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Tomb N13.1 of the Nomarch Iti-ibi(-iqer) at Asyut

with collaboration of
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Cover: Tomb N13.1, northern wall, the nomarch Iti-ibí(-iqr) and his wife Senebtí(-iqreret) below his kilt; photo: Fritz Barthel 2014, © The Asyut Project

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Preface and acknowledgments

This book is one important outcome of the long-term Egyptian-German co-operation in archaeological fieldwork at the necropolis of Asyut. My own participation in *The Asyut Project* extended for eleven seasons of fieldwork between 2003 and 2014. In the first year and with a restricted plan for our project, Jochem Kahl (*Freie Universität Berlin*) and I surveyed the First Intermediate Period tombs of Khety I, Iti-ibi and Khety II, with the aim of preparing future epigraphic and architectural studies therein.

2004, Ursula Verhoeven (*Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz*), joined our project, and the financial support of both *Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz* and *Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster* motivated us towards expanding our original plan so as to include more tombs; i. e., those of the so-called “Northern Soldiers-Tomb” and Djefai-Hapi I, and to survey the necropolis for mapping during season 2004.

Our increasing ambition for more fieldwork activities, which became possible due to the financial support of the German Research Foundation from season 2005 onwards, led us to expand the activities of surveying the necropolis on a larger scale for the purpose of mapping, and resulted in discovering Tomb N13.1 which belongs to the Nomarch Iti-ibi(-iqer). During the next season 2006, the surface of the inner hall and parts of the forecourt of Tomb N13.1 were cleaned, and its decoration was fully documented. In the next season 2007, the shafts of the inner hall of Tomb N13.1 were examined and the tomb’s forecourt was cleaned.

This discovery is the only available source of information introducing the then unknown Siutian nomarch Iti-ibi(-iqer), who probably witnessed the final stages of the civil war between Heracleopolis and their Theban rivals. It also provides us with a possible evidence connecting the well-known Siutian family of nomarchs, who ruled Asyut during the later part of the First Intermediate Period, i. e., Khety I, Iti-ibi and Khety II, on the one hand, and the celebrated nomarch Mesehti, owner of the two sets of model-soldiers representing Egyptian spearmen provided with shields (Cairo CG 258) and Nubian archers (Cairo CG 257), in addition to the two coffins (Cairo CG 28118, 28119), on the other. Moreover, the tomb’s decoration is one of the best preserved late First Intermediate Period/early Eleventh Dynasty tombs known to us up to date. Its iconographic details present one of the earliest known examples of a fabulous creature in a hunting scene in a private tomb and the earliest known example of goddess Sekhet dominating a fowling scene in a non-royal context. Some of its epigraphic features are distinctive, including an apparent tendency towards replacing some of the standardized sitting man determinative/ideogram by a standing one.

The plan of publishing Tomb N13.1 was laid out by Ursula Verhoeven, Jochem Kahl and myself at the beginning of season 2006, according to which the study of the tomb’s visitors’ graffiti (*dipinti*) was
entrusted to Ursula Verhoeven,\textsuperscript{1} the study of the original tomb decoration was assigned to me, leaving the finds to other experts of our joint mission; e. g., the stoppers of the vessels were assigned to Michael van Elsbergen,\textsuperscript{2} studying the pottery was the task of Andrea Kilian,\textsuperscript{3} while the wooden models were committed to Monika Zöller-Engelhardt.\textsuperscript{4}

During the course of our work, we received generous financial support from various institutions without which this project could never have been accomplished. Our most sincere appreciation is extended to Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz (season 2004), Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster (season 2004), the German Research Foundation (short term project at Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, seasons 2005–2007; long term project at Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, seasons 2008–2009; long term project at both Freie Universität Berlin and Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, season 2010–2019); Ursula Verhoeven’s Fellowship of the Gutenberg Forschungskolleg (for Eva Gervers in 2013–2015); Egyptological Seminar of Freie Universität Berlin (for Max Bader in 2018).

The continued and valuable support of the staff of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities is gratefully acknowledged. In this respect special thanks are extended to Professor Zahi Hawass, former Chairman of the SCA, and Dr. Sabri Abel-Aziz, former Head of the Archaeology Sector. Our sincere thanks are also extended to Mr. Magdy El-Ghandour, former Head of the Foreign and Egyptian Missions Affairs and Permanent Committee, Mr. Samir Anis Salib, former Director General of Antiquities of Middle Egypt, Mr. Ahmed El-Khatib, former Director General of Asyut, Mrs. Nadia Naguib, former Director of the magazine at Shutb, and the two successive accompanying inspectors Mr. Magdy Shaker and Mr. Mohamed Mustafa Al-Shafey, who greatly facilitated our fieldwork.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to all those who were involved in the preparation of this book. Eva Gervers (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz) collated the whole decoration, typed the computer version of the hieroglyphic inscriptions, contributed much to the documentation and studied the color conventions. The resulting manuscript was thoroughly revised by Ulrike Dubiel (Freie Universität Berlin). Max Bader (Freie Universität Berlin) took care of the transliteration. The epigraphic work and the final line drawings of the scenes and inscriptions were executed by Sameh Shafiq (EGOTH Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotel Management, Luxor). The architectural drawings are the work of Ulrike Fauerbach (The German Archaeological Institute, Cairo). The photographs were provided by Fritz Barthel. Finally, the manuscript was edited by Ursula Verhoeven and produced for printing by Andrea Kilian.

Sohag, June 2021

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\textsuperscript{1} Cf. Verhoeven (ed.), 2020.
\textsuperscript{2} Cf. Elsbergen, 2019.
\textsuperscript{3} Cf. Kilian, 2019.
\textsuperscript{4} Zöller-Engelhardt, in press.