Coptic Commemorative Protests and Discourses of Egyptian Nationalism: A Visual Analysis[1,2]

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This paper discusses the identity constructions of the Coptic Christian minority of Egypt during conflict and in particular through the theme of commemoration of martyrdom. In the aftermath of the attacks against them on October 9, 2011, (what is known as the "Maspero Massacre") Coptic social movements resorted to performative protests to celebrate their "martyrs". This paper analyses the visual representations of two such protests and examines how different themes and symbols from different traditions were used: Coptic Christian, Pharaonic and as well as nationalist Egyptian traditions. This paper argues that through these performances members of the community aimed to reconstruct and reassert their identity in public space as well produce oppositional nationalist discourses that interplay with social conflicts. Through examining videos and photos of these performances, this paper conducts an intertextual analysis of the visual aspects of the protests in order to reveal their political meaning as well as their contradictions.

Keywords: Copts, commemoration, identity, conflict, nationalism, Egypt

Introduction

In the aftermath of the January 25 Uprising, the security vacuum that ensued led to increased vulnerability of minority groups. While communal attacks against the Coptic Christian community (constituting about 7% of the Egyptian population) can be traced to the 1970s, its increase in the aftermath of the January 25 Uprising led to further strain communal relations (Brownlee 3-5). In the fluid transition period that followed Mubarak's ouster, these attacks led to the rise of various Coptic Christian social movements that started mobilizing against the demolition of churches and for more inclusion of Copts in public life.

The current conflict over the identity of Egypt is rooted in the history of various occupations that the country underwent. Egypt was under Roman rule from 30 BC until it was invaded by the Muslims in 641 AD. Christianity first reached Egypt in the first century with the arrival of Apostle Mark to Alexandria, after which several waves of attacks took place against Christians by the Roman authorities (Hasan 25). These attacks continued even after the Roman Empire became Christian. The rejection of the Coptic Orthodox Church the doctrines of Council of Chalcedon in 451 AD on the dual nature of Christ led to the subsequent schism and

to further persecutions by the Byzantine "Melkite" Church (Hasan 28). With the Islamic occupation in 641 AD, a relative period of tolerance followed which was interrupted by waves of attacks under several Islamic rulers (Hasan 31). A process of Arabization and Islamization ensued and Christians became a minority by the tenth century (Ibrahim et al. 8).

At the heart of the conflict between Copts and Muslims today in Egypt are different social constructions of national territory and national identity. On the one hand, increased Islamization of the public sphere leads to increased public perception of the Egyptian national territory as being a Muslim territory. In this perception, churches are considered anomalies and potential elements of tension (Purcell 433). On the other hand, Copts have perceived this territory as their home for the past 2000 years (Purcell 466). In this sense, different understandings of Egypt's national identity underlie all debates on the right of non-Muslims to build houses of worship and further underlie intercommunal conflict.

The starting point for this paper is October 9, 2011, when a mass rally was organized by several Coptic Christian movements in downtown Cairo to protest the demolition of a church in a village near the Upper Egyptian city of Aswan by Muslim neighbors. [3]The attack spurred a series of protests by Coptic movements against the church's destruction (Androwus 1). The Maspero protest was the largest of these rallies and used the state TV building as its destination. The protesters employed visible Christian symbols, such as makeshift crosses and pictures of Jesus, in order to voice their demands in what was seen as a bold display of religious identity.

As soon as the protesters arrived at their destination, they were attacked. Videos captured the military police's armored car, which were stationed in front of the State TV building, running over protesters. As the protest devolved to a fight, the Egyptian state TV announced that Copts were attacking the national army thus fueling a communal strife (Ibrahim). Twenty-six Copts reportedly lost their lives as a result of the consequent violence (NCHR 1).[4]

These attacks were not only a blow to the victims' families, but the Coptic community at large who needed consolation. It was a particular challenge to the Coptic movements, which were accused by the pro- state media of attempting to violently rupture national unity (Osman 1). As a result, the Coptic movements struggled to prove their patriotism. They responded with protests to commemorate those who had immediately been labelled as *martyrs*.[5] The first ceremony was held approximately a month after the Maspero massacre, and aimed to commemorate the *Arbaʿīn* ceremony, a traditional ceremony forty days after death (Shukry "Celebrating"). A second ceremony was held in order to commemorate the first anniversary. While for the first ceremony SCAF was in power, by the time the second protest took place, SCAF had rendered power to the Muslim Brotherhood affiliated president, Mohammed Morsi (Ahram online 1). Both of these ceremonies used pharaonic artifacts and national symbols, a far cry from the Christian symbols used in the Maspero protest.

This paper questions why Coptic movements resorted to commemorating their martyrs by using ancient Egyptian themes. In the words of one interviewed activist, "it was (…) a message to the audience that the solution lay in fostering an Egyptian identity"[6]. But how can an Egyptian identity be defined? By consulting the visual material of the protests produced by news agencies as well as the movements themselves on their social media channels, various depictions of national identity in the Coptic commemorative protests will be analyzed.[7]

I argue that through the commemoration processes, group identity is continuously reconstructed and negotiated as well as used tactically by social movements in

order to present oppositional discourses that interplay with social conflicts. Coptic social movements attempted to push forth an identity construct – namely a Coptic-Pharaonic identity – which does not relegate Copts to a lower position, but rather balances other variants of national identity in the public space. In this way, commemorations are opportune moments for *performative protests*.

Theory

Protests are performative if they produce, construct, negotiate or establish new or alternative ideas, identities, ideologies or meanings (Juris 227-8). Against threats on their lives or livelihoods or "precarity" in Judith Butler's words due to the uneven distribution of power, protesters resist through appearing in public space. Public space is a field that is regulated by exclusionary and hierarchal norms and constituted by differential forms of power (Butler 38). Performances are a way through which subjects push through this power field in order to become eligible for recognition. It is "a way of laying claim to the public sphere" (Butler 41). Through changing the modes of embodiment and reenactment of our social existence the underlying norms can be contested. The bodies of activists become the site of political agency as they embody oppositional discourses and new political visions (Butler 25-9).

Performative protests make use of both the narratives that structure the protests as well as performative artifacts, which are the objects that become the raw material of performances. These are constitutive of new and different meanings when combined (Johnston 6-7). In Coptic commemorative protests, the artifacts combined elements of pharaonic, Coptic Christian and modern nationalist artifacts. Examples include the national flag, the solar-boat, T-shirts with the ankh sign, a hieroglyphic symbol meaning life that has been appropriated by Copts and used as their cross (Hanna 34). Thus, a visual iconological analysis is needed in order to interpret the messages that the protest performance is trying to make.

Iconological analysis combines scrutiny of compositional elements of visual images and understanding those elements within the cultural conventions of symbolic representations (Richard and Negreiros 16-7; Rose 144-5). The analysis eventually allows one to understand the symbols within the context of the performance or image. It examines how different traditions contribute to the images' meanings (Richard and Negreiros 18-19). Therefore, it is vital to differentiate between the representational methods that are used in portraying the image within a particular cultural convention and the interlocking textual traditions, which in combination are used in an image (Rose 145). Thus, the most important part of iconological analysis is deciphering how different textual traditions have been used to produce the discourse (Rose 145). In that sense, the complexities and contradictions that are internal to discourse become important.

Iconologists such as Panofsky are essentialist in their method, claiming that the image's "intrinsic meaning" can be understood through analysis (Richard and Negreiros 25; Rose 147). However, as the performative protest establishes new meanings and identities, it is primarily constructive. Thus, it underscores the ways in which discourses are enacted by members of the audience and how they themselves take part in the reproduction of meanings. In other words, our iconological analysis will turn away from inherent claims and provide an interpretation of meanings in the performance.

Analysis

In a way, these protests presented an increased strength and Coptic visibility, yet this was done through themes of death and negation (Ramzy 665). The main theme of the performative protest was martyrdom, which begs the ambiguous

question: Is one dying for one's nation or for one's faith. The centrality of the *waṭan samāwī* (heavenly homeland) for faith, lends martyrdom a way of depicting both patriotism and faithfulness (Ramzy 650). However, the representations of nationalisms and religious identity constructs made using these artistic traditions hold particular contradictions that are encapsulated in the performance themselves.

In their attempt to commemorate the martyrs of the Maspero attacks, the movements used two nationalist discourses: the 'national-unity' discourse and the Coptic Church's 'patriotic' discourse. The former focuses on the unity of Copts and Muslims but fails to present both groups as equals. Rather, it succumbs the Coptic narrative to a Muslim one. Thus, according to this discourse, the Muslim conquest (641 AD) is perceived as liberating the Copts from the oppression and the persecution of the Roman occupation. The latter discourse agrees with the former in the depiction of suffering of Copts under the Roman rule and highlights the positive relations between the Muslims and Christians based on harmony and justice since the Islamic rule. However, this discourse resorts to a nativist pharaonic discourse to argue the Copts' authenticity in the face of Muslims as well as the Melkite Christians (ElSasser 102-133).

Visualizing National Identities and Coptic Visibility

The most visible aspect of the first commemorative protest is its focus on Egyptian nationalist imagery through the use of various symbolic artifacts, such as the cross and the flag carried side by side (see fig. 1). While this imagery reminds of the iconography of the 1919 revolution particularly the flag with the cross and crescent depicting national unity[8], it fails to present harmony. First, rather than depicting a unified Egypt, this representation depicted the social fabric of the nation as being made up of both Muslims and Christians communities, and in doing so, highlighted religious differences as definitive. This is very different from a nationalistic representation, which would perceive such differences as secondary and ultimately non-important. Second, the cross is depicted separately from the flag, which aims to increase the Coptic identity's visibility in public space; thereby, showing both patriotism a parallelism from the mainstream national narrative.

Clearly, there is an inherent tension between these artifacts. In the first commemorative protest, pharaonic signs were prominent while crosses that participants attempted to raise personally were banned by the organizers. An oversized Egyptian flag carried by eight young men

Figure 1: Funeral Procession of Maspero Martyrs. Al-Yaum al- Sabi', Cairo, 2011.

followed a smaller flag carried next to a single cross at the beginning of the march. The prominence of the large flag at the beginning of the first ceremony is telling. During the second ceremony in the time of Morsi's rule, the policy of not carrying personal crosses was relaxed. Furthermore, the oversized Egyptian flag was relegated to the end of the ceremony.

This tension can be traced to the struggle in imagining national identity, which lead separate groups to have different conceptions of nationalism. The symbolism of the Egyptian flag and its Arab Islamic affiliations explains the continuous tension of the cross and the flag throughout the commemorative protests. As Podeh argues, it follows the pattern of most flags of the Arab states which "does not reflect

connection to a specific territory but rather an attachment to the larger Arab and Islamic communities" (421). Thus, in this sense, the Egyptian flag is a depiction of the Islamist dominated narratives of national history in which the Islamic conquest is perceived as a civilizing mission that liberated the Copts from their persecution and occupation. The Egyptian flag is no exception with its black, white and red, three of the four colors that make up the "Arab flag" (the missing color being green)[9]. These colors are also used by four Islamic dynasties – the Umayyads, Abbasids, Fatimids and Ottomans (421-422). The colors are thus rooted in an Arab and Islamic historical imagination, but the Egyptian flag was constructed to symbolize territorial meaning by the newfound Republican order in 1953. While the red color came to symbolize the revolution, the white color symbolized its peaceful nature and black the corruption of the pre-1952 regime (435-6).The symbolism of the current Egyptian flag is thus rooted in the Islamic narrative.

In this manner, the cross carried with the flag, carries with it meanings of coexistence beyond the apparent tensions. The Coptic cross presented aside the flag represents a parallel narrative of nationalism rooted in a discourse of martyrdom. The Coptic Church has resorted to making the discourse of martyrdom and persecution a central founding theme in the first two centuries after the Islamic Invasion thus naming itself the *Church of the Martyrs*. This was important as the church was struggling to maintain the cohesion of its community differentiating itself from Melkite Christians and thus presented itself as the national Church (Papaconstantinou 71-72). In this sense, the nationalism that is enacted in Coptic commemorative protests is rooted in a religious historical discourse rather than a secular one.

Revival of an Authentic Identity?

As previously noted, pharaonism was incorporated as an element of Coptic identity as a way of expressing nativism. While this does not deny that there was indeed some proximity between some doctrines in both religious creeds, there were times in which the Church saw it pertinent to separate itself from the ancient Egyptian traditions, and thus, led the iconoclasm of the fourth century (Kamil 135).[10] Thus, pharaonism was constructed as an element of Coptic Church's identity to establish its legitimacy as a national church particularly against the Melkites, who came to be associated with the Romans (Papaconstantinou 72). In this way, the Coptic- Pharaonic national identity became rooted in the Church's religious tradition and history and pharaonism became an important element in the Coptic Church's iconography.[11]

As Van der Vliet explains, in the modern period, orientalism and the once 'imperial' science of Egyptology have played an important role in how Copts have begun to perceive themselves as "sons of the pharaohs". It was the French Egyptologist, Champollion, who deciphered the hieroglyphics with the assistance of the Coptic script. (Van der Vliet 294). Thus, connecting the Coptic identity to the Pharaonic legacy is also a modern construct that was utilized in the Coptic community's search to position itself in the modern world.

The commemorative protests made use of ancient Egyptian symbolism in order to refer to Christian beliefs, thereby enacting an important element of Coptic-Pharaonic identity and calling for internal cohesion of the community by maintaining their identity. However, in that manner, the incompatibilities between both traditions are consciously ignored.[12] In order to understand the way the protests were designed, the differences and similarities between the ancient Egyptian myths and Christian beliefs on death and resurrection are explained.

Christianity holds that Jesus, who is considered the sole son of God, has come to the world to save it. Jesus' crucification is thus seen as a sacrifice for the salvation of the world from its sins. The crucification was followed by Jesus' resurrection and ascension to heaven, thus conquering death. According to Christian beliefs, eternal life is a gift to the martyrs and saints as they have followed the path of God (Diel and El Bardohani 13).

These beliefs were performed using the artifacts and symbols from ancient Egyptian art and mythology. Ancient Egyptian mythology is centered on the deity Osiris, son of Geb and Nut (god of earth and goddess of sky), who was killed by his brother Seth. His body was found and reconstructed by Isis, his sister and wife, after which the corpse was mummified and resurrected. Thus, Osiris became the God of the realm of the dead. Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris then defeated Seth after which they underwent judgment by the Gods. (Taylor 25). According to the myth of Osiris, death is followed by judgment and resurrection of the righteous. The dead should thus follow the path of Osiris in order to become resurrected.

However, myths of death and rebirth in ancient Egypt are quite different from Christian teachings. Both traditions have resurrection as a central tenant, yet it is not the same. In Christianity, resurrection is collective rather than individual, as it is understood in ancient Egypt (Madigan 35). Furthermore, eternal life is considered a gift from God for those who believe in him and walk his path, yet in ancient Egypt, it could be expected naturally if the body was preserved and if other specific conditions were met (Jeremiah 24). Furthermore, the doctrine of sacrifice and salvation central to Christianity are unparalleled in ancient Egyptian mythology.

The commemorative protests analyzed here depict an ancient Egyptian funeral procession. In the ancient Egyptian tradition, this was the last step to be taken before the dead person could be resurrected in the manner of Osiris. In ancient Egypt the funeral procession was a grand and dramatic event. It also was a site of mourning and sadness[13], and professional mourning women would take part in wailing over the dead (Ikram 184).[14] The 2011 commemorative protests presented ladies dressed in white dresses that were similar to those worn by the wailing ladies in ancient Egyptian funerals. The collar and the belt of their white dresses were adorned in blue, which is the color of sadness that was also used to mourn the dead in ancient Egypt (Lurker 114).

Figure 2: "Ladies in white carrying pictures of martyrs with halos". Courtesy of Mina Thabet, Egypt, 2011.

However, the two repertoires are not hermetic. Far from wailing, the ladies in the protest were solemnly carrying face-pictures of the *martyrs* that were decorated with golden halos (see fig. 2). On the one hand, halos have been traced by scholars to the ancient Egyptian solar disk on the head of important deities resulting from devout worship of the sun-God (Kamil 160-163). On the other hand, halos of light that are depicted on martyrs and saints symbolize that they are partaking in God's glory (Shenouda 62, 71). In this way, the funeral depicts a pagan ceremony but adapts it for Christian purposes.

This section of the protest was then followed by a ritual artifact that could be understood as the main thematic object

for the protest. In the first protest held in 2011, it was a white coffin box, decorated on its side with face-pictures of the *martyrs* with halos and on its top with the colors of the Egyptian flag. Coffins were considered to be the *master of life* in ancient Egypt, coming from the term *neb ankh* (Ikram 108-109). It protected the deceased corpse, and thus was considered by ancient Egyptians to be vitally important for the afterlife (108).[15] This is not the case in Christianity, which highlights the death of the body yet the survival of the soul. Yet, the pictures of the martyrs on the coffin are reminiscent of mummy portraits, the *Fayūm* portraits[16] which were painted on wooden panels and placed inside the coffin portraying the deceased in their ideal form. [17] As Skalova argues, these portraits are a product of Pharaonic, Roman and Greek traditions, and are not purely *Pharaonic*; yet, they emerged with the banning of the Pharaonic tradition of mummification under Emperor Theodosius (347-395 AD) (48).

In the second protest held in 2012, a sun-boat that held the names of all the Maspero *martyrs* was the central artifact (see fig. 3). The solar boat, in distinctive golden color, resembled the myth of the resurrection of the sun on a daily basis, which is embodied through the image of

Figure 3: Sun Barque of the Martyrs. Courtesy of Mosireen Collective Creative Commons, Egypt, 2012.

the Sun God Ra traveling in the darkness to reach Osiris. The sun God, the creator of the universe and the origin of all life, popularly known as Ra, would travel every night through the underworld where he unites with Osiris, defeats the forces of darkness and allows the sun to rise again thereby bringing a new day to light. Ra is depicted as traveling in a barque or a boat (Taylor 28-9).[18]

The barque or boat, as an ancient Egyptian symbol, was adopted by the Copts in their protest. In Coptic symbolism, the boat represents the church as the vessel that saves the soul from drowning and doom. It is thus through the church, through its teachings and guidance, that believers are protected from straying into sin and resurrection made possible (Wiscopts 5).

Throughout both marches, the main-core group was dressed in a distinctive manner and carried the artifacts described above. After the display, groups of organized activists walked in lines. They were dressed with red, white and black t-shirts, the colors of the Egyptian flag. All t-shirts carried the ankh sign. Priests that took part in the marches also had a red bleeding ankh sign that was worn around their necks.

The prominence of the ankh sign, in the place of the cross, is telling. It has usually been seen in pictures of temples of Gods giving the *ankh of life* to kings, thus giving them power and eternity (Lurker 155), but Coptic Christians have adopted the ankh as their cross also known as *crux ansata* (Atiya 2164). For Christians, it is through the crucification of Christ and the doctrine of sacrifice that salvation and eternal life are attained (Hanna 34). The ankh was used, albeit in a covert manner, in the protest as a cross. However, as previously stated, the doctrine of sacrifice and salvation has no place in the ancient Egyptian mythology.

In addition, wreaths and flowers were used in both the 2011 and 2012 protests. In

ancient Egypt, wreaths of flowers were a symbol for denoting the innocence of the dead after judgment had taken place and thus the vindication in the afterlife (Lurker 146). This is believed to originate from the amulet granted to Osiris from God Atum, which was believed to assist him against his enemies (Lurker 54-5). Flowers are also related to the beginning of life in ancient Egyptian mythology, they thus played an important role in death ceremonies and rituals and denoted continued life (Lurker 146). Furthermore, wreaths of flowers were believed to have divine powers and its scent was sacred (Lurker 146). While flowers are not believed to have particular powers in Christianity, wreaths were carried by activists and placed around the pictures of the martyrs and on the coffin. It was possibly an attempt to declare the innocence of the protesters and their continued life as martyrs.

The prominence of the music *1492: The Conquest of Paradise* by the Greek composer Evangelos Odysseas Papathanassiou known as Vangelis throughout both ceremonies was also significant (DNE 1). However, it is important to note that this piece of music referred to the 1492 epic that portrayed Columbus' discovery of the new world (Ramzy 663). The colonialist underpinning of the music is indeed antithetical to the themes of nativism and Egyptian authenticity, which the performative protests seek to display.

When arriving at Tahrir square, which was the destination of the first protest, the music of the *The Conquest of Paradise* stopped, possibly referring to Tahrir (*liberation*) as the yearned for paradise. In Tahrir, the protest music took on a different tone starting with the current Egyptian national anthem, first in Arabic then in Coptic language. As the anthem was both sung in Arabic and Coptic, it was made to represent the equality of both identities in the public space, but it also reveals their difference by highlighting their distancing from the Arab identity. In this sense, the protest ends by claiming Coptic citizenship and equality is paradise.

Continued Persecution or Equal Citizenship?

The Coptic commemorative protests in 2011 and 2012 attempted to perform a Pharaonic identity, the larger aim of which was to occupy the public space with a national identity discourse, one that was different from the widespread Islamic dominated discourse. Even the Egyptian national- unity discourse, rooted in Islamic and Arab imagery was thus paralleled with a Coptic-nationalist discourse. This paper has presented the manner in which Pharaonic symbolism was used to portray a Coptic nativism and highlight the superiority of the Coptic identity. By attempting to merge Christian beliefs with ancient Egyptian mythology, the Coptic community might have been seeking to oversee the contradictions and the incompatibilities between these two traditions.

Another issue is the centrality of persecution and martyrdom within Coptic identity, and invisibility becomes a normalized method of ensuring coexistence and for maintaining community cohesion. This is obvious in the way the Christian symbols were consciously suppressed and its beliefs were enacted through Pharaonic symbols. Paradoxically, while the protest was a means of rejecting forms of discrimination and inequality through performing a Coptic identity in public, it also normalized martyrdom as an identity construct. As Ramzy notes, the visibility of the Copts was made though the theme of death, or the state of ultimate negation (Ramzy 664). While Butler holds that the performative appearance in the public space is a way of resisting precarity, she asserts that this precarity is not a separate isolated identity, and she rejects identity politics as a basis for political coexisting (Butler 27, 58). This brings a new meaning to performativity beyond that developed by Butler, and it allows us to speak of the reinforcement of

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collective sub-national identities through performative protests, thereby, asserting those identities, in a contentious manner, into the public space.

Notes

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[2] The author would like to thank Dr. Gamal Soltan and Dr. Marco Pinfari for their comments and discussions that contributed to this paper. The author would also like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their comments.

[3] Muslim neighbors had attacked the Church, stating that they did not want it in their village. The local governor's response was far from pacifying, denying the existence of the Church in the first place (EIPR 1).

[4] Yet, SCAF (the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces), which led Egypt in the aftermath of Mubarak's deposal, denied that the military police had committed any of these attacks.

[5] These protests were primarily organized by the Maspero Youth Union, the largest of the Coptic movements at the time as well as the activists affiliated with the Theban Legion Magazine *(al-Katība al-Tībīya)* which was a newsletter published by the Church of St. Mary in Ezbet al-Nakl, Cairo. Its writers and activists were involved in the planning of the protest.

[6] Maspero Youth Union activist interviewed by author, 19 August 2015

[7] For additional material on the construction of identities see:
Al-Katība al-Tibīya. "Ihtifaliyit Ta'bin Shuhada Maspiro Kamila". *YouTube*, 13 Nov. 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fou6tRN6ZfA. Access on 29 September 2016.
Bora S. Kamel (2011). "al-march al-gana'izi: Masirat ta'bin shuhada maspiro" *YouTube*, 11 Nov. 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bhdwiz3hNB0. Access on 29 September 2016.
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[8] For visual representation of the revolution in 1919 see "1919 Revolution." *Civic Egypt*, http://www.civicegypt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/ثورة-19.jpg. Access on 25 April 2017.

[9] The "Flag of Egypt," *Wikimedia Commons*, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/fe/Flag_of_Egypt.svg/255px-Flag_of_Egypt.svg.png. Access on 25 April 2017.

[10] The author is thankful for Dr. Marco Pinfari for explaining this part.

[11] As Kamil argues, the native churches could be easily differentiated from the Melkite churches due to the former's style that is rooted in the pharaonic tradition (Kamil 201).

[12] Perhaps this is why some Coptic writers on ancient Egypt prefer to consider them monotheistic (cf. Seleem 11)

[13] For an iconological comparison of funeral processions see "Great funeral procession of a royal scribe at Thebes". *New York Public Library Digital Collection*, https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e2-6fd3-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99. Access on 25. April 2017.

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→ [14] For an iconographic comparison of mourning women see "Burial Chamber of Ramose, Vizier and Head of Thebes under Amenophis III and IV, Scene: Lamentations." *Wikimedia Commons*, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/89/Maler_der_Grabkammer_des_Ramose_001.jpg. Access on 25. April 2017.

[15] Coffins are also rooted in the story of Osiris, whose brother Seth trapped him in one and threw it in the sea.

[16] For an iconographic comparison see "Fayum Portrait." *Wikimedia Commons*, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/db/Fayum-07.jpg/220px-Fayum-07.jpg. Access on 25. April 2017.

[17] It is argued that the *Fayūm* Portraits were the predecessors of the devotional icons which was believed to establish communication with a saint in heavens through the likeness on an icon (Skalova 48-50).

[18] For an iconographic comparison of the barque in ancient Egypt see "Book of Gates Barque of Ra." *Wikimedia Commons*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Book_of_Gates_Barque_of_Ra.jpg. Access on 25. April 2017.

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