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Julianna Paksi

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The Ceiling Inscriptions of the Transverse Hall of TT 84 in their Spatial-Material Context, Part I: The Bands Inscribed in Two Stages[*]

JULIANNA PAKSI[**]

ABSTRACT

The present paper represents the first part of a detailed, multidimensional analysis of the six long ceiling bands of the transverse hall of Theban tomb no. 84 (TT 84), a tomb originally built for Iamunedjeh, first royal herald under the reign of Thutmose III. It offers a new edition of the inscriptions in the west and east bands of the south wing as well as in the east band of the north wing and reveals epigraphic and compositional evidence that speaks for a double-stage execution of these ceiling bands. The study examines the clues that shed light on the strong intertextual relations between these inscriptions and the ceiling texts of several other early and mid-18th-Dynasty Theban tombs—TT 82, TT 18, TT 99, and TT 96A in particular. This case study—together with its forthcoming second part—highlights the importance of complementing philological investigations with the analysis of the spatial-material and socio-cultural contexts when studying ancient Egyptian texts.

Keywords: 18th-Dynasty Theban tombs, ceiling inscriptions of Theban tomb chapels, TT 84, intertextuality, textual transmission, textual composition.

[*] This study was conducted with the financial support of the Swiss National Science Foundation as part of my Early Postdoc.Mobility project titled *Textual composition of a tomb: The inscriptions of TT 84*. I am deeply indebted to Susanne Bickel and Andrea Loprieno-Gnirs for their continued support for my work on the inscriptions of TT 84 in the framework of the Swiss Mission at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna of the University of Basel. I also wish to thank A. Loprieno-Gnirs, Dimitri Laboury, Rune Olsen, Alexis Den Doncker, and Diana Fragata for the discussions from which this paper largely benefited, and I am grateful to Krisztián Vértes for all his advice on digital drawing as well as to Renaud Pietri for his critical review of the French abstract of this paper.
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RÉSUMÉ

Le présent article constitue la première partie d'une analyse détaillée et multidimensionnelle des six longs bandeaux d'inscriptions du plafond de la salle transversale de la tombe thébaine nº 84 (TT 84), une tombe construite à l'origine pour Amounedjeh, premier héraut royal sous le règne de Thoutmosis III. L'article propose une nouvelle édition des inscriptions des bandeaux ouest et est de l'aile sud, ainsi que du bandeau est de l'aile nord, et montre que des éléments épigraphiques et compositionnels plaident pour une exécution en deux temps de ces textes. L'étude met en lumière les fortes relations intertextuelles entre ces inscriptions et les textes des plafonds de plusieurs autres tombes thébaines du début et du milieu de la XVIII^e^ dynastie – TT 82, TT 18, TT 99 et TT 96A en particulier. Cette étude – ainsi que sa deuxième partie à paraître – souligne ainsi l'importance de compléter les investigations philologiques par l'étude du contexte spatiomatériel et socioculturel lors de l'analyse des textes égyptiens anciens.

Mots-clés : tombes thébaines de la XVIII^e^ dynastie, inscriptions de plafonds des chapelles funéraires thébaines, TT 84, intertextualité, transmission textuelle, composition textuelle.

1. PRELIMINARY NOTE

This paper constitutes the first part of a longer bipartite study originally presented at the Sorbonne University in November 2021 as part of a two-day workshop organized by Chloé Ragazzoli and Florence Albert: *Le texte égyptien, d'un espace écriture à l'autre*. The second part of this study (Part II: The bands inscribed in a single stage) will be published in the proceedings volume of this conference, in the forthcoming Bibliothèque d'études volume titled *Questions sur la scripturalité égyptienne : des registres graphiques aux espaces d'écriture* and edited by F. Albert and C. Ragazzoli (see Paksi 2025).

2. CEILING TEXTS IN A SECONDARILY ENLARGED SPACE: A CASE STUDY ON TEXTUAL CIRCULATION AND TEXTUAL ADAPTATION IN THE THEBAN NECROPOLIS

Theban tomb no. 84 (TT 84)—one of the textually and artistically most elaborate tombs in the Theban necropolis—is located in the south-western part of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna and was built for Iamunedjeh, an 18th-Dynasty nobleman who lived under the reign of Thutmose III and was one

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of the most influential officials of his time.[1] Architectural and epigraphic evidence suggests that still during the lifetime of Iamunedjeh, the façade, the court, and the transverse hall of TT 84 were enlarged by 50% of their originally planned size in order to accommodate two side chapels at the south[2] and north ends of the west wall of the transverse hall.[3] The side chapels were dedicated to Iamunedjeh's parents, his father Sadjehuty and his mother Resy.[4] The modification of the original architectural plans of the tomb happened at a point in time when part of the transverse hall had already been decorated, which provides us with a unique opportunity to observe how the artists responsible for its decoration responded to these altered spatial conditions.

The enlargement of the hall had a direct impact on its ceiling inscriptions.[5] Since the extension happened in the length (cf. Fig. 1),[6] it led to a double-stage execution of some of the long ceiling bands: the inscriptions that had been painted on the ceiling before the enlargement of the hall (the inner and outer bands in the south wing and the outer band in the north wing) had to be prolonged, while the bands that had not yet been filled with text before the change in the architectural plans occurred (the two central bands and the inner band in the north wing) could from the outset be devised 50% longer than they would have been, had the hall not been enlarged (cf. Fig. 2).[7]



Fig. 1. Two break lines marking the original length of the transverse hall of TT 84 on its ceiling. Photo by Matjaž Kačičnik, Life Histories of Theban Tombs (LHTT), University of Basel, 2019.[8]

1 Iamunedjeh started his career as *ḫrp n kꜣwt* "overseer of works" during the coregency period while Hatshepsut was still in power. Under Thutmose III, he became *wḥmw tpy nsw* "first royal herald" and was also *ỉmy-rꜣ rwyt* "overseer of the gate" to the royal palace and *ỉmy-rꜣ šnwty Šmʿw Mḥw* "overseer of the granaries of Upper and Lower Egypt." His influential position provided him with easy access to the infrastructure necessary for building and decorating his tomb (cf. Laboury 2020). For an overview of Iamunedjeh's career path, see Helck 1958, pp. 384–386, 496 and Shirley 2011, pp. 306–308.

2 The cardinal directions mentioned in this paper are the ideal ones unless otherwise stated. According to the ideal orientation of Theban tombs—which influenced the contents of their wall and ceiling decorations—the east–west axis is defined by their entrance and central chapel or shrine. Geographically, nevertheless, the entrance of TT 84 is in the south, and its central chapel is in the north.

3 A detailed study on the architectural and epigraphic evidence for a secondary enlargement of the tomb is currently in preparation by A. Loprieno-Gnirs and the present author (Loprieno-Gnirs, Paksi in preparation).

4 The names of Iamunedjeh's parents are also preserved in one of the ceiling bands, in the west or inner band of the north wing (Paksi 2025, §2).

5 The ceiling inscriptions of the transverse hall of TT 84 were published by Karl Piehl (1886, pls. 132–134) and Philippe Virey (1886, pp. 35–36; 1891, pp. 339–343) at the end of the 19th century, but their spatial-material context has so far been ignored.

6 The transverse hall of TT 84 reaches almost 16 m (15.80 m) in its length in its final form. The two nearly eight-meter wings of the hall were each ca. 2.67 m shorter before the change in the architectural plans of the tomb, while the width (ca. 2.20 m) and the height (ca. 3 m) of the hall were not affected by the enlargement. The measurements were taken by A. Loprieno-Gnirs and Evelyne Marty in 2017 and were confirmed by R. Olsen in 2022.

7 See also Loprieno-Gnirs, Paksi in preparation. The colors used to differentiate between the two executional stages of the ceiling inscriptions of the transverse hall of TT 84 in Fig. 2 (blue for the first, black for the second stage) are kept throughout the entire paper and are similarly applied to the transcription, transliteration, and translation of the texts. Examples cited in the discussions are, nevertheless, always given in black, also if they belong to the first executional stage of the inscriptional program of the ceiling. Black transcriptions thus do not imply that the corresponding segments of texts had been written in black, the color is only used to suggest that those passages were completed after the enlargement of the hall. All ceiling texts were painted in blue (cf. Figs. 17 and 19–20).

8 This photograph is a stitched image, not an orthophoto. On the photographic documentation methods used in TT 84, see Gojcic et al. 2021. The photogrammetric documentation of the decoration of the tomb was completed after the submission of this paper.

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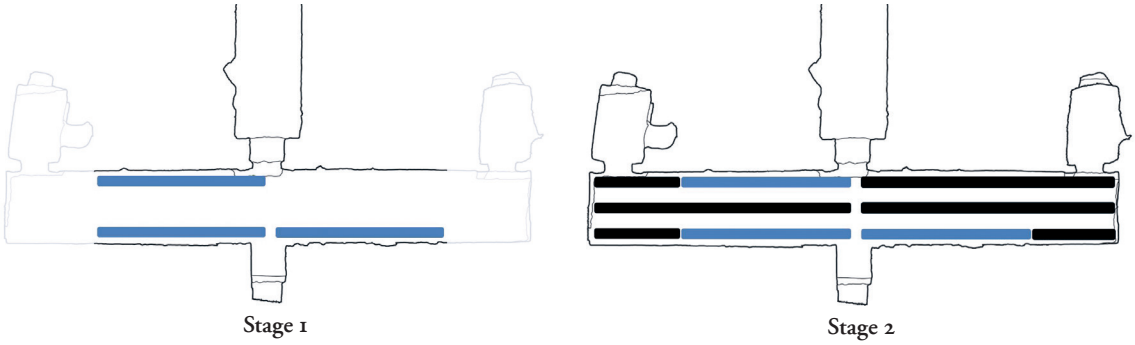


Fig. 2. Double-stage execution of the long inscription bands on the ceiling of the transverse hall of TT 84 (view from above). Plan by Martina Aeschlimann-Langer, Ephraim Friedli, Zan Gojcic, and Stephan Unter, LHTT, University of Basel, 2016–2019. Illustration by the author, 2022.

Before the transverse hall of TT 84 was enlarged, the inscriptions had already been added to three of the six long bands of its ceiling: to the inner and outer bands in the south wing and to the outer band in the north wing. The presence of the name of the deceased directly before the two break lines indicating the original northern and southern limits of the hall (cf. Fig. 1 above) and once more at the actual end of the bands is one of the strongest clues revealing that these were once shorter segments of texts that had to be prolonged secondarily (Fig. 3). By contrast, the inscriptions that were painted in the entire length of the ceiling in a single step and after the extension of the hall—the central bands of both wings and the inner band of the north wing—feature Iamunedjeh's name only once: in the closing part of the texts.[9]

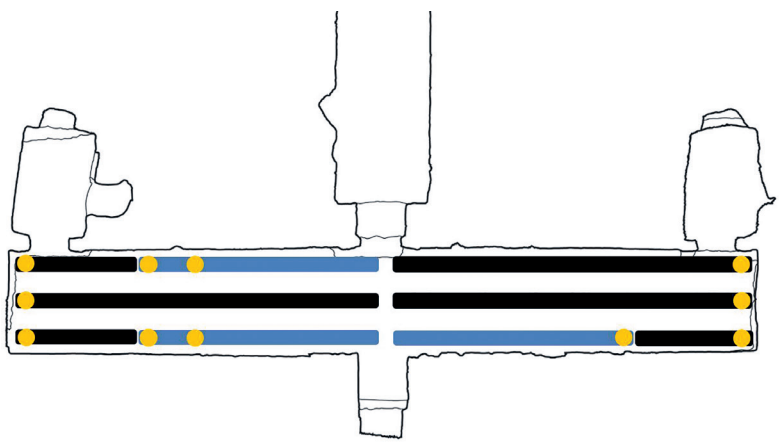


Fig. 3. The distribution of the name of the deceased on the ceiling of the transverse hall of TT 84 (view from above). Plan by M. Aeschlimann-Langer, E. Friedli, Z. Gojcic, and S. Unter, LHTT, University of Basel, 2016–2019. Illustration by the author, 2022.

9 For a detailed analysis of the inscriptions of the central band of the south wing and the central and inner bands of the north wing, see the second part of this study (Paksi 2025). The ceiling inscriptions of the transverse hall of TT 84 were not affected by the alterations made to the textual program of the tomb on behalf of its secondary owner, Mery, the high priest of Amun under Amenhotep II (see Paksi 2024). Thus, any interference with the data due to Mery's takeover of the tomb can be excluded.

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Besides the at least twofold mention of the deceased's name, there are several further indications—epigraphic as well as compositional ones—suggesting a double-stage execution for the inner band in the south wing as well as for the two outer bands of the ceiling. These clues will be discussed in detail in the sections below (§4.3, §5.3, and §6.3).

This study explores the ways in which the textual composition of the ceiling was adjusted to its altered spatial conditions. It does so by following the principles of material philology, that is, by considering the physical form of a text as well as its spatial-material and socio-cultural contexts as integral parts of its meaning. The philological analysis of the ceiling inscriptions is thus complemented by the study of their visual, material, and spatial dimensions. Since the non-linguistic aspects of texts often bear witness to the practices and processes linked to their production and transmission,[10] this approach is expected to lead to a more nuanced understanding of the phenomena that played a role in the composition of these texts and in their transfer from one (written) space to another. In this regard, also the larger spatial context—the monumental landscape of the early and mid-18th-Dynasty Theban necropolis—becomes relevant, and evidence that speaks for strong intertextual links between the ceiling inscriptions of the transverse hall of TT 84 and the ceiling texts of other contemporary Theban tombs will be discussed in detail. By investigating where these inscriptions potentially come from, where else they are found, and how they are adapted to the new three-dimensional environment at hand, the paper presents a case study on textual circulation and textual adaptation in the funerary monuments of the early and mid-18th-Dynasty Theban elite.

3. THE MATERIALITY OF THE CEILING TEXTS OF THE TRANSVERSE HALL OF TT 84

The ceiling texts of the transverse hall of TT 84 are monochrome hieroglyphic inscriptions painted in blue with a white foundation on a red background (Fig. 4).[11] Although the blue paint has sometimes faded away to the point of appearing absent—especially in the closing parts of the central band in the north wing—it was applied along the entire length of all inscriptions. Only a few signs or parts of signs were occasionally forgotten and were hence left in white.[12] In some of the ceiling segments that were inscribed after the enlargement of the hall, preliminary drawings in white and a white pair of auxiliary lines marking the position of the text within the band are sometimes discernible (Paksi 2025, fig. 13). None of the previously realized text segments seem to contain preliminary drawings, but traces of a pair of red horizontal lines marking the position of the hieroglyphs within the band are at times visible (cf. Paksi 2025, §4.3).

The six long bands run parallel to one another in pairs in opposite directions along the east and west sidewalls and in the center of the ceiling towards the north and south ends of the hall.

10 Cf. Albert, Ragazzoli 2025.

11 In my drawings, in cases where the two layers do not fully overlap, the transcription of the text generally follows the blue paint.

12 See §4.1, n. b; §5.1, n. h; §6.1, nn. e, c, and k; and Paksi 2025, §2.1, nn. g and j.

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There are thus two east or outer bands, two west or inner bands, and two central bands, one on each half of the ceiling (Fig. 17). A further inscription band crosses the ceiling from east to west in its middle starting from the entrance and running towards the passage to the corridor.[13]



Photo by M. Kačičnik, LHTT, University of Basel, 2017

Fig. 4. A detail of the west/inner band of the south wing of the transverse hall, TT 84.

The six long bands were originally only about 5.20 m long but became nearly 8 m (7.85 m) in their final format, after the extension of the hall.[14] The width of the red bands carrying the texts generally varies between 8 and 11.5 cm, although the central band in the north wing, the widest among all, reaches 13 cm in width at the northern limit of the hall.[15] The width of the individual bands remains relatively stable throughout their entire length—with the exception of the central and inner bands in the north wing.[16] The northern inner band becomes narrower during its course: its width drops from an initial 10.5 cm to 8 cm by the time it reaches the north wall of the hall. In contrast, the central band of the north wing expands gradually towards the northern limit of the hall: its width increases from 10 to 13 cm.[17] The height of

13 The latter is not discussed in detail in the present paper because it was not affected by the secondary enlargement of the hall. Although the band is highly fragmentary, the traces of the signs preserved (*ḏd*-[*mdw*] [… *long lacuna* …]*=k ḏt sp-sn*) and its position within the tomb strongly suggest that it was a Nut-spell (cf. Galán 2013).

14 The data is based on the measurements of R. Olsen from March 2022.

15 The width of the bands and the height of the signs were measured by the author in March 2022.

16 The outer band in the north wing is 9 cm wide in its entire length, whereas the outer band in the south wing is ca. 2 cm wider (i.e., 11 cm wide) than its northern counterpart. The width of the central band in the south wing is generally 9.5 cm, but it drops briefly to 8 cm roughly at the two thirds of its length. The width of the inner band in the south wing also fluctuates slightly, between 10 and 11.5 cm.

17 The fact that the width of the central band in the south wing remains nearly constant along its entire length (cf. n. 16) suggests that the gradual increase in the width of the northern central band was probably not intentional and thus was not meant to create an optical illusion in order to keep the width of the band close to stable when viewed from the middle of the hall.

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the vertical signs within the bands is in general kept between 6 and 8.5 cm irrespective of the horizontal or vertical layout of the text they belong to.[18] Those of the central band in the north wing, however, vary between 8.5 and 10 cm, while the signs in the northern inner band shrink from 8.5 to 6 cm towards its final part.

The six long bands, the middle band, and the north and south ends of the transverse hall define four rectangles of an identical size, each of which was decorated with geometrical ornaments (Fig. 17).[19] Multiple epigraphic evidence indicates that the ornamental decoration of the ceiling as well as the red background for the inscriptional bands had been completed on the entire surface before the hall was enlarged.[20] Since the ceiling of the hall is in part badly damaged, not only part of the ornamental decoration is missing, but also the texts are only fragmentarily preserved. The southern part of the ceiling has suffered relatively more over the centuries than the northern one, but all inscription bands have been affected by some damage, wherefore none of them is fully preserved. Nonetheless, with the help of some close textual parallels in other Theban tombs, three out of the six long bands—the two side bands in the south wing (§4 and §5) and the outer band in the north wing (§6)—can be completely reconstructed at present.[21]

4. THE WEST/INNER BAND OF THE SOUTH WING

The west or inner band of the south wing is a horizontal inscription running from north to south at the edge of the ceiling, above the southern part of the west wall of the transverse hall of TT 84. The text was written from right to left, with the feet of the signs pointing towards the west wall (Fig. 5; cf. Figs. 17–19). Besides the east or outer band (§5), it is one of the two bands on the southern half of the ceiling that had to be prolonged after the extension of the hall and was therefore painted in two stages (§4.3).

In terms of content, befitting its placement, it is an Osiris offering formula (§4.1) evoking themes such as the traveling in the divine boat in the allegiance of the great god (*sqdt m dpt nṯr m šms n nṯr ꜥ.3*), the receipt of a place among the god's followers at his place in the district of Peqer ([*šsp*] *st mm šmsw=f m st=f nt w <p>qrḏ*), the *ba*'s place in heaven and the corpse's in the *duat* (*bꜣ n pt ḫꜣt n dwꜣt*), or the unhindered movement of the soul (*pr=k ḥꜣ=k nn ḥnḥn=k nn šnꜥ=k ḥr sbꜣ n dwꜣt*).

18 The vertical signs in the outer band of the north wing are generally 7 cm tall, while those in the outer band of the south wing are slightly larger: their size varies between 8 and 8.5 cm. The ones in the central band of the south wing are 6 to 7.5 cm tall, whereas the size of those in the inner band of the south wing remains between 7 and 8 cm. The bands are on average 2 to 3 cm wider than the inscriptions they contain (cf. n. 16 above).

19 On the ornamental decoration of the ceiling, see Loprieno-Gnirs, Paksi in preparation.

20 See Loprieno-Gnirs and Paksi in preparation.

21 The reconstruction of a further band, the inscription of the central band of the south wing (Paksi 2025, §3), may be equally possible with the help of a recently identified parallel in the tomb of Amenhotep (TT C.3), deputy treasurer of Thutmose III. The two texts could, however, not be compared before the finalization of the manuscripts of this bipartite study and will therefore form the subject of a later publication, a study on the ceiling texts of TT C.3, which is in preparation by the present author for the upcoming publication of Amenhotep's tomb, owing to the kind offer of Laurent Bavay.

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The text devised for the original length of the hall shares close textual parallels with the ceiling texts of two contemporary tombs, TT 82 and TT 18, while its secondarily added segment shows close resemblance with texts in TT 127, TT 24, tomb no. 3 in Elkab (EK 3), and TT 96A (§4.2). Approximately one third of the inscription is missing on the ceiling of TT 84, but with the help of its close textual parallel in TT 82, the entire band can be reconstructed (§4.1). What is more, a misinterpreted sign combination—a scribal mistake that seems to have been reinterpreted along the transmission process—suggests that the initial content of the band was directly transferred from the ceiling of TT 82 to that of TT 84 (§4.2).

4.1. Translation and commentary of the west/inner band of the south wing



Fig. 5. Transcription of the west/inner band of the south wing.[22] Drawing by the author, 2022.

ḥtp-dỉ-nsw
Ws[ỉr ḥr-ỉb tɜ-wr][a]
[nb nḥḥ]
[wp šʿt tɜwy]
[wḫm] mswt
ỉ[wʿ Gbb]
d[ỉ=f sqdt m dpt nṯr m šms n nṯr ʿɜ m ḫnt=f n(t) tp rnpt]
[n kɜ n Ỉɜmw-nḏḥ mɜʿ ḫrw]
[šsp] st mm šmsw=f m st=f nt w <p>qrỉ
ỉyt m ḥtp m mɜʿ ḫrw
bɜ n pt ḫɜt n dwɜt
n ỉry-pʿt ḫɜty-ʿ
mḥ-ỉb mnḫ n nṯr nfr[b]
Ỉɜmw-nḏ[ḥ mɜʿ ḫrw]
pr=k
ḥɜ=k
nn ḫnḫn=k
nn šnʿ=k ḥr sbɜ n dwɜt[c]

22 The part transcribed in blue was painted on the ceiling already before the enlargement of the hall, whereas the part rendered in black was only added secondarily (cf. n. 7 above). The segments with reduced opacity are the author's reconstructions and are no longer preserved on the ceiling (cf. Figs. 17–18). Transcriptions of the ceiling inscriptions of the transverse hall of TT 84 are all the author's illustrations, while other hieroglyphic texts were transcribed with the help of *JSesh* in this paper.

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wn.tw n=k ꜥ3wy 3ḫt
sn n=k swy ḏs=(s)n[d]
mḥ-ỉb ꜥ3 n nb t3wy
ḥsy n nṯr nfr
šms nsw ḥr ḫ3st nbt
wḫmw nsw
Ỉ3mw-nḏḥ mꜣꜥ ḫrw ḫr nṯr ꜥ3

King-given-offering of
Os[iris, who dwells in Thinis],
[lord of eternity],[e]
[who quelled the slaughtering of the two lands],
[the one] born [again],
he[ir of Geb];[f]
[may he] gr[ant the traveling in the divine boat][g] in the allegiance of the great god during his water procession of the first day of the year]:
[for the *ka* of Iamunedjeh, true of voice],[h]
[the receipt of] a place among his followers at his place of the district of <Pe>qer,[i]
the coming in peace as one who is true of voice,
and that the *ba* may belong to the heaven and the corpse to the *duat*,[j]
for[k] the hereditary noble, local prince,
excellent confidant of the perfect god,
Iamunedj[eh, true of voice]:
you may come forth
and you may descend,
without your hindering (i.e., being hindered)
and without your turning back at the portal of the *duat*;
the two doors of the horizon shall be opened for you,
and the two door bolts shall unlock for you on their own,[l]
great confidant of the lord of the two lands,
favored one of the perfect god,
who follows the king to all foreign lands,[m]
royal herald,
Iamunedjeh, true of voice in front of the great god.

a. In this band, the reconstruction of the lacunae is based on the text in the west or inner band of the ceiling of the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 82 (see Davies, Gardiner 1915, pl. 30B or Fig. 21 below). A large part of the primarily executed segment of the inscription in TT 84 is also found in TT 18 (see Gauthier 1908, p. 166 or Fig. 22 below), but Baki's version of the text ends before Amenemhat's and Iamunedjeh's (n. h) and appears garbled at various points (nn. e and g). For the discussion, see §4.2 below.

b. The blue paint was forgotten from the short horizontal line at the top of the *nfr* sign (cf. Fig. 4).

c. The spelling of the phrase *sbȝ n dwȝt* "the portal of the *duat*" plays on the different phonetic values of sign N14: .

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d. The group contains a haplography for the *s*: .

e. Instead of *nb nḥḥ* "lord of eternity" (; reconstructed after TT 82), TT 18 has  (Fig. 22). The intrusion of the *r* could be a conscious alteration for *nb r nḥḥ* "lord for (lit., until) eternity" or a mistake in the text. In the 18th Dynasty, *nb nḥḥ* "lord of eternity" is the common formulation of the epithet (*Wb. Belegst.* II 299.8–10), although *nb r nḥḥ* "lord for (lit., until) eternity" is also attested, albeit rarely and rather in post-Amarna times (e.g., on a stela from Deir el-Medina in the collection of the Museo Egizio in Turin, cat. no. 1619; Tosi, Roccati 1971, no. 50011). This and the fact that Baki's version of the text undoubtedly contains another mistake (n. g) makes the interpretation of the additional *r* as an error slightly more likely.

f. The size of the space between the traces preserved of signs (D58) and  (D37) suggests that the spelling of—he name of Geb included a god determinative () in Iamunedjeh's version of the text—similarly to the version in TT 18 (Fig. 22) but not in TT 82 (Fig. 21).

g. Instead of *dỉ=f sqdt m dpt nṯr*… "may he grant the traveling in the divine boat…" (in TT 84, reconstructed after TT 82: ), TT 18 has  (Fig. 22). The end of the phrase is illegible in Baki's version, although the segment was perhaps meant to be read as *dỉ=f sqdt=f m nṯr* {*np*}<*pn*>… "may he (i.e., the god) grant his (i.e., the deceased's) traveling as (i.e., in the form of) <this> god (i.e., Osiris)…"

h. In Iamunedjeh's version of the text, there seems to be no place left for titles or epithets before the mention of the name of the deceased at this point. The situation is different in TT 82 (Fig. 21) and in TT 18 (Fig. 22). In Baki's tomb, however, the text does not continue, as it does in TT 82 and TT 84, but ends with the mention of the name of the deceased and with that of his wife.

i. The group  represents a defective writing for *w* <*p*>*qrỉ* "the district of <Pe>qer" (cf. also Fig. 6). The phrase refers to the precinct of Osiris at Abydos (*Wb.* I 561.9; Faulkner 1962, p. 95). On the possible origins of the mistake in TT 84, see the discussion below §4.2.

j. Cf. Barta 1968, pp. 99, 124, 240, 315–316 (Bitte 137) and Assmann et al. 2005, pp. 138–141. For the origins of the motif, see *Pyr.* 474a (PT 305). The phrase has several parallels in the ceiling inscriptions of the early and mid-18th-Dynasty Theban tombs. It is attested, for instance, in TT 24, the tomb of Nebamun, steward of the royal wife Nebtu (Bouriant 1887, p. 99); in the transverse hall of TT 343, the tomb of Benia called Paheqamen, overseer of works (Guksch 1978, p. 25, fig. 11b); in the pillared hall of TT 97, the tomb of Amenemhat, high priest of Amun under Thutmose III (Gardiner 1910, p. 98); or in the transverse hall of TT 17, the tomb of Nebamun, scribe and physician of the king (Säve-Söderbergh 1957, pl. 27, no. 1). A similar formulation is found on the Bologna statue of Hapuseneb, high priest of Amun under Hatshepsut (*Urk.* IV 484, 14), and on the free-standing false door in the tomb of Senneferi (TT 99), treasurer under the reign of Thutmose III (Strudwick 2016b, p. 95, fig. 85 and p. 97). For a later parallel, see fragment no. 81 from the ceiling of TT 55, the tomb of Ramose, vizier under Amenhotep III and Akhenaten (Davies 1941, pl. 43).

k. Similarly to the case of TT 82 (Fig. 21), the *n kꜣ n* formula is not repeated before the second mention of the name of the deceased in the original closing part of the text in TT 84.

l. The secondarily added segment of the inscription shares close textual parallels with texts in TT 127 (*Urk.* IV 498, 7–11), TT 24 (*Urk.* IV 147, 15 – 148, 2), EK 3 (*Urk.* IV 116, 4–8), and TT 96A (*DZA* 28.368.290). See §4.2.

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m. Through this epithet, the final part of the band resonates with the inscription right below: with the so-called South Stela, one of the two biographical inscriptions of Iamunedjeh. Besides its twofold mention on the stela (in lines 5 and 18), the epithet occurs twice more in TT 84: on the north wall of the north chapel and in the south band of the ceiling of the shrine. It is also attested several times in the texts of Iamunedjeh's contemporaries, most importantly, in the inscriptions of TT 85, the neighboring tomb of Amenemhab called Mahu (*Urk.* IV 890, 10; 899, 12; 899, 16; 900, 2; 900, 5; 909, 14; 910, 6; 915, 8). On the motif of following the king to foreign lands, see also Guksch 1994, pp. 185–198.

4.2. Textual parallels to the west/inner band of the south wing in TT 82, TT 18 and in TT 96A, TT 127, TT 24, and EK 3

The text devised for the original length of the inner ceiling band of the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 84 shares close textual parallels with a ceiling text in TT 82, the tomb of Amenemhat, steward of the vizier Useramun, in Sheikh Abd el-Qurna[23] and with another in TT 18, the tomb of Baki, a chief servant who weighed the silver and gold of the estate of Amun, in Dra Abu el-Naga.[24] Both texts are contemporary with Iamunedjeh's and are found at the same place in TT 82 as well as in TT 18 as the one in TT 84: they constitute in each case the west or inner band on the ceiling in the south wing of the transverse hall.[25] While Baki's version of the text is shorter than those of Amenemhat and Iamunedjeh—it ends after the first mention of the name of the deceased (§4.1, n. h)—and also differs slightly from the other two in its wording (§4.1, nn. e and g), TT 82 contains the entire text that was painted on Iamunedjeh's ceiling before the extension of the hall. The length of Amenemhat's ceiling bands in the transverse hall of his tomb and the length of the ones in TT 84 in their pre-enlargement state were comparable and in fact very similar. Considering the dimensions of the transverse hall of TT 82,[26] Amenemhat's ceiling bands must have been only about 20 to 25 cm longer (i.e., 5.40 to 5.45 m long) than Iamunedjeh's were in their primary stage (ca. 5.20 m)—a negligible difference, barely enough to accommodate an extra epithet or title. Baki's tomb, on the other hand, is significantly smaller than both TT 82 or TT 84.[27] Accordingly, the bands on the ceiling of its transverse hall are merely 2.60 m long, which explains the difference in the length of their content compared to the texts in TT 82 and TT 84.[28]

The west or inner band in the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 82 and the one in the same position in TT 84 in its pre-enlargement state do not only share the same inscription, but

23 See Davies, Gardiner 1915, pl. 30B or Fig. 21 below. On the ceiling inscriptions of TT 82 in general, see Takács in preparation.

24 See Gauthier 1908, p. 166 or Fig. 22 below.

25 Cf. PM I[1], pp. 20 and 160.

26 The transverse hall of TT 82 is about 11 m long and 2.15 m wide. Measurements by R. Olsen (personal communication from March 25, 2022).

27 The transverse hall of TT 18 is about 5.20 m long, 1.50 m wide, and 2.01 m high. The measurements in TT 18 were taken by the author in March 2022.

28 The west or inner band in the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 18 is about 10 cm wide, and its vertical signs are in general about 6 cm tall, which makes the band also slightly narrower and its inscription somewhat smaller than in TT 84 (cf. nn. 16 and 18).

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a similar mistake present in both copies reveals a further link between the two texts. What is more, the type of mistake the two inscriptions share allows us to make an assumption about the direction of the textual transmission between the two tombs. The phrase *w pqrỉ* "the district of Peqer" referring to the precinct of Osiris at Abydos has an erroneous spelling in both TT 82 and TT 84: the *p* is missing from the word *pqrỉ* "Peqer" in both instances. While Iamunedjeh's text features  (Fig. 6; §4.1, n. i), Amenemhat's has  (Fig. 7). Conspicuously, TT 82 substitutes the *p* with three superfluous plural strokes, which must be a corruption for the missing sign  (Q3), the hieratic form of which may be easily mistaken for three strokes ().[29] Indirectly, this mistake suggests that the text was copied from a hieratic or cursive hieroglyphic draft onto the ceiling of TT 82. In the *Digital Slip Archive* of the *Wörterbuch*, we find a note calling our attention to the fact that one of the two tombs, TT 82 or TT 84, must have copied the other.[30] I would go one step further and suggest that the text in TT 82 was copied *in situ* and—presumably with the help of a secondary medium—was transferred directly to the ceiling of TT 84. During this transmission process, a scribe or an artist tried to make sense of the garbled phrase on the ceiling of TT 82—either while writing it down onto an ostracon in TT 82 to carry it over to TT 84 or while painting it onto the ceiling of TT 84 from a copy handed over to him by a colleague. He edited away the superfluous plural strokes but failed to recognize the origin of the mistake and the underlying word *pqrỉ* "Peqer" (→).[31] Considering the geographical proximity of the two tombs,[32] this explanation does not seem implausible—especially because this is not the only ceiling inscription the two tombs have in common (cf. §5). While the text in the southern inner band of the transverse hall of TT 82 may have been directly transposed onto the ceiling of TT 84, the partial presence of the same inscription in TT 18 may be explained by the fact—or rather, possibility—that the same group of artists may have been involved in the decoration of TT 18 and TT 82, as Alexis Den Doncker's research on the stylistic connections between the two tombs suggests.[33]

29 Cf. Möller 1965, no. 388 and AKU–PAL, grapheme no. 509 here represented by sign no. 27135. The above observation was already noted by Davies, Gardiner 1915, p. 43, n. 4.

30 Cf. *DZA* 23.528.180–200. *DZA* 23.528.200: "*NB! Eines dieser Gräber hat das andere kopiert, daher der gemeinsame Fehler* ."

31 This is not the only modification the inscription went through during the transmission process. Further alterations are, however, of lesser importance and mainly concern the layout and the spelling of the text. Compare, for instance,  (TT 84) vs.  (TT 82);  (TT 84) vs.  (TT 82); (TT 84) vs. (TT 82); or  (TT 84) vs.  (TT 82).

32 Cf. Kampp 1996, Plan III.

33 Personal communication from March 18, 2022. On the same group of artists and their activities in the Theban necropolis, see also Den Doncker 2017, pp. 344–345, nn. 63–64 and Den Doncker in preparation.

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Photo by the author, 2022

Fig. 6. The segment containing the phrase *w pqrỉ* "the district of Peqer" in TT 84.



Photo by the author, 2023

Fig. 7. The segment containing the phrase *w pqrỉ* "the district of Peqer" in TT 82.

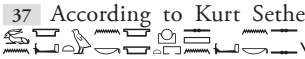
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The secondarily added segment of the west or inner band of the south wing—starting with *pr=k ḥɜ=k*… "you may come forth and you may descend…"—shares close phraseological parallels with minor differences in formulation with the inscriptions of several elite tombs of the early and mid-18th Dynasty: for instance, TT 127, the tomb of Senemiah, overseer of the two treasuries during the time of Hatshepsut, in Sheikh Abd el-Qurna;[34] EK 3, the tomb of Pahery, governor of Elkab and Esna, in Elkab;[35] and TT 24, the tomb of Nebamun, steward of the royal wife Nebtu, in Dra Abu el-Naga.[36] Although the overlap between the texts is shorter than in the case of TT 127, EK 3, or TT 24 and comprises only the last two clauses of the inscription preceding the epithets, title, and name of the deceased (*wn.tw n=k… sn n=k*…), the secondarily added segment in TT 84 also shares a conspicuous parallel with part of a ceiling inscription in TT 96A, the close-by tomb of Sennefer, mayor of Thebes under the reign of Amenhotep II.[37] The passage on the ceiling in TT 96A spells the word *swy* "two door bolts" with the duplication of its logogram () and features the same haplography of the *s* for writing the phrase *ḏs=sn* "themselves" (), as does Iamunedjeh's text ( and ). Since none of the other parallels show the same orthographical correspondences with the text in TT 84,[38] it remains a possibility that the artists responsible for the decoration of Sennefer's tomb were inspired by the text in TT 84 or by the same source the artists in TT 84 worked from. It is similarly conceivable, however, that the co-occurrence of these orthographical features does not originate in a particular written source but reveals a personal idiosyncrasy instead. Accordingly, it might be linked to one specific individual and to his personal preference in spelling this passage and giving it a particular layout in its final format. At present, none of these hypotheses can be substantiated, but the comparison between the painterly handwritings[39] of the corresponding passages in TT 84 and TT 96A may provide further clues on this matter.

34 *Urk.* IV 498, 7–11. Cf. Assmann et al. 2005, p. 239.

35 *Urk.* IV 116, 4–8. Cf. Assmann et al. 2005, p. 230.

36 *Urk.* IV 147, 15 – 148, 2. Cf. Assmann et al. 2005, p. 246.

37 According to Kurt Sethe's transcription (*DZA* 28.368.290), the passage is written as follows in TT 96A: .

38 In TT 127, the word *swy* "two door bolts" is written as  (*Urk.* IV 498, 11). In TT 24, the word is in a lacuna (*Urk.* IV 148, 2), while in Pahery's tomb, a different lexeme is used: *q(ɔ)rwt* "door bolts" (*Urk.* IV 116, 8). The phrase *ḏs=sn* or *ḏsw=sn* "themselves" is spelled as  in TT 127 (*Urk.* IV 498, 11), as  in EK 3 (*Urk.* IV 116, 8), and as  in TT 24 (*Urk.* IV 148, 2).

39 The concept of "painterly handwritings" (cf. Hodin 1949) was introduced to the field by D. Laboury (2012, pp. 203–206), who argued that by adopting an archaeological perception to Egyptian art that allows us to see and consider the materiality of an object, we may not only better understand the circumstances of its creation but may also be able to track the work of individual artists. Laboury criticized the so-called Morellian method (Fernie 1995), which was applied to Egyptian art with limited success in earlier years (e.g., by Kozloff 1979), and suggested that—instead of interpreting motives of the same form as indices of the same hand and thereby ignoring some of the fundamental characteristics of Egyptian art (e.g., its stylistic homogeneity)—we shall look for the technical signature, the personal habits and practices of artists when trying to differentiate their work.

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4.3. Epigraphic and compositional evidence for a double-stage execution of the west/inner band of the south wing

The final segment of the west or inner band of the south wing seems to have been painted by a different person than its first two thirds—as attested by a clear visual contrast between the primarily and secondarily executed parts of the text (Fig. 8). The difference is at first sight most apparent in the dissimilarity of the exact shade of blue chosen for the signs before and after the break line marking the original southern limit of the ceiling. Beyond that, while the initial section of the inscription was written in very elegant, thin, and regularly spaced hieroglyphs, the signs appear compacter, narrower, and less precisely drawn in the final part of the band, and also their arrangement becomes denser and less regular. What is more, in the part secondarily added, the white and blue layers do not precisely overlap because the blue paint no longer fully covers the white foundation used for the signs. While the person responsible for the original inscription of the band had an extremely precise brush handling, the artist continuing the text was inclined to retouch his strokes and also used more strokes per sign than his predecessor did. The second artist also had the habit of pausing at the edges of lines and letting the paint form small blobs there or had a preference for abbreviating the *n*'s with a simple stroke (see, e.g.,  or).[40] Even when he made the effort to paint the ripple of water, he usually built it up from 10 to 12 line segments (see, e.g.,  or), although the first artist never used less than 14 line segments for the same sign (see, e.g.,) and occasionally went as far as 18 (see).[41]



Photo by M. Kačičnik, LHTT, University of Basel, 2017

Fig. 8. Visual contrast between the primarily and secondarily executed parts of the text in the west/inner band of the south wing.

As far as the coherence of the composition is concerned, in the case of the west or inner band of the south wing, a considerable amount of thought seems to have been given to the challenge of adding further 2.60 to 2.70 m of text to an already existing inscription. The secondarily executed segment introduces a new motif by elaborating on the wish of the unhindered movement of the soul (§4.1). As a result, this band appears relatively more coherent when

40 Altogether six times in 14 occurrences. In the primarily executed part of the text, there are only six *n* phonograms preserved: two of them—the one in the phrase *bȝ n pt* () and another in Iamunedjeh's name at the original end of the band ()—are featured with the Lower Egyptian crown, while the remaining four are written with the more generic ripple of water.

41 For further details, see Paksi 2022.

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regarded in its full length than the other two bands that had to be prolonged (cf. §5.3 and §6.3). The almost word by word repetition of an epithet in the final part of the text (*mḫ-ỉb ꜥ3 n nb t3wy* "great confidant of the lord of the two lands"), which already appears earlier, in the original closing section of the band (*mḫ-ỉb mnḫ n nṯr nfr* "excellent confidant of the perfect god"), is, nevertheless, a compositional clue indicating that the last third of the text was a secondary addition.

5. THE EAST/OUTER BAND OF THE SOUTH WING

The east or outer band of the south wing is a horizontally written ceiling inscription running from north to south above the southern part of the east wall of the transverse hall of TT 84. The text was written from left to right, which means that the feet of the hieroglyphs point towards the east wall (Fig. 9; cf. Figs. 17–19). Besides the west or inner band (§4), it is one of two ceiling bands in the south wing that had to be executed in two stages and prolonged after the enlargement of the hall (§5.3).

The outer band of the south wing contains a *ḥtp-dỉ-nsw* offering formula to Amun-Re (§5.1) with wishes for the deceased including an invocation offering (*dỉ=f prt-ḫrw*…) and the motifs of drinking water at the eddy of the river (*swr mw ḥr bbt ỉtrw*), taking the form of the flood on top of the earth (*ỉrt ḫprw bꜥḥ tp t3*), coming forth as a living *ba* (*prỉt m bꜣ ꜥnḫ*), and the mummy's unification with Osiris (*rdt ḫnm sꜥḥ m nṯr*).

A significant part of the primarily executed part of the inscription is missing but can be reconstructed with the help of a close textual parallel in TT 82 (§5.2). What is more, a relatively infrequent formulation shared by both copies suggests that—similarly to the case of the west or inner band of the south wing (§4.2), that is, the inscription on the opposite side of the ceiling—Iamunedjeh's version may be a direct copy of its counterpart in Amenemhat's tomb (§5.2).

5.1. Translation and commentary of the east/outer band of the south wing



FIG. 9. Transcription of the east/outer band of the south wing.[42] Drawing by the author, 2022.

42 The part transcribed in blue was painted on the ceiling already before the enlargement of the hall, whereas the part rendered in black was only added secondarily (cf. n. 7 above). The segments with reduced opacity are reconstructions by the author and are no longer preserved on the ceiling (cf. Figs. 17–18).

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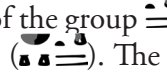
ḥtp-dỉ-nsw
[*Ỉm*]*n-*[*Rʿ*][a]
nb nswt tɜwy[b]
ḥnt[*y Ỉpt-swt*]
[*nṯr ʿnḫ ḫpr ḏs=f*]
[*ʿnḫ m mɜʿt rʿ nb*]
[*dỉ=f prt-ḫrw t ḥnqt ỉḫw ɜpdw*]
[*ḫt nbt nfrt wʿbt*]
[*tɜw nḏm n mḥt*][c]
[*swr mw*] *ḥr bbt*
n kɜ n ỉry-pʿt ḥɜty-ʿ
wḫmw nsw
ỉmy-rɜ rwyt
Ỉɜmw-nḏḥ mɜʿ ḫrw
ỉrt ḫprw bʿḥ tp tɜ
ɜḫ wsr mɜʿ ḫrw
n kɜ n ỉry-p[*ʿt ḥɜty-ʿ*]
mḥ-ỉb m[*nḫ n nb tɜwy*]
[*sš wdḥ*]*w n nṯr nfr*
Ỉɜmw-[*n*]*ḏḥ mɜʿ ḫrw*
prỉt m bɜ ʿnḫy
swrỉ[d] *mw ḥr bbt ỉtrw*
rdt ḫnm sʿḫ[e] *m nṯr m ỉw n mɜʿ*[f] *ḫrw*
n kɜ n sḫnt.n[g] *nb tɜwy ḏs=f*[h]
mḥ-ỉb mnḫ n nsw
ỉry-rdwy=f
wḫmw nsw
Ỉɜmw-nḏḥ mɜʿ[i] *ḫrw ḫr nṯr ʿɜ*

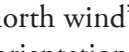
King-given-offering of
[Am]un-[Re],
lord of the thrones of the two lands,
who presid[es over Karnak],
[living god, who created himself],
[who lives in *maat* every day];
[he shall give an invocation offering of bread, beer, beef, poultry],
[everything good and pure],
[the sweet air of the north wind],
[drinking water] at the eddy (i.e., watering place) (*sic*):[j]
for the *ka* of the hereditary noble, local prince,
royal herald,
overseer of the gate,
Iamunedjeh, true of voice;

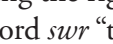
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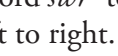
taking the form of the flood on top of the earth,[k]
efficiency, power, veneration:[l]
for the *ka* of the hereditary no[ble, local prince],
ex[cellent] confidant [of the lord of the two lands],[m]
[scribe of the alta]r of the perfect god,[n]
Iamu[n]edjeh, true of voice;
coming forth as a living *ba*,
drinking water at the eddy of the river,
causing the mummy to unite with the god on the island of the venerated one(s):
for the *ka* of the one whom the lord of the two lands has advanced himself,
excellent confidant of the king,
his companion,[o]
royal herald,
Iamunedjeh, true of voice in front of the great god.

a. In this band, the reconstruction of the lacunae follows the inscription in the east or outer band of the ceiling of the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 82 (see Davies, Gardiner 1915, pl. 30D or Fig. 23 below) unless otherwise stated. For the discussion, see §5.2 below.

b. The orientation of the group  is reversed in the phrase *nb nswt ṯ3wy* "lord of the thrones of the two lands" (). The mistake is only present in Iamunedjeh's version of the text, it does not appear in TT 82 (Fig. 23).

c. In TT 82, the word *ṯ3w* "air" is written from right to left in the phrase *ṯ3w nḏm n mḥt* "the sweet air of the north wind" (), although the inscription runs from left to right (Fig. 23). The reverse orientation of sign (P5) was kept in the reconstruction of the text in TT 84 (), since the orientation of another group is similarly reversed in the primarily executed part of this band (n. b above), which suggests that the artist likely would have had a problem choosing the right orientation for this sign as well.

d. The first sign of the word *swr* "to drink" was written from right to left (), although the text runs from left to right.

e. The *s* is reversed in the word *sʿḥ* "mummy" ().

f. The orientation of sign  (Aa11) is reversed in the phrase *ỉw n mɜʿ ḫrw* "the island of the venerated one(s)" ().

g. Similarly to all other *s*'s in the secondarily executed segment of the inscription (nn. d and e above), also the one in the verb *sḫntỉ* "to advance, to promote" is written from right to left () despite the left-to-right orientation of the text.
Transcription contra Sethe's (*Urk.* IV 962, 4).

h. The blue paint was forgotten from the horns of the viper in the phrase *ḏs=f* "himself." The white layer is there, but it has faded significantly ().

i. As above (n. f), the sign for *mɜʿ* in the phrase *mɜʿ ḫrw* "true of voice" is looking in the opposite direction than the orientation of the text would require ().

j. This is the only example in TT 84 where the word *ỉtrw* "river" is omitted from the wish *swr mw ḥr bbt* (*ỉtrw*) "drinking water at the eddy (of the river)" (cf. also Fig. 10). The formulation—including the word *ỉtrw* "river"—is similarly found in the west or inner band

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of the ceiling in the north wing of the hall (Paksi 2025, §2.1) as well as on the ceiling of the corridor. The latter appears in a highly fragmentary context, where *ỉtrw* "river" () is the only word preserved of the entire phrase ([*swr mw ḥr bbt ỉ*]*trw*). The wish is repeated once more also within the outer ceiling band of the south wing of the transverse hall: for the second time, however, it occurs in the last third of the text, and there, the wording includes *ỉtrw* "river." On the possible origins of the more concise rendering of this motif in the first part of the band, see the discussion under §5.2.

k. The formulation is found several times in TT 84. It is present also in the scene of the South Stela, on the ceiling of the corridor, and on the ceiling of the central chapel, in the north band. For a parallel beyond the walls of Iamunedjeh's tomb, see the central ceiling band in the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 100, the tomb of the vizier Rekhmire (Davies 1943, pl. 46, 2A).

l. The wish for efficiency, power, and veneration is attested several times in the tomb. Further examples occur on the left side of the scene of the so-called North Stela, the biographical inscription of Iamunedjeh on the north wall of the transverse hall; in the north band of the ceiling of the shrine; and in the central band of the ceiling of the south chapel.

m. The context and the traces preserved of the signs are sufficient to reconstruct this passage as transcribed above (contra Sethe's reading in *Urk*. IV 962, 2).

n. In this phrase, the reconstruction of the lacuna (; contra Sethe's rendering in *Urk*. IV 962, 3) is supported by the inscription carved on the north doorjamb of the entrance of the tomb, where Iamunedjeh's *sš wdḥw* "scribe of the altar" title is spelled similarly () or rather ). The title is mentioned on funerary cone no. 548 (Davies 1957) in association with the name Iamunedjeh and is also found in the inscriptions of TT 84. While it is spelled out phonetically on the right side of the entrance (north doorjamb), although written with a reversed *sš*-sign, it features an abbreviated spelling (cf. *DZA* 22.673.150, *DZA* 22.676.090, and *DZA* 22.677.400) on the left side of the entrance (south doorjamb):  (see Paksi, Bickel 2021, p. 86, fig. 74; Kampp 1996, p. 334, fig. 215; or Paksi 2024, p. 346, fig. 3). Apart from the present example on the ceiling, the title must have been mentioned at least twice more in the painted inscriptions of the tomb. Both further occurrences known to date have been identified on the north wall of the corridor, underneath the alterations made on behalf of the secondary tomb owner, Mery (see Paksi, Bickel 2021, p. 85 with fig. 72 [i, j], p. 86 with fig. 73 and Paksi 2024, p. 350, fig. 7 and p. 353, fig. 9, right).

o. This is the only preserved attestation of this epithet in the texts of TT 84, but the formulation *ỉr*(*y*)*-rdwy nṯr nfr* "companion of the perfect god" can also be read on Iamunedjeh's block statue (*Urk.* IV 1370, 9) found near the entrance of Thutmose III's mortuary temple (Hayes 1933, p. 8) and kept at the Luxor Museum (Luxor J.3; earlier, Cairo JE 59190; see Romano [ed.] 1979, pp. 58–59, fig. 47) today. The phrase *ỉry-rdwy* referring to a high official's companionship with the king is, however, relatively often attested in the inscriptions of the early and mid-18th-Dynasty elite (cf. Guksch 1994, pp. 198–202).

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5.2. The textual parallel to the east/outer band of the south wing in TT 82

The primarily executed segment of the inscription in the east or outer ceiling band of the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 84 shares a close textual parallel with a ceiling text in the exact same position in TT 82, the tomb of Amenemhat, steward of the vizier Useramun, one of Iamunedjeh's contemporaries.[43] Both versions of the text are highly fragmentary, but the parts preserved mutually complement each other. Similarly to the correspondences between the west or inner bands of the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 84 and TT 82 (§4.2), apart from a few minor differences in layout and spelling,[44] the texts in the southern outer bands of the two tombs appear to have been virtually identical before the transverse hall of TT 84 was enlarged. In addition, a relatively infrequent formulation shared by both copies suggests that—similarly to the example of the west or inner band of the south wing (§4.2)—Iamunedjeh's version may be a direct copy of its counterpart in Amenemhat's tomb. It must be noted, however, that in this case, the shared content on its own only indicates a close connection between the two bands. The direction of the transmission can, nevertheless, be hypothesized by analogy in accordance with the case of the west or inner band of the south wing (§4), where a scribal mistake reinterpreted during the transmission process reveals that the inscription on the ceiling of TT 84 must have originated in TT 82 (§4.2). Considering the almost identical length of the long ceiling bands of the transverse hall of TT 82 (ca. 5.40 to 5.45 m) and those of TT 84 in their pre-extension state (ca. 5.20 m),[45] the geographical proximity of the two tombs,[46] and Iamunedjeh's and Amenemhat's contemporary careers, the close connection between the ceiling texts of TT 84 and TT 82 is hardly coincidental.

The relatively infrequent formulation shared by the two inscriptions is the defective wording of the wish *swr mw ḥr bbt* (*ỉtrw*) "drinking water at the eddy (of the river)" before the first mention of the deceased's name in the band. The word *ỉtrw* "river" is missing from the passage in both versions of the text (cf. Figs. 10–11; §5.1, n. j). Although this is not the only attestation of the expression with the omission of *ỉtrw* in the record,[47] the passage is much more likely to occur with than without the word.[48] In the Theban necropolis, a *ḥtp-dỉ-nsw* formula to Osiris on the south wall of the passage of TT 12, the tomb of Hery, overseer of the granary of queen Ahhotep at the beginning of the dynasty, and the north band on the ceiling of the corridor of TT 97, the tomb of Amenemhat, high priest of Amun under Thutmose III, have both a similar, yet not fully identical example: *swr*[*ỉ mw ḥr*] *ḫȝbȝt* "drink[ing water at] the eddy"[49] (TT 12) and *swrỉ=k mw rnpỉ ḥr*[50] *ḫȝbȝt* "you shall drink fresh water at the eddy"[51] (TT 97). At least

43 See Davies, Gardiner 1915, pl. 30D or Fig. 23 below. On the ceiling inscriptions of TT 82 in general, see Takács in preparation.

44 See, e.g., §5.1, n. b. Furthermore, the name of Amun-Re is spelled with sign  (A40) in TT 82 (Fig. 23), while in TT 84, the classifier is omitted. Compare also (TT 84) vs. (TT 82) or (TT 84) vs. (TT 82).

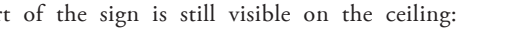
45 See §4.2 and nn. 14 and 26 above.

46 Cf. Kampp 1996, Plan III.

47 See *DZA* 22.770.830–930 and *Wb. Belegst.* I 419.6.

48 See *DZA* 22.770.940 – *DZA* 22.771.560; and *Wb. Belegst.* I 419.7. Cf. also Barta 1968, pp. 92–93, 115, 237 (Bitte 68).

49 *DZA* 22.770.910; Galán, Menéndez 2011, pp. 147–148. I thank R. Olsen for the latter reference.

50 Contra Gardiner's (1910, p. 90) transcription; the lower part of the sign is still visible on the ceiling:  (visit in March 2022).

51 Gardiner 1910, p. 90.

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once in the record, in TT 11, the tomb of Dejhuty, overseer of the treasury and overseer of works under the joint reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III,[52] we find an even more concise formulation of this wish: *swr mw* "drinking water."[53]



Photo by the author, 2022

Fig. 10. A detail of the east/outer band of the south wing of the transverse hall, TT 84.



Photo by the author, 2023

Fig. 11. A detail of the east/outer band of the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 82.

52 Galán, Díaz-Iglesias Llanos 2020, p. 152.

53 The phrase is found on the inner side of the doorway of the tomb's central chapel, in the column on the left side (visit in February 2023). Note that even these two words retained from the wish generally expressed as *swr mw ḥr bbt ỉtrw* "drinking water at the eddy of the river" were written here in the most concise manner possible, in logographic spelling: .

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5.3. Epigraphic and compositional evidence for a double-stage execution of the east/outer band of the south wing

Similarly to the case of the inner band of the south wing (§4.3), there is an unmistakable visual contrast between the primarily and secondarily executed segments of texts of the outer band of the south wing (Fig. 12). Beyond the difference in the exact shade of blue used before and after the break line on the ceiling, multiple further epigraphic evidence suggests that the two parts of the inscription were not only painted at different times but were likely also realized by different artists.



Photo by M. Kačičnik, LHTT, University of Basel, 2017

Fig. 12. Visual contrast between the primarily and secondarily executed parts of the text in the east/outer band of the south wing.

A stroke of red paint running above some of the last signs of the primarily executed segment of text (Fig. 13) reveals, for instance, that the two parts of the inscription were not painted at the same time. This slip of a brush must have happened at a moment when the red foundation for the additional space gained by the extension of the hall was being prepared.



Photo by the author, 2022

Fig. 13. A stroke of red paint running on top of some of the final signs of the primarily executed segment of the east/outer band of the south wing. *DStretch* enhancement with LAB colorspace.

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While the first two thirds of the inscription seem to have been painted by a very steady and secure hand, the brush handling becomes visibly more insecure and less exact in the final parts of the band: the white and blue layers of paint no longer fully overlap, the signs tend to appear skew or crammed as opposed to the rather balanced visual impression of the preceding part of the text, and—just like on the opposite side of the ceiling—small blobs of paint start to appear at the edges of signs. The artist continuing the text after the extension of the hall thus had the habit of letting his brush rest at the edges of lines—similarly to the person responsible for executing the last third of the west or inner band of the south wing (§4.3).[54] This is one of many indications that the artist finishing the two side bands in this part of the hall was presumably one and the same person.[55]

A further piece of epigraphic evidence that speaks for a double-stage execution of this band is that the orientation of certain signs,  (S29) and  (Aa11), is consistently reversed in the final part of the text (§5.1, nn. d–g and i) but never in its first two thirds.[56] Likewise, while the first two thirds of the inscription lack any simplified renderings of signs, the last third contains a few examples of such. Compare, for instance, the three ripples of water in the word *bbt* "eddy" in the primarily and secondarily executed parts of the inscription ( vs. ) or the writing of the phonogram *ḫnt* at the beginning of the text, in the epithet *ḫnt*[*y Ỉpt-swt*] "who presid[es over Karnak]" () and in the final part of the text, in the phrase *sḫnt.n nb tɜwy* "whom the lord of the two lands has advanced" (). The artist responsible for finishing the band after the extension of the hall also used less line segments on average for painting a ripple of water (12) than the one who put the original text on the ceiling (14).[57]

There are various clues in the inscription that point to its double-stage execution also from a compositional point of view. The repetition of the passage *swr*(*ỉ*) *mw ḫr bbt* (*ỉtrw*) "drinking water at the eddy (of the river)" in the final part of the text, a wish already mentioned in its initial parts, reveals, for instance, that the person in charge of devising a text for the additionally gained space on the ceiling solved the problem in a rather unimaginative way in this particular case. The twofold mention of one of Iamunedjeh's epithets (cf. *mḥ-ỉb m*[*nḫ n nb tɜwy*] "ex[cellent] confidant [of the lord of the two lands]" and *mḥ-ỉb mnḫ n nsw* "excellent confidant of the king") equally suggests that—in this specific case—pragmatic considerations were given priority in the compositional process when dealing with the challenge of extending an already complete segment of text by 50% of its original length.

54 See also Paksi 2025, §2.2 and §4.3.

55 The in-depth analysis of the painterly handwritings (on the concept, see n. 39 above) on the ceiling of the transverse hall of TT 84 is currently in progress and will be the topic of a separate study. After the finalization of this manuscript, I gave a talk on the subject in the framework of the online lecture series *Egypt, Land of Writing(s)* organized by Gaëlle Chantrain at the University of Liège in December 2022 (cf. Paksi 2022). The lecture, "How many artists worked on the ceiling texts of a Theban tomb? A case study from TT 84 on the challenges of identifying painterly handwritings," is at present available online under https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7P77cNjMH4k.

56 Compare the orientation of sign (S29) in  and in , , and , or the orientation of sign (Aa11) in , , and in or .

57 Sign (N35) is preserved altogether 10 times in the first two thirds of the inscription: eight times, it is built up from 14 line segments (see, e.g.,) and twice from 12 (see, e.g.,). The sign appears 17 times in the last third of the band: in the majority of the cases (13 times), it is built up from 12 line segments (see, e.g.,), three times from 10 (see, e.g.,), and once from 14 (see the second sign in the spelling of the word *mw* "water").

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6. THE EAST/OUTER BAND OF THE NORTH WING

The east or outer band of the north wing is a horizontal line of ceiling text running from south to north above the northern part of the east wall of the transverse hall of TT 84. The inscription was written from right to left, with the feet of the signs pointing towards the east wall (Fig. 14; cf. Figs. 17–18 and 20). This is the only band on the northern half of the ceiling that had to be prolonged after the extension of the hall: it was painted in two stages (§6.3) in the same vein as the inner and outer ceiling bands of the south wing (§4.3 and §5.3).

The band contains a Re-Horakhty offering formula (§6.1). Hence, much like the ceiling text in the south wing in the east (§5), also this inscription is linked to a solar deity. The main motifs evoked in the text concern the deceased's wish of seeing the sun in the morning and the evening (*mɜɜ nfrw=f ḥft wbn=f stwt=f ḥtp=f m ꜥnḫ*) and the fate of his *ba* and corpse. The former should be in the allegiance of Re every day (*wnn bɜ ꜥnḫy m šms*[*wt*] *Rꜥ rꜥ nb*), while the latter should rest in peace in the necropolis with Osiris (*ḫɜt mn.tỉ m ḫrt-nṯr m ḥtp ḫr Wsỉr*). The text ends with Anubis' inclusion in the offering formula (… *ḫr Ỉnpw*) and an invocation offering that shall be granted by both deities (*dỉ=sn prt-ḫrw*…).

The text devised for the original length of the hall is only fragmentarily preserved and contains a larger lacuna—with 17 to 18 groups of signs missing—but a close textual parallel shared by both TT 99 and TT 96A allows for a complete reconstruction of the affected segment and thus of the entire band (§6.2). In accordance with the influence of the ceiling texts of TT 82 on those of TT 84 (§4.2 and §5.2), it is a possibility that the inscription in TT 84 was inspired by its counterpart in TT 99 (§6.2).

6.1. Translation and commentary of the east/outer band of the north wing



FIG. 14. Transcription of the east/outer band of the north wing.[58] Drawing by the author, 2022.

[*ḥtp-dỉ-nsw*][a]
[*Rꜥ*]*-Ḥr-ɜḫty*
bɜ[b] *ꜥnḫ*
wbn [*m nbw*]
sḫḏ tɜwy m ỉmw=f m [*ɜḫt*] / [*ɜḫt=f*]
[*ỉr šsp m wn n ḫr=f*]
[*dỉ=f mɜɜ nfrw=f ḥft wbn=f*]
[*stwt=f ḥtp=f m ꜥnḫ*]

58 The part transcribed in blue was painted on the ceiling already before the enlargement of the hall, whereas the part rendered in black was only added secondarily (cf. n. 7 above). The segments with reduced opacity are reconstructions by the author and are no longer preserved on the ceiling (cf. Figs. 17–18).

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wnn bɜ ʿnḫy m šms[wt] Rʿ rʿ nb
ḥɜt mn.tỉ m ḥrt-nṯr m ḥtp ḥr Wsỉr
n ỉry-pʿt ḥɜty-ʿ
mḥ-ỉb mnḫ n [nb] tɜwy
sš [nsw]
Ỉɜmw-nḏḥ mɜʿ ḫrw ḫr Ỉnpw
ḫntᶜ sḥ-nṯr
nb tɜ ḏsr

[King-given-offering of]
[Re]-Horakhty,
living *ba*,
who rises [in gold],
illuminates the two lands with[d] his brilliance in [the eye] / [his eye],[e]
[who creates light with the opening of his face];
[he shall grant that his beauty is seen when he rises]
[and his rays when he sets in life],[f]
that the living *ba* be in the allegiance of Re[g] every day,[h]
and that the corpse would rest in peace in the necropolis in front of Osiris;
for[i] the hereditary noble and local prince,
excellent confidant of [the lord] of the two lands,
[royal] scribe,[j]
Iamunedjeh, true of voice in front of Anubis,
who presides over the divine booth,
lord of the sacred land.

dỉ=sn prt-ḫrw t ḥnqt ỉḫw ɜpdw šsᵏ mnḫt snṯr mḏt
ḥnkt rnpt nbt
qbḥw m ỉrp ỉrṯt
ḫɜ m ḫt nb(t)ˡ nfrt wʿbtᵐ ʿnḫ nṯr ỉm
n kɜⁿ n mḥ-ỉb mnḫ n nb tɜwy
Ỉɜmw-nḏḥ mɜʿ ḫrw ḫr nṯr ʿɜ

They shall give an invocation offering of bread, beer, beef, poultry, alabaster, (pieces of) cloths, incense, oil,
every gift and yearly sustenance,
libation of wine and milk,
and thousand(s) of everything good and pure the god lives on:
for the *ka* of the excellent confidant of the lord of the two lands,
Iamunedjeh, true of voice in front of the great god.

a. In the present inscription, the reconstruction of the lacunae follows the text in the east or outer band of the ceiling of the north wing of the transverse hall of TT 99 (Strudwick 2016b, p. 154, fig. 117) and its pendant in the west or inner band of the ceiling of the south wing

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of the transverse hall of TT 96A (Assmann 1983, p. 144, text no. 105; *DZA* 20.727.050 and *DZA* 28.183.200) except where otherwise specified. For the discussion, see §6.2 below.

b. Contrarily to the versions in TT 99 and TT 96A (Strudwick 2016b, p. 154, fig. 117 and *DZA* 20.727.050), which spell the word with the ram hieroglyph (), TT 84 has a more conventional spelling: .

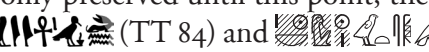
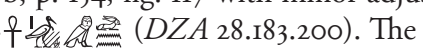
c. The horizontal stroke in the middle of the sign  was only painted in white (cf. Fig. 16).

d. The beginning of the first offering formula on Iamunedjeh's South Stela overlaps with the beginning of this band. The two texts, however, start to diverge at this point, for the first line of the South Stela continues as follows: *wbn m nbw sḫḏ ṯȝwy m stw*(*t*) *ỉrty=f*(*y*) "who rises in gold and illuminates the two lands with the rays of his eyes" (*Urk.* IV 937, 13–15). The beginning of the South Stela also shares a close phraseological parallel with the first few lines of the biographical text of Mentiywy, a royal butler during the time of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II, similarly found on the south wall of the transverse hall of his tomb, in TT 172 (cf. *Urk.* IV 937, 13–17 and *Urk*. IV 1466, 6–10).

e. The formulation of the passage in TT 84 differs slightly from its parallels in TT 99 (Strudwick 2016b, p. 154, fig. 117) and TT 96A (*DZA* 20.727.050). In Senneferi's and Sennefer's tombs, the phrase ends with *m ỉmw ȝḫt=f* "with the brilliance of his eye." In Iamunedjeh's version of the text, however, the word *ỉ*(*ȝ*)*mw* "(solar) brilliance" was appended with a third-person singular suffix pronoun () and was followed by a preposition *m* (cf. Fig. 15). TT 84 therefore must have contained either *m ỉmw=f m* [*ȝḫt*] "whit his brilliance in [the eye]" or *m ỉmw=f m* [*ȝḫt=f*] "with his brilliance in [his eye]" instead. As for the execution of the sign marking the third-person suffix pronoun after the word *ỉ*(*ȝ*)*mw* "(solar) brilliance" in Iamunedjeh's text, the blue paint was forgotten from the horns of the viper, the upper part of the sign was thus only painted in white.
Translation of the passage contra Strudwick (2016b, p. 153, ceiling text no. 4, n. c) and Assmann (1983, p. 144, text no. 105). On the word *ȝḫt* "eye (of a god)," see *Wb.* I 17.1–2.

f. On the deceased's wish of seeing the sun, see Barta 1968, pp. 93–94, 117 (Bitte 89).

g. The band in TT 99 is only preserved until this point, the rest of the text is lost.

h. Instead of  (TT 84) and (TT 99; transcription after Strudwick 2016b, p. 154, fig. 117 with minor adjustments), the version in TT 96A has  (*DZA* 28.183.200). The presence of the preposition *m* in front of the phrase *bȝ ʿnḫ* "living *ba*" leads to a slightly different translation for the passage in TT 96A: "being as a living *ba* in the allegiance of Re every day."

i. The *n kȝ n* formula was omitted before the name of the deceased in the original closing part of the text. The phrase is equally missing in Sennefer's version of the inscription (*DZA* 28.183.200), which indicates that it was presumably also not included in Senneferi's version, although this part of the text is no longer preserved in TT 99 (n. g above). The defective wording is unexpected (see also the "*sic*" on *DZA* 28.183.200) but not unparalleled (cf. §4.1, n. k).

j. The title *sš nsw* "royal scribe" is generally written with honorific transposition, in other words, with the *sš* sign in second position, wherefore reading *sš nsw* "royal scribe" seems to be a plausible reconstruction for the present lacuna (). As for the exact spelling of the phrase, the space with the missing part is too large for a concise solution (), similar to the ones in the texts of the north wall of the corridor (*Urk*. IV 954, 5; 954, 8; and 959, 16),

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as suggested by Sethe (*Urk.* IV 956, 15); the title was therefore more likely written as, for instance, in the third column of the south doorjamb of the entrance of the tomb (; cf. Kampp 1996, p. 334, fig. 215). Alternatively, the text could have also contained a spelling elsewhere not preserved in the tomb, as , for example (cf. *DZA* 28.757.430).

k. The sign for *šs* in the middle of the logogram for *šs mnḫt* () was left in white, the second layer of paint was never applied.

l. The feminine ending is missing from the word *nb* ().

m. In the expression *ḫt nb*(*t*) *nfrt wʿbt* "everything good and pure," the signs for the feminine endings of the adjectives *nfrt wʿbt* "good and pure" are grouped in a way that suggests that the artist worked from a copy containing vertical columns rather than horizontal lines: . Compare the visual distribution of the same signs on the other side and in the middle of the northern half of the ceiling, in the inner and central bands of this wing:  (Paksi 2025, §2.1 and fig. 3) vs.  (Paksi 2025, §4.1 and fig. 10) respectively.

n. The *kꜣ* sign is missing its thumbs in this segment of text: .

6.2. Textual parallels to the east/outer band of the north wing in TT 99 and TT 96A

The text originally devised for the east or outer band of the north wing has close textual parallels in two nearby tombs in Sheikh Abd el-Qurna: in TT 99, the tomb of Senneferi, overseer of the treasury or—in Nigel Strudwick's words[59]—chancellor under the reign of Thutmose III,[60] and in TT 96A, the tomb of Sennefer, mayor of Thebes during the time of Amenhotep II.[61] The parallel in TT 99 appears in the exact same position as Iamunedjeh's version in TT 84: it is painted on the east or outer side of the ceiling in the north wing of the transverse hall, whereas in TT 96A, the text was added to the west or inner side of the ceiling in the south wing.[62] Strudwick was able to demonstrate that half of the ceiling inscriptions in the transverse hall of TT 96A, including the one here in question, were copied from the transverse hall of TT 99.[63] Their position in the tomb was, nonetheless, altered.[64]

The expression that unequivocally establishes the connection between the three texts is the relatively infrequent formulation *m ỉmw ꜣḫt=f* "with the brilliance of his eye" or—as the version in TT 84 has it—*m ỉmw=f m* [*ꜣḫt*] / [*ꜣḫt=f*] "with his brilliance in [the eye] / [his eye]" (cf. §6.1, n. e and Fig. 15). The collocation seems to lack further 18th-Dynasty parallels,[65] but it reappears in the record in the Ramesside period: it is attested in a 20th-Dynasty monumental

59 Strudwick 2016a, p. 9.

60 See Strudwick 2016b, p. 153 with n. 276, p. 154, fig. 117 (ceiling text no. 4).

61 See Assmann 1983, p. 144, text no. 105; *DZA* 20.727.050 and *DZA* 28.183.200.

62 Cf. Strudwick 2016b, p. 159, fig. 125, ceiling text no. 4 and fig. 126, ceiling text no. 7.

63 Strudwick 2016b, pp. 158–160.

64 Strudwick 2016b, p. 159, figs. 125 and 126. On the principle frequently applied in Egyptian art of changing the position or the orientation of a copy with regard to its model in order to underline the difference yet maintain a close connection to the source, see Den Doncker 2017, pp. 336, 349–350 and Stauder 2025. Similar strategies seem to have been in use in the transmission process not only of iconographic materials but also of inscriptional ones. For an example related to the inscriptional programs of TT 95A and TT 76, see Paksi, forthcoming, §6.

65 Cf. *Wb. Belegst.* I 80.9 and *DZA* 20.726.930–727.260.

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royal inscription, in Ramesses III's *Gold Tablet Prayer* in Karnak (*m ỉmw ꜣḫ*[*t*ˀ*=k*ˀ] "with the brilliance of [ˀyourˀ] ey[e]").[66] Besides, similar formulations are also present in the *Satirical Letter of Hori* (*dỉ=f tḥn ꜣḫty=ky m/ḥr mꜣꜣ ỉmw=f* "he shall make your eyes glisten in/while looking at his brilliance")[67] and in a solar hymn on the wall of a 19th-Dynasty private tomb, in TT 41, the tomb of Amenemope called Ipy (*m ỉmw ỉrt=f* "with the brilliance of his eye").[68]



Photo by the author, 2022

Fig. 15. A detail of the east/outer band of the north wing of the transverse hall, TT 84.

The three versions of the text in TT 84, TT 99, and TT 96A are not fully identical: they feature minor differences in spelling and layout[69] as well as in wording.[70] Nevertheless, the mention of the phrase *m ỉmw ꜣḫt=f* "with the brilliance of his eye" and the unexpected omission of the *n kꜣ n* formula before the name of the deceased at the end of the text, which is attested in two of the three examples and can be surmised in the third (§6.1, n. i), point to the fact that the three inscriptions share a close connection and were likely inspired by or even copied from one another. In spelling and layout, the versions in TT 99 and TT 96A are

66 K*RI* V 222, 5–6.

67 Cf. Fischer-Elfert 1983 (ed. 1992), p. 40 or oDeM 1616, 6–7 (Posener 1980, pls. 57–57a); oTurin 6618, 6–7 (Černý, Gardiner 1957, pl. 112, no. 2); oBM EA 65603, recto 2 (Demarée 2002, pl. 167); and oTurin 9624, 1–2 (Černý, Gardiner 1957, pl. 112, no. 3). I thank R. Pietri for calling my attention to the last witness in the list.

68 K*RI* III 310, 6–7; K*RI* VII 138, 14. See also Assmann 1983, p. 76, text no. 54; Assmann 1991, pp. 52–53, text no. 43.

69 See, e.g., §6.1, n. b. To cite further two examples: the name of Re-Horakhty is spelled differently in TT 84 () than in TT 99 () or TT 96A (), and the phrase *sḫḏ tꜣwy* "who illuminates the two lands" is written as  in TT 84 (Fig. 15) but as  in TT 99 and TT 96A. For the corresponding passages in TT 99 and TT 96A, see Strudwick 2016b, p. 154, fig. 117 and DZA 20.727.050 respectively.

70 See, e.g., §6.1, nn. e and h.

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the closest to each other,[71] which makes Strudwick's hypothesis concerning the origin of the band in Sennefer's tomb very plausible.[72] Nonetheless, the texts in both TT 96A and TT 84 feature slight modifications in their wording when compared to the version in TT 99.[73] If the inscription in TT 96A was, however, indeed copied from TT 99, it has to be recognized—similarly to the case of the west or inner band in the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 84 (§4.2)—that smaller changes and minor creative adaptations were part of the textual transmission and remediation process.[74] If so, the initially inscribed segment of the east or outer band of the north wing in TT 84 could have been just as well inspired by its pendant in TT 99.[75] The ceiling texts of the first hall of Senneferi's tomb are some of the finest, most detailed, and most exquisitely painted ceiling texts in the entire early and mid-18th-Dynasty Theban necropolis,[76] it would thus not be a surprise if they had served as a source of inspiration for other monuments.[77]

6.3. Epigraphic and compositional evidence for a double-stage execution of the east/outer band of the north wing

The primarily and secondarily executed segments of the east or outer band of the north wing show significant epigraphic differences when compared to one another (Fig. 16). While the text originally painted on the ceiling was written in very elegant, evenly spaced, and carefully executed hieroglyphs by a steady hand, the brush handling becomes highly insecure and inexact in the final segment of the band. Upon a closer look at the signs in the closing part of the text, it appears at times as if the artist's hand had been trembling. The contours of the hieroglyphs are visibly less clean and less precise than in the first two thirds of the band. The distribution of the signs is occasionally uneven (see, e.g.,  or ), and there is a clearly perceptible slight upward tilt in the entire final segment of the band (see, e.g.,  or ).

71 Cf. n. 69.
72 See n. 63.
73 See §6.1, nn. h and e respectively.
74 Cf. Hussein 2017, pp. 303–311; Díaz-Iglesias Llanos 2018, pp. 36–40; and Díaz-Iglesias Llanos 2019, pp. 153–164.
75 As opposed to the west or inner band in the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 82 and its counterpart in TT 84 in its pre-extension state (§4.2), in which case, the length of the two bands was largely comparable to one another (5.40 to 5.45 m vs. ca. 5.20 m), the east or outer band of the north wing of the transverse hall of TT 99 is significantly longer than its counterpart in TT 84 was in its pre-extension state. The first hall of TT 99 is ca. 14.70 m long (data from R. Olsen, personal communication from March 8, 2022), which means that its long ceiling bands must be over 7 m long, that is, almost two meters longer than those in TT 84 were before the hall was enlarged. The inscriptions on the ceiling of the first hall of TT 99 are, however, also considerably larger than those in the transverse hall of TT 84 (cf. nn. 16 and 18). The width of the east or outer band in the north wing of TT 99 varies between 13.5 and 14.5 cm, while the maximum height of the signs of this band fluctuates between 9.5 and 10.5 cm (measurements by the author from March 2022).
76 Regrettably, only one photograph has been included of the ceiling inscriptions of the transverse hall in the publication of the tomb (Strudwick [ed.] 2016, colour pl. 35D). The picture shows a small excerpt of one of the texts in the north wing.
77 Since Senneferi and Iamunedjeh were contemporaries, and we do not know when exactly these ceiling bands were finished, a reverse scenario, in which Iamunedjeh's version would have served as a model for Senneferi's, would also be possible theoretically. Nevertheless, in terms of execution, Iamunedjeh's version is clearly inferior to Senneferi's.

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Photo by M. Kačičnik, LHTT, University of Basel, 2017

Fig. 16. Visual contrast between the primarily and secondarily executed parts of the text in the east/outer band of the north wing.

Similarly to the case of the other two bands that were painted in two stages (§4.3 and §5.3), the exact shade of blue applied before and after the extension of the hall also differs slightly. So does the composition of the paint: both the white and the blue become visibly more watery and less thick than in the first two thirds of the band. Moreover, the two layers of paint often do not fully overlap, whereas they generally do in the initial parts of the inscription.

As opposed to the case of the other two bands that were realized in two steps (§4.3 and §5.3), there is no substantial dissimilarity in the number of line segments used by the first and the second artist working on this band for building up a wave line.[78] On the other hand, while the first person never reverted to abbreviated signs and sometimes even included more elaborate alternatives in his rendering of the text,[79] the person responsible for finishing the band did have simplified signs in his repertoire.[80] The fact that the artist continuing the text was less deeply invested in its execution than his predecessor also manifests itself in minor details such as the arrangement of the signs for the feminine ending of the last two adjectives in the phrase *ḫt nb(t) nfrt wʿbt* "everything good and pure" (). The words appear to have been copied from a vertical draft (§6.1, n. m), yet seemingly no effort was made to make the necessary adjustments the new writing space would have required.[81]

Regarding the coherence and the textual composition of the band, there are a few signs in the inscription suggesting that its last third was a secondary addition. For instance, the text resumes rather unexpectedly after the first mention of Iamunedjeh's name. It introduces another deity next to Re-Horakhty, Anubis, and continues with a long list of offerings the

78 On average, both individuals used 12 line segments for painting the sign. In the first two thirds of the band, there are only five sufficiently preserved examples: three of them are built up from 12 line segments (see, e.g., ), one from 10 (), and another from 14 (). In the last third of the band, the sign is built up from 12 line segments five times out of eight occurrences (see, e.g., ), the remaining three use 10 (), 14 (), or 16 line segments (see the first sign in the group ).

79 The ripple of water generally used for the phoneme *n* is substituted twice by the Lower Egyptian crown in the first two thirds of the text:  and .

80 See the spelling of Anubis' epithet *ḫnt sḫ-nṯr* "who presides over the divine booth:" . Cf. also §6.1, n. n.

81 For further details, see Paksi 2022.

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two of them shall grant together for the deceased—a content that easily fills the extra 2.60 to 2.70 m of space (*Ỉɜmw-nḏḥ mɜʿ ḫrw ḫr Ỉnpw… dỉ=sn prt-ḫrw…* "Iamunedjeh, true of voice in front of Anubis, … They shall give…"). A further clue pointing to the same direction is the word for word repetition of one of Iamunedjeh's epithets (*mḥ-ỉb mnḫ n nb tɜwy* "excellent confidant of the lord of the two lands"): once in the original closing section of the band and once more at its actual end.

7. THE POTENTIAL OF STUDYING THEBAN CEILING INSCRIPTIONS IN THEIR SPATIAL-MATERIAL CONTEXT

The first part of our case study on the ceiling inscriptions of the transverse hall of TT 84 (cf. §1) already illustrates that writing is "an activity of language use that is deeply interconnected with mental, material and social structures and processes"[82] and highlights the importance of applying a holistic and multidimensional approach to the study of the ceiling inscriptions of the tombs of the Theban necropolis in particular and to the study of ancient Egyptian texts in general. Complementing philological investigations with the analysis of the spatial-material and socio-cultural contexts of a text will reveal additional layers of information on its composition, which in turn will contribute to a better understanding of its content as well as to an increased awareness of the cultural processes that brought it to life.

The ceiling inscriptions of the tombs of the early and mid-18th-Dynasty Theban necropolis have received relatively modest scholarly attention so far. The following remark on the ceiling texts of TT 90, the tomb of Nebamun,[83] speaks volumes about the low standing of these texts in the eyes of the Egyptological community and may explain why they were largely neglected in previous decades: "It does not seem worth while [*sic*] to attempt a translation of the ceiling texts […]. What is commonplace needs no repetition, and anything of interest will need support by texts in better preservation."[84] Hence, many ceiling inscriptions remain un- or only poorly published, and even those that are available today have been mostly insufficiently studied, often without any consideration of their spatial-material context, although—as the ceiling texts of the transverse hall of TT 84 demonstrate—the corpus offers significant potential for research (see also Paksi 2025, §5).

The ceiling inscriptions of the transverse hall of TT 84 offered a unique glance into how certain priorities were defined or redefined in a specific situation during the process of the textual composition of a tomb. The unexpected enlargement of the transverse hall of TT 84 triggered a rather pragmatic and—let us acknowledge—very human response on behalf of the artists

82 Jakobs, Perrin 2014, p. 27.

83 Nebamun was standard bearer of the bark Meriamun during the reign of Amenhotep II and was promoted to chief of the Medjay in western Thebes under Thutmose IV (Shirley 2011, p. 299).

84 Davies 1923, p. 26.

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responsible for completing the ceiling texts of the hall. When previously finalized segments of texts suddenly had to become 50% longer than they were in their initial state, apparently what mattered the most was that the space would not be left blank, and this consideration had priority over the originality or the creativity of the formulation of the secondarily added passage (cf. §4.3, §5.3, and §6.3).

Mistakes and idiosyncratic or rare formulations in the texts played a central role in identifying intertextual connections between the ceiling inscriptions of the transverse hall of TT 84 and the rest of the early and mid-18th-Dynasty record (§4.2, §5.2, §6.2; see also Paksi 2025, §3.2 and §4.2). It must be emphasized that the mere existence of rare or idiosyncratic formulations in these texts challenges the often-assumed formulaic character of the corpus. As Iamunedjeh's example demonstrates, there is much more variability in the ceiling inscriptions of the early and mid-18th-Dynasty Theban tombs than it might initially appear.

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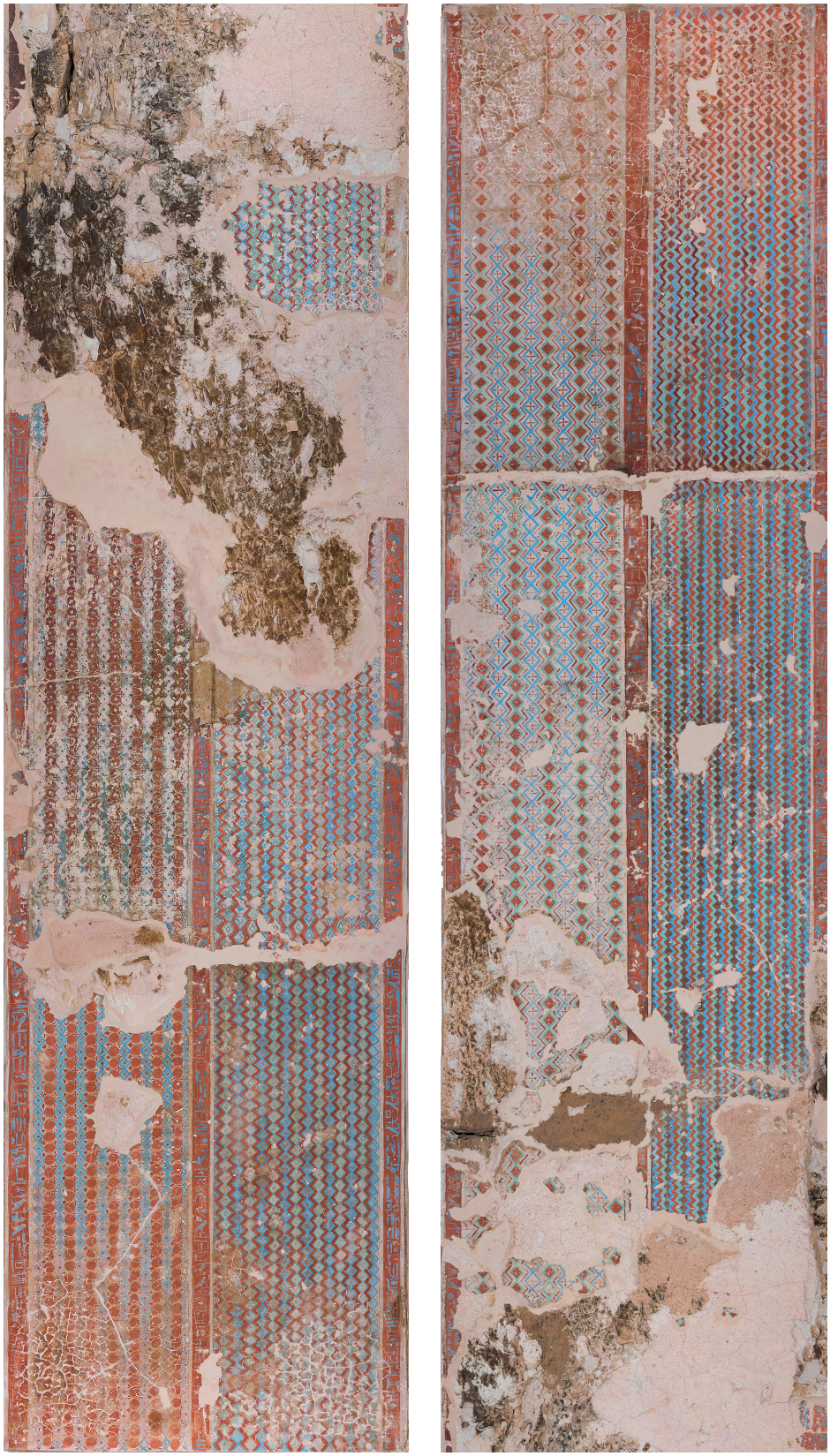


Photo by M. Kaïčnik, LHTT, University of Basel, 2019

Fig. 17. The ceiling of the transverse hall of TT 84 (south and north wings respectively).

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Photo by M. Kaščiník, LHTT, University of Basel, 2019. Illustration by the author, 2022

Fig. 18. The ceiling inscriptions of the south and north wings of the transverse hall of TT 84 (view from below; cf. Fig. 2). Texts transcribed in blue were painted on the ceiling already before the enlargement of the hall, whereas those in black only afterwards.

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Photo by M. Kaćićnik, LHTT, University of Basel, 2017

Fig. 19. Detail of the ceiling of the south wing of the transverse hall, TT 84.

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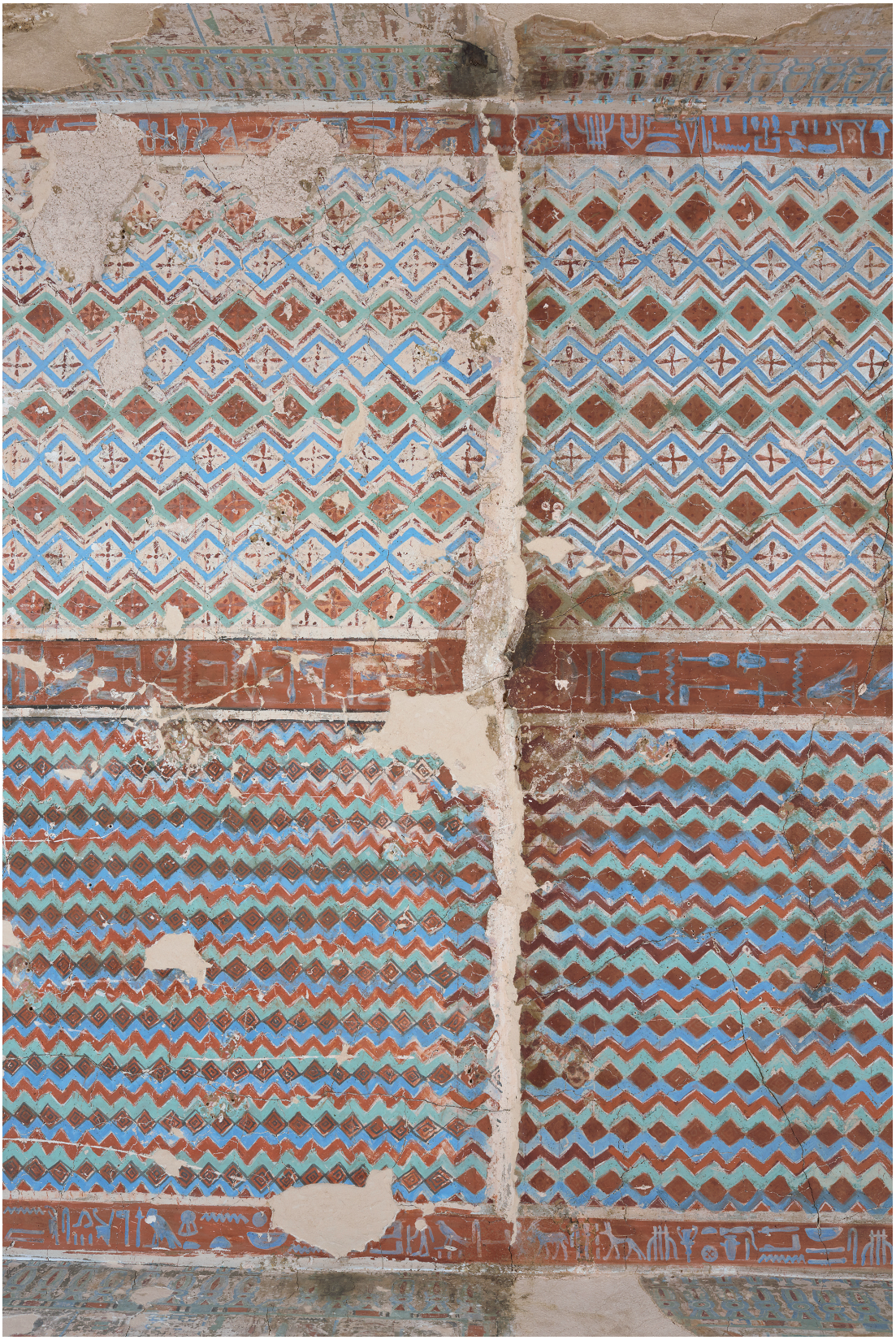


Photo by M. Kaćźnik, LHTT, University of Basel, 2017

Fig. 20. Detail of the ceiling of the north wing of the transverse hall, TT 84.

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Fig. 21. The west/inner ceiling band of the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 82. Photo by A. Den Doncker and Hugues Tavier, Mission Archéologique dans la Nécropole Thébaine (MANT), University of Liège, 2012.



Fig. 22. The west/inner ceiling band of the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 18. Photo by the author, 2022.



Fig. 23. The east/outer ceiling band of the south wing of the transverse hall of TT 82. Photo by A. Den Doncker and H. Tavier, MANT, University of Liège, 2012.

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