

**Univerzita Karlova**

**Filozofická fakulta**

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# **Bakalářská práce**

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**Zobrazení cizinců na královských reliéfech Staré říše**

Foreigners in the Old Kingdom royal reliefs

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V Praze, dne 14. srpna 2023

Irena Kalfas Benešová

**Declaration:**

I hereby declare that I worked on this bachelor's thesis independently, that I properly cited all the used sources and literature, and that this thesis was not used as a part of another university study or as a fulfilment of the requirements of the same degree or any other.

In Prague, 14. August 2023

Irena Kalfas Benešová

### **Klíčová slova (česky)**

Stará říše, pyramidový komplex, královský reliéf, reliéfy z Wádí Maghary, cizinci, vyobrazení cizinců

### **Abstrakt (česky)**

Cílem této práce je shromáždit královské reliéfy pojednávající o cizincích z různých míst tehdejšího starověkého Egypta a prozkoumat jednotlivé aspekty zobrazování cizinců a roli cizinců v dekorativním programu, královské propagandě nebo v rámci víry. Vzhledem k charakteru práce budou zpracovány pouze nástěnné a skalní reliéfy. V rámci výzkumu pak bude kladen důraz na: témata jednotlivých vyobrazení, etnické aspekty cizinců (pokud jsou vyobrazeny), toponyma, zapojení bohů a bohyní, provázanosti s dalšími scénami v okolí uvažovaných reliéfů a jejich umístění v rámci pohřebních komplexů nebo v rámci celého Egypta (v případě skalních reliéfů). Časovým rozpětím výzkumu je Stará říše (cca 2592–2120 př. n. l.).

### **Klíčová slova (anglicky):**

Old Kingdom, pyramid complex, royal relief, Wadi Maghara reliefs, foreigners, depiction of foreigners

### **Abstract (in English):**

The present thesis aim is to collect royal reliefs dealing with foreigners from various locations throughout Ancient Egypt and examine separate aspects of depiction of foreigners and the role foreigners played in decorative program, royal propaganda or belief system. Due to the nature of the study only wall and rock reliefs will be processed. Within the research focus will be laid on: topics of reliefs, ethnical aspects (if depicted), toponyms, gods and goddesses involved, interconnection to other scenes in proximity and their location within the mortuary complex or the whole Egypt (in case of rock reliefs). The timespan of research is the Old Kingdom (ca. 2592–2120 BC).

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Concepts and ideas, which we can see slowly emerging through the Predynastic period, grew to their full strength and bestowed great power to the kings of the Old Kingdom. Through the power of kingship, effective administration and improved management of resources, new projects of colossal proportions arise<sup>1</sup>. Pyramid complexes, with their decoration and equipment, are one of the most splendid ones.

Although relief decoration from kings' eternal residences is not as well preserved as the one from the New Kingdom or the Late Period, there is still a sufficient amount of material to be studied. Moreover, new blocks of decoration are still being discovered, e.g., recently in Dahshur<sup>2</sup> and even more lately in Saqqara<sup>3</sup> and Abusir<sup>4</sup>. These new discoveries might help us understand pyramid complexes, their function and their decorative program better.

There are many analyses regarding foreigners in Ancient Egypt studying these problematics from different perspectives and with different scientific approaches. Many of them will be discussed and quoted within this thesis. However, many of them are focusing on the New Kingdom and later periods, where more textual and archaeological material prevailed, also the international framework was quite different. The problem of the studies regarding the Old Kingdom is that they are dealing only with separate aspects of foreign-ness, or they are dealing just with certain perspective. Therefore, the aim of this study is to begin a journey for better knowledge in the depiction of foreigners in various sources and through various perspectives with the main focus on the Old Kingdom. My bachelor thesis is just the first step and I would like to follow this topic and broaden the knowledge in my master and dissertation thesis.

In the following paragraphs, I will examine separate aspects of depiction of foreigners and the role foreigners played in decorative program through the royal propaganda and/or belief system. The focus will be on the typology of scenes regarding foreigners, their placement within the pyramid complex and their function. Also, I will study features related to each ethnic group, as they were carved by Ancient Egyptians according to their current perspective of lands and nations surrounding them.

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<sup>1</sup> Bárta, 2020, pp. 316–396.

<sup>2</sup> Gospodar, 2021, pp. 113–128.

<sup>3</sup> Megahed & Jánosi, 2020, pp. 90–102.

<sup>4</sup> Khaled, 2020, pp. 82–89; Khaled, 2023.



The ethnic features together with defined topics will help me to identify all fragments of royal reliefs depicting foreigners during the Old Kingdom period. Afterwards, I will sort them into groups according to their motifs and content. Later, I will focus on the description of each scene in detail, evaluation of its content, with respect to royal propaganda, and their placement in the broader context. I will focus on the development of each scene, both within the Old Kingdom period, but also within the Predynastic and Early Dynastic periods. I will try to trace the roots of each motif in the previous eras and distinguish which elements became the key aspects for later artistic expression. Where necessary, I will also look for parallels in later periods in order to find information lost within the relief fragments.

Currently, knowledge concerning foreigners in royal reliefs is scattered in various articles, books and scholarly works. Some opinions have already been surpassed or will need to be updated in the light of the recent discoveries. I will try to summarize the findings, compare them with the latest knowledge and transfer them into the specification of each scene. This should result in a comprehensive overview of all the scenes with detailed descriptions, on the basis of which further analyses and conclusions can be built later, by adding new angles and aspects.

### **1.1. Time**

The aim of the present thesis is to discuss the royal reliefs dealing with foreigners from various locations throughout Ancient Egypt within the timespan of the Old Kingdom (ca. 2592–2153 BC).<sup>5</sup> In this thesis the Old Kingdom will be framed with the Third and the Sixth Dynasty based mainly on the placement of the capital city and the Royal Residence in the Memphite area, the level of the centralisation and organization of the Ancient Egyptian state, the status of the kingship and the king's power in general and last, but not least, the monumentality of and ideas hidden behind the mortuary complexes of the kings. Although, all these elements slightly varied during the Old Kingdom period and we can find their predecessors in previous dynasties<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Absolute dating used according to Hornung, Krauss, Warburton, 2006, pp. 490–491.

<sup>6</sup> For details see: Kemp, 1983, pp. 71–112; Málek, 2000, pp. 83–107; Bard, 2008, pp. 123–128; Papazian, 2013, pp. 41–83 and 153–175; Verner, 2013, pp. 119–122; Baud, 2010, pp. 63–80; Kemp, 2018, pp. 165–193.

The lack of our knowledge regarding kings of the Seventh and the Eighth Dynasty and scarce archaeological findings make it impossible to add any fruitful information into researched topics<sup>7</sup>, hence those will not be included in the present study.

## **1.2. Space**

In search for royal reliefs depicting foreigners in the given period, two types of sources will be considered: royal pyramid complexes and rock carvings. Other royal sources from the Old Kingdom are rather limited<sup>8</sup>, and no depictions from divine temples survived<sup>9</sup>.

We are limited only to the royal context due to the fact that foreigners were not depicted in high officials' or elite tombs. We may find textual mentions regarding non-Egyptians in tomb inscriptions of e.g., Harkhuf or Weni, but they are not portrayed in reliefs. The only exception is represented by Bedouins<sup>10</sup>. It is evident that depiction of gods and even the king himself was forbidden for non-royal tombs during this period<sup>11</sup>. The foreigners are not depicted in non-royal contexts as it was not common to include them in scenes chosen for the tomb.

### **1.2.1. The pyramid complexes**

During the Old Kingdom period<sup>12</sup> mortuary complexes were built at the sites (from South to North) of Beit Khallaf, Meidum, Dahshur, Saqqara, Abusir, Zawiyet el-Aryan, Giza, Abu Rawash. State of research of separate complexes will be discussed in following section.

Due to the fact that some mortuary complexes of the Old Kingdom nearly disappeared, or they are currently not available for further research (e.g., Zawiyet el-Aryan) publications from 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries means our only source

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<sup>7</sup> Two pyramid complexes under consideration are: the pyramid Lepsius No. XL in Saqqara and the pyramid complex in Dara, which are ascribed to Qakare Ibi and Khui, respectively. Although, there is no consent regarding these two kings are the true owners of these mortuary complexes and whether those are both pyramids, they have one in common – stone robbers did not leave much of them. For details see: Lepsius, 1970, Abth.I.BI.34.; Jéquier, 1935; Weill, 1958; Kamal, 1912, pp. 132; Verner, 2020, pp. 311–312; Lehner, 2001, pp. 164–165.

<sup>8</sup> See below.

<sup>9</sup> Except of the Fifth Dynasty sun temples. For details see: Borchardt, 1905; Edel & Wenig, 1974; Lehner, 1997; Nuzzolo, 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Detailed discussion in chapter 1.4. below.

<sup>11</sup> Roth, 2015, pp. 162.

<sup>12</sup> As defined in chapter 1.1. above.

of information. The oldest systematic research of the Old Kingdom pyramids was made by H. Vyse<sup>13</sup>, followed by J. S. Perring<sup>14</sup> and C. R. Lepsius<sup>15</sup>. But it was W. M. F. Petrie<sup>16</sup>, who came with scientific approach of investigation within the whole Memphite region. Many other scholars followed with detail studies regarding separate location (from South to North): W. M. F. Petrie, L. Borchardt, L. Croon and A. Rowe in Meidum<sup>17</sup>; A. Fakhry in Dahshur<sup>18</sup>; C. M. Firth, J. E. Quibell, B. Gunn, G. Jéquier, J.-Ph. Lauer and Z. Ghoneim in Saqqara<sup>19</sup>; L. Borchardt in Abusir<sup>20</sup>; A. Barsanti, G. Reisner and C. Fisher in Zawiyet el-Aryan<sup>21</sup>; H. Junker, S. Hassan, G. Reisner and J.-Ph. Lauer in Giza<sup>22</sup>; É. Chassinat in Abu Rawash<sup>23</sup>.

Extensive excavations continued later in 20<sup>th</sup> century as well, some missions being held till recent years. It would be difficult to provide complete list of all scholars, nevertheless I have decided to name at least some of them based on locations (from South to North): H. Goedicke and D. Arnold in Lisht<sup>24</sup>; A. El-Khouli, G. Dormion and J.-Y. Verd'hurt in Meidum<sup>25</sup>; R. Stadelmann in Dahshur<sup>26</sup>; A. Labrousse, Ph. Collombert, A. Moussa, J. Leclant, J.-Ph. Lauer, Z. Hawass and M. Megahed in Saqqara<sup>27</sup>; M. Verner and M. Ismail Khaled in Abusir<sup>28</sup>; J.-Ph. Lauer, Z. Hawass and M. Lehner in Giza<sup>29</sup>; M. Valloggia<sup>30</sup> in Abu Rawash. And we should not omit V. Maragioglio and C. Rinaldi<sup>31</sup>, whose detailed plans provides valuable sources of information.

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<sup>13</sup> Vyse, 1840–1842.

<sup>14</sup> Perring, 1839–1842; Perring & Vyse, 1842.

<sup>15</sup> Lepsius, 1843; Lepsius, 1849–1859; Lepsius, 1897–1904.

<sup>16</sup> Petrie, 1883.

<sup>17</sup> Petrie, Mackay, Wainwright, 1910; Borchardt & Croon, 1928; Rowe, 1931, pp. 1–47.

<sup>18</sup> Fakhry, 1959; Fakhry, *Sneferu*, 1961; Fakhry, *Pyramids*, 1961.

<sup>19</sup> Firth & Gunn, 1926; Firth & Quibell, 1935; Firth & Quibell & Lauer, 1935; Jéquier, 1928; Jéquier, 1928; Jéquier, 1936; Jéquier, 1938; Jéquier, 1940; Lauer, 1936; Lauer, 1939; Goneim, 1956; Goneim, 1957.

<sup>20</sup> Borchardt, 1907; Borchardt, 1909; Borchardt, 1910; Borchardt, 1913.

<sup>21</sup> Barsanti, 1906, pp. 257–286; Barsanti, 1907, pp. 201–210; Barsanti, 1912, pp. 57–63; Reisner & Fisher, 1910–1911, pp. 54–59.

<sup>22</sup> Junker, 1932, pp. 123–49; Hassan, 1960.; Reisner, 1931; Reisner, 1942; Reisner & Smith, 1955; Lauer, 1947, pp. 245–59.

<sup>23</sup> Chassinat, 1921–1922, pp. 53–75.

<sup>24</sup> Goedicke, 1971; Arnold, 1988.

<sup>25</sup> El-Khouli, 1991; Dormion & Verd'hurt, 2013; Dormion & Verd'hurt, 2016.

<sup>26</sup> Stadelmann, 1983, pp. 225–41; Stadelmann, 2011, pp. 736–746.

<sup>27</sup> Labrousse, Lauer, Leclant, 1977; Labrousse & Moussa, 1996; Labrousse & Moussa, 2002; Labrousse, 2019; Labrousse & Lauer, 2000; Collombert, 2011, pp. 921–938; Collombert, 2023; Megahed, 2017, pp. 36–63; Megahed, 2016; Megahed & Jánosi, 2017, pp. 237–256.

<sup>28</sup> Verner, 1991, pp. 411–418; Verner, 1994; Verner, 1995; Verner et al, 2006.

<sup>29</sup> Lauer, 1947; Lauer, 1962; Lauer, 1971; Lauer 1989; Hawass, 1994; Hawass, 1997; Lehner, 1983; Lehner 1985.

<sup>30</sup> Valloggia, 2011.

<sup>31</sup> Maragioglio & Rinaldi, 1962; Maragioglio & Rinaldi, 1963–1975.

Not only archaeology of different locations and building methods as such, but also understanding of separate elements, structures, reliefs and their placement within the grander scheme is crucial for our comprehension of function of the pyramid complexes. Development of temples and pyramid complexes was described in detail by R. Stadelmann, D. Arnold and B. J. Kemp<sup>32</sup>. Detailed catalogues of pyramids were created by M. Lehner and M. Verner<sup>33</sup>.

Function of the pyramid complex was discussed by F. D. Friedmann, A. M. Roth, D. O'Connor<sup>34</sup> and also based on the Pyramid Texts by J. Allen and B. Mathieu<sup>35</sup>. Separate parts with their function and development were described by D. Arnold, A.D. Espinel, M. Megahed and T. El Awady<sup>36</sup>.

Relief decoration of royal mortuary complexes was studied in detail by A. Ćwiek and D. Stockfish<sup>37</sup>. Overview of relief development was described by A. Dodson, P. Wilson and A. Woods<sup>38</sup>. Development of Ancient Egyptian art during the Old Kingdom was summarized by D. Arnold, J. Málek, J. P. O'Neil and J. Baines<sup>39</sup>.

### **1.2.2. Rock carvings**

The second source of royal reliefs preserved from the Old Kingdom can be found in Wadi Maghara, located in southwestern part of the Sinai Peninsula. Turquoise and copper mines located close to the wadi were important sources of these precious materials. Therefore, many pharaonic expeditions, undertaken during the whole Old Kingdom period, left records regarding their visits carved high up in the steep cliffs<sup>40</sup>. These reliefs were described in detail in several publications by W. M. F. Petrie (1906) and A. H. Gardiner – T. E. Peet – J. Černý (1952 and 1955)<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> Stadelmann, 1997, pp. 1–18; Arnold, 1998, pp. 31–85; Kemp, 2018, pp. 57–109.

<sup>33</sup> Lehner, 2001; Verner, 2020.

<sup>34</sup> Friedman, 1996, pp. 337–51; Roth, 1998, pp. 991–1003; O'Connor, 1998, pp. 135–144.

<sup>35</sup> Allen, 1994, pp. 5–28; Mathieu, 1997, pp. 289–304.

<sup>36</sup> Arnold, 2007, pp. 97–108.; El Awady, 2006; Megahed, 2016, pp. 239–258.

<sup>37</sup> Ćwiek, 2003; Stockfish, 2003.

<sup>38</sup> Dodson, 2010, pp. 804–825; Wilson, 2010, pp. 781–803; Woods, 2015, pp. 219–248.

<sup>39</sup> Arnold, 1999; Málek, 1999; O'Neil, 1999; Baines, 2007.

<sup>40</sup> Regarding this topic see: Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 3–11 and 24–26; Mumford, 2001, pp. 288–292.

<sup>41</sup> Petrie & Currelly, 1906; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955.

### 1.3. Sources Format / Medium

Due to the scale of the present study, the sources to be investigated were limited to reliefs. Majority of the preserved relief decoration have the form of raised or sunken relief<sup>42</sup>.

Other sources, such as royal annals, Pyramid Texts, biographical inscriptions and other private inscriptions left behind by important individuals will not be studied in this thesis. However, they offer a possibility for comparison and also for further elaboration of the subject in the future.

Other formats of art or communication depicting or describing foreigners include for instance statues, some of which were also included in royal monuments. Detailed work regarding statues of prisoners in royal mortuary complexes has been recently published by T. Prakash.<sup>43</sup> Even though the statues are not included in the subject of our research, Prakash's conclusions will be taken into consideration for comparison of the different media.

The diverse textual records preserved from the given period are rather extensive and show a large variety in their style and function. From biographical inscriptions in the tombs of the high officials (e.g., tomb of Harkhuf (QH 34) or Mekhu and Sabni (QH 25, 26) on Qubbet el-Hawa<sup>44</sup>), expedition records of the high officials in Wadi Maghara<sup>45</sup>, through list of toponyms from the mortuary temple of Djedkare Isesi<sup>46</sup> to Palermo stone<sup>47</sup>, where also significant events, such as visits of foreign countries, or import of precious materials from them. References to foreigners in textual sources can be rather valuable in comparison to the depictions, however, such comparison goes beyond the scope of the current thesis.

Finally, we may find sealings depicting enslaved foreigners<sup>48</sup>. Such artefacts might be found within administrative parts or precincts of mortuary complexes or their vicinity. However, in many cases it is impossible to determine the exact location of these artefacts or to verify their original context. Nevertheless, for purposes of this thesis sealings will not be studied.

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<sup>42</sup> Woods, 2015, pp. 219.

<sup>43</sup> Prakash, 2022.

<sup>44</sup> Edel, 1979, pp. 193–197; Edel, 2008; Habachi, 1981, pp. 11–27; Vischak, 2015; Angelini, Vittozzi, Baldi, 2016, pp. 71–79.

<sup>45</sup> Petrie & Currelly, 1906; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955.

<sup>46</sup> Megahed, 2016, pp. 53–54.

<sup>47</sup> Breasted, 1906; O'Mara, 1979; Wilkinson, 2000; Hsu, 2010, pp. 68–89.

<sup>48</sup> Kaplony, 1981, Tafel 59 (16), Tafel 88 (22) und Tafel 112 (1); Nolan, 2010.

#### 1.4. Foreigners in royal reliefs

Egyptian art was highly stylized and formalized and at a first glimpse is obvious ancient artisans were working with a set of standardized rules. Those were slowly evolving during the Archaic and Predynastic periods but were not strictly anchored until the Old Kingdom. Craftsmen of following periods overtook principles and used them, with minor changes, till the latest times<sup>49</sup>.

In wall paintings and reliefs a standing human figure was divided into proportions based on a grid containing eighteen units in height from the baseline to the hairline, the sitting one into fourteen. Proportions between separate body parts varied over time and left a significant distinctive mark<sup>50</sup>. A depiction of a figure followed strict rules: “... a figure’s head, legs, feet and arms were presented in profile, shoulders and hands were shown from the front, and the torso appeared in a combination of frontal and profile views<sup>51</sup>.” These conventions formed the seemingly odd rigid appearance of depicted figures. It is due to the purpose of the art, which was a cornerstone for typical Egyptian canon. Ancient Egyptian art is highly informative and all recorded information served an exact purpose. Artisans depicted objects as an assemblage of their most characteristic features<sup>52</sup>. To fit everything in meant to omit something else, e.g., the perspective with vanishing point<sup>53</sup>. Every single gesture, orientation of the figures, their size, their numbers and choice of colours is based on symbolic meaning. Clues for understanding Egyptian art are hidden in the world that surrounded Ancient Egyptians and in their conception of cosmology and mythology<sup>54</sup> and such aspects will be discussed later.

Therefore, it is no wonder that depiction of non-Egyptian people was highly stylized and canonized too. It belonged to the group of representational art, which was strictly manufactured for the elite – in this case, the king. Although there are no differences in physical and facial characteristics between the foreign and Egyptian peoples, we can see some stylistic features, which formulate the sensation of “otherness”. One of them is lower exaggeration of physiognomic features and the second is lack of idealisation in facial expressions and their naturalistic appearance<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 13.

<sup>50</sup> Manley, 1996, pp. 82–83.

<sup>51</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 14.

<sup>52</sup> Baines & Málek, 2000, pp. 56 and 61.

<sup>53</sup> Schäfer, 1974, pp. 80–93.

<sup>54</sup> Robins, 2008, pp. 19–24.

<sup>55</sup> Roth, 2015, pp. 162–163.

Affiliation to a foreign ethnicity was articulated through the skin colours. Typically, darker red was reserved for Egyptian men and yellow or ochre for Egyptian women. Other colours were reserved for foreign ethnics<sup>56</sup>. Although, the authenticity of such colours is not certain and is a subject of an artistic license. Similarly, various hairstyles, beard shapes, dresses, headdresses and jewellery underlined fashion styles of non-Egyptian people, which contrasted with smooth, elegant and simple style in Ancient Egyptian fashion<sup>57</sup>. Those distinct features such as beards, long hair, collars and necklaces, pendants, chest bends, waistbands, penis sheath, tassels and tails were reserved for foreigners. Regardless, we should approach such distinctive features with caution as they clearly undertook a certain level of idealization, like previously mentioned colours, and may not accurately reflect reality. Moreover, artistic styles and influences varied over time and the degree of stylization in depiction with them<sup>58</sup>.

As was mentioned above, physiognomic features often copy the way ancient Egyptians were depicted. E.g., Nubians are depicted with the same elaborated wigs, short beards and short kilts as Egyptians. Although there are some differences in details such as thin ribbon around their head tied with a loop, few short braids hanging from the wig on their shoulders and extra sash around their waist, which was often red<sup>59</sup>. What helps us distinguish foreigners from Egyptians is the context. We may find foreign nations only in passive roles, many times in subjugated poses such as: kneeling with hands raised in gesture of supplication<sup>60</sup>, in role of a bound captives lined up in processions<sup>61</sup> or held by hair locks by the king ready to smite them with a mace<sup>62</sup>, also often trampled by a king in a form of a sphinx<sup>63</sup> (with human, falcon or lion head)<sup>64</sup>. Non-violent scenes depict foreigners bringing their goods as traders on boats with hands raised in a gesture of awe and adoration<sup>65</sup> in the presence of the king. Finally, there are dramatic scenes with gaunt Bedouins<sup>66</sup>. Although, this ethnic or nation was never tormented in smiting scenes<sup>67</sup> and

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<sup>56</sup> Wilkinson, 1994, pp. 106–108.

<sup>57</sup> Roth, 2015, pp. 163.

<sup>58</sup> Prakash, 2022, pp. 84–85.

<sup>59</sup> Roth, 2015, pp. 164–165.

<sup>60</sup> E.g., Lepsius, 1849, Blatt 2a.

<sup>61</sup> E.g., Borchardt, 1910, Blatt 5.

<sup>62</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VIII/16.

<sup>63</sup> E.g., Borchardt, 1907, Blatt 8–12.

<sup>64</sup> Roth, 2015, pp. 166.

<sup>65</sup> E.g., Borchardt, 1910, Blatt 13; For gestures see: Wilkinson, 1994, pp. 29.

<sup>66</sup> E.g., Labrousse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 175, Fig. 117, Doc. 93.

<sup>67</sup> As discussed in chapter 1.2.

only this group of people was also depicted in non-royal tombs. This indicates they were not perceived as non-Egyptians, but perhaps just as residents of deserts and oases<sup>68</sup>.

Regardless of artistic conventions and changing trends, we can distinguish three main foreign types (mostly based on depictions from pyramid complexes of Sahure<sup>69</sup> and Niuserre Ini<sup>70</sup> with some fragments from Pepi II Neferkare<sup>71</sup>): Nubians, Libyans and Asians. Number three here symbolises a plural, in this case many. Together with Egyptians it makes it four, which symbolises all or entire, it also represents all four corners of the universe or all four cardinal points, in this case all nations<sup>72</sup>. When depicted in processions<sup>73</sup>, we can see that there are differences between separate figures of foreigners, which show us that ancient Egyptians distinguished separate tribes or clans within individual ethnic groups and such details were important to mention<sup>74</sup>. And unlike the statues of bound captives from the Old Kingdom period<sup>75</sup>, women are also depicted in the relief decoration<sup>76</sup>.

Once a brief description of styles and archetypes in depiction of foreigners was done, it must be noted that the authenticity and historical reliability of such depictions is certainly not accurate as some earlier scholars tend to believe. The artistic treatment of non-Egyptian portraits was subject to the skills of individual artists, their knowledge of the subject matter, current trends in art and the place reserved for foreign peoples within cosmology and mythology, which was closely related to both royal propaganda and the current geopolitical situation. All this we should bear in mind, when trying to evaluate and interpret foreigners in royal reliefs. This matter will be discussed in the following chapters.

## 1.5. Limitations

Royal reliefs depicting foreigners studied within this thesis are described and evaluated mainly based on the drawings from the original publications of the authors and provided descriptions or photographs (mostly black and white). Due to the time scale

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<sup>68</sup> Roth, 2015, pp. 162–163.

<sup>69</sup> Borchardt, 1910, Blatt 1–2, 5–8 and 13.

<sup>70</sup> Borchardt, 1907, Blatt 8–12.

<sup>71</sup> Jéquier, 1938, Planche 8–9, 12–14, 18, 35–36 and 38.

<sup>72</sup> Wilkinson, 1994, pp. 131–135.

<sup>73</sup> E.g., Borchardt, 1910, Blatt 5.

<sup>74</sup> Roth, 2015, pp. 162–166.

<sup>75</sup> Prakash, 2022, pp. 7.

<sup>76</sup> E.g., Borchardt, 1910, Blatt 1.



of this work, it was not possible to visit all museums or locations in person. Moreover, with some reliefs it is not even possible to see the originals as they do not exist anymore.

Therefore, it is necessary to rely on given information and their correctness and also be aware some details in visualisations might be affected by interpretations of individual authors and may not mean significant anomaly from set standards.

Unfortunate fate of some pyramid complexes caused their decay, whether it was due to natural elements, grave robbers or stone thieves. Consequently, our image and state of knowledge will never be complete. Even when we are lucky enough and some blocks are found in surroundings or as a part of later constructed structures, the context, e.g., the exact location within the pyramid complex, is forever lost. The same is valid for many artifacts in private collections.

## **2. DEVELOPMENT OF RELIEFS DEPICTING FOREIGNERS AND THEIR CATEGORIZATION**

The aim of this chapter is to describe the development of motifs depicting foreigners beginning with the Predynastic and Early Dynastic periods. I will trace the motifs that became essential for the royal iconography of the Old Kingdom. Further, I will determine the key aspects and trends that influenced the final appearance of standardized scenes. Later, I will focus on the development of each motif during the Old Kingdom. For better understanding of the researched matter, I will try to determine aspects, which may influence our perception of iconography of the foreigners. And finally, I will try to examine the nature of the motifs portraying foreigners and divide them into thematic or functional groups.

### **2.1. Origins of selected motives in Predynastic and Early Dynastic Periods**

When studying Ancient Egyptian royal iconography, continuous evolvement and development of themes and ideas might be traced throughout the time. We can observe motifs appearing, disappearing and returning back slightly modified to fit in current religious, political, social and artistic trends. Among the oldest motifs we may find geometrical shapes, which imitated surrounding landscape, fauna and flora on pottery or a rock art<sup>77</sup>. Soon, they were accompanied by festive motifs of dancing and cheering folks and motifs from everyday life. With development of the chieftaincy or ruling agency, motives of leading figures, elite or royal couple, succession, foreign visitors arriving in ships, international trade and proclamations of dominance saw the light of the day. Therefore, it is no surprise that motifs regarding kingship, keeping cosmic order and dealing with neighbouring ethnics have also been present since the Predynastic Period<sup>78</sup>.

Perhaps the most iconic depiction involving foreigners that comes to mind as the first one is the smiting scene. And truly, this is one of the oldest reliefs we can find. The oldest attestation is from the Cave of the Beasts in Gilf Kebir<sup>79</sup>. In this rock art a male figure with a club or a throwing stick is standing over an already defeated rival. Even more dramatical events are depicted in the Cave of the Swimmers, where one male figure

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<sup>77</sup> E.g., Graff, 2009, pp. 194–210.

<sup>78</sup> Hendrickx & Förster, 2014, pp. 826–852.

<sup>79</sup> Bárta & Frouz, 2010, pp. 39–42 and Fig. 12.

is dragging another one, who is bleeding (from a chopped off arm?)<sup>80</sup>. In the very same cave, an offering scene is depicted, where everything takes place in front of the figure of a chief, who has a special headdress (resembling two ostrich feathers?)<sup>81</sup>. All scenes might be described as a victory of a leading character over the rival/s or as a proof of dominance over some submissive characters. And it is worth highlighting that first headdresses dedicated to a role of a leader, a chieftain or a king are appearing.

Continuity of these motifs might be traced at first in Abydos, where a jar with a victory scene was found on cemetery U, tomb 239/1<sup>82</sup>, where a leading figure with a special headdress (may again resemble two ostrich feathers) is leading two individuals depicted in smaller scale. In these suppressed figures a penis sheath and long hair are outlined<sup>83</sup>. Such features are later used to stress a foreign look of captured enemies. Two jars from the same cemetery, but tomb 415<sup>84</sup>, combines topics of victory and hunting wild animals together. On the first vessel we can see a leading figure with a mace in one hand and a rope, on which a pair of captured rivals is bound by hands, in the second one. A pair of submissive figures, threatened by the mace, is standing in front of the leading figure – again depicted with a distinct headdress. Under this scene a hippopotamus hunt is depicted. In front of the hippopotami stands a bull with majestic horns. This animal is clearly neither hunted nor tamed, thus, according to S. Heidrickx and M. Eyckerman<sup>85</sup>, it represents the king. This assumption makes both scenes parallel in a sense of dominance over the evil, chaotic or hostile forces. A motif which is abundantly represented during the Old Kingdom. The second vessel from tomb 415 in Abydos proposes a similar depiction. In the upper part, various animals are depicted – from both desert and riverine environments, both under the control or supervision of a dog. Again, according to S. Heidrickx and M. Eyckerman<sup>86</sup>, the dog figure here represents the king and the capacity to tame or control both environments. This dual aspect and tendency to stress the ability to rule over opposite spheres, therefore entire or all delineated space, is a motive used later in royal reliefs.

More scenes with later parallels were found in Hierakonpolis, tomb 100, also called the “Painted Tomb”. Scene of submission and/or victory, where a male figure, wearing

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<sup>80</sup> Bárta & Frouz, 2010, pp. 69–78 and Fig. 28.

<sup>81</sup> Bárta & Frouz, 2010, pp. 72, Fig. 29.

<sup>82</sup> Dreyer et al, 1998, Abb. 13.

<sup>83</sup> Hendrickx, 2011, pp. 75, Fig. 8.1.

<sup>84</sup> Dreyer et al, 2003, Abb. 2c.

<sup>85</sup> Hendrickx & Eyckerman, 2010, pp. 122–123.

<sup>86</sup> Hendrickx & Eyckerman, 2010, pp. 123–124.

a leopard skin and holding a stick or a sceptre, is standing victorious over a defeated rival, depicted whole in a red colour with a penis sheath. Similar scene where a male figure, again painted in red, is kneeling and offering the skin of a leopard (in gesture of presentation of the tribute?) to another male figure, who is already dressed in leopard skin and is holding a stick or a sceptre and a knife. Yet another important relief is depicting a male figure holding a mace or a club in one raised hand and grabbing the first of the three bound men, sitting in a row in front of him, by his hair with the other hand<sup>87</sup>. There are two more motifs worth mentioning in this tomb. The first one portrays a man standing between two wild animals, perhaps representing two lions. Curiously, this hero is painted also with red colour and a penis sheath, thus the same style as the people, who were subdued in previous reliefs, which might mean his foreign origin. Moreover, such themes are often compared with similar depictions from the Ancient Near East and the similarity of both will be discussed further. This scene will become an important part of the royal relief scheme, where it represents taming of wild forces, symbols of chaos or *isfet*. And the second relief depicts boats, which represent foreign peoples coming for a trade, or perhaps even coming with hostile intentions<sup>88</sup>. Although all reliefs might not have been created at the same time, according to R. Friedman and L. McNamara<sup>89</sup>, they still point out the existence of such themes in the Predynastic period.

Boats are one of the main motifs of Naqada II pottery<sup>90</sup> and can also be frequently found on the rock art in Elkab site<sup>91</sup>. Based on S. Hendrickx and M. Eyckerman<sup>92</sup> boats were depicted at first as an instrument for hunting in Nilotic environments, later becoming a symbol of power and dominance. In reliefs, where bound captives are depicted in proximity of them or/and are attached to them by a rope, the symbolism of a boat as a great power of the king is obvious. C. Gatto<sup>93</sup> suggests boats might have played an important role while the Naqada culture and the ideas tied to it were spread across Egypt and beyond. Such proof was found in Nag el-Hamdulab<sup>94</sup>, where in a series of three rock carved reliefs the king, here already depicted with a headdress resembling a white Upper Egyptian crown, visits the border region during occasion labelled as “Following

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<sup>87</sup> Quibell & Green, 1902, Plate LXXVI; Wengrow, 2006, pp. 109–111; Leeman, 2019, pp. 19–20.

<sup>88</sup> Quibell & Green, 1902, Plate LXXVI and LXXVII; Leeman, 2019, pp. 21–22.

<sup>89</sup> Friedman & McNamara, 2018, pp. 32.

<sup>90</sup> Hendrickx, 2011, pp. 75–82; Koehler, 2014, pp. 25–47.

<sup>91</sup> Huyge, 2014, pp. 93–102.

<sup>92</sup> Hendrickx & Eyckerman, 2010, pp. 127–131.

<sup>93</sup> Gatto, 2014, pp. 110–117.

<sup>94</sup> Hendrickx, Darnell, Gatto, Eyckerman, 2012, pp. 295–326.

of Horus”, *šms-hr*. This biennial event focused on collecting taxes, demonstration of the royal power and exercise of juridical authority was performed by the king and the court members<sup>95</sup>. Among other courtiers a Nubian man with a double-arched bow is depicted – clearly here representing a symbol of the Land of the Bow, *Ta-Seti*<sup>96</sup>. According to C. Gatto<sup>97</sup>, no hostility towards this man is depicted within Nag el-Hamdulab relief, which may prove that this territory was already under the influence of the king. Although, a relief from el-Hosh<sup>98</sup>, which lays further down the stream from the 1<sup>st</sup> cataract border line, depicts a dramatically different situation regarding relations towards people of Nubian origin. A captive is being ritually sacrificed in front of the king, who is wearing the white crown. According to the authors of the article “Early royal iconography: A rock art panel from el-Hosh”<sup>99</sup>, this contrast might be caused by the official tone of the Nag el-Hamdulab relief with intention to strengthen the role of Elephantine as an Egyptian stronghold.

It is unclear whether Nag el-Hamdulab relief depicts king Narmer, but many similar elements are depicted in reliefs recorded on Narmer’s palette<sup>100</sup>, Narmer’s mace-head<sup>101</sup> and, chronologically the oldest of them, the Scorpion mace-head<sup>102</sup>. Rather than a standardization of art, we may observe a stabilization in the expression of religious ideas and the portrayal of the kingship and the role of the king<sup>103</sup>. With a new medium represented by mace-heads and cosmetic palettes<sup>104</sup> a new idea appears – scenes framed and divided by registers<sup>105</sup>. This innovation helps with storytelling and enables more

<sup>95</sup> Wilkinson, 1999, pp. 220–221.

<sup>96</sup> Gatto, 2014, pp. 112.

<sup>97</sup> Gatto, 2014, pp. 112.

<sup>98</sup> Hardtke, Claes, Darnell, Hameeuw, Hendrickx, Vanhulle, 2022, pp. 29–30, Fig. 3–4.

<sup>99</sup> Hardtke, Darnell, Hameeuw, Hendrickx, Vanhulle, 2022, pp. 42–46.

<sup>100</sup> Quibell, Green, Petrie, 1900, Plate XXIX – Hierakonpolis, Main Deposit, Great Slate Palette.

<sup>101</sup> Quibell, Green, Petrie, 1900, Plate XXVIb – Hierakonpolis, Main Deposit, Great Mace II.

<sup>102</sup> Quibell, Green, Petrie, 1900, Plate XXVIc – Hierakonpolis, Great Mace III.

<sup>103</sup> Hendrickx, 2011, pp. 75–82.

<sup>104</sup> Palettes were used during the Naqada I–IIIc period, and after the reign of the ruler Narmer they ceased to be used in this context. Indeed, their original purpose was to mix pigments for eyeliner. They gradually became an integral part of the burial equipment of elite tombs throughout Egypt and turned into a declaration of wealth and high status. Such palettes were worked into geometric shapes or animal forms but were otherwise completely unadorned. Their purpose changed, however, and they became objects of a ceremonial or commemorative nature as well as a type of communication device. Palettes like Narmer’s were probably displayed in temples and recorded various important events. According to: O’Connor, 2011, pp. 146–147; Leeman, 2019, pp. 1–3.

<sup>105</sup> The recording of events has undergone a gradual evolution, adapting to the type of chosen medium. For example, the depiction of scenes from rock reliefs had to be adapted for depictions on different types of spherical or oval vessels. Hence the customary reading of the reliefs in the round was now revised again and the reading from right to left was gradually established when recorded on a flat surface. Although, even more complicated pattern is suggested by D. O’Connor. According to: Hendrickx & Eyckerman, 2010, pp. 124–125; O’Connor, 2011, pp. 149; Hendrickx & Förster, 2014, pp. 838.

elaborate narratives to be presented<sup>106</sup>. We can see such division on the Scorpion mace-head, where the king is depicted as the main, dominant and slightly bigger figure of the object. Presented as the one, who is digging canals and thus providing sustenance for the people of Kemet. Equally, the king is portrayed with intention of a ritual activity connected with mythical events, through which is fulfilling his role within the cosmic order. The divine nature of the scene is emphasized by his bare feet<sup>107</sup>.

Nonetheless, the Narmer's palette tells a more dramatic story. The obverse side<sup>108</sup> depicts a procession led by standard bearers, which is followed by a scribe of the king. King Narmer is portrayed with the red Lower Egyptian crown, ceremonial beard, flail and mace-head and very special dress resembling marshlands, which D. C. Patch calls "Lower Egyptian Costume"<sup>109</sup>. And again, he is depicted bare foot, followed by a sandal bearer, which may, together with the presence of the goddess Bat in the upper register, as a symbol of sky<sup>110</sup>, refer to mythical events. In front of the procession two rows of decapitated enemies, with arms tied by elbows behind their backs, lie with their heads between their feet. The harsh nature of this scene is even strengthened by the fact that enemies' phalli were severed and placed on the top of their heads, as V. Davies and F. Friedman<sup>111</sup> pointed out. Killed, humiliated and symbolically deprived of the possibility of reproduction these enemies are defeated on many different levels. Together with other symbols such as the boat guarded by a harpooning Horus, symbol of a king, preceded by a swallow in front of the opened gate and with the king's red crown, D. O'Connor<sup>112</sup> suggests rather a symbolic than historical reading of depicted events. According to K. Goebis<sup>113</sup>, the red crown is not just a symbol of Lower Egypt and red colour is not just colour of the sun, but also of the spilled blood and battles against enemies, where D. O'Connor adds: „... *that need to be slain in order for the god Re to achieve ... his daily rebirth. His appearance in the morning sky commemorated the original creation of the cosmos and simultaneously ensured that each repeated sunrise would revitalize the cosmos and guarantee*

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<sup>106</sup> Hendrickx & Förster, 2014, pp. 838.

<sup>107</sup> McNamara, 2021.

<sup>108</sup> Quibell, Green, Petrie, 1900, Plate XXIX; High resolution photo is available on Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. Palette of Narmer [photo]. File name: Palette.jpg. Accessible on: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/be/Narmer\\_Palette.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/be/Narmer_Palette.jpg)

<sup>109</sup> Narmer's kilt is covered with stripes of material resembling a fishing net. This may connect the king with the environment, where the whole scene might take place and similarly symbolize a dominance over this territory. According to: Patch, 1995, pp. 93–116.

<sup>110</sup> Wilkinson, 2003, pp. 172.

<sup>111</sup> Davies & Friedman, 2002, pp. 243–246.

<sup>112</sup> O'Connor, 2011, pp. 146–152.

<sup>113</sup> Goebis, 2008, pp. 163.

*the continuation of the solar cycle upon which that vitality depended. Moreover, the corpses of Re's enemies are subsequently cooked or otherwise treated so he can consume them, and combine the power each opponent represented into a single great entity...* <sup>114</sup> D. O'Connor also suggests reading of the harpooning Horus as a protector of the solar boat and a swallow in the gate as a later symbol of the reappearance of the solar boat on the horizon during the sunrise, stressing the king's identification with the sun god Re<sup>115</sup>. With this interpretation the whole scene gets cosmological rather than historical meaning. Nevertheless, it is possible that historical events are set up in a cosmological frame, as this palette was displayed in the temple, close to the chapel of the god<sup>116</sup>, which suggests the intended audience of this scene – the falcon god, Horus. Similar scene is depicted on an ivory label found in Abydos, cemetery B<sup>117</sup>. If theory of labelling goods with tags depicting important events of past year is accepted<sup>118</sup>, reading of this label could be paraphrased as “The year, when king Narmer beat the papyrus people”<sup>119</sup>. Moreover, an identical scene is depicted on an ivory handle from Hierakonpolis<sup>120</sup>. There are various cylinder seals, found also in Hierakonpolis, depicting a man with a mace smiting a captive before him<sup>121</sup>. One of them claims Narmer's victory over enemies, this time labelled as *thnw*, the land of Libya<sup>122</sup>.

The reverse side of the Narmer's palette portrays another part of this story. We may see the king with the Upper Egyptian white crown, with one hand held above his head and in the second one holding a lock of hair of a man of a foreign origin. This iconic motif will become one of the most often used proclamations of king's strength and triumph over enemies. The same motif is repeated in the upper right part, where the falcon god holds the rope, which is tied to the nose of a man of foreign origin, whose head peeks out of a papyrus thicket. Both motifs depict the strength of the king and triumphant victory over the enemies. This triumph is strengthened with depiction of defeated enemies, which

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<sup>114</sup> O'Connor, 2011, pp. 151.

<sup>115</sup> O'Connor, 2011, pp. 152.

<sup>116</sup> Lehner, 2001, pp. 14–19 and pp. 72–73.

<sup>117</sup> Wengrow, 2006, pp. 205, Fig. 9.13.

<sup>118</sup> In Ancient Near East years were identified based on a name “Year when X did Y”. In Ancient Egypt this tradition was also used since the first dynasties, e.g., on ivory labels or sealings. It is comparable with royal annals from the later Old Kingdom, e.g., Palermo Stone, where important achievements were marked. According to: Liverani, 2011, p. 12; Wengrow, 2006, pp. 127–133.

<sup>119</sup> Wengrow, 2006, pp. 204.

<sup>120</sup> Quibell, Green, Petrie, 1900, Plate XV – Hierakonpolis, Main Deposit, Ivory Cylinders.

<sup>121</sup> Quibell, Green, Petrie, 1900, Plate XV., No. 1, 2, 4 – Hierakonpolis, Main Deposit, Ivory Cylinders.

<sup>122</sup> Quibell, Green, Petrie, 1900, Plate XV., No. 6 – Hierakonpolis, Main Deposit, Ivory Cylinders; Wilkinson, 1999, pp. 133.

lay in the bottom part of the palette. Similar motif is on the bottom of the obverse, where the king, as a mighty bull, tramples the enemy and breaks down the city walls.

Both obverse and reverse shows influences from the Ancient Near East, such as serpopards being tamed by two men, distinctively drawn musculature on the legs of the king or the symbol of the king as a mighty bull. Miscellaneous mythical beasts are depicted on various artifacts from the Predynastic period. On the knife from Gebel Arak<sup>123</sup>, knife from Gebel el-Tarif<sup>124</sup> or so-called “Two dogs palette”<sup>125</sup> is one identical beast – the sphinx, depicted as a composite animal consisting of the body of a lion, head of a bird of prey and with wings on its back. This creature, either with the head of a lion or a bird, then called sphinx or griffin respectively, will become a main character of a scene where the king as a beast is trampling his enemies<sup>126</sup>.

Many artefacts from the Predynastic period have another important feature in common – distinctive characteristics of foreign nations. These markings are not standardized yet, but it is clear which ethnicity was depicted. As such we can recognise e.g., people with Asiatic features in Narmer’s palette and mace-head and people of Libyan origin on the so-called “Hunters palette”<sup>127</sup>.

Boat as a symbol king’s strength has a parallel in the scenes, where the royal serekh is subduing enemies. Such relief is engraved on the wooden label of king Aha<sup>128</sup> and a similar motif was carved in Wadi Ameyra<sup>129</sup> during the reign of king Djer. Yet another designation of royal power is depicted on the alabaster palette of the king Djer from Saqqara<sup>130</sup>. Although the relief is damaged, the figure of the king with a stretched arm with a mace is still visible. Whole smiting scene is observed by a large figure of a lion – in no doubt a symbol of the king’s strength and kingship.

The rough nature of dramatic events during the consolidation of the state is depicted on the relief from the Gebel Sheikh Suleiman<sup>131</sup>, which is also placed into

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<sup>123</sup> Quibell, 1904, Pl. 49, 14205.

<sup>124</sup> Musée du Louvre, E 11517; CG 14265.

<sup>125</sup> Quibell, Green, 1902, Plate XXVIII.

<sup>126</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 8.

<sup>127</sup> British Museum, EA 20790 and 20792; Musée du Louvre, E 11254; High resolution photo available on The British Museum, The British Museum Company Limited. Cosmetic Palette, so called “Hunters Palette” [photo]. Accessible on: [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y\\_EA20790](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA20790).

<sup>128</sup> Penn Museum, E 9396; High resolution photo available on The Penn Museum. Tablet – Object E 9396 [photo]. Accessible on: [https://www.penn.museum/collections/object\\_images.php?im=122418](https://www.penn.museum/collections/object_images.php?im=122418).

<sup>129</sup> Dreyer et al, 1998, pp. 162–163, Plate 12a; Dreyer et al, 2003, pp. 93–94, Plate 18f.

<sup>130</sup> Emery 1949, pp. 60, No. 565, Fig. 31.

<sup>131</sup> Sayce, 1910, pp. 261–263; Arkel, 1950, pp. 24–40, sp. 28–31.



the reign of king Djer, based on the research of C. Somaglino and P. Tallet<sup>132</sup>. The scene depicts two bound enemies and a group of four already killed figures. All placed in front of the boat. The figure standing on the left side has both hands tight behind his back with a symbol of a bow – clear indication of the captive’s homeland in *Ta-Seti*, Nubia<sup>133</sup>. C. Somaglino and P. Tallet<sup>134</sup> also point out the use of archaizing aspects within this relief, to recall the reign of earlier mighty kings such as Narmer. This tendency is followed throughout Ancient Egyptian history. Rock carving of Gebel Sheikh Suleiman served as a commemoration of a military dominance over this region<sup>135</sup>. It is necessary to mention that this relief is placed in Nubia, in a territory inhabited by a so-called Group-A, which was later defeated by Egyptians<sup>136</sup>.

Ivory label found in Abydos belongs to king Den. It was placed into his grave attached to a burial gift in wooden box, which contained a pair of sandals<sup>137</sup>. The label depicts king Den in the same position as king Narmer on his palette – slaying an enemy. The king is striding, one hand with a mace is raised and the other hand is holding the enemy by his hair or a rope that might be tight to his neck. The king is adorned with many insignia of his office: a long head-cloth with uraeus, loincloth reminding *shendyt* and a bull’s tail. As Narmer, also Den is depicted bare foot. The fact, this label was attached to the sandals, may indicate the correlation between the gift and the motif. In later periods, royal reliefs include a scene where the king is trampling nine bows, which represent all the enemies of Egypt. This would suggest interdependence between slaying an enemy and its trampling with sandals or bare feet. Moreover, a sandal bearer is depicted behind king Narmer’s back in the smiting scene on his palette.

From fragments found during several excavations in Hierakonpolis on the monument so-called “Fort” remains of the first decorative program were found<sup>138</sup>. Some pieces were discovered in the entrance to the fort. Later excavations of R. Friedman discovered a large free-standing building in the centre of the enclosure<sup>139</sup>. It is plausible that some reliefs were decorating its walls. Uncovered reliefs are fragmentary, but traces of motifs such as celebration of king’s jubilee, foundation ceremony, *Heb-sed* celebrations

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<sup>132</sup> Somaglino & Tallet, 2015, pp. 123–134.

<sup>133</sup> Somaglino & Tallet, 2015, pp. 128.

<sup>134</sup> Somaglino & Tallet, 2015, pp. 132.

<sup>135</sup> Somaglino & Tallet, 2015, pp. 132.

<sup>136</sup> Török, 2009, pp. 48–51.

<sup>137</sup> Aldred, 1965, pp. 64.

<sup>138</sup> Lansing, 1935, pp. 37–45; Alexanian, 1998, pp. 1–30.

<sup>139</sup> Friedman, 2007, pp. 309–336.

and various depictions of the king in different garments and headdresses were recognised<sup>140</sup>. Worth mentioning is the depiction of the foreigner's head, similar to the one from the Narmer's palette, but this time with a bow on his head<sup>141</sup> – a clear distinction of his origin in the land of *Ta-Seti*. The king is the main figure in the reliefs, but the layout of registers is not firmly established yet<sup>142</sup>. Among other relief fragments, one more is worth mentioning. It is the list of, presumably, conquered foreign localities found in Hierakonpolis and dated to the reign of Khasekhemwy<sup>143</sup>. Such record might indicate strength of Egypt and its power to conquer neighbouring lands, as well as shifting political situation on the Eastern border<sup>144</sup>.

To conclude, the relief program of the Old Kingdom pyramid complexes developed from ideas rooting in the Predynastic period and slowly evolving through the Early Dynastic period. Decorated vessels, cosmetic palettes, majestic mace-heads together with ivory tablets and sealing cylinders provided a corpus of topics and motifs. In the centre of all the themes is the king, who is performing various activities to maintain *maat*, suppress *isfet* and keep his land united and in a cosmologically balanced order. Such activities include acts of domination or victory over enemies or forces of chaos, represented by wild animals from river and desert environments, or enemies from neighbouring territories. Wild animals are tamed or hunted, when non-Egyptian peoples, portrayed with characteristic features, are bound, controlled, smite, slaughtered and beheaded. The sovereign power of the ruler is represented by symbolic animals including a lion, bull, falcon, but also an elephant or a scorpion, which are meant to underline his vitality and strength. The king's power is also figuratively represented by ships – as vehicles through which wealth as well as ideological concepts and new technologies flow.

Such deeds are then presented before the eyes of the gods on artifacts made of precious materials that were placed near or directly in the shrines of the deities. In return the king expects support and acceptance by the deities. Presented deeds also help the king to show himself as a legitimate successor to the throne, a sole ruler of united land, and equal to the gods. First identifications of the king and the sun god Re are presented through aforementioned acts, as well as concepts of the daily day and night travels

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<sup>140</sup> Kemp, 1963, pp. 24–28; Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 57–58; Friedman, 2007, pp. 309–336.

<sup>141</sup> Quibell & Green, 1902, Plate LVIII; JdE 33895, Cairo Museum.

<sup>142</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 83–84.

<sup>143</sup> Quibell & Green, 1902, Plate XXIII.

<sup>144</sup> Wilkinson, 1999, pp. 132–133.

and struggles of this god. With development of such beliefs artefacts with reliefs supporting the king's might and power were inserted also into graves, to help the king in the afterlife. All these ideas and concepts were also developed to strengthen the position of the king and newly united state.

The elements of royal iconography will rely on motifs of victory gained through the merit of the king's divine powers. Protected and supported by various gods, the king starts to be associated with the sun god. Empowered king is depicted with distinguished royal regalia, such as headdresses, collars, kilts, ritual beards or a ceremonial bull's tail. All those elements prove a presence of elaborate ideas regarding kingship and its necessity to communicate them to a broader audience, especially on disputed territories.

## **2.2. Development of the royal relief program in the Old Kingdom**

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, most of the royal iconography was systemized by the beginning of the Third Dynasty. Royal monuments, now built entirely or almost entirely from large blocks of stone, provided opportunity for extensive relief decoration<sup>145</sup>.

Grander space occupied by relief decoration within the Fourth Dynasty enabled more complex scenes with a large number of figures, lined up in rows and registers. The king, in both passive or active roles, became a centre of all the motifs, being surrounded by courtiers or family members or a procession of domains or ancient Egyptian people representing various professions. Despite the static appearance of ancient Egyptian art, group-action reliefs empowered elaborated story telling<sup>146</sup>. New linear concept of pyramid complexes with East-West orientation articulated ideas of strengthening sun cult. Consequently, the principles connected with kingship changed and brought the idea of the sun god Re and the king joining after the king's death in order to become one of the circumpolar stars and become part of the eternal cycle of rebirth and regeneration. These concepts remained valid until the end of the reign of the last Egyptian rulers<sup>147</sup>.

The scheme with a larger figure and rows of smaller ones topped on each other reached its peak during the Fifth Dynasty. The artists achieved liveliness of the long lines

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<sup>145</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 83–84.

<sup>146</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 84.

<sup>147</sup> Robins, 2008, pp. 45–47.

of characters with an endless and rarely repeated palette of gestures and expressions<sup>148</sup>. Group-action reliefs with consecutive appearances were also introduced. This feature brings one more dimension to the story telling – progression in time<sup>149</sup>. By the end of the Fifth Dynasty a new element was introduced – so-called “Pyramid Texts” in burial chambers. These spells were intended to help the king achieve existence in the netherworld. As Do. Arnold indicates, repetitive sequencing in reliefs resembles incantations and as she points out both media were interconnected with intention to intensify magical meaning of spells hidden in relief decoration<sup>150</sup>.

Motifs previously present in sun temples became part of the pyramid complex relief program. Art of this period is influenced by the so-called “second style”<sup>151</sup>, which might originate even in the mid-Fifth Dynasty, together with changing domestic as well as the global socio-political situation<sup>152</sup>.

### **2.2.1. The Third Dynasty**

The current state of research indicates that the only ruler who used relief decoration within his pyramid complex was king Netherikhet, better known as Djoser. His monumental burial and cultic complex, designed by the famous architect Imhotep, rose at the beginning of the Third Dynasty. His afterlife residence is meant to last forever, therefore it is entirely built in stone. Dominated by the step pyramid, it outlined many new trends and tendencies for upcoming generations – not only regarding mortuary, funerary and afterlife beliefs and practices, but also regarding new economic and state organisation<sup>153</sup>.

The stone walls provided large canvases for carving vivid relief scenes, although these are yet not present anywhere else, but in the substructure of the complex. The themes he chose for catacombs under the Step Pyramid and the South Tomb were celebrations of *Heb-sed* festival and visits to divine shrines. Symbols strengthening royal power and authority and concepts related to the kingship were meant to be repeated here for eternity.

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<sup>148</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 90–92.

<sup>149</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 87.

<sup>150</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 87.

<sup>151</sup> Russmann, 1995, pp. 269–279.

<sup>152</sup> Based on: Málek, 2000, pp. 87–98; Altenmüller, 2001, pp. 601–605; Baud, 2010, pp. 76–78.

<sup>153</sup> Kahl, 2001, pp. 591–593; Seidlmayer, 2006, pp. 116–123.

Moreover, these low reliefs were masterly crafted with ease and are full of movement<sup>154</sup>. We can also see changes in the proportion of human figures in comparison with artefacts of the Predynastic and Early Dynastic period. Artists of Djoser's era achieved nearly realistic proportions of a human male figure<sup>155</sup>.

Although Djoser's eternal residence is filled with symbolism connected to kingship, no reliefs containing foreigners were found. Nevertheless, "consoles with projecting high relief heads of foreign enemies<sup>156</sup>" were found<sup>157</sup>.

Another corpus of reliefs comes from the temple of Heliopolis<sup>158</sup>. Nevertheless, the purpose of this temple and therefore its decoration do not make space for any foreigners in relief decoration.

More interesting is the situation in Wadi Maghara, where kings Djoser<sup>159</sup>, Sekhemkhet<sup>160</sup> and Sanakht<sup>161</sup> left traces regarding their, possibly, successful expedition for valuable materials. Although some of the reliefs are badly damaged, they still provide enough material for further research.

### 2.2.2. The Fourth Dynasty

The Fourth Dynasty begins with the great builder, king Sneferu. His remarkable reign meant enormous development in art and architecture, along with administration of the whole country and organization of the military. This progress went hand in hand with new ideas, both regarding the kingship and the religion, as well as the concepts of the afterlife – such as the rise of the solar cult and resulting ideas<sup>162</sup>. Thus, we can observe major changes in the design of the pyramid complexes: a shift from the step pyramid towards the true one, change in orientation of the whole complex to East-West axis, variations in substructure and location of the burial chamber, but also "standardized"

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<sup>154</sup> For details see: Firth & Quibell, 1935; Firth & Quibell, 1936; Lauer, 1936; Lauer, 1939; Lauer, 1948; Lauer, 1956, pp. 1–19; Lehner, 2001, pp. 84–94; Verner, 2020, pp. 68–101.

<sup>155</sup> Robins, 2008, pp. 44.

<sup>156</sup> Prakash, 2022, pp. 14.

<sup>157</sup> Firth, Quibell, Lauer, 1935, Plate 57.

<sup>158</sup> Smith, 1949, pp. 132–137.

<sup>159</sup> Petrie & Currelly, 1906, pp. 44; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate I./2; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 53–54; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 7 and Fig. 11.

<sup>160</sup> At first this relief was assigned to the king Semerkhet, but after corrections of Černý it was assigned to Sekhemkhet. Therefore, all references in all following books labelled as Semerkhet are considered as Sekhemkhet's. For details see Petrie & Currelly, 1906, pp. 41–43 and fig. 45–47; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate I./1(a); Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 52–53; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 7–8 and Fig. 12.

<sup>161</sup> Petrie, & Currelly, 1906, pp. 43–44 and fig. 48–49; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate I./4 and IV./3; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 54–56; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 7 and Fig. 10.

<sup>162</sup> Based on: Málek, 2000, pp. 87–98; Stadelmann, 2001, pp. 593–597; Baud, 2010, pp. 73–74.

layout of the buildings within the pyramid complex is emerging<sup>163</sup>. Hand in hand with these major changes a larger royal relief program is introduced reflecting changes in the concept of the kingship. The reason for such changes is unknown, but it is frequently paralleled with the Amarna Period<sup>164</sup>.

Except for the one fragment of a stela from the vicinity of a satellite pyramid<sup>165</sup>, no relief decoration from the Meidum pyramid complex prevailed<sup>166</sup>. Two stelae with the Horus name and Sneferu's cartouche were found in a small mud brick chapel built for the pyramid in Seila<sup>167</sup>. But it is the Bent Pyramid in Dahshur and remains of the relief decoration from the valley temple, which is a peculiar combination of the mortuary and valley temples of the future<sup>168</sup>, that reveals the full scale of a relief decorative program executed in raised polychrome relief. Compositions of one or more figures accompanied by rows of smaller figures in registers lined up on top of each other or group-action schemes were introduced<sup>169</sup>. From fragments recorded by Ahmad Fakhry<sup>170</sup> it is clear that all topics present in mortuary temples of the kings from the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties already present together with ideas of interlinked solar power with the kingship and concepts of their merge in order to achieve eternal cycle of renewal<sup>171</sup>. The best preserved is the procession of the women representing royal estates, which meant to provide sustenance for the king in the afterlife, *Heb-sed* ceremonial and the king interacting and being accepted by gods. But we can also find traces of motifs containing foreigners<sup>172</sup>. This complex was later studied by Elmar Edel<sup>173</sup> and since 2009 continuous works of the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo<sup>174</sup> are proceeding. The German team discovered a transportation pathway, built from Sneferu's temple, which was dismantled during the Ramesside Period. New fragments of royal relief decoration, found in the pathway, support the picture of the full-fledged royal decorative program within the valley temple of Snefru. The third of the Sneferu's pyramid complexes with the Red

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<sup>163</sup> According to: Bard, 2008, pp. 133–137; Lehner, 2001, pp. 14–19; Dodson, 2010, pp. 807–812; Verner, 2020, pp. 153–164.

<sup>164</sup> Assmann, 2001, pp. 12–14; Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 83; El Awady, 2006, pp. 74–75.

<sup>165</sup> Petrie, Mackay, Wainwright, 1910, pp. 11–12.

<sup>166</sup> Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 85–87.

<sup>167</sup> Bussmann, 2021, pp. 193–197.

<sup>168</sup> Verner, 2020, pp. 136–138.

<sup>169</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 84.

<sup>170</sup> Fakhry, 1959; Fakhry, *Sneferu*, 1961; Fakhry, *Pyramids*, 1961.

<sup>171</sup> Robins, 2008, pp. 45.

<sup>172</sup> El Awady, 2006, pp. 75; some reliefs also discussed in: O'Neil, 1999, pp. 195–198, Art. 22 A, B – 23.

<sup>173</sup> Edel, 1996.

<sup>174</sup> Excavation reports from past seasons available on-line: <https://www.dainst.org/en/projekt/-/project-display/58761>; Rosenow, 2020, pp. 8–15; Gospodar, 2021, pp. 113–128; Alexanian, 2013, pp. 32–42.

Pyramid also had a mortuary temple, which was partly finished with mudbricks and only few relief fragments with the king celebrating *Heb-sed* festival were found<sup>175</sup>. Both the valley temple and causeway were finished by king Khufu with mudbricks and no relief decoration was found so far<sup>176</sup>.

Sneferu's successor Khufu built for himself a large funeral complex, which was gradually surrounded by a "city of the dead" consisting of mastabas of members of the royal family and high officials. Furthermore, his pyramid complex contained all the "standard elements" of the pyramid complex in the "standard layout". Unfortunately, the mortuary temple was dismantled over time and survived extensively damaged, as did the causeway<sup>177</sup>. According to the blocks with relief decoration found, a decorative program similar to the one in Dahshur can be assumed<sup>178</sup>, including the themes depicting foreigners, executed in lower relief than in Sneferu's temple<sup>179</sup>. The valley temple<sup>180</sup> suffered a similar fate when some limestone blocks were reused for the construction of the pyramid complex of Amenemhat I at Lisht<sup>181</sup>. Not only Amenemhat I used Khufu's pyramid complex as a source of building material, but blocks with chiselled reliefs were also found in the burial chamber of king Unas<sup>182</sup>.

It is necessary to mention heavily debated relief from Khafre's pyramid complex. It contains a scene, where in the lower register bound captive of Asiatic origin is facing a male figure. This scene is unparalleled in other reliefs. There is a debate over the dating and placement of this fragment. U. Hölscher found this block in the valley temple<sup>183</sup>. Based on later pyramid complexes, such relief would be expected in the causeway. This placement is also suggested by A. Ćwiek<sup>184</sup>. H. Goedicke<sup>185</sup> suggested that this block was dragged to the valley temple in order to be transported elsewhere but was unintentionally left behind. G. Steindorff<sup>186</sup> thought that this block might come from one of the mortuary temples of Abusir and was brought here as a building material. Nevertheless, this

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<sup>175</sup> Stadelmann, 1983, pp. 225–241.

<sup>176</sup> Verner, 2020, pp. 136–138.

<sup>177</sup> Lehner, 2001, pp. 106–117; Verner, 2020, pp. 139–155.

<sup>178</sup> Reisner, 1942; Reisner & Smith, 1945, e.g., figures 2–5, 6a, 6b, 7 and 28a; Hassan, 1960, Figs. 2–4, 7–8, Pl. V–VIII; Hölscher, 1912. Abb. 162–163; O'Neil, 1999, pp. 222–229, Art. 38–43.

<sup>179</sup> Robins, 2008, pp. 49.

<sup>180</sup> Goyon, 1969, pp. 49–69; Hawass, 1997, pp. 245–256.

<sup>181</sup> Goedicke, 1971, Figs. 1–6, 10–22, 29–30, 53 and 56–60.

<sup>182</sup> Youssef, 2011, pp. 820–822 and Plates 43–45.

<sup>183</sup> Steindorff, 1912, pp. 110–111 und Abb. 162–163.

<sup>184</sup> Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 101–102.

<sup>185</sup> Goedicke, 1971, pp. 10.

<sup>186</sup> Steindorff, 1912, pp. 110–111.

hypothesis was rejected by W. S. Smith<sup>187</sup>, who believes there was enough building material and such an act would be unproductive. Artistic style was compared with Sahure's procession of captives, but A. Ćwiek's<sup>188</sup> measurements showed the figure is too small in height for Sahure's causeway. W. S. Smith<sup>189</sup> furthermore rejected the hypothesis that this relief is from any of the later dynasties. H. Goedicke<sup>190</sup> suggests the processing of the relief fits into the artistic style of the Fourth Dynasty and since no other relief decoration was discovered in the valley temple of Khafre, he suggests Khufu's pyramid complex as the place of the origin. Do. Arnold<sup>191</sup> compares this fragment with another relief of unknown provenance, found in the pyramid complex of Amenemhat I in Lisht, and suggests both Khufu and Khafre as owners based on the style of the carving – very low relief with deeply carved eyes and ears. For the purpose of this work, I will assume this relief belongs to Khufu.

Most of the pyramid complexes of the remaining rulers from the Fourth Dynasty were never completed or have not survived<sup>192</sup>. In this respect, it is difficult to determine in which direction, if any, the relief decoration program evolved. In some regards it seems that it may have given a space to other decorative elements, such as the statue decorative programme. The only reliefs surviving from these complexes are typically names of the pyramid complexes and royal titulary<sup>193</sup>.

Situation regarding the occurrence of a relief decoration is repeated in Wadi Maghara. Only kings Sneferu<sup>194</sup> and Khufu<sup>195</sup> left records regarding expeditions to this locality with a recurring topic of the king smiting an enemy.

### 2.2.3. The Fifth Dynasty

The reign of the Fifth Dynasty commenced with a rule of king Userkaf. His decision to move his pyramid complex to Saqqara to a proximity of the pyramid complex

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<sup>187</sup> Smith, 1949, pp.158.

<sup>188</sup> Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 101, footnote 404.

<sup>189</sup> Smith, 1949, pp.158.

<sup>190</sup> Goedicke, 1971, pp. 10.

<sup>191</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 264–267; Goedicke, 1971, pp. 74–77, Fig. 43.

<sup>192</sup> Lehner, 2001, pp. 94–137, Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 95–107.

<sup>193</sup> Goedicke, 1971, pp. 23–24; Lehner, 2001, pp. 120–137; Verner, 2020, pp. 161–221; Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 95–107.

<sup>194</sup> Lepsius, 1849, Blatt 2a; Petrie & Currelly, 1906, Fig. 50–51; Gardiner, Peet, Ćerný, Press. 1952, Plate II./5 and IV.; Gardiner, Peet, Ćerný, 1955, pp. 56–57; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 8–9 and Fig. 13.

<sup>195</sup> Lepsius, 1849, Blatt 2c; Gardiner, Peet, Ćerný, 1952, Plate II./7 and III.; Gardiner, Peet, Ćerný, 1955, pp. 57–58 and Plate I.; Swan Hall, pp. 9 and Fig. 15.



of king Djoser, perhaps to associate with his reign and strengthen own legitimacy<sup>196</sup>, brought many difficulties. To fit in within a given space, Userkaf's pyramid complex has an unusual layout, placing the mortuary temple on the southern side. Moreover, the pyramid complex of queen Neferhetepes is integrated inside of it<sup>197</sup>. The low relief decoration was described by A. Labrousse and J. Ph. Lauer<sup>198</sup> as exceptionally delicate and exceeding the work of the Fourth Dynasty, but reminiscent of the elegant decoration of the Djoser pyramid complex. Although the relief decoration is fragmentary, it was possible to identify motifs such as: naval procession of the king, fishing and fowling and desert hunt, procession of estates and wild animals, slaughter and presentation of offerings and most importantly, for the topic of this thesis, the recording of the booty from the foreign countries<sup>199</sup>. Some reliefs found in Lisht were also ascribed to Userkaf's pyramid complex<sup>200</sup>. Neither the causeway, nor the valley temple was excavated and there are some doubts whether they were even finished<sup>201</sup>. Userkaf built himself a new type of a structure in Abusir – a sun temple, indicating the growing importance of the god Ra and the sun cult. This monument was later built by other five rulers, based on textual records, and is one of the two archaeologists were able to locate so far<sup>202</sup>. Unfortunately, in Userkaf's temple no relief decoration regarding foreigners was discovered<sup>203</sup>.

Userkaf's successor Sahure built his pyramid complex in Abusir, a new ground consecrated by the building of the sun temple of his father. Thus, a new royal burial site was established. Although Sahure's pyramid complex has suffered considerable damage over time, it was possible to discover the best-preserved corpus of relief decoration from the entire Old Kingdom. It is due to the fact it was possible to excavate the majority of the pyramid complex – mortuary temple, the causeway and the valley temple. Moreover, recently new blocks of relief decoration were unearthed in the vicinity of the causeway. Sahure's pyramid complex became a template for future mortuary complexes, when sufficient time and space allowed such layout, not only for the kings of the Old Kingdom<sup>204</sup>.

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<sup>196</sup> Verner, 2014, pp. 22–24 and 158–159.

<sup>197</sup> Labrousse & Lauer, 2000, pp. 37–62; Lehner, 2001, pp. 140–141; Verner, 2020, pp. 213–221.

<sup>198</sup> Labrousse & Lauer, 2000, pp. 68.

<sup>199</sup> Labrousse & Lauer, 2000, pp. 69 ; Labrousse & Lauer 2000, pp. 76–77 and doc. 156–160.

<sup>200</sup> Labrousse & Lauer, pp. 140–142.

<sup>201</sup> Verner, 2020, pp. 220; Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 111.

<sup>202</sup> Bard, 2008, pp. 152–153; Krejčí & Nuzzolo, 2020, pp. 107–109.

<sup>203</sup> Ricke, 1965; Ricke, 1969.

<sup>204</sup> Baines, 1973, pp 9–14.

Sahure's sophisticated relief program is exquisite not only for the number of various themes, but also for its processing. Artists increased vividness to each line of figures by adding diverse details, gestures and poses. It is hard to find two same depictions. Furthermore, comics-like textual transcripts invoke the feeling of life and buzz when observing each scene. Moreover, all of this is portrayed in skilfully crafted relief, which had polychrome painting<sup>205</sup>. The number of reliefs related to foreigners is the most numerous of all other pyramid complexes. It contains following themes: triumph over enemies, where the king is smiting or in the form of the sphinx trampling foreign nations; procession of foreigners led by gods to the king; bound foreigners being presented together with foreign goods together with goddess Seshat, who is counting the booty; foreigner trades paying respects to the king from ships in the harbour<sup>206</sup>. Some of the motifs appear to be depicted for the first time, but this may be due to the small number of excavated reliefs from the mortuary temples of Sahure's predecessors.

Following kings Neferirkare Kakai, Shepseskare and Neferefre Isi<sup>207</sup> did not manage to finish their pyramid complexes. Some parts were never executed, some of them were hastily finished with mudbricks. Relief decoration is very scarcely attested and does not contain any reliefs with foreigners<sup>208</sup>.

Niuserre Ini found himself in a complicated building situation, when he was simultaneously finishing mortuary complexes of his predecessors, building his own pyramid complex and the sun temple. Perhaps this was the reason why he decided to place his pyramid complex close to his father's. Lack of space within this area forced architects to build a mortuary temple L-shaped instead of T-shaped and to use Neferefra's causeway and divert it to Niuserre's mortuary temple. Changes in layout caused changes in placement of separate relief themes<sup>209</sup>. Nevertheless, scenes with foreigners remained in similar scope as in Sahure's pyramid complex. Following themes were found within Niuserre's pyramid complex: king smiting enemies and king as a sphinx trampling enemies and gods leading processions of captives<sup>210</sup>. Peculiar representation of a scene where

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<sup>205</sup> Oppenheim, 1999, pp. 113–116.

<sup>206</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 1–8 and 12–13.

<sup>207</sup> “*Nine wooden statuettes found in Neferefra's pyramid complex are not statues per se*”, according to T. Prakash these statues were part of the furniture and not free-standing piece of decoration. Therefore, first prisoner statues were found in pyramid complex of Niuserre. For details see Prakash, 2022, pp. 16–19.

<sup>208</sup> Labrouse, 2005; Verner, 1991, pp. 411–418; Verner, 2020, pp. 233–239 and 242–249; Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 33 and 118–120.

<sup>209</sup> Verner, 2020, pp. 250–258.

<sup>210</sup> Borchardt, 1907, pp. 48/Abb. 31, pp. 86/Abb. 64, pp. 88/Abb. 66, pp. 93/Abb. 79 and Blatt 8–12.

the king is smiting the enemies was found on the bracelet of the god Osiris<sup>211</sup>. Faces of captives seem less idealized, but still similar to the style of Sahure. This raw appearance might be caused by the fact that the eyes of foreigners in some reliefs were inlaid and therefore their faces might have been adjusted<sup>212</sup>. Importance of this motif is stressed by the discovery of the first statues of bound prisoners<sup>213</sup>. The king within reliefs is depicted larger and in a more monumental manner than during previous reigns and this style becomes unchanged till the Pepi II Neferkare<sup>214</sup>.

King Djedkare Isesi decided to place his pyramid complex in Saqqara. Clearly inspired by the layout of Sahure's pyramid complex, also the relief decoration follows similar patterns. Although the relief decoration has not been fully published, from available fragments it is obvious the fragments from the motif of trampling the enemies were found<sup>215</sup>. Djedkare Isesi was the first ruler, who decided not to build a sun temple, which is attributed to the growing importance of the cult of the god Osiris and changing political situation. However, elements from the decoration of sun temples became part of the pyramid complex decoration program from Djedkare Isesi forward<sup>216</sup>.

With the last king of the Fifth Dynasty, Unas, a massive innovation arrived – the placement of so-called Pyramid Texts in the substructure of the pyramid<sup>217</sup>. However, this new element did not overshadow the relief decoration, which adorned walls of the mortuary temple, causeway and valley temple. Although it was found fragmentary, it depicts similar topics as in pyramid complexes of his predecessors. Fragments of processions of gods and Seshat counting booty motifs were found<sup>218</sup>, which suggest motifs of trampling and smiting the enemies might have been present too. New unparalleled motif of a war scene was also excavated<sup>219</sup>. Several blocks of decoration were found at Lisht<sup>220</sup>.

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<sup>211</sup> Borchardt, 1907, pp. 39, Abb. 19.

<sup>212</sup> Borchardt, 1907, Blatt 12.

<sup>213</sup> Prakash, 2022, pp. 16–20 and 111–134.

<sup>214</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 92–94.

<sup>215</sup> Moursi, 1987, pp. 185–193. Megahed, 2016, Plate 76, 79 and 80.

<sup>216</sup> Krejčí & Nuzzolo, 2020, pp. 122–123.

<sup>217</sup> Based on: Málek, 2000, pp. 102; Čwiek, 2003, pp. 127; Verner, 2020, pp. 273–275.

<sup>218</sup> Labrouse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 134–135 and Fig. 14–15.

<sup>219</sup> Labrouse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 136–137 and Fig. 16–21.

<sup>220</sup> Goedicke, 1971, Figs. 49–52 and 55; Labrouse & Moussa, 1996, pp. 89.

From the long list of kings of the Fifth Dynasty only Niuserre Ini<sup>221</sup> and Djedkare Isesi<sup>222</sup> left their trace about the expedition to Wadi Maghara with both textual and graphical records. King Menkauhor left only textual records<sup>223</sup>.

#### 2.2.4. The Sixth Dynasty

Based on the current state of research<sup>224</sup> it is evident that remains of relief decoration containing foreigners were found only in the pyramid complexes of kings Pepi I Merenre and Pepi II Neferkare. Nevertheless, statues of prisoners were excavated within Teti's pyramid complex<sup>225</sup>, therefore it is strongly possible this theme was also present here.

Pyramid complex of king Pepi I suffered greater damage, therefore a smaller part of the decoration prevailed. Yet, typical motives of smiting enemies and procession of gods with captives were identified<sup>226</sup>. The situation is similar in the pyramid complex of Pepi II, where the motif of trampling the enemies<sup>227</sup> was also identified, perhaps due to a better state of preservation of the relief decoration. Several blocks from the pyramid complex of Pepi II were found in Lisht<sup>228</sup>.

What is striking is the increasing number of reliefs containing king smiting and trampling enemies. This increasing urge is underlined by the growing number of statues of bound captives found within both pyramid complexes. Even more interesting is the development of the portrayal of the characteristic features of foreigners. This shift called "second style" is typical for the end of the Old Kingdom and was firstly recognised by Edna R. Russmann<sup>229</sup>. T. Prakash sees a connection between the depiction of foreigners in statues and the changing political situation, as well as the role of the king and principles of kingship at the end of the Old Kingdom. The urge to respond to this situation in art is, by T. Prakash, artistically represented by combinations of features typical for different ethnic groups in order to create new and quite unique enemies. Such enemies were ritually

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<sup>221</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VI./10; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 59–60; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 10–11, Fig. 17.

<sup>222</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VIII./14; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 60–62; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 11, Fig. 19.

<sup>223</sup> In "The Inscriptions of Sinai. Part II" this type of record is labelled as a "second type of record", which has reduced or is completely free from the pictorial part and this is the earliest record of it. For details see: Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 28 and 60.

<sup>224</sup> Jéquier 1938; Goedicke, 1971; Labrousse & Moussa, 1996; Labrousse, 2019; Labrousse & Moussa, 2002;

<sup>225</sup> Prakash, 2022, pp. 119–121.

<sup>226</sup> Labrousse, 2019, Fig. 90.

<sup>227</sup> Jéquier, 1940, Plates 15–18.

<sup>228</sup> Goedicke, 1971, Figs. 9, 25–27.

<sup>229</sup> Russmann, 1995, pp. 269–279.

smashed in the temples. In this way the king sought to express his ability to suppress enemies both known and unknown<sup>230</sup>. The tendency to strengthen the image of the king can be traced to a decrease in the number of scenes containing processions. On the contrary, the main theme of the scenes is the king and the gods, who are all depicted as large figures. At the same time, this layout refers to the style of the Fourth Dynasty and the archaizing tendencies at the end of the Sixth Dynasty<sup>231</sup>. These efforts are probably intended to refer to periods in which the Egyptian economic and political situation was at its peak<sup>232</sup>.

One more relief from the pyramid complex of Pepi II is worth mentioning – it is the climbing for the god Min<sup>233</sup>, which is otherwise unparalleled.

Relief in Wadi Maghara shows king Pepi I<sup>234</sup> smiting the enemies. Another record shows a visit of this region during the reign of Pepi II, where queen Ankhesenpepi II is the only pictorial representation. Depiction of the “smiting the enemies motif” is absent. Remaining text was badly damaged and now is destroyed<sup>235</sup>.

### **2.3. Royal reliefs containing foreigners in various contexts**

To define and comprehend “foreign” or “the other” within the ancient Egyptian context is an uneasy task, as I will try to outline in the following lines. It depends on multiple factors that need to be taken into consideration. Moreover, it is necessary to use more than just one scientific approach, to see and understand all layers hidden between the lines.

Early Egyptologist tend to take information written by ancient Egyptians in various textual sources as truthful and historically accurate. Also, depiction of foreign nations and description of their nature and actions were considered as reliable sources of information. With exponential growth of our knowledge of ancient Egyptian culture, mythology, cosmology, religion, economy, social structure and everyday life it starts to be more evident that the truth will be less obvious and more complex.

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<sup>230</sup> Prakash, 2022, pp. 4, 11, 78–80 and 177–179.

<sup>231</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 93–94.

<sup>232</sup> Based on: Málek, 2000, pp. 87–98; Altenmüller, 2001, pp. 601–605; Baud, 2010, pp. 76–78.

<sup>233</sup> Jéquier, 1938, Plate 13.

<sup>234</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VIII./16; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 62–64; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 11, Fig. 20.

<sup>235</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 64.

The first question arises regarding ethnicity. Is this concept known only to modern societies or were ancient Egyptians also familiar with it? And what is the definition of ethnicity? It was social anthropologist Frederik Barth<sup>236</sup>, who opposed the broadly accepted idea that culture is the main identifier of ethnicity. His idea of “fluidness”, self-definition and the role of social relations in the process of identification of ethnic self has been widely accepted<sup>237</sup>. An idea that ethnicity is created based on various factors was expressed comprehensively by another social anthropologist Tamara Dragadze<sup>238</sup> and later evolved by sociologist Anthony David Smith<sup>239</sup> into six distinctive attributes<sup>240</sup>. A self-awareness and a perception of “otherness” was stressed by archaeologist and paleo-linguist Colin Renfrew<sup>241</sup> and elaborated by anthropologist and Egyptologist Stuart Tyson Smith, who defines ethnicity and ethnic self as follows: “*Ethnicity is often described as a self-defined, shared identity, but the ethnic self is inevitably constructed and defined by the ethnic other, who are often given negative attributes*<sup>242</sup>.” He also argues, based on e.g., the Story of Sinuhe and his worries regarding his acceptance among the Asiatic tribes<sup>243</sup>, and Akhenaton’s Great Hymn to the Aton<sup>244</sup>, ethnicity is something well known even in times of Ancient Egyptians<sup>245</sup>. To summarize, ethnicity is a social construct, which is based on self-awareness of multiple factors binding *ethnie*<sup>246</sup> with specific ethnic groups. Egyptians were aware there are other nations, ethnicities and groups with diverse social and cultural habits, even within the Ancient Egyptian population. They were aware of their “otherness”, which also helped them to define their own principles as a nation or ethnic

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<sup>236</sup> Barth, 1969.

<sup>237</sup> Riggs & Baines, 2012, pp. 1.

<sup>238</sup> Dragadze, 1980, pp. 162.

<sup>239</sup> Smith, 1988, pp. 21–46.

<sup>240</sup> “...six main features: 1. a common proper name, to identify and express the 'essence' of the community; 2. a myth of common ancestry, a myth rather than a fact, a myth that includes the idea of common origin in time and place and that gives an *ethnie* a sense of fictive kinship; 3. shared historical memories, or better, shared memories of a common past or past, including heroes, events, and their commemoration; 4. one or more elements of common culture, which need not be specified but normally include religion, customs, or language` 5. a link with a homeland, not necessarily its physical occupation by the *ethnie*, only its symbolic attachment to the ancestral land, as with diaspora peoples; 6. a sense of solidarity on the part of at least some sections of the *ethnie*'s population.” According to: Hutchinson & Smith, 1996, pp. 6–7.

<sup>241</sup> Renfrew, 1996, pp. 129–131.

<sup>242</sup> Smith, 2018, pp. 113–146.

<sup>243</sup> “*I am indeed like a stray bull in a strange herd, whom the bull of the herd charges, whom the longhorn attacks. Is an inferior beloved when he becomes a superior? No Asiatic makes friends with a Delta-man. And what would make papyrus cleave to the mountain?*” According to: Lichtheim, 1973, pp. 227.

<sup>244</sup> “*You made the earth as you wished, you alone ... The lands of Khor and Kush, The land of Egypt. You set every man in his place ... Their tongues differ in speech, their characters likewise; Their skins are distinct, for you distinguished the peoples.*” According to: Lichtheim, 1976, pp. 96.

<sup>245</sup> Smith, 2003, pp. 10–29.

<sup>246</sup> Term used in Hutchinson & Smith, 1996, pp. 6–7.

group. To stress the advanced nature of their own nation, they tend to use negative labels for residents of neighbouring lands. Therefore, we can come across naming like “wretched Kush”<sup>247</sup> or “wretched Retjenu”<sup>248</sup> and labelling its inhabitants like cowards<sup>249</sup> and their lands as hostile<sup>250</sup>, especially in autobiographical stelae or literature and even in toponyms. Strong need for self-identification was studied by Egyptologist with specialization on Nubia, David O’Connor<sup>251</sup>. The questions of ethnicity were studied by Siân Jones, whose specializations are archaeology and ethnicity, who pointed out mistakes, which were made regarding this topic in the not-so-distant past. Moreover, she raised interesting questions regarding modern approaches to ethnicity and identity<sup>252</sup>.

The second important point comes with perception of significance of cosmology and royal propaganda in Ancient Egyptian textual records, art and architecture. Such ideas arise progressively starting with studies of German Egyptologist Alfred Herman<sup>253</sup> regarding the literature genre group, known under the modern term, *Königsnovelle*. Stories, where the king proves his eternal wisdom, which was revealed beforehand to him through a divine dream, to his courtiers<sup>254</sup>. His work was elaborated by Erik Hornung, whose specialty was Egyptian religion and religious texts, who pointed out that Ancient Egyptian kingship is based and performed on the rules of cosmos with a single aim – to maintain the *maat*<sup>255</sup>. The role of cosmology on decoration and architectural layout of the pyramid complexes was studied e.g., from the philological point of view by linguist and religionist with specialization on Ancient Egypt James P. Allen<sup>256</sup> and from the architectonic point

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<sup>247</sup> Smith, 2003, pp. 12, Figure 2.1.

<sup>248</sup> The Stela of Khu-Sobek: „*His majesty proceeded downstream to overthrow the Bedouins of Asia. His majesty arrived at the district named Sekmem. (I was just when) his majesty was making a good beginning to return to the royal residence, the Skmem and the wretched Retjenu fell (while) I was serveing (at) the rear of the army*“. According to: Baines, pp. 43–61; The Manchester Museum, The Stela of Khu-Sobek, on-line: [http://egypt-grammar.rutgers.edu/Miscellany/khu\\_sobek\\_Manchester.pdf](http://egypt-grammar.rutgers.edu/Miscellany/khu_sobek_Manchester.pdf)

<sup>249</sup> Boundary stela of Senwosret III: “*A coward us he who is driven from his border. Since the Nubian listens to the word of mouth, to answer him is to make him retreat. Attack him, he will turn his back, retreat, he will start attacking. They are not people one respects, they are wretches, craven-hearted*“. According to: Lichtheim, 1973, pp. 119.

<sup>250</sup> The Instruction for King Merikare: “*But this should be said to the Bowman: Lo, the miserable Asiatic, he is wretched because of the place he’s in: Short of water, bare of wood, its paths are many and painful because of mountains. He does not dwell in one place; food propels his legs. He fights since the time of Horus, not conquering nor being conquered. He does not announce the day of combat, like a thief who darts about a group.*” According to: Lichtheim, 1973, pp. 103–104.

<sup>251</sup> O’Connor, 2003, pp. 155–185.

<sup>252</sup> Jones, 1997.

<sup>253</sup> Hermann, 1938.

<sup>254</sup> Leprohon, 2001, pp. 470.

<sup>255</sup> Hornung, 1992, pp. 147–164.

<sup>256</sup> Allen, 1994, pp. 5–28.

of view by Egyptologist David O'Connor<sup>257</sup>. Both authors proved that individual parts of the pyramid complex are designed based on cosmology and their primary role is to help the king to be reborn in the afterlife. Additionally, by association of the king and the sun-god it kept the daily renewal of the cosmos running and by this act the whole cosmos was maintained stable and free from chaos. The relief decoration was also designed based on those rules, moreover, together with architecture and statuary it created one inseparable system, which can not properly function separately. Ideology and royal propaganda in art were summarized by Ronald J. Lephoron, Egyptologist with a focus on the place of ancient Egypt within Africa, where he points out that cosmos and maintaining *maat* were always the leitmotifs, but both had to fit within the current socio-political scheme<sup>258</sup>.

Discrepancies between narrative recorded on temple walls and everyday life related to foreigners were described by professor of history and Egyptologist Antonio Loprieno. His terms *topos*, which represents traditional themes and motifs depicted in the literature, and *mimesis*, which reveals more about the real world and interactions of everyday life, became broadly used in discussions involving foreigners and ancient Egyptian self-definition and self-awareness<sup>259</sup>. Although, Egyptologist John Baines opposes that propaganda needs an audience, which was considerably limited within the pyramid complexes and temples in general, thus could not influence such a huge audience to fulfil the term propaganda in mass meaning. On the other hand, he admits propaganda related to an ideology of national identity, which helps define the role of Egyptians and supports their supremacy, is strongly rooted in Ancient Egyptian culture and art<sup>260</sup>.

Ideas about the key principles on which the Ancient Egyptian society was built on, and through which the world and cooperation with other ethnics was seen, are expressed in Jan Assmann's work. He defines Ancient Egyptian society as tight and heavily settled, which is revealed via the relationship to their home cities, gods and tombs, as well as through obligation of care for the cult of their ancestors. These are the key factors that shaped the society, driven by belonging and care for the family, which also affected their attitude towards foreigners and foreign lands. He also stresses that once a foreigner is known and becomes a trusted and reliable friend of an Egyptian, he is no more foreign, strange and unknown<sup>261</sup>. Shifting geopolitical situation through the lens of "the other side"

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<sup>257</sup> O'Connor, 1998, pp. 135–144.

<sup>258</sup> Lephoron, 2015, pp. 309–315.

<sup>259</sup> Loprieno, 1988.

<sup>260</sup> Baines, 1996, pp. 353–377.

<sup>261</sup> Assmann, 1996, pp. 77–99.



may explain how truly Ancient Egyptians saw their neighbours. In Susan Cohen's, archaeologist of the southern Levant, article are Egyptian-Levantine relationships in Sinai tested through the Old and Middle Kingdoms times and explained via perception of events in Levantine history. This point of view explains how it is possible to smite an *Mentju* enemy of Egypt in royal relief under which position of three interpreters are described. The answer is in layered interactions within both groups<sup>262</sup>.

Fact that non-Egyptian ethnics might be seen both hostile and foreign as well as friendly and known were studied from a linguistic point of view on ethnonyms of neighbouring lands of Ancient Egypt by Egyptologist Gaëlle Chantrain. Her corpus consisted of texts from the Old Kingdom till the Third Intermediate period. Chantrain proved that the rendering of foreigners depends on the textual genre they belonged to and on the context. Ideological texts tend to depict them in a more negative way. Concepts of "egyptianity" and "foreignness" were constantly shifting over the time and depended also on the level of integration of foreign people within Ancient Egyptian society<sup>263</sup>.

New perspectives on the relationships in bordering regions of Ancient Egypt are brought from the field of archaeology. Studies of objects of everyday life and their placement into contexts is revealing fascinating connections that would otherwise stay hidden under the veil of mesmerising beauty of reliefs in elite tombs and propagandistic texts. Geoff Emberling, archaeologist with focus on the land of Kush, stressed out a necessity to pay attention to aspects like household structure with its close connection to everyday life, cuisine and habits in cooking, ritual practices and mortuary rituals. He believes that these sectors might show ethnic marks and differences, which originate in friction zones between regions or ethnic groups<sup>264</sup>. Maria Carmela Gatto, archaeologist with specialty on Predynastic and Early Dynastic Egypt, is working with those presumptions as well. She uses a new term of "cultural entanglement" when ethnicity is crossing borders together with cultural and social habits. By examination of usage of certain tools, how the ceramics looked like and which objects were used as funerary equipment she proves that patterns often differ from expectations as the material culture follows social and cultural tendencies of that particular region and time. Gatto also points out that takeover of foreign cultural habits does not necessarily work in one direction and

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<sup>262</sup> Cohen, 2019, pp. 73–90.

<sup>263</sup> Chantrain, 2019, pp. 49–72.

<sup>264</sup> Emberling, 1997.

not always the stronger or more populated group influence another<sup>265</sup>. Similar conclusions were made by Egyptologist and anthropologist Stuart Tyson Smith on case studies from Askut and Tombos. Both locations display personal choices of local people regarding cultural habits of their own or the other (in this case the Egyptian) culture, resulting in fusion of both influences<sup>266</sup>. And this might be also the case of the culture called Sheikh Muftah, which occupied Dakhla Oasis and some traces were found also in Balat. Studies from Caleb R. Hamilton<sup>267</sup>, Laure Pantalacci<sup>268</sup> and Clara Jeuthe<sup>269</sup> all prove that Sheikh Muftah were the original residents of Dakhla Oasis, who were more and more visited by Egyptian people. And even when the Egyptian settlement became permanent, it did not mean annihilation of the Sheikh Muftah tribe. On the contrary, traces of cooperation and even usage of Sheikh Muftah ceramic production processes, because their shale-tempered clay had a better heat resistance. The only difference is the usage, when Egyptians used it to produce huge vats in collective bakeries, which fit in their economical production and redistribution system. By this fusion a new “local ethnic” identity was created, where two cultural systems blended into one. Production of basketry or wickerwork and production of honey made people from desert important suppliers of those valued commodities. We are not sure whether Sheikh Muftah people were the *Tjemehu*, who were depicted bound, smitten and trampled in royal reliefs. Nevertheless, either way it is certain, they were doing business with the royal court and peacefully lived next to the Egyptian people, who permanently settled and established a local governance over this region during the 6<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

To conclude, in paragraphs above many different professions and approaches were named – from Egyptology, through anthropology, archaeology, studies of art or linguistic approaches. All these are necessary for our complete and better understanding of who were foreigners in Ancient Egypt, what was their role within the society and to which degree we can rely on textual or epigraphical sources and depictions in art. Each source must be subjected to detailed analysis within its context. Following questions need to be answered:

- What kind of source am I looking at = what type of object it is?
- What are the limitations of this medium = are there any abbreviations or simplifications I need to take into consideration?

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<sup>265</sup> Gatto, 2014, pp. 93–123.

<sup>266</sup> Smith, 2018, pp. 113–146.

<sup>267</sup> Hamilton, 2019, pp. 159–177.

<sup>268</sup> Pantalacci, 2023, pp. 23–32.

<sup>269</sup> Jeuthe, 2014, pp. 103–114.

- Where was it found = what is the context?
- Why was this object created = what is its primary function?
- To whom was this object created = who was the audience?
- By whom was this object created?
- In which time period can we place this artifact in?
- What was the social, economical and geopolitical situation in this time period?
- What did the artistic style of that time look like?

Each answer may change our perception of the source and its meaning within the broader context and without such answers our portrait of foreigners in Ancient Egypt might be completely wrong.

To conclude, the royal reliefs were prepared for a very narrow audience – first of all the king, especially his deceased form and for priests providing necessary rituals. Every piece of relief was carved to help the king to reach the netherworld and join the gods as one of the circumpolar stars. For the timespan of the Old Kingdom, it is necessary to evaluate royal reliefs within the whole decorative scheme of the pyramid complex. The location of each relief plays its role in the king's journey towards successful resurrection and rebirth. Although the overall scheme of each pyramid complex is similar, the exact plan is unique. This was reflected in the royal relief program; therefore some themes are absent and some of them have deviations from standard distribution. Reliefs reflected beliefs regarding netherworld, afterlife and kingship - e.g., growing popularity of the sun cult might be observed during the Fourth Dynasty and rising ideas connected with the god Osiris are visible towards the end of the Fifth Dynasty. Changing geopolitical situation and the position of the king is also present in the royal relief scheme. Moreover, it found its way even to art in so-called “second style”, which appeared by the end of the Fifth Dynasty. End of the Fifth Dynasty brought also huge innovation – decorated burial chambers with Pyramid texts. Changing domestic political situation changed the size of rooms within the pyramid complex and triggered new rituals, such as smiting the statues of the captives during the Sixth Dynasty. This also proves that the mortuary complex was used for different rituals during the reign of each king and this was also reflected in the relief program. And last but not least, each relief was a part of the royal propaganda, which was designed for one purpose – to reinforce the role of the king. Nevertheless, the reality was completely different. Therefore, it is necessary to read relationships with foreigners from other sources than royal reliefs, such as biographical texts, accounting

records or records of expeditions. Those might uncover strong business relations on a daily basis.

#### 2.4. Typology of royal reliefs

Before any attempt to divide relief scenes into separate themes or groups, it is worth to mention, that even with the greatest corpus of reliefs from the pyramid complex of Sahure, by Di. Arnold it represents only 1–2 percent of all the reliefs once carved on the walls<sup>270</sup>. With new findings of blocks from the causeway the percentage will be higher, but still low. T. El Awady points out that the whole relief corpus known to us today may represent 1 percent of the whole relief program of the Old Kingdom<sup>271</sup>. Moreover, every new piece of relief found may cause re-evaluation of previous findings and especially reconstructions of scenes and their interpretation. With this in mind, we may try to summarize our knowledge and try to suggest some classification, which will never be perfect.

Do. Arnold<sup>272</sup> offers division of reliefs based on the figure schemes, the number of main figures and their actions. This classification is helpful for detailed relief. For evaluation of themes in greater context, it is necessary to allocate them within the whole decorative program of the mortuary complex. Nevertheless, as stressed by both T. El Awady and A. Ćwiek<sup>273</sup>, this is complicated as no exact definition of “scene”, “subscene” or “subject” exists. Moreover, as they both add, some scenes are composed of smaller subscenes, which all share the same subject. At the same time, the relief program varied in separate pyramid complexes. Reasons were different – from shift in beliefs to lack of space within the complex. Therefore all motifs were not present in all complexes. With such fragmented relief corpus it is hard to estimate, whether presence of one motive determines existence of another.

Simple distribution of themes was proposed by G. Robins as follows: “inscriptions with the king’s titles and names; the king as establisher of order; legitimation and renewal of kingship, including the king’s interaction with deities; and provisioning the deceased

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<sup>270</sup> Arnold, 1997, pp. 73.

<sup>271</sup> El Awady, 2006, pp. 78.

<sup>272</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 83–84.

<sup>273</sup> Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 149–150; El Awady, 2006, pp. 78.

king<sup>274</sup>”. But it is hard to place several topics into this scheme, as their meaning overlaps within multiple groups.

More detailed distribution was proposed by D. Stockfish<sup>275</sup>: “cult-acting” king (e.g., appearing before chapels, running); the king dealing with people and animals (e.g., slaying enemies, hunting in the desert); the king dealing with gods (e.g., embracing, reviving); the king and processions (e.g., procession of gods, captives, offerings); the king and offerings (e.g., the offering table scene, bringing of offerings); other elements. Within this scheme some themes are also overlapping and groups do not respect the larger idea behind the whole program.

A. Ćwiek offered a more detailed distribution, based on active and passive roles of the king, as follows:

“1. King seated at the offering table, or simply enthroned (facing the rows of offering-bearers, his retinue, gods, personifications, ships transporting goods etc. Without doubt these were the most important representations, the focal points of the whole programme.

2. King as an object of gods’ activity: nursed, given life, embraced, crowned.

3. King active: offering to gods, enacting various rituals before the gods, killing enemies, hunting in the desert or in the marshes, celebrating the *Heb-sed*, erecting the *shnt*-pole. Visits to sanctuaries and inspections also belong here rather than to the next type. They are records in short of the king’s activity, which (at least when visiting the sanctuaries) is to be presumed.

4. King ‘half-active’: In the case of ‘assembly of deities’, the king is ‘halfactive’, standing and watching (the activity is done in the name of the king, who is a witness to it)<sup>276</sup>”.

The most elaborate distribution, based on the whole decorative program, was provided by T. El Awady<sup>277</sup> and it is summarized in following diagram:

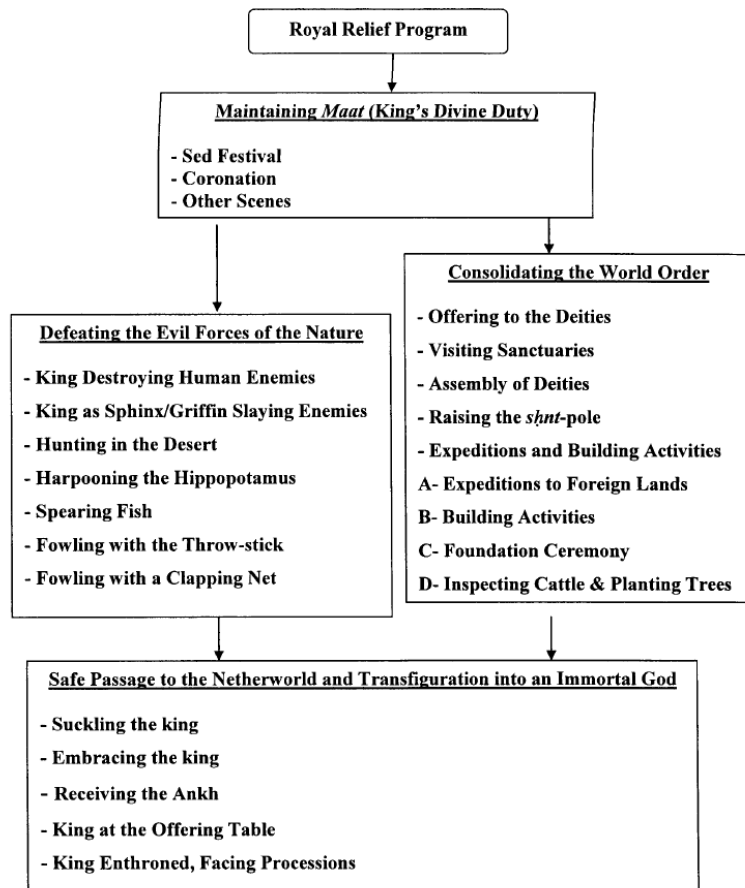
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<sup>274</sup> Robins, 2008, pp. 58.

<sup>275</sup> Stockfish, 1999, pp. 9.

<sup>276</sup> Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 152 with description of each group on pages 152–171.

<sup>277</sup> El Awady, 2006, pp. 80 and description on pages 81–106.



**Diagram 1:** Definition of the Royal Relief Program according to T. El Awadi.

The main themes within which foreigners appear in royal reliefs in the Old Kingdom are as follows:

1. The king smiting the enemies;
2. The king as a sphinx or a griffin trampling enemies;
3. Gods leading captives to the king;
4. Seshat recording booty;
5. Libyan family;
6. Return of the merchant ships;
7. War scenes;
8. Raising the *shnt*-pole.

Classification of reliefs depicting foreigners within the proposed schemes is as following:

- a) Based on A. Ćwiek themes would fit into three groups:
  1. “King seated at the offering table, or simply enthroned”, where arrival of merchant ships and Seshat recording booty would fit in.

3. “King active”, where themes such as smiting the enemies, trampling the enemies and Libyan family belong.
  4. “King ‘half-active’”, where gods leading captives, war scenes and celebrations of the god Min belong.
- b) Based on T. El Awady all themes would fit into two main groups:
1. “Defeating the evil forces of the Nature” and subcategory “King destroying human enemies” and “King as sphinx/griffin trampling enemies”, where themes as king smiting enemies, king trampling enemies, gods leading captives, Seshat recording booty, Libyan family and war scenes belong.
  2. “Consolidating the world order” and subcategory “offering to the deities” and “Expeditions and building activities”, where themes such as arrival of merchant ships and celebrations of the god Min belongs.

In the following chapter all themes will be described in detail.

### 3. TOPICS CONCERNING FOREIGNERS WITHIN ROYAL RELIEF DECORATION

In this chapter I will focus on each theme, which will be described in detail. I will also determine placement of each group within the pyramid complex and identify surrounding scenes. Based on the recent state of knowledge, I will challenge some older assumptions and I will try to propose new ideas. The aim is to create a detailed catalogue of scenes depicting foreigners in the royal context with an elaborate description.

In the previous chapter I defined eight main topics containing foreigners. As was already mentioned, the whole relief corpus is fragmentary and not all themes are attested in each of the pyramid complexes. Following table summarizes representation of individual themes. Pyramid complexes with no relevant reliefs were omitted.

Location of the Relief	Relief Theme								
	King Smiting Enemies	King Trampling Enemies	Gods Leading Captives	Seshat Recording Booty	Libyan Family	Merchant Ships	War Scenes	Raising the <i>shnt</i> -pole	
Netjerikhet Djose	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hor Sekhemkhet	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sanacht / Nebka	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sneferu	2	?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Khufu (Cheops)	1	?	-	?	-	-	-	-	-
Userkaf	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Sahure	1	2	2	1	3	2	1	-	-
Niuserre Ini	1	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Djedkare Isesi	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unas / Wenis	-	1	?	1/2	1	-	1	1	-
Pepi I Meryre	1	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Pepi II Neferkare	-	5	8	2	1	1	-	-	1

Table 1: Representation of themes in individual pyramid complexes.

#### 3.1. The king smiting the enemies

We have seen scenes of hunting and taming animals being depicted together with scenes, where human enemies of the king were captured, dragged or beheaded as was described in chapter 2.1. In the royal ideology, both motives have the same meaning – taming the wild, evil or chaotic forces in order to maintain order of *maat*. Hunting or killing was not activity intended for high officials or even other royal members. The only activity dedicated to them, in the reliefs, was silent observation. The king was the only person suitable and capable to perform such deeds.



This motif is present in most of the pyramid temples (in which at least some reliefs were found) of the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Dynasty. This motif is also depicted on the cliffs of Wadi Maghara. Most of the kings from the Third, Fourth and Fifth Dynasties carved this motif. From the Sixth Dynasty only king Pepi I carved the whole scene, Pepi II left only textual records.

### 3.1.1. Smiting the Enemy in Wadi Maghara

There are altogether ten reliefs containing the motif “the king smiting the enemy” carved in the cliffs of the Wadi Maghara. Kings who left message in the form of such scene were: Netjerikhet Djoser, Hor Sekhemkhet, Sanacht / Nebka, Sneferu, Khufu, Sahure, Niuserre Ini, Djedkare Isesi and Pepi I Meryre. All rock carvings are engraved in raised relief and no traces of polychrome painting remain<sup>278</sup>.

Reliefs discussed within this chapter:

Dynasty	King's Name	Discussed Relief	Relief Placement	Figure Number
3rd	Netjerikhet Djoser	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate I/2	Wadi Maghara	1
	Hor Sekhemkhet	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate I/1(a)	Wadi Maghara	1
	Sanacht / Nebka	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate I, 4	Wadi Maghara	1
	Sanacht / Nebka	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate IV/3	Wadi Maghara	
4th	Sneferu	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate IV/6	Wadi Maghara	
	Sneferu	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate II/5	Wadi Maghara	
	Sneferu	Lepsius, 1849, Abth II. Bl. 2. a	Wadi Maghara	4
	Khufu (Cheops)	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate II/7	Wadi Maghara	
	Khufu (Cheops)	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate III/7, left and right	Wadi Maghara	
	Khufu (Cheops)	Lepsius, 1849, Abth II. Bl. 2. b, c	Wadi Maghara	4
5th	Sahure	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate V/8	Wadi Maghara	1
	Niuserre Ini	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VI/10	Wadi Maghara	1
	Niuserre Ini	Lepsius, 1849, Abth. II. Bl. 152	Wadi Maghara	
	Djedkare Isesi	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VIII/14	Wadi Maghara	
6th	Pepi I Meryre	Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VIII/16	Wadi Maghara	
	Pepi I Meryre	Lepsius, 1849, Abth. II. Bl. 116	Wadi Maghara	5

**Table 2:** List of reliefs depicting the “king smiting the enemies” scenes from Wadi Maghara.

<sup>278</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 25.

### 3.1.1.1. *Djoser*

During the Third Dynasty, new elements appear in the scene, which will remain consistent from now on. We may observe development in royal insignia, gestures and poses. Djoser's relief<sup>279</sup> was crudely carved and the quality is low. Nevertheless, the striding figure of the king with a right raised arm holding a mace and with the left hand holding the enemy's lock of hair and a stick or a staff. King's posture is the same as on Narmer's palette or king Den's ivory label. King's left foot is stepped on and his body is leaning towards the enemy. The weight of his body is on the left leg, with the right one he is standing just on the tip of the toe.

The enemy, always depicted as a male, is kneeling in a pose when his body is turned back towards the king, while the rest of the body is turned away, suggesting his attempt to run, but his tangled lock of hair is preventing him in this movement. In this particular relief it seems like the kneeling man is touching the hand of the king in the gesture suggesting a plea for mercy. His second hand lies on his knee. The captive is wearing a plain loincloth with a belt, which is both better articulated in later reliefs. The king is wearing long head cloth, resembling *nemes*<sup>280</sup>, with uraeus.

The king's garment is not visible well, but the lower part resembles *shendyt*, where the middle stripe is missing and the kilt is not adorned with stripes<sup>281</sup>, as on the ivory label of king Den. Nevertheless, this loose tunic is often depicted on members of the army, as it allows free movement, with the difference that *shendyt* is always depicted only on the king or gods<sup>282</sup>. The last insignia of the king is the bull's tail hanging from his waistband<sup>283</sup>. In front of this scene the king's name is carved in *serekh*, with a god Horus perching on the top of it.

A second carving is behind the king, depicting "goddess *Edjo (Wadjet) or Hathor, Mistress of Mafket, the goddess of the turquoise mines*"<sup>284</sup>, who is giving holding the was sceptre and is granting the king "dominion, perpetuity, life and joy eternally"<sup>285</sup>. The placement of the figures and arrangement of hieroglyphs in columns is not as smooth as we are used observing on the temple walls.

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<sup>279</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955 Plate I/2.

<sup>280</sup> Müller, 1977, pp. 694.

<sup>281</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, J. 1955, pp. 25–26 and 54; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 7.

<sup>282</sup> Vassilika 1989, pp. 96.

<sup>283</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 25–26 and 54; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 7.

<sup>284</sup> Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 7.

<sup>285</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 54.

### 3.1.1.2. *Sekhemkeht*

The shift in the style of the carving and scene extension is evident from the relief of king Sekhemkhet<sup>286</sup>. Smiting part is the same as Djoser's, but the king wears the white Upper Egyptian crown, he is armed with a dagger and the weapon he holds in his left hand is more resembling a spear or a javelin. Moreover, the hand holding the mace up high is held slightly behind his crown, almost touching its top, and it will remain in this position in the following periods.

The scene is extended to the right, where the king is depicted with both the Upper and Lower Egyptian crown and is armed with a mace and the spear, where the pointy end is even better visible. King's garment has changed – he is dressed in a long tunic that is fastened over his shoulder, with a belt around his waist, from which hangs another stripe of cloth. This reminds of the “Lower Egyptian costume” described by D. C. Patch<sup>287</sup>, where even the small bird amulet<sup>288</sup> is visible on the king's figure in the Lower Egyptian crown. All the king's' figures are wearing ceremonial bull's tale. Both scenes are accompanied with the king's name in a *serekh*.

The kneeling enemy is not holding king's hand but is raising his right arm in a gesture of mercy<sup>289</sup>. The thing he is holding in his left hand was identified as an ostrich feather by A. H. Gardiner and W. M. F. Petrie, based on the similarity with the relief found in the mortuary temple of Niuserre and Gebelein reliefs<sup>290</sup>. Nevertheless, I would like to propose another possible meaning. In fragments from the temple of Niuserre<sup>291</sup> a row of enemies was depicted, based on the multiple hands and legs overlapping one another. Enemies are armed with daggers or maces in their left hand and in the second one they hold a feather. However, the feather is not an ostrich feather, which is clear from the rounded ending, without a puff on one side. The nationality of the enemy is unknown.

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<sup>286</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955 Plate I/1(a).

<sup>287</sup> As discussed above, the fishnet-like appearance may be related to the environment in which the scene takes place. Together with the red beaded accessory, made of carnelian, and the swallow-shaped pendant, they strongly refer to solar symbolism. In the context of slaughtering enemies, the king invokes the power of the sun god and his ability to defeat Apophis each day and be reborn on the horizon. For details see Patch, 1995, pp. 93–116.

<sup>288</sup> Compare with the garment of Senwosret I (Fig. 4) and see detail of the swallow (Fig. 1 and 2) in Patch, 1995, pp. 96, Fig. 4.

<sup>289</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 52–53; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 7–8.

<sup>290</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 52.

<sup>291</sup> Borchardt, 1907, pp. 86, Abb. 64.

In the Gebelein relief<sup>292</sup>, it is clear the ostrich feather is depicted. But also, a penis sheath and some sort of animal tail, clipped to a belt, is depicted as well. Both these attributes are typical for people of Libyan origin, as we may see e.g., in the mortuary temple of Sahure<sup>293</sup>. Moreover, we know that feather in hair or headdress was typically depicted with Libyans or Nubians<sup>294</sup>, when both nations were famous for trading with these items<sup>295</sup>. Besides, Libyan nationality of this captive makes sense here, due to the location of the temple – on the west riverbank. On the other hand, the ethnicity of the enemy from Wadi Magara should be given by the location of the scene – therefore a person of Asiatic or Bedouin origin is expected. On the pectoral of princess Meret<sup>296</sup>, daughter of king Senwosret III, the enemy is depicted holding a dagger in left hand, similar to the aforementioned relief from Niuserre, and in the right hand he holds a club or a throwing stick. Similar weapons are shown in the tomb of Baqt III, tomb of Khety or Khnumhotep I, all in Beni Hasan, where Asiatic mercenaries are depicted<sup>297</sup>. On the pectoral, nationality of smite enemies is stated as *sttyw*, a term used in the Middle Kingdom, designating people of Nubian origin<sup>298</sup>, but also during the Middle Kingdom and later it sometimes overlaps with *ꜥ3mw*<sup>299</sup>, a term, which designated people of Asiatic origin<sup>300</sup>. The haircut of the enemy speaks for the Asiatic origin – the most similar depiction bears the statue of Asiatic dignitary from Tell el-Dab'a<sup>301</sup> or representation of Aamu from tomb of Khnumhotep II at Beni Hasan<sup>302</sup>. Therefore, I suggest that the stranger is not holding an ostrich feather, but a throwing stick or a club – as a designation of weapon these adversaries used against Egyptian expeditions.

### 3.1.1.3. *Sanakht*

The last relief of the Third Dynasty belongs to king Sanakht. Two fragments prevailed. The one with a smiting scene<sup>303</sup> is badly damaged and we can see only upper part of king's body, his left hand with a stick, *serekh*, Wepwawet's standard and partly

<sup>292</sup> Marochetti, 2009, pp. 57.

<sup>293</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 5–7.

<sup>294</sup> Henry, 1977, pp. 82; Teeter, 2010 pp. 3.

<sup>295</sup> Shaw, 2017, pp. 89 and 104.

<sup>296</sup> JE 30876, CG 52003, Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

<sup>297</sup> Saretta, 2016, pp. 81.

<sup>298</sup> Chantrain, 2019, pp. 54–55.

<sup>299</sup> Saretta, 2016, pp. 20.

<sup>300</sup> Chantrain, 2019, pp. 62.

<sup>301</sup> Saretta, 2016, pp. 75.

<sup>302</sup> Newberry, 1893, Pl. XXXI; Lepsius, 1913, Plate Altes Reich, Dyn. XII.

<sup>303</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, Plate I/4; Swan Hall, 1986, fig. 10.

preserved inscription *mfk3t* – a designation for turquoise, which is mentioned here for the first time<sup>304</sup>. Interestingly, the king is wearing a red Lower Egyptian crown, while in all other reliefs he wears the white crown. Moreover, no ceremonial beard is depicted on the king's chin.

The second scene<sup>305</sup> is, perhaps, the remaining half of the scene, with double depiction of the king walking and holding a mace and a stick or a spear – once with the white and second with the red crown, again both without the ceremonial beard. The standard or Wepwawet is present again. God Wepwawet is often associated with necropolis and underworld and one of his epithets is the “Opener of the ways”<sup>306</sup>. His standard is composed of a creature identified as wolf or a jackal, when the specific species has not been identified, a cobra and an object called *shedshed*<sup>307</sup>. This standard is present on Narmer's palette and mace-head, on Scorpions mace-head or label of king Den. Many propositions were made in order to identify this object. Among others a rolled feather, bag of animal origin or placenta were suggested<sup>308</sup>. L. Evans identified this object with an animal's den<sup>309</sup>, which animals, native to a desert, dig to protect themselves during the night or during the time they give birth to their offspring. Furthermore, according to L. Evans, the *shedshed* should represent an empty space a Wepwawet creates for a king, truly to open or clear the way for his passage<sup>310</sup>. Therefore, symbolism and forces attributed to Wepwawet are more than relevant for the purpose of intended expedition and needs of the king. This standard is present in smiting scenes in the pyramid complexes.

#### 3.1.1.4. *Sneferu*

Only two kings of the Fourth Dynasty carved smiting scenes in Wadi Maghara – kings Sneferu<sup>311</sup> and Khufu<sup>312</sup>, where king Sneferu carved this scene two times, Khufu just once. This is quite understandable, given the Sneferu's extensive building activity.

The relief, identified by A. H. Gardiner and Weill<sup>313</sup> as the older, is similar with the one of Sekhemkhet. In comparison with the second relief from Sneferu's reign,

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<sup>304</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 56; Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 7.

<sup>305</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955 Plate I/3.

<sup>306</sup> Wilkinson, 2003, pp. 191–192.

<sup>307</sup> Graham, 2001, pp. 164 and 166.

<sup>308</sup> Evans, 2011, pp. 105.

<sup>309</sup> Evans, 2011, pp. 111–113.

<sup>310</sup> Evans, 2011, 114–115.

<sup>311</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, Plate II/5 and IV/3; Lepsius, 1949, Abth. II. Bl. 2. B, c.

<sup>312</sup> Lepsius, 1849, Blatt 2c; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate II/7 and Plate III/7, left and 7, right.

it is lacking details in both figures and hieroglyphs. This time the king is wearing the white crown. The scene of smiting is accompanied by the double-king scene with the king in the white and red crown but armed only with a mace or maces in both hands. A staff or a spear is present only in the smiting scene.

In the second relief of Sneferu<sup>314</sup> a major shift in style is visible. Text around two main figures is better organised in columns and a more elaborate titulary of the king is recorded: “*The king [of Upper] and Lower Egypt, two goddesses [lord-of]-right, Horus of gold, Sneferu*<sup>315</sup>”. The appearance of the king is differing: the king is dressed only in *shendyt*, wears an elaborate crown with two plumes and doubled horns – one of a cow and second of a ram<sup>316</sup>, called *šwty*<sup>317</sup>, under which a short curly wig howls and his neck is adorned with a necklace. The pose of the smitten enemy remains unchanged. The last new element is the description “*subduing the foreign lands*”<sup>318</sup> recorded behind the king’s back. The predicate: “*Sneferu, the great god, granted dominion, perpetuity, and life, all health and joy eternally*<sup>319</sup>” is almost identical to the one recorded in times of Djoser and as a shorter version in the first relief. In *serekh* “*neb maat*” is written instead of the king’s name Sneferu.

### 3.1.1.5. *Khufu*

Reliefs carved in the time of Khufu<sup>320</sup> are only partially preserved. Nevertheless, the smiting scene<sup>321</sup> on the left brings few new aspects: the king is wearing the compound crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, which may refer about the political situation and consolidation of the king’s power; in the front of the smiting king the god Thoth<sup>322</sup> stands

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<sup>313</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 56; Gardiner, Peet, 1917, Plate IV/3.

<sup>314</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, Plate II/5.

<sup>315</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 56–57.

<sup>316</sup> Swan Hall, 1986, pp. 9.

<sup>317</sup> The *šwty* headdress, especially during the early Old Kingdom, is associated with the god Horus, based on the straight feathers. In later dynasties, the ostrich feathers were used. The association with Horus highlights the king’s divine status and the status of legitimate successor to the throne. For details see Collier, 1996, pp. 53–61.

<sup>318</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 57.

<sup>319</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 57.

<sup>320</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, Plate II/7 and Plate III/7, left and 7, right.

<sup>321</sup> Better visible in drawing in Lepsius, 1849, Blatt 2c.

<sup>322</sup> Originally the moon god, when Gardiner discusses possible origin of this god in Sinai, where it was assimilated from the local nomad tribes (for details see Gardiner, Peet, Černý 1955, pp. 28–29), which explains epithets like “Lord of the foreign deserts” or “Lord of the Nomads” (from the pyramid complex of Sahure). In this moon aspect, he represents the counterpart to the solar god. Later, Thoth became the god of wisdom, knowledge and writing – often keeping important accounts and records, but also treaties. Moreover, he commanded magic and secrets. Thoth was often associated with goddess Seshat, who

with *was* sceptre (dominion) and symbol of *ankh* (life) in his right hand facing the king; new god, Horus of Behdet<sup>323</sup>, is protecting the king in the left upper corner; the king states he is “*smiting the nomads (Iwnwt)*”<sup>324</sup> and behind the king new type of wish is carved: “*The protection of [life] behind [him]*”<sup>325</sup>. Both the Horus and the same wish will accompany the king from now on. In the second part of the relief, an elaborate king’s titulary is engraved. The king bears the title “*marksman*” and “*Horus strong of [arm]*”<sup>326</sup>, when the second mentioned is often depicted in the pyramid complexes. It seems that the hand of the enemy might be holding the left hand of the king as we have seen with Djoser, but the relief is badly damaged. Striking difference is also in the appearance of the enemy, where the crossed chest bands are depicted. Such accessories are typical for the people of Libyan origin.

### 3.1.1.6. *Sahure*

A total of three kings engraved their smiting scene in the Fifth Dynasty: Sahure<sup>327</sup>, Niuserre Ini<sup>328</sup> and Djedkare Isesi<sup>329</sup>. From the development of previous periods, it is obvious that the artistic style performed in the pyramid complexes was always followed in Wadi Maghara. The high quality of craftsmanship on Sahure’s relief<sup>330</sup> is extraordinary. New elements were added to frame the whole scene: a prolonged *pet* sign filled with stars on the top and *was*-sceptres on both sides. On the left side, the king is depicted on the double scene, known from previous periods, where both his figures are facing right. On the right side, the smiting scene, which is also orientated to the right, takes place. Both reliefs are divided by Wepwawet’s standard. This time the king wears the white crown and a ceremonial beard, which is depicted also in figures on the left side.

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represented his wife or daughter and who is depicted recording Libyan booty in the pyramid complexes. For more details see Wilkinson, 2003, pp. 215–216.

<sup>323</sup> Horus of Behdet, or “He of Behdet” is a falcon deity, depicted with spread wings and a sun disc in its clutches. Later it was portrayed as a winged solar disc with two *urei*. In this form, Horus represented the solar aspect or the Sun god himself and his passage through the sky. Later Pyramid text refers to Horus as the “God of the East”. For more details see Wilkinson, 2003, pp. 200–201. In this particular relief, it forms a counterpart to the god Thoth, the moon god. Together they both nicely frame the scene (one in the left upper corner and second one in the lower right corner) and create a sacred space between the sun and the moon, day and night, during which the king always defeats his enemies.

<sup>324</sup> *Iwnwt* is a term used for the nomads residing in various parts of Ancient Egypt; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 58.

<sup>325</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 58.

<sup>326</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 58.

<sup>327</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate V./8.; Swan Hall, 1986, Fig. 16.

<sup>328</sup> Lepsius, 1849, Abth. II. Bl. 152 a; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VI./10.; Swan Hall, 1986, Fig. 17.

<sup>329</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VIII./14.; Swan Hall, 1986, Fig. 19.

<sup>330</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate V./8.; Swan Hall, 1986, Fig. 16.

King's garment resembles the one of Sekhemkeht or Sanakht, only a broad collar was added.

The pose of the smitten foreigner is unchanged. New is the designation of the ethnicity of the enemy in the inscription: "*The great god, smiting the Mentju (mntw) and all foreign lands*" affirmed by the inscription behind the king's back "*Subduing all foreign lands*"<sup>331</sup>.

### 3.1.1.7. *Niuserre Ini*

The same inscription was carved in relief of Niuserre<sup>332</sup>. The smiting scene and the king's garment remain without a change – wearing a "Lower Egyptian costume" with a belt and wide collar. New element dwells under the *pet* sign on the top, where Horus of Behdet and two inscriptions on each side, which states: "*The great god, lord of the two lands*"<sup>333</sup>, are placed and create a whole line, under which the king's titulary is carved. Smiting scene was accompanied by another relief on the left side. Based on the headdress and garment the god Thoth is standing on the right edge of this part, facing leftwards. Unfortunately, nothing else remained from the scene.

In separate relief, carved to the right from the smiting scene, is depicted a libation vase standing on *hetep* sign and three *ankh* signs sitting on the top of the *Sed* festival pedestal, creating its base. The inscription inside the vase states: "*The king of Upper and Lower Egypt Niuserre, granted all life and health, all joy, eternally*"<sup>334</sup> and another text is carved above the vessel: "*Thoth, lord of the foreign countries, may he give cool draughts*"<sup>335</sup>. Gardiner<sup>336</sup> suggested this relief as commemorative, recalling the opening of a new well. A wooden model, inlaid with faience, of similar tall libation vase was found in the mortuary temple of Neferirkare<sup>337</sup>.

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<sup>331</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 58.

<sup>332</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VI /10.; Swan Hall, 1986, Fig. 17.

<sup>333</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 59.

<sup>334</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 59.

<sup>335</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 60.

<sup>336</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 60.

<sup>337</sup> Borchardt, 1909, Blatt 4; O'Neil, 1999, pp. 344, Doc. 115A, B.



### 3.1.1.8. *Djedkare Isesi*

The relief of Djedkare Isesi<sup>338</sup> is poorly preserved but was also poorly carved. The top of the relief is lost. On the right side *renpet 9 tjenut* is stated. Most of the smiting scene is still preserved, together with inscription: “*Smiting the chief of the foreign country*”<sup>339</sup>, which was perhaps accompanied by “*subduing all foreign countries*”<sup>340</sup>. The pose of the enemy remained unchanged. Nevertheless, there is a change in the king’s appearance – the king is wearing a headcloth, resembling *nemes*<sup>341</sup> with uraeus and a ritual beard. Also, his hand is held above his head, as on the ivory tablet of Den or relief of Djoser. Both the headdress and the pose, resembling previous historical periods, might refer to changing religious beliefs or political situation during the reign of Djedkare Isesi.

### 3.1.1.9. *Pepi I Meryre*

The only smiting scene during the Sixth Dynasty was done during the reign of king Pepi I Meryre<sup>342</sup>. Royal titulary creates the upper border of the relief, which is divided into two parts. On the left the smiting scene takes place. King is wearing the same garment as his predecessors, together with a wide collar, but he uses the white crown again. From Lepsius’ drawing it seems, as the mace differs from previous weapons. On the right side the king is performing the ritual run. The enemy appears to be touching the left hand of the king, as we have seen with Djoser and maybe Khufu. Detailed description of the mission is inscribed below the relief. The retinue of the king involved positions such as the “pilot of interpreters” and “overseer of interpreters”, which suggest necessity and will to communicate with local inhabitants. This proves more complex and intertwined relationships between the court and the foreigners<sup>343</sup>.

## 3.1.2. **Smiting the enemy in the pyramid complexes**

The scene of smiting enemies was present in the pyramid complexes of the kings as well. We may find them in all parts – in valley temples, causeways and mortuary temples. From the surviving fragments, it was possible to identify smiting scenes

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<sup>338</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1952, Plate VIII./14.; Swan Hall, 1986, Fig. 19.

<sup>339</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 61.

<sup>340</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 62.

<sup>341</sup> Müller, 1977, pp. 694.

<sup>342</sup> Lepsius, 1849, Abth. II. Bl. 116 – Altes Reich, Dyn. VI. a; Gardiner, Peet, Černý 1952, Plate VIII./16.; Swan Hall, 1986, Fig. 20.

<sup>343</sup> For details see Cohen, 2019, pp. 73–90.

in the pyramid complexes of: Sahure, Niuserre Ini, Unas/Wenis, Pepi I Meryre and Pepi II Neferkare. The interpretation is uncertain in pyramid complexes of: Sneferu and Khufu.

Reliefs discussed within this chapter:

Dynasty	King's Name	Discussed Relief	Relief Placement	Figure Number
4th	Sneferu	Fakhry, 1961, pp. 130, Fig. 149	valley temple	
	Khufu (Cheops)	Hassan, 1960, Plate VII/A.	causeway, N wall	6
5th	Sahure	Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 2	mortuary temple, pillared court	
	Niuserre Ini	Borchardt, 1907, pp. 39, Abb. 19	valley temple	7
	Niuserre Ini	Borchardt, 1907, pp. 86, Abb. 64	valley temple	8
	Unas	Labrousse, Lauer, Leclant, 1977, pp. 90, Fig. 65, Doc. 39	mortuary temple	
6th	Pepi I Meryre	Labrousse, 2019, pp. 53–57	mortuary temple, passage, E wall	
	Pepi I Meryre	Labrousse, 2019, pp. 108–110	mortuary temple, transversal corridor, E and W wall	
	Pepi I Meryre	Labrousse, 2019, pp. 108–110	mortuary temple, <i>atechambre carrée</i> , N wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1940, Planche 6	valley temple, hypostyle hall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, Planche 36	mortuary temple, vestibule, S wall	9
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, Planche 37	mortuary temple, vestibule, S wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, pp. 27, Fig. 3	mortuary temple, vestibule, S wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, Planche 40	mortuary temple, vestibule, S wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1940, Planche 36	mortuary temple, vestibule, N wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1940, Planche 37	mortuary temple, vestibule, N wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, Planche 8	mortuary temple, transversal corridor, E wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, Planche 9	mortuary temple, transversal corridor, E wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, Planche 10	mortuary temple, transversal corridor, E wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, Planche 35	mortuary temple, chapel with five niches	10

**Table 3:** List of reliefs depicting the “king smiting enemies” scenes from the pyramid complexes.

### **3.1.2.1. Sneferu**

The pyramid temple of Sneferu does not tell us much about this scene. Four fragments with polychrome painting of a raised arm of the king are the only remains<sup>344</sup>. Nevertheless, the handle of the supposed mace has a very unusual curvy handle. Odd shape of the mace handle raises a question, whether the king is really performing the smiting, or whether it is a different activity. This relief was found in the valley temple, where it presumably belonged to the wall<sup>345</sup>. No further details were recorded.

### **3.1.2.2. Khufu**

Not much left in the pyramid temple of Khufu. Two pieces of relief with the king's waist and belt from the loincloth of the "Lower Egyptian costume" persevered<sup>346</sup>. Nevertheless, the quality of the carving is exquisite and we can even distinguish papyrus flower endings of each line of the pearl decoration. As discussed above, this type of garment was typical in smiting scenes. What raises suspicion is the tilt of the body. In the smiting scene, the body of the king is always leaned forward, where here it looks more like the king is leaning backwards. S. Hassam identified relief as a ritual dance scene when both fragments were found on the north wall of the causeway<sup>347</sup>.

### **3.1.2.3. Sahure**

More convincing is the situation in the pyramid complex of Sahure. Fragments found in the pillared court of the mortuary complex depict faces of foreign enemies lined one next to each other<sup>348</sup>. We can distinguish at least four different faces of foreigners, painted in different colours to make each one of them visible. Based on the bow of the king, which is depicted in front of the face closest to the spectator, number four should be the final number. Number four here represents four cardinal points to stress the fact that the king can smite all enemies surrounding Egypt. Borchardt<sup>349</sup> pointed out that the skin tones do not match with the outfit of the foreigners. Clearly, the need to express the total number of enemies overruled the convention of depicting each of

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<sup>344</sup> Fakhry, 1961, pp. 130, Fig. 149.

<sup>345</sup> Fakhry, 1961, pp. 129.

<sup>346</sup> Hassan, 1960, VII/A.

<sup>347</sup> Hassan, 1960, pp. 34.

<sup>348</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 2.

<sup>349</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 15.

the ethnic with their characteristic and established features. Therefore, the total number of four or even better the information about all enemies is the primary here. The whole scene conveys the information that the king is able to strike down all the enemies of Egypt with a single blow. An ending of the mace handle is visible on one fragment, therefore we may suggest the king holds the mace in the hand of the raised arm, ready to strike, and a bow and locks of hair of his enemies in the second hand.

Truly, the faces of captured enemies mirror the sheer terror of the whole scene, being firmly attached to one to another. The last man is raising his hand in the gesture of mercy we know from reliefs of Wadi Maghara. The right hand of the captive is, perhaps, holding a dagger or a mace<sup>350</sup> (see discussion in chapter 3.8.). Eyes of enemies were inlaid, as in the temple of Niuserre, as will be discussed later.

Based on another fragment, where the raised heel and king's ritual tail, but in an opposite direction, is depicted, we may assume another scene, where the king is depicted running or performing another activity with striding legs. Borchardt states<sup>351</sup> that fragments come from both the northern and the southern wall – this gives the impression that the smiting scene was carved on both sides of the temple. Moreover, he points out that a piece of the name of the Libyan wife or daughter *hwt-itf-s*, was visible next to one of the reliefs, where we can see people pleading for mercy. Therefore, Borchardt<sup>352</sup> suggests the same scene with a Libyan family, which will be discussed later, might be carved in the north wall of the open pillared court.

#### **3.1.2.4. Niuserre Ini**

The pyramid complex of Niuserre Ini provides proofs of at least two smiting reliefs. Both were found in the valley temple. The first one dwells in an unexpected place – on the bracelet of the god Osiris<sup>353</sup>. With raw details a typical smiting scene is depicted. King is portrayed in Lower Egyptian crown, smiting an enemy with a mace and holding

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<sup>350</sup> Based on the later reliefs of smiting scenes from various temples. E.g., see wall relief of Amenhotep II on the eighth pylon in Karnak or wall relief of Ramesse III on the first pylon in Medinet Habu; Porter & Moss, 1972, pp. 57/43–44 and pp. 175–176/521–522; Photo of Amenhotep II: Wreszinski, 1935, Fig. 184a; High resolution photo of Ramesse III is available on Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. Medinet Habu Ramses III16 [photo]. Accessible on: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Medinet\\_Habu\\_Ramses\\_III16.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Medinet_Habu_Ramses_III16.JPG).

<sup>351</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 15.

<sup>352</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 15.

<sup>353</sup> Borchardt, 1907, pp. 39, Abb. 19.

him by his lock of hair. In contrast to all previous smiting scenes, the enemy is standing. Horus of Behedet is protecting the king from above.

The second scene is more typical and in multiple fragments the limbs of enemies are depicted. As with Sahure, enemies are standing side by side in a total number of four, facing the same direction. We can see various colours of skin and small details like the arm ring of the man from Punt or his richly decorated belt. Enemies are holding a dagger or a mace in their left hand and a feather in their right hand. Borchardt states that this is an ostrich feather<sup>354</sup>, but it is probably not. As discussed above, its rounded ending is without a puff on one side, as typical depiction of ostrich feather has. This feather more resembles a feather of a falcon, often used in double-plum crown. Gardiner suggested<sup>355</sup>, that the foreigner pulled this feather from his hair and is offering it to the king in a plea for mercy. Such scenario is not plausible here, as the pose of the foreigner's body do not suggest such gesture. Moreover, specific details for each ethnicity are depicted, therefore it seems suspicious to have one type of feather for all of them. Nevertheless, the offering of the feather to the king would still make sense. In case the depicted feather would represent a specific symbol of a feather, as this type of feather is not among the hieroglyphs. Such symbol would be perhaps referring to the sun god Re, or the god Horus, both often depicted as falcons.

No colours are described either in the picture, nor in the text, but we may observe vertical lines crossing the middle part of the feather – *rachis*<sup>356</sup>. When we take a closer look at the falcon feathers, they are striped<sup>357</sup>. On the tail feathers even over *rachis*. Ancient Egyptians were great observers and it is possible that such detail is depicted – mainly due to the importance of the falcon god in ancient Egyptian mythology. Therefore, the artistic aim was to determine the feather with high precision.

Two more relief fragments are worth mentioning<sup>358</sup>. Both depict smaller figures of bound captives of Asiatic, Libyan and Punt origin. Borchardt suggests<sup>359</sup> that they might belong to one bigger scene together with the smiting king.

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<sup>354</sup> Borchardt, 1907, pp. 86–87, Abb. 64.

<sup>355</sup> Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 52.

<sup>356</sup> “Feather”, Encyclopaedia Britannica, on-line: <https://www.britannica.com/science/feather>.

<sup>357</sup> Drawing of Lanner Falcon feathers is available on Wikimedia Commons. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. Lanner Falcon Feather Age [drawing]. Accessible on:

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d3/Lanner\\_falcon\\_feather\\_age.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d3/Lanner_falcon_feather_age.jpg)

<sup>358</sup> Borchardt, 1907, pp. 88, Abb. 66.

<sup>359</sup> Borchardt, 1907, pp. 88.

### 3.1.2.5. *Unas*

In the mortuary temple of king Unas is at least one smiting scene accompanied by a procession of captives led by a god. The relief fragment<sup>360</sup> is very skilfully crafted with delicate details. Only the central part of the relief with the king's navel, his kilt and upper body part of the body of the enemy is preserved. The king is wearing *shendyt*, ritual beard and tail and some kind of a long wig or a headdress. His left arm is holding the prisoner's lock of hair together with a stick or a staff. Behind the king a standardised formula "*The protection of life behind him*" as in Wadi Maghara reliefs. The foreign enemy has a long beard, long hair and belts crossed over his chest – typical standardized features for people of Libyan origin. Unlike in previous depictions, the enemy is not raising his hand in the gesture of mercy. Another relief depicting a Libyan captive<sup>361</sup>, labelled with inscription *skr 'nh*, "live prisoner", is being presented to the king. In front the Libyan captive is the Wapwawet's standard. The figure of the god presenting the prisoner is damaged and unrecognisable. Four more relief fragments<sup>362</sup> depict squatting, kneeling or standing prisoners of Asiatic, Libyan or Punt origin.

### 3.1.2.6. *Pepi I Meryre*

Total number of four smiting scenes were excavated in the pyramid complex of Pepi I Meryre. All are placed in the mortuary temple. The first scene<sup>363</sup> is carved in passage leading from the causeway to the mortuary temple, on the east wall. An exquisite relief depicts the king smiting two captives – one of the Libyan and second one of the Punt origin. The appearance of the enemies copies the standardized scheme of previous periods, which contrasts with the development in statuary program<sup>364</sup>, where the influence of the "second style"<sup>365</sup> is significantly higher. The king wears the "Lower Egyptian costume", where the detail with a pendant with the swallow is carved. The left hand of the king with a staff or a stick, holding the lock of the hair of foreigners, is also visible. Behind the elbow of a Libyan man a scene with a row of Libyans in a gesture of mercy follows. This is a precedent for other pyramid complexes, where it was uncertain whether these two scenes are tightly connected.

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<sup>360</sup> Labrousse, Lauer, Leclant, 1977, pp. 89–90, Fig. 65, Doc. 39.

<sup>361</sup> Labrousse, Lauer, Leclant, 1977, pp. 90–91, Fig. 66, Doc. 40.

<sup>362</sup> Labrousse, Lauer, Leclant, 1977, pp. 92–94, Fig. 67–71, Doc. 41–45.

<sup>363</sup> Labrousse, 2019, pp. 53–57.

<sup>364</sup> Prakash, 2022, pp. 4, 11, 78–80 and 177–179.

<sup>365</sup> Russmann, 1995, pp. 269–279.

Two other reliefs<sup>366</sup> are from the corridor separating the intimate part of the temple – from both eastern and the western wall. Both are fragmentary, when on the first one only the king’s kilt resembling the “Lower Egyptian costume” is visible; on the second one only part of the leg of two kneeling foreigners is visible, together with an ankle of the king.

The last relief<sup>367</sup> is from the first antechamber, north wall, and only the left hand of the king with part of the locks of hair prevailed. This scene was accompanied by the “Seshat recording booty” scene.

### 3.1.2.7. *Pepi II Neferkare*

Even higher number of scenes depicting smiting were identified in the pyramid complex of Pepi II Neferkare. All of them comes either from the valley temple or from various places in the mortuary temple.

In the valley temple, perhaps in the hypostyle hall<sup>368</sup>, small fragments<sup>369</sup> of the smiting scene were found. There are fragments of the row of hands raised in a gesture of mercy, where at least four hands adorned with a bracelet are depicted. Another fragment shows row of hands, this time the left ones, holding daggers or maces. Fragments with the hands of the kings are also present. From the direction of hands it appears, that the scene was placed here twice – perhaps on the opposite sides of the hall.

In the mortuary temple a smiting scene<sup>370</sup> is depicted on the southern wall of the vestibule, placed between the statue chamber and *antichambre carée*. Fragments<sup>371</sup> of the king’s striding legs, hand holding a staff, *shendyt* garment and a double-plumed crown with horns were excavated. Enemies are depicted standing, which is unusual in comparison with previous periods. Their number significantly increased to ten – five on each side, facing opposite directions<sup>372</sup>. Two relief fragments<sup>373</sup> show raised opened hands of captives. Symbolically, the king is ready to smite ten enemies with a single blow. This stresses the need to deal with a larger number of enemies threatening the Egyptian state, than in previous periods. This finding goes hand in hand with the increasing number

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<sup>366</sup> Labrousse, 2019, pp. 101 and 108–110.

<sup>367</sup> Labrousse, 2019, pp. 101 and 139–140.

<sup>368</sup> Jéquier, 1940, pp. 4.

<sup>369</sup> Jéquier, 1940, Planches 6.

<sup>370</sup> Jéquier, 1938, Planche 36.

<sup>371</sup> Jéquier, 1938, Planche 37.

<sup>372</sup> The assumption regarding orientation of the bodies is made based on the relief of Amenhotep II on the eighth pylon in Karnak. For details see Wreszinski, 1935, Fig. 184a; Porter & Moss, 1972, pp. 57/43–44.

<sup>373</sup> Jéquier, 1938, pp. 27, Fig. 3 and Planche 40.

of bound captives' statues<sup>374</sup>, that were excavated within the pyramid complex. At least one of the captives is of Libyan origin, based on the jackal's tail over his calf, and the second one is of Nubian origin, based on the short beard and the arm ring. It seems like the established conventions in depiction of foreigners remained unchanged. Damaged caption, right to the king's titulary, mentions *Tmhw*<sup>375</sup> and *Iwnwt*<sup>376</sup> ethnics, Asiatic nomads and nomads in general, respectively. This relief is accompanied by scenes "gods leading captives" and "Seshat recording booty". It raises a question, whether also Libyan family scene was present, but it seems unlikely.

Yet another scene belongs to the vestibule<sup>377</sup>. Excavated fragments suggest<sup>378</sup> a figure of the king in *shendyt* smiting two captives of Nubian origin. The origin is determined by a long stripe of cloth hanging from the belt and feather in his right hand. This idea is supported by a determinative of the bow and land, *Ta-Seti*, under the inscription *Iwnwt*.

Another scene was found in *couloir transversal* on the east wall<sup>379</sup>. The king is smiting the single enemy of Libyan origin – based on the penis sheath, jackal's tail and elongated beard. The king is dressed in *shendyt*, other elements of his garment did not prevail. This scene is accompanied by the "Libyan family" theme, where even the names are the same as in the pyramid complex of Sahure<sup>380</sup>. Such detail speaks about the symbolism of such scene rather than about its authenticity.

Fragments of the last smiting scene<sup>381</sup> were found in the chapel with five niches. Not much is left from this scene. Partly an inscription *nb h3swt* is visible and a pair of hands raised in a gesture of mercy. One small fragment depicts determinative for the word *Iwnwt*, where the sign A1<sup>382</sup>, of squatting man, is depicted three times to stress the plural. The sign is transformed to portray standardized accessories typical for every ethnic group. The second man is portrayed with a long ribbon in his hair, short beard and, presumably, an ostrich feather in hand – typical accessories of man from Nubia. The second man is depicted with a long hair, long beard and a dagger or a mace – features

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<sup>374</sup> Prakash, 2022, pp. 124–128.

<sup>375</sup> Chantraine, 2019, pp. 58

<sup>376</sup> *Iwnwt* is a term used for the nomads residing in various parts of Ancient Egypt; Gardiner, Peet, Černý, 1955, pp. 58.

<sup>377</sup> According to A. Labrousse, all scenes belong to the vestibule, not to the corridor as G. Jequier suggested. For details see Labrousse, 2019, pp. 57.

<sup>378</sup> Jéquier, 1940, Planche 36–37.

<sup>379</sup> Jéquier, 1938, Planches 8–10.

<sup>380</sup> Borchart, 1913, Blatt 1.

<sup>381</sup> Jéquier, 1938, Planche 35.

<sup>382</sup> Gardiner, 1957, pp. 442, hieroglyph A1.



typical of men of Libyan origin. It is clear, that the first man is of Asiatic origin, which is supported by his long hair. Similar type of detail is depicted in the causeway of Sahure<sup>383</sup>, within the “the king trampling enemies” scene.

### *3.1.3. Comparison of the smiting scenes in Wadi Maghara and the pyramid complexes*

Starting with foreigners depicted in all scenes, the major difference is that in Wadi Maghara is the king facing the only enemy – Asiatics. While in the pyramid complexes he faces all enemies of Egypt. Therefore, we may distinguish between Libyan, Asiatic and Punt ethnicities. It also implies that in the pyramid complex the king must defeat multiple enemies with a single blow, whereas in Wadi Maghara he is facing just one. The number of enemies has a symbolic meaning. Despite the fact that in Wadi Maghara the king is smiting just one person, the whole nation is represented within this figure. In pyramid complexes the number varies. We have encountered four in the pyramid complex of Sahure and Niuserre, representing all cardinal points. King Unas is smiting a single enemy of Libyan origin, while king Pepi I is smiting pairs of captives – one of Libyan and second one of Punt origin, representing opposite directions of north and south respectively. The number grows exponentially in the pyramid complex of Teti II, where he smites ten enemies of various origins with a single blow. At least one of the prisoners is of Libyan origin and another one of Nubian origin.

While the ethnicity of enemies may change, their pose does not. The enemy is always portrayed as a kneeling male. The lower body part of the enemy is turned away from the king, but his upper part is twisted back to face the king. The left hand is resting on the knee of the enemy, but the second one is raised in the gesture of mercy. On rare occasions it appears like the enemy is touching the hand of the king (Djoser, Khufu?, Pepi I). The enemies from Wadi Maghara are mostly unarmed, with the only exception in Sekhemkeht's reign. On the other hand, the enemies from the pyramid complexes are often armed with daggers or maces, holding a falcon feather in the second hand (Niuserre, Pepi II). The pose of the enemy has two exceptions. The first one is from the pyramid complex of Pepi II, where standing captives are depicted. Because their number is significantly higher, they are facing both directions, in the number of five on each side. Fragments of hands from the right row of captives proves that their left hands were raised

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<sup>383</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 8.

in the gesture of mercy. It is impossible to determine, whether they held something in their right hand, but a handle of some type of weapon, perhaps a dagger, is visible hanging from the belt. A second exception is from pyramid complex of Niuserre, where the smiting scene is depicted on a bracelet of the god Osiris.

The pose of the king remains almost the same – he is depicted striding, his body is leaning forward and his weight is on his left foot, while the right foot is on its toe. The only difference is in the height of the raised arm holding a mace. In the early depictions the king is holding the mace above his head, while later the mace-head is placed slightly behind the king's head, almost touching the tip of the crown. The second hand grabs the lock of hair of the enemy or enemies. The pose of the king is better preserved in reliefs from Wadi Maghrara, which helps to reconstruct scenes within the pyramid complexes.

The garment of the king and his headdress vary over time on both places. In Djoser's relief the king is depicted with a headdress resembling *nemes* and a plain kilt resembling *shendyt*. Later, the king is portrayed in a tunic with stripes tighten over his shoulder, a belt and additional adornment in the form of pearl beads tied into a fishing net pattern. This garment resembles marshes of Lower Egypt, from which the sun rises every day. The solar symbolism is strengthened by the colour of beads in a pendant finished by a swallow, which is hanging down from the belt. All these elements refer to the sun god and his daily struggles on his way through the sky. The headdress of the king differs as well. *Nemes* is replaced by the White of the Red Crown of Egypt, in Khufu's relief the king wears the compound crown. Sneferu is depicted in a double-plumed crown with cow's and ram's horns. Also, the king may or may not wear a ceremonial beard. The only permanent royal insignia is the bull's tail. The relief decoration from the pyramid complexes is too fragmentary to determine the meaning of each garment and headdress within the larger scheme. Both *shendyt* and "Lower Egyptian costume" refers to combat or military activities in the presence of gods. But it appears as the *shendyt* in depicted only together with double-plumed headdress with horns.

What also changes over time is the weapon the king holds. The staff in the king's left hand is depicted as a plain walking stick representing the staff of the office, sometimes a more elaborate staff or weapon is portrayed. In Sekhemkhet's relief the staff resembles *mks-staff*<sup>384</sup>, carried by high officials or a spear – especially when the king is carrying

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<sup>384</sup> Graham, 2001, pp. 164 and 166.

the weapon horizontally. In the pyramid complex of Pepi I, the staff resembles *3ms*-staff<sup>385</sup>. Also the mace changes over time. At the beginning it is a pear-shaped<sup>386</sup> mace matching with the Scorpion's or Narmer's mace-head, by the end of the Old Kingdom (Pepi I) the weapon more resembles a semi-circular axe<sup>387</sup>. This change may reflect the progress in army and warfare.

The biggest difference is in the reliefs that are surrounding the smiting scene. In Wadi Maghara it is the scene with double depiction of the king in the Upper and the Lower Egyptian crown, scene with the ritual run of the king (Pepi I) or scenes with the god Thoth (Khufu, Niuserre). In pyramid complexes the smiting scene is accompanied by reliefs with the “gods leading captives” scene or with the “Libyan family” scene. The proximity of the Libyan family scene suggests the main object of king's smiting would be a figure of Libyan origin or their group.

### **3.2. The king as a sphinx or a griffin trampling enemies**

This motif originates in the Predynastic period and presents the king as a mighty beast dealing with his enemies or chaotic forces, clearly in his active role<sup>388</sup>. Animals chosen to represent the king in Predynastic times were typically bulls, lions or falcons. Recent studies of the ivory labels from the tomb U-j in Abydos and contemporary rock art<sup>389</sup> shows that the king was associated with all different types of ultimate forces represented by lightning or fire force of the sun. Often dual aspects were presented to express the strength and totality of the king's powers. Therefore, we may find a falcon in opposition with a scorpion to represent mighty forces of the sky and earth, both at once.

No relief with such scene survived from the time of the Third and Fourth Dynasty. Nevertheless, it is possible that a giant statue of the sphinx guarding the pyramid complex of king Khafre, or many statues of sphinxes, fulfilled this role<sup>390</sup>.

Relief depicting the king as a sphinx, or possibly a griffin, was found in the pyramid temple of Sahure<sup>391</sup>. Following the idea from Predynastic times, the king

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<sup>385</sup> Graham, 2001, pp. 164 and 166.

<sup>386</sup> Shaw, 2019, pp. 16.

<sup>387</sup> Shaw, 2019, pp. 97.

<sup>388</sup> Awady, 2006, pp. 88.

<sup>389</sup> Stauder, 2023.

<sup>390</sup> Lehner, 1991; El Awady, 2006, pp. 88.

<sup>391</sup> The current research suggests that a sphinx or a griffin is figure of Egyptian origin. The earliest depiction of griffin is from Naqqada II period and is carved on the Gebel el-Arak and Gebel el-Tarif knife. The second oldest attestation is from Naqqada III period and it is carved on the “Two Dogs Palette” (for all three

is presented here as a composite beast with lion's body with wings on its back and human or lion's head<sup>392</sup>; alternatively, as a griffin with the winged body of lion and head of some bird of prey<sup>393</sup>. The idea hidden behind this representation is clear – to present the king with the mightiest powers of all these beasts all at once.

“Trampling scenes” were found in pyramid complexes of Sahure, Niuserre Ini, Djedkare Isesi, Unas and Pepi II. Neferkare. Scenes discussed within this chapter:

Dynasty	King's Name	Discussed Relief	Relief Placement	Figure Number
5th	Sahure	Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 8	valley temple, hall with two pillars	11
	Niuserre Ini	Borchardt, 1907, Blatt 8	causeway, lower part, N and S wall	
	Niuserre Ini	Borchardt, 1907, Blatt 9	causeway, lower part, N and S wall	
	Niuserre Ini	Borchardt, 1907, Blatt 10	causeway, lower part, N and S wall	
	Niuserre Ini	Borchardt, 1907, Blatt 11	causeway, lower part, N and S wall	
	Niuserre Ini	Borchardt, 1907, Blatt 12	causeway, lower part, N and S wall	12
	Niuserre Ini	Borchardt, 1907, pp. 48/Abb. 31, pp. 86/Abb. 64, pp. 88/Abb. 66, pp. 93/Abb. 79	causeway, lower part, N and S wall	13, 8
	Djedkare Isesi	Megahed, Plate 76, 79 and 80	mortuary temple	
6th	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1940, Planche 15	causeway, lower part, N and S wall	14
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1940, Planche 16	causeway, lower part, N and S wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1940, Planche 17	causeway, lower part, N and S wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1940, Planche 18	causeway, lower part, N and S wall	

**Table 4:** List of reliefs depicting the “king as a sphinx or a griffin trampling enemies” scenes.

artefacts see chapter 2.1.). The Egyptian origin is also confirmed by the linguistic studies, which proved the Akkadian word *kurību* and Hebrew *śārāp* originates in Egyptian verb stem *srp*, when a noun *sfrr* means griffin. For details see: Frankfort, 1936, pp. 106–22; Wyatt, 2009, pp. 29–39; Morgan, 2010, pp. 303–323. Here I would like to thank my colleague A. Chejnová, with whom I presented the topic “King as a griffin trampling enemies” within the AEA100024 seminar.

<sup>392</sup> The lion, as the personification of the strength and power, has the ability to defeat enemies, but he is also a guardian of the boundaries – both of the world of the living and the dead. That is why the great sphinx of Khafre is placed at the entrance to the valley temple. The lion may also represent the king's ka. In the context of necropolis, the figure of lion connects the worlds of gods and men. For details see Wilkinson, 1994, pp. 69.

<sup>393</sup> The birds of prey, especially the falcon, refers to the god Horus, who is identified with both heaven and the sun. He is the rightful heir to the Egyptian throne, therefore he is associated with the king and kingship. For details see Wilkinson, 1994, pp. 83.

### 3.2.1. *Sahure*

The relief with exquisite quality and details<sup>394</sup> was excavated on the northern wall of the hall with two pillars, close to the entrance to the causeway. But as Borchardt<sup>395</sup> suggests, and as excavation in the causeway of Niuserre confirms (see below), it may belong to the lower part of the causeway, based on the placement of the corner, the southern wall. This was confirmed by new finding of a fragment with trampled Asiatic, belonging to the northern wall<sup>396</sup>. The original scene, which Borchardt excavated, is damaged and only the rear part of the sphinx prevailed. Unfortunately, the head is missing, therefore it is not possible to determine, whether it was of lion, human or bird shape. The feathers are carved in fine detail and tail feathers with stripes refers to a falcon. Trampled enemies are depicted of Punt, Asiatic and Libyan origin from left to right. An interesting detail is depicted on the arm of the man from Punt – an arm ring. Borchardt confirms this piece of jewellery is of Nubian origin based on Reisner's excavations in Shellal<sup>397</sup>. Based on these findings these arm rings were made of ivory or hippopotamus tusk. Borchardt<sup>398</sup> suggests that the figure of the sphinx comes from the victory psalms, previously passed down only within the oral tradition. The griffin is often connected with gods Thoth and Sopdu, both guardians of the eastern border, which confirms the inscription carved inside the curve of the sphinx's tail: *dḥwtj nb Twntyw, spd nb ḥ3swt ptpt mntw*. This relief was surrounded by the scenes with “Gods leading captives” and “Seshat recording booty” themes.

### 3.2.2. *Niuserre Ini*

Trampling scene was depicted on the lower part of the causeway of king Niuserre<sup>399</sup>. Both northern and southern wall were covered with reliefs<sup>400</sup> captives of various ethnicities being trampled. Only the lower register was found undamaged, where mostly legs of the beasts or enemies were depicted. In some fragments the head of the downtrodden enemy is visible. The eyes of the enemies were inlaid. It is clear that

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<sup>394</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 8.

<sup>395</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 21.

<sup>396</sup> El Awady, 2006, pp. 149–150.

<sup>397</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 20, Abb. 2–3; Reisner, Report I 50, Friedhof 7, Grab 190.

<sup>398</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 21–23.

<sup>399</sup> Borchardt, 1907, pp. 46.

<sup>400</sup> Borchardt, 1907, pp. 48/Abb. 31, pp. 86/Abb. 64, pp. 88/Abb. 66, pp. 93/Abb. 79 und Blatt 8–12.

the motifs of “Libyan family” and “Gods leading captives” were an integral part of this scene, as their parts are visible left or right to the trampling scene.

### **3.2.3. Djedkare Isesi**

Only three fragments from pyramid complex of Djedkare Isesi bear the traces of trampling scene<sup>401</sup>. The first fragment depicts a paw of the lion, second one top of the head of Asiatic man with lion’s claws and the last one depicts a leg of the lion and a palm of the hand. Reliefs were found in the pyramid temple<sup>402</sup>, which is a change in comparison with previous, but also following pyramid complexes. Nevertheless, prisoner statues were found in the mortuary complex – one finding is attested in the *antichambre carrée* and the second one in the inner temple<sup>403</sup>, which suggest shift of the motive from the causeway to the mortuary temple.

### **3.2.4. Unas**

The evidence from the lower part of the causeway, northern wall, of king Unas only suggest possible existence of this motif, but no fragments were excavated<sup>404</sup>. Only the fragment of Seshat recording booty scene prevailed<sup>405</sup>.

### **3.2.5. Pepi II Neferkare**

Reliefs with elaborate details in trampling scenes were found on the lower part of the causeway – on both the northern and southern walls<sup>406</sup>. Both depiction of sphinx with lion’s or human head and a griffin are attested<sup>407</sup>. G. Jéquier<sup>408</sup> suggest, that at least eight figures of a sphinx and a griffin, four on each wall, existed. Only two fragments depict a trampled enemy. Remaining fragments portrays details from bodies of both beast. The body of the sphinx, seems to have a body covered with fish scales, resembling a scale armour, and paws of the beast are armed with sharp claws. The griffin is depicted with falcon feathers on its back.

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<sup>401</sup> Megahed, Plate 76, 79 and 80.

<sup>402</sup> Megahed, 2016, pp. 151, 153–157, Cat. no. 45, 48–49.

<sup>403</sup> Prakash, 2022, pp. 116–117.

<sup>404</sup> Labrouse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 19–20.

<sup>405</sup> Labrouse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 135, Fig. 15.

<sup>406</sup> Jéquier, 1940, 11.

<sup>407</sup> Jéquier, 1940, Plates 15–18.

<sup>408</sup> Jéquier, 1940, 11.

### 3.2.6. Summary of the scene “trampling the enemies”

The “trampling scene” remained consistent during the whole Old Kingdom. There are no dramatical changes neither in artistic depiction, nor in the content. The scene is mostly attested from the lower part of the causeway, mostly during the Fifth and Sixth Dynasty, or the entrance from the valley temple to the causeway. With one exception, in pyramid complex of Djedkare Isesi, where the relief was found in the mortuary temple.

The scene is depicted on the lower end of the causeway, where the journey to the west begins, or where the deceased king is about to rise to the horizon<sup>409</sup>. Moreover, doors were dangerous liminal places, which needed to be guarded and protected. The same meaning bears the sphinx of king Khafre, which is also placed next to the valley temple<sup>410</sup>. According to T. El Awady<sup>411</sup> sees the connection between the roads flanked by sphinxes or ram headed sphinxes during the New Kingdom. We may find the same scene in the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari<sup>412</sup>, placed on the newel posts of the first ramp leading to the temple.

### 3.3. Gods leading captives to the king

This scene is an integral part of the motif of “trampling enemies”, “smiting enemies”, as well as “Seshat recording booty”<sup>413</sup>. All three motifs belong to the category “defeating the evil forces of the nature”<sup>414</sup> or so-called “victory scenes”<sup>415</sup>. The king is here always depicted in his active role<sup>416</sup>. Based on the finding from the pyramid complexes it is evident that the procession of captives mostly ends before the king, who then performs his will.

Reliefs discussed within this chapter:

<b>Dynasty</b>	<b>King's Name</b>	<b>Discussed Relief</b>	<b>Relief Placement</b>	<b>Figure Number</b>
<b>4th</b>	<b>Khufu (Cheops)</b>	Hölscher, 1912, pp. 110, Abb. 162, 163	mortuary temple	18

<sup>409</sup> O’Connor, 1998, pp. 135–144.

<sup>410</sup> Fakhry, 1961, pp. 202.

<sup>411</sup> El Awady, 2006, pp. 94.

<sup>412</sup> Beaux, 2015, pp. 66.

<sup>413</sup> There are several scenes in which procession of deities appear. For detailed typology see Megahed, 2016, pp. 196.

<sup>414</sup> El Awady, 2006, pp. 80 and 86.

<sup>415</sup> Labrouse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 14.

<sup>416</sup> El Awady, 2006, pp. 150.

<b>5th</b>	<b>Userkaf</b>	Labrousse & Lauer, 2000, pp. 77, Fig. 230a-b–232a-b.	mortuary temple, transversal corridor	
	<b>Sahure</b>	Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 5	causeway, lower part, N wall	15
	<b>Sahure</b>	Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 6	causeway, lower part, N wall	
	<b>Sahure</b>	Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 7	causeway, lower part, N wall	
	<b>Unas</b>	Labrousse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 19–20	causeway, lower part, N wall	
<b>6th</b>	<b>Pepi II Neferkare</b>	Jéquier, 1940, Planche 12	causeway, lower part	
	<b>Pepi II Neferkare</b>	Jéquier, 1940, Planche 13	causeway, lower part	
	<b>Pepi II Neferkare</b>	Jéquier, 1940, Planche 14	causeway, lower part	

**Table 5:** List of reliefs depicting the “gods leading captives“ scenes.

### 3.3.1. *Khufu*

As was discussed in chapter 2.2.2., a peculiar relief<sup>417</sup> (Fig. 18 and 19) was found in the pyramid complex of Khafre. Given that the motif has no parallel, it is difficult to assess how the scheme might look like.

In the upper register we can see the legs of four men from the knees down striding in the left direction. G. Steindorff<sup>418</sup> identified these men as gods, but A. Ćwiek<sup>419</sup> argues, that these figures are too small for gods, therefore they must be captives. This is quite a logical argument with regard to the motif in the lower register. Nevertheless, we can see that the gown of the first man is very long. No such garment of a foreigner is attested in another relief. Possibility that this procession of captives is led by a female goddess seems odd as well, as in all reliefs the god or goddess is depicted above or behind the captive. When we accept the hypothesis that the second man (see the discussion below) is a priest, we may assume that the procession is led by a priest. As no other parallel is attested, we can not eliminate this hypothesis. Three remaining men have short kilts, where the lower edge is partly visible in the last man.

In the lower register we can see two male figures. The man on the left is a bound captive with both hands tight with a rope above his head, facing the right direction. His facial features and pieces of garment resemble stylized depiction of Asiatic people

<sup>417</sup> Hölscher, 1912, pp. 110, Abb. 162–163.

<sup>418</sup> Steindorff, 1912, pp. 110–111 and Abb. 162–163.

<sup>419</sup> Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 101, footnote 401.



in the causeway of Sahure<sup>420</sup> or Niuserre<sup>421</sup>. The lower part of his body is lost. In the description G. Steindorff<sup>422</sup> stated that hair was painted with black colour and the skin with yellow. The man of the right was identified as a priest by G. Steindorff<sup>423</sup>, but this idea was rejected by A. Ćwiek<sup>424</sup>, who compares man's garment to archers from the block from Lisht<sup>425</sup>. I do not support this idea, as it is clear that the archer's garment contains two bands of cloth running across the chest, where in this relief is visible, that no cloth is articulated over the second shoulder. Moreover, even the nipple is visible. Also, in reliefs containing archers, they always carry or hold their bows and/or arrows. Therefore, I support the idea of G. Steindorff and describe this man as a priest. The residue of colours remained and his hair is black and his skin was painted with red-brown colour<sup>426</sup>. Nevertheless, the composition of this scene is unusual. It seems as the priest is whispering<sup>427</sup> something to the prisoner. The space behind both the priest and the captive is empty and does not go along with traditional Egyptian *horror vacui*<sup>428</sup>. It also appears as if the man's face was re-carved. Behind the man, we can see a weapon, but it is unclear how it fits within the whole scheme. In the same register in the right corner, there is a remnant of some relief. It raises a question whether the whole scene was modified.

Hölscher stated that he found this relief in the valley temple. No detailed information was provided. In respect to the fact that the valley temple of Khafre is otherwise undecorated<sup>429</sup>, this seems uncertain. It would be more possible to place this relief into the causeway, based on findings from pyramid complexes of Sahure and Niuserre. Nevertheless, no other relief decoration was found<sup>430</sup>. Therefore, it is more

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<sup>420</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 5–7.

<sup>421</sup> Borchardt, 1907, Blatt 8, 10 and 12.

<sup>422</sup> Steindorff, 1912, pp. 111 and Abb. 163.

<sup>423</sup> Steindorff, 1912, pp. 111 and Abb. 163.

<sup>424</sup> Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 101.

<sup>425</sup> Goedicke, 1971, pp. 74–77, Fig. 43; Arnold, 1999, pp. 264–267.

<sup>426</sup> Steindorff, 1912, pp. 110–111 and Abb. 162–163.

<sup>427</sup> This gesture reminds relief from the tomb of Kagemni (for details see Harpur & Scremin, 2006, pp. 69, fig. 10), where a man on the boat is whispering casts against crocodiles in the river. The same spells are later part of the Book of the Dead. Proof of execration rituals exists and findings from the pyramids complex of Pepi I and Pepi II show signs of ritual, during which the statues of captives were smite (for details see Prakash, 2022, pp. 4, 11, 78–80 and 177–179). This relief might be a predecessor to such rituals, which were at first performed just on the walls of the temples. Nevertheless, the gesture may not be the same, as I am comparing reliefs from royal and non-royal tombs and practices from different periods.

<sup>428</sup> Baines & Málek, 2000, pp. 56–57.

<sup>429</sup> Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 101–102.

<sup>195</sup> Hölscher, 1912, pp. 6.

plausible that this relief comes from the pyramid complex of Khufu and was dragged here as was discussed in chapter 2.2.2.

Despite the unusual setting of the scene, I see it as a part of the topic “Gods leading captives to the king”. It is clearly not a part of the “Seshat recording booty” scene, as any Libyans are not present – no tail, penis sheath or crossed chest belts are depicted. Although no gods are present in this relief, the upper register suggests possible presence of a procession, lower register depicts a priest. Suggested execration rituals possibly took place in the temple with the supervision and blessing of the deities. Due to the lack of material preserved from both pyramid complexes, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the scheme of surrounding motifs known from other complexes. It is possible, the god assembly was present, as well as the king. In any case, this scene is a part of the victory scenes, where the king is dealing with enemies and evil forces.

### 3.3.2. *Userkaf*

Three fragments<sup>431</sup> possibly relevant for this group were found in the transversal corridor, which is in the case of the temple connected to the small, pillared hall in front of the chapel with five niches. One of the reliefs depicts a god, who is holding a rope and *ankh* symbol in his left hand. Below him an inscription states *skr Twntyw* and to the left is *mntw* – designation of captive’s ethnicity. This is confirmed within two other reliefs, where in the first one a bound captive with hands tight behind his back is depicted and the second one portrays two bound captives – one of the Asiatic and the second one of the Nubian origins.

### 3.3.3. *Sahure*

A scene with procession of gods with captives<sup>432</sup> was found on the lower end of the causeway, on the northern wall<sup>433</sup>. Gods are depicted with larger figures, standing in registers right below the sign of the heaven filled with stars. Each god hold *ankh* symbol, rope and a semi-circular axe in his left hand and a *was*-sceptre in his right hand. In fact, all gods are holding two ropes with one captive on each end. The ethnicity of the captives is connected to the god – typically, the god is a protector of the lands

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<sup>431</sup> Labrousse & Lauer, 2000, pp. 77, Fig. 230a-b–232a-b.

<sup>432</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 5–7.

<sup>433</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 18.

represented by each captive. In the lower register we can recognise Seth from Kom Ombo, in his jackal appearance, and Sopdu, Lord of the East(ern deserts). Sopdu is depicted with different attributes determining the place of which he is the protector: Asiatic facial features, special headdress with two pointed feathers – a typical Asiatic warrior headdress<sup>434</sup> and *shemset* girdle<sup>435</sup>. He is holding two Asiatic captives on his ropes. Prisoners dedicated to Seth, the lord of the desert, who is depicted in plain garment tight over his shoulders and ceremonial jackal's tail, are from Punt and Libya. The gods in the upper row are missing their heads, from the last one only his legs and right hand is visible. We can distinguish, that the second and fourth god is goddess – based on their long garments. The third god is depicted with ceremonial beard and a kilt with apron at the front. Such garments are often connected with chthonic gods. Another suggestion might be the god Aš, depicted within the “Seshat recording booty” scene (see below). The connection between the gods and origin of captives must be investigated further, also within the other assembly of gods, but so far it is over the scope of current thesis.

The rows of captives are the best preserved, to this extent, of all pyramid complexes. Beautifully carved details provide detailed information about the garment and headdress of each prisoner. Also, the way the artists executed details, such as different types of bonding – there are no two identical, make this scene vivid and busy. I do not think that special type of bonding is determined to a certain ethnicity. People of *Twntyw* and *Mntw* origin are mentioned in the inscription. Elaborate details in triple A1 determinative of these nations makes easier to recognise Nubian, Asiatic and Libyan origins. The man determined as Libyan is holding an ostrich feather.

This scene was surrounded by the “trampling scene” and “Seshat recording booty” scenes.

### **3.3.4. *Unas***

Few damaged fragments were excavated in the lower part of the causeway, close to the northern wall<sup>436</sup>. Only one row of deities prevailed<sup>437</sup>. Unfortunately, the fragments are too damaged for deeper analysis.

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<sup>434</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 20.

<sup>435</sup> Attested also in the pyramid complex of Niuserre (Borchardt, 1907, pp. 93, Abb. 71), otherwise, according to Borchardt, attested only textually. For details see Borchardt, 1913, pp. 20.

<sup>436</sup> Labrouse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 19–20.

<sup>437</sup> Labrouse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 135, Fig. 15.

From the mortuary temple four relief fragments<sup>438</sup> depict squatting, kneeling or standing prisoners of Asiatic, Libyan or Punt origin prevailed. Nevertheless, the only god figure is depicted within the “Seshat recording booty” scene (see below).

### **3.3.5. *Pepi II Neferkare***

Various fragments of reliefs depicting bound foreigners lead by the gods<sup>439</sup> were found in the lower part of the causeway of king Pepi II. The same elements of the motif are present, as we know them from other pyramid complexes. Although fragmentary, distinguishable parts of bodies of Asiatic, Libyan and Nubian enemies are distinguishable. Their hands are tied in front, above or behind their bodies – the same diversity of bounding, which we know from the causeway of Sahure<sup>440</sup>. Again, we can also see the adjusted determinatives, that show specific attributes of neighbouring countries. The inscription, which is dividing the procession from the “Seshat recording booty” scene, contains the same formulas, as we have seen in the causeway of Sahure<sup>441</sup>. We can read the formulas: “All the lands of the West and East, *Twntyw* and *Mntw*, who are in these lands”.

### **3.3.6. *Summary of the scene “gods leading captives”***

In the transition from the Fourth to the Fifth Dynasty, this scene has been preserved from the area of the mortuary temple. In the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties it is found only at the lower path of the causeway. It is an integral part of the story in which the king tramples his enemies in the form of one of the mythical creatures. The difference in location may be given by the fact that reliefs from the turn of the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties may belong to the “Seshat recording booty” or “Libyan family” scenes. The scene is archetypal and so we do not find many differences between the temples. The same captives and the same gods are found in all of them. Unfortunately, the deities from this scene are only preserved in the pyramid complex of the ruler Sahure.

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<sup>438</sup> Labrousse, Lauer, Leclant, 1977, pp. 92–94, Fig. 67–71, Doc. 41–45.

<sup>439</sup> Jéquier, 1940, Planches 12–14.

<sup>440</sup> Borchartt, 1913, Blatt 5.

<sup>441</sup> Jéquier, 1940, pp. 10.; Borchartt, 1913, Blatt 5.

### 3.4. Seshat recording booty

As discussed above, the scene “Seshat recording booty” is a part of the “smiting scene”. Nevertheless, in the pyramid complex of Sahure is Seshat accompanied by a scene, where various goods from a foreign land, Libya, based on the origin of depicted figures, take place. Seshat’s role is to count and record booty and prisoners and execute king’s orders, as the inscription from the pyramid complex of Pepi II suggest.

Reliefs discussed in this chapter:

Dynasty	King's Name	Discussed Relief	Relief Placement	Figure Number
5th	Userkaf	Labrousse & Lauer, 2000, pp. 77, Fig. 230a-b–232a-b.	mortuary temple, transversal corridor	
	Sahure	Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 1	valley temple, S and N wall	16
	Sahure	Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 3	valley temple, S and N wall	
	Sahure	Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 4	causeway, lower part	
	Sahure	Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 5	causeway, lower part	15
	Sahure	Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 6	causeway, lower part	
	Unas	Labrousse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 135, Fig. 15.	causeway, lower part	
	Unas	Labrousse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 19–20	mortuary temple	
	Pepi I Meryre	Labrousse, 2019, pp. 140.	antechamber, north wall	
6th	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, Planche 8	causeway, lower part	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, Planche 9	transversal corridor, E wall	
	Pepi II Neferkare	Jéquier, 1938, Planche 10	transversal corridor, E wall	

**Table 6:** List of reliefs depicting the “Seshat recording booty” scenes.

#### 3.4.1. Userkaf

Two relief fragments<sup>442</sup> were found in transversal corridor. The goddess Seshat is depicted sitting on the throne in her characteristic garment of leopard skin. Her right hand is holding the papyrus. Close to her legs is an inscription stating *skr ʿnh*, “living

<sup>442</sup> Labrousse & Lauer, 2000, pp. 76, Fig. 228a-b and 229a-b.

prisoners<sup>443</sup> – the object of her counting. Prisoners are depicted within another two relief fragments<sup>444</sup> described above. Scene with “gods leading the captives” was a part of this scheme.

### 3.4.2. *Sahure*

Three scenes are attested in Sahure’s pyramid complex. Two<sup>445</sup> are placed in the valley temple, on the southern and northern wall. The third one<sup>446</sup> is just a fragment of the relief with the “trampling scene”, which was placed within the lower part of the causeway, on the northern wall. Only part of the Seshat’s throne, her headdress prevailed and hands of the Asiatic captive are visible.

The southern wall<sup>447</sup> offers the most complete depiction of the “Seshat recording booty scene”. Fragments of the smiting scene are slightly visible in the register to the left. To the left from the seated Seshat are three registers of Libyan prisoners. Each line depicts male, female and even children. Adult’s hands are raised in the gesture of mercy. Each line represents different tribe, when the first name is lost. Remaining names are *B3s* and *B3kt*<sup>448</sup>. All tribe members are depicted with: long hair with a headband, which has a protrusion in the front that resembles a royal *aureus*; V-shaped necklace; wide decorated stripes of fabric crossed over the chest; a belt, from which a penis sheath and a tale hangs. One side of the belt is adorned with an arc, perhaps a pendant. Both women and men are occasionally depicted with bracelets. It is worth mentioning, that the tale differs from the ritual bull’s tail of the king. Borchartd<sup>449</sup> suggest a tail of fox or a jackal is depicted. Curiously, even Libyan women are depicted with the penis sheath. This may refer to symbolical meaning of some elements. E. g., the *uraeus* and the jackal tail may refer to the homeland of these tribes.

The central part of the relief is filled with various species of domestic animals: cows, donkeys, goats and sheep. The number of seized booty is stated above each line. Nevertheless, the numbers are so absurdly high, that only the symbolic meaning

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<sup>443</sup> Labrousse & Lauer, 2000, pp. 112.

<sup>444</sup> Labrousse & Lauer, 2000, pp. 77, Fig. 230a-b and 232a-b.

<sup>445</sup> Borchartd, 1913, Blatt 1, 3–4.

<sup>446</sup> Borchartd, 1913, Blatt 5–7.

<sup>447</sup> Borchartd, 1913, Blatt 1.

<sup>448</sup> Borchartd, 1913, pp. 11.

<sup>449</sup> Borchartd, 1913, pp. 12.

is permissible. All animals are depicted in movement or interaction, which makes whole scene full of life and movement.

In the low right corner, two gods are silently observing the whole scene, to witness the king's triumph under the stary sky. The first one from the left is The Lady of the West. The second deity is the god Aš, Lord of Tjehenu. Inscriptions next to both gods are granting the king "the land of Tjehenu and all good things of the foreign lands". The main goddess of this scene is Seshat seated on the throne. She is depicted in her typical leopard garment<sup>450</sup>, which is recognisable by the paws hanging on the bottom edge. The skin is clipped with two clips<sup>451</sup> over her shoulders. Both her ankles are adorned with jewellery. Her specific headdress consists of a headband from which an extension rises up to hold a star with seven points. It seems like the star is glowing, as the rays of light are running in all directions. The star is covered with and oddly shaped crescent. She is holding a reed pen and a sheet of papyrus.

The second scene<sup>452</sup> from the valley temple contains only small fragments of the cattle and Asiatic, Libyan and Nubian prisoners. Nevertheless, we may observe new products and animals being depicted, including tall alabaster oil jars of foreign origin<sup>453</sup>, bears or cheetahs, suggested by M. Hilzheimer<sup>454</sup>. Borchardt suggest, that all products are from the northern lands, based on the placement of the scene<sup>455</sup>.

### 3.4.3. *Unas*

Two fragments of this scene prevailed<sup>456</sup> from the lower part of the causeway, northern wall<sup>457</sup>. The first fragment depicts the headdress of the goddess Seshat. The second one portrays the lowest row of the bound captives, each of different origin. Their hands are tied in different ways – as we saw with Sahure. Two following rows depict a heard of cows and donkeys.

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<sup>450</sup> The goddess of literacy, writing and record keeping. Her name can be translated as "The female scribe". She is also counting the regnal years of the king. Mostly, she is depicted in anthropomorphic form. For details see Wilkinson, 2003, pp. 166–167.

<sup>451</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 13.

<sup>452</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 3–4.

<sup>453</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 16.

<sup>454</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 179–180.

<sup>455</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 17.

<sup>456</sup> Labrouse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 135, Fig. 15.

<sup>457</sup> Labrouse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 19–20.

Another fragment<sup>458</sup> was found in the mortuary temple as a part of the smiting scene. Asiatic prisoner followed by a god is labelled as *sꜥr ꜥnh*, “live prisoner”. The figure of the god, presenting the prisoner, is damaged and unrecognisable.

#### **3.4.4. *Pepi I Meryre***

Only two fragments of this scene were excavated in the antechamber, north wall<sup>459</sup>. The first relief depicts a row of donkeys and the second one portrays bound captive followed by the god<sup>460</sup>.

#### **3.4.5. *Pepi II Neferkare***

Fragments of this scene were found in the transversal corridor on the east wall<sup>461</sup>. Nothing is left from the Seshat part, or the booty, except for the Libyan family in the lower corner. This scene was continuing with the smiting motif.

#### **3.4.6. *Summary of the scene “Seshat recording booty”***

The scene may appear in all parts of the pyramid complex, as complementary motif for the “smiting” and “trampling” scene. Seshat is keeping records of king’s deeds and accomplishments. Within the smiting scene it affirms the king’s dominion over certain region, which is granted to him by the gods. When the Libyan family is present, the only prisoners are of Libyan origin. While the king is smiting enemies of multiple regions, the gods are bringing representatives from each of the nations. Also, when counting booty from other regions, all captive ethnicities are present as well.

### **3.5. Libyan family**

This scene is an integral part of the “smiting scene” and the “Seshat recording booty” scene. This motif was attested in the pyramid complex of Sahure and Pepi II Neferkare. Nevertheless, it is highly plausible, that this scene was a standard theme of the relief decoration.

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<sup>458</sup> Labrousse, Lauer, Leclant, 1977, pp. 90–91, Fig. 66, Doc. 40.

<sup>459</sup> Labrousse, 2019, pp. 140.

<sup>460</sup> Labrousse, 2019, Fig. 90.

<sup>461</sup> Jéquier, 1938, Planche 8–10.



In both cases the family of so-called Libyan prince is witnessing the smiting of their father/husband. The historicity of this scene is in question as the scene remains the same in both pyramid complexes – including names of the family members. The plea for mercy of the family is in contrast with the will of the king to smite all his enemies and thus ritually confirm his dominance over certain territories.

### 3.5.1. *Sahure*

Within the “Seshat recording booty” scene<sup>462</sup> a Libyan family is depicted in lower left corner. The family is forced to watch the smiting of their father/husband. Two sons and a presumably a wife, based on her larger figure, of the Libyan chieftain are depicted and even their names are recorded: *W<sup>c</sup>s3*, *Wni* and *hwt-itf-s*, respectively. Borchardt<sup>463</sup> states, that the last two names are of Egyptian origin. Nevertheless, comparison with the pyramid complex of Pepy II showed, that the same names are mentioned there. This suggests a symbolical meaning of such scene.

Another scene of Libyan family was in the proximity of the “smiting scene”. The name of the wife *hwt-itf-s* was partly visible at the time of excavations<sup>464</sup>. Unfortunately, only fragments of this scene prevailed. Fragment of the scene, where the family is pleading for mercy was found.

### 3.5.2. *Pepi II Neferkare*

We can see a typical scene<sup>465</sup>, the same we know from the temple of Sahure<sup>466</sup>, where even the names of the members of the family are the same. This shows that also this scene had symbolical meaning more than the historical one. The wife and her children are raising their hands in the gesture of mercy. Right next to this scene the smiting motive was present.

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<sup>462</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Blatt 1.

<sup>463</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 11.

<sup>464</sup> Borchardt, 1913, pp. 15.

<sup>465</sup> Jéquier, 1938, Planche 8–10.

<sup>466</sup> Borchardt, 1907, Blatt 1.

### 3.6. Return of the merchant ships

The “Return of the merchant ships” represents only a small part of the repertoire of the maritime scenes. Considering the number of surviving fragments, it is evident that, as the procession of domains, this theme played an important role within the decorative programme<sup>467</sup>. As mentioned in previous chapters, boats were often depicted in art since the Predynastic times. This stems from the important role the river Nile played in everyday life of the ancient Egyptians. Moreover, the ship and the potential it represented were associated with an extensive power of the king. Boat travels are associated with the sun god and therefore with the king. Description of the whole problematic of boats within the pyramid complexes is over the scope of this thesis, therefore I will focus only on the scenes where Asiatic people are aboard of the merchant ships.

Reliefs depicting this scene were found only in the pyramid complex of Sahure<sup>468</sup> (Fig. 17) and Unas<sup>469</sup>. With Sahura, the people aboard of the ship are both Egyptian and Libyan origin. All groups contain men, women and children. With Unas, only people of Libyan origin are depicted. In both complexes the foreigners are not bound nor they do not seem threatened. Their arms are raised in the gesture of respect when they pay homage to the king.

As A. Ćwiek summarised: “Three different explanations of the depicted event were proposed: either a military, or trade expedition, or else coming of a Syrian princess to marry the king”<sup>470</sup>. While A. Labrousse and A. Moussa<sup>471</sup> are proposing possible marriage of the king, J. Vercoutter<sup>472</sup> is suggesting Libyans as prisoners in Sahura’s pyramid complex and Libyans as prisoners in the pyramid complex of Unas.

In the context of this paper, for now, I will leave this question opened.

### 3.7. War scenes

A war scene<sup>473</sup> against people of Asiatic origin is depicted in the middle of the causeway, on the northern wall, of the king Unas. Foreigners are carved with typical standardised features of long hair with ribbons, long beards, bracelets and short plain kilts.

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<sup>467</sup> Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 250.

<sup>468</sup> Borchardt, 1913, Plate 12 and 13.

<sup>469</sup> Labrousse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 140, Fig. 27, Doc. 15.

<sup>470</sup> Ćwiek, 2003, pp. 254.

<sup>471</sup> Labrousse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 27.

<sup>472</sup> Vercoutter, 1992, pp. 292 and 310.

<sup>473</sup> Labrousse & Moussa, 2002, Fig. 16–21 and Doc. 5–10.

One of the enemies is labelled as *sw/šw*. All depicted figures are of smaller scale, creating separate registers – A. Labrousse and A. Moussa<sup>474</sup> suggest there were at least five of them. From found fragments it is unclear whether a large figure of the king was present, or whether this scene is a part of smaller scenes in the causeway, escalating with a large figure of the king sitting on the upper end on both sides. Nevertheless, it does aptly complement the scenes in which the king, as a sphinx or a griffin, tramples his enemies.

The war scene is often compared to a scene with archers<sup>475</sup> from Khufu's pyramid complex. We see two rows of archers, in typical dress with stripes of cloth crossing their chests, with bows drawn and arrows in their hands. The archers appear to be ready to shoot. The two rows could refer to an attack in progress. However, the scene depicting the war from the causeway of the king Unas is somewhat more vivid and harsh. Although the archers are also present, stabbing and beating is happening as well. Enemies are depicted beaten or lying dead on the ground. The feeling of the fight is quite dense. The archer scene from Khufu's pyramid complex resembles more the newly excavated scenes from the causeway of Sahure, where his sons are instructed how to use the bow, or a parade of the army troops we know also from other pyramid complexes.

The scene layout and balanced depiction is extraordinary. Egyptian troops are depicted fighting back to back against their enemies, which are clearly defeated. Similarly to the procession of captives, each pose is unique presenting different types of combat with various weapons – containing bows, sticks, daggers or maces<sup>476</sup> and semi-circular axes<sup>477</sup>. One of the descriptions states *snḥ sw*, binding<sup>478</sup> enemies labelled as *sw*. Despite the static style of Egyptian art, scenes are vivid and full of action.

This scene is unparalleled elsewhere and it is possible, it represents a new kind of motif, which might appear as a reaction to the changing geopolitical situation.

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<sup>474</sup> Labrousse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 21–23.

<sup>475</sup> Arnold, 1999, pp. 264–267 and Pic. 66.

<sup>476</sup> The weapon held by both the Egyptian soldier and the foreigner resembles with its shape a dagger (see Shaw, 2019, pp. 99) or the hieroglyph T8 of archaic type (see Gardiner, 1957, pp. 511, hieroglyph T8), but the style in which the enemy is holding the weapon does not match with a dagger and resembles more a mace or a club. The handle of the dagger is missing, but according to the T8 hieroglyph, the archaic version of it was depicted this way. One detail of relief from pyramid complex of Pepi II, where one of the figures, within the plural determinative, is holding this dagger-like object. But the way the figure is holding the dagger, more resembles a mace (see Jéquier, 1938, Planche 35). In this particular relief, it resembles a disk-mace. See a photo from the Brooklyn Museum, where even the angle is right to create a perception of this odd shape: Brooklyn Museum. Objects: 07.447.873; 35.1314. Mace Head [photo]. Accessible on: <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/4234>. Further research will be necessary for better identification of this weapon. A. Labrousse and A. Moussa suggest a mace (see Labrousse & Moussa, 2002, Fig. 16 and Doc. 5.)

<sup>477</sup> Shaw, 2019, pp. 97.

<sup>478</sup> Erman & Grapow, 1971 pp. 168.

According to A. Labrousse and A. Moussa<sup>479</sup>, it depicts a real historical event. Nevertheless, it belongs to the victory scenes, where the king is dealing with his enemies.

### 3.8. Raising the *shnt*-pole

This unique unparalleled scene<sup>480</sup> was excavated in the pyramid complex of king Pepi II Neferkare (Fig. 20), in the transverse corridor of his mortuary temple, on the east wall. This motif belongs, according to T. El Awady, to the group “Consolidating the world of order”, where the king acts in his passive role – as an observer and receiver<sup>481</sup>. There are no other earlier attestations, but existence of this motive can not be rejected, due to the important role of the god Min and his cultic centre in Coptos<sup>482</sup>.

In this scene<sup>483</sup> eight men, four of them are preserved on the right side, therefore it is logical to assume the same number on the opposite side, dressed in a special tunic bound with a narrow strip of cloth, are climbing up a special construction. Striking feature is an ostrich feather in their hair. This feather is associated with people of Libyan or Nubian origin. Nevertheless, the wig, absence of the headband with stripes and absence of the beard ascribes to these men a rather Egyptian origin. This type of dress is not attested for any other activity but is attested for this type of a feast during the New Kingdom<sup>484</sup>. Gauthier<sup>485</sup> points out, that men labelled as *Nhsjw* were coming to participate in this feast and help to build up a tent, which is resembling this *shnt* structure – a tent-

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<sup>479</sup> Labrousse & Moussa, 2002, pp. 21.

<sup>480</sup> D. Stockfish raises a question, whether a relief from the pyramid complex of Sneferu also depicts this scene (see Fakhry, 1961, pp. 132, Fig. 154). In my opinion it does not. The costume on the depicted figure also contains crossed bandages, but their thickness and angle of bandaging does not correspond with the scene from the pyramid complex of Pepi II. This type of bandaging more resembles the one depicted on archers (see Arnold, 1999, pp. 264). Moreover, a belt from a kilt is visible, which is not a part of the costume depicted on the relief of Pepi II.

<sup>481</sup> El Awady, 2006, pp. 80 and description on pages 92–93.

<sup>482</sup> Min is one of the earliest attested deities and remained popular until the last days of Ancient Egypt. As a god of male sexual procreativity, he was associated primarily with fertility, renewal and sprouting. He was also the god of the eastern desert regions. Depicted in anthropomorphic form, with crown with two straight, tall plumes and a solar disc, sometimes wearing collar and bracelets, ithyphallic, with right raised arm holding a flail. Where colour prevails, he is painted in black – as a reference to the black fertile soil. His emblem remains uninterpreted, being explained as a lightning bolt or petrified sand. One of the often offerings to this god was a lettuce, due to its milky sap, that sprouts out of its stem. The oldest site associated with Min is Coptos, called Gebtu by ancient Egyptians. Legends connected to the origin of this god states, that he came to Egypt from Nubia during the Prehistorical times. For details see: Wilkinson, 2003, pp. 115–117.

<sup>483</sup> Jéquier, 1938, Tableau IV., Planches 12–14.

<sup>484</sup> McFarlane, 1995, pp. 251.

<sup>485</sup> Gauthier, 1931, pp. 147–149; McFarlane, 1995, pp. 251.

shrine of the god Min. Based also on Gauthiers research<sup>486</sup>, later textual records show, that some hymns were sung by the men from Punt, to honour the god Min during various festivities. Therefore, it is possible, that they may represent people of Nubian origin, but the typical short beard is missing.

Close to the most upper man on the right side of the pole, above his head, a piece of inscription is visible, stating *shnt*. According to A. McFarlane<sup>487</sup> the full name of this ceremony is *s<sup>h</sup> k3 shnt*, Raising the *shnt*-pole, as it is attested in later times and bears the name of the Min's shrine, also called *shnt*. G. Jéquier<sup>488</sup> compares this festival with modern maypole and states it was supposed to celebrate agricultural rites of sprouting and flourishing. The symbolism of ithyphallic Min and raising the pole is clearly also valid, based on G. A. Wainwright's<sup>489</sup> assumptions. M. Isler<sup>490</sup> proposed a theory, where the pole represents a gnomon, to predict the solstice, when the yearly inundations come.

The ritual is being supervised by a figure of the priest, standing to the right of the pole, with titular *hry-hb hry-tp* and *smr w<sup>t</sup>ty* – Chief Lector Priest and the Courtier of Pepi II. The king is also present in this scene, standing on to the right from the pole. He is wearing *shendyt* and McFarlane<sup>491</sup> considers he is wearing the white Upper Egyptian crown, as this ritual originates in the south of Egypt. G. Jéquier<sup>492</sup> adds that the king is holding the *ʿb3* sceptre or *shm* to perform the gesture of initiation towards the god Min, who is standing in the opposition to the king in the upper register.

The evidence from later periods suggests, that the origin of the men performing the ritual, is in Nubia. The Nubian origin of this god would explain their nationality. Nevertheless, the reason, why the ritual must be performed by the Nubian men is unclear. More elaborate assumptions regarding this festival are beyond the scope of present thesis, however, the author plans to continue with more detailed research.

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<sup>486</sup> Gauthier, 1931, pp. 202–204; McFarlane, 1995, pp. 251.

<sup>487</sup> McFarlane, 1995, pp. 251.

<sup>488</sup> Jéquier, 1938, pp. 17–19.

<sup>489</sup> Wainwright, 1935, pp. 152–170.

<sup>490</sup> Isler, 1991, pp. 155–185.

<sup>491</sup> McFarlane, 1995, pp. 251.

<sup>492</sup> Jéquier, 1938, pp. 17–19.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Depictions of foreigners are present in the iconography and art from the Predynastic and Early Dynastic periods. We may observe gradual emergence of the motif of the leading figure. These early chieftains or kings were designated with special headdresses. Special rituals were performed for or before them. First scenes depicting violence on people of the foreign origin are not averse to violence. The strength of the leading figure is reinforced by special attributes such as: special headdresses and kilts or garments, and ceremonial tails. The tail as a symbol of strength is of bull. Other animals were associated with the king and the kingship – falcon, lion, scorpion, elephant or dog.

The early kings adopted ceremonial palettes as commemorative objects, on which they carved their deeds. Palettes were displayed in close proximity to the temples. The king presented his deeds to the gods, to receive their blessing and protection. Scenes of smiting became the key motifs of the kingships. Paralleled with the slaying of the dangerous animals, they both representing the same idea – defeating chaos and establishing order. The transition from 3D objects to flat materials brought the novelty of depicting stories in registers. This allowed more elaborate stories, to be told. Also new sign of the kingship emerged – *serekh* with the god Horus perching on the top of it. Smiting scene together with celebration of the *Heb-sed* festival, were the key motifs of Early Dynasties. First ideas connecting the king with the sun cult emerges as well.

The beginning of the Old Kingdom saw another great innovation – mortuary temples built entire from stone. These walls meant the perfect canvas for royal reliefs. From the excavated reliefs is evident, that all key motifs from the previous periods continued. Although not much is left from the Fourth Dynasty, it is evident, that the elaborate system of motifs and their placement within the pyramid complex appeared. The smiting scenes were involved in this decorative programme.

It is the Fifth Dynasty and king Sahure, from whose pyramid complex the most extensive collection of reliefs prevailed. The second greatest corpus comes from the pyramid complex of king Pepi II. The scenes containing foreigners might be divided into the following topics:

1. The king smiting the enemies;
2. The king as a sphinx or a griffin trampling enemies;
3. Gods leading captives to the king;

4. Seshat recording booty;
5. Libyan family;
6. Return of the merchant ships;
7. War scenes;
8. Raising the *shnt*-pole.

Except the last three motifs, all present the king as the active figure. Smiting or trampling enemies takes place with the supervision and tacit consent of the god. They are not only witness, goddess Seshat is recording the booty, which was seized based on king's orders. The decorative programme is creating one long story about the king, his reign and his deeds. Therefore, we may observe gods leading captives to the king, who is in the form of mythical beast trampling them. Captives are being brought on the ships, as well as the goods from foreign lands, before the king, who is smiting the Libyan chieftains and acquiring his possessions.

Thanks to elaborate details, we may observe features typical for each nation:

Libyans are depicted with long hair with a headband resembling uraeus. They have long narrow beard. Usually, they are wearing collars and V-shaped necklaces. Their chest is crossed with two stripes with rich embroidery. They wear a belt with a jackal's tails and a pendant on one side. Both men and women are depicted with a penis sheath.

People of Asiatic origin are wearing headbands of ribbons, plain kilts. As Libyans, they are depicted with a long beard.

Nubians are most similar to the Egyptians. They are depicted with elaborate wigs, from which sometimes three braids hang down, headbands and plain kilts with double belt. Special stripe of cloth is hanging down their waist. Their belts are richly decorated.

The decorative program differs in each pyramid complex, but we may find the key motifs repeating all over again. Their placement differs. This might be caused by various factors. From the lack of space, through lack of time to difficult political situation. It is evident, that there were many factors affecting the number and motif layout. The most significant difference is visible with the smiting and trampling scenes. Their number increases at the end of the Sixth Dynasty, which reflects the complex political situation, as also example of bound captive statues confirms.

# LIST OF FIGURES

PLATE I

MAGHĀRAH.

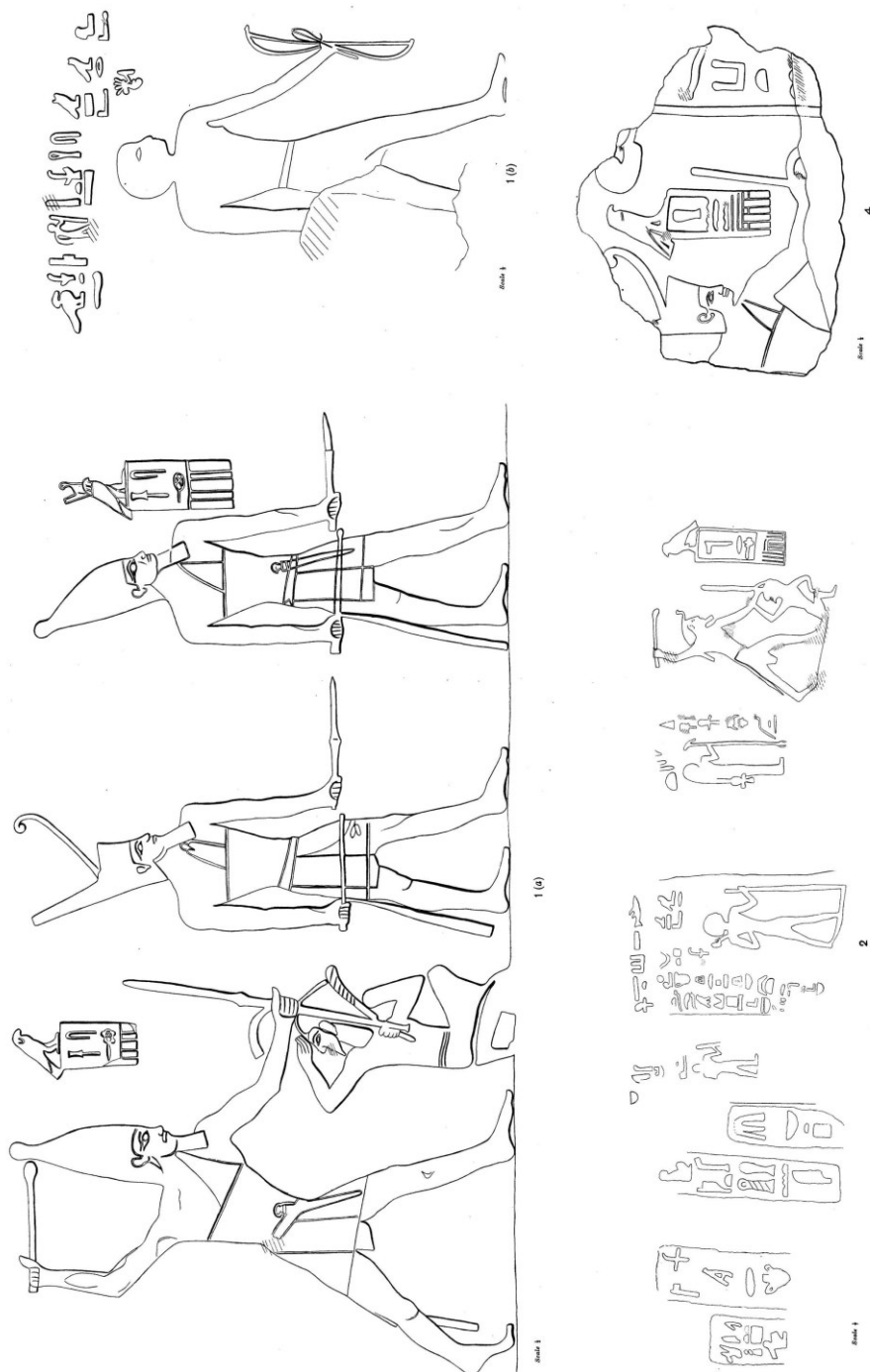
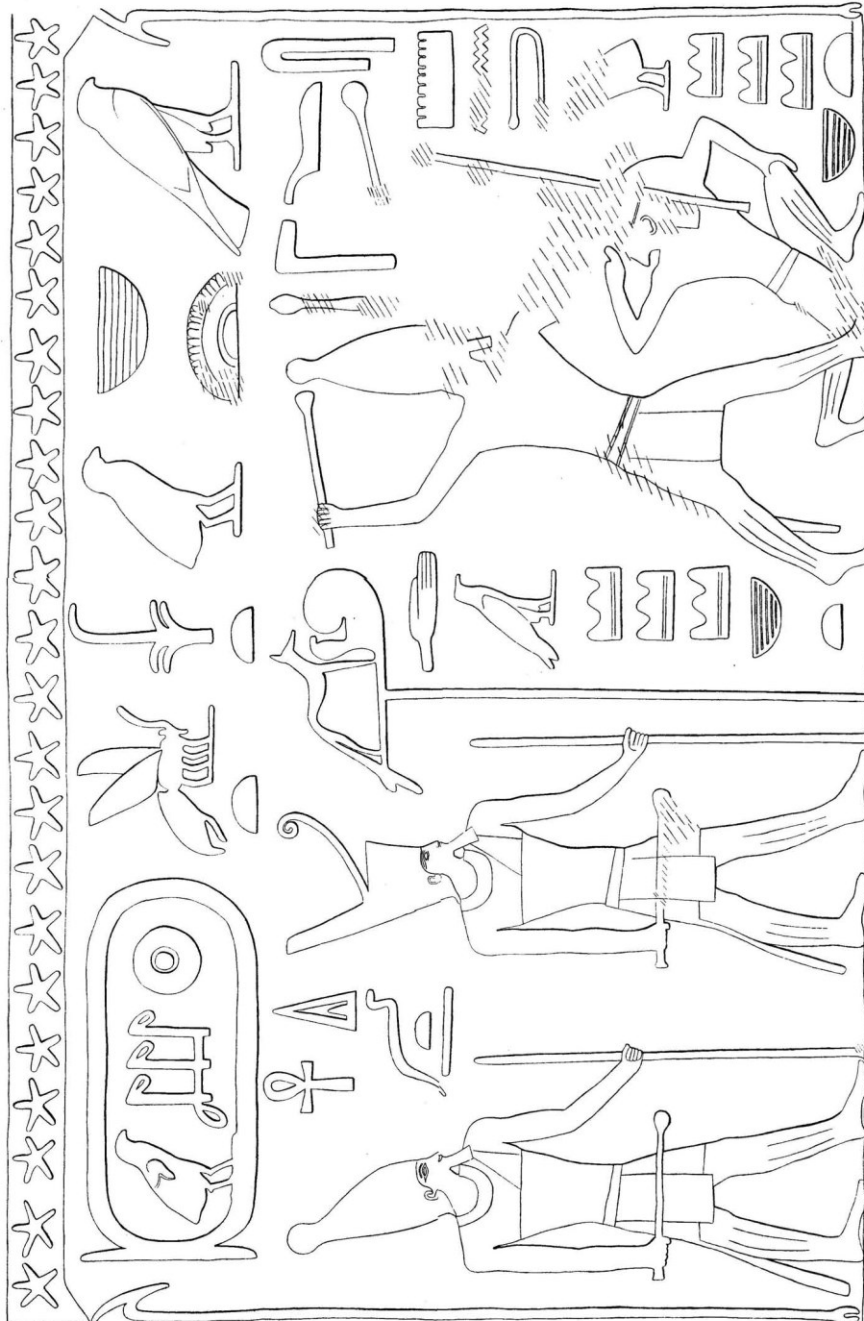


Figure 1: Reliefs with the “smiting scene”, kings Djoser, Sekhemkhet and Sanakht, Wadi Maghara.

Source: Gardiner, A. H., Peet, T. E., & Černý, J. (Eds.). (1952). *The Inscriptions of Sinai. Part I, Introduction and Plates, Thirty-Sixth Memoir of The Egypt Exploration Society*. London: Oxford University Press.



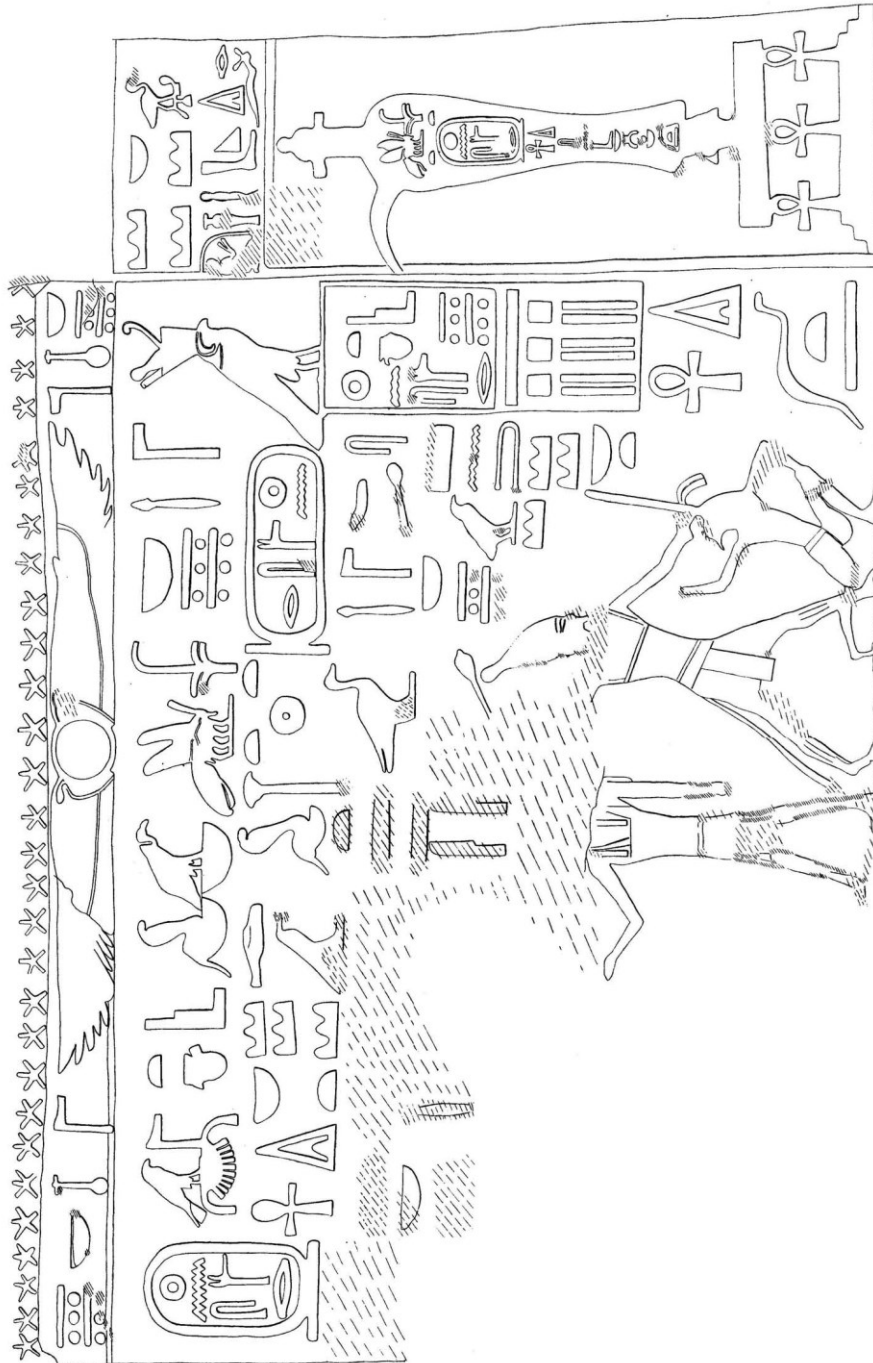
MAGHÁRAH.



**Figure 2:** Relief with the “smiting scene”, king Sahure, Wadi Maghara.

**Source:** Gardiner, A. H., Peet, T. E., & Černý, J. (Eds.). (1952). *The Inscriptions of Sinai. Part I, Introduction and Plates, Thirty-Sixth Memoir of The Egypt Exploration Society*. London: Oxford University Press.

MAGHÁRAH.



10

Scale +

Figure 3: Relief with the “smiting scene”, king Niuserra, Wadi Maghara.

Source: Gardiner, A. H., Peet, T. E., & Černý, J. (Eds.). (1952). *The Inscriptions of Sinai. Part I, Introduction and Plates, Thirty-Sixth Memoir of The Egypt Exploration Society*. London: Oxford University Press.

ALTES REICH

Abth. II. Bl. 2.

Dyn. IV.

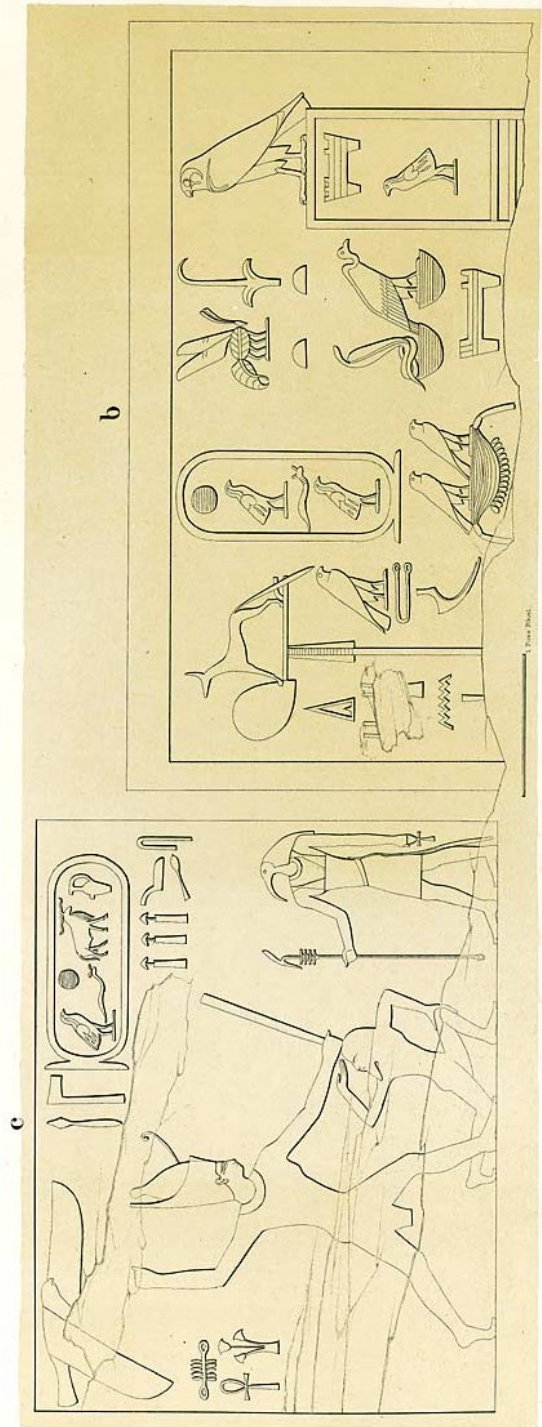
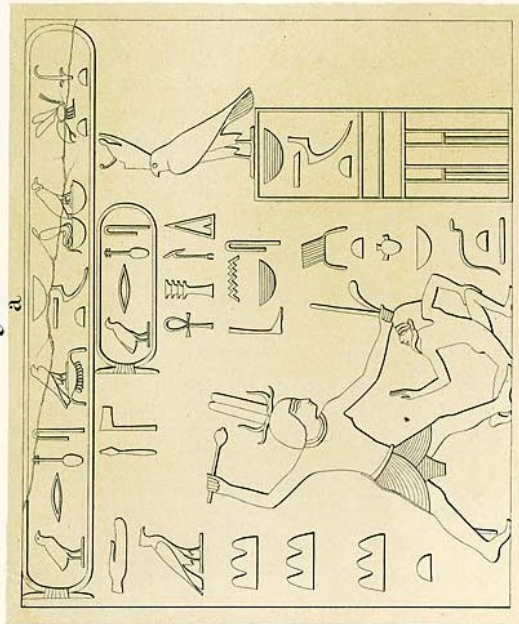
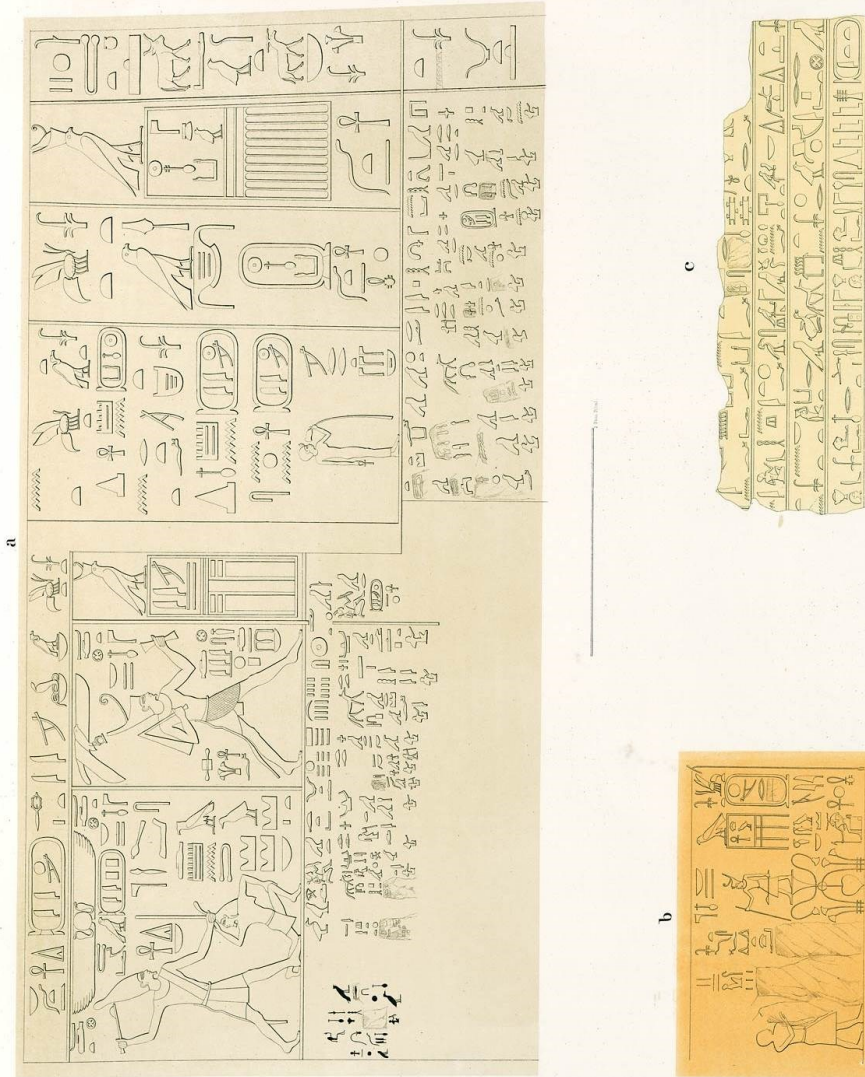


Figure 4: Relief with the “smiting scene”, kings Sneferu and Khufu, Wadi Maghara.

Source: Lepsius, C. R. (1849). *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien nach den zeichnungen der von Seiner Majestaet dem Koenige von Preussen Friedrich Wilhelm IV: Zweite Abtheilung Denkmaeler des Alten Reichs, Abtheilung II, Band III*. Berlin: Nicolaische Buchhandlung.

ALTES REICH

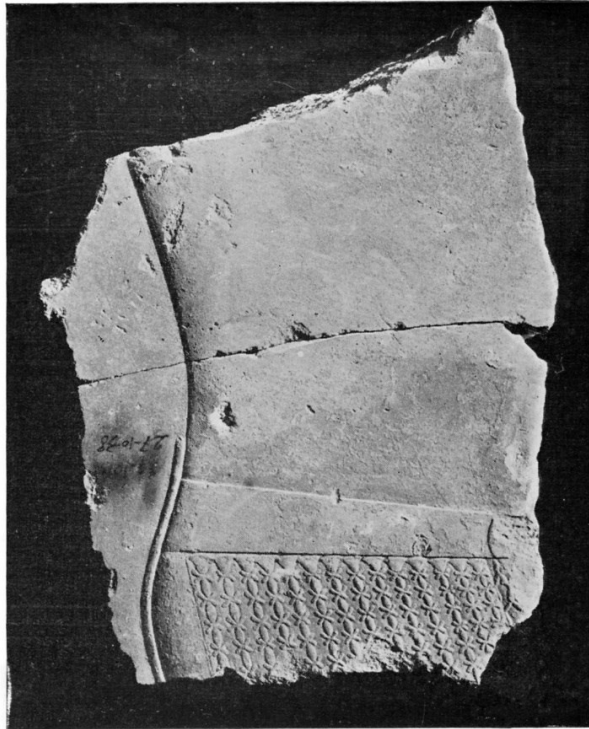
Dyn. VI.



Felseninschriften a. aus Wadi Maghara. b. aus Assuan.  
c. Steine aus Saqara [jetzt im K. Mus. zu Berlin.]

Figure 5: Relief with the "smiting scene", king Pepi I Meryre, Wadi Maghara.

Source: Lepsius, C. R. (1849). *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopen nach den Zeichnungen der von Seiner Majestaet dem Koenige von Preussen Friedrich Wilhelm IV: Zweite Abtheilung Denkmaeler des Alten Reichs, Abtheilung II, Band IV.* Berlin: Nicolaische Buchhandlung.



A.—The torso of King *Khufu*, from the northern wall of the causeway

**Figure 6:** Photograph A. shows part of the kilt of the king *Khufu* with a detailed depiction of the pearl ornament topped with papyrus flowers, part of the "Lower Egyptian costume".

**Source:** Hassan, S. (1960). *The Great Pyramid of Khufu and its Mortuary Chapel, With Names and Titles of Vols. I-X of the Excavations at Giza, Excavations at Giza, Season 1938-39, Vol. X.* Cairo: General Organisation for Government Printing Offices.



**Figure 7:** Detail of the bracelet of the god Osiris, which depicts the "smiting scene" with a standing enemy, pyramid complex of king Niuserre.

**Source:** Borchardt, L. (1907). *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Ne-user-Rea*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.

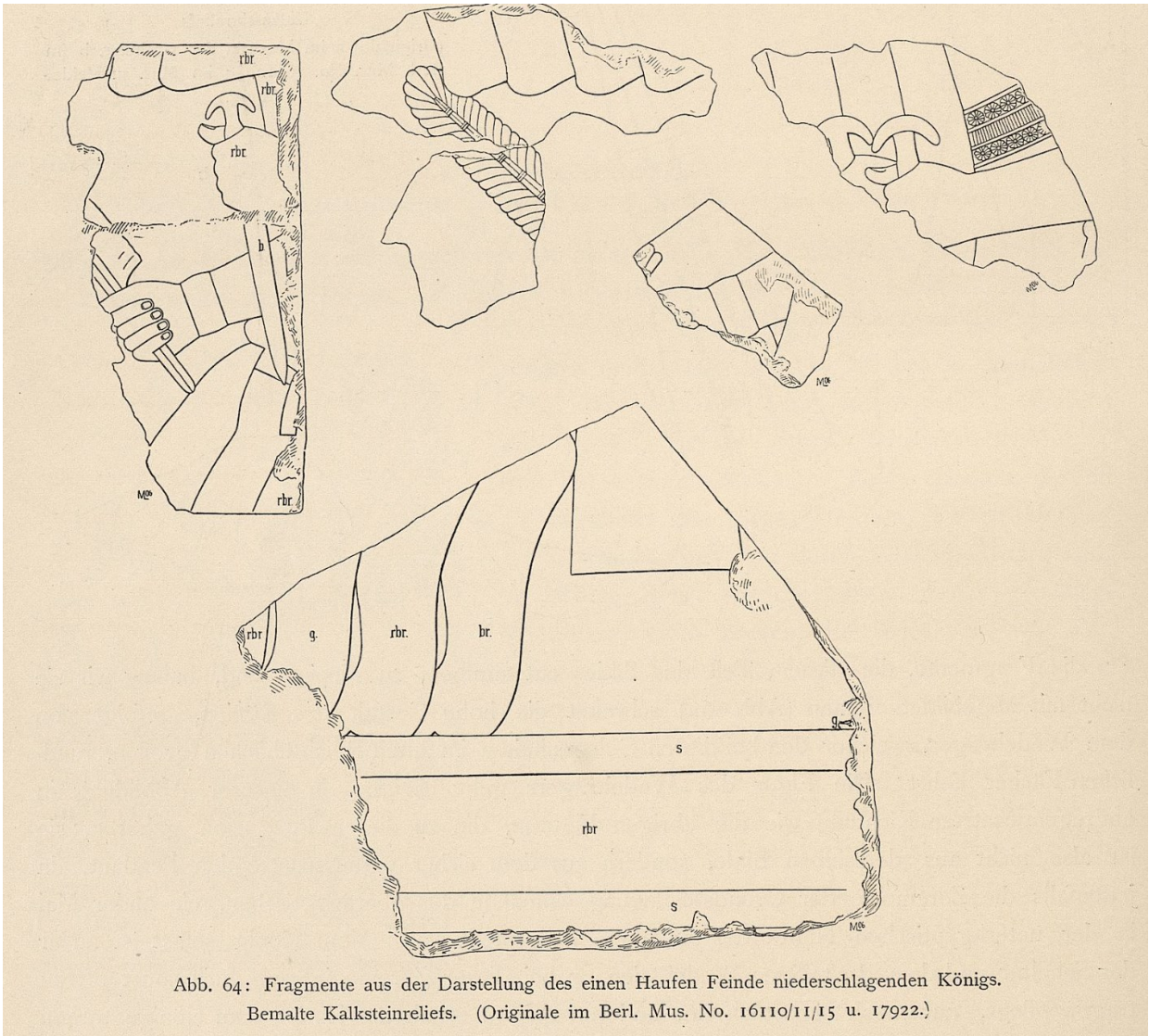
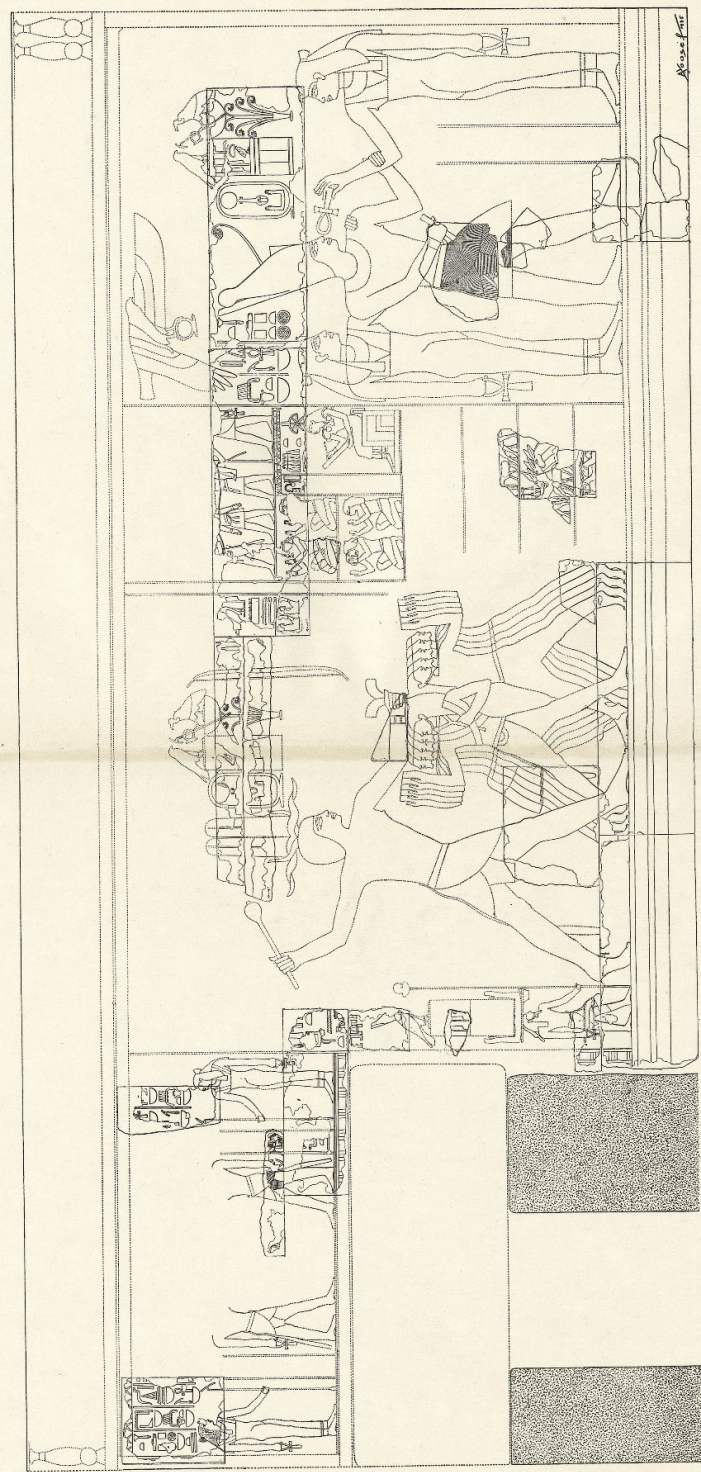


Abb. 64: Fragmente aus der Darstellung des einen Haufen Feinde niederschlagenden Königs.  
Bemalte Kalksteinreliefs. (Originale im Berl. Mus. No. 16110/11/15 u. 17922.)

**Figure 8:** Fragments of reliefs depicting hands of enemies holding a dagger or a mace and a feather,  
pyramid complex of Niuserre.

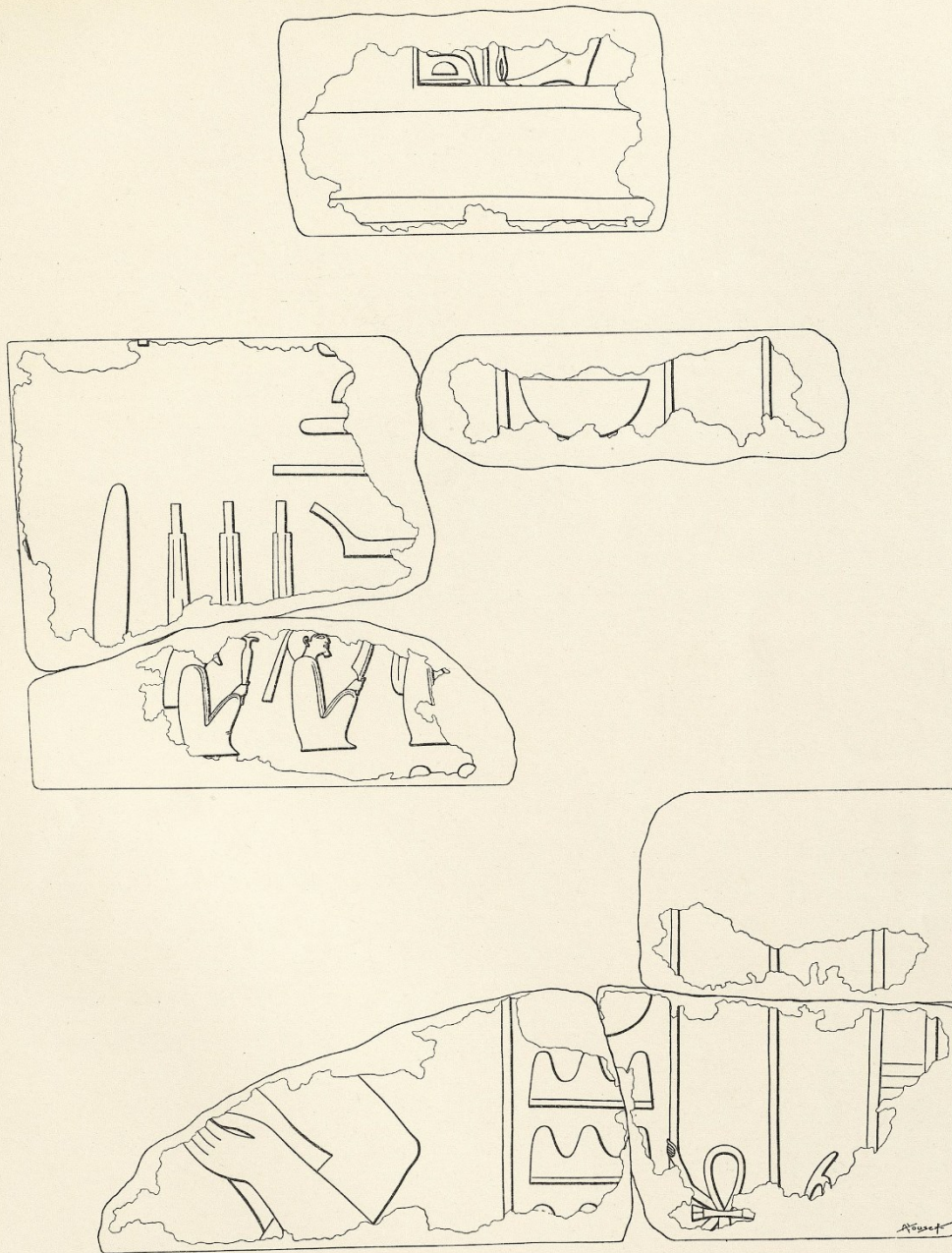
**Source:** Borchardt, L. (1907). Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Ne-user-Rea. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.



Vestibule, Paroi sud. Reconstitution de l'ensemble.

**Figure 9:** Reconstruction of the "smiting scene", pyramid complex of Pepi II Neferkare.  
**Source:** Jéquier, G. (1938). *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II. Vol. 2, Le temple.* Le Caire: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français d'archéologie Orientale.

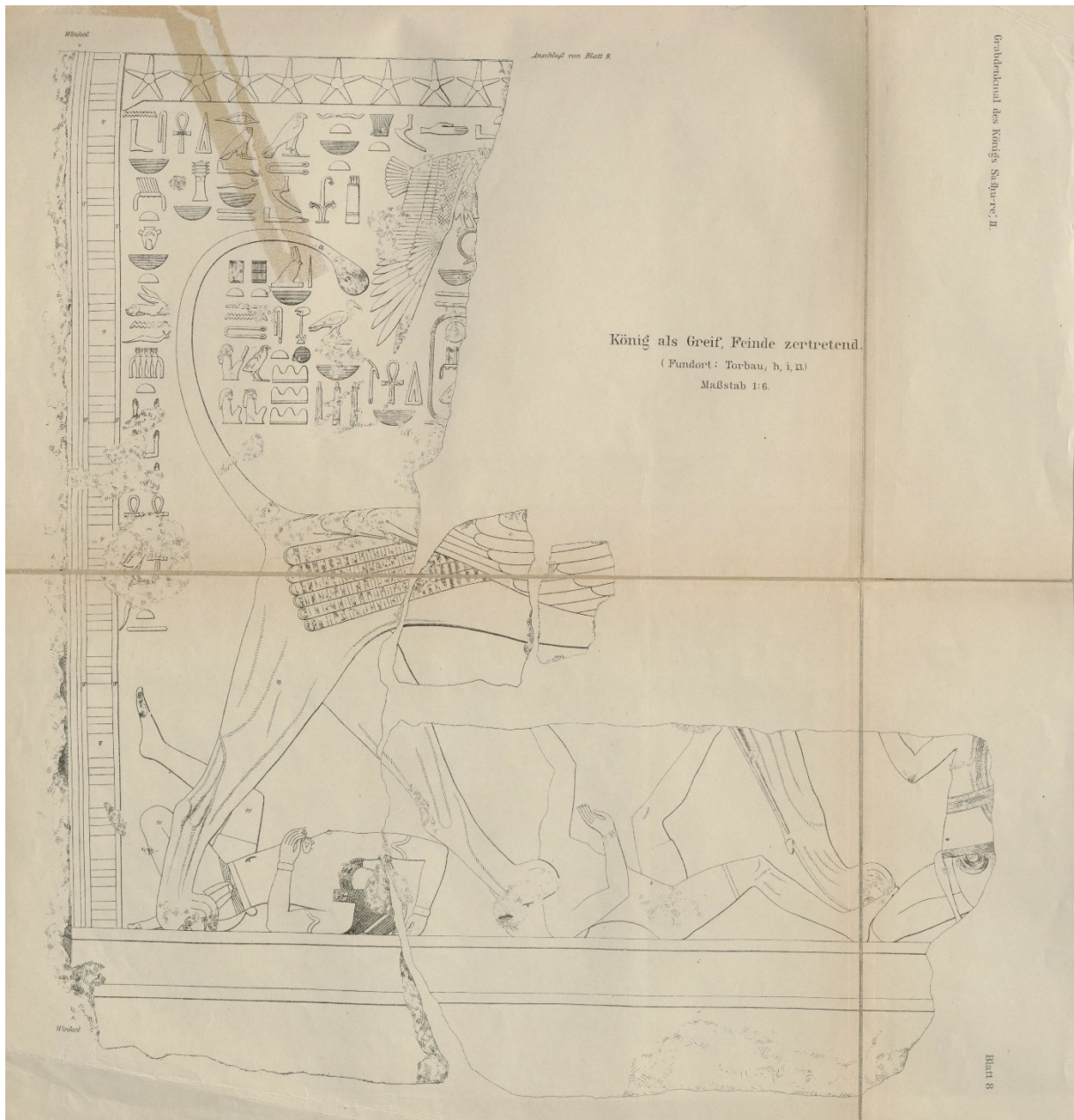




Salle des statues.

**Figure 10:** Relief with a detail of determinative of *Twntyw*, where each ethnicity is depicted, pyramid complex of Pepi II Neferkare.

**Source:** Jéquier, G. (1938). *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II. Vol. 2, Le temple.* Le Caire: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français d'archéologie Orientale



**Figure 11:** Relief with the “trampling scene”, pyramid complex of king Sahure.

**Source:** Borchardt, L. (1913). *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs S'uAhu-Rea, Band II.: Die Wandbilder, Abbildungsblätter.*

Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.



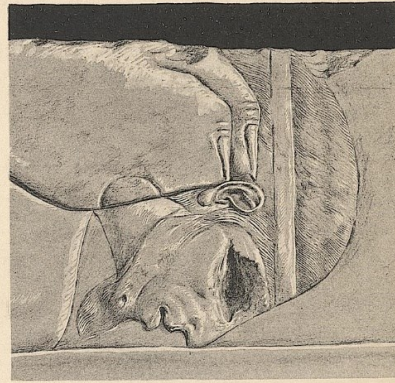
1



2



3



4



5



6

Köpfe niedergeworfener Feinde  
von den Relieffragmenten aus dem Aufgang.

1, 2, 4, u. 6: Asiaten; 3 u. 5: Bewohner von Punt.

(Originale im Berl. Mus.)

**Figure 12:** Details of the heads of trampled enemies, depicting Asians, Libyans and Nubians, pyramid complex of Niuserre.

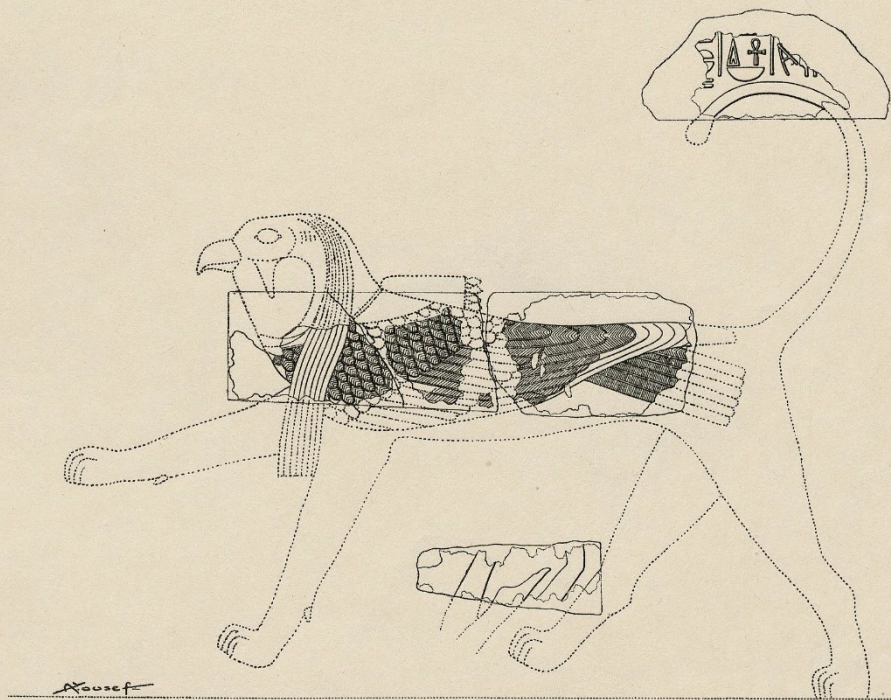
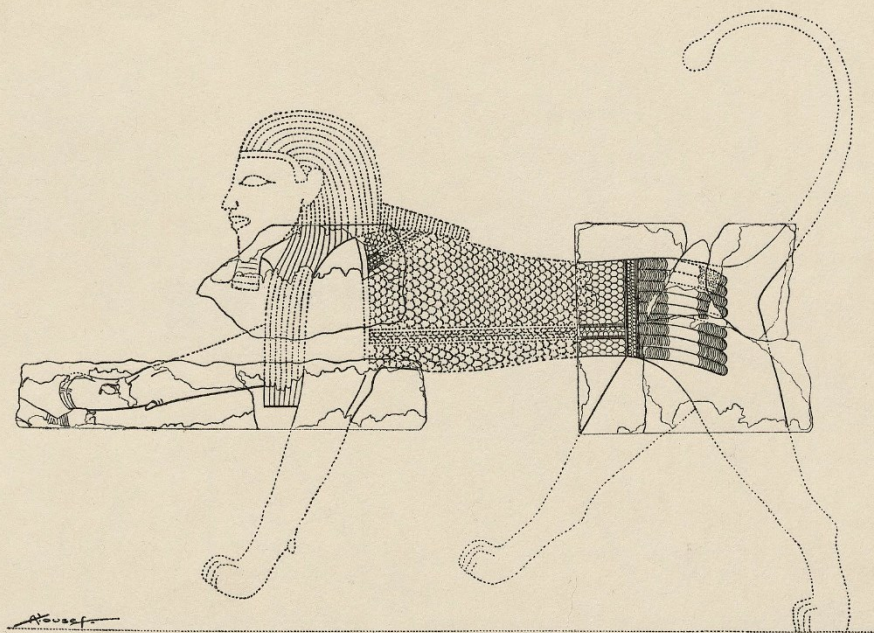
**Source:** Borchardt, L. (1907). *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Ne-user-Rea*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.



Abb. 31: Probe der Relieffragmente aus dem Aufgang. Körper eines fallenden Libyers.  
(Original im Berl. Mus. No. 17915/16.)

**Figure 13:** Relief with fine details of a smitten Libyan, pyramid complex of Niuserre.

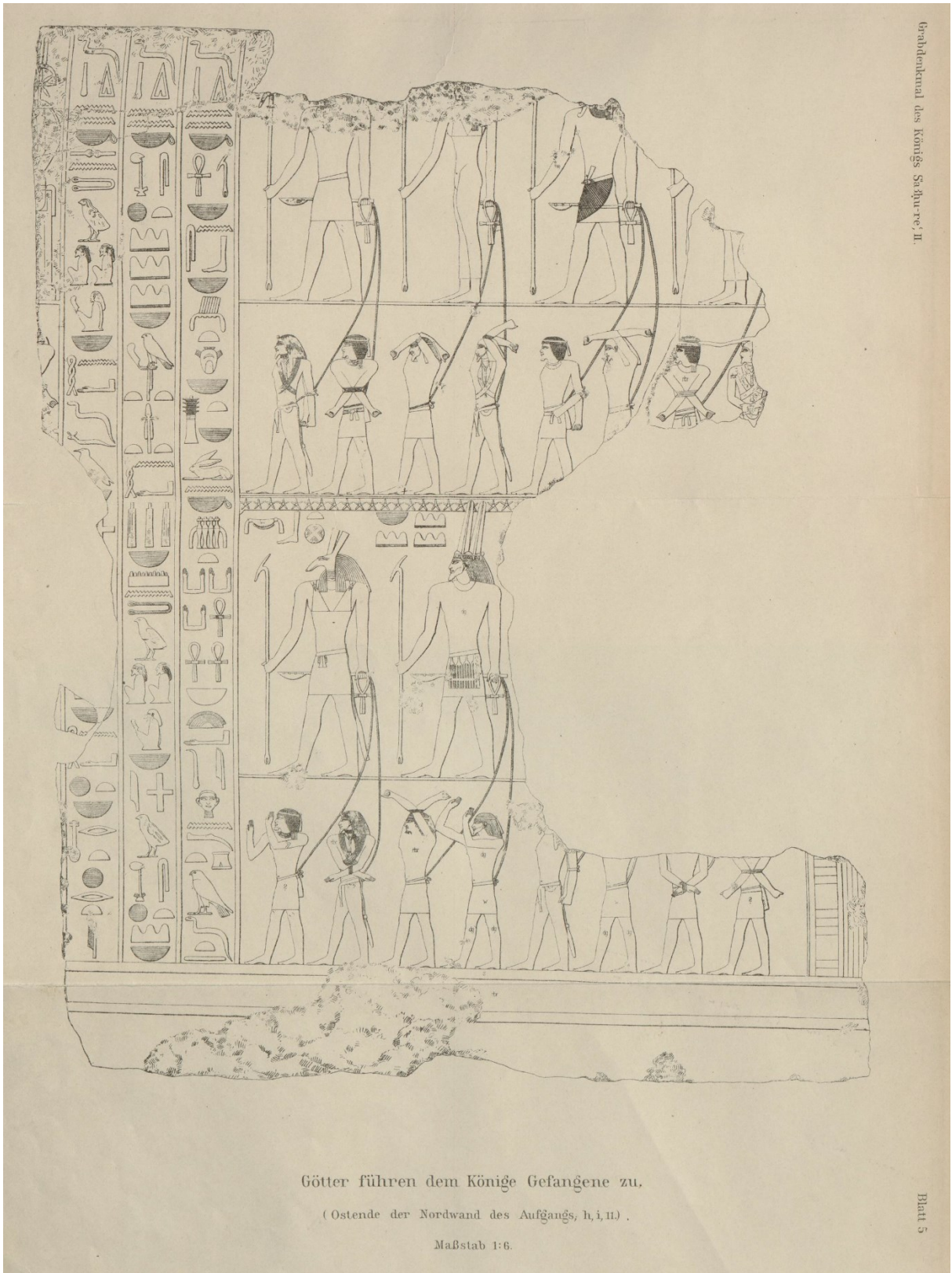
**Source:** Borchardt, L. (1907). *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Ne-user-Rea*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.



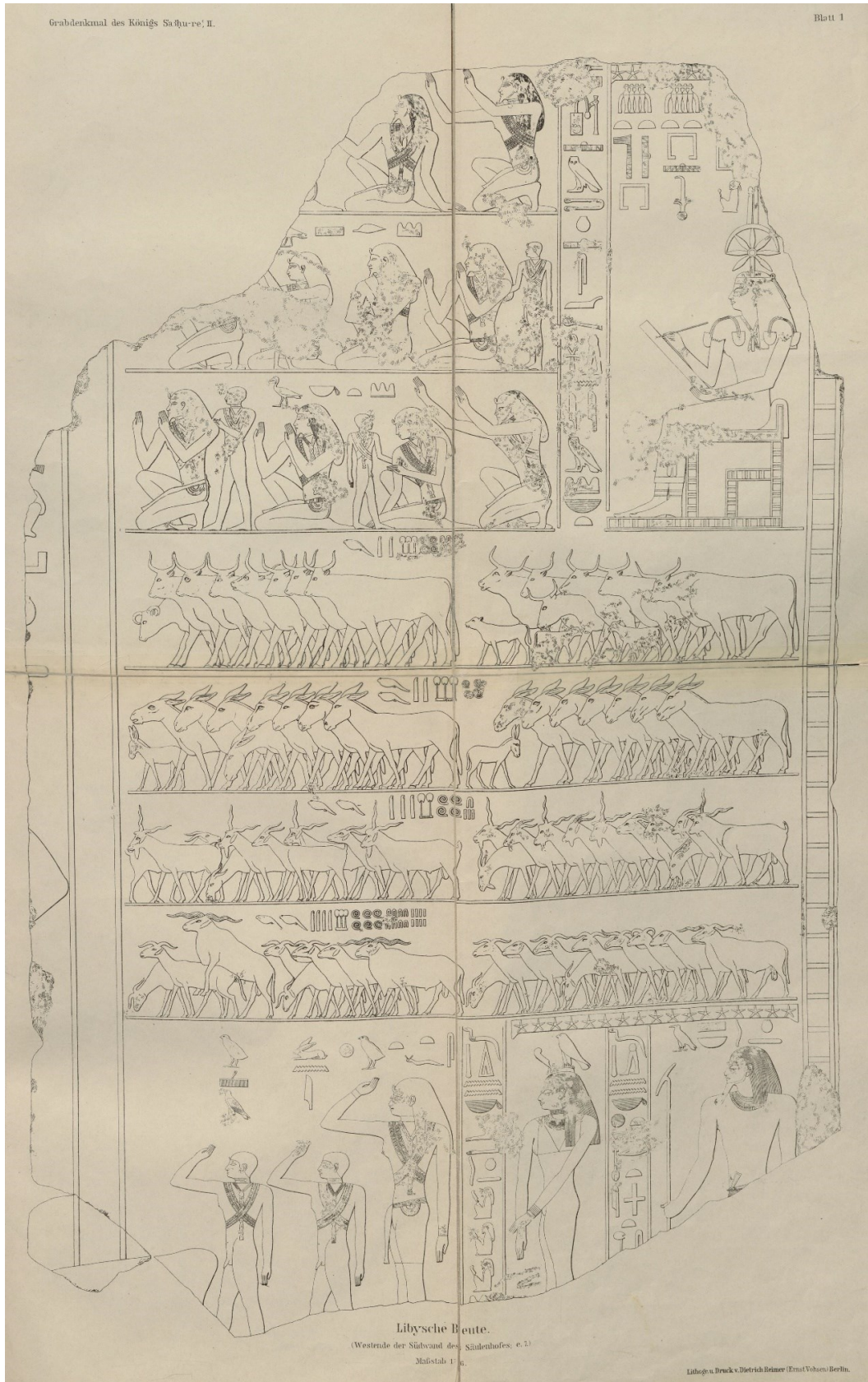
Bas de l'avenue. Sphinx et griffon de la paroi sud.

**Figure 14:** Reconstruction of reliefs depicting king as a sphinx or a griffon, pyramid complex of Pepi II Neferkare.

**Source:** Jéquier, G. (1940). *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II. Vol. 3, Les approches du temple.* Le Caire: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français d'archéologie Orientale.



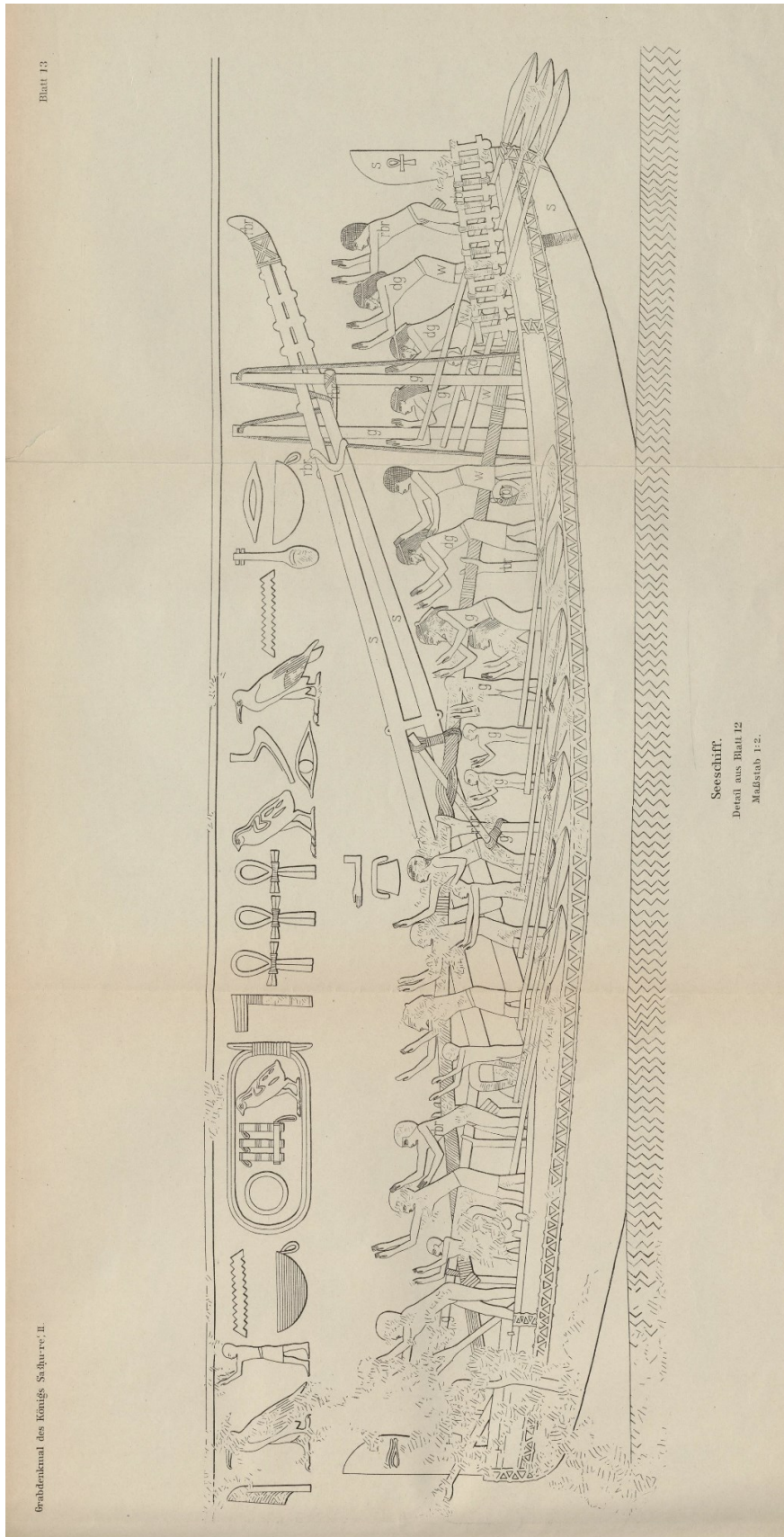
**Figure 15:** Relief with the scene “god leading enemies to the king”, pyramid complex of king Sahure.  
**Source:** Borchardt, L. (1913). *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs S'AHu-Rea, Band II.: Die Wandbilder, Abbildungsblätter.*  
Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.



**Figure 16:** Relief with the scene “Seshat recording booty”, pyramid complex of king Sahure.

**Source:** Borchardt, L. (1913). *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs S'aHu-Rea, Band II.: Die Wandbilder, Abbildungsblätter.*

Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.



**Figure 17:** Relief with the scene “return of the merchant ships”, pyramid complex of king Sahure.

**Source:** Borchardt, L. (1913). *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs S'aAHu-Rea, Band II.: Die Wandbilder, Abbildungsblätter.*

Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.



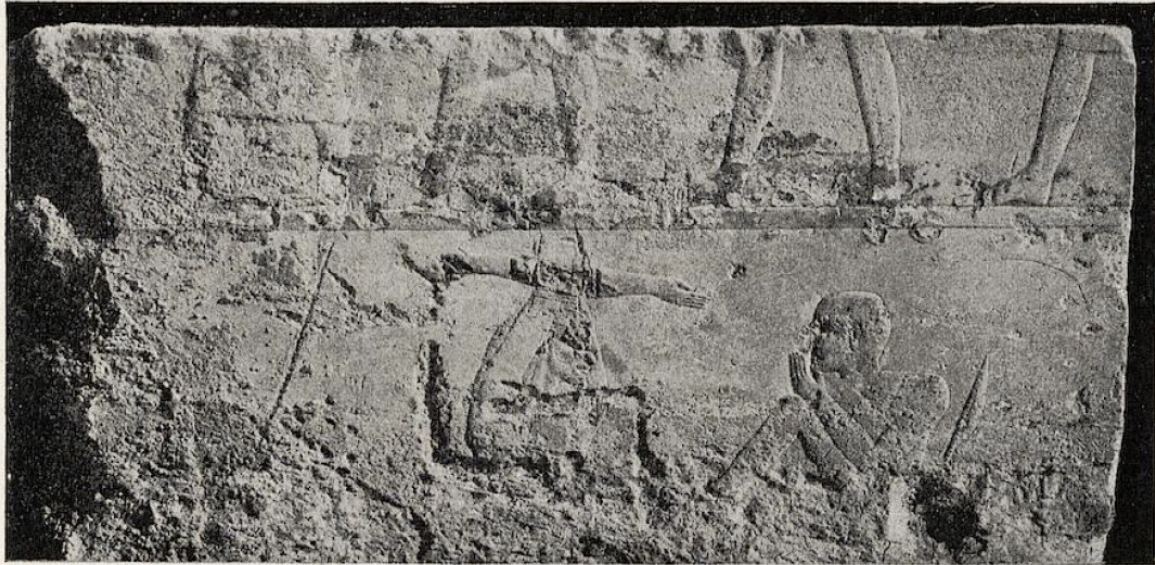


Abb. 162. Tempelrelief unbekannter Herkunft.

**Figure 18:** Relief depicting a procession and a Libyan captive with an Egyptian priest, pyramid complex of Khafre.

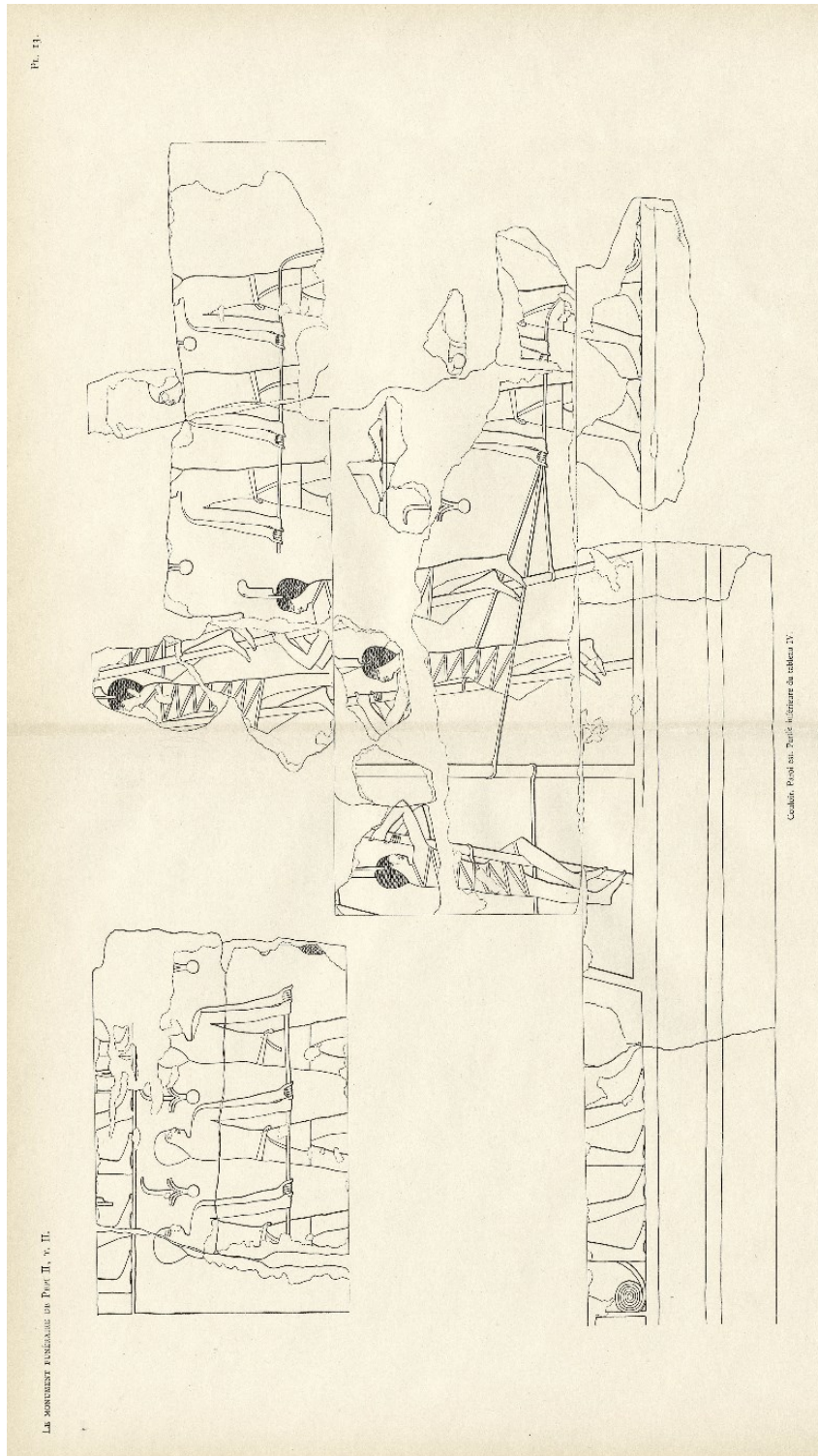
**Source:** Hölscher, U. (1912). *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Chephren, Veröffentlichungen der Ernst von Sieglin Expedition, Erster Band.* Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.



Abb. 163. Gefesselter Semit und Ägypter, von einem Tempelrelief (vergl. Abb. 162).

**Figure 19:** Detail of the scene with a Libyan captive and an Egyptian priest, pyramid complex of Khafre.

**Source:** Hölscher, U. (1912). *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Chephren, Veröffentlichungen der Ernst von Sieglin Expedition, Erster Band.* Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.



**Figure 20:** Reconstruction of the relief with “climbing for the god Min” scene, pyramid complex of Pepi II Neferkare.  
**Source:** Jéquier, G. (1938). *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II. Vol. 2, Le temple.* Le Caire: Imprimerie de l’Institut Français d’archéologie Orientale.

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