

death (though the accident of preservation also skews our evidence towards mortuary remains). Because there were fewer philosophical and scientific frameworks within the reflective discourse to temper intuitive reasoning, these entities in the ancient world were more elaborate and variable. The CONTAINER schema was salient in places like Egypt and Mesopotamia, evinced not only by the frequent use of prepositions that demonstrate the body's interiority and exteriority, but also by the concern for the integrity of the body and the skin's protection of the vulnerable interior from malevolent spirits and other potentially contaminating entities that existed outside the body.²¹

In Egypt, the most popular iconography and texts from the Third Intermediate period describe several *kheperu*, or "manifestations," as central to personhood.²² Among these are the *akh*, the spirit of the deceased that could aid the living (Hays 2015, 76), the *ib* ("heart"), which was the locus of intelligence and morality that testified for or against the person in the afterlife,²³ and the *rn*, or "name," which represented the reputation of the person, was materially manifested in the cartouche (that is, a hieroglyphic name or title enclosed within an oval), and took on a life of its own, particularly in the afterlife.²⁴ There was also the *ka*, an animating force or "twin" that could exist on in a deceased person's statue once their corpse had disintegrated (Gordon 1996; Assmann 2005, 96–102), and the *ba*,²⁵ which was the most dynamic element of personhood that survived the body.²⁶ During life, the *ba* was largely dormant. At death it was endowed with divine abilities and could travel freely during the day but had to return to the corpse by night.²⁷ This mobility was expressed in the iconographic representation of the *ba* as a saddle-billed stork or a bird with a human head (Janak 2011; Steiner 2015, 56).

²¹ In Egypt, women were particularly susceptible and were expected to perform purifying rituals following events like menstruation. See Gahlin 2007, 337–38; Frandsen 2007. See also Zgoll 2012.

²² Taylor 2001, 16; Meskell and Joyce 2003, 18–21, 67–70; Assmann 2012; Hays 2015, 76–77; Putthoff 2020, 17–38.

²³ The heart exercised a degree of autonomy that was sometimes a source of anxiety for the person (Assmann 1998, 385).

²⁴ Meskell and Joyce 2003, 69–70; Leprohon 2013, 5–7; Allen 2014, 101; Quirke 2015, 55–56.

²⁵ Taylor 2001, 20–23; Meskell 2002, 59–60; Assmann 2005, 90–96; Janak 2011; Gardiner 1957, 173; Žabkar 1968.

²⁶ The *ba* was a flexible concept that referred in earlier periods to the manifestation of a deity, later to a king's endowment with divine powers in the afterlife, and by the time of the New Kingdom, to any (properly buried) deceased person's unseen locus of agency. See Žabkar 1968, 11–15, 51–89.

²⁷ Janak 2011, 144–45; Keel 1997, 64–65. On the anxiety regarding the potential for the *ba*'s return to the body to be disrupted, see Steiner 2015, 128–62; Hays 2015, 51–53.