

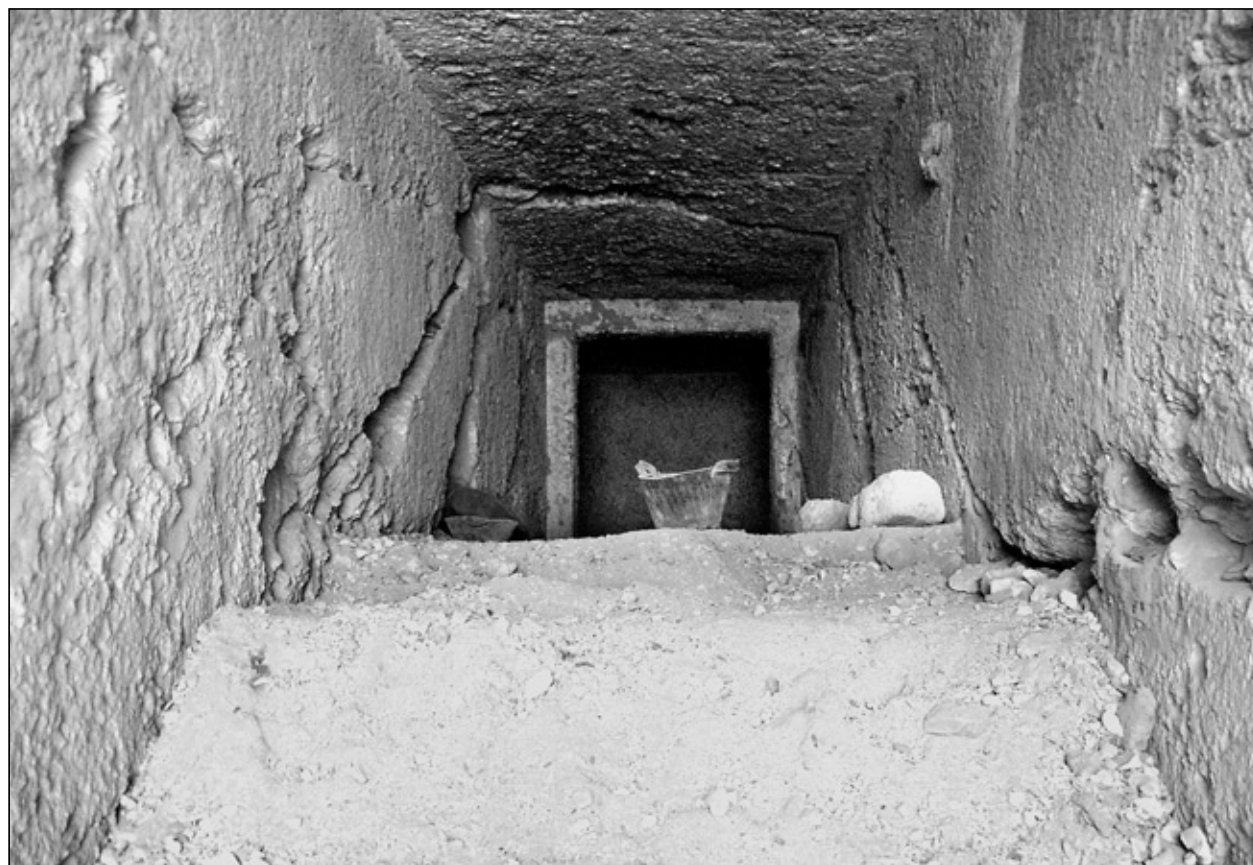
# PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MATERIAL FROM TOMB 1152 IN SHEIKH ABD EL-GURNA

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Excavations in 2005 in the hermitage at Sheikh Abd el-Gurna concentrated on clearing the fill from the corridor of Tomb 1152. This rock-cut tomb, which was reused by the Coptic monks, represents corridor type II B<sup>1</sup> [cf. *Fig. 1* on p. 264

above] and is dated to the Middle Kingdom, presumably the turn of the 11th and beginning of the 12th Dynasty.<sup>2</sup>

The corridor, measuring 22 x 2.50 x 4.75 m, was filled with rubble. The fill was 1.50 m high by the entrance, rising to



*Fig. 1. The fill in the corridor of Tomb 1152 in Sheikh Abd El-Gurna (Photo E. Szpakowska)*

- 1 According to D. Arnold, *Grabungen in Assasif 1963-1970, Das Grab des Jnj-jtj.f, Die Architektur* (Mainz 1971), 46-47, Pl. XX. He uses the neighboring smaller tomb MMA 1151, identical in plan to our tomb, as an example.
- 2 The oldest potsherds found in the excavations are dated to this period, cf. T. Rzeuska, M. Orzechowska, "Pharaonic Pottery from Sheikh Abd El-Gurna", *PAM XVI, Reports 2004* (2005), 248-256.

3.50 m at the highest point. Explorations started in previous seasons, in 2003 and 2004. This year the remaining fill was removed layer by layer and sieved.

Work in the corridor revealed brick constructions (wall with doorway and stone threshold) and fragments of a stone pavement used by the monks. This floor was cleared this year, but it is not the original rock-cut floor of the tomb, which is presumably a few dozen centimeters lower down.

The fill proved to be secondary without any stratigraphy and with completely disturbed material [Fig. 1], both Pharaonic and Coptic. Pharaonic objects, comprising pottery and broken elements of the tomb equipment, were present in all the arbitrary layers excavated this year.

Ushebti figurines constituted the most numerous group recorded this year (more than 1600 fragments). These were for the most part uninscribed clay figurines, 5-7 cm high, dated from the Third Intermediate and Late Period.

The other finds included large quantities of broken wooden coffins, ushebti boxes, cartonnages and various attachable parts like ears, beards and hands. Obviously the tomb had been used for a number of burials.

The fill also contained parts of wooden figurines representing Anubis and probably Ptah-Sokaris-Osiris (elements of the crown: feathers, horns) [Fig. 2]. This permits at least one of the burials to be dated to the 25th-26th Dynasty. Fragments of Canopic urns and alabaster vases were also scattered throughout the fill.

Fragments of mummies were also found discarded in the fill. The remains included bones, bandages, leather mummy straps, pieces of faience amulets (so-called "Sons of Horus", scarabs) and considerable quantities of mummy net beads. One mummy and the loose head of another mummy were found

in the southeastern corner of the chamber; they were apparently stacked there intentionally either by the earlier excavators or the robbers [Fig. 3].

Pharaonic material was found also outside the tomb, mainly as beads, fragments of amulets and ushebti figurines. Among the more important objects of



Fig. 2. Fragment of a wooden horn from the crown of Ptah-Sokaris-Osiris (Photo J. Śliwa)



Fig. 3. Damaged mummy discovered during the clearing of the chamber; the head lying on the chest is from another mummy (Photo E. Szpakowska)



Pharaonic date scattered around in the hermitage there are pieces of limestone funerary stelae and stamped bricks. Most of the stamped bricks were excavated in 2004, mainly in the ruined keep and in its vicinity. It is likely that these bricks were carried here from the nearby tombs or temples and reused in the structures of the hermitage. These were sun-dried mud bricks, mostly in fragmentary condition,

originally measuring c. 40 x 18 x 12 cm. Occasionally, the presence of stamps was only barely signaled. Recorded stamps fall into one of two types: cartouche or rectangular field with inscribed cartouche. Sometimes a double-feather motif was added to the cartouche. The name on the best preserved stamp can be read despite some minor damages as Mn-chprw-re - Tuthmosis IV [Fig. 4].<sup>3</sup>



Fig. 4. Stamp on a brick with the name of Tuthmosis IV, Mn-chprw-re  
(Photo J. Śliwa, drawing E. Szpakowska)

3 A.J. Spencer, *Brick Architecture in Ancient Egypt* (Warminster 1976), Pl. 26, no. 28.