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*Object Frieze in the Burial Chamber  
of the Late Period Shaft Tomb of Menekhibnekau  
at Abusir*

Object friezes, containing a broad range of different items, such as crowns, staves, royal insignia, clothing, jewellery, weapons, ritual objects, amulets, tools, etc., appear rather frequently on the sides of wooden coffins or, much rarely, on the sides of the burial chambers dating especially from the later part of the Old Kingdom until the end of the Middle Kingdom. Less often, they are attested during the New Kingdom and even later.<sup>1</sup> In some cases, they are only painted; otherwise their names are added as well. Sometimes, more items of one and the same kind are mentioned or a digit is added, clearly intending to enhance their magical powers for the deceased.

Although the object frieze is, exceptionally, attested later, namely during the New Kingdom in scenes of the funeral outfit or the deceased overseeing it (e.g. TT 79: Mencheperre-seneb)<sup>2</sup> and even the Late Period (TT 33: Padiamenopet),<sup>3</sup> its use in the tombs of such a date seemed to have been limited to the Theban region so far. Recently, however, such friezes have also been found in the large Late Period shaft tombs at Abusir, dated to the very end of the Twenty-sixth or even the beginning of the Twenty-seventh Dynasty, namely those of Iufaa<sup>4</sup> and Menekhibnekau.<sup>5</sup>

In the tomb of Iufaa, several short object friezes (containing up to ten items as a maximum) appear on the outer side of the lid of the anthropoid inner sarcophagus, in the head region, as well as on the northern and southern sides of the depression inside the outer sarcophagus (close to its western, i.e. foot-end).

In the burial chamber of Menekhibnekau, a large, single object frieze appears in the upper part of the western wall. Together with a long *ḥtp-di-nswt* formula containing also the titles of Menekhibnekau that is written in a single line just above it,<sup>6</sup> it takes the entire length of the western (i.e. the longer) side of the burial chamber. Above the *ḥtp-di-nswt* formula, the personifications of the night hours appear as a row of twelve women (always with their names written above their heads); the kneeling owner of the tomb is depicted in front of them.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> E. OTTO, s.v. Gerätefries, *LÄ* II, 532, referring to G. JÉQUIER, *Frisés des sarcophages du Moyen Empire, MIFAO* 47, Le Caire 1921 [= *Frisés*] and Id., *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains du Pepi II, Le Caire* 1929.

<sup>2</sup> See recently H. GUKSCH, *Die Gräber des Nacht-Min und des Men-cheper-Ra-seneb, Theben Nr. 87 und 79, AV* 34, Mainz a/Rhein 1995, pp. 162–164, Pls 40–41, with parallels from other tombs mentioned on p. 162; see also the tombs listed in PM<sup>2</sup> I.I, p. 472 (g).

<sup>3</sup> J. DÜMICHEN, *Das Grabpalast des Patuamenap in der thebanischen Nekropole I, Leipzig* 1884, pp. 43–45 and Pls XIV–XV.

<sup>4</sup> On the archaeological work in this tomb, see now L. BAREŠ, K. SMOLÁRIKOVÁ, *The shaft tomb of Iufaa I: Archaeology, Abusir XVII, Prague* 2008 [= *Iufaa I*]. Texts and scenes from the magnificent relief decoration of Iufaa's burial chamber (including the object friezes) will be published in the second volume, now under preparation.

<sup>5</sup> On the archaeological work in this tomb, see now L. BAREŠ, K. SMOLÁRIKOVÁ, *The shaft tomb of Menekhibnekau I: Archaeology, Abusir XXV, Prague* 2011 [= *Menekhibnekau I*]. Texts and scene from the relief decoration of that tomb will appear in the second volume, now under preparation.

<sup>6</sup> On the titles of Menekhibnekau, see BAREŠ, SMOLÁRIKOVÁ, *Menekhibnekau I*, pp. 74–79.

<sup>7</sup> On those personifications, see L. BAREŠ, *Personifications of the day- and night-hours in the tomb of Menekhibnekau at Abusir – a preliminary notice, [in:] J. Mynářová, P. Maříková Vlčková, M. Tomášek (Eds), My Things Changed Things [Fs P. Charvát], Prague* 2009, pp. 16–24.

The object frieze contains altogether 47 items, usually arranged in short columns. Above, their names are listed, each of them separated with short vertical dividing lines. Below, the items or their symbols are depicted, without any dividing lines but arranged into several groups on low rectangular stands. The object frieze starts in the north-western corner and is thus arranged in the direction from the head to the feet of the deceased. These objects are:

- 1) *ʕnt* ‘Afnēt Headdress’,<sup>8</sup> with a depiction of it put on a low stand below – the depictions below the items one to nine are placed on one and the same low rectangular stand (representing most probably a box for storing those items);
- 2) *nms* ‘Nemes Headdress’,<sup>9</sup> with its depiction put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 3) *iʕrt* ‘Uraeus’,<sup>10</sup> with a depiction of a raised cobra put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 4) *dt* ‘Eternity’,<sup>11</sup> below, the same cobra with an additional sign *t* is depicted, put on a low rectangular stand;
- 5) *sšm(t) rmt* ‘Uraeus’,<sup>12</sup> with the depiction of a raised cobra put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 6) *wrt hk3w* ‘Great of Magic (i.e. the Red Crown),<sup>13</sup> with the depiction of a raised cobra put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 7) *sr(k)t* ‘Sereq (Serpent),<sup>14</sup> with the depiction of a raised cobra put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 8) *ntr ʕnh* ‘Living God’,<sup>15</sup> with the depiction of a raised cobra put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 9) *bd(?)* ‘Natron’,<sup>16</sup> with the depiction of an incense burner put on a low rectangular stand below;

<sup>8</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, Frises, pp. 4–6. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by J. CAPART, Une liste d’amulettes, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 3, where the reading is clearly misunderstood.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, Frises, pp. 8–11. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 4; K. GOEBS, Crowns in Egyptian Funerary Literature. Royalty, Rebirth, and Destruction, Oxford 2008 [= Crowns], pp. 89–92, and *pass.*

<sup>10</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, Frises, pp. 14 and 72. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 6.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, Frises, pp. 14 and 70. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 5. Cf. JÉQUIER, Frises, pp. 69–70, where also the connection of this item with Chapter 158 of the Book of the Dead is mentioned (n. 5 on p. 69).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, Frises, pp. 13–14. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 9; R. HANNIG, *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch* II, *Hannig-Lexica* 5, Mainz a/Rhein 2006 [= *ÄgWb* II], p. 2355, and P. WILSON, A Ptolemaic Lexikon, *OLA* 78, Leuven 1997 [= A Ptolemaic Lexikon], pp. 927–928.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, Frises, pp. 14 and 66. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 17, No. 29.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, Frises, pp. 13–14. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, Frises, pp. 13–14. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 8; HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, pp. 522–523.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, Frises, pp. 118 and 318. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 17, No. 18(?); R. HANNIG, *Grosses Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch* (2800–950 v. Chr.), *Kulturgeschichte der Antiken Welt* 64, Mainz a/Rhein 2006<sup>4</sup> [= *GHWb*], p. 266.

- 10) *imnt* ‘The Hidden’<sup>17</sup> with the depiction of a vulture (G 14) put on a low rectangular stand below – the depictions below (items Nos 10 to 15) are situated on one and the same low rectangular stand;
- 11) *dmd(t)* ‘The Uniting’<sup>18</sup> with the depiction of a vulture put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 12) *dm3(t)?* ‘The Massacring(?)’<sup>19</sup> with the depiction of a vulture put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 13) *nrt* ‘The Vulture’<sup>20</sup> with the depiction of a vulture put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 14) *wrt hk3w* ‘Great of Magic (i.e. the Red Crown)’<sup>21</sup> with the depiction of a vulture put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 15) *mkr(t)* ‘Serpent’s Head’<sup>22</sup> with the depiction of a raised cobra (with a tail shown outstretched and not coiled) put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 16) *wsht* ‘Broad Collar’<sup>23</sup> with the depiction of this type of collar (ending with clasps shaped as falcon heads on both its ends) put on a low rectangular stand below – the items Nos 16 to 20 are situated on one and the same low rectangular stand;
- 17) *nrt* ‘The Vulture’<sup>24</sup> with the depiction of a vulture put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 18) *m(ϕ)nh* ‘Counterpoise’<sup>25</sup> with the depiction of this item made of beads put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 19) *tit* ‘*Tyt* Amulet’<sup>26</sup> with the depiction of the *tyt*-knot put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 20) *ḏdwy?* ‘The Two *Djed*’<sup>27</sup> with the depiction of a *djed*-pillar put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 21) *h3drt* ‘Bracelet’<sup>28</sup> with the depiction of three bracelets (in a rectangular shape with a clasp resembling a rope on each side) put on a low rectangular stand below – items Nos 21 to 30 are situated on one and the same low rectangular stand;

<sup>17</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, p. 15, referring to a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 14.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, p. 15, referring to a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 13; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, p. 1198; HANNIG, *ĀgWb* II, p. 2790.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, p. 15, referring to a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 15; HANNIG, *ĀgWb* II, p. 2782: *dm3t-pḏwt* 1) ‘die die Bogen zusammenbindet (epitheton von Nechbet), 2) Amulett (in Geiergestalt)’.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, p. 15, referring to a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 12; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, pp. 526–527.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, p. 15, referring to a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 17, No. 29; GOEBS, *Crowns*, pp. 299–302.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 53–55. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 15, No. 1. One may also compare *mkr* ‘staff’ – HANNIG, *GHWb*<sup>4</sup>, p. 391.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 62–72 and 340. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 15, No. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *supra*, n. 19.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 65–66, 72. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 18, No. 37.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 335–336. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 19, No. 46.

<sup>27</sup> See a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 19, No. 43.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 100–102; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, p. 600. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 16, No. 17. Or ‘Pectoral’(?), see HANNIG, *ĀgWb* II, p. 1559.

- 22) *swr(t)* ‘Anklet(?)’,<sup>29</sup> with the depiction of three anklets in an oval shape with a clasp resembling a rope on each side put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 23) *mnf(r)t ir(t)* ‘wy ‘Bracelet – Guarding Arms’,<sup>30</sup> with the depiction of three bracelets (in a rectangular shape with a clasp resembling a rope on each side, i.e. in the same shape as item No. 21) put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 24) *w<sup>c</sup>t(t) hbst* ‘(Animal) Tail,<sup>31</sup> (Animal) Tail (decorating the royal apron)’,<sup>32</sup> with the depiction of two animal tails put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 25) *bs(3w)* ‘(Pearl) Strap’,<sup>33</sup> with the depiction of this item (decorated with a vertical strap decorated and ending with beads) put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 26) *m3gs(w)* ‘Dagger’,<sup>34</sup> with the depiction of a dagger put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 27) *(m)tpnt* ‘Dagger Sheath(?)’,<sup>35</sup> with the depiction of a dagger put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 28) *db3* ‘(Royal) Apron(?)’,<sup>36</sup> with the depiction of an apron (S 26) put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 29) *s3t* ‘Falcon’,<sup>37</sup> with an item in the shape of an archaic image of a falcon (G 11) put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 30) *mnh(t)* ‘Clothing’,<sup>38</sup> with the depiction of a falcon on a standard (F 7) accompanied by a horizontal strip of cloth with three strands of a fringe put on a low rectangular stand below;
- 31) *mdw Hr, isr ir* ‘Staff of Horus,<sup>39</sup> Staff (made of tamarisk wood?<sup>40</sup>)’, the depiction below (items Nos 31 to 34) resembles a low rectangular stand with twenty-four vertical sticks arranged at different intervals;

<sup>29</sup> Perhaps written erroneously instead of *sww* ‘bracelet’, see HANNIG, *ÄgWb*<sup>4</sup>, p. 788. Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 99–100, see also HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, pp. 2142–2143: ‘Pearl’.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 99–100. Cf. WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, p. 429. Or should *ir* be considered as a simple *nisbe* with the meaning ‘(Bracelet) for (both arms)’, see HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 328.

<sup>31</sup> HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 628.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 110–111, see also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 17, No. 20 and HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 1854 – erroneously written as *hbbt*?

<sup>33</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 102–108, see also pp. 18–21: ‘le tablier de perles’; HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 822: ‘Perlen-Überschurz’. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 17, No. 19(?).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 195–200. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 17, No. 21, where the reading is clearly misunderstood.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 195–200; HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 1157: ‘Dolchscheide’. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 17, No. 22.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 18–21; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, pp. 230–231, or perhaps ‘(Pearl)-Pendant’ (HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 2834: ‘Perlengehänge’), with a depiction of an apron, used erroneously. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 17, No. 23.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 91–93: ‘le faucon couché’, for possible connotations see also HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, pp. 2074–2082. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 17, No. 24.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 31–39; HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, pp. 1080–1081: ‘Kleid, Gewand (für Götterbilder, den Verstorbenen)’.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 160–161; HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 1160: ‘Horus-Stab’.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, pp. 111–112; HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 412.

- 32) *ḡsr* ‘Sceptre’<sup>41</sup> for the depiction below, see item No. 31;
- 33) (*m*)*ḡn* ‘Stick’<sup>42</sup> for the depiction below, see item No. 31;
- 34) *šht(-w<sup>c</sup>tt)*,<sup>43</sup> *mstyw n imntt i3btt(?)* ‘Royal Apron, Packets of Clothing of the West and East(?)’<sup>44</sup> for the depiction below, see item No. 31;
- 35) *mks* ‘Mekes-staff (or, Mekes-Symbol?)’<sup>45</sup> with the depiction of a roughly cylindrical object below – the depictions below items Nos 35 to 41 are situated on a low rectangular stand;
- 36) *sm* ‘Staff’<sup>46</sup> with the depiction of a mace with a pear-shaped head (T 3) standing on a low stand below;
- 37) *ḡd* ‘Mace?’<sup>47</sup> with the depiction of a mace with a pear-shaped head (T 3) standing on a low stand below;
- 38) *mn(-wr?)* ‘Incense?’<sup>48</sup> with the depiction of a tall pottery incense burner standing on a low stand below;
- 39) *nh(3)ḡ3* ‘Flail’<sup>49</sup> with the depiction of a flagellum standing on a low stand below;
- 40) *ḡ<sup>c</sup>m* ‘*Djam*-sceptre’<sup>50</sup> with the depiction of two short sceptres (in the shape of a *w3s*-sign) put onto a low stand below;
- 41) *w(3)s* ‘*Was*-sceptre’<sup>51</sup> with the depiction of two short sceptres (in the shape of a *w3s*-sign) put onto a low stand below;
- 42) *ḡb(w)t* ‘(Forked) Staff’<sup>52</sup> with the depiction of two forked sticks put on a low stand below – the depictions below items Nos 42 to 47 are situated on a low rectangular stand;
- 43) *iwnt* ‘Bow’<sup>53</sup> with the depiction of two composite bows standing on a low stand below;
- 44) *r(w)ḡ* ‘Bow-string’<sup>54</sup> with the depiction of two bow-strings standing on a low stand below;
- 45) *ḡrḡ* ‘Bundle (of arrows)’<sup>55</sup> with the depiction of a bunch consisting of five arrows standing on a low stand below;

<sup>41</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 161 and 342, but see also HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 2861: *ḡsr* ‘Anrichtetisch’ (i.e. a table with meals).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 167 and 342.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 2325.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 21 and 32; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, p. 459, or ‘Staff of Osiris’ – see HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 1123 or perhaps ‘Mortar (Pestle?)’, see *ibid.*, p. 2499.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, pp. 473–474, HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 1153, *Id.*, *GHWb*<sup>4</sup>, p. 393.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 161 and 342.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 203–205.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, p. 427; HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, p. 1064.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 187–191; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, pp. 538–539.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 176–180.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 176–180, see also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZÄS* 45, 1908–09, p. 17, No. 28.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 165–168; HANNIG, *ÄgWb* II, pp. 495–496.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 211–214; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, pp. 53–54.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. JÉQUIER, *Frises*, pp. 220–223.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 214–216.

- 46) *pdt* ‘Bow’,<sup>56</sup> with the depiction of two bows standing on a low stand below;  
 47) *r(w)d* ‘Bow-string’, with the depiction of two bow-strings standing on a low stand below.

The reasons for the presence or absence of the object friezes in the decoration of the individual Late Period tombs at Abusir (or such tombs in general) are far from certain. Some time ago, a connection between the object frieze and the offering list (as part of the tomb’s decoration) has been suggested, namely that the friezes precede the offering lists.<sup>57</sup> The fact that no offering list seems to have existed in the subterranean parts of the tomb of Menekhibnekau (in the burial chamber proper or on any part of the double sarcophagus) might corroborate such an assumption. Theoretically, however, a short offering list (and/or another object frieze as well) might have existed on the sides of the inner sarcophagus that is still firmly embedded inside the outer one, large areas of its surface thus being inaccessible, perhaps forever. At the same time, numerous fragments of an offering list (or even offering lists?) had been unearthed above the ground at this spot. Most probably, therefore, an offering list/offering lists must have been present in the superstructure of that tomb that, unfortunately, had been almost completely destroyed by later stone quarrying.<sup>58</sup> On the other hand, most of the New Kingdom and Late Period examples of the object frieze formed part of the scene of the deceased overseeing his funeral outfit, i.e. they appear in a context rather different from the situation in the Abusir shaft tombs.

In the tomb of Iufaa, two large (and several minor) offering lists are present, in addition to the object friezes mentioned above. A large list, in a shape usual for other large Late Period shaft tombs of the same kind, decorated the southern side of the burial chamber and was thus situated to the left of the tomb owner’s mummy. Another large and detailed offering list, accompanied by the traditional scene of the tomb owner seated in front of a table with offerings, decorated the outer side of the inner sarcophagus’s chest on its foot end. A number of representations of offerings, offering tables, etc. appear also on the inner sides and bottom of the chest.

In the remaining large shaft tombs at Abusir, namely those of Udjahorresnet<sup>59</sup> and Padihor,<sup>60</sup> no traces of any object frieze had been found. In both tombs, however, a rudimentary offering list exists, so that, perhaps, there was no need for the tomb owner (or for the people who had prepared his tomb) to add an object frieze there. Theoretically, of course, an object frieze (quite short, in this case) might have been included in the decoration of the inner sarcophagus of Udjahorresnet in its parts now inaccessible, or might have appeared on the presupposed wooden coffin of Padihor, destroyed by the tomb robbers later on and now

<sup>56</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 211–214. See also a list of amulets from the Saite Period published by CAPART, *ZĀS* 45, 1908–09, p. 20, No. 57.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. E. OTTO, *s.v.* Gerätefries, *LÄ* II, 532.

<sup>58</sup> BAREŠ, SMOLÁRIKOVÁ, Menekhibnekau I, pp. 38–41.

<sup>59</sup> L. BAREŠ, The shaft tomb of Udjahorresnet at Abusir, *Abusir* IV, Praha 1999 [= The shaft tomb of Udjahorresnet].

<sup>60</sup> F. COPPENS, K. SMOLÁRIKOVÁ, Lesser Late Period Tombs at Abusir. The Tomb of Padihor and the Anonymous Tomb R 3, *Abusir* XX, Prague 2009 [= Lesser Late Period Tombs], pp. 23–84.

missing. In both those tombs, moreover, the superstructure had been so badly destroyed that a possible existence of any offering list there can be neither proven nor rejected. In the anonymous tomb R 3, almost no traces of any decoration had been found and, most probably, no offering list or object frieze had ever existed here.<sup>61</sup>

In the object friezes mentioned above, several items appear more than once, even in one and the same frieze. So far, no obvious reason for that fact can be given. In the case of Menekhibnekau, especially, the frieze had to cover the entire length of the wall. A possible connection with texts accompanying that frieze in the lower part of the same western wall of the burial chamber cannot be proven. Whether some other imaginable motives, such as personal preferences (of the tomb owner or of the people who had prepared his tomb) or the habits of that time had been present as well, must remain purely hypothetical, more so in view of the very limited evidence.

Generally speaking, the reasons for the presence or absence of an object frieze in the large Late Period shaft tombs at Abusir are as unclear as are, for instance, the reasons for the surprising difference in the orientation of deceased in those burial complexes.<sup>62</sup> Supposedly, all those tombs had been built in about the same time<sup>63</sup> and had belonged to people of roughly the same (or, at least, rather similar) social status<sup>64</sup> that, moreover, seem to have been related to each other.<sup>65</sup> Because of that, the reasons for such clear differences must be looked for elsewhere, perhaps in personal preferences, as well as means (including the ordinary workforce and qualified artists) and time available for the construction of their burial complexes, rather unsatisfying as such an explanation is. Certainly, one may even ask, whether – and if so, to which degree – the owners of the individual tombs actually had the possibility and liberty (and/or had felt an interest in that matter?) to choose and, potentially, also change any of the features mentioned above, or, whether they had been more or less dependent on other decision-makers in this respect. Theoretically, the presence of the object-friezes in the large Late Period shaft tombs might be connected with the archaistic tendencies of that era as well.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>61</sup> COPPENS, SMOLÁRIKOVÁ, Lesser Late Period Tombs, pp. 85–104.

<sup>62</sup> BAREŠ, SMOLÁRIKOVÁ, Menekhibnekau I, p. 54 with n. 155.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>64</sup> L. BAREŠ, The social status of the owners of the large Late Period shaft tombs, [*in:*] M. Bárta, F. Coppens, J. Krejčí (Eds), Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2005. Proceedings of the conference held in Prague (June 27–July 5, 2005), Prague 2006, pp. 1–17.

<sup>65</sup> BAREŠ, SMOLÁRIKOVÁ, Menekhibnekau I, pp. 79–80, see also E. STROUHAL, The relation of Iufaa to persons found beside his shaft-tomb at Abusir (Egypt), *ArOr* 70, 2002, pp. 403–414; E. STROUHAL, P. KLÍR, The relation of persons buried in the tomb of Iufaa at Abusir, [*in:*] M. Bárta, F. Coppens, J. Krejčí (Eds), Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2005. Proceedings of the conference held in Prague (June 27–July 5, 2005), Prague 2006, pp. 50–56; E. STROUHAL, A. NĚMEČKOVÁ, Iufaa and the Others. Anthropological and Palaeopathological Analysis, [*in:*] BAREŠ, SMOLÁRIKOVÁ, Iufaa I, pp. 253–281; L. BAREŠ, Family ties among the owners of the large Late Period shaft tombs at Abusir (Egypt), *Anthropologie* 48/2, 2010, pp. 121–125.

<sup>66</sup> On the rules for the choice and arrangement of the object friezes (dealing however exclusively with their Middle Kingdom examples) see H. WILLEMS, The Embalmer Embalmed. Remarks on the Meaning of the Decoration of Some Middle Kingdom Coffins, [*in:*] J. van Dijk (Ed.), Essays on Ancient Egypt in Honour of Herman Te Velde, Groningen 1997, pp. 343–372, referring also to Id., Chests of Life. A Study of the Typology and Conceptual Development of Middle Kingdom Standard Class Coffins, Leiden 1988, pp. 209–211. In his

Summing up, our understanding of thoughts and motives that had led the owners and/or the architects of such tombs to choosing (or, on the other hand, to omitting) a certain type or feature of the tomb's arrangement, the inner decoration of their burial chambers and the individual set of amulets and burial equipment in general<sup>67</sup> is quite limited and much more work should be done in that respect. Without any doubt, such changes must have mirrored deep changes in the religious thought of ancient Egyptians in the course of time, as, e.g., the differences in the position and orientation of deceased clearly show.<sup>68</sup> At the same time, some features – such as the presence or absence of the inner wooden coffin inside the double sarcophagus – had perhaps been in no way connected with the personal preferences or changes in the religious thought of that time and might have simply reflected the means available to the owner of the tomb (including his family) or the degree of the royal favour.

So far, the large Late Period shaft tombs at Abusir have brought more questions than answers. Let us hope that the future excavations will change the balance in favour of the latter.

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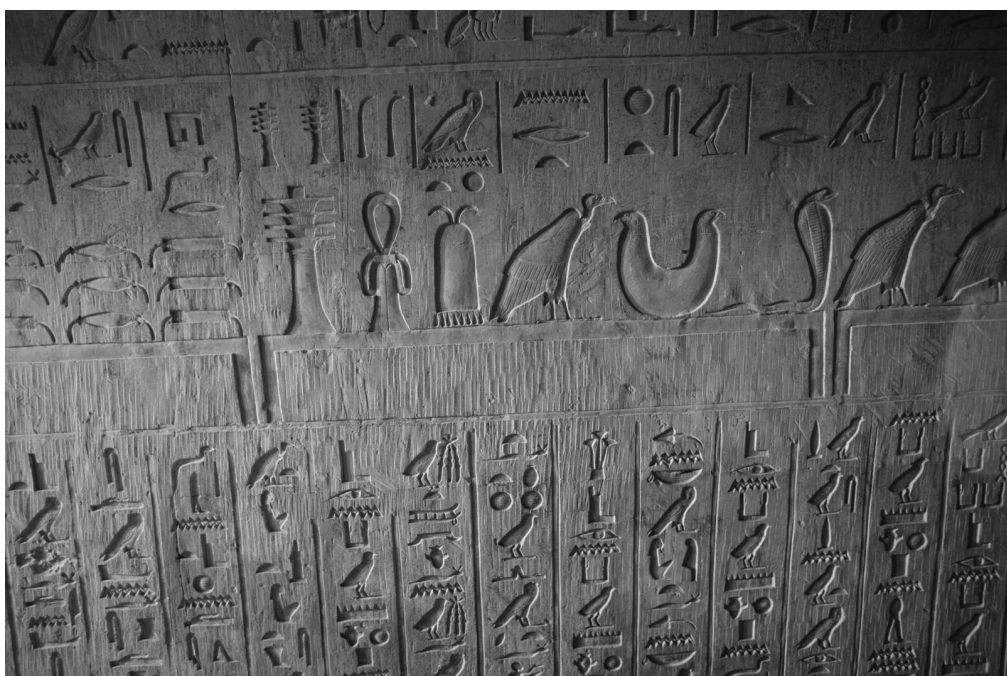
opinion, the object friezes accompany and, in a way, perhaps also materialize, the rites concerning the burial and the resurrection of the deceased.

<sup>67</sup> On this phenomenon, see, e.g., the interesting and thought-inspiring recent discussion of the meaning and use of the so-called magical bricks by H. FRANZMEIER, *Die magischen Ziegel des Neuen Reiches – Material und immaterieller Wert einer Objektgruppe*, *MDAIK* 66, 2010, pp. 93–105 (esp. 93–95). See also the preceding note.

<sup>68</sup> J.-PH. LAUER, *La structure de la tombe de Hor à Saqqarah*, *ASAE* 52, 1954, p. 134 n. 2; BAREŠ, *The shaft tomb of Udjahorresnet*, p. 22 with n. 12; M. STAMMERS, *The Elite Late Period Egyptian Tombs at Memphis*, Oxford 2009, p. 31.



1. Beginning of the object frieze in the burial chamber of Menekhibnekau (Phot. M. Frouz).



2. Second part of the object frieze in the burial chamber of Menekhibnekau (Phot. M. Frouz).



3. Third part of the object frieze in the burial chamber of Menekhibnekau (Phot. M. Frouz).



4. End of the object frieze in the burial chamber of Menekhibnekau (Phot. M. Ottmar).