

La navigation funéraire de Khnoumhotep à Béni-Hassan

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Abstract

The aim of lexicography is not simply to restore the lexicon of a language. Words express the world and its categories. The only way to find their exact meaning, i.e. to precisely delimit their semantic field, is to carry out a genuine ethnographic survey. The aim of this article is to show that, with a good knowledge of the principles of Egyptian navigation and the words used by boatmen, it is possible to find several ideas that are merely suggested behind a figuration accompanied by a banal inscription. We will consider here the example of a navigation scene and an inscription from the tomb of Khnumhotep II at Beni-Hassan (Twelfth Dynasty). The researcher might think that these ideas were hidden, as they were intended for initiates, but this is not the case. Any Egyptian observer looking at the scene and reading the inscription could find them without difficulty.