

## The Northern Soldiers-Tomb at Asyut\*

Mahmoud El-Khadragy

(Tafel 12)

### Abstract

The present study represents a publication and examination of the newly rediscovered Middle Kingdom tomb at Asyut. The tomb still has some of its decoration, including four rows of marching soldiers, three rows of wrestling men and two unusual representations of a jackal-headed god and the goddess Hathor. The dating of the tomb and the identity of its unknown owner are discussed.

### Introduction

In their report concerning Asyut, Jollois and Devilliers<sup>1</sup> stated that one of their colleagues reported the presence of more than one tomb decorated with marching soldiers at Asyut.

\* The joint Egyptian-German mission of South Valley University (Sohag, Egypt) Johannes Gutenberg-Universität (Mainz, Germany) and Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität (Münster, Germany) is currently recording and publishing the First Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom Tombs at Asyut. This article is the first of a series of articles and volumes intended to be published by Dr. Jochem Kahl and the author. The work on this tomb was conducted in the 2004 season, which was funded by the Universities of Mainz (fieldwork) and Münster (restoration work). This financial support is acknowledged with gratitude. The expedition received full cooperation and support from the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities and the Inspectorate of Antiquities at Asyut. In this respect, we would like to express our sincere thanks to Professor Dr. Zahi Hawass, Chairman of the SCA; Mr. Sabry Abdel-Aziz, Head of the Archaeology Sector; Mr. Samir Anis, Director General of Antiquities for Middle Egypt; Mr. Hani Sadek, Director General of Asyut; Mr. Magdy El-Ghandour, Head of the Foreign and Egyptian Missions Affairs and Permanent Committee; Mr. Hassan Fathy, Director of Antiquities at Asyut and to our Accompanying Inspector, Mr. Rageh Darwish Khalaf. Directed by Professor Dr. Ursula Verhoeven, Dr. Jochem Kahl and the author, the mission was assisted by a number of individuals who deserve all our thanks and appreciation. Dr. Eva-Maria Engel, Mrs. Ulrike Fauerbach, Mr. Omar Nour ed-Din, Mr. Yasser Mahmoud and Ms. Monika Zöller. The architectural drawings were produced by Dr. Eva-Maria Engel, who described also the architectural features, while the map of Asyut necropolis and the key-plan of the wall decoration were prepared by Mrs. Ulrike Fauerbach. The decoration was drawn by Mr. Yasser Mahmoud and inked by Dr. Sameh Shafik. The photographs were taken by Dr. Jochem Kahl.

<sup>1</sup> According to their colleague Balzac, some other tomb beside that of *Htj* II is decorated with seven or eight rows of marching soldiers in bas-relief (Commission des monuments d'Égypte, Description de l'Égypte ou recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l'expédition de l'armée française, IV. Antiquités: Descriptions, 1818, 147–48). The facts that our tomb has only four rows of soldiers executed in paint, and that the tomb of *Htj* II has three rows of such soldiers in sunk relief suggest that he was either referring to some unknown third tomb decorated with such a motif, or that our tomb was meant here, but inaccurately described: (For the soldiers scene in the tomb of *Htj* II, see n. 7 below). If the scene of our tomb was meant here, then Balzac's seven or eight number of rows was probably the result of confusing the number of soldiers in each row with that of the rows of marching soldiers, and that his notice concerning the technique used in the decoration was not correct. However, the artist who produced the drawings of *Htj* II's tomb in the „Description de l'Égypte“ confirmed the presence of a second tomb decorated with marching soldiers (Description Ant. IV, Texts, 147).

Discussing his report, they came to the conclusion that there is only one tomb decorated with such a scene belonging to *Htj* II, which has already been documented in their report<sup>2</sup>. However, in 1879, Villiers Stuart reported the presence of two tombs decorated with marching soldiers at Asyut<sup>3</sup>, assigning one to *Htj* II, but mentioned no details of the second tomb. Referring to a ruined painted tomb cut in the uppermost terrace of the mountain, Francis LI. Griffith alluded to the aforementioned second tomb in his 1889 report dealing with the inscriptions of Siût and Dêr Rîfeh<sup>4</sup>. David G. Hogarth, who excavated the northern part of Asyut cemetery in 1906/07 on behalf of the British Museum, reported the presence of a decorated tomb above that bearing his no. 33<sup>5</sup>. According to the recently published hand-sketched map<sup>6</sup>, the location of this painted tomb accords well with the so-called „Northern Soldiers-Tomb“<sup>7</sup>. Rediscovering the tomb in 1986, Diana Magee described its fragmentary wall decoration briefly<sup>8</sup>. She adopted Griffith numbering system (tombs I-V)<sup>9</sup>, retained later by Montet who added three more entries (tombs VI-VIII)<sup>10</sup>, so she assigned no. 13 for this tomb<sup>11</sup>. Considered an indispensable source of information on the now totally lost northern wall decoration,<sup>12</sup> Magee’s description of the fragmentary southern wall decoration overlooked some of the still existing remnants of figures and inscription<sup>13</sup>, and the significance of the fragmentary central scene on the same wall escaped her. Adopting a new numbering system, the tomb bears now our number M 11.1 (fig. 1). As the tomb has never been fully documented in photographs or in facsimile, and

<sup>2</sup> Description Ant. IV, pls. 46 [1–5], 48 [3–5], 49 [1–4]; Texts, 145–48.

<sup>3</sup> V. Stuart, Nile Gleanings Concerning the Ethnology, History and Art of Ancient Egypt as Revealed by Egyptian Paintings and Bas-Reliefs, 1879, 93. According to him, both tombs have already decayed by his time owing to the quarrying activities.

<sup>4</sup> F. LI. Griffith, in: The Babylonian and Oriental Record, 3, 1889, 126; cf., D. Magee, Asyût to the End of the Middle Kingdom: A Historical and Cultural Study (microfilmed Ph. D. Thesis, Oxford), 1988, II, 36.

<sup>5</sup> D. P. Ryan, The Archaeological Excavations of David George Hogarth at Asyut, Egypt (Cincinnati, Ohio 1988), 56. Noteworthy, however, that D. G. Hogarth never published his own reports. For the history of past exploration of the ancient necropolis of Asyut, see: Griffith, in: The Babylonian and Oriental Record, 3, 1889, 244–51; Magee, Asyût I, 2–8; Ryan, Excavations of Hogarth, 17–29.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., unnumbered map before pl. 1.

<sup>7</sup> This term was adopted for the painted tomb published here in reference to its location as to the well known „Soldiers-Tomb“ of *Htj* II (tomb IV): J. Kahl/M. El-Khadragy/U. Verhoeven, in: SAK 33, 2004, forthcoming. For the marching soldiers scene of *Htj* II, see: Description, Ant. IV, pl. 46 [4]; Wreszinski, Atlas II, pl. 15; D. Spanel, in: Or 58, 1989, 308–9, pl. 9, figs. 10–15; M. El-Khadragy/J. Kahl, in: SAK 32, 2004, pl. 14.

<sup>8</sup> Magee, Asyût II, 36–38.

<sup>9</sup> Griffith, Siût, 9–11.

<sup>10</sup> P. Montet, in: Kêmi I, 1928, 53–68; III, 1930, 45–111; VI, 1936, 131–37.

<sup>11</sup> Magee, Asyût II, 1, 36–38; III, pl. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 38–37; III, pls. 42–43.

<sup>13</sup> For example, the standing woman at the eastern end of the wall, the remaining traces of a forth row of the marching soldiers and the fragmentary inscription identifying the standing woman before the goddess Hathor (cf., ibid. II, 37–38).

having no published plan, the remaining part of the tomb-chapel still needs a thorough documentation.

*Architectural Features* (Figs. 1–3)

Cut in the eastern face of the cliffs bordering the Western Desert<sup>14</sup>, the tomb is located about two-thirds of the way up the mountain, in the same terrace containing the three First Intermediate Period tombs of *Jt(=j)-jb(=j)*<sup>15</sup> (tomb III), *Htjj* II (tomb IV) and *Htjj* I (tomb V), some 330m. to the north of tomb IV (fig. 1). Originally facing east, the tomb façade is now missing; its ceiling has collapsed as has the northern wall, which is still preserved in parts but not in its original place. The gap between the standing rock and the block of the northern wall indicates that it might have been moved one meter southwards, thus pointing to an original width of about 14m. Traces of the floor are visible at the southern wall showing a horizontal line above which the wall was smoothed. Inside the tomb, the floor seems to have been largely destroyed, but no further excavations have been undertaken yet<sup>16</sup>.

The back panel is unfinished. Two horizontal niches of 1.5m. long were cut in its southernmost part. Their regularity points to the original plan, but they might have been reused in later times. The partially preserved south wall is at present about 14m. long, and shows two projections, one near the front and the other near the backside. The front projection is also a characteristic feature of tombs III and IV at Asyut<sup>17</sup>. The similarity in the design of both our tomb and tomb IV is striking, since each of them has the marching soldiers scene on its southern wall directly after the front projection<sup>18</sup>. In contrast to tombs III and IV, no traces of any pillars have been found so far. Since the tomb has not been excavated yet, one can not determine whether this is due to the rather bad state of preservation, or to the smaller ground plan of the tomb that made the pillars unnecessary (figs. 2–3).

<sup>14</sup> For the Western Desert, see: C. Vivian, *The Western Desert of Egypt: An Explorer's Handbook*, 2000.

<sup>15</sup> For the reading and the possible meaning of the name, see: Ranke, PN I, 50 [14]; Schenkel, *Memphis, Herakleopolis, Theben*, 74, n. b; Spanel, in: *Or* 58, 1989, 312–14.


<sup>16</sup> Challenged by the huge blocks of the collapsed roof, our mission is still unable to clear neither the surface nor the shaft(s) of the tomb. With the wall decoration in a fragile condition endangered by direct sunlight, rain and wind, the remaining part of the tomb-chapel had to be promptly documented before any further damage should affect its scenes.

<sup>17</sup> For the recently amended ground plan of tomb III, see: El-Khadragy/Kahl, in: *SAK* 32, 2004, fig. 2. And for the ground plan of tomb IV, see: *Description*, Ant. IV, pl. 48 [3]; Brunner, *Felsgräber*, fig. 43; Magee, *Asyût III*, pl. 16; El-Khadragy/Kahl, in: *SAK* 32, 2004, fig. 3.

<sup>18</sup> For the marching soldiers scene in tomb IV, see n. 7

*Representations and inscriptions* (Figs. 4–8; Pl. 12)

After the partial collapse of the northern wall resulted in the total loss of its decoration<sup>19</sup>, the only remaining decorated part in the tomb-chapel is its southern wall. All the remaining decoration is painted on a thin layer of plaster, but the wall surface has suffered much damage, for the plaster has fallen in some areas and the painted scenes and inscriptions are now too faded to be recognizable. At the broken eastern end of the wall are remnants of a large figure of a standing woman (figs. 4 [22–23], 5). Facing outwards, a small portion of the figure's upper part is now visible showing traces of the head's outline and parts of her right arm, necklace, breast and dress. She wears a yellow garment adorned with green dots in its remaining part, seen under the breast, and provided with yellow shoulder straps, of which the only preserved left one is bordered by red dots on both sides. Parts of a broad collar of green tubular beads around her neck and a bracelet with green circular beads on her right wrist are still visible. The attitude of her extended right arm is probably that of one who holds a staff<sup>20</sup>. Of the originally three columns of hieroglyphic text identifying the woman, a few traces of the signs and the separating lines, painted green, are still visible. Oriented towards the left, the only legible hieroglyphic signs are those at the beginning of the second line, which read: ... *hz[jjt] n ... - , , ... favoured of...“*, and an isolated ...*j..* in the middle of the third column.

Headed by a figure labelled  ...*[j mj]-r pr ... - , , ... steward...“*, of whom only some traces of his brown foot can be detected, a fragmentary scene depicting four rows of marching soldiers is still visible<sup>21</sup>. Its remnants suggest seven men at least in each row<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> According to Magee, the decorated northern wall was still in situ when she visited Asyut in 1986 (Asyut II, 1, 36–37). From the east, it was decorated with columns of hieroglyphic inscription in sunk relief facing outwards, of which content nothing was reported. Then follows a standing woman followed by a similarly standing man with an intervening painted inscription of two columns mentioning Asyut. In front of the man was a coloured column which, according to her, may have belonged to a kiosk in which the man was standing. After this she reported the presence of traces of some scenes, the subject matter of which were unidentifiable (ibid. II, 36–37; III, pls. 42–43). Most regrettable are Magee's poor quality photographs documenting the northern wall decoration, since not much details can be recognized (loc. cit.).

<sup>20</sup> One should admit that the arm is much higher and extending forward than expected in such attitude. This is probably due to the text inserted under her arm. Women holding papyri-form or loti-form staffs are documented from the reign of Pepy II onwards. For this attitude, see: A. Hassan, *Stöcke und Stäbe im pharaonischen Ägypten*, MÄS 33, 1976, 199–200; Y. Harpur, *Decoration in Egyptian Tombs of the Old Kingdom*, 1987, 134–35; H.G. Fischer, *The Tomb of Ip at El Saff*, MMA, 1996, 34. For some examples, see: Davies, *Deir el-Gebrâwi II*, pl. 6; Newberry, *Beni Hasan II*, pls. 4, 16; Blackman, *Meir II*, pl. 2.

<sup>21</sup> Two distinctive types of military scenes can be recognized from the extant pictorial material in private tombs during the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom. The first type represents rows of marching soldiers equipped with different kinds of warfare weapons, while the second type represents soldiers engaged in combat. Of the first type, three examples are known from the tombs of *nh.tj.fj* at Mo<sup>o</sup>alla (Vandier, *Mo<sup>o</sup>alla*, 96–100, pl. 35), the tomb of *Htj* II at Asyut (see n. 7 above), and our „Northern soldiers-Tomb.“ Related to this category are the First Intermediate Period stelae representing isolated armed soldiers with or without other members of their families (J. Vandier, in: *CdÉ* 17, no. 35, 1943, 21–29; H. G. Fischer, in: *Kush* 9, 1961, 44–80). Of the second type, eight examples are

(figs. 4 [14–21], 6; pl. 1). Proceeding towards the left, their figures still have remnants of brown paint on their bodies and heads, which may suggest shaven heads rather than misapplication of colours. With a large area of their bodies hidden behind the body-sized shields, no details of their clothes can be recognized. Of their weaponry, the soldiers carry in their right hands half-moon bladed battle-axes painted brown<sup>23</sup>, and hold with their left hands large, full-length shields with pointed tops made of wood covered by cow-hide, cheetah skin and antelope skin<sup>24</sup>. Of those still retaining colours, all the shields were outlined in brown paint. In the uppermost row, the shield of the second soldier from the left still has a few brown spots, and that of the third one is coloured in dark yellow (antelope skin), while the shield of the fourth soldier has only one red spot. In the second row, the shield of the third soldier from the left has red spots with a triangular dark yellow join at its lower edge<sup>25</sup> (pl. 12a). The next soldier carries a shield covered with cheetah skin having many small yellowish brown spots on a plain background. Following them is a soldier with a shield having some curved and strait brown lines irregularly arranged on a plain background. The shield of the sixth soldier in the same row is decorated with brown spots on plain background and has some ornamentation along its edges of a double brown line filled with brown hatching explained as a sewn edge strengthening the attachment of the

preserved. The first scene is in the tomb of *St-k3* at Qubbet el-Hawa (ibid., 63, fig. 5), the second is a fragmentary scene in the tomb of *ḥnh.tj.fj* at Mo'alla (Vandier, Mo'alla, 126–29, figs. 61–63), the next two scenes are in the tomb of *Jnj-jt=f* at Thebes (B. Jaroš-Deckert, Grabung im Asasif 1963–1970, V: Das Grab des Jnj-jt=f: Die Wandmalereien der XI. Dynastie, AV 12, 1984, pls. 14, 17). The next four scenes come from tombs at Beni Hasan: the tomb of *Jmn-m-ḥ3t* (Newberry, Beni Hasan I, pl. 14), the tomb of *Hmw-ḥtp I* (ibid., pl. 47), the tomb of *B3qt III* (ibid. II, pl. 5) and the tomb of *Htjj* (ibid., pl. 15). For the Middle Kingdom Battle scenes, see: A. Schulman, in: JSSEA 12 [1], 1982, 165–183.

<sup>22</sup> Stripped of its plaster, the limited area of wall surface before the dividing vertical band to the right of the marching soldiers suggests that each row might have had one more soldier. Comparison with the other First Intermediate Period and early Middle Kingdom scenes of marching soldiers suggests that the provincial armed forces were not similarly organized in different provinces as yet. Even in the same province, there is no evidence of any standardized organization at that time. Compare the two well-known groups of model soldiers from the tomb of *Mzhtj* at Asyut, each of which is arranged in four rows having ten soldiers each (PM IV, 265; CG 257, 258. For the Nubian model soldiers of *Mzhtj*, see: M. Bietak, in: Mél. Gamal Eddin Mokhtar 1, 1985, 87–97, pls. 1–4), and the marching soldiers scene in the tomb of *ḥnh.tj.fj* at Mo'alla where some forty six soldiers were arranged in three registers (Vandier, Mo'alla, 96–100, pl. 35). The unfinished marching soldiers scene of *Htjj II* at Asyut adds little information to this matter (Griffith, Siût, 11). For the scanty evidence of organizing the provincial armed forces during the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom, see: R. O. Faulkner, in: JEA 39, 1953, 36–41.

<sup>23</sup> For the different kinds of weapons used by the Ancient Egyptians, see: R. Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs: Weapons and Warfare in Ancient Egypt*, 2002, 21–74.

<sup>24</sup> For the different kinds of Egyptian shields, see: A. Nibbi, in: ZÄS 130, 2003, 170–81. She pointed out that Egyptian shields are usually shown to be made of wood covered with cow-hide until the late New Kingdom, nevertheless, wooden shields covered with cheetah skin and antelope skin have been recognized among Tutankhamun's funerary furniture (ibid., 173–74; cf., H. Carter, *The Tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amun III*, 1933, 142–43, pl. 47 [B]).

<sup>25</sup> For the different types of such joins, where skins of different colours were brought together both in symmetrical and asymmetrical types, see: Nibbi, in: ZÄS 130, 2003, 176–77, figs. 11–13.

animal skin to the backing<sup>26</sup>. In the third row, only a part of the shield's outline carried by the second soldier from the left is still visible, while the shield of the sixth man still has some parts of its outline, a dark yellow spot near the middle and some brown patches near its lower edge. As for the lowermost row, the shield of the sixth soldier from the left still has some parts of its outline and some red dots on its surface.

After a relatively small area to the right of the marching soldiers scene is a dividing vertical band of alternating blue and red paint. Then follows a relatively large area stripped thoroughly of its plaster, to the right of which is a very fragmentary scene representing a jackal-headed god and the goddess Hathor (figs. 4 [4–13], 7). This jackal-headed god might be identified as Wepwawet, the local god of the town of Asyut<sup>27</sup>, or less likely as Anubis<sup>28</sup>, who was associated with its necropolis<sup>29</sup>. Having the jackal's distinctive muzzle in brown paint, some parts of the curved brown outline of the back of the long divine wig and a part of its yellow tail, the god wears a broad collar of blue tubular beads and an unidentifiable type of short kilts painted in green, yellow and red. Outlined in brown, the body still has remnants of blue paint on the left shoulder, the left arm and both legs<sup>30</sup>. While the extant outline and blue paint of the left arm suggest that it was hanging by his side, nothing of his right arm is preserved (fig. 4 [11–13]).

Next is an anthropomorphic figure of Hathor<sup>31</sup> surmounted by a winged sun disc.<sup>32</sup> The

<sup>26</sup> H. Bonnet, *Die Waffen der Völker des alten Orients*, 1926, 155ff; Nibbi, in: *ZÄS* 130, 2003, 174.

<sup>27</sup> Apart from the Fifth Dynasty disputable example of the vizier *Nfr-Mnw* (PM III<sup>2</sup>, 764; Leemans, *Mon. Eg.* III, L., pl. 1a), the earliest attested evidence of *Wp-w3wt nb Z3wt* dates to the First Intermediate Period (e.g., Griffith, *Siût III* [1–2, 57–58]; IV [21, 45, 61]). Wepwawet's temple at Asyut was refereed to during the same time (e.g., Griffith, *Siût IV* [23–24]. Refer also to: F. Gomaà, *Die Besiedlung Ägyptens während des Mittleren Reiches I: Oberägypten und das Fayyûm*, TAVO Beiheft B/66 [1], 1986, 268–69). As for *Nfr-Mnw* example, some scholars read his title as *hm-nfr Jnpw nb Z3wt jmj wt* (e.g., D. Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom I*, 2000, 505–6 [1892]; N. Strudwick, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom: The Highest Titles and their Holders*, 1985, 92 [55]), while others prefer to read the god's name here as *Wp-w3wt* (e.g., K. Zibelius, *Ägyptische Siedlungen nach Texten des Alten Reiches*, TAVO B/19, 1978, 196, n. 1137).

<sup>28</sup> Probably one can find some evidence in favour of identifying the jackal-headed god associated with Hathor here as being Wepwawet rather than Anubis in a statue of Ramses II found in Tanis. On this statue Hathor, lady of Medjed is associated with Wepwawet, lord of Asyut, which might reflect some older tradition associating both Siutan gods together (Petrie, *Tanis II*, pl. 9).

<sup>29</sup> According to Magee, *Asyût I*, 198–200, Anubis was associated with the necropolis since the late Old Kingdom. Evidence of the local priesthood of Anubis is attested as early as the First Intermediate Period (e.g., Griffith, *Siût III* [61]; IV [53]; V [42]). For Asyut cemetery and the temple of Anubis, see: Gomaà, *Besiedlung I*, 269–73.

<sup>30</sup> Magee suggests that Wepwawet wears a blue robe rather than a blue painted flesh (*Asyût II*, 37).

<sup>31</sup> Evidence for Hathor cult at Asyut is attested as early as the First Intermediate Period. Many sarcophagi of that time refer to *Hwt-hr nbt Mdd(nj)* (e.g., É. Chassinat/Ch. Palanque, *Une campagne de fouilles dans la nécropole d'Assiout*, MIFAO 24, 1911, 19, 27, 127, 132, 137, 166; cf., S. Allam, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches*, MÄS 4, 1963, 95, n. 10). Some scholars prefer to identify *Mdd(nj)* with the modern Drunka, some four km. to the south of Asyut (e.g., Gauthier, *DG III*, 26; AEO II, 68\*; Allam, *Hathorkult*, 95–96), while others suggest different places such as al-Masâyid and Rifâ (Gomaà, *Besiedlung I*, 275–76, with references). Magee, who prefers the reading *Mdn*, suggests that it referred to a mythical place and was an epithet applied to Hathor after she connected

tips of the two wings are still visible; each of which has its upper row of feathers painted blue, while the lower one is painted green. Over Hathor's head, traces of brown outline of the left horn and some parts of the enclosed sun disc filled with red paint and outlined in yellow are still visible. Of the remaining traces, some brown outlines of her wig, face, left shoulder, left arm and hips are still visible. Some traces of yellow paint on her face and left arm are also recognizable. Hathor wears a green, close fitting dress with shoulder straps and a broad collar of green tubular beads. In front of her face is some unidentifiable object outlined in brown and filled with yellow paint (fig. 4 [8–10]). Facing her is a standing woman<sup>33</sup>, of which only some brown outlines of her hips, legs and right arm are discernible. She extends her right arm towards Hathor through a column having a shaft with alternating red and green squares, and lotus-bud capital, of which a green bud is recognizable. Such a column suggests that the woman might have been standing in a kiosk<sup>34</sup>. The action performed by the woman's right hand is not clear (fig. 4 [4–7]). Above her are few remains of what seems to be tips of some wings, and a fragmentary inscription of one horizontal line and two short vertical columns of hieroglyphs oriented towards the left, of which the following is still legible<sup>35</sup>:

(1) *m*[z]<sup>36</sup> ... *n*... [*s*]nw *mn*[jt]<sup>37</sup> (2) *n* *k*<sup>3</sup> *n* *hm*(*t*)-*ntr* (3) *Hwt*-[*hr*]<sup>38</sup> ...

„(1) Bringing ..., *snw*-bread and *mnjt*-necklace<sup>39</sup> (2) for the priestess of (3) Hathor<sup>40</sup> ...“



with the Osirian myth at Asyut in the Middle Kingdom (Asyût I, 194–95).

<sup>32</sup> According to Smith, the winged sun disc is documented on royal monuments as early as the reign of king Snefru, and it was provided with the two uraei since the reign of king Neuserer (Sculpture, 324, fig. 204). For some Middle Kingdom examples of the winged sun disc in private tombs, see: Davies/Gardiner, *Antefoker*, pl. 16; Blackman, Meir III, pl. 19; Davies, *Five Theban Tombs*, pl. 30 [3].

<sup>33</sup> The presence of such a woman before the goddess Hathor might suggest a similar context for the neighboring scene of Wepwawet, i.e., some main figure might have been facing him, for whom the anonymous tomb owner is suggested here.

<sup>34</sup> For a Middle Kingdom example of such a kiosk supported by similar columns, see: Newberry, *El Bersheh I*, pl. 19.

<sup>35</sup> All the remaining signs are outlined in brown. In the first line, the *m*-sign and the remaining part of the *z*-sign are painted yellow, the *n*-sign and the *nw*-sign are painted brown, and the vertical stroke is painted blue. In column (2), the two *n*-signs and the vertical stroke are painted blue, the *k*<sup>3</sup>-sign is painted brown, while both *hm* and *ntr* signs are filled with yellow paint. Of column (3), the only remaining part of the *hwt*-sign is painted yellow.

<sup>36</sup> Of *mz*, both the *m*-sign and the remaining part of the *z*-sign are painted yellow, while the remaining part of the walking legs determinative is painted red. Noteworthy is the writing  instead of the usual writing combining the *z*-sign and the walking legs determinative  (cf, Wb II, 135; Blackman, Meir I, pls. 9, 10). However, the same epigraphic feature is attested again in the recently discovered tomb at Asyut bearing our number O 13.2 (fig. 1).\_ ...*n*... [*s*]nw *mn*[jt].

<sup>37</sup> Of the word, only the upper part of the *mn*-sign can be recognized. For the reconstruction, see: Blackman, Meir I, pl. 2; II, pl. 15.

<sup>38</sup> Of the *hwt*-sign, only the left corners are still visible, while nothing of the probable interior or exterior signs expressing *hr* can be recognized. For variant writings of the title, see: M. Galvin, in: *JAOS*, 103, 1983, 425–30.

<sup>39</sup> For the significance of offering the *mnjt*-necklace and the sistrum to the deceased and the associated ritual, see: Blackman, Meir I, 25; Davies/Gardiner, *Amenemhet*, 94–96. For the probable significance

To the right is a dividing vertical band of alternating blue and red paint. The upper part of the remaining space to the right has traces of three registers of wrestlers (figs. 4 [2–3, 25–26], 8; pl. 12b). As evident from the upper register, there might have been three pairs of wrestlers in each register. Represented in different attitudes, each pair has a wrestler painted in dark red, while the other is painted in clear red<sup>41</sup>. Having lost most of its layer of plaster, the lower part of this section of the wall has only traces of some small figure standing near the lower left corner<sup>42</sup>. The figure, whose activity can not be determined, is outlined in brown, and still has traces of yellow paint on the left shoulder (fig. 4 [27]). Alongside the wall's western corner are traces of a vertical border with alternative brown and green rectangles (fig. 4 [1, 28]).

### Dating

There is no conclusive evidence for dating the tomb, but the following remarks may help in assigning it to a reasonably secure date:

- (1) The projection on the southern wall is a characteristic feature of tombs III and IV at Asyut dating to the end of the First Intermediate Period<sup>43</sup>.
- (2) Marching soldiers are only attested again in the tomb of *Htj* II at Asyut<sup>44</sup> securely dated by inscription to the reign of Merykare<sup>45</sup>, and the tomb of *ḥn.tj.fj* at Mo<sup>c</sup>alla<sup>46</sup> ranging in its date between the Eighth and the Tenth Dynasties<sup>47</sup>. The same motif was

of offering the *snw*-bread of Hathor, see: Blackman, Meir I, 23, n.5.

<sup>40</sup> This is the eighth known priestess of Hathor at Asyut. The other seven are: *Hwjt* dated to the Sixth Dynasty (British Museum 46634; PM IV, 268; Magee, Asyût II, 44–45 [C3], pls. 54–55); *K3j(t) Jdnj(t)* dated to the late Old Kingdom (British Museum 46637; Magee, Asyût II, 46–47 [C6], pl. 58), *Snt-wsr* dated to the late Old Kingdom or to the early First Intermediate Period (Cairo JE 44019; PM IV, 267; G. Lefebvre, in: ASAE 13, 1913, 10–18; Magee, Asyût II, 48–49 [C9]), *Nbt-m-qjs* dated to the First Intermediate Period (Turin Museum Sup. 14378; Magee, Asyût II, 51–52 [C13], pl. 64), *Jt(=j)-jb(=j)*, a female relative of *Htj* II whose tomb is dated to the reign of Merykare (PM IV, 263–4; Griffith, Siût IV [38–40]); *Jdw* dated to the Eleventh Dynasty (PM IV, 266; Chassinat/Palanque, Assiout, 21–22; Magee, Asyût II, 60 [C25]) and *Nht*, mother of *Htj* whose tomb is dated to the late Twelfth Dynasty (Magee, Asyût II, 34–35 [Tomb 12]). Noteworthy, however, is that none of these examples was referred to in R. Gillam's valuable study devoted to the Priestesses of Hathor, in: JARCE, 32, 1995, 211–37.

<sup>41</sup> For the wrestling scene, see: W. Decker/M. Herb, *Bildatlas zum Sport im alten Ägypten*, HdO 1.14, 1994, 533ff. Of its significance, Schulman wonders if the wrestlers of the Middle Kingdom scenes were not engaged in some sort of ceremonial games attested later in the New Kingdom (JSSEA 12 [1], 1982, 168, n.18). For such ceremonial games, see: J. Wilson, in: JEA 17, 1931, 211–20.

<sup>42</sup> Compared with the tombs of Beni Hasan associating wrestling with battle scenes, the lower part of this wall might have also been decorated with some battle scene (e.g., Newberry, Beni Hasan I, pls. 14–16; II, pls. 5, 15; cf., Schulman, in: JSSEA 12 [1], 1982, 166, n.12, 168, n.18).

<sup>43</sup> See n. 17 above.

<sup>44</sup> See n. 7 above.

<sup>45</sup> Griffith, Siût IV [3, 9, 22].

<sup>46</sup> Vandier, Mo<sup>c</sup>alla, 96–100, pl. 35.

<sup>47</sup> Some scholars suggested an Eighth Dynasty date for *ḥn.tj.fj* (e.g., J. v. Beckerath, in: JNES, 21, 1962, 147; E. Martin-Pardey, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Provinzialverwaltung bis zum Ende des Alten Reiches*, HÄB 1, 1976, 207ff; F. Gomaà, *Ägypten während der Ersten Zwischenzeit*, TAVO, Beiheft B/27, 1980, 24; N. Kanawati, *Governmental Reforms in Old Kingdom Egypt*, 1980, 105–107; N. Kanawati/A. McFarlane, *Akhmim in the Old Kingdom I: Chronology and Administration*, ACE:



reproduced in the form of two groups of model soldiers found in the tomb of *Mzhtj* at Asyut<sup>48</sup>, whom Brovarski dates to the reign of Nebhepetre: Mentuhotep II suggesting that he was the successor of the Asyut nomarchs of the Tenth Dynasty<sup>49</sup>. Schenkel, on the other hand, dates him to the very end of the Eleventh Dynasty or the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty<sup>50</sup>.

- (3) Representations of local gods in private tombs are only attested again in the tomb of *Z3-rnpwt* I at Qubbet el-Hawa dated to the reign of Senwosret I, where Khnum and either Satet or Anuket are represented on pillar faces<sup>51</sup>.
- (4) Apart from the Fifth Dynasty example belonging to *Pth-htp* II<sup>52</sup>, wrestling scenes are attested again since the reign of Nebhepetre: Mentuhotep II onwards. Middle Kingdom examples are attested in Qubbet el-Hawa<sup>53</sup>, Thebes<sup>54</sup>, Meir<sup>55</sup>, El-Bersheh<sup>56</sup> and Beni Hasan<sup>57</sup>.
- (5) The lack of honorific transposition for Hathor attested here in the title *hmt(i)-ntr Hwt-hr* is attested once in the late Old Kingdom<sup>58</sup>, twice in the First Intermediate Period<sup>59</sup>, more frequently in the Eleventh Dynasty<sup>60</sup>, and once again in the first part of the Twelfth Dynasty<sup>61</sup>.

**Suggested Date:** Eleventh Dynasty, probably the reign of Nebhepetre: Mentuhotep II, after the reunification of Egypt.

#### *General Commentary*

The representation of marching soldiers suggests that the anonymous owner of the „Northern Soldiers-Tomb“ might have been in charge of some local army, while the representation of a local jackal-headed god in his tomb might indicate that he was a high

Studies 2, 1992, 157–62). Other scholars suggested a Ninth Dynasty date for the tomb (e.g., W. Schenkel, *Frühmittelägyptische Studien*, 1962, 150–51; D. Spänel, in: GM 78, 1984, 87–94). A date within the Tenth Dynasty was also suggested (Vandier, *Mo'alla*, 40).

<sup>48</sup> PM IV, 265; CG 257, 258.

<sup>49</sup> E. Brovarski, *The Inscribed Material of the First Intermediate Period from Naga-ed-Dêr*, (microfilmed Ph. D. Thesis, Chicago), 1989, 1062–1065.

<sup>50</sup> Schenkel, *Frühmittelägyptische Studien*, 117–18.

<sup>51</sup> H. W. Müller, *Die Felsengräber der Fürsten von Elephantine aus der Zeit des Mittleren Reiches*, ÄF 9, 1940, 45–46, figs. 21–22. For the date, see: *ibid.*, 12.

<sup>52</sup> Paget/Pirie, *Ptah-hetep*, pl. 33 = Davies, *Ptahhetep and Akhethetep I*, pls. 21, 24.

<sup>53</sup> De Morgan, *Cat. des Mon.* 1, 193 = Müller, *Elephantine*, 49.

<sup>54</sup> PM I<sup>2</sup>, 429 [pillar D]; Jaroš-Deckert, *Jnj-jtj.f*, fig. 16.

<sup>55</sup> Blackman, *Meir I*, pl. 3; II, pl. 2.

<sup>56</sup> Griffith/Newberry, *El Bersheh II*, pl. 11 [7].

<sup>57</sup> Newberry, *Beni Hasan I*, 85, pls. 14–16; II, 38, pls. 8, 32.

<sup>58</sup> *British Museum 46637* = Magee, *Asyût II*, 46–47 [C6], pl. 58.

<sup>59</sup> Griffith, *Siût IV* [38]; D. Dunham, *Naga-ed-Dêr Stelae of the First Intermediate Period*, 1937, 76, pl. 21 [2].

<sup>60</sup> TPPI §19 [α], §27 [β: 2: 1, δ: 4, ζ: 1, θ: 1, ι: 1, ξ: 1, π: 1, σ]; P. Lacau, *Sarcophages antérieurs au Nouvel Empire I*, 1904, 62–65 [CG 28026]; Chassinat/Palanque, *Assiout*, 21–23; Brovarski, *Naga-ed-Dêr*, 111–16, 788, fig. 75.

<sup>61</sup> Newberry, *Beni Hasan I*, pl. 35.

priest of that god. Considering that his probable wife represented in a relatively large scale in his tomb was *hm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr*, which was a privilege of the royal court and the elite at that time<sup>62</sup>, our tomb owner was probably a nomarch and overseer of the priests of either Wepwawet or Anubis.

The evidence indicates that *Htj* II, who is dated by an inscription to the reign of Merykare<sup>63</sup>, was probably the last of the three First Intermediate Period nomarchs at Asyut<sup>64</sup>, and that the next well dated holder of the title *hrj-tp* <sup>ε3</sup> *n 3tf hntt mj qd=s* at Asyut was *Dfj-h'pj* I, who is securely dated by an inscription to the reign of Senwosret I<sup>65</sup>. The administration of Asyut during the Eleventh Dynasty and the early part of the Twelfth Dynasty still needs reconsideration. It has already been suggested that the title of *hrj-tp* <sup>ε3</sup> was suppressed during the Eleventh Dynasty, probably by Nebhepetre: Mentuhotep II<sup>66</sup>, and that the most indicative title for nomarchs during the Middle Kingdom was *h'jtj-c*<sup>67</sup>.

Four possible high ranked provincial administrators could be assigned to that period, the earliest of whom was probably the owner of the „Northern Soldiers-Tomb“. The other three possible administrators are:

(1) *jrj-p'ct, h'jtj-c, jmj-r hm(w)-ntr n Wp-w'wt nb Z'wt, jmj-r hm(w)-ntr n Jnpw nb R-qrrt, Mzhtj*<sup>68</sup>. In view of the absence of any conclusive evidence for dating his tomb, *Mzhtj*'s exact position within the Eleventh Dynasty remains uncertain, for an early date during the reign of Nebhepetre: Mentuhotep II has already been suggested<sup>69</sup>, and a later date at the very end of the Eleventh Dynasty or even at the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty is also possible<sup>70</sup>.

(2) *h'jtj-c, jmj-r hm(w)-ntr Wp-w'wt nb Z'wt, jmj-r jsqt-ihw n Jnpw*<sup>71</sup>, <sup>εnw</sup><sup>72</sup>. His tomb is dated to the early Twelfth Dynasty<sup>73</sup>.

(3) *jrj-p'ct, h'jtj-c, hrj-tp* <sup>ε3</sup> *n 3tf hntt mj qd=s, jmj-r hm(w)-ntr n Wp-w'wt nb S'wt, jmj-r hm(w)-ntr n Wsjr nb jmnt, Dfj-h'pj* II<sup>74</sup>. Architecturally, the tomb belongs to the early group with chapels having single chambers supported by pillars<sup>75</sup> rather than the relatively

<sup>62</sup> Gillam, in: JARCE 32, 1995, 233.

<sup>63</sup> Griffith, Siût IV [3, 22].

<sup>64</sup> Gomaà, *Ersten Zwischenzeit*, 99–100.

<sup>65</sup> Griffith, Siût I [210–16].

<sup>66</sup> Brovarski, *Naga-ed-Dêr*, 1065.

<sup>67</sup> Helck, *Verwaltung*, 208–209.

<sup>68</sup> PM IV, 265; P. Lacau, *Sarcophages antérieurs au Nouvel Empire II/2*, 1906, 101–33 [CG 28118, 28119].

<sup>69</sup> See n. 49 above.

<sup>70</sup> See n. 50 above.

<sup>71</sup> For this unattested title elsewhere and the possibility of referring to the herds of Anubis by some local term, see: Magee, *Asyût II*, 39 [a].

<sup>72</sup> A. Roccati, in: *OrAnt* 11, 1972, 42–44.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>74</sup> PM IV, 262; Griffith, Siût II [Iff.]; Montet, in: *Kêmi* 3, 1930, 86–89.

<sup>75</sup> Examples of this early group of tomb-chapels are those of *Htj* I (tomb V), *Jt(=j)-jb(=j)* (tomb III) and *Htj* II (tomb IV), for whose ground plans, see: n. 17 above (tombs III and IV); *Description, Ant. IV*, pl. 47 [8]; Brunner, *Felsgräber*, fig. 41 (tomb V).

later tomb-chapels consisting of passages and transverse halls leading to one or more shrines<sup>76</sup>. Therefore, in agreement with Magee, *Dfβj-h'pj* II seems to be the first of his proposed family, and post dates *Dfβj-h'pj* I, and accordingly should be dated to the early Twelfth Dynasty<sup>77</sup>. Supporting this conclusion is the fact that *Dfβj-h'pj* II's tomb is located in the same terrace containing the three First Intermediate Period tombs (III-V) and our „Northern Soldiers-Tomb“ rather than being in the terrace of the relatively later tombs containing those of *Dfβj-h'pj* I and *Dfβj-h'pj* III (fig. 1).

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<sup>76</sup> Examples of this type of tomb-chapels are those of *Dfβj-h'pj* I and *Dfβj-h'pj* III „Salkhana Tomb“, for whose ground plans, see: Description, Ant. IV, pl. 44 (1); PMIV, fig. on p. 260, respectively. For dating the tomb of *Dfβj-h'pj* III to the reign of Amenemhat II, see: R. Moss, in: JEA 19, 1933, 33.

<sup>77</sup> Magee, Asyüt I, 139ff.

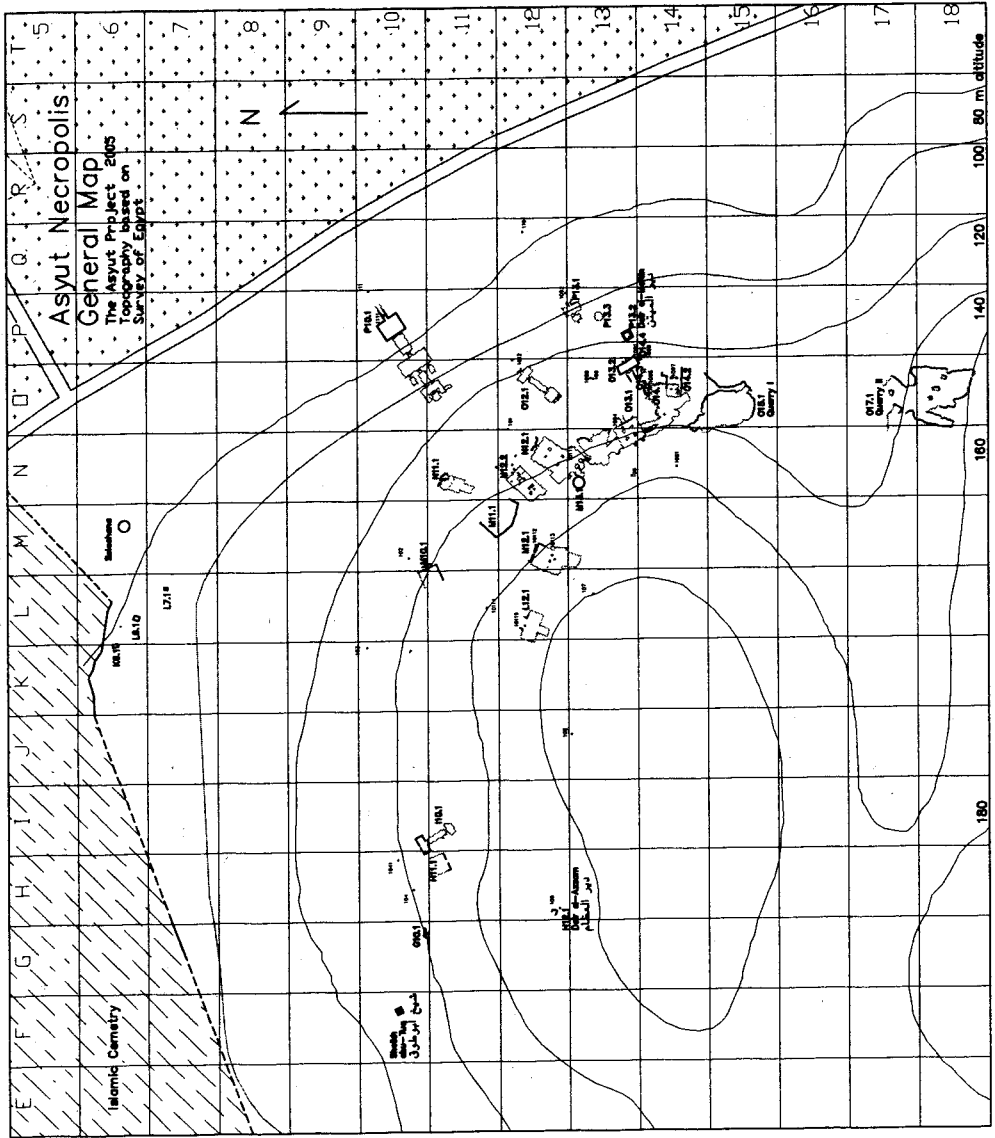


Fig. 1: Map of Asyut necropolis

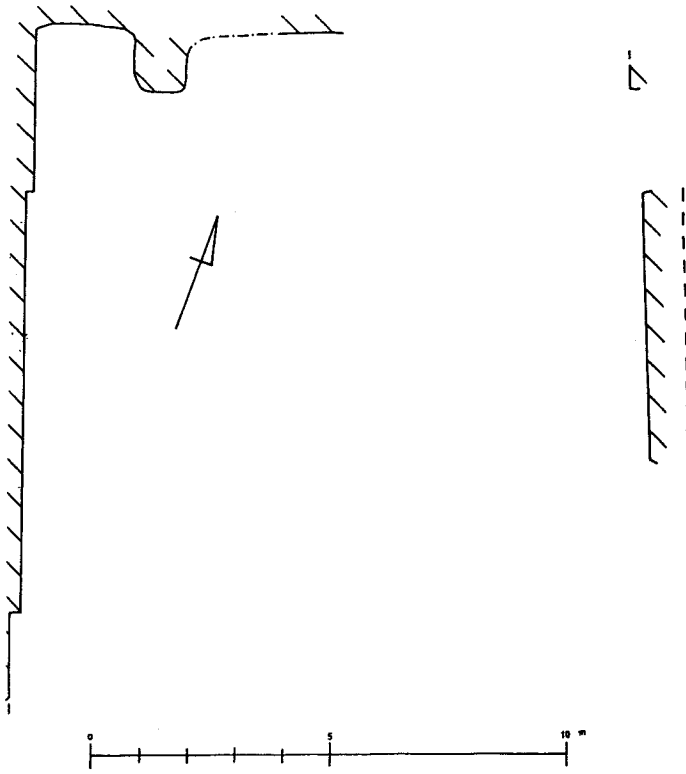


Fig. 2: The Northern Soldiers-Tomb, architectural plan

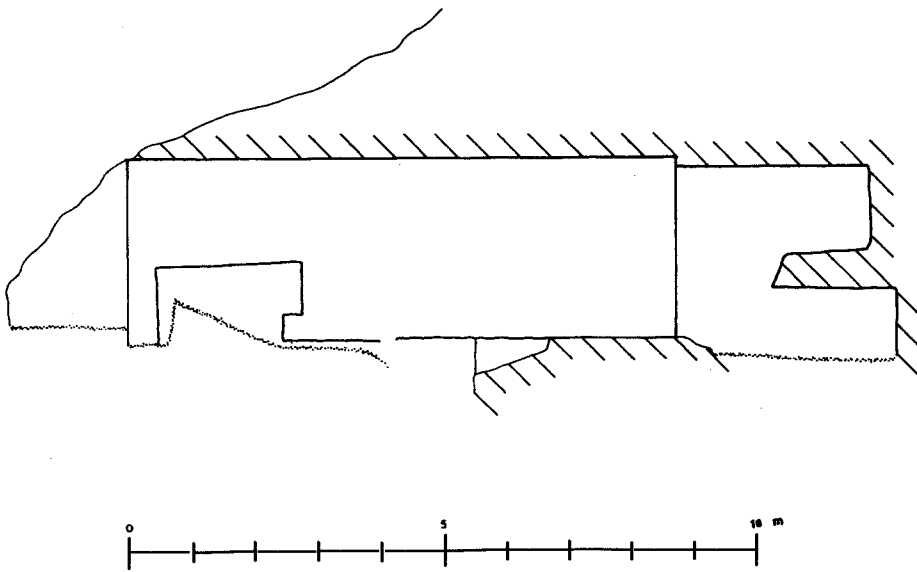


Fig. 3: The Northern Soldiers-Tomb, southern wall, elevation

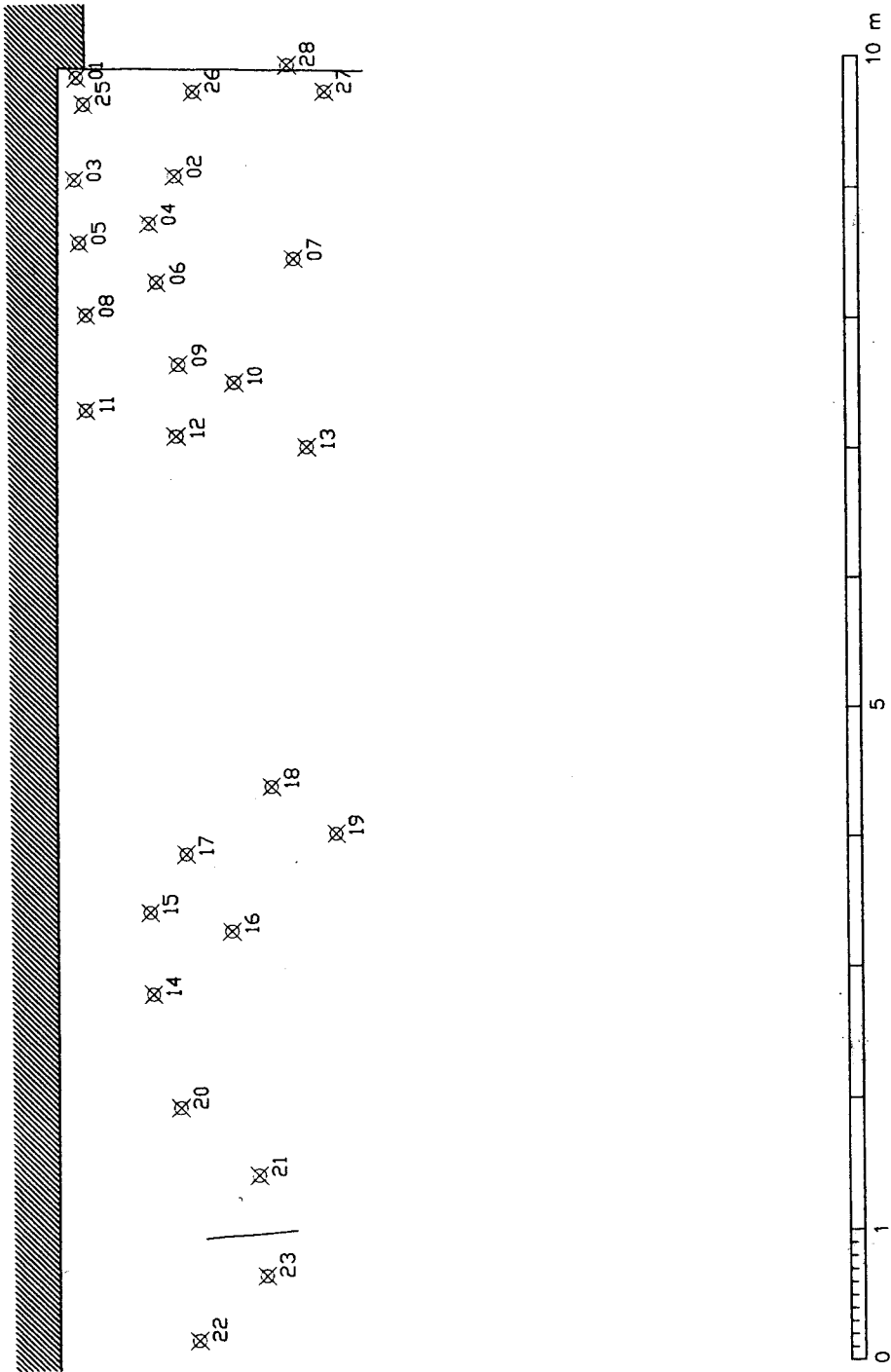


Fig. 4: The Northern Soldiers-Tomb, southern wall, key-plan

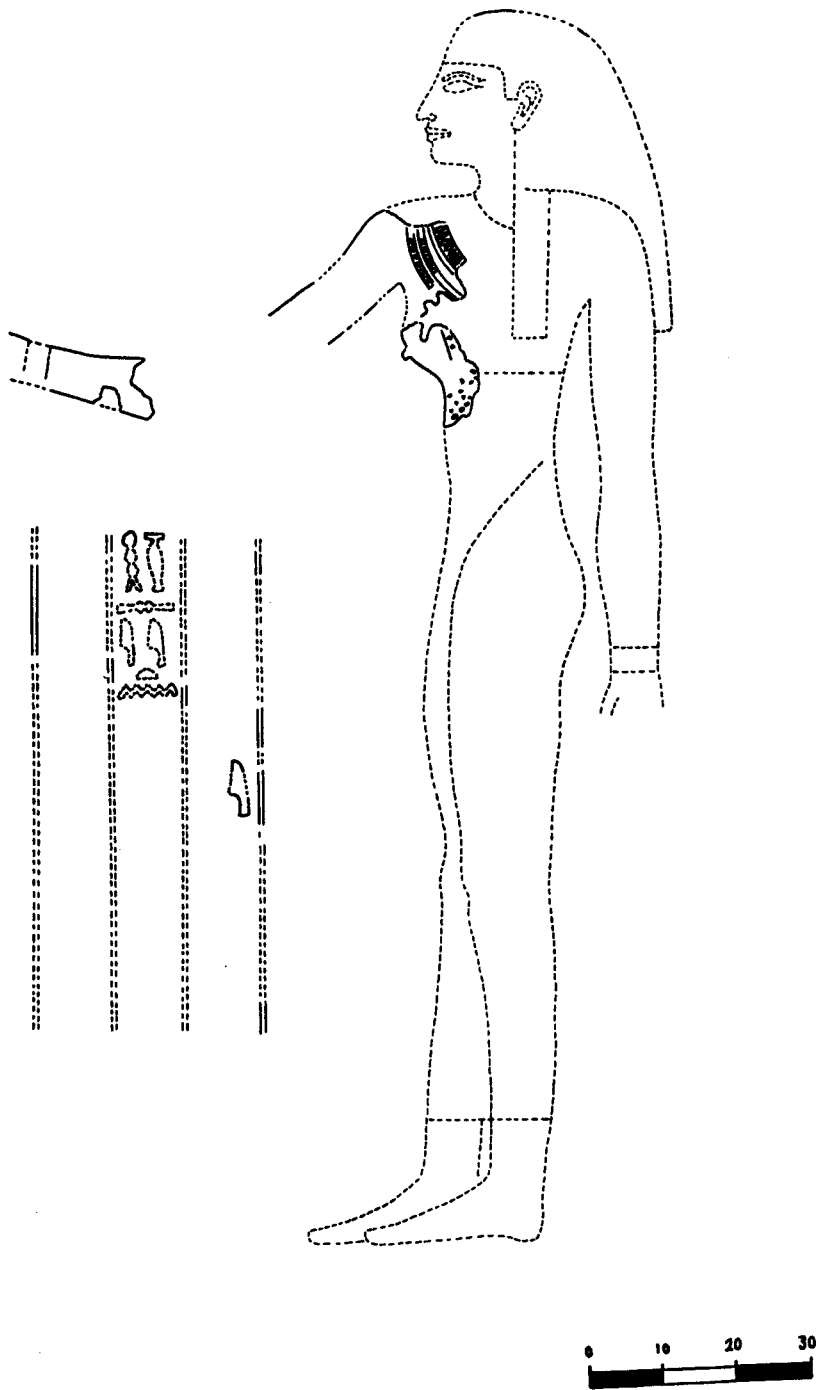


Fig. 5: The Northern Soldiers-Tomb, southern wall, eastern end

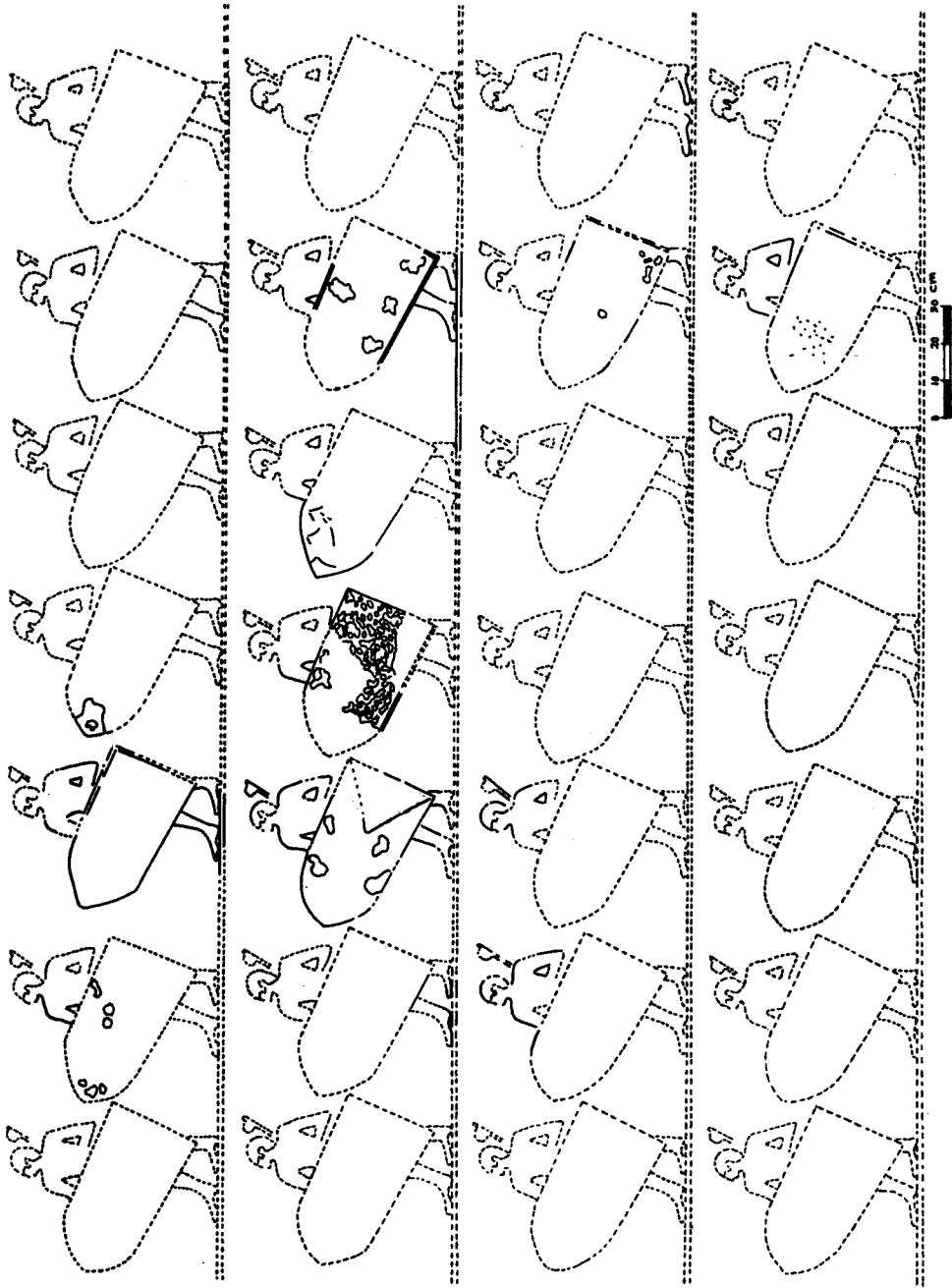


Fig. 6: The Northern Soldiers-Tomb, southern wall, next to the front projection



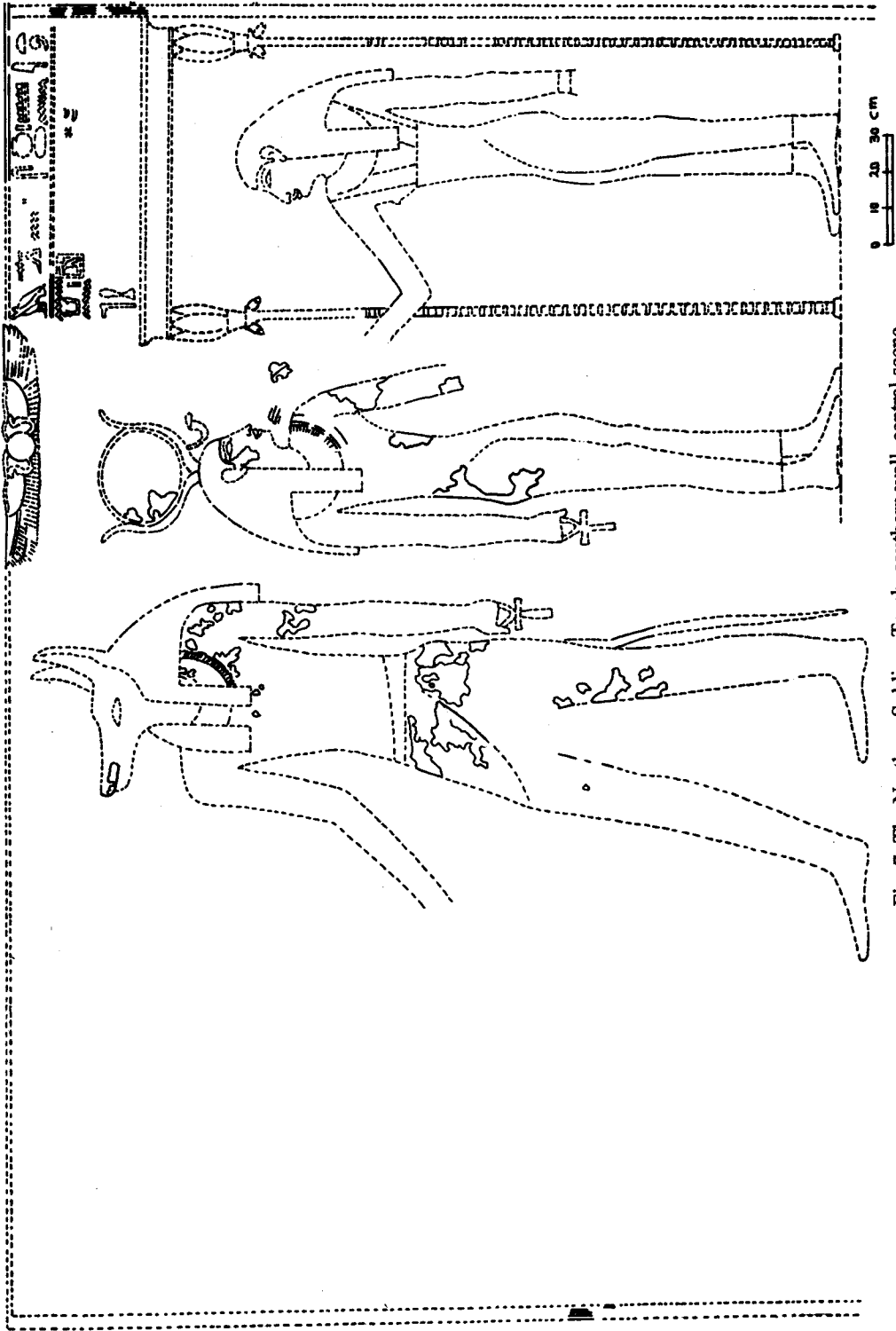


Fig. 7: The Northern Soldiers-Tomb, southern wall, central scene

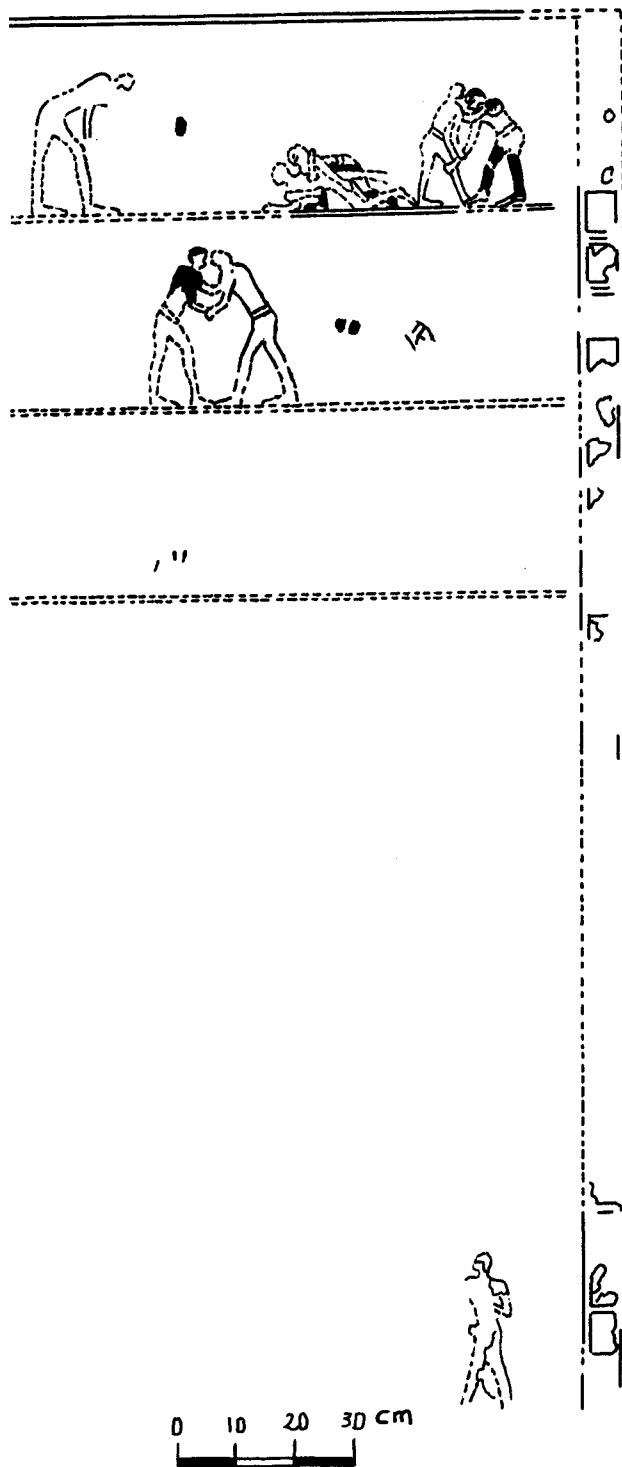


Fig. 8: The Northern Soldiers-Tomb, southern wall, western end



The Northern Soldiers-Tomb, southern wall, marching soldier



The Northern Soldiers-Tomb, southern wall, wrestling men