



HANA VYMAZALOVÁ, PETRA HAVELKOVÁ

## NOTES ON THE TOMB OF DUAPTAAH (AS 68A) AT ABUSIR SOUTH

**ABSTRACT:** *The article presents evidence uncovered by the mission of the Czech Institute of Egyptology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University (Prague) at the necropolis of Abusir, Egypt. The tomb of Duaptah was one of the four rock-cut tombs uncovered in 2012 in the tomb complex of Princess Sheretnebtu at Abusir South. The identity of the tomb's owner is given by inscriptions carved on limestone blocks which once decorated the tomb's entrance. The tomb contained two male burials in two burial chambers, and the remains of one female burial as well as some more scattered human remains.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Ancient Egypt - Old Kingdom - Abusir South - Tomb complex of Sheretnebtu - Rock-cut tomb - Duaptah - Nefermin - Burial - Anthropological examination*

### INTRODUCTION

Prof. Eugen Strouhal, to whose memory this volume is dedicated, spent many years working with the Czech (Czechoslovak) archaeological mission in Abusir. His expertise in anthropology and palaeopathology contributed to the discussion and interpretation of finds from Abusir, including tombs from the Fifth Dynasty as well as from the Twenty-Sixth/ Twenty-Seventh Dynasty. Among his numerous achievements, we can point to the analysis of human remains from the so-called Djedkare's family cemetery, a group of mastabas uncovered in 1978, which included tombs of

a prince, two princesses and two other females belonging to the late Fifth Dynasty royal family, as well as several tombs of dignitaries associated with them (Strouhal 2002). In 2012, the tomb of another princess from the same period was discovered, located surprisingly in the non-royal part of the Abusir necropolis, at the cemetery of high and middle officials in Abusir South (Vymazalová, Dulíková 2012, Bárta *et al.* 2014b) (see *Figure 1* and plan in *Figure 2*). This discovery re-opened discussion on the royal family of the late Fifth Dynasty, and the role and status of the royal women of the time. Evidence shows that Princess Sheretnebtu was most likely the daughter

---

Received 16 June 2017; accepted 23 January 2018.

© 2019 Moravian Museum, Anthropos Institute, Brno. All rights reserved.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26720/anthro.19.02.14.1>

of King Nyuserre and died in the reign of one of his successors, probably Djedkare (Vymazalová, Dulíková 2014: 10). Unlike her contemporaries from the Djedkare's family cemetery who were interred in their individual tombs, she was apparently buried in a tomb complex (AS 68) belonging to the family of her husband, which included four rock-cut tombs of officials of non-royal origin and a communal courtyard and corridor where numerous burial shafts were hewn for many associated individuals between the mid Fifth Dynasty and the end of the Old Kingdom (Bárta *et al.* 2014b: 20–30, Vymazalová 2015).

Duaptah was one of the four major individuals/owners buried in the tomb complex of Princess Sheretnebtj (AS 68) in the mid/late Fifth Dynasty. His tomb (AS 68a) was the western-most tomb of the four rock-cut tombs in the complex AS 68, which otherwise included the tombs of Shepesuptah (AS 68b), Sheretnebtj (AS 68c) and Nefer (AS 68d) (for these

tombs, see Bárta *et al.* 2014b: 20–30, Vymazalová, Dulíková 2012, 2014, Vymazalová 2015, Vymazalová, Havelková 2016, Vymazalová, Arias Kytarová 2017, Bárta 2014).

#### **The entrance to the rock-cut chapel of Duaptah**

The entrance to the tomb of Duaptah is located in the western part of the southern wall of the courtyard AS 68 and it was filled with brown sand mixed with limestone chips to a height of ca 1.90 m (Figure 3). This entrance is 2.38 m high and max 1.10 m wide and its side walls were originally cased with limestone blocks, thus forming a narrower entrance 0.65 m wide and 1.00 m long; only several bottom layers of these blocks remained *in situ* by the side walls of the entrance and another slab formed the entrance floor, which reached 15 cm above the floor of the chapel.



FIGURE 1: The tomb complex of Princess Sheretnebtj AS 68 (looking north into the pillared courtyard), which includes the rock-cut tomb of Duaptah (photo Martin Frouz).

A small fragment of a limestone lintel survived *in situ* in the upper right corner of the entrance, and two larger parts of this lintel were uncovered during the exploration of the tomb (see also Vymazalová, Dulíková 2012: 343, Bárta *et al.* 2014b: 20–21, 24). One fragment (excav. no. 77/AS68/2012, size 82 × 31 × 17 cm) was uncovered in the rubble debris in front of the entrance ca 0.70 m above the ground level, while the other fragment (excav. no. 244/AS68/2012, size 58 × 31 × 13 cm) was found at a depth of 6.5 m in Shaft 4 which was hewn in the courtyard not far from the tomb's entrance. A drum which was once placed underneath the lintel and supported by the side walls casing, was discovered inside the tomb, in the burial chamber of Duaptah (excav. no. 270/AS68a/2013, size 83 × 28 × 20 cm, see Figure 8).

The lintel and the drum bore hieroglyphic inscriptions in sunken relief, to be read from right to left (Figure 4); they comprised the offering formula, the name and the title of the tomb owner. The inscription on the lintel is arranged in two horizontal rows separated by a single line, with no frame lines. The name of the tomb owner in the left part of the inscription is written vertically.

<sup>1</sup> *ḥtp [di nswt] Inpw ḥnty zh-ntr krst.f m ḥrt-ntr*

<sup>2</sup> *[/// w]rt im3ḥw ḥr ntr-ḥ3 šd pr-ḥ3 Dw3-Pth*

"May the king [give an offering] and Anubis who presides over the divine booth that he may be buried in the cemetery

[at an old a]ge revered with the Great God, inspector of the Great House attendants, Duaptah".

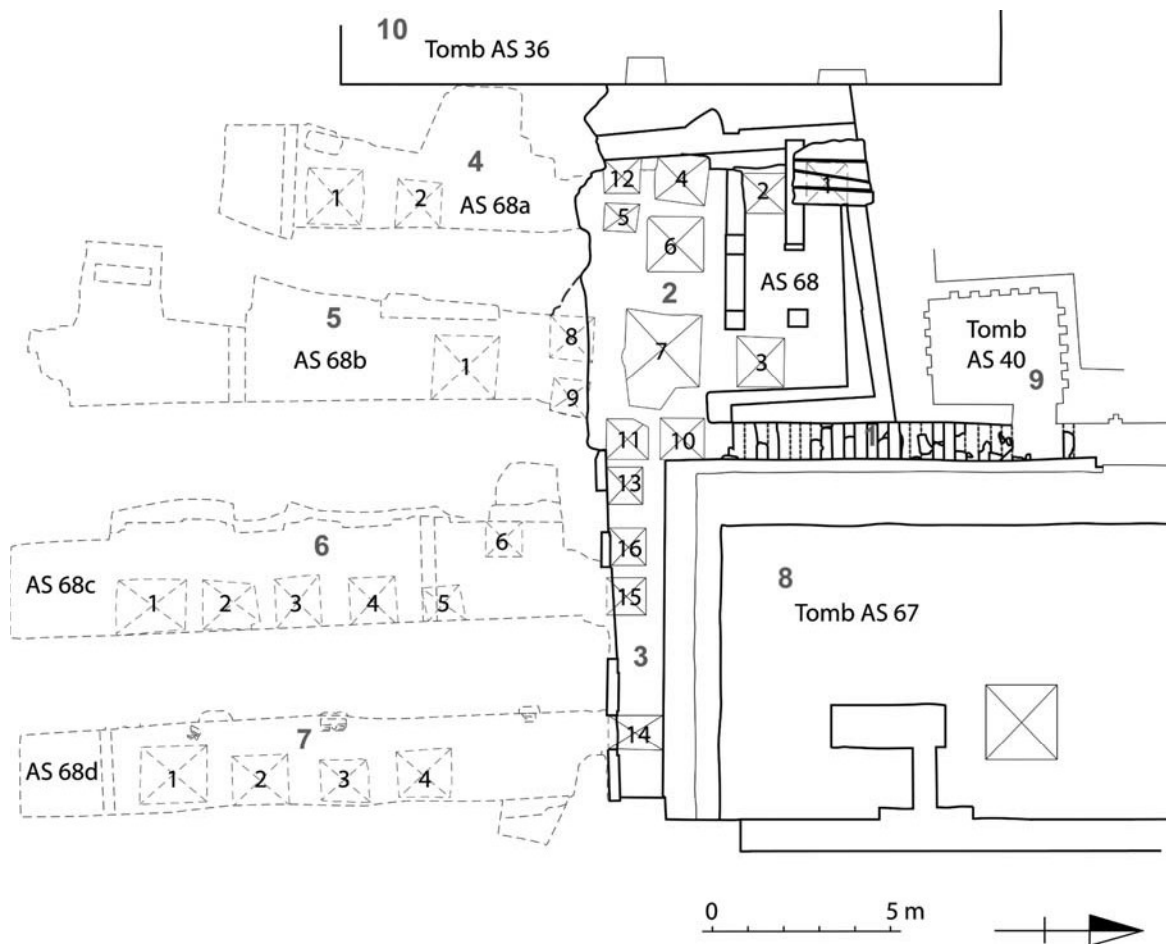


FIGURE 2: Plan of the tomb complex of Princess Sheretnebt AS 68 showing 1 – the descending staircase, 2 – the courtyard AS 68, 3 – the corridor, the rock cut tombs of 4 – Duaptah, 5 – Shepesuptah, 6 – Sheretnebt and 7 – Nefer, 8 – the tomb of Nefershepes (AS 67), 9 – a mud brick niched courtyard (AS 40) and 10 – the mastaba of Ptahhetep (AS 36) (drawing Hana Vymazalová).



FIGURE 3: Entrance to the tomb of Duaptah with the fill of the tomb chapel (photo Hana Vymazalová).

The inscription on the drum is carved in a single row and it is enclosed in a frame which is drawn in red paint but not carved.

*shd pr-ꜥ Dw3-Pth*

"Inspector of the Great House attendants, Duaptah".

The inscriptions on both the lintel and the drum ended with an enlarged determinative of a seated official with a short beard, a medium long wig and a staff in his left hand and a baton in the right hand. Such seated figures of tomb owners appear since the mid-Fifth Dynasty (Harpur 1987: 130–131) and the slim features of his body indicate the second style of Egyptian Art (Russmann 1995), matching the presumed late Fifth Dynasty date of the tomb.

The inscribed lintel and drum from Duaptah's tomb (Figure 5) correspond to the usual decoration of tomb entrances of the time (Harpur 1987: 43–49, see also



FIGURE 4: The lintel and the drum from the entrance to the tomb of Duaptah (photo Martin Frouz).

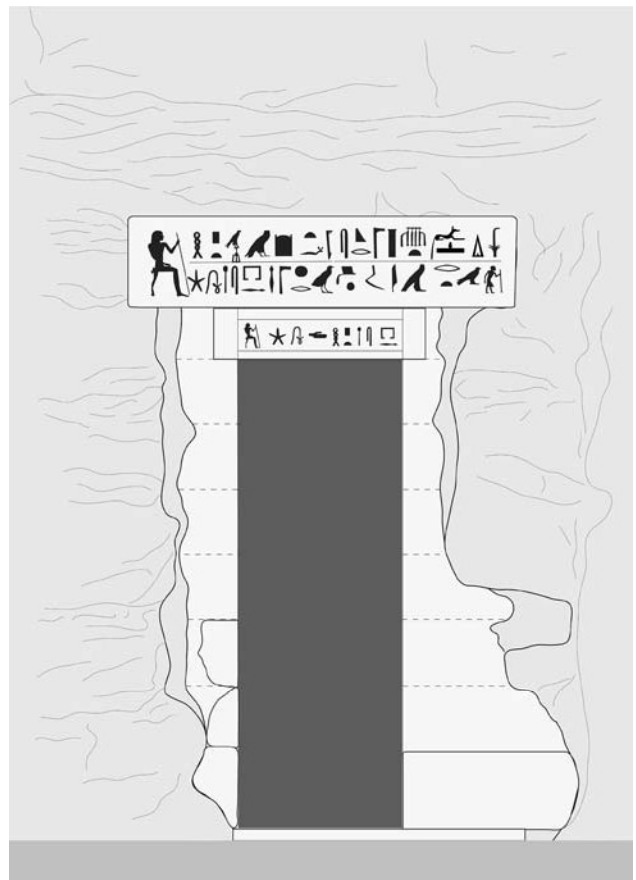


FIGURE 5: A reconstruction of the entrance of the tomb of Duaptah with its lintel and drum in place (drawing Hana Vymazalová).

Vymazalová 2014: 17, Fig. 18). We can find such type of decoration in chapels of many Old Kingdom tombs, including for instance the Fifth Dynasty tomb of Wepemnefer in Giza (Hassan 1936: 186 fig. 214 and 189 fig. 217–218, Pl. LXXII–LXXIII); and of rock-cut



FIGURE 6: Relief block with offering bearer carrying a goose (photo Martin Frouz).

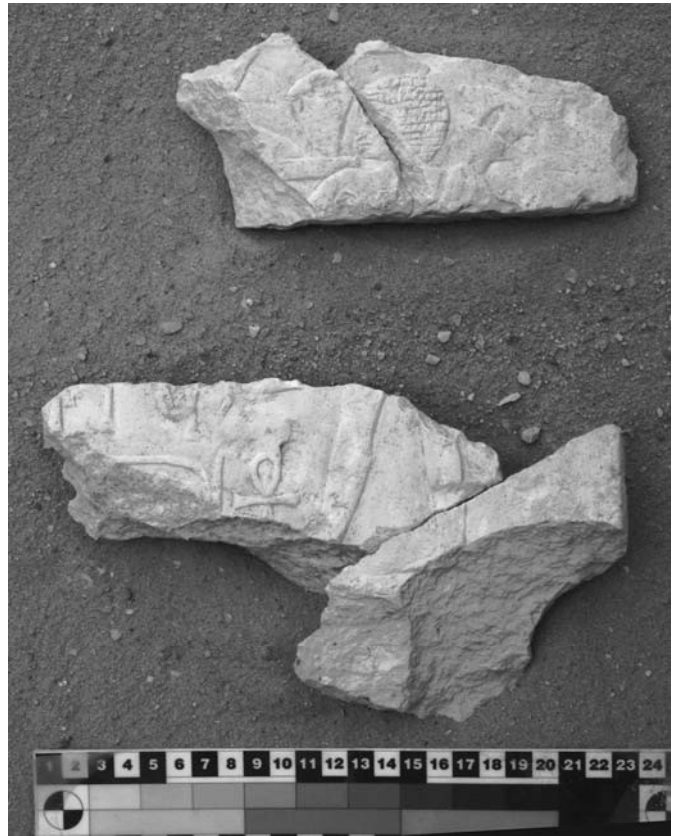


FIGURE 7: Relief fragments showing a part of an offering bearer carrying a tray of breads (photo Hana Vymazalová).

tombs with lintels and drums preserved we can mention for instance the tombs of Khuwiwer, Suf or the rock-cut chapels of Itisen or Messa, dating to mid to late Fifth Dynasty or slightly later (Hassan 1944: 240, 259, 263–264, 291–292, Porter, Moss 1974: 252–254).

The upper part of the side walls of the entrance to Duaptah's tomb, which are lost today, might have also been decorated. A few fragments of low reliefs were found in the tomb and its vicinity, which might have come from the entrance decoration. One such block was discovered in the debris in front of the tomb's entrance at floor level (excav. nos. 93/AS68/2012); it shows an offering bearer facing right and holding a goose in his extended arms (Figure 6). A hieroglyphic inscription in front of the figure reads: *hm-k3 m[r]r [nb].f imy-r3 zšrw Nb=sn* "funerary priest, beloved of his [lord], overseer of linen, Nebesen" (for the titles and epithet, see Jones 2000: 591 [2167], 444 [1659], 234 [864], for the name, see Ranke 1935: 186,13, Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 454 [1786]).

Fragments of another very similar scene with an offering bearer facing left were found in the fill of Shaft 4 in the courtyard (excav. no. 240/AS68/2012), and inside the tomb, in the burial chamber of Shaft 1 and in its entrance (excav. no. 268a-c/AS68a/2013). These fragments might have belonged to one and the same scene (Figure 7); two of them show an upper part of an offering bearer with a short wig, carrying a tray of bread and flowers, the other three fragments show the bottom part of the figure with striding legs and a hieroglyphic inscription giving the name and title of the offering bearer: *šd hm(w)-k3 [ ]i-ḥnh* "inspector of funerary priests [...].ankh" (for the title, see Jones 2000: 943 [3475], for the name, see Ranke 1935: 45,21).

The offering bearers on each of these preserved relief fragments show the same scale and the same style of carving and stone (see Figures 6 and 7). It is very likely that these fragments belonged to the entrance of Duaptah's tomb. The offering bearers

occur in the entrance thicknesses since the early Fourth Dynasty, and are usually oriented towards the chapel, bringing the offerings into the chapel for the tomb owner (Harpur 1987: 55–56). Thus, Duaptah's relief fragments with the offering bearers facing right were once placed on the eastern wall while the ones facing left come from the western wall of its entrance.

### The rock-cut chapel of Duaptah

The chapel was found filled with debris consisting of brown sand mixed with limestone chips, which reached to ca 0.50 m below the ceiling and after ca 2.5 m sloped down towards the south, covering the floor all the way until Shaft 1. The upper surface of the debris was covered with a layer of dried mud, evidence of heavy rain which flooded the chapel after it was filled with debris but before the fill of the courtyard blocked its entrance; such evidence was also documented in the other rock-cut tombs in this tomb complex (see Vymazalová, Dulíková 2012: 343, Bárta *et al.* 2014b: 24, 25, Vymazalová, Havelková 2016: 92, Vymazalová, Arias Kytarová 2017: 437). In the south part of the chapel the fill also included fragments of *tafla* which might have fallen off the walls and ceiling of the chapel.

Duaptah's rock-cut chapel is the smallest of the four rock-cut tombs in the tomb complex AS 68, measuring in total max 9.80 m (north-south length) and 4.00 m (east-west width) (Bárta *et al.* 2014b: 24). The chapel however consists of three parts: the main chapel, an extension to the west in the north-western part of the room, and an extension at the south end of the room (Figure 8).

#### The main part of the chapel

The main part of the tomb was a roughly rectangular rock-cut chapel measuring 6.70 × 2.70 × 2.25–2.50 m. Similar to the other three rock-cut tombs AS 68b–d, the eastern wall was smoothly hewn in the bedrock while the western wall was much rougher. The southern part of the west wall of the chapel features a 1.80 m high, 0.80 m wide but only 10 cm deep recess, located opposite to the owner's shaft (see Shaft 1 below). A simple offering table made of limestone blocks was placed in front of this recess (Vymazalová, Dulíková 2012: 343). It is 1.00 × 0.50 × 0.25 m large and placed asymmetrically to the recess (reaching further north from it; Figure 9); it bore a plaster coating, but no traces of decoration or inscription were noticed on this simple table. At the same time, no traces of a false door which was once

perhaps placed here were discovered in the tomb itself or elsewhere in the tomb complex.

Straight traces/imprints on the floor of the chapel along the whole western wall seem to indicate that the western wall might have been cased (or planned to be cased) with limestone blocks (similarly to the neighbouring tomb of Shepesuptah, AS 68b, see Bárta *et al.* 2014b: 24, Vymazalová, Havelková 2016: 93) and that this casing might have moreover blocked the room in the western wall (similarly to the tomb of Sheretnebty, AS 68c, see Vymazalová, Pícke 2017: 451–452). If a casing did indeed exist in the chapel, the shallow recess in the west wall would become deeper and more suitable to hold a false-door. Nothing of the casing, however, remained *in situ* or in the fill, and therefore its existence cannot be confirmed.

Only very few finds were found in the fill of the chapel, including pottery fragments from the Fifth until mid-Sixth Dynasty (pottery no. 28.AS68a/2012, see Arias Kytarová 2017: 76–79). Some human bones scattered behind the entrance (excav. nos. 105a and 106a/AS68a/2012) together with animal bones of cattle and sheep (excav. nos. 106b and 107b/AS68a/2012, zoological determination by Zdeňka Šůvová), fragments of acacia and tamarix wood (excav. no. 107/AS68a/2012, determination of the wooden finds by Jan Novák), and a faience bead in the northern part of the chapel ca 0.40 m above the floor (excav. no. 108/AS68a/2012, 4 mm in diameter and 26 mm long).

#### The western room

The large extension hewn to the west in the north-western part of the chapel has an irregular shape; it is 2–3.00 m wide, 1.80 m deep and 1.90 m high, with its ceiling reaching ca 0.50 m lower than the ceiling of the chapel. The room was filled with debris of brown sand mixed with numerous limestone chips, *tafla* chips and occasional larger limestone pieces. The upper part of the fill contained a higher percentage of sand compared to the lower layers. The fill included not many pottery fragments, only beer jars and very few fine pottery and miniatures (Arias Kytarová 2017: 76–79). Besides, a few finds were uncovered in the fill of the room, including a human rib (excav. no. 109a/AS68a/2012) and animal bones of a pig (109b/AS68a/2012), as well as human bones of a child (see more below) which were scattered in the fill in the north-west corner of the room together with fragments of fine pottery (excav. no. 110/AS68a/2012, pottery no. 28.AS68a/2012-b). These bones lead us to the preliminary conclusion that the room was intended for a burial (Vymazalová, Dulíková



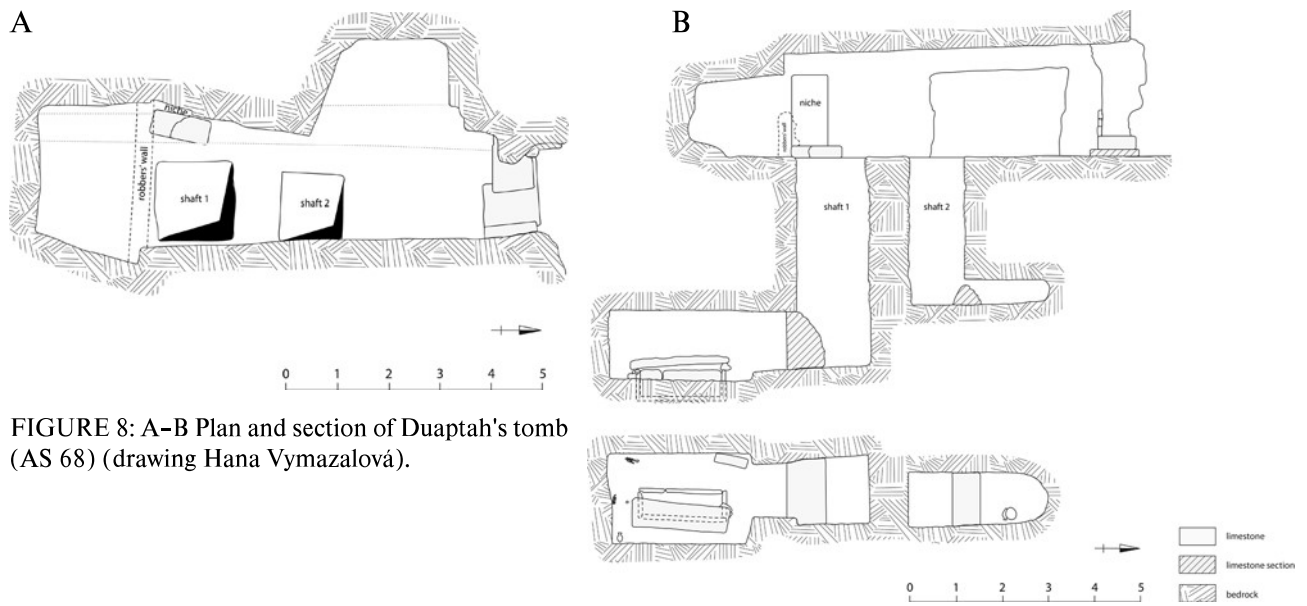


FIGURE 8: A-B Plan and section of Duaptah's tomb (AS 68) (drawing Hana Vymazalová).



FIGURE 9: Duaptah's chapel with a shallow recess in the west wall and a simple offering table (photo Martin Frouz).

2012: 343); however, it might have also been planned as a serdab (for comparison see the tomb of Sheretnebt, Bárta *et al.* 2014b: 25, Vymazalová, Arias Kytarová 2017: 437, fig. 2, Vymazalová, Pícke 2017: 451–452 and fig. 2). The room (like the whole chapel) was robbed in antiquity and the scattered burial placed here was clearly secondary.

#### *The southern extension*

Another roughly rectangular extension was formed to the south in the southern part of the tomb. It was max 2.00 wide, 3.10 deep and 1.80 m high. Its floor in the southern part is rough and not flat, as if unfinished. The original purpose of this extension is not clear however, it is located above the owner's burial chamber and might have been intended to enlarge the cultic space of the chapel.

The extension was found partly closed with a simple 1 m high wall made of irregular limestone pieces and mud bricks (29 × 15 × 10 cm) of fine dark mud. This

wall was retaining a rather uniform fill of brown sand mixed with numerous limestone chips and pieces (*Figure 10*), which contained no finds. It is most likely evidence of the activities of ancient robbers (?) who seem to have used the available space in the south part of the chapel to lay aside the fill they removed (Vymazalová, Dulíková 2012: 343). Similar retaining secondary walls blocking the debris were found in the north part of Sheretnebt's chapel (Vymazalová, Arias 2017: 448) as well as in the south end of Nefer's chapel.

#### **The burial apartments**

Two burial shafts were hewn in the floor of the chapel, by its eastern wall (*Figure 8*, for the preliminary report on the shafts, see also Vymazalová 2014: 17–18, Vymazalová 2015: 48–50).

#### *Shaft 1*

The main shaft belonging to the tomb owner was located in the southern part of the chapel, near the cult



FIGURE 10: The southern end of the tomb chapel showing the secondary robbers' (?) wall and collected rubble (photo Hana Vymazalová).



recess. It was  $1.50 \times 1.60$  m large at the top and reached 4.70 deep. In the fill of the shaft, three major layers could be distinguished; the upper 2.60 m were filled with compact cut *tafla*, to which medium size limestone pieces were added in the central part, and brown-grey sand and very few *tafl* pieces in the bottom 0.90 m of the shaft. Besides pottery fragments and some sycamore wood, acacia charcoal and bones of cattle and pig, the fill of the bottom part of the shaft contained relief fragments from the tomb's entrance (see above) and fragments of a cedar wood artefact (excav. no. 269/AS68a/2013).

The entrance to the burial chamber in the south wall of the shaft was partly closed by a 1.24 m wide, 1.00 m long and 1.35 m high wall built of irregular limestone pieces and sand. Its upper part (ca 0.5 m) had been removed by the ancient tomb robbers and in this level bones of a female, over 50 years of age (see more details below), were found scattered in three assemblages (excav. no. 266a-c/AS68a/2013). These bones might have been pulled out from the burial chamber by grave robbers, but they could also have been placed at the bottom of the shaft or even thrown into the shaft by the robbers during its backfilling.

The burial chamber was hewn in hard bedrock and was 3.20–3.30 m long in a north-south direction, 2.80 m wide and 1.55 m high. It was partly filled with brown sand mixed with limestone and *tafla* pieces and chips with some fragments of pottery, which had penetrated from the shaft. In this fill in the northwestern corner of the chamber, just behind its entrance, some small fragments of sunken and low reliefs as well as the drum coming from the tomb's entrance were found (excav. no. 170/AS68a/2013); it might have been used by the ancient robbers to break the blocking wall (?).

The floor of the burial chamber contained a partly sunken sarcophagus built-up of limestone slabs inside a rectangular pit. Another built-up sarcophagus was used by Shepesuptah, the owner of the neighboring tomb AS 68 (Vymazalová 2015: 50, Vymazalová, Havelková 2016: 95) and examples of such sarcophagi are also known for instance from some Giza tombs (Hassan 1944: 63). Duaptah's sarcophagus is situated almost in the center of the room, slightly closer to the east than west wall, and its limestone slab lid was moved by the ancient robbers slightly to the east and supported by a stone in its northern part (*Figure 11*).

The sarcophagus was filled with brown sand mixed with limestone and *tafla* chips and some fragments of pottery (see also Arias Kytnarová 2016: 117, Arias

Kytnarová 2017: 84). Disarticulated remains of the burial of a male over 50 years old (excav. no. 279a/AS68a/2013, see more details below) were found inside the sarcophagus together with faience beads, small fragments of golden foil, and tiny fragments of copper (excav. nos. 279b–d/AS68/2013). The burial most likely belonged to Duaptah himself and it seems to have been originally adorned with jewellery.

Very few objects of the original tomb equipment were found, including parts of two pottery jars and some associated fragments (pottery nos. 54-45, 54-46 and 54-47. AS68a.2013; see also Arias Kytnarová 2016: 117–118, Arias Kytnarová 2017: 85), entirely disintegrated wooden objects, remains of meat offerings mostly of cattle and, most importantly, a conical mud stopper with seal impressions referring to King Djedkhau, i.e. Djedkare (excav. no. 275/AS68a/2013), which is a clear indication of the date of Duaptah's burial within this king's reign (Vymazalová 2015: 49).

#### *Shaft 2*

The second shaft was located 0.90 m north of Shaft 1; it measured  $1.30 \times 1.25$  m at the top and reached a depth of 3.50 m. The fill consisted of brown sand mixed with limestone chips and some slightly larger limestone pieces and it contained pottery fragments and a few other finds including a stone hammer, a few cattle bones, acacia charcoal fragments and a small fragment of a vessel made of Egyptian alabaster. Of particular interest were fragments of a fine jar bearing incised hieroglyphs reading *Nfr-mnw*, "Nefermin" (pottery no. 51-35. AS68a.2013; for the jar see Arias Kytnarová 2014: 13, Arias Kytnarová 2016: 113, 118, Arias Kytnarová 2017: 84; for the name, see Ranke 1935: 152, 2, Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 468 [1892]).

The entrance to the burial chamber, located to the north of the shaft, was blocked up with a wall of irregular stones and rubble, partly removed by the ancient tomb robbers. The chamber was 2.00 m long in a north-south direction, max 1.25 m wide and only 0.50–0.60 m high. It seems likely, considering its width and length that the chamber was planned to be higher but was perhaps unfinished. The fill of the chamber consisted of *tafla* fragments and chips with some pottery fragments. Ca 10 cm above the floor level a layer of dried mud was detected on the *tafla* fill in the north part of the chamber; it probably attests to the funerary practice associated with the concept of renewal known from some other tombs in the same part of the Abusir South necropolis, (see e.g. Dulíková

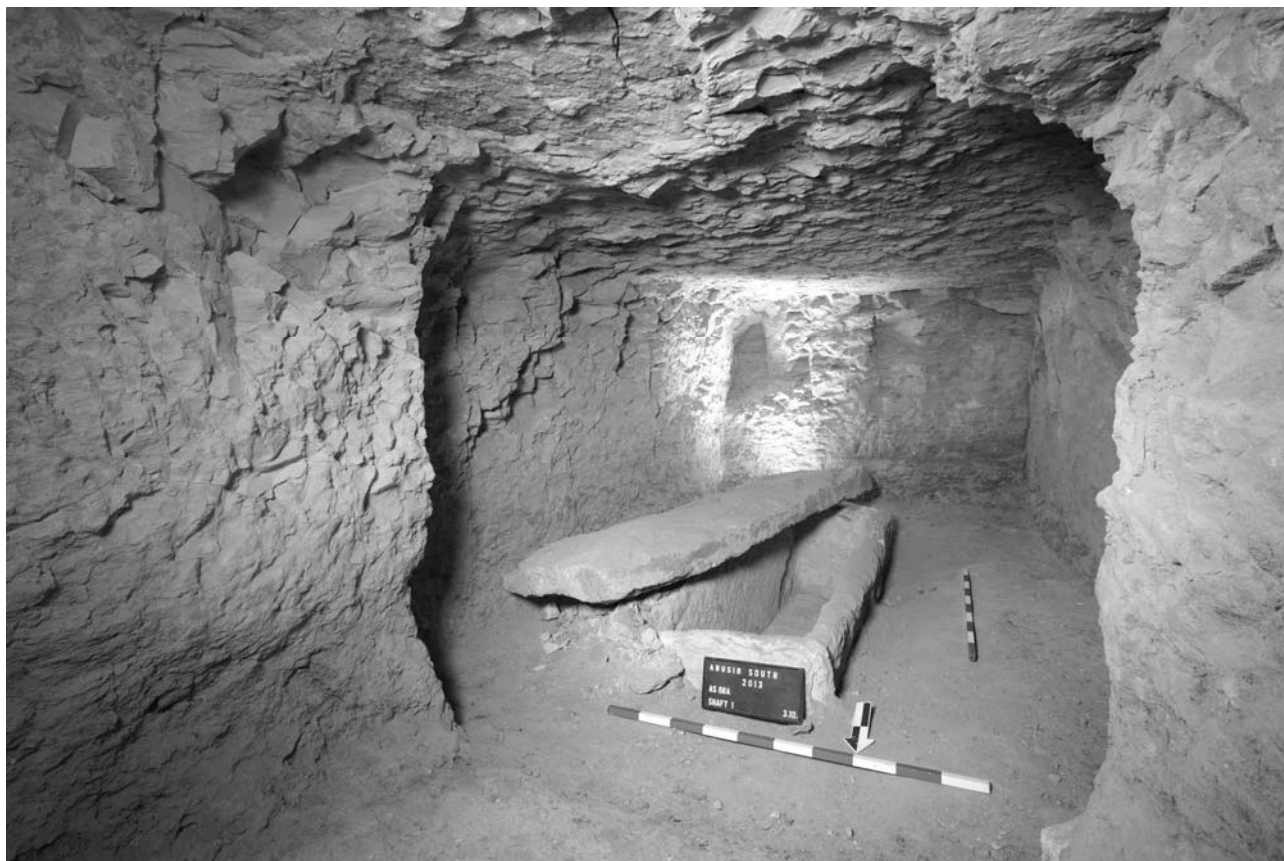


FIGURE 11: The burial chamber of Duaptah in Shaft 1 (photo Martin Frouz).

*et al.* 2011: 12, Bárta *et al.* 2014a: 36, Fig. 3.35, Jánosi 2017, Vymazalová, Arias 2017).

The northern part of the chamber contained a burial of a male over 50 years of age (see more below), placed on the floor of the chamber in an unusual east-west direction, with his head to the east, and face to the north (*Figure 12*). A jar and a bowl of fine pottery were found together with the burial, near its head (pottery no. 52-1 and 52-2.AS68a.2013, Arias Kytarová 2016: 119–120, Arias Kytarová 2017: 88). The body seems to have been found in correct anatomical position, but the chamber was disturbed.

#### **Anthropological analysis of the human remains**

Human skeletal material of different state of preservation was uncovered in different contexts in the tomb AS68a. The fill of the chapel contained scattered remains of at least three individuals, while two individuals were found in Shaft 1 and one individual in Shaft 2.

#### *Human bones from the chapel*

The fill of the chapel behind the entrance contained scattered isolated human bones (excav. no. 105/AS68a/2012) which were brought here together with the fill from elsewhere. These bones belonged to at least two individuals; it was however quite difficult to distinguish them. Femur, tibia, fibula and fragments of hip bone from the right side probably belonged to an adult individual who was probably a female according to the shape of the greater sciatic notch. Considering the well preserved femur it was possible to estimate the stature of this individual between 157–162 cm (Raxter *et al.* 2008, Sjøvold 1990). Other bones from the same context were strongly fragmented and most likely belonged to another adult individual (based on presence of the second right tibia and different robusticity and appearance of the bones); these included parts of the diaphysis of the humerus, the ulna and right tibia, fragments of the right clavicle, ribs and right



FIGURE 12: The burial, presumably of Nefermin, in the burial chamber in Shaft 2 (photo Hana Vymazalová).

I. metatarsal bone. Sex or age-at-death estimation was not possible on the basis of these remains. No pathological condition was observed.

Another part of the fill of the chapel contained a fragment of an adult rib (excav. no. 109/AS68a/2012). It cannot be excluded that it belonged to one of the individuals mentioned above.

The western part of the tomb, namely the northern part of the western room, contained an assemblage of human bones, which all belonged to one non-adult individual (excav. no. 110/AS68a/2012). The skeleton was well preserved, mainly the postcranial part (*Figure 13*). Unfortunately no teeth were found and therefore the age-at-death estimation was based on epiphyseal and apophyseal fusion (Krogman, Iscan 1986, Schwartz 1995), the long bone's diaphysis length and other measurements (Florkowski, Kozłowski 1994, Stloukal, Hanáková 1978). The child probably died between 9 and 12 years of age.

#### *Shaft 1*

Shaft 1, belonging to the tomb owner Duaptah, contained two human skeletons. The first was scattered in the shaft itself and was found in three assemblages of bones (excav. no. 266a-c/AS68a/2012). It is very probable that all these bones belonged to one individual of gracile constitution with slight muscular development.

The skeleton was poorly preserved but several markers on the skull and hip bones, which are important for sex and age estimation, were evaluable. According to the morphological analysis of the preserved bones, it is possible to state that the individual was probably female, older than 50 years (Brůžek 2002, Ferembach *et al.* 1980, Lovejoy 1985, Schmitt 2005, Szilvássy, Kritscher 1990). No pathological changes were observed except of degenerative changes of joints corresponding to the advanced age. One of the non-metrical traits – *depressio biparietalis circumscripta* (Breitinger 1982) was recorded on the parietal bones. This symmetrical thinning of the



FIGURE 13: State of preservation of the only non-adult individual buried in the western niche (photo Petra Havelková).

parietal bones is often considered to be one of the non-metric traits where genetic influence as well as the family relationship related occurrence of this marker is assumed (Hauser, De Stefano 1989). It is worth mentioning that the same traits were observed also in other tombs in Abusir, above all on the skull of Shepesuptah, the owner of the neighbouring rock-cut tomb AS 68b (Vymazalová, Havelková 2016: 98), two

more individuals with this feature were buried in the tomb of priest Neferinpu not far from Duaptah's tomb (Havelková 2014: 166, 173–174). Another case is known from the skull of the priest Iufaa who was buried at a much later point in time in the west part of the Abusir necropolis (Strouhal *et al.* 2003). Even though family relationship is presumed for the individuals buried in the tombs within the complex AS 68, including the tombs

of Duaptah and Shepesuptah, and for individuals from Neferinpu's tomb, some caution needs to be taken. It had been noticed that the symmetrical thinning of the parietal bones is rather frequent in ancient Egyptian population in comparison to other studied populations (14.4 % compared to 0.4–1.3 %; Breitingner 1982: 77, see also Vymazalová, Havelková 2016: 98). This means that the presence of *depression biparietalis circumscripta* did not necessarily indicate a family relationship between individuals in ancient Egypt.

Remains of another individual were found inside the burial chamber in Shaft 1, namely in the fill of the sarcophagus (excav. no. 279a/AS68a/2013). The burial was disturbed by the ancient tomb robbers, and entirely disarticulated. The bones were fragmented and very fragile. According to fragments of left hip bone it is possible to assume that the skeleton belonged probably to a male who was older than 40 or 50 years when he died (Brooks, Suchey 1990, Ferembach *et al.* 1980, Phenice 1969, Schmitt 2005). Such an advanced age is often characterised by higher incidence of degenerative changes especially on joints (*osteoarthritis*) which affect almost all big joints equally. In this case, however, the important osteoarthritic changes (macro-porosity or eburnation) were recorded only at the left elbow and the left knee (*Figure 14*). This asymmetrical kind of incidence shows rather some kind of repetitive physical activity than a connection with age. On the other side, dental health corresponded to the determined advanced age; the teeth were strongly abraded, in some cases only roots were preserved and therefore hypoplasia on crowns was not possible to be evaluated. A fragment of maxillary sinus shows signs of inflammation, but an X-ray

examination would be necessary for confirmation. Interesting changes, namely thickening of the bony tissue, were registered also in the inner plate of the frontal bone (*Figure 15*). These changes may correspond with a pathological condition called *hyperostosis frontalis interna* which might be connected with some kind of endocrine disease (Armelagos, Chrisman 1988, HersHKovitz *et al.* 1999). Similar cases of this type of thickening were recorded in human remains from other tombs in Abusir South, including the nearby located tomb of Neferinpu (Havelková 2014: 166) and the anonymous tomb AS 53 in the eastern part of the cemetery (Malá 2010: 331).

#### Shaft 2

An intact human burial was uncovered in the burial chamber of Shaft 2 (excav. no. 262/AS68a/2012); the skeleton was well preserved but both hip bones were fragmented, which complicated sex estimation. Despite this it is possible to presume that the bones belonged to a male between 40 and 60 years of age (probably older than 50 years) (Brooks, Suchey 1990, Brůžek 2002, Ferembach *et al.* 1980, Lovejoy 1985, Schmitt 2005). This individual was approximately 170 cm tall (Raxter *et al.* 2008), his skull was almost complete and robust (*Figure 16*). All teeth were strongly abraded with several cases of caries, hypoplasia and dental abscess (*Figure 17*). Strong dental attrition as well as degenerative changes recorded mainly on cervical part of vertebral column could be connected with the advanced age of the deceased. On the other hand, both these kinds of changes might also reflect some type of regularly



FIGURE 14: The most important state of the osteoarthritis in Duaptah's skeleton – eburnation of the left knee, the distal part of the femur (photo Petra Havelková).

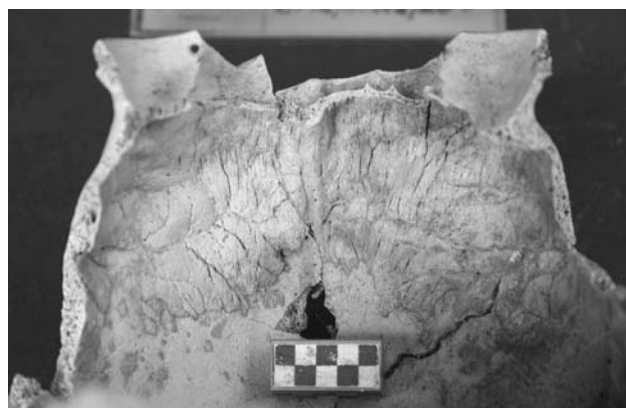


FIGURE 15: Thickening of the bony tissue in the inner plate of the frontal bone of Duaptah, known as *hyperostosis frontalis interna* (photo Petra Havelková).

repeated activities (Jurmain *et al.* 2012). Several traumas were observed on the skeleton that might indicate life experience. A distal radius fracture on the left side, called a Colles fracture, is most commonly caused by a fall onto a hard surface with outstretched arms (Figure 18). Even though the fracture of radius

is only on the left side, the fracture of the right V. metacarpal bone and accessory facet on the right distal radius (probably as a result of scaphoid bone luxation) suggest a fall on both hands. Post-traumatic aetiology could be assumed also at a compressive fracture of the second lumbar vertebra.



FIGURE 16: Lateral view of the complete skull of Nefermin (photo Petra Havelková).

FIGURE 17: The state of dental health of Nefermin, with strong attrition, several cases of caries, hypoplasia and dental abscess and calculus (photo Petra Havelková). →



FIGURE 18: Distal radius fracture on the left side, called a Colles fracture (photo Petra Havelková).



### **Duaptah, Nefermin and the tomb AS 68a**

The finds from the tomb of Duaptah (AS 68a) provide us, above all, with archaeological and physical evidence but in addition some remains of decoration of the entrance were uncovered in the tomb.

The identity of the tomb owner is revealed by the hieroglyphic inscriptions on his lintel and drum. Duaptah as an inspector of the palace (Great House) attendants belonged to the group of middle ranking officials, and his status seems to correspond to his not very large tomb chapel and burial shafts of medium depth, including the built-up sarcophagus instead of a monolithic one. The name Duaptah is not very common in the Old Kingdom (Ranke 1935: 398,12, Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 743 [3767]) and is attested once on a statue (Borchardt 1911: 109) and several times, with various titles, in the Abusir papyrus archives from the pyramid complexes of Kings Neferirkare and Neferefre. In the latter archive we can find it once with the title of *pr-ʿ3* "attendant of the Great House", "palace attendant", "courtier" (Posener-Krieger *et al* 2006: fragment 5A, for the title, see Jones 2000: 924-925 [3401]). The date of this text is close to the date of the tomb, and we cannot exclude (nor fully confirm) that the palace attendant mentioned in the text is identical with the inspector of palace attendants buried in tomb AS 68a (see also Vymazalová, Dulíková 2012: 343).

Uncovered evidence allows us to partly reconstruct the decoration of the tomb's entrance, which included an inscribed lintel and drum on the outer façade, and scenes of offering bearers on the thicknesses. Despite the lack of substantial evidence from the excavations, the other three tombs within the tomb complex AS 68 are likely to once have had their entrances decorated in a similar manner (see also Vymazalová, Havelková 2016: 91, Vymazalová, Arias Kytnarová 2017).

The tomb chapel gives today a very modest impression; it is not very large, the smallest within this tomb complex AS 68, and no traces or fragments of decoration survived on its walls or in the tomb's fill. Similarly to the neighbouring tombs AS 68b-d, the eastern wall of the chapel was most likely undecorated, while the western wall might have possibly been once cased and if so, the chapel had originally a more regular appearance (for the other tombs, see Vymazalová, Havelková 2016: 93-94, Vymazalová, Arias Kytnarová 2017: 437-440). No clear indications of the casing survived besides the straight imprint on the tomb's floor. In addition, no fragments of a false door were found in the tomb or in its vicinity, which

might have been once placed in the niche in the western wall.

The human remains found in the chapel, scattered in the fill behind the entrance to the tomb, were undoubtedly intrusive. The child burial in the western room, however, might have been placed here intentionally at a later point in time, when the room was partly filled.

The tomb contained two burial shafts, which were probably planned together and therefore their burial chambers were directed not to the west but one to the north and the other one to the south to avoid a collision during construction. In our current state of exploration, we know of no tomb in the vicinity which might have, with its shafts and chambers, influenced this arrangement of the shafts in Duaptah's tomb.

Duaptah himself was buried in Shaft 1 which was not as deep as the shafts of the most prominent individuals buried in the tomb complex AS 68, including the Princess Sheretnebtu and her husband (Shafts 1 and 2 in AS 68c) and Nefer and his wife (Shafts 1 and 2 in AS 68d) but it was deeper and larger than the shafts of their dependants (Shafts 3-6 in AS 68c and Shafts 3-4 in AS 68d, for these shafts, see Vymazalová 2015: 48-57, Bárta *et al.* 2014: 29, Bárta 2014). Duaptah's burial chamber was roughly hewn and it is comparable in size to the burial chamber of Sheretnebtu's husband who was the highest positioned individual in the whole tomb complex AS 68 (Vymazalová 2015: 51-53). Despite the size of the chamber, Duaptah's burial was more modest, with a built-up sarcophagus and few objects of tomb equipment of which not much survived. Tiny remains of gold foil found inside the sarcophagus with Duaptah's bones indicate that his tomb once contained also valuable objects, which were damaged and taken away by ancient tomb robbers. Duaptah's physical remains showed degenerative changes on the left part of his body but not many changes related to his age (more than 40 or 50 years).

The identity of an elderly (50+ years) lady whose burial was found scattered at the bottom of Duaptah's shaft remains unknown. She might have been his mother, wife or another relative. Her good social standing might be indicated by no apparent changes that would relate to hard work. It is unclear, though, whether she was buried with Duaptah in his burial chamber but this possibility seems likely.

Shaft 2 was used for another elderly (probably 50+ years) male burial, most likely Nefermin. The low height of his burial chamber indicates that he was buried in

haste before the construction was finished. No evidence was uncovered during the exploration of the tomb that would reveal a relationship between Duaptah and Nefermin; Duaptah's skull was too fragmentary and this prevented us from even a basic anthropological comparison of the two men's skulls but a detailed epigenetical examination of all human remains from the tomb complex AS 68 is under preparation. In addition, there is no clear evidence on the precise date of Nefermin's burial, but the analysis of the pottery finds indicate that his burial might have been slightly later than Duaptah's burial (Arias Kytnarová 2017: 331).

No evidence also survived that would reveal Nefermin's social status. The inscription on the pottery vessel from his shaft gives us no indications on any titles; the fact that he was buried in Duaptah's tomb instead of having a tomb of his own seems to indicate his rather lower social standing.

The pottery finds from the tomb chapel included cult pottery of the late Fifth Dynasty date and a large number of early-mid Sixth Dynasty rough vessels (Arias Kytnarová 2017: 77–79). We cannot exclude that some of this pottery was brought in with the fill, however, it seems probable that at least a part of the pottery finds reflects the original tomb equipment as well as vessels used for the funerary cult (Arias Kytnarová 2017: 78). The absence of objects dating to later periods indicate that the tomb was most likely looted already in mid-Sixth Dynasty and filled with debris soon after.

The date of Duaptah's burial is specified through the seal impression found in his burial chamber; he was buried in the reign of King Djedkare. A date referring to the reign of the same king was found in the neighbouring tomb of Shepespuptah (Vymazalová, Havelková 2016: 102–103), and a similar date has been suggested for the whole tomb complex of Princess Sheretnebtj according to the inscriptions on the four pillars on the courtyard (Vymazalová, Dulíková 2012: 347–348). The construction of some parts of the tomb complex might have started earlier than Djedkare's reign, many years before Duaptah's death. Many of the individuals buried in the rock-cut tombs in AS 68 however lived to an advanced age (around 50 years, see e.g. Vymazalová 2015), and thus many years could have passed between the construction of their tombs and placement of their burials.

It is worth mentioning that seal impressions with Djedkare's name were also found in two burial chambers in Neferinpu's tomb (Bárta *et al.* 2014a: 98); despite the long rule of the king (see e.g. Verner 2014: 79–88), this evidence confirms that the tombs and

burial in this part of the Abusir South site were roughly contemporary (see also Bárta, Vymazalová forthcoming).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper was written within the Programme for the Development of Fields of Study at Charles University, no. Q11: "Complexity and Resilience: Ancient Egyptian Civilisation in Multidisciplinary and Multicultural Perspective".

## REFERENCES

- ARIAS KYTNAROVÁ K., 2014: Princezná a její příbuzní? Keramické nálezy z vybraných pohřebních kontextů z komplexu Šeretnebtj. *Pražské egyptologické studie* 13: 11–19.
- ARIAS KYTNAROVÁ K., 2016: Preliminary report on ceramic finds from the funerary contexts in the tomb of Duaptah (AS 68a) at Abusir South. *Bulletin of the Austrian Centre for Egyptology* 26: 111–129.
- ARIAS KYTNAROVÁ K., 2017: *Social Dynamics in the Material Culture – Pottery of the Late Old Kingdom from the Tomb Complex of Princess Sheretnebtj at Abusir South*. unpublished PhD thesis. Charles University, Prague.
- ARMELAGOS G. J., CHRISMAN O. D., 1988: Hyperostosis Frontalis Interna: A Nubian Case. *Am J Phys Anthropol* 76: 25–28.
- BÁRTA M., 2014: Objev pohřební komory hodnostáře Nefera. *Pražské egyptologické studie* 13: 3–6.
- BÁRTA M., with contributions by ABE Y., ARIAS KYTNAROVÁ K., HAVELKOVÁ P., HEGRLÍK L., JIRÁSKOVÁ L., MALÁ P., NAKAI I., NOVOTNÝ V., OGIDANI E., OKOSHI A., SŮVOVÁ Z., UCHINUMA M., VYMAZALOVÁ H., 2014a: *Abusir XXIII. The Tomb of the Sun Priest Neferinpu (AS 37)*. Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Arts, Prague.
- BÁRTA M., VYMAZALOVÁ H., DULÍKOVÁ V., ARIAS KYTNAROVÁ K., MEGAHED M., VARADZIN L., 2014b: Exploration of the necropolis at Abusir South in the season of 2012. Preliminary Report. *Ägypten und Levante/ Egypt and the Levant* 24: 15–38.
- BÁRTA M., VYMAZALOVÁ H., forthcoming: Created for eternity: statues and serdabs in the late Fifth Dynasty tombs at Abusir South. In: K. O. Kuraskiewicz, E. Kopp, J. Popielska-Grybowska (Eds.): *Old Kingdom Art and Archaeology in Warsaw 2013*, Warsaw.
- BORCHARDT L., 1911: *Statuen und Statuetten von Königen und Privatleuten im Museum von Kairo Nr. 1–1294*. Reichsdruckerei, Berlin.
- BREITINGER E. 1982. Depressio biparietalis circumscripta. I. Zwei Fälle aus dem awarenzeitlichen Gräberfeld von Zwölfaxing bei Wien. *Archäologia Austriaca* 66: 141–153.
- BROOKS S. T., SUCHEY J. M., 1990: Skeletal age determination based on the os pubis: A comparison of the

- Acsádi-Nemeskéri and Suchey-Brooks methods. *Human Evolution* 5: 227–238.
- BRŮŽEK J., 2002: A method for visual determination of sex, using the human hip bone. *Am J Phys Anthropol* 117, 2: 157–168.
- DULÍKOVÁ V., ODLER M., HAVELKOVÁ P., 2011: Archeologický výzkum hrobky lékaře Neferherptaha. *Pražské egyptologické studie* 8: 9–16.
- FEREMBACH D., SCHWIDETZKY I., STLOUKAL M., 1980: Recommendations for age and sex diagnoses of skeletons. *Journal of human evolution* 9: 517–549.
- FLORKOWSKI A., KOZŁOWSKI T., 1994: Ocena wieku szkieletowego dzieci na podstawie wielkości kości. *Przegląd Antropologiczny* 57, 1–2: 71–86.
- HARPUR Y., 1987: *Decoration in Egyptian Tombs of the Old Kingdom. Studies in Orientation and Scene Content*. KPI, London, New York.
- HASSAN S., 1936: *Excavations at Giza 1930–1931*. Government Press, Bulaq, Cairo.
- HASSAN S., 1944: *Excavations at Giza V. 1933–1934*. Government Press, Bulaq, Cairo.
- HAUSER G., DE STEFANO G. F., 1989: *Epigenetic Variants of the Human Skull*. Schweizerbart, Stuttgart.
- HAVELKOVÁ P., 2014: Anthropology. In: M. Bárta et al.: *Abusir XXIII. The Tomb of the Sun Priest Neferinpu (AS 37)*. Pp. 105–119. Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Arts, Prague.
- HERSHKOVITZ I., GREENWALD C., ROTHSCHILD B. M., LATIMER B., DUTOUR O., JELLEMA L. M., WISHBARATZ S., 1999: Hyperostosis frontalis interna: an anthropological perspective. *Am J Phys Anthropol* 109, 3: 303–325.
- JÁNOSI P., 2017: The mastaba of the chief physician, *Nfr-hr-Pth* (AS 65). *Prague Egyptological Studies* 19: 27–36.
- JONES D., 2000: *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom*. BAR International Studies 866. Archaeopress, Oxford.
- JURMAIN R., ALVES CARDOSO F., HENDERSON C. Y., VILLOTTE S., 2012: Bioarchaeology's holy grail: The reconstruction of activity. In: A. L. Grauer (Ed.): *A companion to Palaeopathology*. Pp. 531–552. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester, West Sussex, Malden, MA.
- KROGMAN W. M., ISCAN M. Y., 1986: *The Human Skeleton in Forensic Medicine*. Charles C Thomas Publisher, Springfield, Illinois.
- LOVEJOY C. O., 1985: Dental wear in the Libben population: its functional pattern and role in the determination of adult skeletal age at death. *Am J Phys Anthropol* 68, 1: 47–56.
- MALÁ P., 2010: Human skeletal remains. In: M. Bárta, F. Coppens, H. Vymazalová, et al., *Abusir XIX Tomb of Hetepi (AS20), Tombs AS 33–35 and AS 50–53*. Pp. 318–333. Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Arts, Prague.
- PHENICE P. W., 1969: A newly developed visual method of sexing the os pubis. *Am J Phys Anthropol* 30: 297–302.
- PORTER B., MOSS R., MÁLEK J., 1974: *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings III: Memphis, Part 1 (Abu Rawash to Abusir)*. The Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- POSENER-KRIÉGER P., VERNER M., VYMAZALOVÁ H., 2006: *Abusir X. The Pyramid Complex of Raneferef. The Papyrus Archive*. Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Arts, Prague.
- RANKE H., 1935: *Die ägyptischen Personennamen. Band I. Verzeichnis der Namen*. J. J. Augustin, Glückstadt.
- RAXTER M. H., RUFF C. B., AZAB A., ERFAN M., SOLIMAN M., EL-SAWAF A., 2008: Stature estimation in ancient Egyptians: a new technique based on anatomical reconstruction of stature. *Am J Phys Anthropol* 136, 2: 147–155.
- RUSSMANN E. R., 1995: A second style in Egyptian art of the Old Kingdom. *Mitteilungen des Deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 51: 269–279.
- SCHEELE-SCHWEITZER K., 2014: *Die Personennamen des Alten Reiches. Altägyptische Onomastik unter lexikographischen und socio-kulturellen Aspekten*. Philippika. Marburger altertumskundliche Abhandlungen 28. Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden.
- SCHMITT A., 2005: Une nouvelle méthode pour estimer l'âge au décès des adultes à partir de la surface sacro-pelvienne iliaque. *Bull Mém Soc Anthropol Paris* 17, 1–2: 89–101.
- SCHWARTZ J. H., 1995: *Skeleton Keys*. Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford.
- SJØVOLD T., 1990: Estimation of stature from long bones utilizing the line of organic correlation. *Human Evolution* 5, 5: 431–447.
- STLOUKAL M., HANÁKOVÁ H., 1978: Die Länge der Längsknochen altschlawischer Bevölkerungen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Wachstumsfragen. *Homo* 29(1): 53–69.
- STROUHAL E., 2002: The anthropological evaluation of human skeletal remains from the mastabas of Djedkare Isesi's family cemetery at Abusir. In: M. Verner, V. G. Callender: *Abusir VI. Djedkare's Family Cemetery*. Pp. 119–132. Charles University in Prague and Set Out, Prague.
- STROUHAL E., NĚMEČKOVÁ A., KOUBA M., 2003: Palaeopathology of Iufaa and other persons found beside his shaft tomb at Abusir (Egypt). *Int J Osteoarchaeol* 13,6: 331–338.
- SZILVÁSSY J., KRITSCHER H., 1990: Estimation of chronological age in man based on the spongy structure of long bones. *Anthropol Anz* 48: 289–298.
- VERNER M., 2014: *Sons of the Sun. Rise and Decline of the Fifth Dynasty*. Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Arts, Prague.
- VERNER M., CALLENDER V. G., 2002: *Abusir VI. Djedkare's Family Cemetery*. Charles University in Prague and Set Out, Prague.
- VYMAZALOVÁ H., 2014: Skalní hrobky v hrobovém komplexu princezny Šeretnebtj (AS 68): výzkum šachet a pohřebních komor. *Pražské egyptologické studie* 12: 10–19.
- VYMAZALOVÁ H., 2015: Exploration of the burial apartments in tomb complex AS 68. Preliminary report of the 2013 fall season. *Prague Egyptological Studies* 15: 43–58.
- VYMAZALOVÁ H., 2016: Evidence on three possible relatives of Princess Sheretnebtj from her tomb at Abusir South. *Archiv Orientální* 84: 1–22.
- VYMAZALOVÁ H., ARIAS KYTNAROVÁ K., 2017: The development of tomb AS 68c in Abusir South: burial place

- of the king's daughter Sheretnebt and her family. In: M. Bárta, F. Coppens, J. Krejčí (Eds.): *Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2015*. Pp. 435–450. Charles University, Faculty of Arts, Prague
- VYMAZALOVÁ H., DULÍKOVÁ V., 2012: Sheretnebt, a king's daughter from Abusir. *Archiv Orientální* 80: 339–356.
- VYMAZALOVÁ H., DULÍKOVÁ V., 2014: New evidence on princess Sheretnebt from Abusir South. *Archiv Orientální* 82: 1–19.
- VYMAZALOVÁ H., HAVELKOVÁ P., 2016: Shepesuptah Idu according to evidence from his rock-cut tomb at Abusir South. *Annals of the Náprstek Museum* 37 (2): 89–108.
- VYMAZALOVÁ H., PIEKE G., 2017: Iti and his statuette from the tomb of Princess Sheretnebt in Abusir South. In: M. Bárta, F. Coppens, J. Krejčí (Eds.): *Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2015*. Pp. 451–466. Charles University, Faculty of Arts, Prague.

Hana Vymazalová\*  
Czech Institute of Egyptology  
Faculty of Arts, Charles University  
nám. Jana Palacha 2  
116 38 Praha 1  
Czech Republic  
E-mail: hana.vymazalova@ff.cuni.cz

Petra Havelková  
National Museum, Natural History  
Museum  
Anthropological Department  
Cirkusová 1740  
193 00 Praha 9  
Czech Republic  
E-mail: petra\_havelkova@nm.cz

\*Corresponding author.