicians playing the lute. *hsw* is a singer who clapping or playing an instrument like harp and lute (Emerit, 2013: 4, 8, fig. 7). Meanwhile, *hsw* and *smcw*, indicate musicians who can play several instruments and, sometimes, who can also dance. The titles *hsw(t)* and *smcw(t)*, are used for both males and females, with a different artistic role (Emerit, 2013: 8), and their functions are not specified (Manniche, 2010: 142).

The female lute musicians were represented generally with a bent knee, striking the ground with the tip of the foot as they are dancing while beating out a rhythm. Their stance, however, was similar to the ideogram that depicts after the new Kingdom, which supposed *tnf* as a lute-dancer (Meeks, 2001:258). On the other hand, Bes and Beset were depicted dancing while playing harp, lute, or

tambourine (Emerit, 2013: 7). The word  *tnf* means 'dance' (Lambert, 1925: 391), and it was mentioned in a text in the Karnak temple  *tnfyw gngnti* as 'dancing with playing lute' (Boraik, and Thiers, 2017: 64). It seems that (*tnf*) is specifically designated to the

lute-dancer, where the word referring to the lute included a determinative of a man and a donkey dancing separately with a lute , (Erman, & Grapow, 1971c: 380/11).

2.2. The Lute

The lute was a stringed instrument was known by the ancient Egyptian besides harp and lyre. It was played both by men and women in ensembles or alone (Sibylle, 2013: 3, Bleiberg, 2002: 48). The lute as a musical instrument once refers to it in the ancient Egyptian language as  *gngnti*, (Erman, & Grapow, 1971c: 177/12), or  which mentioned in a text in the Karnak temple.

Sometimes *gngnti* () refers to the female singers with a falcon-headed lute neck linked to the sound box. (Boraik, and Thiers, 2017:64-65). The ancient lute had a small oval-shaped body like a turtle shell or coconut, with a long thin neck and few strings. It is shown mainly in representations of female entertainers at banquets. (Peck, 2013:P. 186), and looks like the Egyptian guitar (Wilkinson, 1871: 125), or the Middle Eastern *oud* (Peck, 2013: 186). It is a well-known fact that lute-players played their instruments using a plectrum, not by strumming with the fingers alone (Manniche, 2011: 107). A well-preserved lute from the time of Tuthmosis III or Hatshepsut has been found at Deir El-Bahari in the tomb of Harmose (figure 1) and is now in the Egyptian Museum (JE 66248). The sound box of the long-necked lute is more or less elongated, carved in one piece, or made of tortoiseshell as that preserved in the British Museum, where the body of the shell is in good condition (figure 2). The sound box was covered with a membrane pierced by the neck and sometimes provided with sound holes. The neck is straight long and enters the sound box between the box and the membrane. The top part of the neck may be decorated with the head of a goose or duck. The strings, two or three of the gut, are attached separately. Usually, the color of the lute is red. It is played with a plectrum, suspended from the instrument. (Bosse-Griffiths, 1980: 73; Manniche, 1975: 70; Scott, 1944: 160-162; Wilkinson, 1871:124-125).

Another three-stringed lute of a somewhat more advanced type, in comparison with examples and representations of the mid-eighteenth Dynasty and later times. The soundbox now in the Metropolitan Museum (35 cm. in length), and made of fine,

ornately grained wood, reddish-brown in color, and has a smooth finish inside and out (Hayes, 1990: 24, fig.9). However, the performers usually stood as they played, and were considered equally suited to men or women. Sometimes the lutenists danced while they touched its strings, supporting it on the right arm (Wilkinson, 1871: 124). Holding the instrument on the forearm, crossing the breast of the player, which can be observed in various depictions, and keeping the lute in the crook of the arm (Garcia-Ventura, et al, 2018: 108). Because of its lightness, it became the ideal instrument for soloists, who could dance, play, and sing at the same time (Bosse-Griffiths, K., (1980: 72). Since the Egyptians were known a lute during the 18th dynasty, due to their influence on Syria, a suggested connection between the Syrian god of war, Reshep, and the lute can be seen in numerous stela dedicated to Reshep (figures. 3 and 4), dates to the 19th dynasty, where the lute appears as a 'symbol' at the back of the god who is shown as usual with a shield and a spear (Bosse-Griffiths, 1980:72), and she was represented more than once with a lute accompanied her (Cornelius, 1994: pls.1 RR2, pl.5 RR7).

2.3. Playing the lute in the banquets

The banquet scene is an attractive motif and a central feature of 18th dynasty tomb decoration, with the beautiful women nearly nude, servants, and musicians, and it shows the Egyptians in perfect style of life (Manniche, 1997: 29). Female musicians are relatively common, mostly among the personnel of private estates (Ward, 1986: 22). A frequent combination of musician bands was a trio consisting of the oboe, a long-necked lute, and a boat-shaped harp. The lutenist and oboe player are often shown moving their feet as if dancing, although the musicians must have remained in one place during their performance (Manniche, 1988: 194). Therefore, there was a reason for freedom of action and bodily pose, as with dancing girls and acrobats. The possession of perfect bodily form being especially desired in slaves and dancing girls, it may be that the artist omitted their thin robes for artistic reasons (Davies, 1917: 58, n. 1). Besides figures making music and dancing were an example of bodies turned for the Egyptian artists (Schäfer, 1974: 209). Musical instruments like the lute require a quiet activity of the fingers and allow freedom of movement to the hands so that the whole task is entrusted to the feet and spine. In the

New kingdom, the women dancers accompanied themselves most frequently on the lute (Lexová, 2012: 44). Sometimes, the lutenist and the young dancer are nearly nude except for a broad beaded collar, bracelets and armllets, and a girdle slung around their waists. Behind them, the rest of the musicians wears the popular New Kingdom flowing dress made of nearly transparent fabric or the traditional form-fitting sheath. (Teeter, 1993: 83).

A traditional musician scene from the tomb of Rekhmire at Luxor (TT 100) (Roehrig, 2002: fig. 45; Vireym, 1889: 162, Pl. XLII; Davies, 1943: Pl. LXVI), shows a group of female musicians. The band consists of a harp player, a lutenist, and a frame drum player (figure 5). The grab of the lutenist does not differ from the dress of the other musicians (Teeter, 1993: 83-84). Another scene from the same tomb shows a lutenist in a similar dress playing music. The lute instrument rested on the ground like a cello, maybe a different and heavier one than the ordinary lute, which is held across the breast (Davies, 1943: 62). Although the young girl is standing, one cannot recognize whether she is also singing, because her face is hidden by hair. Krejčí, and Zamarovský suggested that she is playing the lute with a bow, as her body is moderately bent forward, holding the instrument in her left hand. (Krejčí, and Zamarovský, 2010: 62). On the other hand, Manniche refuted this opinion because there is no tangible evidence to support it (Manniche, 2011: 109). The lutenist here playing on a heavy wooden lute (figure 6), grasping the neck of the lute by her left hand, while her right hand is reached below to strum the cord (Manniche, 2011: 107).

Moreover, a scene found on a stone block from the 18th Dynasty tomb belonging to Nebamun (TT. 146), now in the British Museum. It represented female lutenists seated in a banquet as part of a musical ensemble. The relief shows four musicians seated on the ground to provide entertainment for the guests (figure 7). The female musicians wear earrings, broad collars, bracelets, armllets, and finger rings, and it seems they wear a long-pleated gown. Two of them playing the lute (British Museum no. EA37986; Hickmann, 1953: 177, fig. 9). Some of the British museum ensembles were depicted in full facial view, that pose usually characterized the musicians and dancers (Tassie, 2008: 62).

Three female musicians performing at a feast in the home of the scribe Nakht in the 18th Dynasty tomb (TT 52) at Luxor. A double flute, a standing harp player, and the third is a lutenist (Wilkinson and Hill, 1983: fig. 52; Peck, 2013: 184). Two of them are clothed exactly like the guests, except that an additional bracelet is worn loosely on the forearm (figure 8). The nude lutenist is centered between a long, straight-falling garments girl, on either side of the dancer. The player on the lute is represented as a young dancer girl unclothed save for a scanty belt of beads characteristic of a professional dancer. The twist of her body at the waist is natural and accords with the moving position of the legs and feet. The strings were touched by a plectrum which is attached to the lute by a string (Davies, 1917: 58, pl. XV; Shedid and Seidel, 1991: 52; Mekhitarian, 1954: 34 fig. 33; Aldred, 1951: 65, fig. 73). Another female ensemble of musicians with harp, lute double pipe, and lyre represented in the tomb of Djoserkaraseneb (TT 38) at Luxor which dates back to the 18th Dynasty (Wilkinson and Hill, 1983: fig. 30.9.4; Scott, 1944: fig. 34; Davies and Gardiner, 1965: Pl. XXXVII). The lutenist who was part of the female band moves as she plays, her lute is adorned with tassels and shows the sound-holes (figure 9). She is nude except for her ornaments, which would be an adolescent woman, by comparison with the child beside her (Davies, and Gardiner, 1966: 77). This is the best illustration of the typical New Kingdom representations of female ensemble musicians at a banquet, because of a wider variety of instruments portrayed, and the representation of active women. The lutenist raises her foot as she lifts her head to sing. Also, the ensemble has been joined by a young dancer who performs amid the musician (Teeter, 1993: 82).

A lutenist with a transparent long gown shown in the 18th Dynasty tomb of Qen-Amun at Luxor (TT 93), she was shown while playing the lute. This scene was most carefully painted by the ancient artist, and the colors show the dark wood of the lute's neck, the lighter bridge, the leather soundboard, and three strings and their lashings, ending in ornamental tassels (Davies, 1930: pl. X; Scott, 1944: 163). Details of the girl's hair are rendered with care. Noteworthy is the degree of freedom with which Egyptian artists drew minor figures of a scene, creating more realistic representations than with major characters (figure 10) (Raven, and Kaper, 2000: fig. 124;

Hickmann,1953: fig. 6). furthermore, three girls were illustrated in the 18th Dynasty tomb of Nebamun (TT 90) at Luxor, one of them plays the harp while the two lutenists accompanying the rhythm by dancing (figure 11). Another scene from the same tomb shows a male lute player accompanied by a female lutenist, who was seen also dancing to the music (Davies, 1923: 27, 29, Pls. XXIII, XXI). Similarly, in the 18th Dynasty tomb of Amenhotep Sise (TT 75) a nearly nude lutenist provides music and dancing to the guest (figure 12), as part of female musicians (Davies, 1923:7, V).

An ensemble of female musicians entertaining Kha and his wife in his tomb (TT8) at Deir el-Medinah. This scene dates back to the late 18th Dynasty and consists of a harpist and a lute player. On the rhythm of both, a dancer performing between them (D'Abbadie, 1839: pls. IV, XVI), likewise, in the 18th dynasty tomb of Haremhab (TT 78), two female musicians are playing the lute and can be seen in the frontal position (figure 13). Behind the musician on the left is a dancer who bends far down and was performed in profile (Lirscher, 2013: 4, fig. 225). The two female players wear transparent dresses similar to the ensemble in the tomb of Ka. The dress is yellow to the waist and white to the ground. Through its transparency, one can see the bent knees of the musicians, and the detail of the body lines, which indicate the whole body participates in the action (Robins, 1998:183). In addition, fragments of a wall painting from a tomb chapel to an unknown person now in the Museo Egizio-Italy dates back to the 18th Dynasty (figure 14). The relief was part of a banquet scene showing female entertainers playing the lute and the harp, and a young naked dancer between them (Manniche, 1989b: fig. 95: Museo Egizio: no. S1341 - S.1344). The lute player lifts her head up as if to sing similar to the young lutenist in the tomb of Djoserkaraseneb comparing to the redrawing figure of the lutenist (Manniche, 1989b: fig. 95). In the tomb of Thotnefer (TT80) at Luxor which dated back to the 18th Dynasty, a scene shows a female playing lute while dancing, she wears a long transparent dress revealing the whole-body lines (figure 15) (Hickmann, 1953:172, fig.8 Manniche,1989a: fig.2). Similarly, a nude female lutenist represented on a bas-relief at the Egyptian Museum (no. 2266) (figure 16), plays the lute in an odd position, where she holds the soundbox upon his shoulder and the tip of the long neck towards

the ground (Bruyère, 1937: fig. 66; Schäfer, 1974: fig. 217a).

Moreover, In the 18th dynasty tomb of Meryre II at El-Amarna (no. 4), two of the female musicians of the harem are playing the lute (Davies, 1905a: 36, pl. XXXII), while the court band in the 18th Dynasty tomb of Huya (no. 1) at El-Amarna, consists of four female performers, a harpist, two players on the lute, and one on the lyre. They are standing as if they are waiting to perform. Another scene shows the musicians as if they are practicing in the palace. (Davies,1905b: 6 pl. VII. XXXIII). Each great house, whether royal or private, seemed to possess a band of female musicians. The female musicians illustrated in the palace of Harem in the tomb of Ay (no. 25) at El-Amarna, are all busily engaged in the practice of music and dancing, while walls are hung with musical instruments (fig. 17) (Davies, 1908: 20-21, pl. XXVIII). Moreover, a painted limestone relief (No.1985.328.12), in the reign of Akhenaten at El-Amarna now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (figure 18), shows a band of five female musicians. The varied hand positions of the musicians give an illusion of movement, although the strumming motions of the two lute players would be impossible to achieve. The second woman is not playing a stringed instrument and has been described as a singer (Ancient Art: 1992: 28, 29; Aldred, 1990: 163).

Lute player performance as shown in table (1) contains thirteen scenes of tombs, which indicates that the lutenist represented in the tombs usually stood as they played while holding the lute across the breast and supported it with their left hands. Accordingly, twelve figures out of a total of thirteen were represented standing. Meanwhile, eight figures of them were movable. Thus, most of the lutenists depicted dancing to the rhythm as they are more animated and vitality than others. The face direction as represented in table (2) shows the face of the player differs from one scene to another. Sometimes the lutenist's face is paralleled with the lute direction, or opposite to it. Ten figures of lutenists turned their faces opposite to the lute direction, and six scenes were represented their faces parallel to the lute. Three scenes out of the thirteen tombs are showing two lutenists playing together in the same scene. So, when the two lutenists playing together, each one has turned her face against the other, at the same time, the neck of the two lutes is pointed towards one direction.

Table 1

Lute player performance in the tombs

tombs	status of the body		Position of legs & feet		Lute direction	
	stand	seated	movable	immovable	Parallel to face	Opposite to face
Rekhmire (TT100)	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓
Nebamun (TT146)	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓
Nakht (TT 52)	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
Djesrkarasenb (TT38)	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
Qenamun (TT 93)	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-
Nebamun (TT90)	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓
Amenhotep Sise (TT 75)	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
Kha (TT 8)	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
Haremhab (TT 78)	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓
Thotnefer (TT80)	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-
Meryre (no. 4)	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-
Huya (no. 1)	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
Ay (no. 25)	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
Total	13	12	2	8	3	10

Table 2:

Examples of figures illustrate lute direction

Lute direction		
Unparallel position to face	Parallel position to face	Same direction with opposite faces
		
Tomb of Nakht Schäfer, 1974: fig. 217a	Tomb Qen-Amun Hickmann, 1953: fig. 6	Tomb of Nebamun Davies, 1923: Pl. XXIII

2.4 Playing the lute in the marshes

One of Akhenaten's daughters depicted on limestone relief from Tell el-Amarna dates back to the late 18th dynasty (figure 19). The lutenist was shown playing the lute in the Nile marshes. The finger of the princess's right hand strums the chords, while the fingers of her left hand press down on the lute strings (Brooklyn Museum no. 60.197.9). This relief shows that sometimes the king's daughters themselves were lutenists (Graves-Brown, 2014: 116) where, female members of the royal family are shown as musical leaders (Roberts, 1997: 157; Ward, 1986: 76). A

similar example of a female musician in the marsh can also be found upon a New Kingdom faience bowl from the Leiden Museum (Brooker, 2009: 97). The interior of this bowl is decorated with a nearly naked young woman, seated on a soft cushion, with a perfume cone on her head, and she is playing on a long-necked lute. The terminal of the lute end in the duck's head. Above are grape vines supported at each end by lotus columns. Over each of her two arms is draped a lotus as well. Her naked body was adorned with a thin girdle, a necklace, and yet another flower in her hair. A figure of the god Bes is tattooed on her right thigh. Behind her, a pet monkey seems to call for her

attention (figure 20). The subject of the seductive musician indicates that this bowl was meant for use at a banquet or similar entertainment (Peck, 1978: 56, pl. XV, Robins, 1998: fig.83). In Egyptian art, female lute players are often displayed in a sensual nature, showing as a nude or semi-nude, wearing heavy wigs and accompanied by monkeys or apes (Graves-Brown, 2010: 81, 108). Monkey often occurs in Egyptian scenes with sensual meaning (Roberts, 1977: 45 pl. 55; Houlihan, 19956: 108), moreover, The Egyptian word referring to lute (*tnf*)



included a determinative of an ape or monkey playing with lute (Erman, & Grapow, 1971c: 380/11). Playing the lute in front of papyrus reeds is an artistic motif that was well known already at the time of Amenhotep III, if not earlier. This is proved by scenes on unguent spoons carved in wood which show lute-playing soloists in front of papyrus reeds (figure 21). (Bosse-Griffiths, 1980: 78; Fechheimer, 1921: fig. 143; Houlihan, 1996: fig. 105). Another spoon now in the Petrie Collection of University College, London, shows a nude lutanist wearing only a long festive wig, earrings, and a hip-girdle, balancing herself in a small papyrus raft that is floating on the water (figure 22). She is surrounded by stalks of papyrus, the highest of which reaches her head. The stern and stem of the boat, as well as the terminal of the lute, end in duck's heads. The motif of ducks could have sensual connotations (Petrie, 1910: fig. 42; Bosse-Griffiths, 1980: 78, pl. 2/2; Fechheimer, 1921: fig. 141; Robins, 1998: fig. 81; Houlihan, 1996: fig. 105). The lute itself is sometimes said to have sensual connotations, partly because of its inclusion in the sexual scenes of the Turin Papyrus, and partly because of the duck-head motif frequently shown on the lute. Several depictions show lutes with handles ending in duck-head (Graves-Brown, 2014: 118-119). A reference to the sexual potential of the deceased in the afterlife and guaranteed him regeneration and rebirth. This duck inhabited the marshes, the essential place for creation and domain of the goddess Hathor (Bailleul-Lesuer, 2012: 75; Houlihan, 1996, fig. 105).

The baked clay votive beds include decoration depicted figures of nude women, sometimes shown frontally like fertility figurines, and sometimes seated in profile playing lute (Martwing, 2015: 135). Such as this decorated votive bed with a ritual scene of picking papyrus for Hathor (figure 23). The musician playing lute is seated in a boat, one

woman punts the boat through the marsh while another picks off papyrus. Shaken the papyrus looks like the sound of a sistrum. The imagery of the naked musician, and figures of Bes that flank the composition all refer to Hathor (Teeter & Johnson, 2009: 30). These female figures are combined with depictions of music-making, marsh plants, and other motifs that relate to Hathor, creation, and life, and express concern both with fertility and procreation in this life and with rebirth into the next, since many of these objects were found in burials where they must have been placed after their owner's death (Robins, 2015: 133; Martwing, 2015: 135).

Spoons were often decorated with carvings of nude young girls, similar to the female dancers and maidservants portrayed in banquet scenes (Kroeter, 2009: 54). The symbolism of many vignettes incorporates flexible dancing girls playing musical instruments and singing or gathering Hathor's sacred reeds in the marshes where the cow was roaming. As all music was sacred to Hathor, such performances were meant to entice the goddess to emerge from her hiding place and attend to the rebirth of the king and likewise his courtiers (Kozloff, 2015: 301). Besides, the marsh provides plenty of lotuses, a flower which was a major symbol of rebirth on account of the myth that the young sun god came forth from a lotus (Robins, 1998: 188).

2.5. Drawing lutenist in Ostraca

One of the most significant contributions of New Kingdom art is the style of images painted freely in watercolor on ostraca from Deir el-Medina, some of these ostraca are related to female musicians. These ostraca might be a sketch of what was executed later in the tomb's wall. For example, a painted ostrakon depicted a lute dancer where the upper part of the girl is nude, except for the simple jewelry indicated by quick strokes and dots and the distinctive lotus in her hair (Kinney, 2000: P. 198). Similarly, a bust of another nude musician dates back to the 19th dynasty, shows her torso bowed and her head turned to the left (figure 24), she is raising her left hand to her ear and holds a lute in her right hand (D'Abbadie, 1937: 81, pl. LXIII/2390; Peck, 1978: pl. VII; Asher-Greve, & Sweeney, 2006: fig. E19). The young lutenist is portrayed in a frontal position. Another ostrakon represented a nude lutenist kneeling to the right and turning her head to the left. She plays the lute while

holding the plectrum in her hand right. Her long hair falls over her back (figure 25). A related relief of a lutenist depicted as she was walking and looking behind while playing a lute (figure 26), her forehead is decorated with a lotus flower

(D’Abbadie, 1937: 81, pls. LV/2391, LV/2392), besides part of an ostracon shows a female lutenist holding a lute under her arm (D’Abbadie, 1959: 191, pl. cxxiv 2876).

Table 3

Lutenist represented on different objects

Items	No.	status of the body		Position of legs & feet		Lute direction		Nude/nearly nude
		stand	seated	movable	immovable	Parallel to face	Opposite to face	
Stone blocks	4	3	-	1	2	2	1	3
Spoons	2	1	1	1	-	1	1	2
Ostraca	3	1	2	-	-	-	2	3
Bowel	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1
Votive bed	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1
Total	11	5	5	2	2	5	4	10

Table (3) contains eleven objects, which indicates that nude lutenists were the dominant motif, where ten nude or nearly nude lutenists are depicted, save one block was unidentified due to its damage. Meanwhile, all the female lutenists represented on ostraca and spoons were shown nude. Seated and standing lutenists are equally represented. Besides, three out of the five seated positions were displayed by the lutenists in the marsh. On the other hand, the position of the legs and feet are equally displayed, with slight differences concerning the lute directions

2.6 The motif of nude lutenist

The most common woman’s dress was a tight-fitting sheath dress held up by shoulder straps and falls from just below the breasts to just above the ankle (Brier and Hobbs, 2008: 134; Robins, 1998: 181). Surviving dresses would tend to be baggy and would conceal rather than reveal the wearer’s body. By contrast, the sheath dress displays every curve of the body. The image is an artistic one and does not exist in reality. Such an image ensures that the shape of the body is not obscured by the dress (Robins, 1998:181-182). Table (4) indicates that most of the lutenists displayed in the scenes of thirteen tombs were represented nude or nearly nude with transparent clothes revealing the whole body underneath as indicated by the table, ten out of a total thirteen tomb scenes depicted the female lutenist nude or nearly nude. This number refers that nude lutenist figures were the favorite motif displayed by the artists.

Table 4

Lutenist Clothes

Tombs	Opaque clothes	Nude/nearly nude
Rekhmire (TT100)	✓	-
Nebamun (TT146)	✓	-
Nakht (TT 52)	-	✓
Djesrkarasenb (TT38)	-	✓
Qenamun (TT 93)	-	✓
Nebamun (TT90)	-	✓
Amenhotep Sise (TT 75)	-	✓
Kha (TT 8)	-	✓
Haremhab (TT 78)	-	✓
Thotnefer (TT80)	-	✓
Meryre (no. 4)	-	✓
Huya (no. 1)	-	✓
Ay (no. 25)	✓	-
Total	13	10

The Egyptian artisans were able to give a vivid impression of the female body, even if clothed (Peck, 1978: P. 45). By the reign of Tuthmosis IV a change had been affected in the culture of the 18th dynasty and brought new ideas, due to the contacts with the Aegean and Asiatic worlds. Tomb paintings lost their formality, and sensual element enters into the life of the sophisticated ruling class represented in art. The female nude is the most obvious aspect as a lutenist is depicted in a Brooklyn Museum relief in a papyrus skiff (no. 60197.9), a motive that appears on the spoons of that period (Aldred, 1990: 163). One female image that appears in the art of the New Kingdom is the motif of a nearly naked adolescent girl. In most cases, she wears only jewelry and a girdle round her hips, often with an elaborate hairstyle. The image is found in the tomb chapels of the second

half of the 18th Dynasty representing musicians, dancers, and serving girls. It also decorated spoons, cosmetic pots, mirrors, bowls, and similar objects used in daily life and subsequently placed in a burial (Robins, 1998: 185; Graves-Brown, 2010: 53). Although nude female figures were rare in Egyptian iconography (Kroeter, 2009: 51), female musicians, acrobats, and dancers were depicted nude. There is a status difference since no elite woman would be represented in this way, but the musicians and dancers are also represented as sexually alluring (Asher-Greve & Sweeney, 2006: 136). Robins agree with the previous opinion that female figures are seldom shown nude, except when depicted as servants, musicians, and dancers in the banquet scenes (Robins, 2015: 125). Peck also assured the same notion that the nude can be seen as signifying a lack of empowerment or low status which contains also children and female adolescents (Peck, 1978: 65). The wooden nude statue of a girl from the Museo Egizio, suggests that she is a young girl and does not have a childish side lock, but her hair is plaited. She wears a wide necklace and a hip belt that may allude to her adolescence (Vassilika, 2006: Fig. 45). Hairstyles of lute players at parties may reinforce their daughterhood. Their hair is different from that of the seated guests and resembles that of serving girls. In the Eighteenth Dynasty, there are hints about those females playing instruments that they are associated with the young girl (Graves-Brown, 2014:118). The representation of the lutenist and the young dancer is nearly nude except for a broad beaded collar, bracelets and armbands, and a girdle slung around their waists. The rest of the band behind them wears the popular New Kingdom dress made of nearly transparent fabric and, some musicians wear the traditional form-fitting sheath (Teeter, 1993: 83). In the tomb of Nakht for example, the costumes range from nudity which usually the mark of the specialist dancer to sheer plain long dresses, or opaque long skirts with rich embellishments and bare breasts (Kinney, 2000: P. 198). However, occasional nude figures show both breasts from the front and the profile. These are often musicians whose bodily attractions were important (Baines, and Malek, 2000: P. 60). Moreover, nudity had a ritual significance as well, and most of the musicians' scenes in the New Kingdom have a funerary function. The gods Bes and Ihy, who are associated with rebirth, are routinely depicted as being nude. Female

musicians and dancers who are represented in the temple of Bes at Edfu in later time are often shown naked. (Teeter, 1993: 90, 79). furthermore, the adolescent nudes in banquet scenes may be similar images found on fertility objects like mirrors, spoons, and makeup pots which were discovered both in domestic and burial contexts (Kroeter, 2009: 51; Robins, 1998: 186). Since music and dance were sacred to Hathor, these scenes frequently include images of musicians and dancers, often with nude female performers. The latter resemble female fertility figurines and may have had the same function to stimulate the rebirth of the deceased (Robins, 2008: 138). On the other hand, it is unclear whether the nude musicians and maidservants attend the banquets were a reflection of real-life (Derchain 1976: 8-9). Meanwhile, the female dress is treated as transparent, so that the body is visible underneath. The display of the female body was not new in Egyptian art. Its purpose was probably to produce an icon of the female body (Robins, 2008:151), and an artistic representation of hopes and wishes by the deceased for regeneration, and rebirth in the afterlife (Asher-Greve, & Sweeney, 2006: 157-158). However, clothing is not a faithful representation of reality, since art performed a ritual function and was designed to record ideals, rather than reality. So, when the dress reveals the entire body, this was due to the female role in the afterlife, as she represented fertility and rebirth (Kinney, 2000: 176).

Like the musicians and dancers in tomb chapels, some figures on domestic objects carry or play a musical instrument. A few figures have images of Bes tattooed or painted on their thighs, because Bes was associated also like Hathor with love, music, and dance (Robins, 1998: 185). The female nude itself, however, was not one of the standard subjects of Egyptian art. In Egyptian art, apart from pictures of children, dancing girls, and handmaidens, there are no nudes of women such as are understood in Western art (Peck, 1978: P. 45).

3. Methodology

This paper depends on a descriptive-analytical approach to study the female lute players during the 18th Dynasty according to the data available in thirteen tombs that date back to the 18th dynasty. Beside eleven objects contain four stone blocks, three ostraca, two spoons, one bowl, and a votive bed

4. Conclusion

There is no word in the ancient Egyptian language referring clearly to the lute as a musical instrument. However, the long-necked lute was introduced to Egypt during the New Kingdom and generally played as part of a musical ensemble, which commonly women. The lutenist always displayed stands beside or next to the harper as a twin. In most cases, she almost dancing to the rhythm as a specialist musician, therefore lutenists are represented in ten scenes (59%) as movable figures out of a total of seventeen standing figures. Thus, show them more vitality. Meanwhile, the lutenists are rarely shown performing as they are seated, where seventeen standing figures (74%) were represented out of a total of twenty-three figures, including tombs scenes and different objects (table 1, 3). Furthermore, the face of the lutenist usually in an opposite direction to the lute instrument, where fourteen opposite directions were displayed (58 %), compared with ten parallel positions with lute (42%), out of a total of twenty-four.

Sometimes the lutenist is looking different from the rest of the music ensemble and rarely appears wearing an opaque dress. In some scenes, she looks like the dancer who accompanied the musicians. However, when the two lutenists playing together, they are wearing the same dress. Furthermore, nudity is an artistic motif preferred to portray female lutenists and manifests the ritual function of hope to the renewal and rebirth in the other world. consequently, numbers of nude and nearly nude figures reached twenty (83%) out of a total of twenty-four figures (table 3,4). These numbers are equally represented both in the tombs and other objects. Moreover, all the female lutenists represented on ostraca and spoons were shown nude. Besides some scenes represented the nude female lutenist playing in the marshes had a religious significance referring to the goddess Hathor.

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Figures

Figure 1

Lute of Harmose



©Egyptian Museum (JE 66248)

Figure 3

stelae of goddesses Reshep accompanied with lute



Cornelius, 1994: pl. 1 RR2, pl. 5 RR7

Figure 2

British Museum sound-box



©British Museum (EA38171)

Figure 4

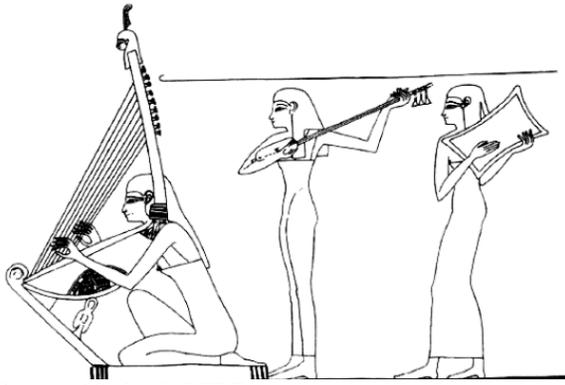
stelae of goddesses Reshep accompanied with lute



Cornelius, 1994: pl. 1 RR2, pl. 5 RR7

Figure 5

Music ensemble in Rekhmire's tomb.



Davies, 1943: pl. LXVI

Figure 6

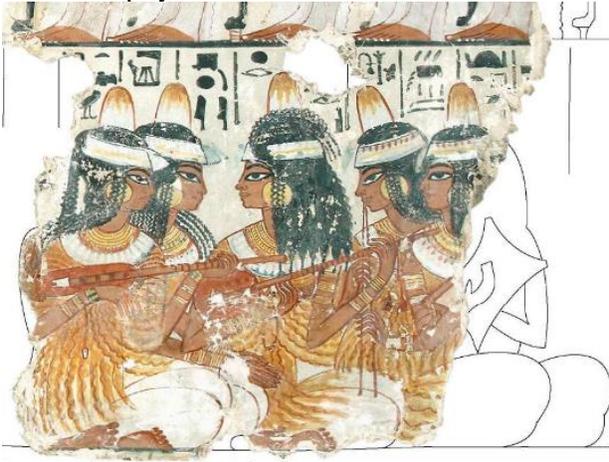
Bizarre position of playing a lute



Davies, 1943: Pl. LXIV

Figure 7

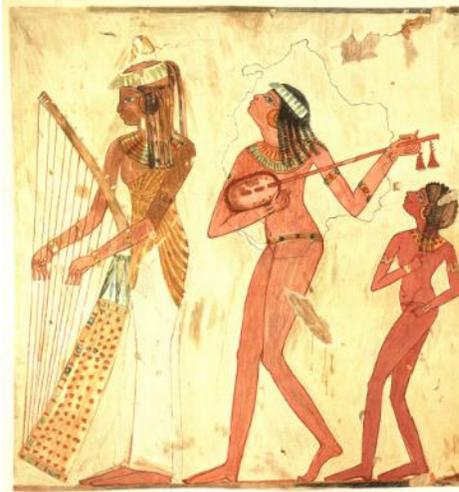
Seated lute player



©British Museum (no. EA37986)

Figure 9

Djeserkaraseneb tomb's lutenist



Davies and Gardiner, 1965: Pl. XXXVII

Figure 8

A lutenist in the tomb of Nakhe



Wilkinson & Hill, 1983: fig. 52

Figure 10

A girl with long-necked lute



Hickmann, 1953: fig. 6

Figure 11

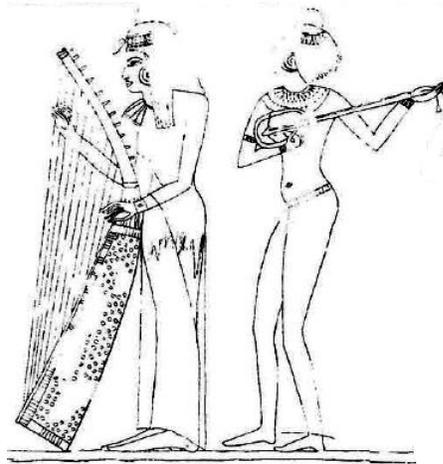
Two girls dancing with lute



Davies, 1923: Pl. XXIII

Figure 12

A harper and lutenist



Davies, 1923: Pl. V

Figure 13

Lute dancers as a part of music ensemble



Lirscher, 2013: 4, fig. 225

Figure 14

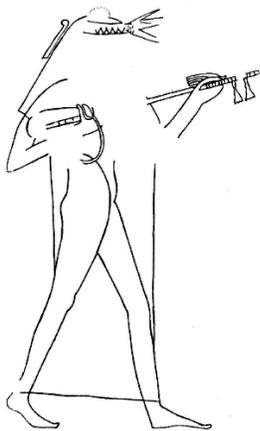
Lute dancers as a part of music ensemble



©Muzeo Egizio (no. S. 1344)

Figure 15

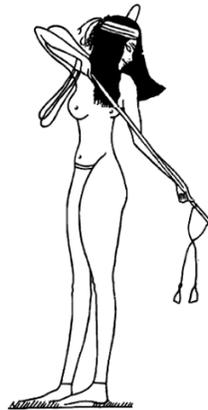
lutenist in the tomb of Thotnefer



Manniche, 1989: fig. 2

Figure 16

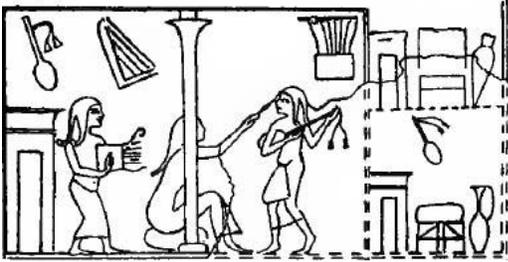
Odd position of playing lute



Schäfer, 1974: fig. 217a

Figure 17

Training inside the place



Davies, 1908: PL. XXVIII

Figure 19

A princess playing lute



©Brooklyn Museum

Figure 21

A spoon decorated with nude lutenist



Fechheimer, 1921: fig.143

Figure 23

A votive bed scene



Teeter, 2009: Fig. 22

Figure 18

Aamarna female lute player



Ancient Art, 1992: 29

Figure 20

A bowl with a nude lutenist



Robins, 1998: fig.83

Figure 22

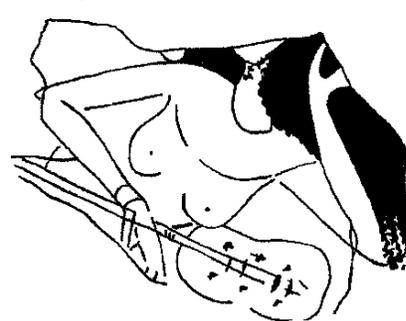
A spoon decorated with nude lutenist



Robins, 1998: fig.81

Figure 24

Lutenist on Ostraca



Asher-Greve, & Sweeney, 2006: fig. E19

Figure 25

Lutenist on Ostraca



D'Abbadie, 1937: PL. LV/2391, 2392

Figure 26

Lutenist on Ostraca



D'Abbadie, 1937: PL. LV/2391, 2392