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ANOTHER PYRAMID OF EL-KHOKHA

Summary: The excavation of the 19th Dynasty Theban Tomb 184 (Nefermenu) exposed the remains of a structure built of irregular stones in the upper section of the south slope of the El-Khokha hillock, which can be reconstructed as the pyramid-like superstructure of a New Kingdom mortuary monument. No epigraphic or other evidence relates the edifice with certainty to any of the rock-cut tombs in the vicinity. The chronological relations of the rather complex ensemble of the nearby built structures are analysed in order to date the monument. Besides TT 184, the New Kingdom tombs of the upper row of tombs on the hillock, TT 205, Kampp -42- and -43-, are involved as well as TT 241, below and the *saff*-tomb behind the pyramid.

Key words: Ancient Egypt, El-Khokha, Hungarian excavation, Pyramid.

Hungarian archaeological missions have been working in the Theban necropolis since 1983, when the excavation of Djehutymes' tomb (TT 32) began.¹ There, I had the honour to share the tasks, spending months of enthusiastic life together with Ernő Gaál under the direction of the late László Kákósy for more than a decade.

The research of this single monument soon proved to be that of a whole complex of further burial places and funerary edifices.² When research was extended to a wider area of the hillock in the mid-1990s, the excavation and epigraphic documentation of other New Kingdom tombs were to serve a better understanding of the history of a well definable section in the necropolis. Since then, not less than four Hungarian

¹ For its architecture and decoration, see KÁKÓSY, L. – BÁCS, T. A. – BARTOS, Z. – FÁBIÁN, Z. I. – GAÁL, E.: *The Mortuary Monument of Djehutymes (TT 32) I–II* [Studia Aegyptiaca, Series Maior I]. Budapest 2004, with further bibliography.

² Already in the first preliminary report on our work, Kákósy and Gaál described later re-use (*Acta Arch. Hung.* 37 (1985) 13–22), then Kákósy's yearly reports in the same periodical and other publications mostly contain details of later burials (for bibliography, see n. 1, 367). Recently SCHREIBER, G. – VASÁROS, ZS.: A Theban Tomb of the Late Third Intermediate Period on El-Khokha. *Acta Arch. Hung.* 56 (2005) 1–27.

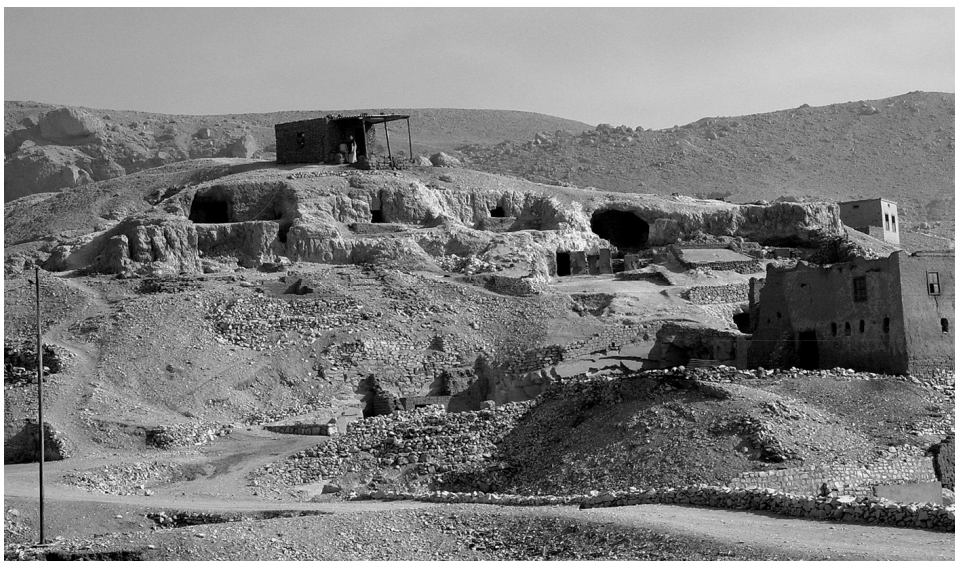


Fig. 1. View of El-Khokha from the south with the line of New Kingdom rock cut tombs in the upper section of the hillock (2005). On the right: Bet Boghdady, the modern house inhabited even today. Below and behind it: TT 184 (Nefermenu). The hole behind it (below) is the entrance of TT 241 (Jahmes). Above these two monuments: reconstructed remains of the structure which must once have belonged to one of the latter two tombs. Left of the superstructure: pillars of the *saff*-tomb. The cave above: Tomb -43-. Left of it, with ramp: TT 205, with semicircle: -42-, cave left: TT 204.

teams have been digging in the necropolis of the ancient Egyptian elite. One was headed by Ernő Gaál.

In the area under research on the south slope of El-Khokha (figs. 1–3), four rows of smaller or more monumental rock-cut funerary complexes were known from quite different periods, most of which were re-used in later times.³ The lower row contains mostly New Kingdom tombs (Amenemhat-Surer: TT 48, Eighteenth Dyn.;⁴ Nebsumenu: TT 183, Nineteenth Dyn.;⁵ Amenhotep: -64-, Eighteenth Dyn.; Djehutimes: TT 32, Nineteenth Dyn.).

The most ancient part of the Theban necropolis is above these, where funerary monuments had already been created in the Old Kingdom⁶ (Seni-iqer: TT 185; Unis-

³ For a general description of the monuments below, see PORTER, B. – MOSS, R. L. B.: *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings I: The Theban Necropolis, I²: Private Tombs*. Oxford 1970, and KAMPP, F.: *Die thebanische Nekropole zum Wandel des Grabgedankens von der XVIII. bis zur XX. Dynastie I–2* [Theben 13]. Mainz 1996. The abbreviation “TT” stands for Theban Tomb and is followed by the official numbers, while Kampp’s numbers are marked with dashes, as in -43-.

⁴ SÄVE-SÖDERBERGH, T.: *Four Eighteenth Dynasty Tombs* [Private Tombs in Thebes I]. Oxford 1957.

⁵ SEYFRIED, K.-J. in *ASAE* 25 (1999) 9–12; ASSMANN, J. in STRUDWICK, N. – TAYLOR J. H. (eds.): *The Theban Necropolis. Past, Present and Future*. London 2003, 53–60.

⁶ SALEH, M.: *Three Old Kingdom Tombs at Thebes* [AV 14]. Mainz am Rhein 1977.



Fig. 2. The south slope of El-Khokha from the air, taken before the beginning of the excavation (1995). In the centre of the picture, in front (left) of the rock line of the façades of the New Kingdom tombs in the uppermost section of the hillock there is still no sign of any structure. (Photo: György Csáki)

ankh: TT 413, both Sixth Dyn.;⁷ -60-?). New Kingdom tombs were prepared between them (Nefermenu: TT 184, Nineteenth Dyn.; Qen-Amun: TT 412, Eighteenth Dyn.⁸), and behind them. These latter were the target of Ernő Gaál's research (-59-, -61-)⁹ and I have been clearing then excavating Nefermenu's TT 184.¹⁰ The ceiling of some

⁷ For problems and further proposals of dating, see KANAWATI, N.: *Governmental Reforms in Old Kingdom Egypt*. Warminster 1980, 132 ff; JAROŠ-DECKERT, B.: *Grabung in Assasif, V: Das Grab des Jnj-jtj.f. Die Wandmalereien der XI. Dynastie* [AV 12]. Kairo 1984, 102–106.

⁸ SALEH, M.: The Tomb of the Royal Scribe Qen-Amun at Khokha (Theban Necropolis no. 412). *ASAE* 69 (1983) 15–28.

⁹ The latter had already deserved much attention before Gaál's studies: HABACHI, L.–GHALIOUNGUI, P.: Notes on Nine Physicians of Pharaonic Egypt, of whom Five Hitherto Unknown. *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte* 51 (1969–1970) 17, no. 4; BAKRY in *Rivista degli studi orientali* 44 (1969) 179–180; with reference in LECLANT, Or 41 (1972) 263.g; GHALIOUNGUI, P.: *The Physicians of Pharaonic Egypt*. Mainz 1983, 27, no. 47; MANNICHE, L.: *Lost Tombs*. London–New York 1988, 12, referring to it as "TT 415" not yet officially numbered.

¹⁰ See my accounts, Preliminary Report on the First Two Seasons in Theban Tomb 184 (Nefermenu). *SAK* 24 (1977) 81–102; Harper's Song Scene in the Tomb of Nefermenu (TT 184): *Specimina Nova Universitatis Quinqueecclesiensis* 16 (2000) 1–12; Did They Say 'Yes' in the 19th Dynasty Version of Book of the Dead 145? *Specimina Nova* 15 (1999) 13–25; Stripes in Dados for Dating New Kingdom Theban Tombs? In BÁCS, T. (ed.): *A Tribute to Excellence. Studies Offered in Honor of Ernő Gaál*,

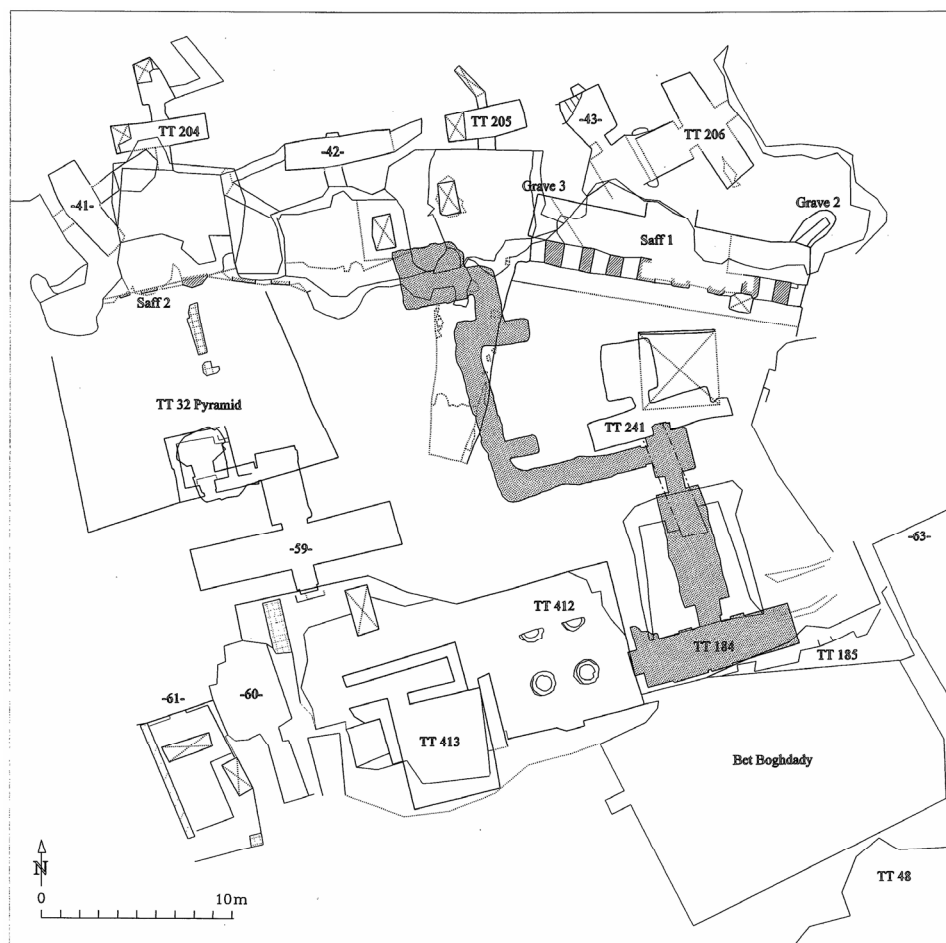


Fig. 3. Map of the upper section of the south slope of El-Khokha with TT 184 (Nefermenu) in the centre and the rock cut tombs of different periods and the modern building of Bet Boghdady around it.

Left: the superstructure of TT 32 (Djehutimes). Above TT 184 and TT 241: the reconstructed remains of the structure presented in this paper. Behind (north of) this: pillars of the *saff*-tomb exposed during its excavation.

of the rock-cut tombs in this row collapsed already in ancient times destroying architectural elements of further suspected monuments above them, which may still be covered by rubble. The only known tomb in the third row is that of Jahmes (TT 241, Eighteenth Dyn.).¹¹

Ulrich Luft, László Török [Studia Aegyptiaca XVIII]. Budapest 2002, 217–224; Nefermenu (TT 184), April 2003. *ASAE* 79 (2005) 41–59; Nefermenu kormányzó sziklasírja a Khokha-domb déli lejtőjén [The rock-cut tomb of governor Nefermenu on the south slope of El-Khokha]. *Ókor* IV/4 (2005) 60–67.

¹¹ SHORTER, A.W. in *JEA* 16 (1930) 54–62; KONDO, J. in *Orient* 23 (1987) 63–76; YOSHIMURA, S.: *Research in Egypt 1966–1991*. The Egyptian Culture Center, Waseda University, Tokyo 1991, 17;

In the uppermost row exclusively New Kingdom tombs seem to have been cut (TT 206; -43-; TT 205: Djehutimes, -42-; TT 204: Nebanensu; and -41-).

The choice of Nefermenu's tomb, beside the framework of the research of the Khokha, was also due to the fact that its architectural and decoration layout, i.e. religious-conceptual background, represented a variant apparent in TT 32 (Djehutimes) and also in other post-Amarna monuments that we call the "El-Khokha tomb group". It showed striking similarities to TT 183 (Nefermenu), Djehutimes's neighbour, where the latter is also depicted in a relief. Thus, in the researched area on the south slope of El-Khokha, there are at least three Nineteenth Dynasty monuments reflecting the new, rather stereotypical, ripe canon of post-Amarna Theban tombs.¹²



Fig. 4. Remains of the mud brick superstructure of TT 32 (Djehutimes) some 15 m east of that of Nefermenu or Jahmes. (KÁKOSY ET AL.: *The Mortuary Monument of Djehutymes, TT 32*. Budapest 2004, Pl. XX. Photo: Károly Kozma)

YOSHIMURA, S.: *The History of Egyptian Culture Centre's field research in Egypt. VI. Congresso internazionale di egittologia, Atti*. Torino 1992, 661–664; YOSHIMURA, S. – KONDO, J.: Découvertes de nouvelles tombes de nobles. In (s.ed.) *Vallées des reines et des rois*. Dijon 1992, 112–113.

¹² For the sacralisation of the decoration system and thus the whole monument see ASSMANN and SEYFRIED cited in KÁKOSY ET AL. (n. 1) and my descriptions on pp. 61–63 and 347–353. Further members of the tomb-group are TT 23 (Tjay), TT 264 (Ipiy), and in several respects TT 296 (Nefersekheru) and TT 370. For the group, see recently HOFMANN, E.: *Bilder im Wandel. Die Kunst der Ramessidischen Privatgräber* [Theben 17]. Mainz am Rhein 2004, 41–44.

Meanwhile, after a long research in different spots, remains of the 15 m wide superstructure of Djehutimes' monument were discovered¹³ (fig. 4) approximately above its burial chamber, also above Gaál's -59-, in front of TT 204. It was built of mud bricks, filled up with irregular stones and debris, and the outer surfaces were plastered. Its chapel contained paintings depicting the owner. The structure can be reconstructed on the analogy of the Dra Abu'l-Naga trapezoid, pyramid-like superstructures of New Kingdom tombs.

Though this was the only known example of such a structure among the tombs of the "El-Khokha group", the tradition of pyramid-building in New Kingdom private tombs of Thebes seemed to be evident¹⁴ now, not only in Dra Abu'l-Naga and Deir el-Medina or their depictions in wall paintings and reliefs¹⁵ (figs. 5–6). Free-standing pyramids in museum collections (fig. 7) are a further reason for the research of pyramid-like superstructures in the Theban necropolis.¹⁶ The number of exposed, documented and published superstructures of the kind has gradually grown from Nay's (TT 271),¹⁷ through User-Amun's (TT 131),¹⁸ Paser's (TT 106),¹⁹ Parennefer's (-162-)²⁰ examples, and the royal tradition of an earlier period is also represented.²¹

It was a compulsory task, thus, in the research of TT 184 and the wider area, to locate such a construction – if it had existed at all. Seyfried, while excavating Nebsumenu's TT 183, was also digging on the hillock in 1999, in the hope that Nebsumenu's superstructure could be exposed but in front (south) of TT 205, only part of an ancient wall was revealed (to which see below). I also began excavation in 2000, in the axis of TT 184, in front of the uppermost tomb row of the southern slope of the Khokha hillock, i.e. above TT 241, in front of Tomb -43-, east of TT 205 (figs. 1–3). We were digging in a rhomboid field of 7/9 x 12 m, so that in the middle a cross-like

¹³ For description and reconstruction, see KÁKOSY ET AL. (n. 1) I 27, Pls CXV, and ZS. VASÁROS' model, Pl. XVI.

¹⁴ For the concept, see SEYFRIED, K.-J.: Entwicklung in der Grabarchitektur des Neuen Reiches als eine weitere Quelle für theologische Konzeptionen der Ramessidenzeit. In ASSMANN, J. – BURKARD, G. – DAVIES, V. (eds.): *Problems and Priorities in Egyptian Archaeology*. London–New York 1987, 219–253 and KAMPP (n. 3) 95–109, 117–119.

¹⁵ DAVIES, N. M.: Some Representations of Tombs from the Theban Necropolis. *JEA* 24 (1938) 25–40.

¹⁶ RAMMANT-PETERS, A.: Les Pyramidions égyptiens du Nouvel Empire. *OLA* 11 (1983), where she also publishes a list of tombs with such representations, on 167–168.

¹⁷ HABACHI, L. – ANUS, P.: Le tombeau de Naÿ à Gournet Mar'eï (no. 271). *MIFAO* 97 (1977) 11–16, figs. 4, 8, 11, 13, and Pls. II and VII.

¹⁸ DZIOBEK, E.: Eine Grabpyramide des frühen NR in Theben. *MDAIK* 45 (1989) 109–132, esp. 126, Abb. 6 and 129, Abb. 7; DZIOBEK, E.: Die Gräber des Vezirs User-Amun. Theben Nr. 61 und 131. *AV* 68 (1995) 59–60, esp. Taf. 47–48, and 67–69.

¹⁹ SEYFRIED, K.-J.: Dritter Vorbericht über die Arbeiten des Ägyptologischen Instituts der Universität Heidelberg in thebanischen Gräbern der Ramessidenzeit. *MDAIK* 46 (1990) 350–353, Abb. 1, 6, Taf. 59–60.

²⁰ KAMPP, F.: Vierter Vorbericht über die Arbeiten des Ägyptologischen Instituts der Universität Heidelberg in thebanischen Gräbern der Ramessidenzeit. *MDAIK* 50 (1994) 177–178, Abb. 2–3, Taf. 23–24; KAMPP (n. 3) II 714, fig. 643.

²¹ POLZ, D. – SEILER, A.: *Die Pyramidenanlage des Königs Nub-Cheper-Re Intef in Dra'Abu el Naga*. [ADAIK Sonderschrift 24]. Mainz am Rhein 2003, with proposals on the origins of the tradition.



Fig. 5. Painting of a chapel crowned with a pyramid-like structure from TT 10 (Penbui and Kasa, Deir el-Medina)



Fig. 6. Painted relief of TT 32 (Djehutimes) depicting the entrance of the tomb-chapel and the pyramid above it. (KÁKOSY ET AL.: *The Mortuary Monument of Djehutymes, TT 32*. Budapest 2004, detail of Pl. LX. Photo: Károly Kozma)

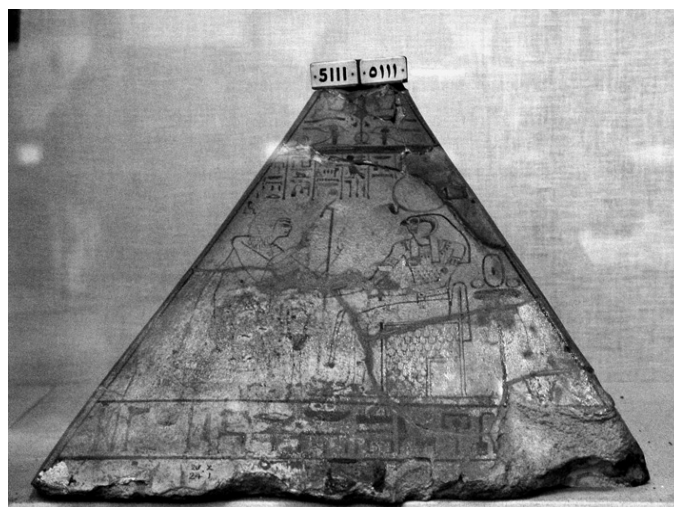


Fig. 7. Blue faience pyramidion in the Cairo Museum

area of one metre width was left unexcavated to witness the strata of the soil or rubble. The excavation was thus carried out in four trenches. No trace of a pyramid-like building seemed to reveal itself, and in the lower trenches, the virgin soil (brownish *tafl*) was reached. Though no identifiable architectural elements came to light, it was observed that a considerable amount of limestone flakes and boulders bearing witness of light mortar was piled up especially in the lower sections of our trenches. As the presupposition aimed at the research of the traces of mud brick remains, the limestone rubble was not considered to have resulted from the superstructure of a New Kingdom tomb.

In the upper trenches, however, parallel to the broken rock entrance of Tomb -43-, at a 2.5 m depth from the actual floor level of the debris, remains of an ancient construction could be observed. There were remains of four pillars, carved of the *tafl*, with plastered and whitewashed walls. The floor between and in front of the pillars showed the same feature, it was also plastered. It is to be noted that the line of the pillars seemed to be perpendicular to the plastered stone wall Seyfried had revealed the year before. The stone material coming from our upper trenches was rather similar to the material used for the above-mentioned wall, but mortar could not be identified in much quantity with the stones. It could be put forward that the entrance of a *saff*-tomb²² was revealed and the stones and boulders had been used here for the foundation of its entrance platform or forecourt. However, as the primary aim of our excavation was the research of the superstructure of TT 184, and this did not lead to sound results, the research of the probably much earlier monument was at least temporarily abandoned, and the trenches covered again.

²² Behind (north of) the superstructure of TT 32 (Djehutimes), below the forecourt of TT 204, a similar feature can be detected: the at least six holes separated by irregular rock-formations are probably the remains of the intercolumnia marking the façade of a *saff*-tomb.



Fig. 8. Remains of the structure above TT 184 (Nefermenu) and TT 241 (Jahmes) with the remains of the plastered floor around it as exposed in 2001 (from the north).

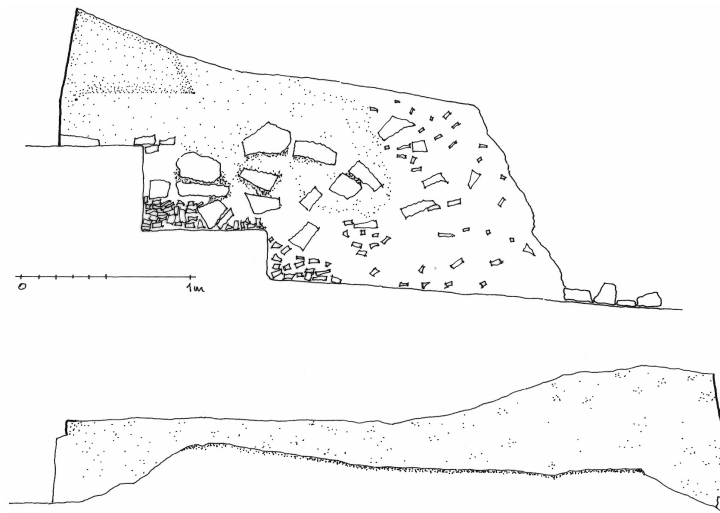


Fig. 9. South–north section of the structure above TT 184 and TT 241 (above) and view from the north (below). (Drawing: István Kozák)

In 2001, however, research was continued on the upper levels of the southern slope of El-Khokha in order to locate the possible remains of the suspected superstructure of TT 184. In front (south) of the *tafl* pillars, exactly beneath the cross separating our trenches and the area left unexcavated in 2000, the north wall of a structure was exposed with both corners surviving (figs. 8–9). It had been built of



Fig. 10. Fill of the remains of the superstructure from the south.

irregular, raw limestone, not mud bricks as expected, with the application of light mortar, and the remains of the slanting northern wall and a part of the western preserve light plastering. The rubble of limestone flakes and boulders with light mortar observed the previous year south of the – then unknown – wall is either the result of the destruction of the building or rather the remains of the casing technique, where the core inside the stone wall was filled up (fig. 10). The height of the remains of the northern wall rise at 20–55 cm. The length of the wall at the base is 3.95 m.

The structure was built against the slope of the hillock, standing on some foundation of ca. 0.90 m on the *tafl* (measured at the west corner), created with a similar technique of irregular stones and boulders. The remains of the walls of the building are obviously slanting both on the north and the western sides as well as at the corner. They are not high enough, however, to allow any safe measurement, reconstruction or estimation of inclination. The structure may with much probability be identified as a pyramid-like superstructure on the Deir el-Medina analogies, though its precise layout remains unknown: whether the remains of a base have been revealed or the slanting walls continued up to the top or capstone can hardly be stated now.

The building used to be surrounded by a pavement of very light, almost white plastering. This feature can be observed at the northern, southern and the slanting western sides of the structure. On the north side, the pavement was relatively steep and rather irregular having been constructed on a foundation of large boulders, similar to that of the pyramid. The pavement reached the pillars behind the superstructure, which can now with certainty be considered as the façade of a *saff*-like tomb (figs. 3, 11), as further seasons exposed the whole line of eight pillars and smaller pilasters at the sides. The width of the façade of the *saff*-tomb is 15.40 m (ca. 30 cu-



Fig. 11. Pillars of the *saff*-tomb cut in the *tafl* and plastered behind (north of) the structure above TT 184 and TT 241. Here, the mud brick walls were constructed during the excavation to protect the pillars and the plastered floors from the rubble.

bits). The ceiling, which had once also been the floor of the forecourt of Tomb -43-, collapsed. The tomb seems to have been carved in the *tafl* layer between two limestone layers of the hillock, probably in order to facilitate the work. The surviving architectural elements allow a Middle Kingdom rather than an early New Kingdom dating.²³

Between some pillars, behind the superstructure, mud brick walling can be observed blocking the entrances of the *saff*²⁴ (fig. 12), probably in order to provide the

²³ For further details and measurements, see my TT 184 (Nefermenu) and the Upper Section of the South Slope of El-Khokha Hillock. Report on the Activities of the Hungarian Archaeological Mission—Season 2005: *ASAE*, forthcoming. For characteristic Middle Kingdom features, see the analysis in ARNOLD, D.: Grabung im Assasif 1963–1970 I. Das Grab des Jnj-jtj.f. Die Architektur. *AV* 4 (1971) 36–48. For Middle Kingdom versus New Kingdom dating problems in tombs with pillared façade, see also DZIOBEK, E. in J. ASSMANN ET AL. (eds.): *Problems and Priorities in Egyptian Archaeology*. London–New York 1987, 78–79.

²⁴ Measurements of the bricks in the easternmost intercolumnium are: 33/35x15/17x8/10 cm, the ones in the third one: 36/38 cm. These figures are quite common throughout Egypt's history (SPENCER, A. J.: *Brick Architecture in Ancient Egypt*. Warminster 1979, Pl. 42), and even if regarded as good New Kingdom examples, their dating value can be eliminated as re-use is to be taken into consideration. Bonding in the limited space between the pillars does not seem to offer much more information either.



Fig. 12. Between some of the pillars of the *saff*-tomb, mud brick was used in ancient times to block the debris filled below the plastered floor around the New Kingdom structure.

foundation of the pavement with some stability or for some other reason. This feature in itself, as no significant find of dating value has come to light,²⁵ predates the pilared façade to the superstructure.

One interesting find, however, deserves mentioning. Behind (north of) the wall of the structure, on the pavement, the lower part of a beer jug was found filled with grains (figs. 13–14).

The structure, hypothetically reconstructed thus as a New Kingdom pyramid, exposes only its northern corners. No remains of the southern wall, further corners or a possible chamber could be detected. Nothing but the remains of the foundation stones of the south-western corner can be observed on the side where the entrance of its shrine can be suspected. However, if once there was indeed a shrine there, a path must have led to it from the sides as the entrance of TT 241 (time: Hatshepsut/Thutmose III) is below it. The edge of the bedrock level above the entrance of TT 241 is indeed rather steep (around 45°) about 2 m south of the foundation stones of the structure. This would only allow the hypothetical reconstruction of a narrow but safe path leading to the superstructure in antiquity.

²⁵ Fragmentary finds rather date the Third Intermediate Period secondary burial places cut in the corners behind the façade of the *saff* (human remains, cartonnage, beads, coffin and furniture fragments, mummy wrapping), or they are the usual wandering pieces of the necropolis originating from the decorative elements or burials of nearby tombs as funerary cones of TT 205 and TT 241 (Davies–MacAdam nos. 178 and 350, respectively) and shabtis of different periods.

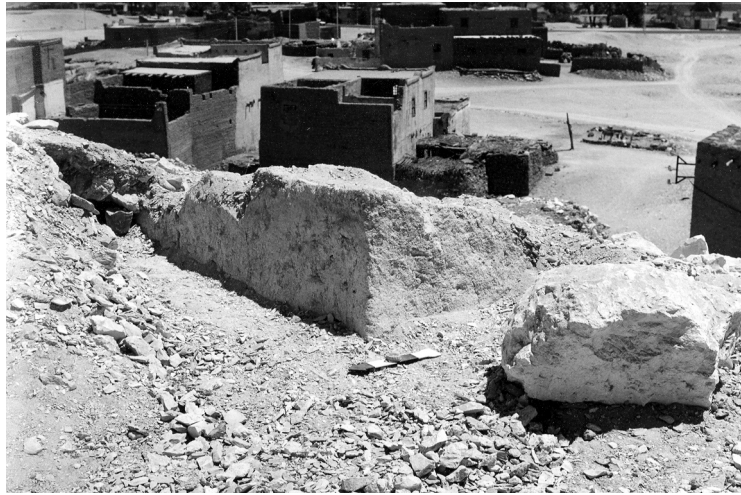


Fig. 13. North-east corner of the structure with the vessel (left) containing grain, below the floor level surrounding it.

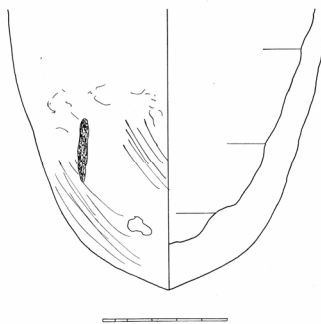


Fig. 14. Drawing of the vessel containing grain. The upper part was found separately nearby. (Registered as No. 2004.223. Drawing: Bori Németh)

However, even if the structure can be identified as the superstructure (pyramid) of one of the rock-cut tombs somewhere below it, no textual or other material proves that it belonged to TT 184. Besides Nefermenu's TT 184, Jahmes' TT 241 can also be taken into consideration.

Further information on the chronological position of the originally probably pyramid-like building can perhaps be gained from the context of the surrounding structures and of the nature of the debris especially west of it.

The forecourts of the Eighteenth Dynasty Tomb -42- and TT 205 (time: Thutmosis III/Amenhotep II) were cleared from debris. The bedrock formations and probable remains of built structures south of them were examined as no path running in front of them could be reconstructed in their actual state. Only a ramp or stairs could lead up to them while they functioned. The middle part of the south edge of the fore-

court of Tomb -42- indeed preserved a semicircle shape of the bedrock (figs. 1, 3). Kampff notices the feature and puts forward that this could be part of the “Mittelrampe” leading up to the tomb.²⁶ Except for some piles of mud bricks, no remain of an evidently built construction connected to it have been observed as yet, though east of the semicircle, a considerable amount of *tafl* chips covered the surface. After having cleared a part of this substance, the upper part of a rock cut entrance was revealed. This entrance is still unexcavated, but its upper line makes it probable that the tomb that was to be approached through it is on the same level as the two *saffs* flanking it, north of the superstructure of TT 32 (Djehutimes) and our one above TT 184 and TT 241. This might mean that it is earlier than the tombs of the upper row.²⁷

The feature inspiring the ramp interpretation was even more prominent in the case of the forecourt of TT 205. Here, the outlines of the expected rock cut semicircle on the southern edge of the forecourt could also be identified, though not only the bedrock but also *tafl* chip, reddish *suen* stones and rather firm, “cemented” dust drew the outlines.²⁸

The east side of the rock cut semicircle turned out to be the western side-wall of the *saff*-tomb north of our superstructure (TT 184/TT 241). The wall is plastered on its east surface. The side-wall descends in a considerable length to the south, being the upper part of the also plastered *suen* wall exposed by Seyfried in 1999. Thus, the side-wall of the *saff*-tomb’s forecourt is identical with the sloping ramp of TT 205. In the lower section of the ramp the filling had been made of *tafl* chips and in a ca. 1 m section even the upper plastering, the floor, survives. The eastern, once plastered wall of the ramp partly carved in the bedrock, partly built of *suen* stones can be reconstructed in 11.15 m length, up to the western corner of the façade of the *saff*. The western edge of the ramp, however, is still unidentified. As it appears, in this case the western side-wall of the Middle Kingdom *saff*-tomb was re-used for the construction of the ramp leading up to TT 205 in the Eighteenth Dynasty.

In this light, the semicircle of the forecourt of Tomb -42- also provides a clearer picture. If it was the upper end of a ramp, the latter had been constructed on the eastern side-wall of the *saff*-tomb beneath Tomb -42- and TT 204 (Neb-anensu, Eighteenth Dyn.), behind Djehutimes’ later, Nineteenth Dynasty pyramid.

The researched two New Kingdom tombs in the upper row of tombs on the southern slope of El-Khokha (-42- and TT 205) were, thus, constructed in a way that their axes were slightly shifted in relation to the earlier *saff*-tombs beneath them. The side-walls of the forecourts of the latter were then applied as parts of the ramps leading up to the upper row of tombs. The same question may be put forward in the cases of TT 204 above the western *saff*, and of the pyramid of TT 32, however. They

²⁶ KAMPP (n. 3) 664–665, fig. 539.

²⁷ The entrance is in the line (in front of) the forecourt shaft of Tomb -42-. While cutting the shaft, the masons seem to have applied the earlier structure as part of the substructure, which might explain the blocking of the entrance with *tafl* chips.

²⁸ These outlines had, however, been disturbed by a small grave (h: 55 cm, w: 50 cm, l: 110 cm) dug in the bedrock below the floor of the forecourt, from the south. It contained the broken and rather fragile remains of a small, undecorated wooden chest coffin and some bone fragments of a child.



Fig. 15. Remains of the structure above TT 184 and TT 241 protected with some lines of mud bricks (from the north).

must have been approached in a way, but they do not seem to have had earlier forecourt side-walls in front of them, there used to be façades of earlier monuments below. Paths leading to them from the sides can be excluded, for rock formations do not make it possible. In both cases, there are mud brick structures, however. One is in the middle part of the pyramid of TT 32, behind its shrine, in front of the *saff*-tomb, below TT 204, and it does not fit in the (casing) building technique of Djehutimes. The other mud brick wall is left (west) of the entrance of Tomb -59-. Built against the façade of Tomb -59-,²⁹ on the rock-cut, possible western side-wall of one of its building phases,³⁰ or a part of an earlier monument, separating it from Tomb -60-, it also bears witness to different building phases. Its eastern surface was plastered, the western one was not. The orientation of the two mud brick walls is identical (north-south), they are in the same line, their function seems to be unclear if regarded separately only in the context of their neighbouring structures. Though drawing a final

²⁹ Connected to the plastered façade elements, where, between the wall and the entrance of -59-, Kampp still saw some pigment traces and interpreted it as a stela (?).

³⁰ The first owner of Tomb -59- and of the forecourt shaft seems to be a certain Menheperreseneb, obviously of the Eighteenth Dynasty, the second, Bakenamun of the inside sloping passage must be Ramesside. For dating parallels, see KAMPP (n. 3) 665, in connection with Tomb -43- (TT 189 Annex and TT 377).

conclusion may be too early, it can perhaps be put forward that the two wall-remains once served to approach of the monuments in the upper slope. It cannot be excluded that both wall-remains formed part of one and the same ramp leading up to the Eighteenth Dynasty TT 204.³¹ The rock formations at the lower wall inspire the reconstruction that the space west of the wall, between it, and the rock-line in front of -60- could be filled up. That is why the western surface of the wall is not plastered. Then Djehutimes, while having his pyramid built during the reign of Ramesses II, included the upper part of the ramp in his superstructure and used or rebuilt its lower part in its original function, but only up to the shrine in his pyramid.

Here comes Tomb -43-, above the other, eastern *saff* into the picture. It could not have any other access than its own ramp built properly above the *saff*'s façade. The ceiling of the *saff* in those days had not yet collapsed as the first chamber and the probable forecourt of Tomb -43- still stood above it, but the *saff* was not in use any more. If the orientation of -43- is taken into consideration, the ramp must have lead somewhere in the place of the superstructure belonging to either the Nineteenth Dynasty TT 184 or to TT 241 of Thutmosis III's time at the latest. In this case, the superstructure could not have stood there when Tomb -43- was prepared, either because it had not yet been built or because it had already been destroyed.

The Eighteenth Dynasty dating of an early phase of Tomb -43- is rather uncertain but cannot be excluded.³² If so, and we attempt to attribute the superstructure to TT 241, the relative chronology of the two tombs may offer the above pattern, too: the ramp of -43- and this tomb itself may either predate the pyramid of TT 241, or they were built after its destruction. In this case, two Eighteenth Dynasty tombs are involved and though none of the two solutions can be excluded, they are very uncertain.

If the Eighteenth Dynasty dating of Tomb -43- is excluded,³³ and we still relate the superstructure to TT 241, the Ramesside ramp must already have been prepared on its ruins. This solution appears to be more probable.

However, if the superstructure was built for the monument of Nefermenu (TT 184), and we still stick to the phase of Tomb -43- dated to the Eighteenth Dynasty, then Nefermenu destroyed the ramp of the earlier tomb or it was already in ruins together with the façade of the *saff*. In this case, however, during the Ramesside reconstruction of -43-, the ramp must have been rebuilt on the ruins of Nefermenu's pyramid (not very plausible) or it is earlier than the pyramid.

With an exclusive Ramesside building phase of Tomb -43-, the ramp may either have been built earlier than the pyramid, predating Nefermenu's TT 184, or on its ruins. No safe relative chronology can be put forward of the two Ramesside monuments, thus, both solutions can be taken into consideration.

³¹ In this case, TT 204 would postdate the first phase of Tomb -59-.

³² The width of its small first chamber is around 225 cm. The measurements of its inner chamber are 300 x 230 cm with a ca. 170 cm height. The first chamber and the forecourt collapsed with the ceiling of the *saff*, and thus no remain of a forecourt shaft can be detected. The remains of the wall decoration are rather of Ramesside character than earlier.

³³ A sloping passage approached through three steps of a stair opens on the "south" side of the inner chamber.

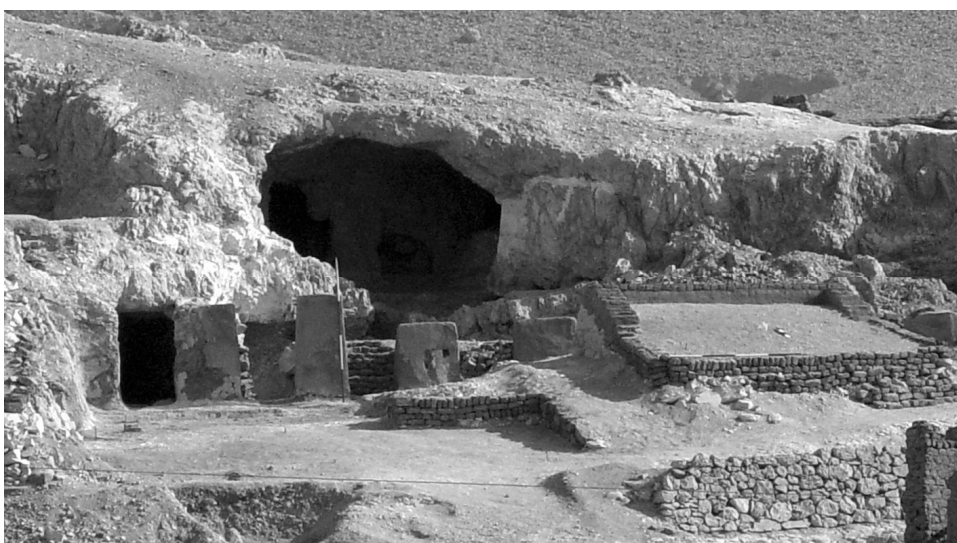
Temporarily, the following possibilities seem to be probable:

1. The superstructure was built for TT 241 and the Ramesside ramp of -43- was constructed on its ruins;
2. The superstructure belonged to Nefermenu
 - a. constructed on the remains of the early Nineteenth Dynasty ramp of -43- already destroyed with the *saff*, or
 - b. the pyramid had already collapsed when the later Ramesside ramp of -43- was built over it, and the forecourt and first chamber with the *saff* were destroyed in an even later period.

Though this latter possibility may have some validity, it is more probable that the destruction of the monuments happened at the same time. Even so, further information should be included for the dating of our superstructure. This may only be provided by the debris around it, especially on the west, between this and the ramp of TT 205, and on the north, in front of the *saff*, and perhaps the blocking walls of this latter's intercolumnia.

In the foundation of the plastered pavement around the superstructure of TT 184/241, especially north and west of it, though not in the latter's foundation, a large amount of the hard, reddish stone (*suen*) material could be observed. It is the same type of stone that had been applied for the plastered eastern side-wall of the *saff*'s forecourt, that is, the west wall of the ramp leading up to TT 205. The presence of the stones even quite far from the wall built of them does not appear to be accidental: their position cannot be attributed to the simple collapse of the wall, but to their deliberate re-use in the foundation of the pavement. This might mean that while constructing the platform around the superstructure, the ramp of TT 205 (time: Tutmosis III/Amenhotep II) was either dismantled or it had been destroyed earlier. The pavement stands around half a metre over the finely plastered floor of the forecourt of the *saff*, but apart from the northern remains in front of its pillared façade, it can only be safely identified around the superstructure, unfortunately. In the area bordered by the three structures: the ramp, the *saff* and the superstructure, on top of the hard, reddish stone material of the foundation, a substance rather similar to the material used for the building of the superstructure above TT 184/241 was observed. The large piles of limestone debris containing plaster fragments may well be the remnants of some further construction erected here. However no visible corners, straight sides, or wall remains were detected. This pile with the appearance of construction rubble, is surely not the collapsed material of the ramp of TT 205, but seems to be later than the pavements around the superstructure above TT 184/241. It can most probably be the collapsed material of the pyramid.

It is very tempting to relate the destruction of all the monuments around to a certain catastrophe, earthquake or the like, and we have no other starting point but probabilities which seem to be available for the reconstruction of the chronology. Even so, it seems to be rather probable that the stone material of the already destroyed ramp had been used for the pavement foundation of the superstructure, which,



Figs. 16–17. The structure above TT 184 and TT 241 and the façade pillars of the *saff*-tomb as reconstructed with mud bricks and plastered for protection (2005).

in turn, collapsed in a later period, also destroying the pavement further west, beside the ramp. This is why the pavement above the reddish stone foundation and below the limestone and plaster fragments could not be pointed out.

Returning to Tomb -43-, its ramp, the walled up intercolumnia of the *saff*, and the superstructure, one may also approach the question of their chronology in a different way. The intercolumnia are walled up indeed only behind (north of) the superstructure as described above, but this is also the area where the place of the ramp in the axis of Tomb -43- might be located. The eastern intercolumnia are not blocked. The reason for constructing walls between the pillars may not only be the stability of the foundation of the pavement around the superstructure but that of the ramp as well. If so, this may be an argument for the earlier dating of Tomb -43- than the superstructure. This would support our possibility 2.a above, i.e. the superstructure was constructed on the remains of the early Nineteenth Dynasty ramp of -43- then already destroyed with the *saff* – and probably together with the ramp of TT 205 too, the stone material of which was re-used for the pavement.

However uncertain this proposal may appear, this seems to be the more probable at the moment. The conclusion can only be that the superstructure in its form as we know it cannot be earlier than the Nineteenth Dynasty. This relates it to Nefermenu, though regarding the extremely intricate and complex interrelationships of the monuments in question several other possibilities should also be kept in mind. If our intention is to demonstrate that the landscape of the area in ancient times was different from our view of some decades ago, full of probably pyramid-like superstructures, we cannot exclude that Jahmes of TT 241 also had one, perhaps in the same place as Nefermenu. And Menheperre-seneb (-59-) or Amenhotep (-61-) also had their own where we find Djehutimes's ruins today, and so forth.

To reconstruct the landscape of the necropolis in a certain or in different periods is, thus, a hard task, but in some way the existing monuments or their remains are to be preserved. For that, all the efforts are taken, though here again approaches and solutions may vary.

The task was done in the following way treating some of the monuments on El-Khokha:

The ramp of TT 205 was rebuilt applying its own reddish stone material. The inclination was reconstructed from the line of the plastered floor remains in the lower section and those in front of the forecourt. On the ramp's – still unknown – but hypothetically reconstructed other, western side, limestone fragments of the debris are piled up.

The visible, now clear sides of the *tafl* pillars of the eastern *saff* were restored with mud bricks where necessary and on the top edges, and plastered, so that it is still possible to make difference between the restored parts and the original plastering (figs. 16–17).

A similar method was applied to the northern wall and the two surviving corners of the superstructure (pyramid) above TT 184/241 (fig. 15). The top was protected with some lines of mud brick, in the height of its best preserved north western corner, so that even here, the wall was raised with two brick-lines. On the

east and west sides, below the corners, the protecting additional walls reach down in a 1.5 m length and the outlines of the New Kingdom superstructure have now also been made dominant with mud brick lines.

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