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*Khaemhet's Bad Luck**

It is astonishing that with so many Egyptian tombs already published, there are still extremely interesting and beautiful monuments, which await their scientific publication. This is the case of the tomb of Ramesses III – the first royal tomb made known to European public thanks to drawings in James Bruce's account of his travels, published in 1790. Several Egyptologists studied decoration of the tomb in view of the future publication but not one of them finished the work. The last one – and the one who nearly succeeded with this task – was Marek Marciniak. For some time in spring 1978 I also was part of his team.

The tomb of Khaemhet (TT 57) is unlucky too, and not only because of lack of publication.

When in the second quarter of the nineteenth century this tomb was discovered,¹ the fame of its beauty went far and wide. The consequences were undesirable.

First of all, exquisite style of reliefs executed in delicate limestone encouraged making copies of decoration by means of a method popular in the nineteenth century, namely pressing wet sheets of soft paper onto reliefs. The side effect of this activity was removing nearly all colour from reliefs – pigment particles easily adhered to wet paper. Khaemhet was so popular that many collections of squeezes were prepared and willingly bought by tourists. Presently they are kept in many museums and institutions around the world.²

Secondly, some people would not be contented with squeezes and would not hesitate to destroy the decoration of the tomb, cutting away the more attractive fragments: royal portraits, images of deceased, agricultural scenes, hieroglyphic scenes, whatever. In less than hundred years the tomb was devoid of majority of beautiful portraits and interesting texts. Eight fragments found its way to the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin, three to the Musée Royale du Cinquantenaire in Brussels.³ The fate of other fragments is unknown.

The activity of early explorers and collectors, such as Richard Lepsius, who unscrupulously gathered reliefs and paintings from devastated tombs and temples for own or museum collections, met with criticism amid their contemporaries. Our compatriot, Maurycy Mann, accompanied Count Adam Potocki in his travel to Egypt and the Holy Land in 1852. He put his memoirs into a volume published the next year in Cracow. He wrote:

The tomb of the father of Sesostris ['Sesostris' stands here for Ramesses II; the tomb in question is actually that of Seti I] *discovered by Mr. Belzoni is one of the most beautiful,*

* Photographs of squeezes are by Z. Doliński; photographs of tomb reliefs are by M. Jawornicki, digitally treated by Z. Doliński.

¹ According to J.H. TYLOR (cited by B. STICH, Making a Good Impression? Paper Squeezes of Ancient Egyptian Reliefs in the Leeds Collections, *Leeds Museums and Galleries Review* 4/2001–02, pp. 7–10), the discoverer may have been G. Lloyd, a friend and assistant of A.C.T.E. Prisse d'Avennes, and the date of the discovery was 1842. However, as J. MÁLEK pointed in his communication (Early Squeezes Made in the Tomb of Khaemhet (TT 57), *JEA* 75, 1989, [= Early Squeezes], pp. 227–229), the tomb may have already been known earlier, since Nestor l'Hôte copied in it – and he died in 1842. Apart from Nestor l'Hôte several other great scholars copied the decoration in there, including A.C.T.E. Prisse d'Avennes, J.G. Wilkinson, R. Lepsius, and Th. Devéria.

² E.g. in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, in the Louvre, in the Griffith Institute in Oxford, in the Bristol City Museum and in the Leeds Museum (this last information I owe to Prof. J. Málek).

³ In Berlin: Nos. 2063, 14442, 14503–4, 14635–7, 22439. Gypsum casts of the first four of them were sent to Egypt in 1913 and put into the walls of the tomb, cf. E. MACKAY, Report of the Excavations and Other Work Carried out in the Necropolis of Thebes for the Department of Antiquities, *ASAE* 14, 1914, p. 89. In Brussels: E.2484, E.2164. (After PM I², pp. 113–119).

*although disgraced and robbed already by Persians, and later, and worse, by Mr. Lepsius. Persians were seeking valuables, shattered the coffin, robbed the mummy – and that was all. Mr. Lepsius proved to be worse than Persians, as he destroyed whole walls, overthrew pillars etc. Even Arabs mention his name with indignation. As a matter of fact, one can understand taking to the museum a cartouche, a nice relief or an interesting painting but to damage the whole wall and spoil such a beauty like Theban tombs, in order to remove a fragment, is dishonourable.*⁴

Théodule Devéria recorded a similar opinion about Lepsius in his notes from his second travel to Egypt in 1862: *À propos de ce nom, voici ce qu'on lit dans le tombeau de Sétî I^{er}, qu'il passe, ce qui est faux d'ailleurs, pour avoir particulièrement mutilé afin d'enrichir son musée de Berlin : ce Lepsius, savant, c'est possible ; voleur, c'est certain.*⁵

In case of Khaemhet, Lepsius seems to be relatively innocent, however: save one fragment (Inv. No. 2063) he took to Berlin, the remaining pieces reached the Berlin Museum much later: six of them were bought in 1899 at the Egyptian antiquities market and the last one was brought to Germany only in 1925.⁶

Devéria also has something in common with Khaemhet: he made squeezes in his tomb too, during the same travel, in March 1862. In the preface to the 4th volume of *Bibliothèque Égyptologique* dedicated to Devéria, Gaston Maspero recalled a visit of Achille Constant Théodore Émile Prisse d'Avennes in the house of Devéria's father in 1843. Prisse d'Avennes had just returned from Egypt. They talked about paper squeezes, which Prisse made in Egyptian monuments, including the tomb of Khaemhet, and about an attempt to reproduce squeezes in gypsum. This idea was implemented, as we shall see.

The biggest collection of squeezes (143 sheets), as far as I know, is in the Griffith Institute, it is also the best illustrated;⁷ well described is the collection in Boston.⁸ Dows Dunham in 1936 compared squeezes in Boston with reliefs, but not personally. He used Harry Burton's photographs, Victor Loret's publication,⁹ and Guy Brunton's observations. Dunham noted differences between squeezes and reliefs and observed that some squeezes are more complete than reliefs seen on the contemporary photographs. Lack of such a notice in the description of the squeeze made from the scene on the lintel in the passage (PM I², 117 (16)) could possibly be an indication that in 1936 this scene was still *in situ*. On the other hand, some inaccuracies in Dunham's descriptions are not excluded, given his indirect way of checking reliefs.

Recently another series of squeezes, kept in the storeroom of the Department of Ancient Art in the National Museum in Warsaw, has been brought to light. This series once belonged to the collection of count Michał Tyszkiewicz who visited Egypt at the turn of

⁴ Egypt, Syria i Konstantynopol, przez Maurycego Manna, Kraków 1858.

⁵ TH. DEVÉRIA, Notes quotidiennes de janvier à fin d'avril 1862, in: *Bibliothèque Égyptologique* 4, Paris 1896, p. 358.

⁶ I owe this information to Dr. B. Arnst from the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin.

⁷ J. MÁLEK, Early Squeezes, p. 229. Nearly all squeezes have been digitalized and are accessible on the Institute website, with references to PM.

⁸ D. DUNHAM, Notes on Some Old Squeezes from Egyptian Monuments, *JAOS* 56, 1936, pp. 174–177.

⁹ V. LORET, La Tombe de Khâ-m-hâ, in: *Mém. Miss.*, I, pp. 113–132.

1861 and 1862. Tyszkiewicz, except his main goal, which was shooting birds and crocodiles, also did sightseeing, was engaged in excavations (not always legal) and was buying antiquities.¹⁰ In that part of his collection, which eventually reached his family estate in Łohojsk in Lithuania, there was also a series of squeezes. These, together with other Egyptian objects (including the papyrus of Bakai and the cartonnage of Nehemes-Bastet), Krystyna Brandt-Tyszkiewicz donated in 1915 to the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Warsaw, then in 1919 they found its way to the National Museum. The list of objects from the Łohojsk collection, made in the beginning of the twentieth century and preserved in the Historical Archives in Vilna, contains position 1 in the section titled *Imitations: Representations of various bas-reliefs and ancient Egyptian inscriptions imprinted in papier-mâché, 29 sheets*.¹¹ In the National Museum this series of squeezes got the number 22168. Presently it bears the number Vr.St.272/a-ee.

It is not known who made squeezes bought by Tyszkiewicz. Perhaps, as Jaromír Málek suggests,¹² it was an enterprising individual who was selling them to tourists. Their value lies in the fact that they document scenes and details long nonexistent. The comparison of squeezes with reliefs in the tomb of Khaemhet enables us to realize how much has been irretrievably lost.

Tyszkiewicz squeezes were made in the following parts of the tomb (numbering of scenes is after PM I²; fragments taken to Berlin and replaced by copies sent from Germany in 1913 are marked by asterisks):

(6) Head of Khaemhet* (**k**) [Fig. 1];

(10) Hands of priest holding Opening the Mouth instrument and fragments of 11 columns of text above (**o**) [Figs. 2a and 2b];

(11) Head of Amenophis III* (**h**); his throne (**i**); three calves in upper register and fragments of 5 columns of text over Khaemhet reporting to King (**aa**) + (**j**) [Figs. 3a–1 + 3a–2 and 3b];

(12) Head of Khaemhet (**m**) and his hands with braziers (**p**);

(13) Boy, surveyor, and scribe in upper row of register I, in front of Khaemhet (**dd**); scribes behind Khaemhet (**t**); agriculture in upper row in register III (men closing basket with grain, boy playing pipe, women gathering ears of corn) (**cc**);

(14) Upper part of man offering (**r**);

(15) Head of Amenophis III* (**a** and **b**); back of his throne (**c**); cartouches (**d**); torso and head of Khaemhet before King (**e**); upper part of official being rewarded by servant, in upper register (**f**); upper part of two middle pairs of officials in middle register (**g**);

(16) Khaemhet adoring, with offerings, on right half of lintel (**u** and **w**) [Figs. 4a and 4b];

(17) Head and torso of Khaemhet (**l**) [Figs. 5a and 5b];

¹⁰ Egipt zapomniany, czyli Michała hr. Tyszkiewicza Dziennik podróży do Egiptu i Nubii (1861–62), Warszawa 1994 (ed. A. NIWIŃSKI).

¹¹ A. SNITKUVIENĖ, Lithuanian Collections of Count Michał Tyszkiewicz and His Family, in: Essays in Honour of Prof. Dr. Jadwiga Lipińska, *Warsaw Egyptological Studies* I, Warsaw 1997, pp. 236–238, 242.

¹² Personal communication.

(18) Men with funeral outfit: bed with headrest and amphorae (**y**) [Figs. 6a and 6b]; chair and racks with vessels (**z**) [Figs. 7a and 7b];

(19) Booths with food-tables, men offering and rowers (**x**) [Figs. 8a and 8b]; female mourners (**s**) [Figs. 9a and 9b];

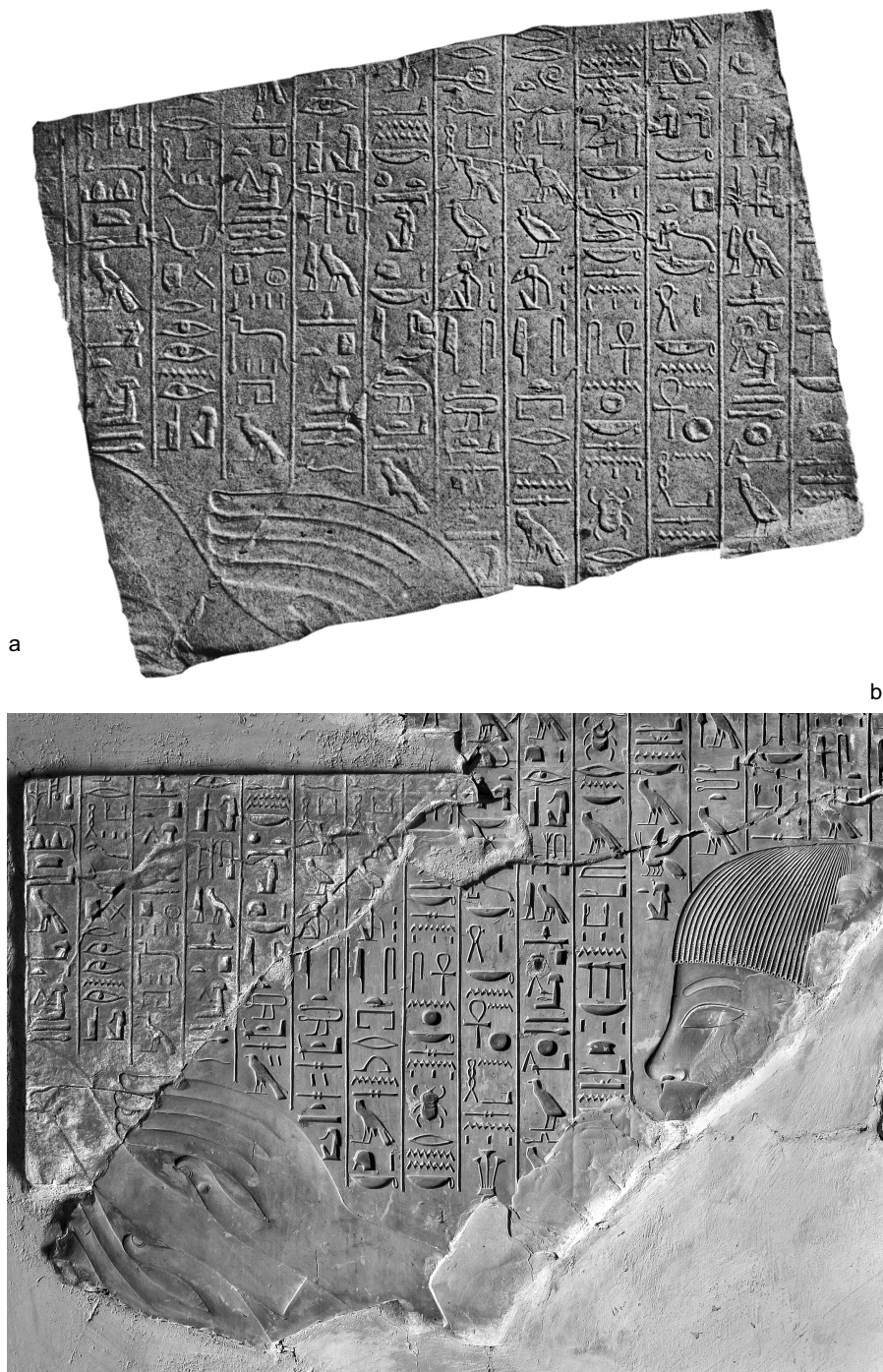
(21) Two men before three squatting deities (**ee**) [Figs. 10a and 10b]; man ploughing with oxen, another sowing, and line of text below (**bb**) [Figs. 11a and 11b];

(27) Head of Khaemhet (**n**) [Figs. 12a and 12b].

In case of 12 squeezes (**o**, **aa**, **j**, **u=w**, **l**, **y**, **z**, **x**, **s**, **ee**, **bb**, **n**) there are essential differences between them and the present condition of reliefs (those taken to Berlin, noted in PM, are disregarded here). The comparison of photographs of squeezes and photographs of reliefs made in 2005 in the tomb enables the evaluation of damages to ancient substance. One thing is puzzling: the presence in the tomb of gypsum copies (apart from the Berlin ones), which in many cases replace original reliefs. They are visible on photographs: **2b** (upper left corner), **3b** and **4b** (almost entire fragments), **6b** (upper part), **7b** (upper and left part), **8b** (entire fragment), **10b** (filling), **11b** (almost entire fragment), **12b** (face of Khaemhet). It is not known when these gypsum copies were put into the walls. It must have been done after 1937, as on photographs from the archive Photo Marburg (Neg. Nos. 97.168 and 87.093), made that year, they are absent; also Dunham doesn't mention them – he reports only the lack of relief. As to the source of copies – it seems that they were made on the basis of squeezes. Outlines and size of replacements correspond with format of squeezes. Some of Tyszkiewicz squeezes match exactly gypsum replacements; some of them seem to be slightly shifted to one or other side. An overview of available squeezes reveals that there are numerous copies of especially attractive or interesting motifs and that in order to make them, sheets of wet paper were applied sometimes more to the right or to the left, to the top or to the bottom, covering slightly different area of relief. Looking at the present condition of the tomb one can only regret that there are no squeezes of the entire decoration of the tomb, when it was still *in situ*.



1. Khaemhet at the entrance to the tomb (upper part in the Berlin Museum, replaced by cast). PM F, p. 114 (6).



2. Khaemhet offering with Opening the Mouth text: a/ squeeze; b/ relief with upper left corner restored in gypsum. PM I², p. 115 (10).



a-1



a-2



b

3. Cattle from the upper register and text above Khaemhet: a-1/ and a-2/ squeezes; b/ gypsum copy of relief with original part at the bottom. PM I², p. 115 (11).

a



b



4. Right part of the lintel with Khaemhet before an offering table: a/ squeeze; b/ gypsum copy of relief with original part of seated Osiris. PM I², p. 117 (16).

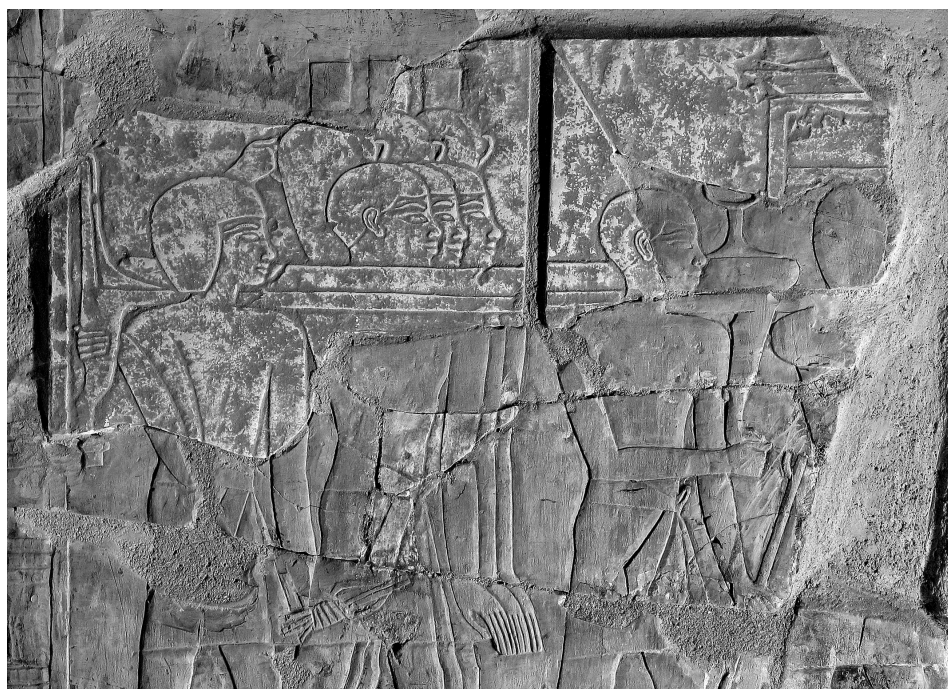
a



b



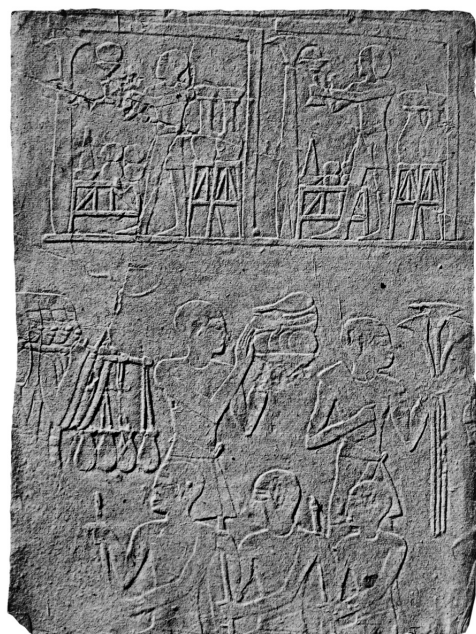
5. Head and torso of Khaemhet: a/ squeeze; b/ relief with most of head missing. PM I², p. 117 (17).



6. Funeral procession with a bed and amphorae: a/ squeeze; b/ relief with upper part restored in gypsum. PM I², p. 117 (18).



7. Funeral procession with a chair and vessels in racks: a/ squeeze; b/ relief with upper and left part restored in gypsum. PM I², p. 117 (18).

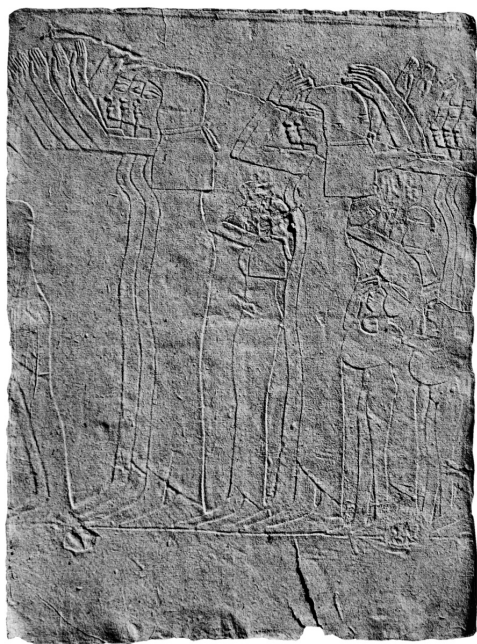


a



b

8. Booths with food-tables, men with offerings and male mourners: a/ squeeze; b/ gypsum copy of lower part of relief. PM I², p. 117 (19).



a



b

9. Female mourners: a/ squeeze; b/ relief with left part missing. PM I², p. 117 (19).

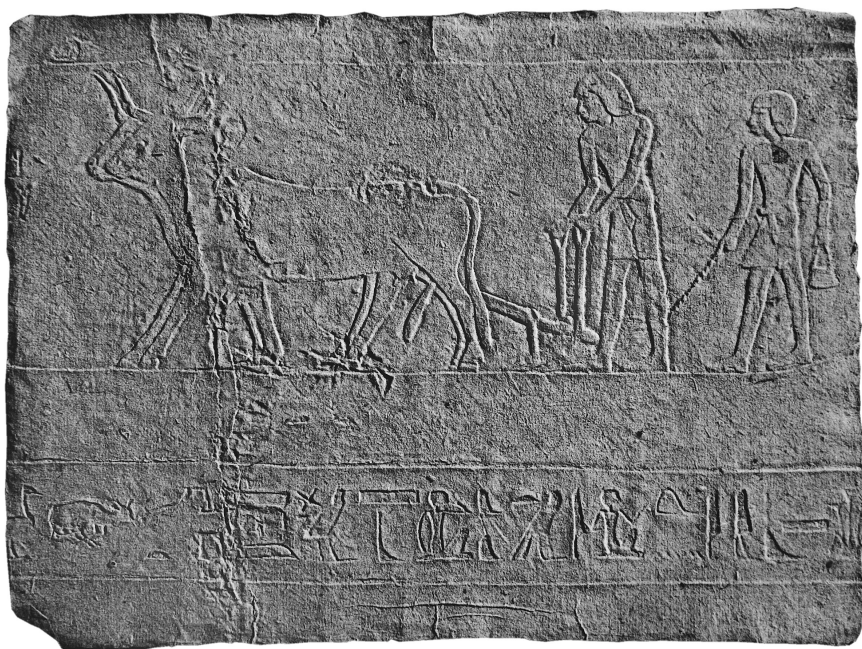


a



b

10. Men offering before seated gods: a/ squeeze; b/ gypsum copy of relief with original part at the bottom. PM I², p. 118 (21).



a

b



11. Men ploughing: a/ squeeze; b/ relief with gypsum fillings. PM I², p. 118 (21).



a

b



12. Head of Khaemhet: a/ squeeze; b/ relief with face restored in gypsum. PM I², p. 119 (27).