

Celebration at Medamud

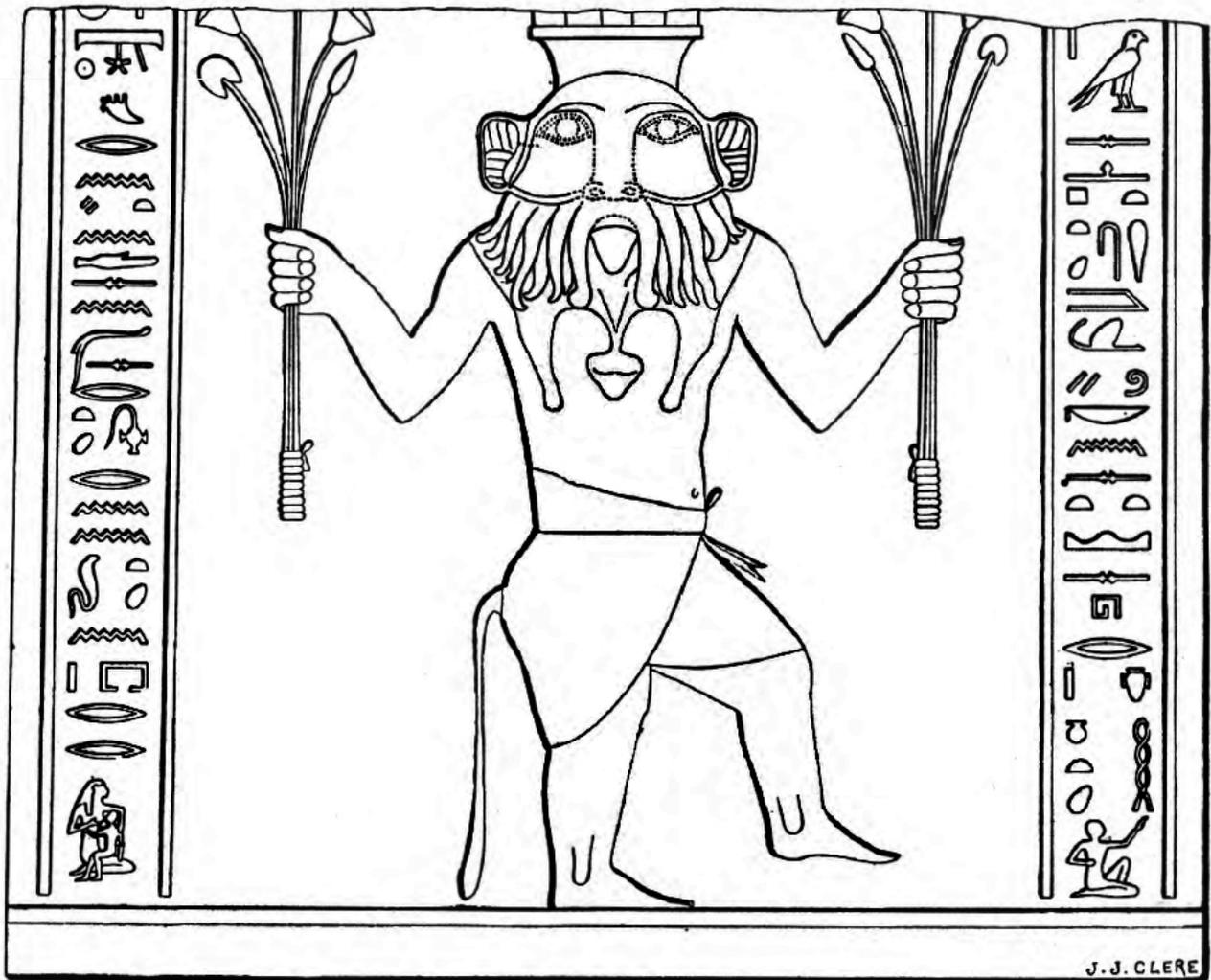


Fig. 10. — LE DIEU BÈS DANSANT.

The drawing is from “Rapport sur les fouilles de Medamoud: Les Inscriptions, Etienne Drioton”, (1926 FIFAO), page 29. If it weren't for Drioton's publications, much of this would be now lost to us. This image of Bes accompanies a hymn to Hathor as the returning Eye of the Sun as she returns at winter solstice. John Coleman Darnell explains:

"The accompanying scenes and annotations inside the gateway at Medamud are important for properly understanding the hymn to the Gold. To the right of the text of the hymn is a large depiction of a dancing Bes, a vertical inscription to the right of the deity states clearly that the goddess honored in the texts of the gateway is the far-wandering eye of the sun:"

[... *ir.t* (?)] *Hr shtp hm=s.t m ph.wy Kns.t shr ib hnw.t*

"[...the eye (?_ of] Horus, who pacifies her majesty in the far reaches of Keneset. and who gladdens the heart of the mistress."

Keneset is a land of the far southeast, up towards Punt and the land of the "eastern souls of the cosmographic text. The text to the left of the dancing Bes figure mentions night, and continues:

dr nty nds nsr.t rnn.t n pr rr,

"because she is the flame, Renenet [Renenutet] in the mansion of nursing." This alludes to the result of the goddess' return - the conception, birth and care of the child god."

Hathor Returns to Medamûd, John Coleman Darnell (Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur Bd. 22 (1995) (Helmut Buske Verlag GmbH), pages 47-48



Fig. 9. — PAROI INTÉRIEURE OUEST DU KIOSQUE MÉRIDIONAL (INSCRIPTIONS N^{OS} 326 À 330).

Drioton's photo shows the Bes to the right of the hymn and a scene with worshippers.

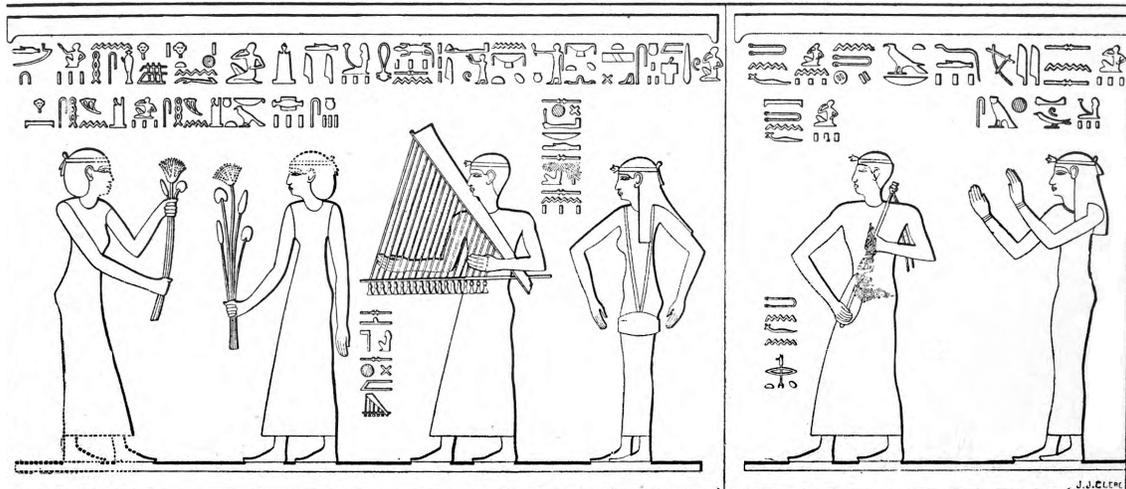


Fig. 8. — LES MUSICIENS DES PAROIS INTÉRIEURES SUD ET OUEST DU KIOSQUE MÉRIDIONAL.

We can see the lady in adoring "Dua" position at the far left in Drioton's photo in the far right in his drawing.

“The Medamud hymn to the returning goddess is an elaborated version of two lines in a hymn to Hathor at Dendara:

"The whole world rejoices to you,
the animals (?) dance for you in joy,
The Two Lands and the foreign countries praise you,
even unto the Nethersky upon its four supports."
Coleman quoting Junker, ZAS 43, 1906, on page 93 of his article.

Lisa Manniche describes the scene to the left of the hymn: "Preceding the whole group are two ladies adorned with flowers. One, who raises her hands [in “Dua” position], is called 'the one who sweetens evil'. a phrase which must surely proclaim the role of music in this particular scene. The caption for the drummer and harpist is unusually eloquent: 'The members of the choir take up their instruments and play them. The songstresses in full number adore the Golden Goddess and make music to the Golden Goddess: they never cease their chanting.' The lutenist and gesticulating lady are accorded the following lines: 'We dance for you, we dance for you, the words required by the adorers'.

Lise Manniche: Music and Musicians in Ancient Egypt (1991, British Museum Press), page 61

Manniche begins the hymn:

“Come, O Golden Goddess, the singers chant
(for it is nourishment for the heart to dance the *iba*,
to shine over the feast at the hour of retiring
and to enjoy *ha*-dance at night)...”

(The “*iba*” is a religious dance, associated with joyfulness.)

Here is a segment of Coleman's translation, page 54:

“When the royal children pacify you with what is desired,
the officials consecrate offerings to you.
When the lector exalts you in intoning a hymn,
the magician reads the rituals.
When the organizer praises you with his lotus blooms,
the percussionists take up the tamborine.
The virgins rejoice for you with garlands,
the women with the wreath-crown.
The drunken celebrants drum for you during the cool of the night,
with the result that those who awaken bless you.”

His translation differs in some phrases. For instance for his "When the organizer praises you with his lotus blooms", Manniche has "the priest honors you with his basket". The basket might have been assumed to be full of lotus blooms, but apparently Drioton, from whom Manniche derives her version, thought the "basket" was a "sacred chest".

Meanwhile, it is clear this celebration is a lively, boisterous affair, full of rejoicing and dancing and joy!

The full Hymn to Hathor is located here:

<http://www.hethert.org/hymnsprayers.htm#Hymn from Ptolemaic Temple at Medamud>

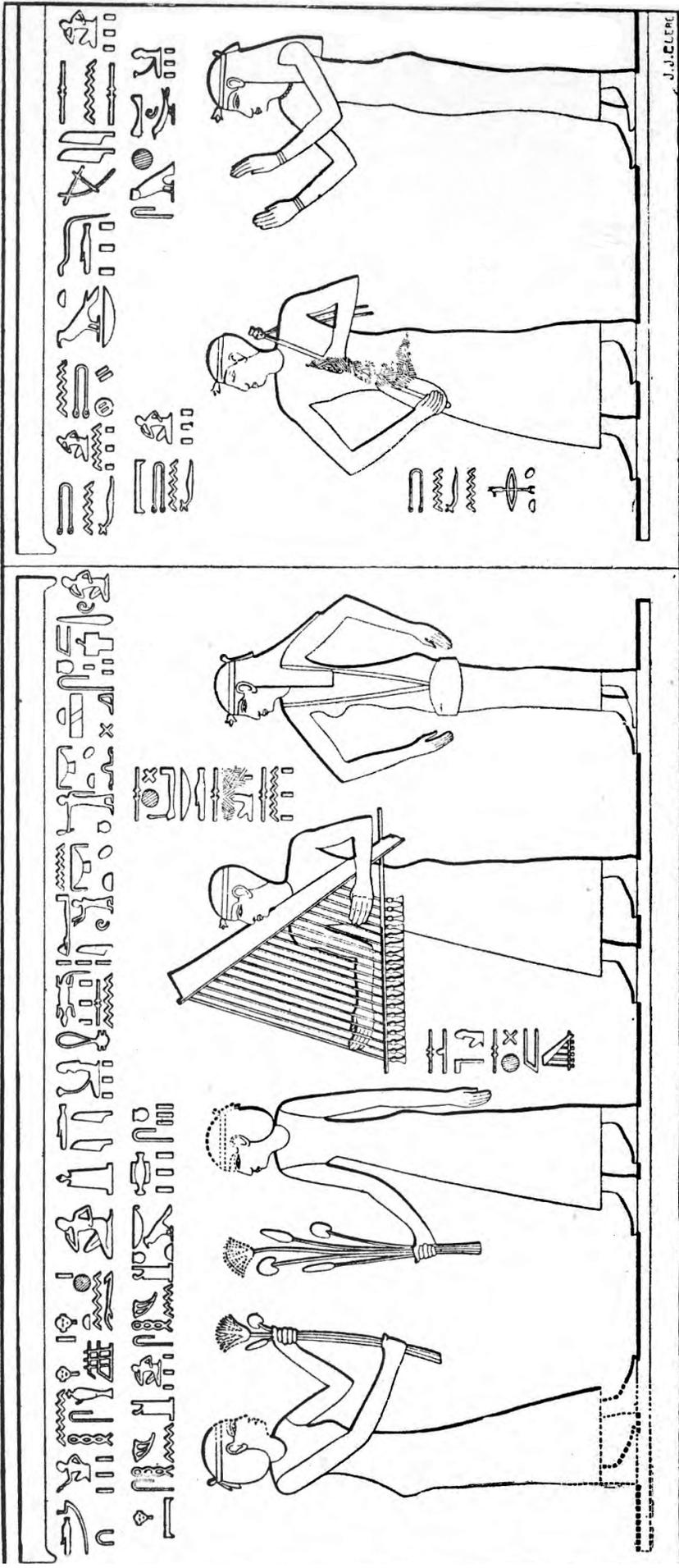
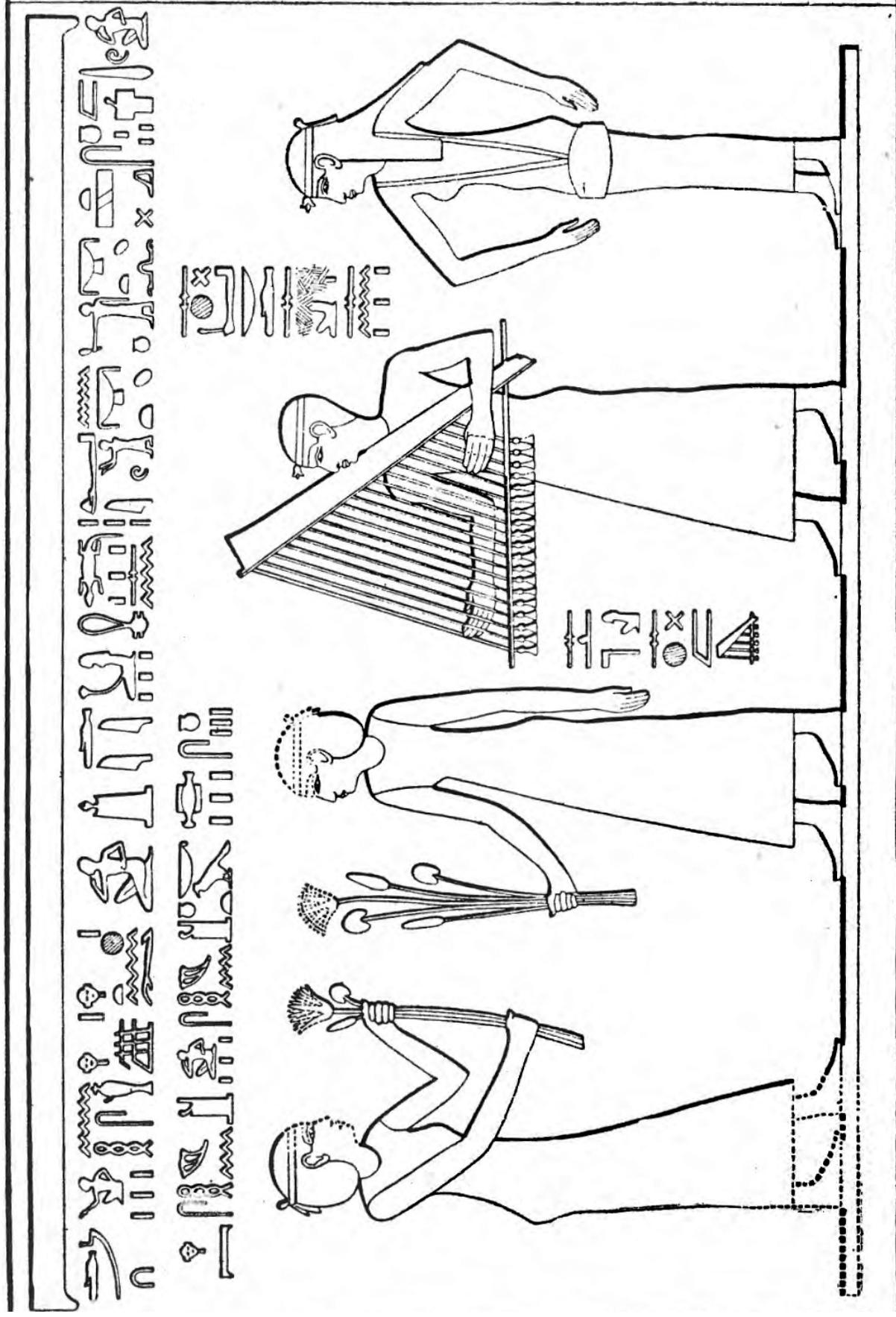


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Goddess: they never cease their chanting.' Lise Manniche: Music and Musicians in Ancient Egypt (1991, British Museum)