

# Menihy and his family: New evidence for the *tjnenet* sanctuary<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

The depiction of the family of Menihy on a lintel found at Abusir South attracts attention due to a component present in the compound personal names of his children. All but one of them have names including the element *tjnenet*, which is remarkable in the context of previously found mentions of the *tjnenet* sanctuary at Abusir South. The lintel belongs to the Sixth Dynasty finds discovered at the Czech archaeological concession that had originally been part of tombs or cult places and were destroyed already in antiquity. Some reflections on the function of the *tjnenet* are included.

## KEYWORDS

Abusir South – Saqqara – Old Kingdom – Sixth Dynasty – *tjnenet* sanctuary – Memphite cults – lintel – Inti

## من إحيى وعائلته: دليل جديد على هيكل الـ *tjnenet*

فيرونيكادوليكوفا

### الملخص

إن المنظر الذي تم تصويره لعائلة من إحيى على عتب تم العثور عليه بمنطقة جنوب أبوصير على درجة كبيرة من الأهمية بسبب وجود عنصر بالأسماء الشخصية لأطفاله. حيث يحمل جميعهم، باستثناء واحد منهم فقط، أسماء يتداخل فيها العنصر *tjnenet*، وهو أمر مميز عند مقارنته بالسياقات السابقة التي تشير إلى *tjnenet* والتي تم العثور عليها بمنطقة جنوب أبوصير. ينتمي العتب إلى اكتشافات أخرى تعود لعصر الأسرة السادسة عثرت عليها البعثة التشيكية، وربما كان العتب في الأساس عنصراً معمارياً من المقابر أو أماكن العبادة التي تم تدميرها بالفعل خلال العصور القديمة. كما يتضمن البحث بعض الانعكاسات على وظيفة *tjnenet*.

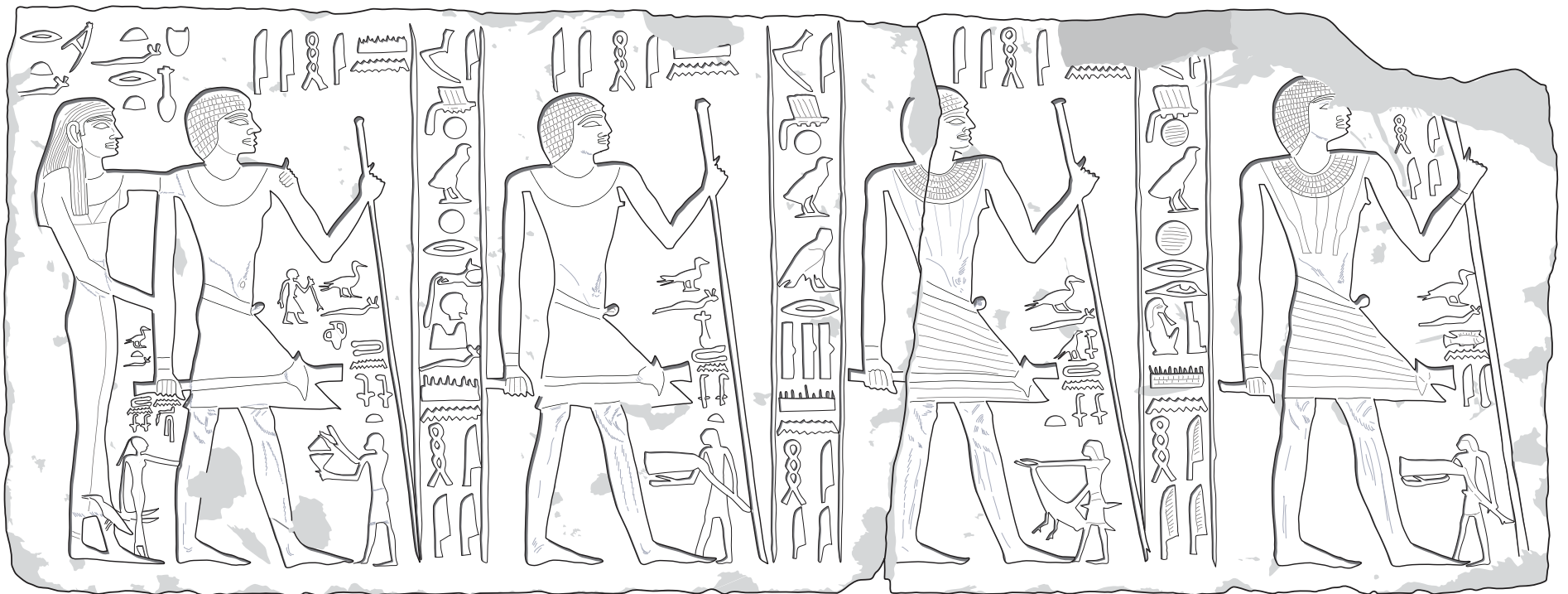
### الكلمات الدالة

جنوب أبوصير – سقارة – الدولة القديمة – الأسرة السادسة – هيكل الـ *tjnenet* – العبادة المنفية – عتب – إنتي

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT AND THE DESCRIPTION OF THE LINTEL

A lintel inscribed for Menihy was discovered during the excavation of mastaba AS 79 during the 2015 autumn season at Abusir South. The superstructure of the mastaba was largely destroyed, no cult structures were detected there. However, numerous fragments of relief

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the two anonymous peer-reviewers whose stimulating notes and observations were helpful in improving this article, especially for the translation of personal names.






0 | | | | 50 cm

**Fig. 1** Lintel showing overseer of crews Menihy and his family (photo M. Frouz, drawing J. Malátková)

decoration found in the fill of the shafts of this mastaba and the adjacent tombs explored up to now indicate the presence of Sixth Dynasty tombs destroyed already in antiquity.

The lintel broken into pieces was found when cleaning Shaft 1 of mastaba AS 79. Its right part (35/AS79/2015) was discovered in the fill of the shaft, 2.0 m from its opening, and the left part (37/AS79/2015) at a depth of 5.7 m. The whole lintel is 85.7 cm long, 32.3 cm wide and 6.5 cm thick (fig. 1). The rectangular lintel is made of white limestone. Its right upper corner is damaged. The lintel shows the representation of Menihy and his family, including his wife and five children, executed in sunk relief. No traces of paint are visible. The owner is pictured four times striding and facing right. The individual figures are divided by a single column of inscription bordered with vertical lines. In each of the four representations, the owner is accompanied by one of his sons who are facing their father and bring offerings. In addition to that, the last segment includes the representation of his wife and daughter. All five children are rendered on a small scale with their heads reaching to the father's knees. The owner's personal name is recorded in front of his face in all four representations. The figures of the deceased and his wife are elaborated, whereas the small figures of their children are executed rather schematically, exaggerating their hands, in which they bring offerings to their father. It is worth noticing that most hieroglyphic signs in the inscriptions accompanying the smaller figures are reversed. The rendering style of the deceased's clenched hands represents another noticeable curiosity: his left arm with the staff shows the back of the hand and the thumb is oriented towards the body, whereas his right arm with the sceptre has the fingers visible and the thumb is placed once again on the opposite side. It implies that Menihy's hands are swapped in the representation – the right arm ends with the left hand and the left arm with the right.

The lack of elaborated details in the execution of the main figures (the rendering of the beads in the broad collar and the pleating of the kilt) and also of the hieroglyphs (e.g., , , ) in the third and fourth segments indicates that the lintel is unfinished.

A more detailed description of the individual elements consecutively numbered 1 to 4 follows.

1. The deceased is depicted wearing a knee-long pleated kilt with a protruding tip, a short wig, bracelets and a broad collar with three suspending ribbons<sup>2</sup> reaching to his belly. Five rows of beads can be identified in the minutely executed broad collar. The individual holds a long staff in his left arm with the right hand, while the right arm with the left hand grasps a *kheryp*-sceptre, the staff of which is hidden behind his body. The remainder of the person's name is to be found before his face inscribed vertically: [*Mn-]**Ihy*, “[Men]ihy (Ihy is enduring)” (Ranke 1935: 150, no. 4; Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 1235 [373]; Gourdon 2007: [236] 5).

Between the staff and the deceased's leg, a male person is depicted on a smaller scale, reaching to the knee of the deceased, striding towards him and carrying the foreleg of an ox. The extremely slim figure is wearing a knee-long kilt and a shoulder-length wig. His right hand, extended towards the large figure of his father, holds the upper part of the beef leg, which is depicted behind his back. His left hand holds the lower part of the leg.

2 These ribbons are common in the late Fifth Dynasty and the Sixth Dynasty, regularly on sculptures (Gabriele Pieke, personal communication).

An inscription in a column above his head reveals his kinship and name: *z3.f Inti*, “His son Inti” (Ranke 1935: 38, no. 23; Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 240–241 [325]; Gourdon 2007: 74 [1]).

2. The depiction of the deceased is almost identical to the first case. The only difference is that the sceptre is depicted in the front, horizontally over the kilt. A single text column divides the first and the second figures: *[im]3hw hr Wsir Mn-Ihy*, “Revered with Osiris (Jones 2000: 19–20, no. 89), Menihy.” The name of the deceased is written horizontally above his head; the first hieroglyph is damaged: *[M]n-Ihy*, “Menihy”.

A figure on a smaller scale reaching to the knee of the deceased is striding towards him, carrying a goose. The man is wearing a knee-long kilt and a shoulder-length wig. The elongated left arm extended towards the figure of his father is holding the bird’s head while the right hand is clutching the lower region of the fowl below the wings. An inscription in a column above his head reads: *z3.f H3-tnnt*, “His son Khatjenenet (The *tjenenet* is measured?)”. Such personal name is unattested so far (for an analogy, see Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 583 [2652]).

3. The third figure is depicted in almost the same way as the previous two, but elaborated details such as the rendering of the beads in the broad collar and the pleating of the kilt are missing. The first sign of his name above his head is partly damaged: *[M]n-Ihy*, “Menihy”. The column separating the second and the third figures bears an inscription: *im3hw imy-r3 izwt Mn-Ihy*, “Revered one, overseer of crews/gangs (Jones 2000: 69–70, no. 313), Menihy”.

This title refers to the organization of labour. As a general rule, its holders were depicted as boat crew members, often on the top of the boat holding sail ropes, for example in Mereruka’s mastaba (Kanawati *et al.* 2011: Pl. 87d) and in the mastaba of the brothers Nyankhkhnum and Khnumhetep (Moussa – Altenmüller 1977: Abb. 9, 10).

A small figure is approaching the deceased carrying a leg of beef. The man is wearing a knee-long kilt. No wig is depicted. The elongated right hand extended towards the deceased holds the upper part of the beef leg, while the left hand grasps its lower part. An inscription in a column above his head reads: *z3.f Nfr-tnnt*, “His son Nefertjenenet (The *tjenenet* is beautiful/perfect/good)” (Gourdon 2007: [392] 4; Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 737 [3726] *Tnn.t-nfr(.tj)*; not listed in Ranke).

4. The fourth tableau in the sequence on the lintel occupies more space than the previous ones; behind Menihy and his son, it also depicts the deceased’s wife and daughter.

The depiction of the deceased himself is identical to the third portrayal. He is wearing a knee-long kilt with a protruding tip, a short wig, a broad collar and a bracelet on the right hand. The elaborated details of the broad collar and the kilt are again omitted. The name of the deceased is inscribed above his head: *Mn-Ihy*, “Menihy”. The column between the third and the fourth images bears an inscription: *im3hw hr Inpw tpy dw.f Mn-Ihy*, “Revered with Anup, the One upon his hill (Jones 2000: 16, no. 72), Menihy”.

A woman standing behind Menihy is wearing a long close-fitting dress, a long wig and a broad collar. Her right ear is sticking out of the wig. Based on the natural sexual dimorphism, she is depicted a little smaller than her husband, embracing him with the left hand around his shoulders, the palm resting on his left shoulder, while her right hand holds his left arm in the area of the elbow. A horizontal inscription above her head reads: *hmt.f mrt.f Nfrt*, “His beloved wife Neferet” (Ranke 1935: 201, no. 10; Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 489–490 [2035]; Gourdon 2007: [392] 1 *Nfr:t(j)*).

A small figure approaching the deceased performs an incense offering with a double-bell censer in front of him. The man is wearing a knee-long kilt. No wig is engraved. The exaggerated right hand raises the top of the censer, while his left hand holds the lower part of the vessel. An inscription in a column above his head reads: *z3.f śmśw Hnm-tnt*, “His eldest son Khnumtjenenet” (previously unattested). There are two possible ways of translation. Taking into consideration that *hnm* can be a verb meaning “to join, to unite with”, the translation of the name is “He who joins the *tjenenet*”. If the sign *hnm* represents the god, a possible translation would be “Khnum is the *tjenenet*”.

A small female figure holding her father’s knee is standing behind him. She is wearing a long close-fitting dress and a ponytail. She is embracing her father’s calf with her left hand, while the right hand hanging along her body is holding the wings of a fowl. A vertical inscription above her reads: *z3t.f N(y)-śy-tnt(t)*, “His daughter N(y)sytjenen(et) (She who belongs to the *tjenen(et)*)” (previously unattested, cf. Scheele–Schweitzer 2014: 62–63 for such nisba morphology in personal names and Scheele–Schweitzer 2014: [1649]–[1657] for the *ny-śy-NN* names).

## ANALOGIES TO THE LINTEL AND ITS ORIGINAL PLACEMENT

The decoration on Menihy’s lintel with the four segments depicting the tomb owner without a vertical upper line containing an offering formula is similar to that of Qar Junior from Abusir South (Bárta *et al.* 2009: 176, fig. 6.3.1), Khnumhetep from South Saqqara (Jéquier 1940: 38, Fig. 25), Nypepy from North Saqqara (Kuraskiewicz 2013: Pl. LXXV) and Impy from South Saqqara (Legros 2019: 165, Fig. 14). Another lintel with four representations of the deceased was discovered in the form of loose blocks broken into fragments during the excavation of the burial places of Vizier Qar’s sons and the adjacent area. It depicts *śmr pr*, “companion of the house” (Jones 2000: 896, no. 3287) Iri Irenakhty (Dulíková 2012: 10). All the above-mentioned finds are dated to the Sixth Dynasty.

Based on analogies, the lintel was probably originally placed over Menihy’s false door (Kuraskiewicz 2013: Pls. LXXIV and LXXV) or above the entrance to his chapel (Bárta *et al.* 2009: 156, fig. 6.2.4, 176).

## PROSOPOGRAPHY OF MENIHY’S FAMILY

The personal name *Mn-Ihy* is attested exclusively from the late Fifth Dynasty and the Sixth Dynasty. A man named Menihy is depicted twice as an offering bearer labelled with the title *zš md3t-ntr pr-3*, “scribe of the god’s/divine books/writing of the Great House” (Jones 2000: 858, no. 3134) in the wall decoration of the mastaba of Ptahshepses and Sabu Ibebi in North Saqqara, early Sixth Dynasty, the reign of Teti (Nos. 37–38 = E 1–2; Mariette 1889: 378; Borchardt 1937: 95, no. 1418, Bl. 21; Murray 1905: Pls. 30 and 31). Another individual of the name Menihy occurs with the title *imy-r3 śšr*, “overseer of cloth/linen/clothing distribution” (Jones 2000: 234–235, no. 864), in the North Saqqara mastaba of Mehu, who performed the vizierial function under Pepy I (Altenmüller 1998: 47, no. 40, pl. 8). A certain Menihy appears as an offering bearer with the title *hnm-k3* in the tomb of Khnumenti (G 2374), who held the vizier’s office in the reign of Unas and the early reign of Teti (Brovarski 2001: fig. 84a; Strudwick 1985: 128 [113]). The last evidence of the personal name comes from a letter found in the palace of governors in Balat in

no.	name	provenance	tomb code	source type	find number
1	<i>Inti</i>	mastaba of Inti	AS 22	false door	
2	<i>Inti</i>	mastaba of Qar	AS 16	wall decoration	
3	<i>Inti Ppy-ḥnh(.w)</i>	mastaba of Inti, shaft A	AS 22	copper vessel	
4	<i>Inti</i>	tomb of Qar Junior, burial chamber B, loose block	AS 17	false door of Rudj Inti	40/HH/2000
5	<i>Inti</i>	mastaba of Inti, loose block	AS 22	altar	71/JJ/2000a
6	<i>Rwd Inti</i>	tomb of Qar Junior, burial chamber B, loose block	AS 17	false door	40/HH/2000
7	<i>Inti</i>	mastaba of Neferherptah, fill of Shaft 1	AS 65	false door of Idjedji	47/AS65/2010
8	<i>Inti (1)</i>	tomb of Qar Junior	AS 17	wall decoration	
9	<i>Inti (2)</i>	tomb of Senedjemib	AS 18	wall decoration	
10	<i>Inti (3)</i>	tomb of Senedjemib	AS 18	wall decoration	
11	<i>Inti</i>	tomb AS 79, loose block	AS 79	lintel with Menihy's family	

**Tab. 1** List of Sixth Dynasty holders of the name Inti attested at Abusir South

the Dakhla Oasis; in it, a certain Menihy with the title *šmšw*, “retainer, follower” (Jones 2000: 991, no. 3665) is attested (Pantalacci 1998: 309, letter no. 3689-9).

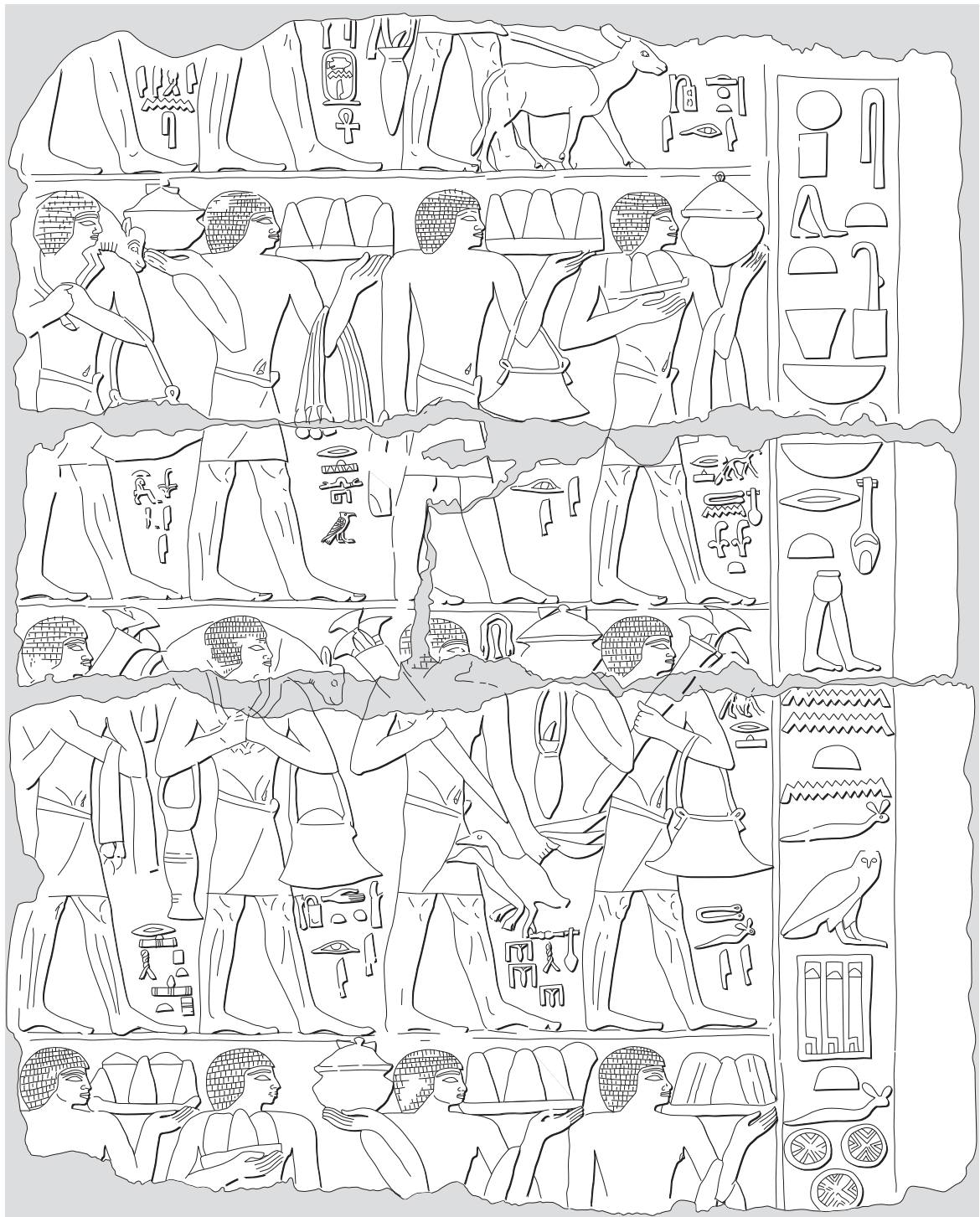
The female name *Nfrit* appeared rather frequently in the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties at many sites throughout Egypt; listing its occurrences is unnecessary with regard to the purpose of the present contribution (cf. Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 489-490 [2035]).

The personal name *Inti* was popular with both men and women in the Old Kingdom. An increased occurrence of this male name clearly defined in both time (Sixth Dynasty) and space (Abusir South) is worth noticing. At least seven other individuals bearing the name Inti are attested in and around the tomb complex of Vizier Qar and his sons (see tab. 1). They include a tomb owner, *r Nhn (n) z3b*, “speaker of Nekhen of the king” (Jones 2000: 808, no. 2953; see Bárta 2013 for the recent article about this title), Inti (AS 22), the son of Vizier Qar, three offering bearers depicted in the relief decoration of the tombs of Qar Junior and Senedjemib (AS 17 and AS 18, respectively), the sons of Vizier Qar (Bárta *et al.* 2009: 150, 184-185, 196-198, figs. 6.3.9, 6.3.20), owners of false doors and offering tables and their family members found in the debris during the excavation of the above-mentioned area. These monuments, originally placed in modest cult places within subsidiary burial places, were destroyed already in

dynasty	king	title(s)	bibliographical reference	note
late 6	Pepy I – Pepy II	<i>r Nhn (n) z3b, wd<sup>c</sup>-mdw m hwt-wrt 6, imy-hi hm(w)-ntr Dd-šwt-Tti, hnty-š Dd-šwt-Tti</i>	Bárta – Vachala <i>et al.</i> , forthcoming	nos. 1 and 2 are the same person
late 5 – early 6	Unis – Teti	<i>imy-hi hm(w)-ntr Dd-šwt-Tti, hnty-š Dd-šwt-Tti, šmšw h(3)yt (n) z3b, z3.f mry:f</i>	Bárta <i>et al.</i> 2009: passim	nos. 1 and 2 are the same person
late 6	Pepy I – Pepy II	<i>zš ʕ(w) (nw) nšwt hft-hr; šhd zš(w) ʕ(w) (nw) nšwt hft-hr</i>	Bárta – Vachala <i>et al.</i> , forthcoming	
late 6		<i>šmšw ip(3)t ?, šn-d(t).f</i>	Dulíková 2012: 11	nos. 4 and 5 are the same person
late 6 or later		<i>šmšw ip(3)t ?, šmšw ip(3)t pr-ʕ3 ?</i>	unpublished	nos. 4 and 5 are the same person
late 6 or later		<i>imy-r3 pr, imy-r3 ššr, šhd hm(w)-k3</i>	Dulíková 2012: 11	no. 6 is probably identical with no. 10
late 6 or later		<i>z3.f mry:f</i>	Dulíková <i>et al.</i> 2011: 13, fig. 6	
late 6	Pepy I – Pepy II	... <i>šmšw</i>	Bárta <i>et al.</i> 2009: 150, 184, 185, fig. 6.3.9	
late 6	Pepy I – Pepy II	<i>imy-r3 pr</i>	Bárta <i>et al.</i> 2009: 150, 196, 197, fig. 6.3.20	
late 6	Pepy I – Pepy II	<i>imy-r3 ššr; šhd hm(w)-k3</i>	Bárta <i>et al.</i> 2009: 150, 196, 198, fig. 6.3.20	no. 6 is probably identical with no. 10
late 6 or later		<i>z3.f</i>	previously unpublished	

antiquity. The multiple occurrences of the name in the cluster of tombs leads to the question of whether these men were named in honour of an important person. It seems that the judicial official Inti (AS 22) might have been such an authority. Taking the unexcavated area to the south, west and north of the tomb complex of the family of Vizier Qar into consideration, however, other Intis may still lie hidden in the sand.

The names of Menihy's children remaining are compound words including the *tjenedet* element. While the names Khnumtjenedet, Khatjenedet and N(y)sytjened(et) are unattested as yet, the name Nefertjenedet is attested in the Memphite region. A certain Nefertjenedet is depicted as the first offering bearer with the title *iry md3t (n) z3b*, “judicial book keeper” (Jones 2000: 805–806, no. 2944) in the second register in the eastern doorway of the tomb of the judicial official Inti (AS 22; fig. 2). Another Nefertjenedet is labelled with the title *hm-k3* in a scene with antelopes in the mastaba of the brothers Nyankhkhnum and Khnumhotep at Saqqara (Moussa – Altenmüller 1977: 34 [no. 40], 40, 83, 84, 161, 162, Taf. 82, Sz. 35.2). With regard to the rare occurrence of this name, it is possible that Menihy's son and the offering bearer in Inti's mastaba were the same person. If this was the case, Nefertjenedet was the contemporary of Inti, who performed judicial functions in the Sixth Dynasty (Pepy I – Pepy II).



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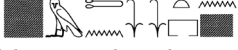
**Fig. 2** A certain Nefertjenenet depicted as the first offering bearer in the second register, the tomb of Inti at Abusir South (drawing J. Malátková)



Names including the element *tjnenet* are rather frequent in the Memphite necropoleis, especially in the Abusir and North Saqqara region, during the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties. Several individuals with compound names including *tjnenet* are attested from the vicinity of the place where the lintel under scrutiny was found. For example, *śmśw h(3)yt (n) z3b*, “elder of the audience hall” (Jones 2000: 813, no. 2974), Ankhemtjnenet is depicted in the mastaba of his father, Inti (AS 22, late Sixth Dynasty; Bárta – Vachala *et al.*, *forthcoming*). A certain Kaiemtjnenet occurs in the inscription on an altar placed in the tomb of Qar Junior (AS 17, late Sixth Dynasty; Bárta *et al.* 2009: 132, 133, figs. 5.4.34 and 5.4.35). The owner of a nearby mastaba was *imy z3*, “phyle-member” (Jones 2000: 298–299, no. 1091), Kaiemtjnenet (AC 38, mid-Fifth Dynasty; Vymazalová *et al.* 2011: 55, fig. 5.1), while *zš*, “scribe” (Jones 2000: 834, no. 3040), Kaiemtjnenet was the son of Sankhuptah, who built his tomb near the Abusir Lake (late Fifth or Sixth Dynasty; Bárta 2019).

### THE TJENENET SANCTUARY IN VIEW OF OLD KINGDOM SOURCES

The first written evidence for the *tjnenet* sanctuary comes from the mastaba of Vizier Akhet-hotep Hemi dated to the late Fifth Dynasty.<sup>3</sup> Within a procession of *hm-ntr*-priests bringing offerings, *ḫ w<sup>c</sup>b n tnnt*, “pure bread of the *tjnenet*”, is recorded next to two offering bearers who follow three others bringing pure bread from the house of Ptah (Hassan 1975: 19, Fig. 4). The word *tjnenet* does not include a determinative. Another scene shows *hm-ntr*-priests carrying offerings labelled *ḫ w<sup>c</sup>b p[w] Inpw*, “pure bread of Anubis”, and *ḫ w<sup>c</sup>b n Hry-š.f*, “pure bread of Heryshef” (Hassan 1975: 20, Fig. 5). Taking into account partly preserved wall decoration related to procession *hm-ntr*-priests, it is obvious that the deceased vizier’s funerary cult was supplied by an unspecified number of sanctuaries in the necropolis. The mastaba is situated in the Unas cemetery at North Saqqara.

The second mention of the *tjnenet* sanctuary... *m tnnt n...*  “...in the *tjnenet* sanctuary...”, occurs within a fragmentarily preserved biographical inscription in the entrance to the mastaba of the judicial official Inti at Abusir, who lived under Pepy I and Pepy II (AS 22, Vachala 2006: 381–382). The expression includes the determinative of a schematic house plan (Gardiner’s sign list O 1). Inti also incorporated the *tjnenet* sanctuary into one of his epithets of funerary character. The epithet is recorded on a stela located in the substructure of the tomb, in front of the east wall of his limestone sarcophagus in his burial chamber: *im3hw hr nb tnnt*, “revered with the lord of the *tjnenet*”, followed by *hr (Pth) rsy-inb.f* “revered with (Ptah) South-of-his-Wall” (Bárta – Vachala *et al.*, *forthcoming*). In the tomb of Vizier Qar, the goddess Tjnenet is mentioned in a partly preserved inscription, including the determinative for the seated goddess: ... *m im3hw hr ntrw Tnnt m šwt.š nbt*, “... to the revered with the gods (and) Tjnenet in all her places” (Bárta *et al.* 2009: 131–132).

The *tjnenet* sanctuary was also reflected in theophoric personal names during the Old Kingdom:

*nh-m-tnnt*, “He who lives in the *tjnenet*” (Scheele–Schweitzer 2014: 297 [701])

3 The mastaba was reused by Vizier Nebkauhor Idu during the reign of Pepy II or later. Consequently, the name of Akhethotep Hemi was erased and replaced with the name of new tomb owner (Hassan 1975: 20).

- K3(.i)-m-tnnt*, “My ka is in the *tjenenet*” (Scheele–Schweitzer 2014: 701 [3471])  
*N(y)-k3w-tnnt*, “Kas belong to the *tjenenet*” (Scheele–Schweitzer 2014: 447 [1723], see also 713 [3536])  
*N(y)šy-tnn(t)*, “She who belongs to the *tjenen(et)*”  
*Nb(.j)-m-tnnt*, “My lord is in the *tjenenet*” (Scheele–Schweitzer 2014: 453 [1781])  
*Nfr-tnnt*, “The *tjenenet* is beautiful” (Scheele–Schweitzer 2014: 737 [3726])  
*H3-tnnt*, “The *tjenenet* is measured (?)”  
*Hnm-tnnt*, “He who joins the *tjenenet*”  
*Tnnt(.i)*, “He who belongs to the *tjenenet* (?)” (Scheele–Schweitzer 2014: 737 [3727])

It seems that the meaning of these names refers to a space where a human or his/her *ka* lives or to a space to which the human belongs or which they join. These names occur mainly in Abusir South, Saqqara, Giza but also in Meir (Kaiemtjenenet) and Wadi Hammamat (Ankhemtjenenet) within a timeframe ranging from the mid-Fifth Dynasty to the end of the Old Kingdom.

Khentytjenenet, “Foremost of the *tjenenet*”, the deity associated with the *tjenenet* sanctuary, provides another proof of the existence of this sanctuary during the late Old Kingdom (from mid-Fifth to late Sixth Dynasty). Khentytjenenet occurred in priestly titles and epithets, as a component of theophoric personal names and as a part of the names of funerary domains or estates. The geographic distribution of the evidence on Khentytjenenet is limited to a certain territory of the Memphite necropolis – Abusir and North Saqqara (for details, see Dulíková 2016).

## CONCLUSION

The lintel found in the fill of a shaft of mastaba AS 79 originates from a subsidiary tomb located in the vicinity of the tomb complex of Vizier’s Qar family at Abusir South. Inti, the name of one of Menihy’s sons, and another son, Nefertjenenet, who is probably identical with an offering bearer depicted in Inti’s mastaba, represent indirect evidence suggesting that Menihy and/or his sons might have been members of the judicial official’s household living in the late Sixth Dynasty. Based on context analysis, it is worth noticing that the link to the *tjenenet* sanctuary permeates the tomb cluster in several spheres:

1. Inti’s mastaba (AS 22):
  - a) mention of the *tjenenet* sanctuary within the biographical text;
  - b) Inti’s epithet *im3hw hr nb tnnt*, “revered with the lord of the *tjenenet*”;
  - c) name of Inti’s eldest son *ḥnh-m-tnnt*, “He who lives in the *tjenenet*”;
  - d) Khentytjenenet occurs four times in the procession of female funerary domains: *Mr Hnty-tnnt ḥnh Tti*, “Khentytjenenet desires Teti to live” and *Ny nfr irt Tti Hnty-tnnt*, “What good Teti belongs to Khentytjenenet” (for more details, see Dulíková 2016: 41).
2. tombs in the close vicinity of Inti’s mastaba (AS 22):
  - a) the component *tjenenet* is included in several personal names *K3(.i)-m-tnnt*, “My ka is in the *tjenenet*” (AS 17 and AS 38), *Nfr-tnnt*, “The *tjenenet* is beautiful”, *N(y)-šy-tnn(t)*, *N(y)sytjenen(et)*,

- “She who belongs to the *tjenen(et)*”, *Hnm-tnnt*, “He who joins the *tjenenet*”, *H3-tnnt*, “The *tjenenet* is measured (?)” (35+39/AS79/2015);
- b) evidence for the service to the deity Khentytjenenet. The priestly title *hm-ntr Hnty-tnnt*, “*hem-netjer*-priest of Khentytjenenet” (Jones 2000: 569, no. 2095) is attested for Hetepuni (AS 68, Shaft 8?) and probably for Sefekhu Itji (AS 68, Shaft 14) (see Dulíková 2016: 37–39);
- c) the god Khentytjenenet occurred also as a part of the epithet *im3hw hr Hnty-tnnt*, “revered with Khentytjenenet” (Jones 2000: 36, no. 177) for Hetepuni (AS 68, Shaft 8?), Qar (Junior) Nefermeryre (AS 17), Khai (I) (AS 68, Shaft 4 or 12?), Khai (II) (9/AS79/2015) and Iri Irenakhty (142+148/HH/2002+16/LL/2002).

Judging by a probable root meaning “the elevated place”, Maj Sandman Holmberg proposed that the *tjenenet* “must have been a hillock and it was possibly regarded as a Memphite primeval mound” (Holmberg 1946: 217–218). Regrettably, the *tjenenet* sanctuary has not been archaeologically attested yet. Moreover, the fragmentarily survived sources have not revealed its exact location in the Old Kingdom. Nevertheless, the increased number of occurrences from Abusir South perhaps indirectly indicates that the sanctuary could be situated not far from there, somewhere in North Saqqara–Abusir South region.<sup>4</sup> Persian sources imply that the *tjenenet* sanctuary was to be found in the area of Serapeum or on the north side of the dromos (Leahy 1998: 384, 386–387; Klotz 2014: 301). Protectors of the Memphite necropolis, Ptah, Sokar and Osiris, were worshipped in the *tjenenet* sanctuary from the New Kingdom onwards (Montet 1957: 33). In textual sources ranging from the Middle Kingdom to the Roman times, the *tjenenet* with the determinatives  $\square$  and also  $\otimes$  is considered not only a sanctuary at Memphis but also a region of the netherworld.<sup>5</sup> References to the *tjenenet* occur also in several places in the Book of the Dead (BD) (Allen 1974: Spell 1 B e § T 2, 17b § S 5, 100 § T 6, 142 § S 1, var. 2, 146 w § S 9, 181b § S 1, Pleyte 168 § S 46, Pleyte 172 e § T 2), where the expression is sometimes translated as the earth-shrine.<sup>6</sup> Most references to the *tjenenet* in the Book of the Dead are associated with a liminal space where the deceased becomes the blessed one, i.e. passes into a new sphere of his existence, which takes place at the beginning of his journey to the beautiful west (Allen 1974: Spell 1 B e § T 2; 100 § T 6, Pleyte 172 e § T 2). In that regard, as the vignettes of the relevant chapters of the Book of the Dead imply, cf. for example *Spell for causing that the mummy descend to the nether world on the day of joining the earth* (1 B e § P var. 1), or *Beginning of extollations and commemorations (to be used at) ascending from and descending into the god’s domain and becoming a blessing one in [the beautiful west]* (17 a § P 1). “The gate of the *tjenenet*-sanctuary” is the place where the sun is setting and the soul of the deceased disembarks from or embarks on the bark of Re, while his corpse “abides in the netherworld” (BD 1 B e). Such meaning of the space resembles that of the Old Kingdom personal compound names including the *tjenenet* element (see above). In this context, it is worth noticing that the *tjenenet* sanctuary served as

4 I am indebted to Rémi Legros who checked for me the database of the French mission and kindly provided me with information that there is no mention on the *tjenenet* in the published and unpublished material excavated by the French expedition in South Saqqara.

5 Cf. <https://simondschweitzer.github.io/aed/176030.html>. Accessed on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

6 The *tjenenet* translated as the earth-shrine is to be found, for example, in UCL <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/literature/religious/bd17.html>. Accessed on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

the setting for the Nehebkau festival celebrating rebirth and rejuvenation, which was related to the travelling aspect of the soul after death (Leitz 2012: 283–284).

Furthermore, in Chapter 17 of the BD, the *tjenenet*-sanctuary is mentioned as “the tomb of Osiris” and “... I am one who passes (in safety), a pure one lodging in the place of smiting, to whom have been brought suppers of the fayence that is in the *tnnt*-sanctuary” (17 a § 5).

The preliminary remarks in the present contribution represent some initial steps. The article has demonstrated the research potential of the recently found monument and equally of the topic of the *tjenenet* sanctuary, which has not yet been exhausted. The research will continue. Menihy’s lintel will be put into context within the planned overall assessment of the group of destroyed tombs and cult places unearthed by the Czech archaeological mission at Abusir South. An in-depth study of the *tjenenet* will be conducted, particularly as regards the religious topography of the Memphite cemetery.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Research presented in this study was compiled within the framework of the Charles University Progres project Q11 *Complexity and resilience. Ancient Egyptian civilisation in multidisciplinary and multicultural perspective* and within the non-investment subsidy no. MSMT-1-VEG2021, no. 227/2021-8.

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### INTERNET RESOURCES

term tjenet in TLA <https://simonschweitzer.github.io/aed/176030.html>

BD Chapter 17 in UCL <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/literature/religious/bd17.html>

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