

Fig. 1 View of the tomb of Ankhires from the north-east (photo M. Odler)

Tomb at Abusir South from a time of change belonging to Ankhires, inspector of hairdressers of the Great House (AS 98)

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A new tomb (AS 98; dimensions 24.00 × 17.20 m, figs. 1 and 2) belonging to Ankhires, an inspector of hairdressers of the Great House, was discovered by the Czech Institute of Egyptology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University at Abusir South during the autumn part of the 2016 mission.¹ The excavation of the limestone mastaba proceeded along with the restoration and reconstruction works on the partially preserved decoration of Room 1 until autumn 2017. The tomb is located at a cemetery used from the late Third Dynasty onwards (fig. 3). The earliest structure there is a large mud brick mastaba built in the reign of King Huni (AS 54) (Bárta 2010). In its vicinity, a mastaba of the official Kaaper was built in the early Fifth Dynasty (AS 1) (Bárta 2001: 143–191) and several smaller tombs were erected in the latter half of the Fifth Dynasty (AS 76–78) (Dulíková *et al.* 2017). Ankhires's afterlife mansion situated west of the mastaba AS 54 is preliminarily dated to the second half of the Fifth Dynasty (Nyuserre to Djedkare). Its owner witnessed important changes in Old Kingdom society and tomb architecture. Because this part of the landscape overlooks the Abusir wadi, the supposed entrance to the necropoleis at Abusir South and North Saqqara, this area was used for tomb building for several centuries.

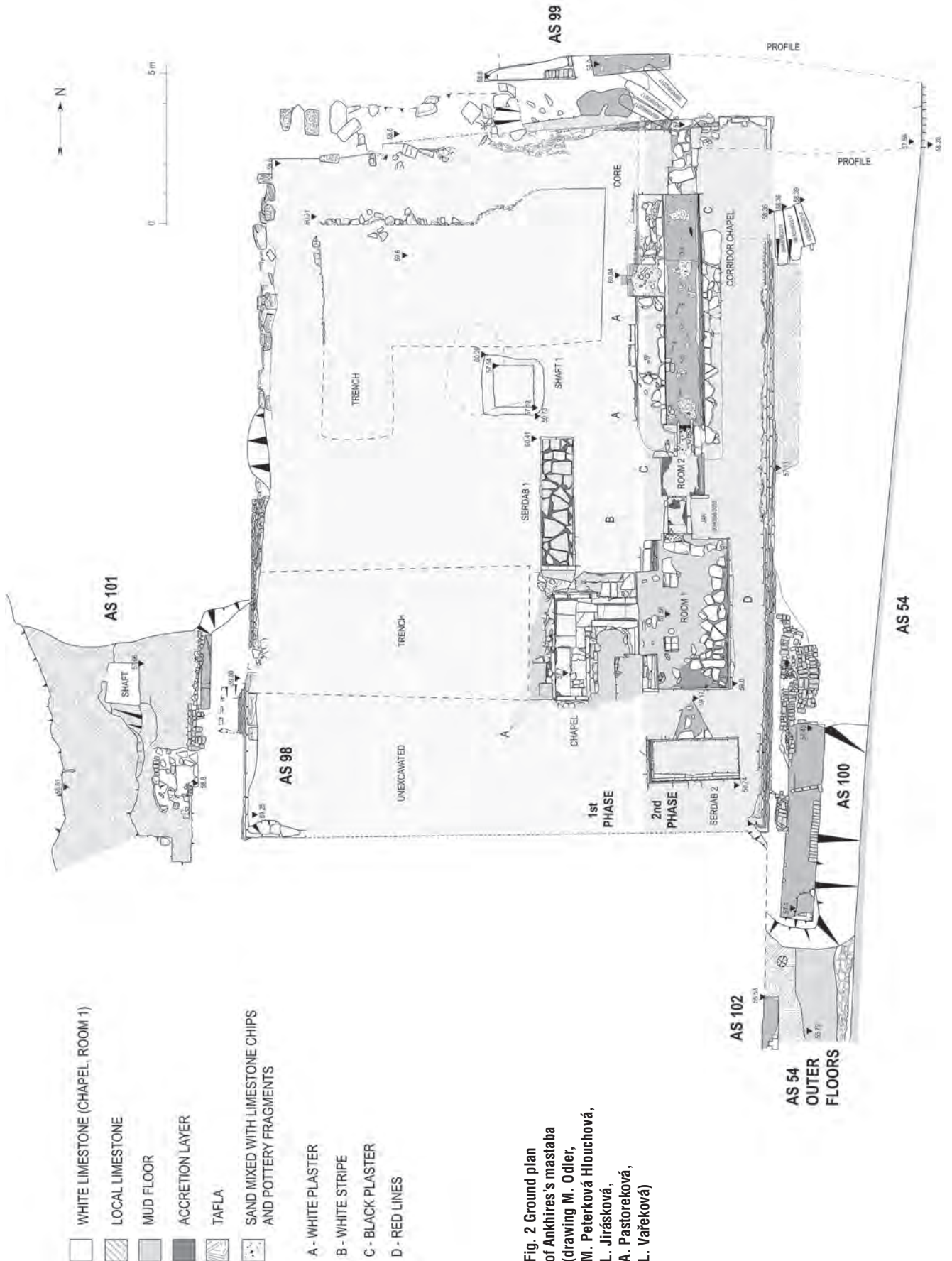


Fig. 2 Ground plan of Ankhires's mastaba (drawing M. Odler, M. Peterková Hloučková, L. Jirásková, A. Pastoreková, L. Vařeková)

Tomb architecture

Superstructure

Before the start of the excavations, dislocated and eroded blocks of local limestone originally coming from the tomb masonry were identified on the desert surface. Some narrow blocks might have served as roofing blocks, but they were scarce. Although the upper parts of the structure were destroyed or damaged and eroded, the general ground plan is clear (fig. 2). The mastaba was damaged and looted and subsequently remained open to natural transformations for a long time. Hopefully, fragments of yet unprocessed pottery will point to a time period when the tomb was serving as a source of worked stone (if the tomb was not destroyed in a single event). The masonry blocks were found in several levels, as they were pulled and moved away from the tomb walls. A mud layer was

observed under some of them, indicating that the fill in the chapel and Room 1 was deposited gradually.

From the structural point of view, two main phases can be observed in Ankhires's tomb. The older phase contained a chapel of the "traditional" style with an L-shaped ground plan and a single funerary cult stela – false door in its western wall. Serdab 1 was built north of it, with statues participating in the funerary cult. A burial shaft is also a part of this phase (see below).

The sophisticated concept of the second phase is unconventional for the period, with a corridor chapel, Rooms 1 and 2 and Serdab 2 added to the original ground plan of the mastaba. The extension happened during the life of Ankhires, as it must have taken a considerable time to change the layout and finish the altered tomb ground plan. If a traditional L-shaped chapel in a tomb had been followed, an entrance would be found in front of the chapel.



Fig. 3 The mastaba of Ankhires and its vicinity: anonymous Third Dynasty mastaba AS 54, tombs of Kaaper (AS 1), Iti (AS 10), Hetepi (AS 20), Kaaper Junior (AS 61), Kaisebi and Ptahwer (AS 76 and AS 76b), anonymous mastabas (AS 77, AS 78, AS 78b, AS 81, AS 88 and AS 91) and boat AS 80 (archive of CIE, processed by V. Brůna)

Rather untypically, a room/courtyard decorated with low relief was built east of the assumed original entrance. Designated as Room 1, it represents the most intriguing part of the tomb. The whole inner tomb space leads the visitor from the entrance in the north to the central point of the funerary cult in the tomb's south-eastern part, the false door in the chapel. Inside the cultic rooms, the floor gradually rises up to the false door, as the visitor of the tomb is approaching the centre of the funerary cult. Accordingly, the tomb's description will proceed from the entrance to the funerary chapel.

Entrance and corridor chapel

The tomb's entrance is situated in the northern wall, 1.80 m west of the north-eastern corner, with a recessed door opening. Its orientation was probably due to the main access to the cemetery from the north-east, from the area of the former Lake of Abusir. The entrance façade is 2.46 m wide and 0.30 m deep.

The cultic space of the tomb was accessible from the north (see above). The entrance was followed by a short corridor (2.22 × 0.60 m, after 1.16 m broadened to 0.98 m) and a corridor chapel (7.68 × 1.18 m).² The fill of this area consisted of darker yellow sand mixed with fragments of pottery and limestone. Larger limestone blocks originating from the tomb masonry were also present. The walls of the entrance area and the corridor chapel were built from bigger limestone blocks joined by pink mortar.³ Several hieratic inscriptions in red colour were detected on the blocks of northern, western and eastern walls (see below).

Two levels of mud floor were uncovered in the corridor chapel (fig. 4): the original one consisted of hard Nile mud, the second one was placed 7 cm higher on a level of darker sand with smaller fragments of pottery and limestone. White lines were exposed besides the walls of the corridor on both levels of the floor.⁴

In the western wall of the corridor chapel, the so-called northern niche was located 2.40 m south of the northern

wall of the structure (fig. 5). This niche was part of the first phase of the mastaba built before the extension of the tomb to the east. No remains of the decoration or an inscription were observed, and it did not reach the floor: it was at a level of 0.76 m above the floor and was recessed 1.06 m to the west. Its preserved height was 1.80 m, but the top is missing. The width of the niche is 1.03 m, and the central recess is 0.28 m wide and 0.20 m deep. A similar pattern can be observed at Abusir e.g. in the tomb of the chief physician, Shepseskafankh (AS 39; Bárta 2015: 17 and fig. 5).

During the clearing of the corridor chapel, two complete mud bricks (30 × 16 × 14 cm) and one half of another were found in its southern part, 5.40 m to the south of the northern wall (see fig. 4). The two complete mud bricks of north-south orientation were placed next to each other touching with their longer sides and as such attached to the western wall of the corridor chapel. The half mud brick adjoined the complete ones from the north. It is worth noticing that they were not situated directly on the floor level but 6 cm above it. The space between the floor and the lower side of the mud bricks was filled with darker sand. A deposit of miniature ceramic vessels (bowls and cups; 23.AS98.2017) was found scattered around the bricks. The single shaft of the tomb of Ankhires is located west of this structure. The possibility that the bricks represent the remains of a wall does not seem plausible since the top of one of them was covered with a layer of dark mud and no other bricks were found in the fill of the corridor chapel. The limestone wall bore no indications of mud coating. Therefore, it can be supposed that it might have been a simpler altar, the remains of a less formalised cultic place which can be connected to the main burial. Likewise, it can be an indirect piece of evidence that the shaft contained the burial of the tomb owner. Finding any parallels is fairly challenging. One rectangular and several circular offering tables were discovered in so-called Djedkare's family cemetery



Fig. 4 Two levels of mud floor in the corridor chapel with three mud bricks in the background, view from the north (photo M. Peterková Hloučová)



Fig. 5 Corridor chapel with a northern niche (photo M. Odler)

at Abusir Centre, but their structure slightly differs, with their masonry consisting of mud bricks, and their inner parts were filled with rubble (Verner – Callender 2002: 83 and Plate XIX Ff2).

Several blocks of the walls bore hieratic inscriptions, builders' marks or lines in red colour: four (Gr1/AS98/2017, Gr21–23/AS98/2017) were observed on the western wall and one (Gr2/AS98/2017) on the northern wall in front of the tomb extension. On the contrary, a single inscription (Gr30/AS98/2017) was found on the eastern wall, in the second row of blocks from the floor. It represented the *nfr*-sign (Gardiner's Sign-list F35, cf. Gardiner 1927: 465) in brownish colour. Besides these *in situ* inscriptions, others were found on loose blocks from the fill of the corridor chapel (e.g. Gr11/AS98/2017).

Room 2

The corridor chapel leads via an entrance passage (1.05 × 0.52 m, max. height of 2.24 m) into an almost square antechamber, Room 2 (1.26 × 1.24 m). In the passage leading into this space, two white lines (width: ca. 5 cm) on both sides and black colour in between them appeared (fig. 6). Presumably, at least the second level of the floor was black flanked with white lines. Three walls of Room 2 were flat, while the eastern one had sloping masonry. Pottery, charcoal and animal bones were collected in the fill, with no apparent layering.

From there, it was possible to proceed directly to Room 1 through a narrow passage (1.26 m long and 0.60 m wide). A modern steel door is now located in Room 2, closing Room 1 from the north for the purpose of protection.



Fig. 6 Remains of white and black pigments in the passage between the corridor chapel and Room 2 (photo M. Peterková Hloučová)



Fig. 7 Room 1 decorated with polychrome reliefs (photo M. Frouz)

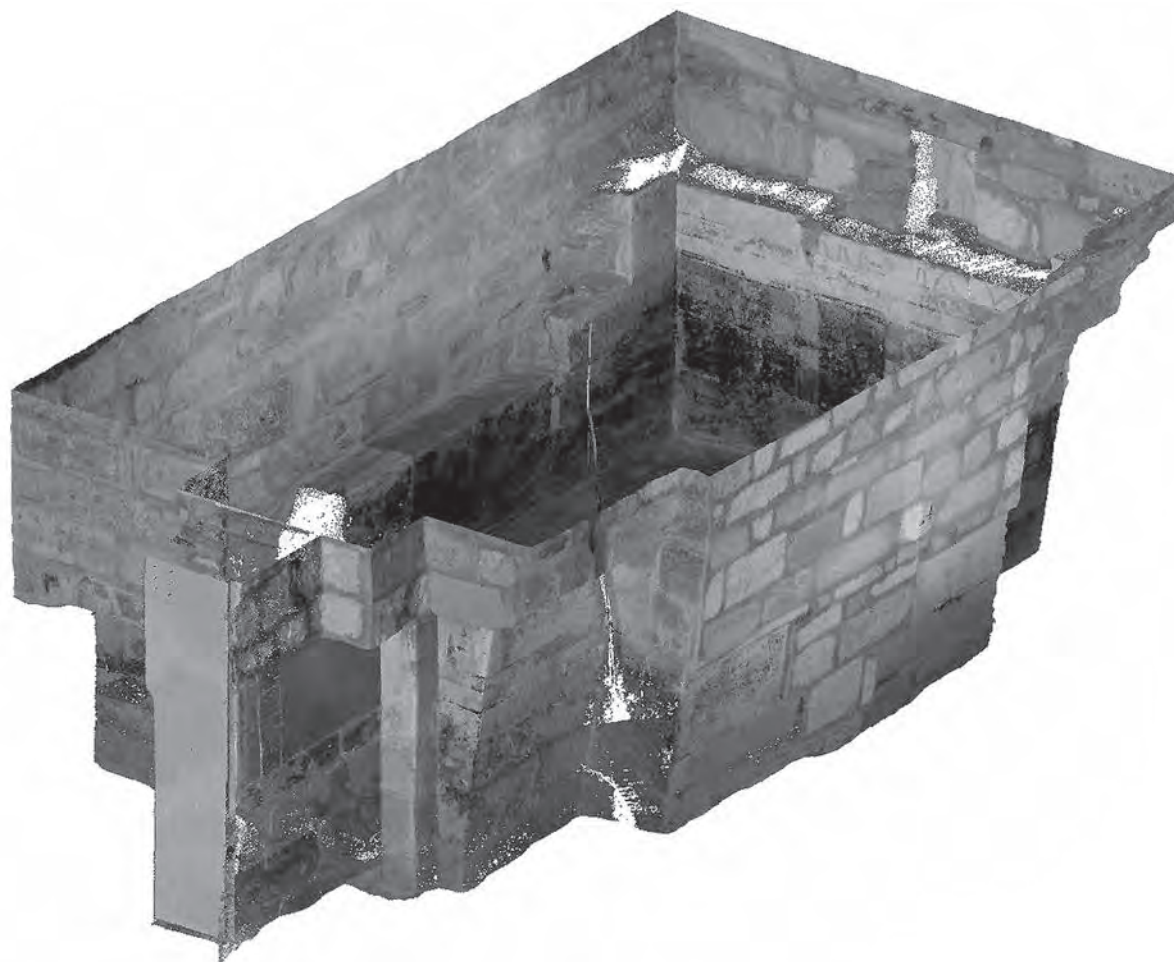


Fig. 8 Three-dimensional model of Room 1, view of relief remains in the south-east corner and on the south wall from the north-west (photo V. Brůna)

Room 1

Room 1 (4.95 × 2.40 m) was paved with irregular blocks of white limestone and mud plaster (figs. 7 and 8). South of the entrance to the chapel, a trace of a white stripe (width 7 cm) was preserved on the floor, possibly delineating the main cultic area in this space. The floor in a larger part of the room was covered with another mud layer with small fragments of wood and animal bones. Thus, the walking surface was not on the stone-paved floor of the room but above it, on the mud layer.

Two almost square imprints in a distance of 1.65 m were preserved on both sides of the chapel's entrance. They are the remains of pillars with a square section that probably supported the original roofing of (at least part of) the room. In the middle of both imprints there is a north-south running red line: a builders' mark. The northern imprint (50 × 45 cm) survived in better condition. White and pink plaster was preserved in the middle, with fragments of wood on it. The southern imprint showed three more red lines and no traces of plaster. No worked fragment of stone pillars was found. It is thus possible that stone robbers took away the complete pillars. It remains a question whether the roof only reached from the chapel entrance to the pillars or covered whole Room 1. The

architectonic feature of two pillars inside a room in Fifth Dynasty tombs occurred at nearby Saqqara in the tomb of Ty (Jánosi 2006: Abb. 81) and the tomb of Ptahhotep (Jánosi 2006: Abb. 85).

Besides room decoration discussed below and the usual and ubiquitous ceramic fragments, charcoal and animal bones, the only other trace of a funerary cult in Room 1 was an incomplete and uninscribed white limestone offering basin (57/AS98/2016; dimensions: 23 × 15 × 14 cm) found near the south-eastern inner corner of the room. It might have been originally located in the middle of the southern wall where wall decoration indicates the focus of funerary cult in the room. Some finds are probably connected to a period when the tomb of Ankhires became a stone quarry: a quartzite pounder with traces of copper (14/AS98/2016) and fragments of rope (11/AS98/2016, 37/AS98/2016), which served the looters as working tools and aids.

Room 1 is the only part of the mastaba with preserved decoration *in situ*, with black *dado* (to a height of 1.30 m) and a yellow and a red stripe above it. From this level starts the decorated surface executed in low relief on white limestone, in at least three registers. Most of the reliefs were damaged in antiquity, however, and only two

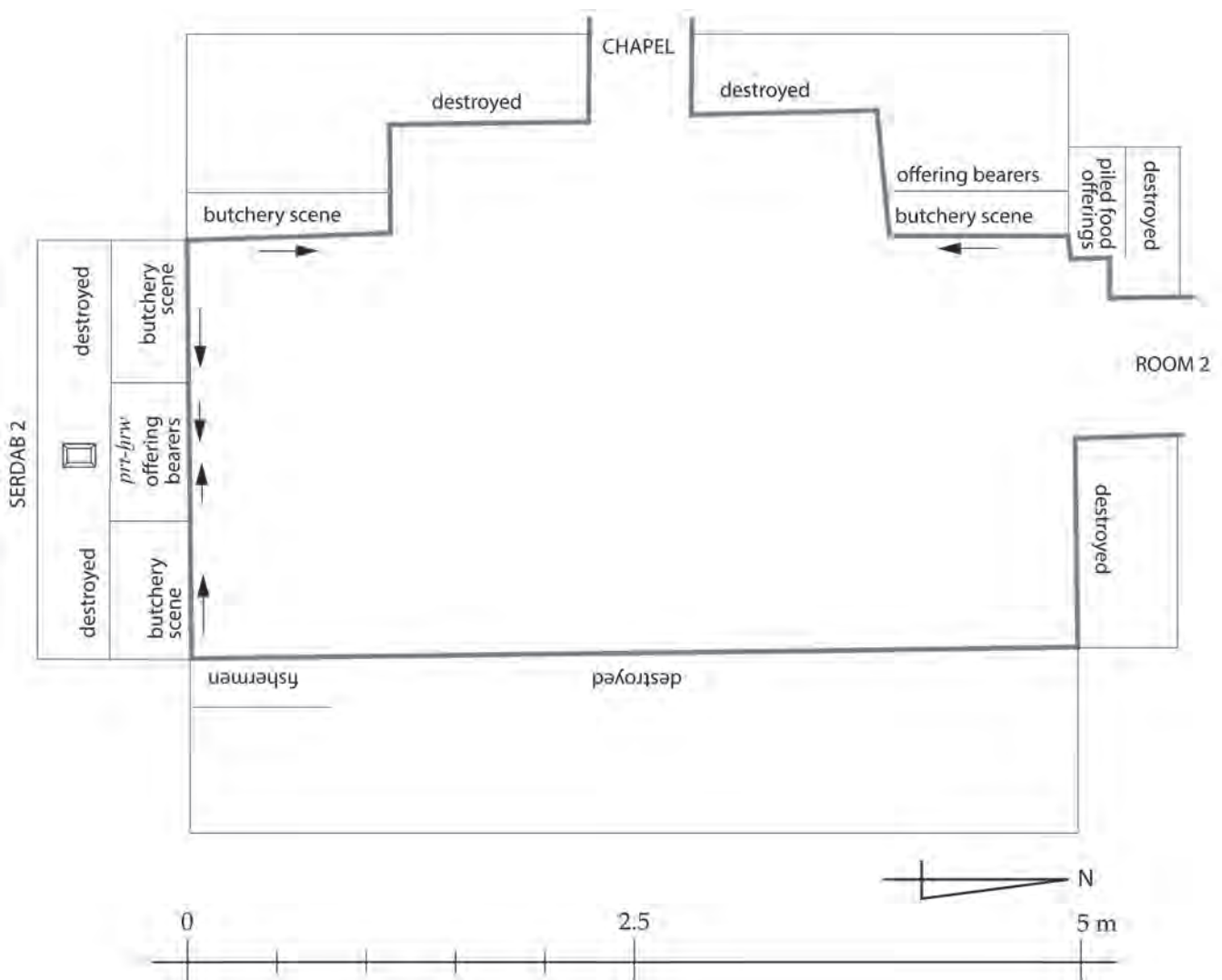


Fig. 9 Schematic description of the decoration *in situ* in Room 1 (drawing J. Malátková)

registers remain *in situ*. The western wall of the room inclines in the width of 4.44 m; it was probably planned as the original entrance to the tomb.

The decoration *in situ* shows very few basic themes (fig. 9). The eastern wall features a small portion of what must have been originally an extensive scene with fishermen operating a large seine. The decoration has been preserved only at the south end of the wall on an area that is 42 cm long and 25 cm high. Three men wielding a seine with floaters are preserved, two facing south and one north.

The lower part of the lowest register, preserved to a height of 14 cm, can be found on the southern wall. At its western end, the complete height of the lower register is preserved: 32 cm. Here also the second course of decoration survived (height 8 cm). The decoration can be divided into the eastern, central and western parts. The eastern part consists of two pairs of butchers. While the man on the right firmly holds a leg of the slaughtered ox,

the one on the left holds the same leg with his left hand, cutting it off with a knife held in his right hand. The motif of butchers and oxen is repeated in the western part (fig. 4 in colour plates). The central part of the wall corresponds neatly and symmetrically with the serdab opening which starts directly above it, 1.40 m over the floor. The serdab slit was set in a rectangular frame, with the lowermost part preserved. The caption below it reads as follows: *pṛt-hrw sntr*, “*peret-kheru* offering of meals and incense” (fig. 2 in colour plates). A combination of these determinatives after the invocation formula meant “meals” in general (Lapp 1986: 91); it was rather traditional, having occurred already e.g. in late Fourth or early Fifth Dynasty tomb of Vizier Seshathetep Heti (Junker 1934: 184, Abb. 28). The man to the right is proceeding eastwards, holding two strips of cloths in front of him. Three men to the left are proceeding towards the west. The centre of their movement is the serdab slit and a reference to an invocation offering below.

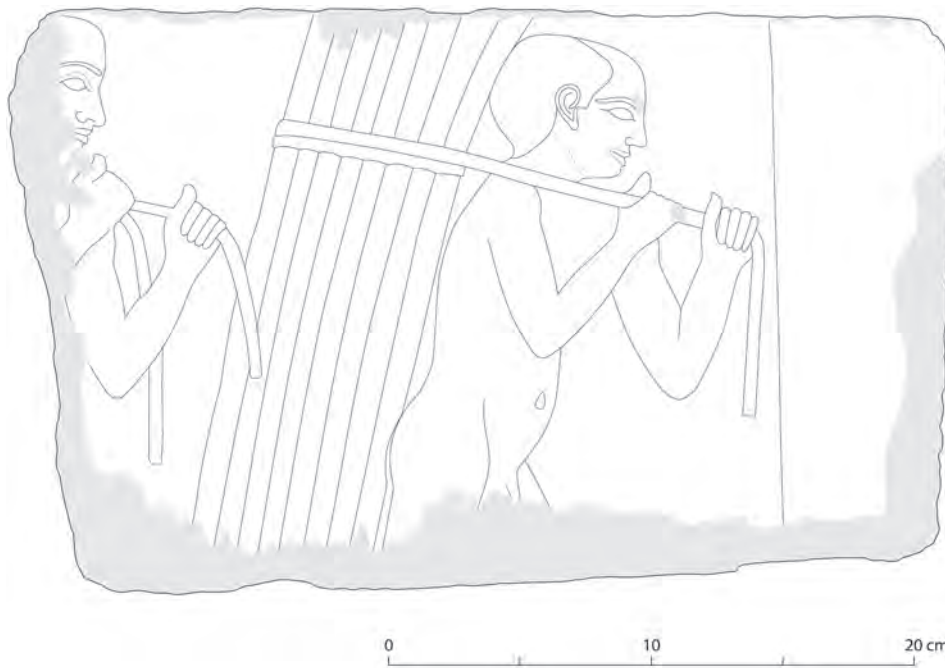


0 10 20 cm

Fig. 10 Scene from Ankhires's house presumably depicting his relatives (42+44/AS98/2016) (photo M. Frouz, drawing E. Majerus)



Fig. 11 Two men carrying bundles of papyrus plants (32/AS98/2016_a) (photo P. Košárek, drawing E. Majerus)



It has to be highlighted here that based on the study of Old Kingdom serdabs as collected by Katja Lehmann (2000), this is one of the very few examples of scenes where a serdab slit is incorporated in the composition of a wall in front of the serdab. Offering bearers in combination with the serdab aperture were more common if the false door was on the wall in front of the serdab (Lehmann 2000: 210). Another frequent motif on such walls (35 occurrences) is represented by offering scenes, but only in three cases, the existence of the serdab was indicated on the wall. An inscription “for the statue” can be found in the Fourth Dynasty tomb of Metjen (Lehmann 2000: 217). In the tomb of Ty, there is a serdab slit in his chapel flanked on both sides by two men, one *hm-k3* with a caption “incense for Ty” (Wild 1966: Pl. CLXXII). The offering scene was repeated on two walls of the early Sixth Dynasty tomb

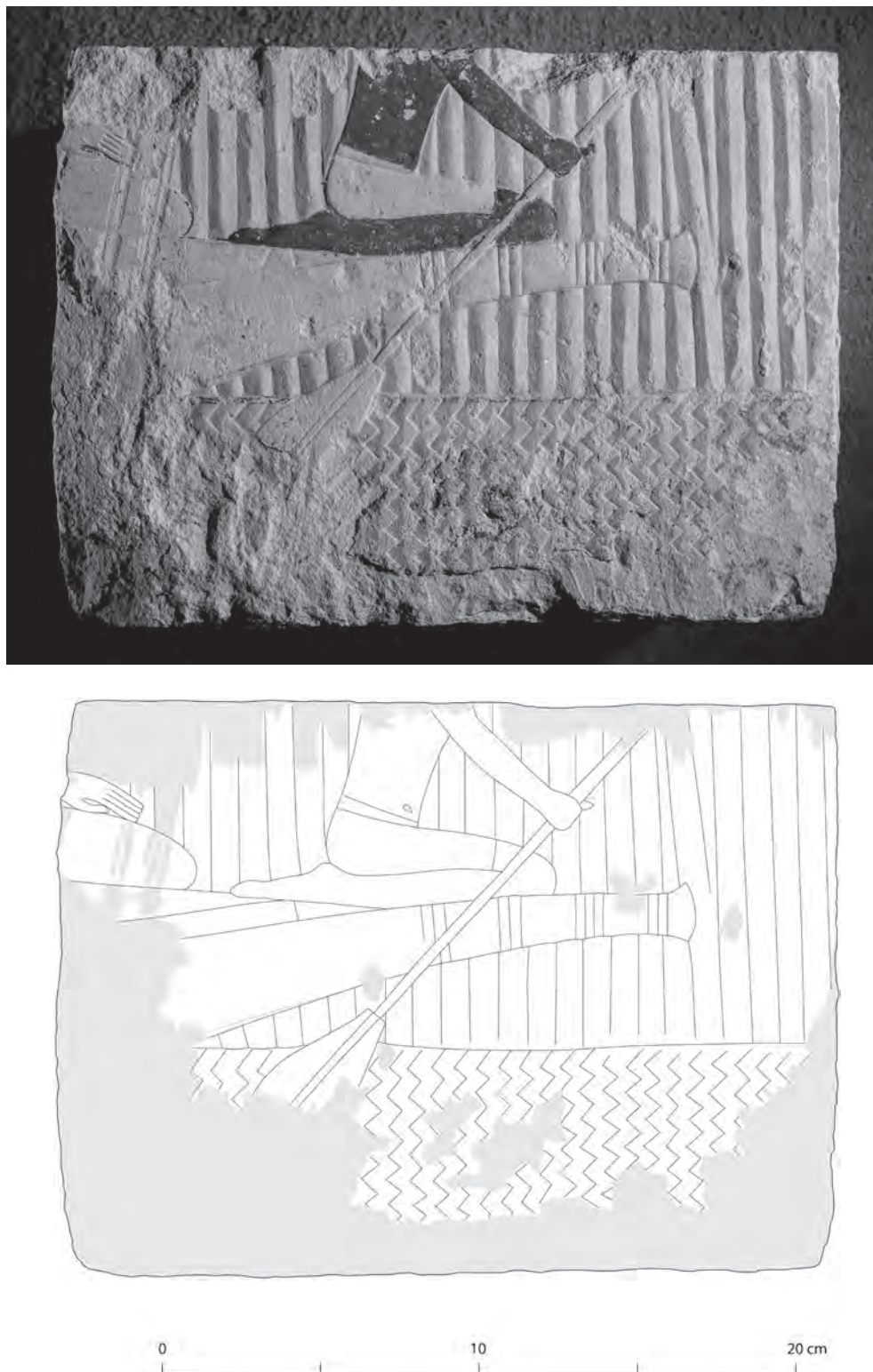
of Sankhuptah, one of them with the serdab slit and an intentional lacuna in the offering list (Kanawati – Abder-Raziq 1998: 58, Pl. 74). The decoration of Room 1 in the tomb of Ankhires featured this rather unusual aspect.

The western wall with the entrance to the original chapel was occupied by the continuing motif of butchers binding oxen and cutting off their legs (height 40 cm). The second register comprised a procession of offering bearers, in the direction towards the chapel (preserved height 12–13 cm).

In the north wall of Room 1 there was an entrance into Room 2, on the left side with a narrow triangular space filled with the depictions of piled offerings, on the right side containing at least two registers with a procession of offering cattle and other animals (e.g. antelopes).

A rectangular depression was identified in the entrance to Room 1, probably a place for ritual cleansing before

Fig. 12 Remains of a scene showing the tomb owner on a boat in papyrus marshland (20/AS98/2016) (photo M. Frouz, drawing E. Majerus)



entering the funerary space. An intriguing find from this spot was a calcite squat jar, found on its side (60/AS98/2016, diameter 12.2 cm, height 7.5 cm). An original fill left in the vessel awaits further processing. Altogether 12 similar installations, purification basins, are known from the Old Kingdom, the closest at Abusir Centre, in the tomb of Ptahshepses Junior (see Bárta 2000: 48, 59–60 with a list of 11 parallels from Giza, pl. 2).

Several larger and many smaller relief fragments belonging to the original decoration were found in the fill of

the room. They were all found facing with the reliefs to the ground near the place of their original location in the wall. The highest concentration was identified by removing the first layer of undecorated blocks from the tomb walls (thickness ca. 1 m). They include scenes with scribes, offering scenes (fig. 8 in colour plates), processions of offering bearers, people carrying a chair (fig. 3 in colour plates) and activities in the marshes (fig. 12). It is possible that a partial reconstruction of Room 1 decoration will be possible in the future.

The best-preserved blocks include the following:

Blocks 42+44/AS98/2016 (measuring 78 × 34 × 29 cm and 15 × 19 × 29 cm) bear the depiction of four seated figures looking right (fig. 10). The first person in the row is a man with his arms folded in an adoration gesture. The arms of the following woman wearing a long close-fitting dress (probably the daughter of the house owner) are bent in a similar position. The two other individuals are men, scribes with scribal tools. A one-line text above the figures oriented to the left states: *... n šḥd ir(w)-šn pr-ḥ nḥ-ir.š im pr.f šk šw ...*, "... of the inspector of hairdressers of the Great House, Ankhires, in his house, when he was ...". The phrase "in his house" referring to the tomb owner counts among unusual formulations for which is not easy to find parallels at this moment. Nevertheless, the expression is undoubtedly connected to Ankhires's household comprising not only members of his family but also other people for whom Ankhires provided jobs and various posts implicating steady income.⁵

Two other blocks are related to activities in papyrus marshland. The first one depicts two men carrying bundles of papyrus plants for the purpose of building boats (32/AS98/2016_a, measuring 23.50 × 11.00 × 14.50 cm; fig. 11). Both male figures stretch their arms ahead with a considerable effort, holding ropes which bind together the bundles of papyrus on their backs. The second block (20/AS98/2016, measuring 24.00 × 18.50 × 17.00 cm; fig. 12) records the bow of a papyrus boat with the torso of a seated man wearing a short kilt and holding a paddle. Behind him is seated a woman, probably the daughter or wife of the tomb owner, whose figure as well as the stern of the boat have not survived. Originally, this fragment was embodied in a scene showing the tomb owner on a boat in a papyrus thicket.⁶

The absence of the tomb owner's head is worth noticing. No remains of the wall decoration and no statue bear his face (fig. 13 and 14). Is this a coincidence (the destruction of the mastaba by stone robbers) or an intention? This question cannot be reliably answered yet.

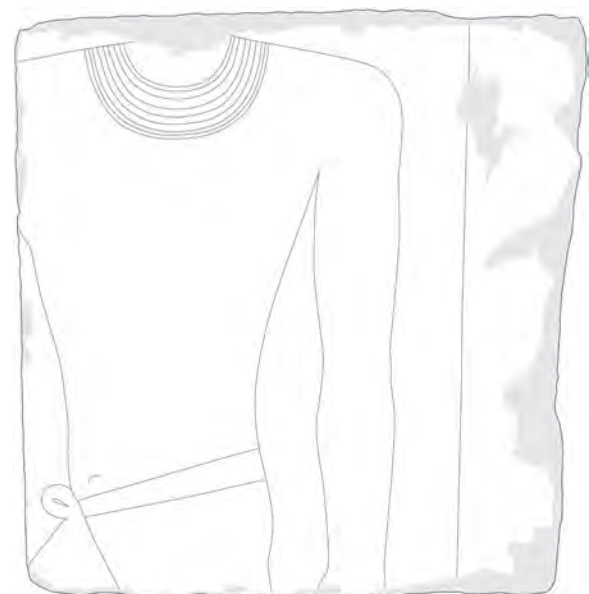
Serdab 2

To the south of Room 1, another space identified as Serdab 2 (2.85 × 1.3 m, max. height of preserved walls 1.50 m) was uncovered quite unexpectedly in autumn 2017. A wall with a thickness of 1.6 m divided Serdab 2 from Room 1.

An aperture (1.32 × 0.20 m, max. height of preserved walls 0.72 m) connected Serdab 2 and Room 1; various wooden fragments, possibly remains of a statue or statues, were found there. The best-preserved piece is a wooden left forearm (74/AS98/2017_a, dimensions 35.2 × 12.5 × 7.8 cm; fig. 15 and fig. 5 in colour plates). The genus of the wood has not been identified yet. It represented a man's left forearm and hand with fingers clenched in a fist and a hole for the insertion of a staff. The nails on the fingers were painted with a white and pink pigment. The wood was covered with a layer of white stucco to which a red pigment was applied. Remains of textile with stucco were detected on a crack leading throughout the back side of the forearm. Ancient Egyptian sculptors masked

the uneven surface of the material in such a way during the production.⁷ A peg was located at the elbow, intended for connecting the forearm to the (unpreserved) arm. The appearance of the complete statue can be inferred from complete parallels of Old Kingdom wooden statues whose bent left hand holds a staff, while the right hand wields a sceptre. One of possible ways of making a bent arm was to produce it from two pieces of wood (Harvey 2001: 160–163), as in this particular case.

Four larger undecorated limestone blocks were found in the serdab itself, coming most probably from its walls. After their removal, several spots with a concentration of statue



0 10 cm

Fig. 13 Torso of the tomb owner (21/AS98/2016) (photo P. Košárek, drawing E. Majerus)

Fig. 14 Relief fragment depicting the tomb owner embraced by his wife (31/AS98/2016) (photo M. Frouz, drawing E. Majerus)



0 10 20 cm

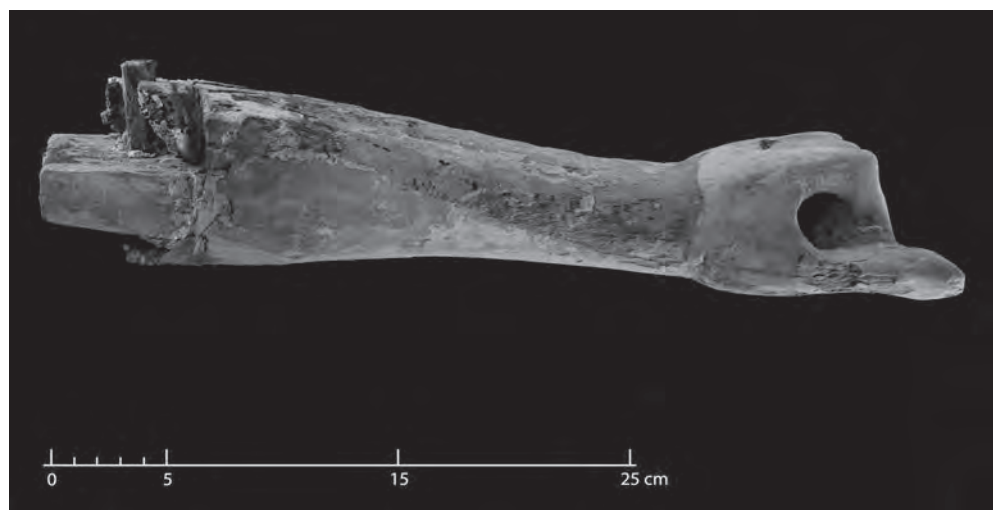


Fig. 15 Remains of a wooden statue (74/AS98/2017_a) found in an aperture between Room 1 and Serdab 2 (photo P. Košárek)

fragments, predominantly smaller bits of wood and stucco, were uncovered at the northern, eastern and western walls. The most interesting find was a wooden *hrp*-sceptre (78/AS98/2017_a) in the eastern corner of the serdab.⁸ After the documentation of this layer, more fragments followed: a fragment of a foot (81/AS98/2017_b) and a *hrp*-sceptre broken into two pieces (82/AS98/2017). The find 78/AS98/2017_a bore traces of yellow stucco and ochre (29.5 × 4.43 × 1.3 cm); the inscription on it was similar to that on the latter sceptre. Yet only a hieroglyphic sign of reed with reading *i* was preserved, most probably a remnant of the name Ankhires. Another *hrp*-sceptre (82/AS98/2017) was uncovered by the eastern wall of Serdab 2, broken but complete (length 36.5 cm; fig. 16). After its conservation, a hieroglyphic inscription in black ink appeared: *šhđ ir(w) šn pr-ꜥꜣ ḥnh-ir.s*, “inspector of hairdressers of the Great House, Ankhires” (see below). The text thus identifies the owner of this piece and of the whole tomb and mentions his most important title. Both

sceptres were originally parts of wooden statues, depicting Ankhires with the symbols of his social status and his position in society. A similar *hrp*-sceptre was found in the nearby tomb of Kaisebi (AS 76) situated to the south-east of the hairdresser’s tomb (Dulíková *et al.* 2017: 11, fig. 9), and in a burial chamber of the structure AS 47 further to the south-east (Arias Kytňarová 2011: 121–124).

Other statue fragments were deposited in a layer consisting of brown sand, ceramic fragments and rodent bones, most probably from owl pellets (see below), in the western part. After the removal of these finds, a 5 cm thick even layer of yellow sand was found at a level of indentations of the masonry at the north and south sides of the serdab, probably indicating the intended level of the floor. Last layer with small stones and ceramic fragments was identified on irregular limestone fragments below the clean sand.

The original contents of the serdab had been extensively looted and damaged; only small fragments of the statues

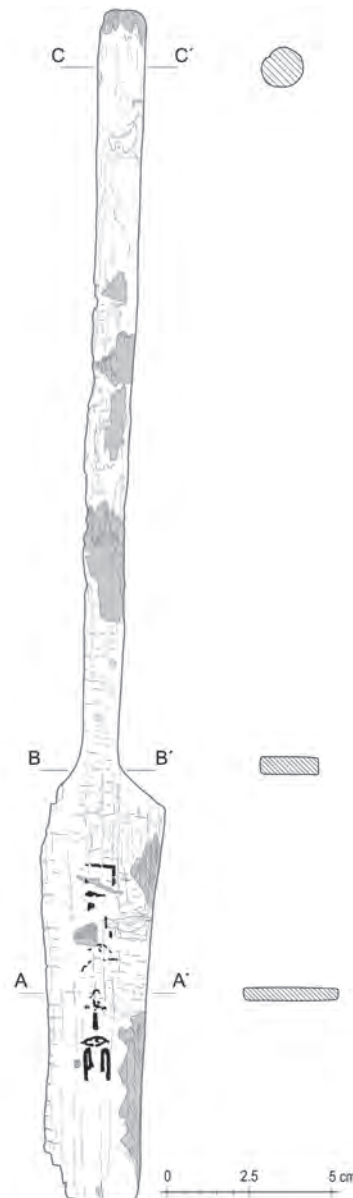


Fig. 16 Wooden *hrp*-sceptre (82/AS98/2017) found in Serdab 2 (photo P. Košárek, drawing J. Malátková)

were preserved. Two sceptres indicate that the original serdab equipment included at least two statues. As the bones from owl pellets were located below the level of the statue fragments, Serdab 2 must have been open for some time. Only then did the stone looters drag some stones from the serdab walls and buried the statue fragments beneath them.

Chapel and Serdab 1

The entrance façade of the interior chapel is 4.44 m wide, with a recessed entrance. Only a few larger fragments originally decorating the entrance into the chapel were found in the fill on the floor of Room 1. An architrave and a drum placed below it, both made of fine limestone which enabled the execution of a nicely carved inscription in sunken relief with precise details of neat hieroglyphic signs, can be partly reconstructed (fig. 17). The architrave (22/AS98/2016, unobservable length, height 42.00 cm, thickness 35.50 cm, figs. 6 and 7 in colour plates) included three horizontal lines:

1. *ḥtp di nšwt, ḥtp di ... [im3]ḥw ḥr ntr ʿ3, nb krs [m] zmit imntt i3w [nfr(t)]*
2. *ḥtp di Wsir ... [Dḥwtyt], tpy rnpt ... ḥb wr, rkh ... [w3h] ʿh, (tp) 3bd, (tp) smdt ...*
3. *iry nfr-ḥ3t šḥkr [ḥ3t ntr.f],... ʿ3t ḥry-šš3 n nb.f irr*

Translation:

1. “An offering which the king gives and an offering which ... gives revered with the great god, the lord of the burial [in] the western desert (necropolis) at a good age”
2. “An offering which Osiris gives ... [the Thoth] feast, the first of the first year, ... the Great feast, the *rekeh* feast (the festival of burning), ... the feast of braziers (the first day) of the month and of the half-month...”

3. “Keeper of the headdress, adorer [of the brow of his god], ... great..., privy to the secret of his lord, beloved of his lord, who does...”

The lower central part of the architrave bears the impression of the drum with the colours preserved in an excellent condition. The drum (19/AS98/2016, length 58 cm – inferred from the entrance width, height 37.50 cm, thickness 36.50 cm; fig. 17 and fig. 1 in colour plates) is black dotted on a richly orange base, with blue hieroglyphs. It bears two horizontal lines of text, only partially preserved:

1. ... [*šhkr*] *ḥ3t ntr.f*..., “... [adorner of] the brow of his god (i.e. the king) ...”

2. ... [*im3*]ḥ(w) ʿ*nḥ-ir*[.s], “... revered one Ankhires”.

The main chapel of the tomb had an L-shaped ground plan (3.24 × 1.25 m) (see fig. 2). The east-west oriented entrance corridor (length 1.50 m, width 0.62 m) was raised by 10 cm above the floor level of Room 1. The chapel was built from white limestone blocks of high quality from Tura quarries. Stone robbers destroyed the chapel almost to the ground. In front of the eastern wall, they even tore out a floor block. The inner part was divided into the northern and southern halves by a step; a false door stood originally in the latter, with remains of a central niche and only a plaster imprint preserved *in situ* (width 1.76 m, depth 0.32 m, height impossible to estimate). The L-shaped layout represents a traditional type of Old Kingdom chapels, occurring from the Fourth Dynasty in Giza and later also in Saqqara and Abusir (Jánosi 2006: 57–58).

Only a few fragments of the original wall decoration survived scattered in the debris immediately above the floor of the chapel. Nine fragments made it possible to put together a part of the false door (6/AS98/2016_a–j, 10/AS98/2016_e) and thus partly reconstruct the central

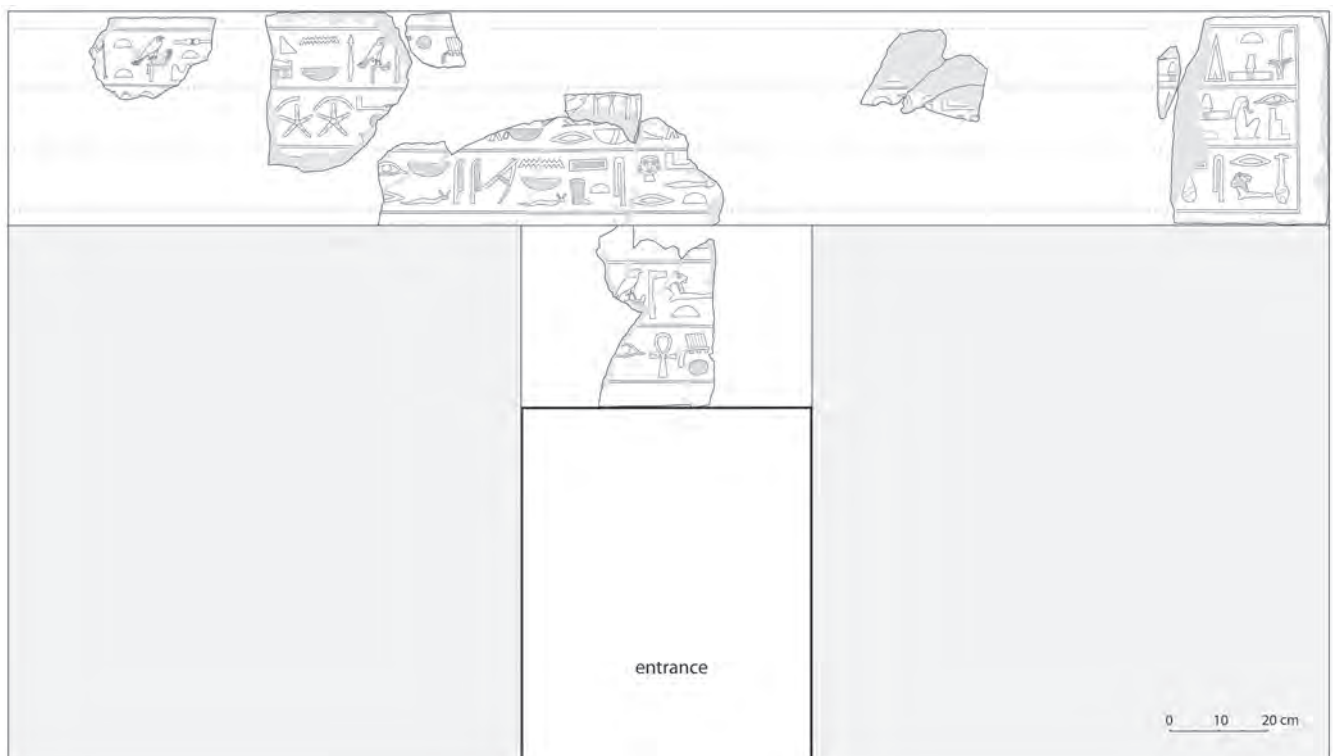


Fig. 17 Reconstruction of the chapel entrance. Originally, an architrave and a drum made of fine limestone with a coloured inscription were placed there (drawing E. Majerus)

niche to the height of 1.44 m (max. width 26.5 cm, depth of 6 cm; fig. 18). The base of the lowest fragment of the middle part of the false door (6/AS98/2016_c) bears traces of pink mortar where the stela touched the floor of the chapel. This identification was confirmed by the dimensions of the false door imprint on the floor of the funerary chapel (max. depth of 5.5 cm; fig. 19) and by a convex bend in the place where the deeper central niche changed into the raised jambs. The archaeological context revealed that the false door fell down towards the eastern wall of the chapel. All the fragments lay upside down; the lowest part of the false door remained nearest to its original location, while the upper part of the central niche was found by the eastern wall.

A continuous inscription in the central niche bears the titles and the name of the tomb owner: ... *šhđ ir(w) šn nšwt hm-nṯr Ni-wšr-r^c hry-ššḫ n nb.f m k3t ir(w) šn n pr-3 ḥḥ-ir.š*, "... inspector of the king's hairdressers, *hem-netjer*-priest of the king Nyuserre, privy to the secret of his lord in the work of hairdressers of the Great Palace, Ankhires". The individual hieroglyphs made in sunken relief contain remains of a green, blue, black and red pigment. The signs are organised in one column surrounded by vertical black lines. The orientation of the hieroglyphs indicates the reading from right to left, the standard direction in central niches of false doors. Although the upper part of the niche has not survived and the beginning of the inscription is lost, just as other pieces of the false door (an architrave, panel, lintel and jambs), it is possible to estimate its height: it was about one-third higher than the reconstructed strip, *i.e.* about 2 m. However, these scanty remains of the stone gate indicate that fine quality material (white limestone) was used and skilfully dressed by experienced craftsmen. This fact is confirmed not only by the perfectly smoothed surface but also by the execution of the hieroglyphic signs.

The decoration of the central niche by the text, which is not terminated by the depiction of the tomb owner, was characteristic of the period from the middle to the end of the Fifth Dynasty. One column of the text in the central niche is attested for example on the false doors of the high-ranking priest Ptahshepses (Mariette 1889: 110–114; Dorman 2002), Vizier Pehenuika (Lepsius 1900: Bl. 48), inspectors of manicurists of the Great House Nyankhkhnum and Khnumhotep (Moussa – Altenmüller 1977: Taf. 92a, b) or family members of the overseer of singers of the Two Houses Kahai (Lashien 2013: Pl. 62, 85, 86), all of whom lived during the reign of Nyuserre in the mid-Fifth Dynasty and were buried at Saqqara.

Despite the fragmentary preservation of the false door, its imprint on the floor by the western wall of the funerary chapel provides more information about its appearance. The central niche was bordered by two pairs of jambs. The lowest part of the left inner jamb remains *in situ* and shows a *dado* consisting of a wider black strip at the bottom and a narrower yellow strip above it. The false door of the above-mentioned manicurists Nyankhkhnum and Khnumhotep (Moussa – Altenmüller 1977: Taf. 92a, b) were decorated in a similar manner. It is one of the two wall blocks of the funerary chapel preserved in their original place. A torus moulding and cornice were probably absent from Ankhires's false door.

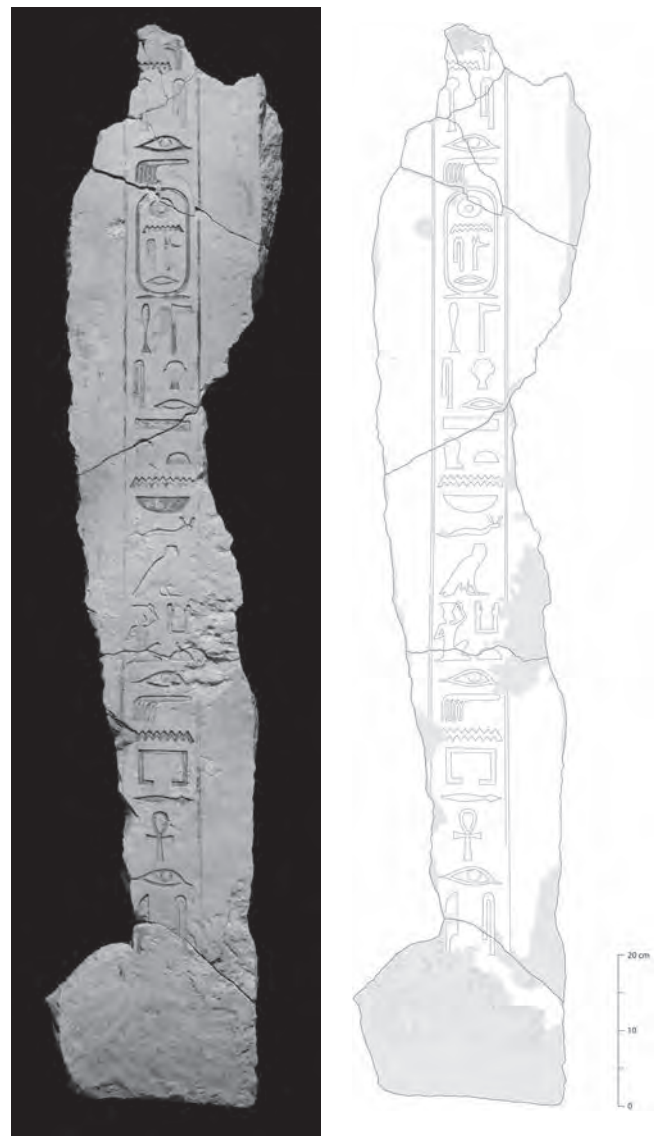


Fig. 18 Reconstruction of the central niche of the false door originally placed in the funerary chapel (photo M. Frouz, drawing E. Majerus)

The second group of original wall decoration of the funerary chapel differs from the previous one by small-sized hieroglyphs executed in lower relief with traces of colour. About ten tiny pieces with signs and a grid were identified (e.g. 10/AS98/2016_a, d; 13/AS98/2016_o, p; 23/AS98/2016_a; 26/AS98/2016_u; figs. 9 and 10 in colour plates), representing the remains of an offering list.

A serdab aperture (0.70 × 0.22 m) was built north of the chapel, at a height of ca. 1.15 m. Before the start of the excavation, large eroded local limestone blocks were visible on the desert surface. It was found out that they were an integral part of the walls of Serdab 1, which was less damaged by erosion in lower levels at that time. The whole serdab was built of blocks of local limestone and represents one of the largest known serdabs in Abusir (ground plan 4.12 × 1.02 m, preserved height 1.45 m). Having been almost completely looted, it contained only a small number of ceramic fragments; from its original contents, there was only a left big toe, probably made of fired ceramics (2/AS98/2016). The walls of the serdab preserved a number of red-written graffiti in hieratic

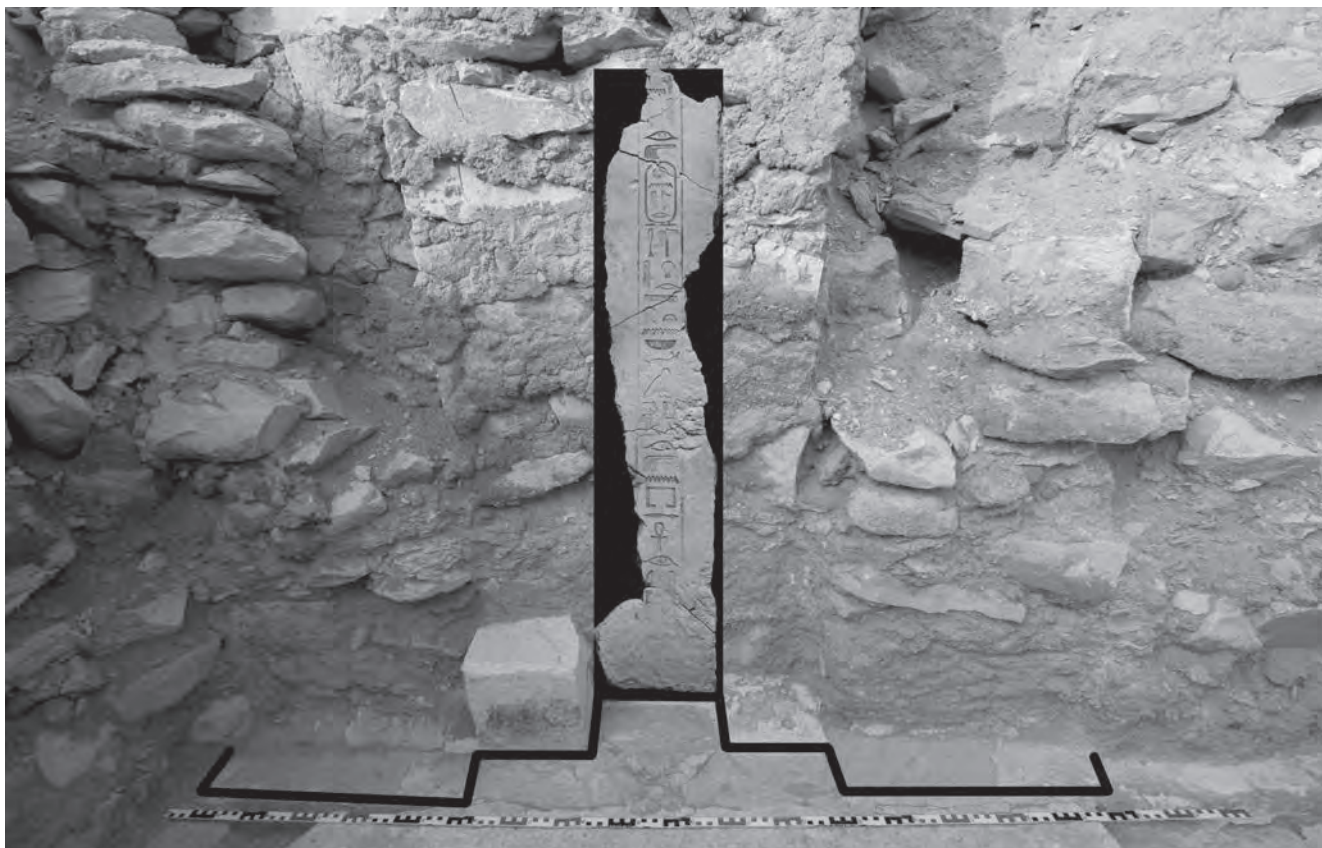


Fig. 19 False door imprint on the floor of the funerary chapel and the reconstruction of the central niche (photo M. Frouz)

with the name and the most important title of Ankhires: “inspector of the hairdressers of the Great House” and the title “hairdresser of the Great House” (fig. 20).

Substructure

Shaft 1

A single shaft was found in the core of the mastaba, situated close to the north-western corner of Serdab 1. As this was the only shaft uncovered, it can be assumed that the tomb owner was buried at its bottom. The shaft was fairly deep: 11.75 m. Its almost square opening (2.09×2.39 m) grew narrower at a depth of ca. 3 m (fig. 21): by 22–28 cm at the northern and southern walls, by 36 cm at the eastern wall and by 40 cm at the western wall. Several constructional levels were identified in the shaft (fig. 23): the walls from the opening to a depth of 2.30 m were faced with irregular limestone blocks. Underneath, 0.60 m of the walls were cut from *tafla* and another 1 m down was once again faced with irregular limestone blocks. Below, a 3.80 m section of the shaft walls had mud brick casing. The rest (4.05 m) was cut in the limestone bedrock with alternating layers of yellow and grey limestone.⁹ The floor of the shaft was not flat; it was left unfinished, unsmoothed with deep cuts.

A burial chamber ($3.02 \times 1.98 \times 1.34$ m; fig. 22) with north-south orientation was situated at the bottom of the shaft, in the western wall. The floor level of the burial apartment was 0.58 m below the shaft’s bottom. In its entrance there were two fallen limestone blocks which might originally have formed a blocking wall. The size of the tomb, its decoration and the depth of the shaft allow us



Fig. 20 Hieratic inscriptions on the northern wall of Serdab 1 bearing mainly the name of Ankhires and the titles “hairdresser of Great House” and “inspector of the hairdressers of Great House” (photo M. Frouz)



Fig. 21 Narrowing of Shaft 1 at a depth of ca. 3 m (photo M. Peterková Hloučová)

to suppose that a sarcophagus may have been intended for the burial of Ankhires, also as a status symbol.¹⁰ Nevertheless, as the burial chamber was unfinished with unsmoothed walls, no sarcophagus was ever placed there. By the northern, western and southern walls there was a bench, which was perhaps intended to be removed by the ancient builders. Therefore, the maximum dimensions of the floor (and the space for a burial) were 1.78 × 1.62 m. However, no remains of any burial pit were observed, indicating that its construction never started.

Fragments of pottery, bones of small rodents, owl pellets and charcoal were collected in the shaft's fill. The

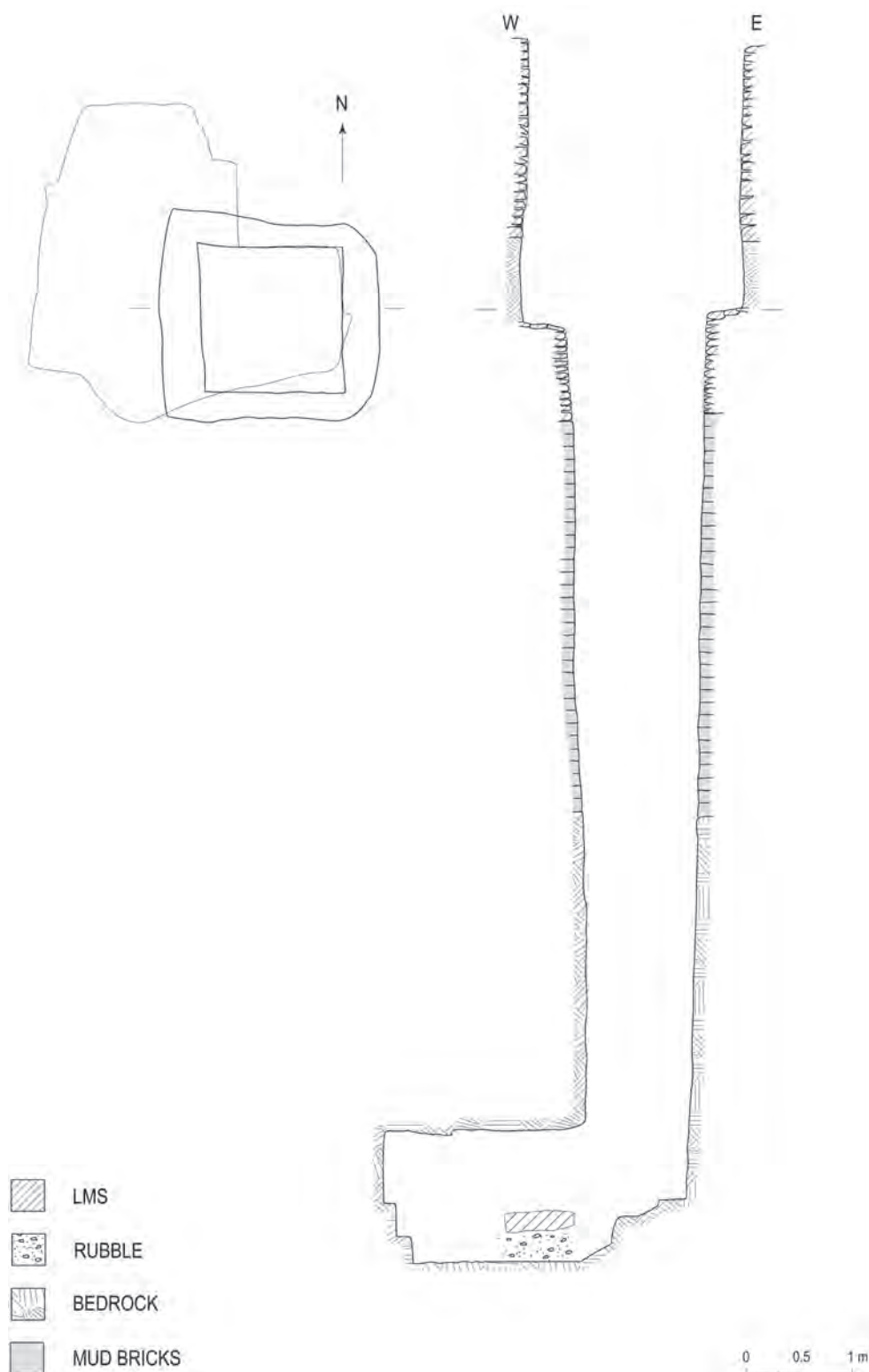
presence of the pellets and rodent bones indicates that the shaft must have been open for a certain period of time. It was possible to recognise remains of the original fill of the shaft which consisted of *tafla* later deposited to the west of the shaft opening. Moreover, complete ceramic vessels were uncovered in this area.

It can be supposed that several objects found scattered in the fill of the chapel and in the area to the east of the chapel were originally part of the burial equipment, including e.g. a number of tubular faience beads (1/AS98/2016, 4/AS98/2016, 15/AS98/2016, 65/AS98/2017, 66/AS98/2017_a), a fragment of a faience pendant



Fig. 22 Unfinished burial chamber in the western wall of Shaft 1, view from the south-east (photo M. Peterková Hloučová)

Fig. 23 East-west section through Shaft 1 and its ground plan (drawing M. Peterková Hloučková, L. Vařeková)



or of a bead of a drop shape (66/AS98/2017_b), a worked flint blade (88/AS98/2017), or a copper needle (106/AS98/2017). Even for flint and copper objects, parallels can be found in the burial equipment of Fifth Dynasty tombs. The blades were present, for instance, at the bottom of Shaft 1 in mastaba D 24 at Giza.¹¹ Needles also appear in Old Kingdom burial equipment (*cf.* Odler 2016: 195–196), including also the burial chamber of Kahotep, son of Ptahshepses, in the so-called Tomb of Princesses (AC 10).¹²

Tomb owner

Personal name

The name of the tomb owner, Ankhires, is reliably identified by several inscriptions in the mastaba – the false door, the relief decoration of the walls and of the original entrance into the tomb – as well as by graffiti on the masonry. The entry of the name in four hieroglyphs shows an alternation of last two signs: $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{𓆑} \text{𓆒}$ (*cf.* 26/AS98/2016_s, t) or $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{𓆑} \text{𓆒}$ (see *e.g.* the false door or the sceptre). Its meaning in


translation is “May live her (*i.e.* a goddess) creator” (the transliteration of the name slightly varies: ḥnh-ir-ḥ in Ranke 1935: 63, no. 1; ḥnh-ir(w)-s(j) in Gourdon 2007: [131] 5; ḥnh-jr=ḥ in Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 293 [676]). Other pieces of evidence of this name come from the necropoleis in Saqqara and Giza. Seven other individuals called Ankhires are attested from the Old Kingdom, all dated to the Fifth Dynasty when the name occurred rather frequently (source: the *Maat-base* database):


1. A man named Ankhires buried in a stone-built mastaba at Saqqara (No. 15 = B 16; Mariette 1889: 109–110; Strudwick 1985: 71 [25]) is dated to the early Fifth Dynasty. This individual headed the department of royal works as $\text{imy-r3 k3t nbt (nt) nṣwt}$, “overseer of all works of the king” (Jones 2000: 262–263, no. 950). He also worked in the department of justice as $\text{imy-r3 d3d3t nwṣt nt wdḥ-mdw nb}$, “overseer of the royal jury of every judgment” (Jones 2000: 279, no. 1006) and besides that as ḥd-mr (n) z3b , “administrator of the king” (Jones 2000: 806, no. 2947). Moreover, he was employed in the palace and in the area of redistribution as hrp ḥ , “director of the *ah*-palace” (Jones 2000: 707, no. 2579) and $\text{hry wdb(w) (m) hwt-ḥnh}$, “master of the largess in the House Mansion of Life” (Jones 2000: 604–605, no. 2215). Furthermore, he bore priestly and privy to the secret titles and epithets expressing the king’s favour.
2. Iteṯi Ankhires interred at Saqqara (D 63; Mariette 1889: 357–359; Strudwick 1985: 68 [21]) had titles very similar to the previous Ankhires. For example, he acted as $\text{imy-r3 k3t (nt) nṣwt}$, “overseer of works of the king” (Jones 2000: 262, no. 949) and imy-r3 ḥ , “overseer of the *ah*-palace” (Jones 2000: 80, no. 347), like the previous individual. A family relation between these two men cannot be excluded. This person is dated to the late Fifth Dynasty.
3. Only the rank title ṣmr wḥty is preserved for another Ankhires buried at Saqqara (No. 81 = D 4; Mariette 1889: 182). He lived in the Fifth Dynasty.
4. A certain Ankhires is attested as an offering bearer in the wall relief decoration of the mastaba of Vizier Ptahhotep I who held the office in the late Fifth Dynasty (Hassan 1975: 27, 48, Pl. XLV). No title has survived.
5. Ankhires labelled as wdpw , “cupbearer” (Jones 2000: 406, no. 1494) occurs in the funerary chapel of Wehemka buried at Giza (D 117; Kayser 1964: 24–25, 44). This tomb is dated to the early Fifth Dynasty.
6. Another Ankhires buried together with his father Medunefer at Giza (G 4630; Curto 1963: 78–83, fig. 33) worked as zṣ pr-md3t ntr , “scribe of the house of documents of the god (*i.e.* the king)” (Jones 2000: 849, no. 3103) and as a priest: ṣm3 Inpw , “stolist of Anubis”, and ḥt Wr , “*khet*-attendant of the Great-One” (Jones 2000: 888, no. 3251, 755, no. 2752). He is attested also on the false door of his father in a dedication inscription (Curto 1963: fig. 32) and in the nearby tomb of his wife Nensedjerka (G 4631; Reisner 1942: 495–499, pls. 61–62). This individual lived in the mid-Fifth Dynasty or little latter.
7. The name Ankhires is to be found on a fragment of a statue of unknown provenance (probably coming from Saqqara or Abusir; Borchardt 1911: 183). The owner of the statue bore the titles ṣḥd zṣ(w) (n) z3b , “inspector of scribes of the king” (Jones 2000: 814, no. 2978) and $\text{ḥm-ntr Rḥ m Ṣt-ib-Rḥ}$, “*hem-netjer*-priest of Re in the sun temple of Neferirkare” (Jones 2000: 537, no. 2005). This man performed his functions in the mid-Fifth Dynasty or little latter.


No other personal names of Ankhires’s family members, persons of his household or of his professional milieu are known, even though a relief depicting Ankhires’s wife embracing her husband (31/AS98/2016, fig. 14) has survived. She (or her daughter) probably appears on another relief fragment depicting a ride on a boat in papyrus marshland (20/AS98/2016, fig. 12). In both cases, the parts with the inscriptions are missing.


Titles


Ankhires’s titulary can be partly reconstructed based on the mastaba remains:


 ir ṣn pr-ḥ , “hairdresser of the Great House” (Jones 2000: 310, no. 1132). The title appears within masons’ graffiti in Serdab 1.


 ṣḥd ir(w) ṣn pr-ḥ , “inspector of hairdressers of the Great House” (Jones 2000: 915, no. 3361). The title occurs within masons’ graffiti in Serdab 1, on a hrp -sceptre (82/AS98/2017; fig. 16) and on fragments of relief decoration coming mainly from Room 1, for example in the scene from Ankhires’s house (42/AS98/2016; fig. 10).

 ṣḥd ir(w) ṣn nṣwt , “inspector of the king’s hairdressers” (Jones 2000: 915, no. 3362). The title is to be found on fragments from the false door (6/AS98/2016_d, f, i, h; 10/AS98/2016_e; fig. 18).

 [ṣḥkr] ḥ3t ntr.f , “adorner of the brow of his god (*i.e.* the king)” (Jones 2000: 973–974, no. 3595). The possibility that the title could be connected with the addition $\text{[ṣḥkr] ḥ3t ntr.f [m k3t ṣn]}$, “adorner of the god’s brow in the works of the hair” (Jones 2000: 974, no. 3596) cannot be excluded. The title is attested on the door drum (19/AS98/2016; fig. 1 in colour plates) and on the architrave (22/AS98/2016_h; fig. 17 and fig. 7 in colour plates). It occurred with Fifth Dynasty individuals whose occupation was related to body care of the king. Besides hairdressers, it was held by barbers and manicurists (source: *Maat-base* database).


 iry nfr-ḥ3t , “keeper of the headdress” (Jones 2000: 321–322, no. 1183). The title can be found on the architrave (22/AS98/2016_h; fig. 17). Its chronological distribution spans from the mid-Fifth Dynasty to the end of the Old Kingdom. In view of the fact that except for inspectors of hairdressers of the Great House, the title was borne by Viziers Washptah and Ptahshepses and by a high-ranking dignitary Ty, the “keeper of the headdress” could serve as an honorary marker. However, all connotations of the title have not been discerned yet (for more information, see Dulíková 2017: 66–67).


 ḥm-ntr Ni-wsr-rḥ , “*hem-netjer*-priest of the king Nyuserre” (Jones 2000: 524, no. 1954). The title occurs on false door fragments (6/AS98/2016_d, g; fig. 18). Another person buried at Abusir bearing this title is the sun priest Neferinpu (AS 37; Bárta *et al.* 2014).


 ... Ṣt , “... great”. The part of a title was documented on a fragment from the architrave of the original entrance (22/AS98/2016_e, i; fig. 17 and fig. 6 in colour plates).


Epithets

Apart from titles, several epithets also constituted Ankhires's titulary; five of them were preserved. Two of them can be regarded as a form of "security clearance", as they indicate that their holder was checked and was privy to the secret. This type of epithets started to appear in larger measure from the mid-Fifth Dynasty, alongside various additions specifying the sphere in which the given secret should be kept. Another Ankhires's epithet was connected with the king's favour, and the last two expressed the marking of the deceased in the funerary cult.


 *hry-ššt3 n nb.f*, "privy to the secret of his lord" (Jones 2000: 628, no. 2298). The epithet is attested on a fragment of the architrave (22/AS98/2016; fig. 17 and fig. 6 in colour plates). It often occurred in the titulary of persons caring for the king's body or the regalia.


 *hry-ššt3 n nb.f m k3t ir(w) šn n pr-ꜥ3*, "privy to the secret of his lord in the work of hairdressers of the Great House". The previously unattested epithet is to be found on fragments from the false door (6/AS98/2016_a, b; fig. 18).

 *mry nb.f*, "beloved of his lord" (Jones 2000: 438–439, no. 1623). The epithet is attested on fragments of the architrave (22/AS98/2016_a, b; fig. 17 and fig. 6 in colour plates). It occurred rather frequently in the Fifth Dynasty.

 *im3h(w)*, "revered" (Jones 2000: 11, no. 42). The epithet found on a fragment of the entrance drum

(19/AS98/2016; fig. 17 and fig. 1 in colour plates) was connected with the netherworld existence of the deceased, frequently occurring in the Old Kingdom.

 *[im3]h(w) hr ntr ꜥ3*, "revered with the great god" (Jones 2000: 30, no. 142). The epithet occurring on a fragment (17/AS98/2016_b; fig. 17) was originally part of the architrave. Frequent evidence from the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties.

 *irr ...*, "who does...". A partly preserved epithet is attested on the architrave (22/AS98/2016_b, k; fig. 17 and fig. 6 in colour plates).

Social position

A few chief factors including the tomb area, its architectural features, the decoration of the tomb, the burial arrangement and the titulary provide information about the social position of the tomb owner. Ankhires's occupation in life can be reconstructed from the preserved titles, which testify to activities related to the care for the king (see above). It can be said with a certain hyperbole that Ankhires was responsible for the king's head, since he cared for ruler's hair and for the adornment of his head. One of his titles was connected with priestly rituals within the cult of King Nyuserre. The title "inspector of hairdressers of the Great House" was the principal one. It is the most frequent of Ankhires's titles (see above) and the one he chose when stating a single title. Ankhires was



Fig. 24 Hairdressers in senior positions attested in Giza: 1 Kaiemnefert (L 63), 2 Rakhefankh, 3 Nefer (G 8420) (photo © QuickBird, distributed by EURIMAGE S. p. A. [2012]; updated by V. Dulíková)

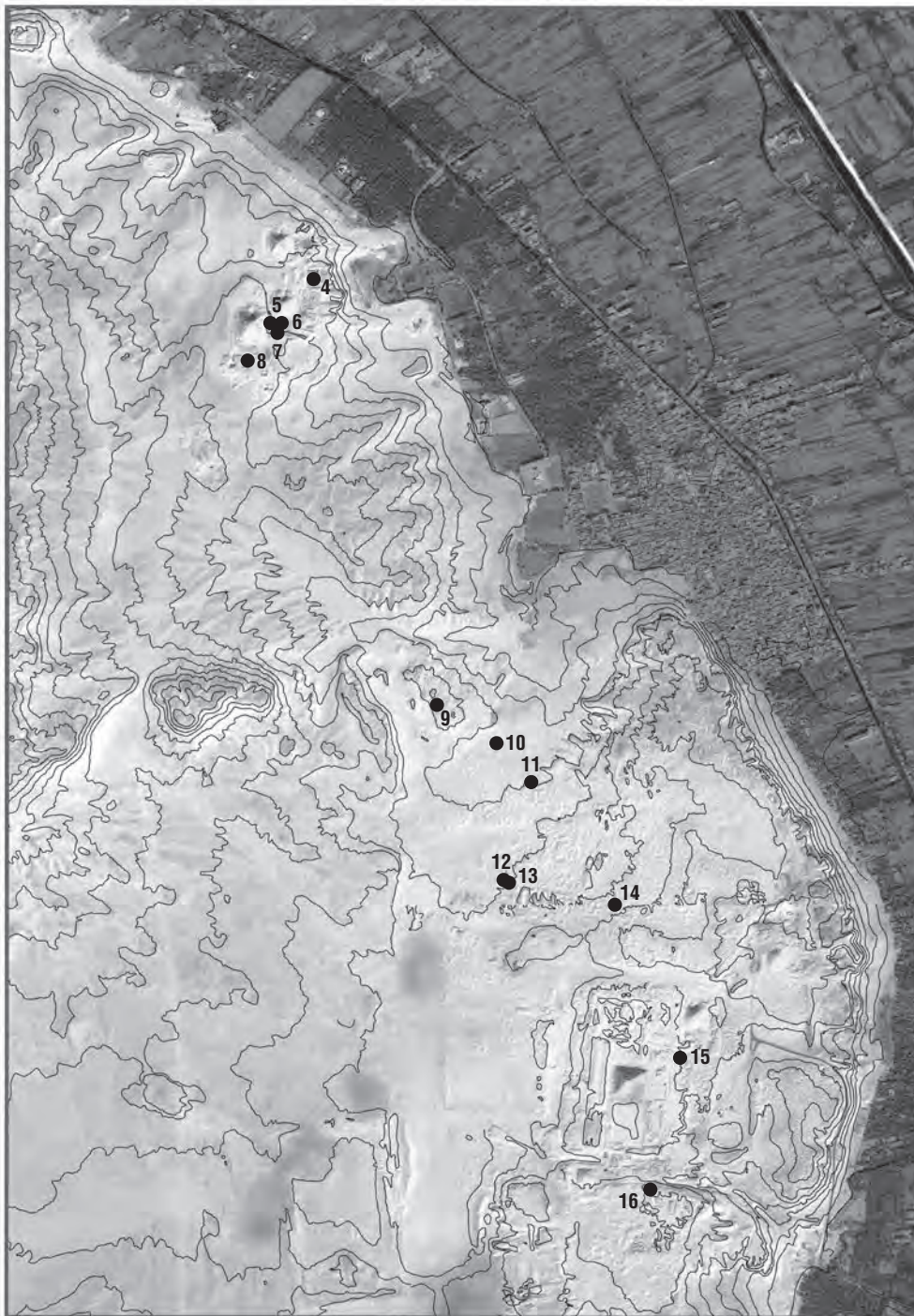


Fig. 25 Hairdressers in senior positions found in Abusir-Saqqara area: 4 Ptahshepses (AC 8), 5 Pyramid of Neferirkare (Ankhmare), 6 Pyramid of Neferirkare (Kaires), 7 Pyramid of Neferirkare (...fa), 8 Pyramid of Raneferef (Wa...), 9 Ankhires (AS 98), 12 Ty (No. 60), 13 Ty Junior (No. 60) (photo © Quick Bird, distributed by EURIMAGE S. p. A. [2012]; updated by V. Brůna – V. Dulíková)

identified by this title in the three various forms: in his house in the world of the living (fig. 10), as the tomb owner (the graffito on the tomb wall, relief decoration) and as a spirit *ka* in the inscription on the statue (the sceptre, fig. 16).

Although Ankhires did not hold offices connected with the administration of the land, both the area of his tomb and the quality of wall decoration reveal that as the “inspector of hairdressers of the Great House”, he was a relatively high-ranking person of the then society (for more information, see Preliminary conclusions). Ankhires’s significant position was also confirmed by the second building phase during which his mastaba gained a rather big courtyard with two pillars supporting the roof and the second serdab.

Several men had a titulary structure very similar to Ankhires’s. The same function, “inspector of hairdressers

of the Great House”, was performed for example by Khabauptah, Nymaatptah and Manefer, buried at Saqqara North (Mariette 1889: 205, 294–295, 446–447; on hairdressers in the Old Kingdom generally, see Speidel 1990). Hairdressers in senior positions (*i.e. imy-r3, šhd, hrp*) are attested mainly at Saqqara, Abusir and Giza (see tab. 1, figs. 24 and 25). Just as a matter of interest, most frequent evidence of that profession comes from the Fifth Dynasty. Old Kingdom hairdressers are recorded not only in their own tombs and in dwellings of eternity of their contemporaries; they were also depicted among important persons in mortuary temples of royal pyramid complexes. This profession occurs on papyri and seals, *i.e.* sources originating in connection with kings’ mortuary cult (Neferirkare’s and Raneferef’s papyrus archives; Speidel

name	site	type of tomb	tomb code	dynasty	king	reference
<i>Htp-k3(.i)</i>	Saqqara	stone	S 3509	mid 5	Neferirkare – Nyuserre	Martin 1979: 4–16; Pl. 14
<i>Ty</i>	Saqqara	stone	No. 60 = D 22	mid 5	Nyuserre	Wild 1966
<i>Ty Junior</i>	Saqqara	stone	No. 60 = D 22	mid 5	Nyuserre	Epron – Daumas 1939: Pls. XVII, XIX, XXVII, XXXI, LX
<i>H^c-b3w-Pth</i>	Saqqara	stone	No. 19 = D 42	mid 5	Nyuserre	Mariette 1889: 294–295; Borchardt 1913: 124, pl. 58
<i>Pth-špšš</i>	Abusir	stone	AC 8	mid 5	Nyuserre	Vachala 2004: 204–205 (57(A)+701)
<i>nh-ir.š</i>	Abusir	stone	AS 98	mid 5	Nyuserre	
<i>R^c-h^c.f.^cnh</i>	Giza	rock-cut	unnumbered	mid 5		Speidel 1990: 10–13 [No. 6]
<i>Nfr</i>	Giza	rock-cut	G 8420 = Lepsius 99	mid 5		Hassan 1941: 200–218, Pls. 59–61
<i>Ny-nh-R^c</i>	Saqqara	rock-cut	F 1	late 5	Nyuserre – Djedkare	Mariette 1889: 431–432
<i>nh-m-^c-R^c</i>	Abusir	–	AC 2	late 5	Djedkare	Posener-Kriéger – Cenival 1968: 62 (1, 19), 63 F
<i>K3(.i)-ir.š</i>	Abusir	–	AC 2	late 5	Djedkare	Posener-Kriéger – Cenival 1968: 62 (8), 63 A
<i>...fb</i>	Abusir	–	AC 2	late 5	Djedkare	Posener-Kriéger – Cenival 1968: 72 A
<i>M3-nfr</i>	Saqqara	stone	H 2 = LS 17	late 5	Djedkare – Unis	Mariette 1889: 446–447
<i>Ny-m3^c-Pth</i>	Saqqara	stone	No. 56 = D 24	late 5	Djedkare or later	Mariette 1889: 250
<i>Nfr-hr-n-Pth</i>	Saqqara	rock-cut	unnumbered	late 5	Nyuserre – Unis	Altenmüller 1982
<i>špšš</i>	Abusir	–	–	late 5	Nyuserre – Unis	Mostafa 1982: 103–110, Tafel XX
<i>K3(.i)-m-nfrt</i>	Giza	rock-cut	Lepsius 63	late 5 – early 6		Badawy 1976: 25–33, Figs. 25–30, Pls. 24–36
<i>W3...</i>	Abusir	–	AC 3	late 5 – early 6		Posener-Kriéger – Verner – Vymazalová 2006: 59 D

Tab. 1 An overview of Fifth Dynasty hairdressers in senior positions of overseers, inspectors and directors

1990; Posener-Kriéger – Verner – Vymazalová 2006). Altogether almost 70 individuals employed as hairdressers are attested for the Old Kingdom. The titulary of those who were hairdressers of the king or/and in the Great House testifies that most of them occupied posts in the king's privacy: in the sphere of the king's body care (*šhd/hrp mhnk nšwt*, “inspector/director of intimates of the king”) and personal adornment and regalia (*imy-r3 hkrwnšwt*, “overseers of the royal regalia”, *iry nfr-h3t*, “keeper of the headdress”, *šhkr h3t ntr.f*, “adorner of the brow of his god”), often together with titles connected to the privy of the secret (*hry-ššt3 n nb.f*, “secretary of his lord”; *hry-ššt3 n nšwt*, “secretary of the king”, *hry-ššt3 n pr-dw3t*, “secretary of the House of Morning”), priestly titles connected with royal cults and epithets expressing the king's favour (*mry nb.f*, “beloved of his lord”) (source: *Maat-base* database). There are a few exceptions of men who worked in administrative offices. For example, a king's hairdresser, Rashepses, the son of Nyankhre, director of *ah*-palace, was employed as the king's letter scribe of all sealed documents (which are) in the sun temple of Userkaf, in the *nht*-sanctuary of Hathor and in the pyramid “Pure are the Places of Userkaf” (Borchardt 1911: 48–49, Bl. 14). Another director of the king's hairdressers, the dignitary Ty, headed two principal administrative departments: the organization of royal works and the royal documents. Moreover, he was involved in the management of the marginal zones, of vegetable and animal resources and of censings (Strudwick 1985: 158–159 [157]). The king's hairdresser Rawer, who built a complex mastaba with 25 serdabs, is also

worth noticing (Hassan 1932: 1–61). Apart from the titles mentioned above, his titulary comprised titles associated with royal ceremonies, e.g. *w^c (m) wr(w) hb*, “unique one of greatest of the festival”, and *hrp šndt*, “director of the kill”.

Fifth Dynasty tombs with similar architecture

Even though the Old Kingdom serves as a textbook example of a centralized society, with some exceptions, there are no two tombs with exactly the same architecture. Tomb building was certainly limited by some fundamental rules, but a creativity was expressed within those rules. Similar architectural elements to the tomb of Ankhires can be found elsewhere at the Memphite necropoleis (e.g. at Giza and Saqqara), but there is no identical tomb. As in the already mentioned cases of Ankhires's name, titles and false door, parallels to the tomb disposition can be dated to the Fifth Dynasty. The existence of two serdabs, occurring only since the reign of Nyuserre (Lehmann 2000: 35–36), can be used as a particularly notable dating element.

The original disposition of the L-shaped chapel and a serdab north of it have parallels, e.g. two rather small tombs at Giza: Sekhemka (G 1029; Lehmann 2000: Cat. No. G58; tomb area 60.69 m²) and Weri (G 2415; Lehmann 2000: Cat. No. G141; tomb area 46.59 m²). Two pillars were added to this disposition by Nefermesedjerkhufu (G 2240; Lehmann 2000: Cat. No. G124; tomb area 82.4 m²). Kanefer's tomb features three rooms creating a corridor chapel in the eastern part of tomb, thus resembling the disposition of AS 98. The entrance to this chapel was in the north-eastern corner, but an access from

the east was enabled circumventing the entrance (G 2150; Lehmann 2000: Cat. No. G112; tomb area 302.4 m²).

Likewise, the disposition of the superstructure with a chapel, a room with two pillars and a serdab south of it is almost identical in the tomb of Neferbaupthah at Giza (G 6010); its serdab was located more to the south than Serdab 2 in Ankhires's mastaba (Jánosi 2006: Abb. 67; tomb area 144.32 m²). This tomb with a slightly more complex ground plan than Ankhires's tomb (two pillars were added to the entrance near the north-eastern corner) was built in two phases as well. Similar is also the disposition of the tomb of Seshemnefer III (G 5170) but with much more complex structure of the serdabs (Lehmann 2000: Cat. No. G208; tomb area 426.72 m²). Only this last tomb has a size comparable to the area

of Ankhires's tomb, which could have been inspired by the tombs that had been built or were being built in Fifth Dynasty Giza. Its architecture is less complex than the mastaba of Vizier Ptahshepses (AC 8; see e.g. Krejčí 2009),¹³ but it can be counted among the largest tombs in Abusir South (see also below).

Structures around the tomb of Ankhires: AS 99–AS 102

In order to establish the maximum dimensions of mastaba AS 98 and clarify its connections to the adjacent structures, trenches were opened north, east and west of Ankhires's tomb (figs. 2, 26 and 27). The trenches demonstrated that it was built on a *tafla* hill with an uneven surface slanting towards the south.



Fig. 26 Tomb of Ankhires with structures AS 54, AS 100 and AS 102 from north-east (photo M. Odler)



Fig. 27 South-western corner of the tomb of Ankhires with structure AS 101 to west of it and steps cut into the *tafla* hill (photo M. Odler)

The trench south-east of AS 98 uncovered that the original level of the surface south of the tomb was at a height of ca. 55.8 m a.s.l. Tomb AS 54 was built at this position in the Third Dynasty (Bárta 2010). Its western outer wall with three layers of outer floor was documented in the trench, at a distance of ca. 3.5 m from the tomb of Ankhires. At this original level of *tafla*, a small mud brick tomb AS 102 was built, with only its northernmost niche uncovered in the trench (tomb ground plan dimensions in the trench 2.00 × 0.55 m). Ankhires's tomb significantly altered the landscape later, in the latter half of the Fifth Dynasty, raising the level of the hill in this part of necropolis. More than 2.5 m of debris and wind-blown sand was deposited on the surface of the *tafla* hill.

Another structure, AS 100, was uncovered east of Ankhires's mastaba. It is a mud brick feature, most probably built also in the Fifth Dynasty. It was built in three phases: the earliest is a loose heap of bricks on the north, stacked without any plaster (ground plan dimensions: 5.25 × 1.50 m). This heap is overlapped by a rectangular platform, slightly reaching upwards in the south, built on clean yellow sand, with neatly laid courses of bricks, the utmost with five levels. The whole platform (7.50 × 1.25 m) was covered with very well preserved mud plaster. Remains of a rectangular structure consisting of one course of mud bricks were found on this plaster. In the south-eastern outer corner of AS 98 was built the third distinct phase: a narrow mud brick wall (1.40 × 0.50 m). The function or purpose of this structure cannot be explained for the present. It seems that AS 100 is somehow connected to the time of the construction of tomb AS 98. As the level of

this platform (57.10–57.45 m a.s.l.) is similar to the *tafla* layer along the northern half of the eastern outer wall of AS 98 (57.13 m a.s.l.), it can be speculated that AS 100 could have supported a now lost structure possibly used during the construction of mastaba AS 98.

AS 99, a low structure with a rectangular ground plan, was situated ca. 2 m north of AS 98, built of local limestone and mud bricks (6.00 × 0.75 m) and divided by a narrow passage (0.40 m) into two parts. This object might have been connected to the burial rites of Ankhires (similarly to AS 74, a structure north of the tomb of Neferinpu – Bárta *et al.* 2017). Uncovering of the whole structure is planned for one of the upcoming seasons.

An original Fifth Dynasty mud floor level (ca. 57.6 m a.s.l.) was preserved north of the entrance to AS 98. As can be observed from the comparison with the original surface of the *tafla* hill, the floor of Ankhires's tomb was ca. 2 m above the foundation of AS 54. The mud brick enclosure wall of AS 54 exceeded the level of the Fifth Dynasty floor only by ca. 10 mud brick courses. The rest of the wall continues below the Fifth Dynasty level.

The scant ruins of another tomb, AS 101 (7 × 4 m), were located to the west of AS 98, in the side of the *tafla* hill (fig. 27). AS 101 was partly built of local limestone and mud bricks and partly cut into the *tafla* bedrock. A much eroded shaft contained fragments of a large ceramic vat or storage jar. The excavations did not continue due to the badly eroded and damaged sides of shaft. The view of hillside from west suggests that the hill was intentionally shaped by at least two terraces resembling steps. The third, uppermost step was the mastaba of Ankhires.

Two triplets of coffins (67/AS98/2017, 68/AS98/2017, 69/AS98/2017 and 99/AS98/2017, 100/AS98/2017, 101/AS98/2017) from late Ptolemaic or early Roman Period were found north and east of the north-eastern outer wall (*cf.* Dulíková *et al.* 2018: 21–23). They were deposited there long after the tomb of Ankhires was abandoned and his funerary cult ceased.

Archaeozoological finds from Ankhires's mastaba and surrounding structures

Fragments of animal bones and other archaeozoological material were excavated during the 2016 and 2017 seasons. Several finds (Eco1/AS98/2016, Eco2/AS98/2016, Eco9/AS98/2017) from the layers near the surface were excluded from the analysis owing to their expected later, *i.e.* almost recent date. Standard archaeozoological methods (*e.g.* Reitz – Wing 2008) were applied during the analysis. The zoological assemblage was examined in Abusir, mainly using osteological publications (Cohen – Serjeanston 1996; Osborn – Helmy 1980; Schmid 1972). Three methods were used for its quantification: the number of fragments, the weight of the fragments, and the minimum number of individuals (hereinafter MNI). In the case of microfauna (see below), only the MNI method was applied.

The assemblage of animal bones excavated within the area of tomb AS 98 contained 366 finds related to human activities, with the total weight of 3461.1 g and the average weight of 9.5 g. In addition, the assemblage of microfauna originating in owl pellets was analysed from Shaft 1, Room 2 and Serdab 2.

Corridor chapel

The uncovering of the corridor chapel area (Eco27/AS98/2017 and a bone artefact 118/AS98/2017) brought together 111 finds of animal bones weighing 1430.2 g in total and 12.9 g in average. As usual, the remains of cattle (*Bos taurus*) played the most important role with 22 examples coming from individuals of different age: adult, subadult and juvenile. Concerning the anatomical position of the finds, fragments of skulls, metapodials, phalanges (and other small limb elements), vertebrae, scapulae and radial bones were recorded in the assemblage. The second place was occupied by the remains of sheep/goats (*Ovis/Capra*) – 11 finds belonged to animals of different age (adult, subadult, juvenile). One find each of femur, humerus and lumbar vertebra were recorded, while the rest of the fragments came from the skulls. Six finds of pig (*Sus domesticus*) were documented: radius of an adult animal, lower jaw of a juvenile animal and 4 fragments of subadult animals (ulna, tibia, metapodium, skull). Other mammalian fragments were not determined: 20 finds of large ungulates (size of cattle), 16 of medium-sized mammals (size of sheep) and 17 of undetermined mammals. The category of large ungulates contained at least 6 fragments of ribs and the category of medium-sized mammals 15 fragments of ribs. Bird remains were represented by one piece of a duck (Anseriformes): a part of coracoideum belonging to an adult specimen. Fish – or more precisely catfish – remains were also found: 5 vertebrae of Siluriformes and 3 fin spines of *Synodontis*.

Traces of cutting and working were recorded in 14 cases, including 5 finds of cattle, 4 of medium-sized mammals, 2 of sheep/goats, 2 of large ungulates and 1 example of a pig. Altogether 11 bones bore incisions, while 2 scapulae of cattle and 1 rib of a large ungulate were shaped as bone tools (see below). Two bones of cattle bore marks of gnawing, one caused by a dog and one by a rodent. No traces of burning were recorded.

Room 2

Animal bones from Room 2 (Eco6/AS98/2016) included 43 finds with the total weight of 168.7 g and the average weight of 3.9 g. Except for one example (phalanx I) of adult cattle (*Bos taurus*) and 2 pieces of large ungulates (size of cattle), the dominant part of this assemblage was made up by a partial skeleton of a lamb (*Ovis aries*). This animal was a male that died at an age of 5 to 6 months. The remains of the skeleton contained 40 bones: 28 ribs, 3 neurocranium finds, 3 teeth, left and right lower jaws, left and right upper jaws, left and right femur, and left scapula. The skull had disintegrated into numerous small fragments; 6 of them bore dark stains caused probably by an embalming resin. Moreover, one of the ribs contained a healed fracture. No traces of cutting, burning or gnawing were recorded in this assemblage.

Room 1

This assemblage (29/AS98/2016, 36/AS98/2016, Eco8/AS98/2016) contained 40 finds of animal bones with the total weight of 365.1 g and the average weight of 9.1 g. Cattle (*Bos taurus*) was represented by 5 (+ 1 *cf.*) examples from an adult animal; parts of femur, humerus, metacarpus, scapula, lumbar vertebra and phalanx III were recorded. As for sheep/goats (*Ovis/Capra*), 5 pieces from an adult (humerus and tibia) and a juvenile (humerus, lower jaw, sacrum) were found in the room fill. Two bones (phalanx I and II) of an adult donkey (*Equus asinus*) and a fragment of lower canine of a subadult/adult male pig (*Sus domesticus*) were also documented. Other fragments of mammals were not determined: 1 find of a large ungulate, 9 of medium-sized mammals and 13 of undetermined mammals. Moreover, 1 fragment of an undetermined bird bone and 1 vertebra of a catfish (Siluriformes) were found there. Traces of cutting, mainly fine incisions, were recorded in 4 cases on bones of cattle, a sheep/goat, a medium-sized mammal and an undetermined mammal. No gnawing or burning was documented. Phalanx I of a donkey bore dark stains caused probably by an embalming resin.

Serdab 2

Altogether, 13 finds of animal bones were analysed in the assemblage from Serdab 2 (Eco13/AS98/2017, Eco15/AS98/2017), with the total weight of 130.0 g and the average weight of 10.0 g. In the case of cattle (*Bos taurus*), 4 pieces of adult animal were recorded: two carpals, phalanx II and a molar fragment. Other domestic ungulates were represented by bones of subadult specimens: pig femur (*Sus domesticus*) and sheep metatarsus (*Ovis aries*). The shoulder height of the sheep was around 51 cm, so the animal was quite small. Other mammalian bones remained

undetermined: 1 find of large ungulate (size of cattle) and 5 pieces of medium-sized mammals (size of sheep). No bird remains were detected. On the other hand, pectoral spine of catfish (*Synodontis* sp.) was present. Traces of cutting – more precisely small incisions – were found on the pig bone. No burning or gnawing was recorded in the sample.

Chapel

Altogether, 22 animal bone finds were analysed within this assemblage (7/AS98/2016). The total weight of the material was 258.5 g, with the average weight of 11.8 g. Examples of mammals, birds and fish were determined during the analysis. A single cattle (*Bos taurus*) bone was documented: phalanx II posterior belonging to an adult specimen. Remains of sheep/goats (*Ovis/Capra*) were represented by 3 cases of mandibles coming from at least 2 animals: a subadult (ca. 2 years old) and a juvenile. A pig (*Sus domesticus*) was detected in one example: metapodium lateralis of a juvenile. Other remains of mammals were not determined: 7 fragments of large ungulates (size of cattle), 3 fragments of medium-sized mammals and 2 fragments of undetermined mammals. One find of a bird bone was also documented: a part of tarsometatarsus from an adult goose (*Anseriformes*). Fish remains included 1 vertebra of Siluriformes, 1 pectoral spine of *Synodontis* and 2 undetermined fragments. Traces of cutting were observed in two cases – two ribs of large ungulates bore fine incisions. No burning or gnawing was documented.

Shaft 1

The finds from Shaft 1 (bone artefact 117/AS98/2017, Eco19/AS98/2017, Eco20/AS98/2017, Eco34/AS98/2017) contained 12 animal bones with the total weight of 350.1 g and the average weight of 29.2 g. Four remains of adult cattle (*Bos taurus*) were recorded: atlas, femur and 2 scapulae. Other mammalian species were not determined. The sample contained also 1 find of a large ungulate (size of cattle), 4 of medium-sized mammals (size of sheep) and 2 of undetermined mammals. The last find was pectoral spine of catfish (*Synodontis* sp.). Traces of cutting and working were observed in 3 cases – the ribs of a large ungulate and a medium-sized mammal contained incisions, while the cattle scapula was shaped as bone tool (see below).

Remaining animal finds

The material coming from the rest of the tomb area (passage between chapel and Room 1: Eco4/AS98/2016; finds west of the chapel in the core rubble masonry of the mastaba: Eco8/AS98/2017, Eco10/AS98/2017, Eco11/AS98/2017, Eco12/AS9/2017; debris north of AS 98: Eco17/AS98/2017; surface of the mastaba: Eco23/AS98/2017; east of the corridor chapel: Eco32/AS98/2017) contained 125 finds of animal bones with the total weight of 758.5 g and the average weight of 6.1 g. Remains of cattle (*Bos taurus*) were represented by 11 (+ 1 cf.) fragments that came from at least 2 individuals (one adult and one juvenile). Anatomically, 1 carpal bone fragment, 1 phalanx II, 1 radial bone fragment, 2 vertebrae, and fragments of skulls were recorded in the

assemblage. In the case of sheep/goats (*Ovis/Capra*), 16 finds were determined, belonging to animals of different age: 1 adult, 2 subadult and 1 juvenile. The finds of skulls, humerus, vertebrae, pelvic bone, metatarsus, scapula, and tibia were distinguished. The remains of pigs (*Sus domesticus*) were found, too: 3 finds of calcaneus, 3 of skulls and 1 scapula, all coming from at least 2 subadult animals. The assemblage also contained 12 fragments of large ungulates, 29 fragments of medium-sized mammals and 41 tiny fragments of undetermined mammals. No bird remains were documented, but fish remains were included: 1 vertebra of Siluriformes, 2 pectoral spines and 1 lower jaw of *Synodontis*, 1 dorsal spine of tilapia (*Tilapia*) and 3 undetermined fish fragments. Traces of cutting were recorded in 18 cases on 3 bones of cattle, 2 of large ungulates, 4 of medium-sized mammals, 7 of sheep/goats, and 2 of a pig. Most of these bones bore fine incisions. As usual, no burning and gnawing was documented in the assemblage.

Bone artefacts

The assemblage contained 4 examples of animal bones that were probably used as bone tools: one of them was excavated in Shaft 1 (117/AS98/2017), the rest came from the cleaning of the eastern wall (118/AS98/2017).

1. A part of right scapula of adult cattle (*Bos taurus*) (117/AS98/2017; fig. 28a). The find is quite damaged by post-depositional processes; nevertheless, some traces of shaping and using the tool can be observed, including grinding off and polishing both original and modified edges (result of cutting off and using the tool) or scratching – all especially in the distal part of the bone. The maximum measurements of the find were 109.20 × 43.84 × 18.97 mm, weight 48.6 g.
2. A part of left scapula of juvenile cattle (*Bos taurus*) (118/AS98/2017; fig. 28b) that disintegrated into 2 fragments. Spina scapularis was broken off – this edge and original peripheral edges of the bone were grinded off and polished. The posterior surface of the bone bore transverse incisions and scratches. The maximum measurements of the find were 215.84 × 86.71 × 18.80 mm, weight 90.9 g.
3. A part of right scapula of adult cattle (*Bos taurus*) (118/AS98/2017; fig. 28c), badly damaged during post-depositional processes and broken into two pieces. Grinding off and polishing were documented on some preserved parts of the edges, while scratches and incisions were recorded on both surfaces of the bone. The maximum measurements of the find were 231.08 × 63.44 × 21.00 mm, weight 88.3 g.
4. A part of large ungulate (size of cattle) rib (118/AS98/2017; fig. 28d). The find is only a part of the former artefact. It has an irregular shape with both original and modified edges grinded off and polished. The maximum measurements of the find were 108.99 × 29.99 × 8.96 mm, weight 16.3 g.

As the polishing of the edges indicates, all bones mentioned above could be used as smoothers. Other use of the three similar artefacts made from cattle scapulae is also possible, however, e.g. as a shovel, possibly for digging in the sand.

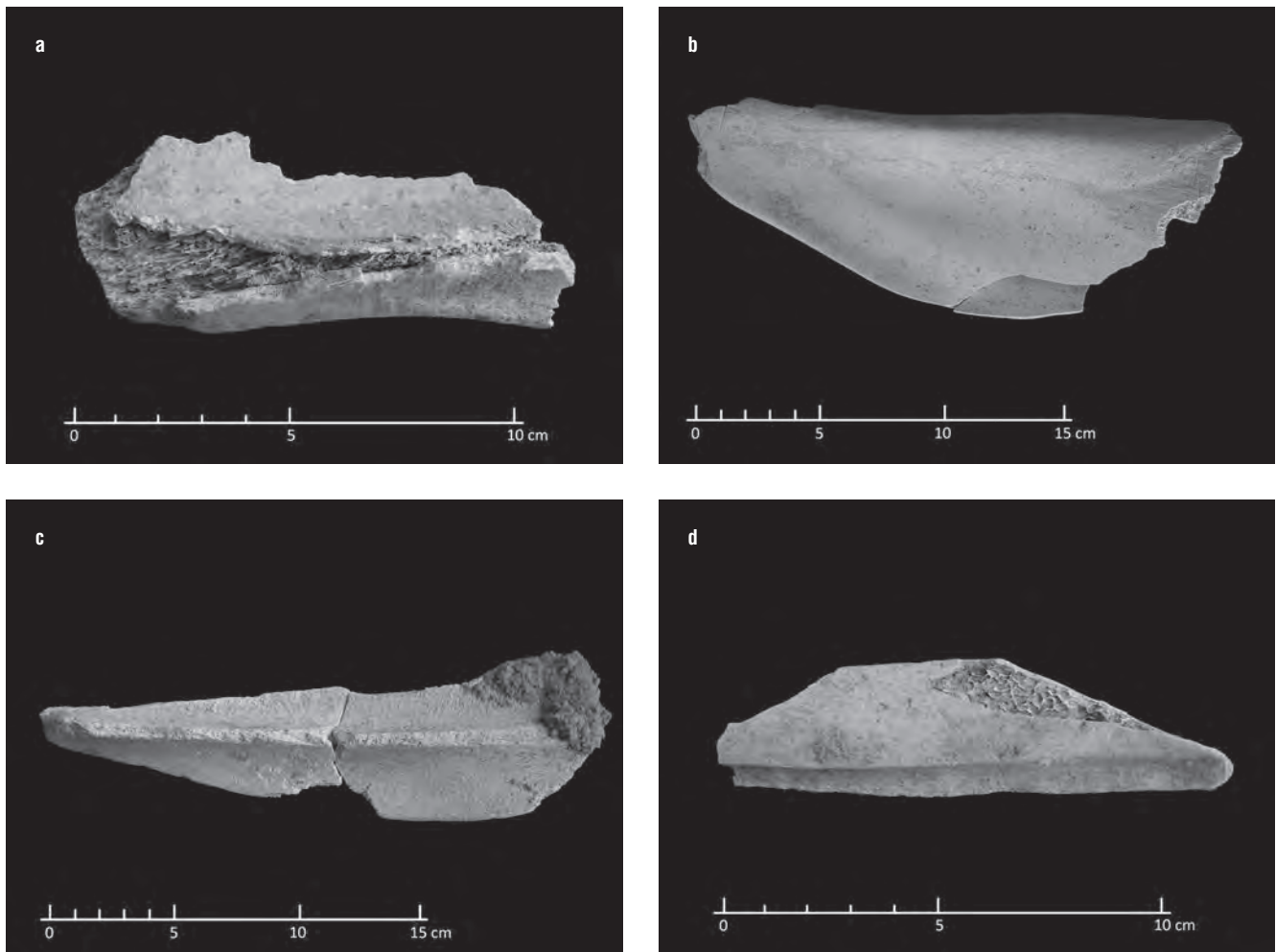


Fig. 28 Bone tools from the tomb of Ankhires: a: part of a tool made from a cattle scapula (117/AS98/2017 – Shaft 1), b and c: tools made from cattle scapulae (118/AS98/2017 – Eastern wall), d: part of a tool made of a large ungulate costa (118/AS98/2017 – Eastern wall) (photo Z. Šůvová)

Remains of microfauna from owl pellets and other intrusion

Remains of small vertebrates and invertebrates were found in three structural parts of tomb AS 98: Room 2, Serdab 2 and Shaft 1. Most of these finds came probably from owl pellets and reflect not only the diet habits of barn owls (*Tyto alba*) but – owing to habitat preferences of the hunted fauna – also the former environment. There were two possible exceptions: shells of snails (Gastropoda) and remains of barn owls that were probably dropped down and mixed up with pellets. The pellets were formed in the periods when the tomb structures were temporarily open (e.g. by robbers) and barn owls could nest in the accessible parts of them (Obuch – Benda 2009).

The assemblage of Room 2 (Eco6/AS98/2016) contained only a small quantity of microfauna finds: 2 individuals of singing birds (Passeriformes), 1 individual of a bat (Chiroptera), 1 individual of a mouse (*Mus musculus*) and 1 individual probably of a rat (*Rattus rattus*). The assemblage of Serdab 2 (Eco13/AS98/2017) was also smaller in number: 2 individuals of beetles (Tenebrionidae), 1 individual of a frog (*Ptychadena mascareniensis*), 2 individuals of white-toothed shrews (*Crocidura olivieri*), 3 individuals of mice (*Mus musculus*) and 3 individuals of rats (*Rattus rattus*).

The assemblage of Shaft 1 was the most abundant with 2 individuals of snails (Gastropoda), 2 individuals of frogs (*Ptychadena mascareniensis*), 2 individuals of barn owls (*Tyto alba* – including 1 juvenile and 1 adult), 2 individuals of quails (*Coturnix coturnix*), 6 individuals of singing birds (Passeriformes – including 1 juvenile), 13 individuals of white-toothed shrews (including 11 individuals of *Crocidura olivieri* and 2 individuals of *C. religiosa/floweri*), 5 individuals of bats (Chiroptera – including 1 individual of *Otonycteris hemprichii*), 20 individuals of mice (*Mus musculus*) and 10 individuals of rats (*Rattus rattus*). The species composition of the microfauna reflects an environment strongly influenced by human presence, with portions of species inhabiting the vegetation of canal banks, grassland and deserts.

Surrounding structures

Tomb AS 99 (Eco1/AS99/2017) contained only one animal bone find: a part of ulna belonging to an adult individual of a goose (Anseriformes). The bone weighted 3.8 g and bore violet stains associated probably with fungal activity.

Altogether 29 finds of animal bones were analysed in tomb AS 100 (Eco1/AS100/2017), with the total weight of 236.3 g and the average weight of 8.1 g. Cattle (*Bos*

taurus) was determined in 4 cases, coming from at least 2 animals: one adult (ilium and sacrum) and one juvenile (vertebra thoracica and phalanx I). Due to the post-depositional conditions, the ilium find had fallen apart into 19 fragments. Moreover, the bone contained one oblique incision. Other domestic mammals were recorded in the assemblage: tarsals of a subadult/adult pig (*Sus domesticus*) and a skull find probably from a juvenile sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*). Other remains of mammals remained undetermined: 4 bone fragments of large ungulates (size of cattle), 7 bone fragments of medium-sized mammals (size of sheep) and 9 bone fragments of undetermined mammals. One fragment of a large ungulate contained 8 long longitudinal incisions, while one fragment of a medium-sized mammal bore 2 shallow transverse incisions. No traces of burning or gnawing were found in the assemblage. On the other hand, plant root erosion was documented on the bone surface. In addition to mammalian bones, 3 fragments of undetermined fish (Pisces) were recorded in this sample.

Conclusion concerning the archaeozoological analysis

The excavation of tomb AS 98 and its surrounding structures brought an interesting assemblage of animal bones. It is most probably not the evidence of a long-standing funerary cult. A pottery analysis and the identification of the phases of the tomb use and destruction are necessary to cast more light on this issue. The dominant part of the samples was made up of the finds of domestic ungulates – not only cattle but also sheep/goats and pigs, and sporadically donkeys. The mammalian remains were supplemented by the finds of fish (mainly catfish of the genus *Synodontis*) and several finds of birds (Anseriformes). Concerning taphonomical changes, traces of cutting and bone working, together with sporadically gnawing, were observed, while no burning was recorded. The most important features of this archaeozoological assemblage are the presence of a male lamb in Room 2, the bones possibly coloured by dark embalming resin in Room 1 and Room 2, and the finds of four bone tools in Shaft 1 and in the area of eastern wall. The remains of microfauna from owl pellets were also analyzed – the finds of rodents, white-toothed shrews, bats, frogs, small birds, etc. belong to commensal, desert and grassland species or species of river banks vegetation.

Preliminary conclusions

The excavations of Ankhires's mastaba has revealed two building phases. During the first phase, the funerary chapel and Serdab 1 were built and, probably, Shaft 1 was dug. The corridor chapel, Room 2, the abundantly decorated Room 1 and Serdab 2 were added during the second phase. The extension increased the mastaba's area to 413 m². The preserved textual evidence, which represents only a tiny fraction of the original decoration and equipment of the tomb, betrays nothing about an enhanced function as an intention behind the tomb enlargement, because the title "inspector of hairdressers of the Great House" was crucial to both building phases. In view of the fact – based on the title "inspector of hairdressers of the Great House" – that Ankhires could meet the ruler daily and even touch him, it

cannot be ruled out that Ankhires could extend his mastaba thanks to the king's favour and affection.

As regards the funerary cult, the concept of two serdabs is very interesting: it means that Ankhires's *ka*, the spirit of the deceased tomb owner, could observe two places of his after-death dwelling: the actions in the funerary chapel from Serdab 1 and the cultic activities in Room 1 from Serdab 2. The idea of two serdabs was used for example in the magnificent mastaba of the high-ranking dignitary Ty, whose *ka* watched the visitors already from the moment they entered the tomb (Jánosi 2006: Abb. 81).

The newly uncovered mastaba represents a novelty at the Czech archaeological concession, particularly because of the occupation of the tomb owner. Ankhires's working activity was connected with the care for king's hair and the adornment of his head. He was given the privilege to touch the living god. From this point of view, the comparison of his mastaba with the tombs of other dignitaries employed in the administration of the land and buried at Abusir at the same time as Ankhires is worth noticing. For example, Kaaper Junior (AS 61), who worked in the department of justice, built his tomb to the east of the mastaba AS 54. It is a stone-built structure with an undecorated corridor chapel, a small serdab and seven shafts on the area 120 m². The sun priest Neferinpu (AS 37) engaged in the same sphere had a 170 m² tomb (Bárta *et al.* 2014). Persons working as physicians also built their tombs in the area: Shepseskafankh (AS 39): 252 m² (Bárta 2015), Ptahhotep (AS 36): 138 m² and Neferherptah (AS 65): 231 m² (Dulíková – Odler – Havelková 2011; Jánosi 2017). None of these tombs equalled Ankhires's mastaba in size, the superstructure layout or the quality of decoration.

The superstructure of Ankhires's tomb is preserved in a relatively damaged condition. Especially the decoration of the main chapel suffered damage, as it was completely dismantled. Only fragments of the false door have survived. In the most imposing part of the mastaba (Room 1), the decorated walls are preserved to the height of 1.80 m. Although remains of the decoration were found on the floor or in the debris, the fact that the faces of Ankhires and his wife are missing is conspicuous. Was it caused coincidentally by the activity of ancient robbers, or were the faces destroyed intentionally? We do not have an unequivocal answer to this question yet.

The depth of the shaft corresponds to the architecture of Ankhires's tomb and to his social standing, whereas the appearance of the unfinished burial chamber does not. The bed-rock was not removed in many places, causing an uneven shape of the walls, floor and ceiling of the prepared chamber. Theoretically, a burial might have been put on the floor, but there is no direct indication of it. Almost nothing has been found; no human remains or a case for the body. Probably only tiny fragments of the original burial equipment could confirm a burial. Based on the elaborated superstructure, one might assume that the body of the tomb owner should have been buried in a sarcophagus. Such a manner of burial is attested for other two hairdressers in higher positions, Nyankhre and Neferherptah, interred in sarcophagi made of fine limestone at nearby North Saqqara. They both lived in the late Fifth Dynasty (Mariette 1889: 431–432; Altenmüller 1982).

Regrettably, the burial shafts of others were not excavated (Lepsius 1900: 172–172; Mariette 1889: 205, 294–295) or were destroyed (Martin 1979: 4–16). Comparing the shaft in Ankhires's mastaba with the manner of burial of the above-mentioned individuals buried at Abusir South, Kaaper Junior, Neferinpu and Ptahhotep were interred in a burial chamber within a limestone sarcophagus or a burial pit. Only Shepseskafankh deviated from this trend, probably because of his untimely death – neither the decoration of his false door nor his burial chamber was finished (Bárta 2015).

Numerous questions arise: Why was the burial chamber of Ankhires's mastaba left unfinished? Did he run out of resources needed for the completion of the place of his eternal rest? Could he have spent it on the finishing of the second building phase? Did he die before the completion of the burial chamber, and his family did not care to finish the building plan? Was he buried in the mastaba at all? Where was his wife, who occupies a significant position in the relief decoration of Room 1, interred?

Ankhires's mastaba can be preliminarily dated to the late Fifth Dynasty, from the reign of Nyuserre to Djedkare. The work in progress – analyses of the relief decoration and iconography, the assessment of pottery finds and the evaluation of the stratigraphy around Ankhires's tomb – may lead to a more precise dating. The preliminary dating is based on the typology and fashion of the decoration (sunken relief and the absence of a torus moulding), the invocation of Osiris and on an important iconographical element – the representation of the tomb owner's wife at a scale equal to that of her husband.¹⁴ Another important feature in the chronological placement is the enlargement of the tomb with a second serdab, among other things. As the concept of two and more serdabs occurred in Old Kingdom tombs from the reign of King Nyuserre (Lehmann 2000: 35–36), the extension of Ankhires's mastaba may have come about precisely at that time.

Notes:

- ¹ The members of the excavation team included archaeologists and Egyptologists Miroslav Bárta, Veronika Dulíková, Lucie Jirášková, Martin Odler, Alexandra Pastoreková and Marie Peterková Hlouchová. Pottery has been studied by Ashraf Senussi, anthropological material by Petra Havelková and Šárka Bejdová, animal bones by Zdeňka Sůvová. Surveying was done by Vladimír Brůna, restoration works by Alexandra Kosinová and Martin Dvořák, photographs by Martin Frouz and Petr Košárek. On the Egyptian side, inspectors of the Ministry of Antiquities Mohamed Mekawi, Samir Ramadan, and Tamer Ragab Abdalla took part in the excavations. Our thanks belong to the anonymous reviewers of the manuscript for their helpful comments.
- ² The maximum height of the eastern wall of the chapel was 1.7 m, while the western wall was 2.7 m high.
- ³ Mortars used in Abusir were studied by Václav Čilek (2012).
- ⁴ Parallels from a roughly contemporary period can be found in the recently excavated tombs AC 29–31 at Abusir Centre (Krejčí 2017).
- ⁵ For the social arrangement in ancient Egypt, see Lehner (2000).
- ⁶ For more information on scenes in papyrus marshland and on *zšš w3d* scenes, see e.g. Altenmüller (2002), Dunncliff (2012) and Woods (2011).

- ⁷ We would like to thank Alexandra Kosinová for important insights for the discussion of the use of textile and stucco.
- ⁸ Based on ancient Egyptian sources, there exist two names for this sceptre type, *hrp* and *šhm*, alternating in Egyptological literature. Concerning the sceptre terminology, our thanks belong to Gabriele Pieke, who has provided us with an extensive consultation.
- ⁹ On Abusir's geology, see Reader (2009).
- ¹⁰ The depth of the shaft is one of the indicators of the social status (see Bárta 2002: 296).
- ¹¹ http://www.giza-projekt.org/Funde/UL_7823/UL_7823.html. Accessed on 29th May 2018.
- ¹² Altogether 11 needles (ÄM 16480–16481, ÄM 16483–16487, ÄM 16490, 16492–16494) are now deposited in the Neues Museum, part of Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, and were documented in May 2018 by Martin Odler.
- ¹³ On the social status of Vizier Ptahshepses, see e.g. Dulíková (2017), with other references.
- ¹⁴ The wives of tomb owners were usually depicted at the same scale as their husbands from the Fourth to the latter part of the Fifth Dynasty, precisely until the early reign of Djedkare (Roth 1999: 39).

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Electronic and Internet resources:

Giza-Projekt: http://www.giza-projekt.org/Funde/UL_7823/UL_7823.html
Maat-base: database of personal names, titles and family relations of more than 4.500 officials living in the Old Kingdom

Abstract

A new tomb (AS 98) of Ankhires, inspector of hairdressers of the Great House, was excavated at Abusir South in the autumn seasons of 2016 and 2017. The stone-built mastaba is preliminarily dated to late Fifth Dynasty, from the reign of Nyuserre to Djedkare. It has an unusual architectural plan, consisting of a corridor chapel, Rooms 1 and 2, an L-shaped chapel, two serdabs and Shaft 1. It was obviously built in two phases. The extension gave the mastaba the area of 413 m². In view of several facts, the tomb represents a new phenomenon not only at the Czech archaeological concession but also at the Memphite necropolis. It was surrounded by several structures including tombs (AS 101, AS 102), a technical(?) structure (AS 100) or a cultic installation (AS 99), which were also partly excavated. The work has brought to light many interesting finds, being it remains of the original wall decoration, remains of wooden statues or ecofacts. An analysis of the animal bones assemblage is also incorporated in the present study.

Abusir South – Old Kingdom – Fifth Dynasty – Nyuserre – mastaba – relief decoration – transformation of society – wooden statue – animal bones

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Fig. 1 Part of a drum (19/AS98/2016) which was originally situated below an architrave in the entrance to the main chapel in Ankhires's mastaba. The drum is made of fine limestone, black dotted on richly orange base, while the hieroglyphs are of blue colour (photo M. Frouz)

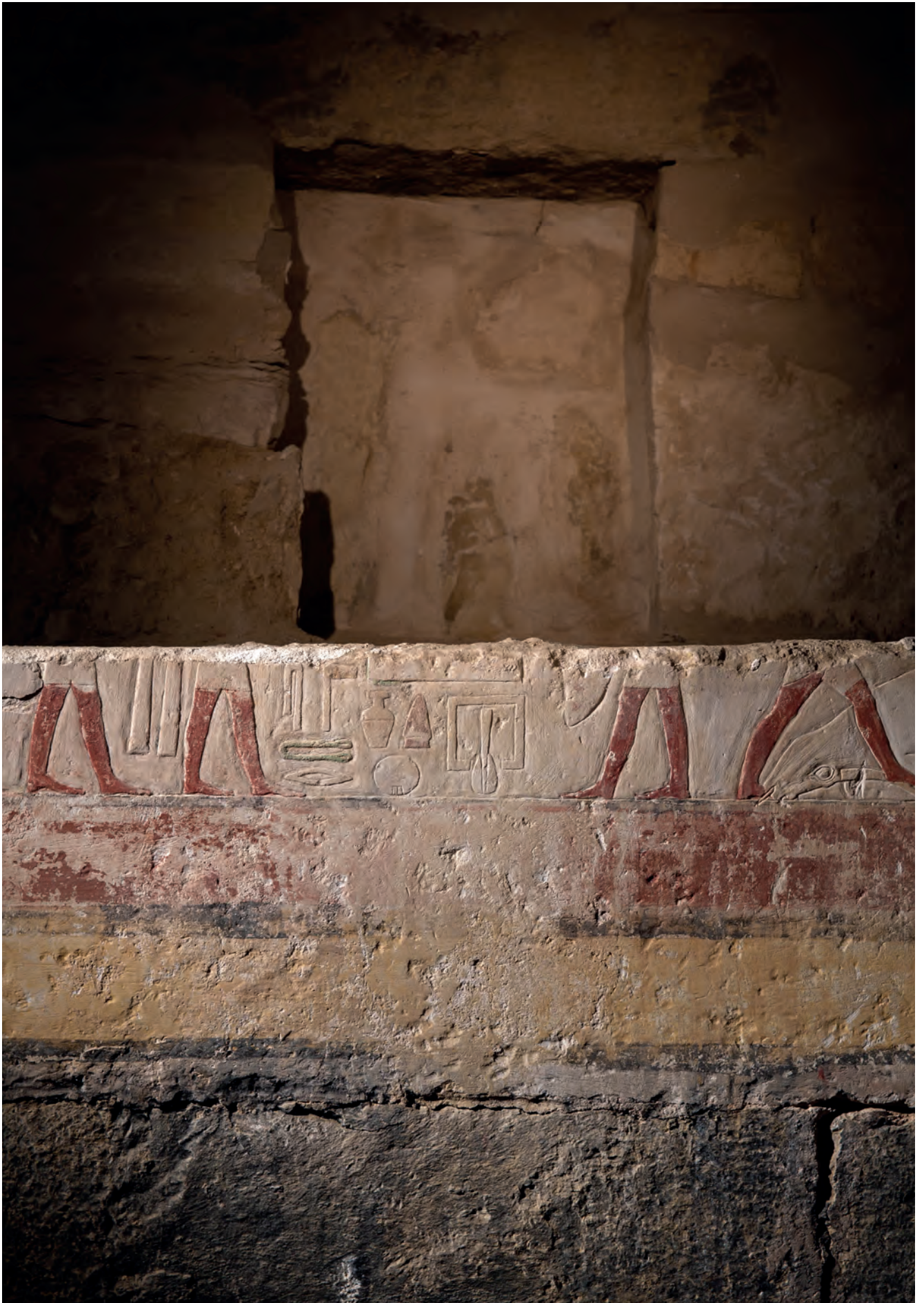


Fig. 2 Partly preserved serdab slit (the original edge of right side has not survived) and the caption *pṛt-ḥrw šntr* (photo P. Košárek)



Fig. 3 Block depicting four offering bearers (34/AS98/2016). The first man is carrying a chair, the second individual is holding a bent stick and a case, the third person is clutching a long receptacle and the last one dressed in a projecting kilt is walking in a gesture of veneration (photo P. Košárek)



Fig. 4 Motif of butchers and oxen on the southern wall of Room 1 (photo P. Košárek)



Fig. 5 Wooden left forearm (74/AS98/2017_a), remain of a wooden statue of Ankhires which was originally placed in Serdab 2 (photo P. Košárek)



Fig. 6 Fragments of an architrave made of fine white limestone (22/AS98/2016_a, b, e, i, k). Neat hieroglyphic signs were executed in sunken relief with precise details (photo M. Frouz)



Fig. 7 Beginning of the text inscribed on an architrave which was originally embedded above the chapel entrance in the mastaba of Ankhires (22/AS98/2016_h). The inscription was divided into three horizontal registers. The first two lines bear offering formulas, whereas the third register contains Ankhires's titles (photo M. Frouz)



Fig. 8 (right column) Fragment of an offering scene with remains of polychromy showing various offerings in two registers (24/AS98/2016_b).

The block was probably constituent of the wall decoration in the north-west corner of Room 1 in the mastaba of Ankhires (photo M. Frouz)

Fig. 9 (left column, upper fig.) A tiny fragment (23/AS98/2016_a) which originally stood at the beginning of an offering list as its first item: *mw zt* “libation of water” (photo M. Frouz)

Fig. 10 (left column, middle fig.) Piece of an offering list (26/AS98/2016_u) with small-sized hieroglyphs and a grid executed in lower relief with traces of colour. Remains of former decoration in Ankhires’s main funerary chapel (photo M. Frouz)

Fig. 11 (left column, lower fig.) Tiny fragment (53/AS98/2016) of a scene from papyrus marshland with traces of green and ochre colours (photo P. Košárek)