

GUIDES TO THE "COLLECTIONS OF THE MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS AT VIENNA"

Published by Verein der Museumsfreunde

Vol. 14

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THE  
OFFERING ROOM  
OF PRINCE  
KANINISUT

BY

HERMANN JUNKER

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VIENNA 1931

KUNSTHISTORISCHES MUSEUM

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English Edition

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I.

THE SITE.

(Plate 1.)

The tomb exhibited in room VI of the Collection of Egyptian Antiquities of the "Kunsthistorisches Museum" has been excavated in the major cemetery which extends near the pyramids of Giza. The cemetery stretches to the west of the pyramid of Cheops in a width of about 300 m. and a length of about 500 m. into the desert plateau. The Academy of Sciences of Vienna obtained permission to excavate in the centre part of this cemetery in the year 1911. This area extends from the northwest corner of this pyramid westwards to the centre of its west side, enclosing the whole width of the site. In five expeditions, in the years 1912-1914 and 1926-1927, this large area was completely uncovered, so that the arrangement of the plot can be clearly traced. The tombs belonging to the earlier period are arranged in streets according to a regular plan, their fronts forming a parallel to the pyramid of Cheops, and their production is perpendicular to the pyramid of Chephren. This Necropolis of regular right-angled streets was enclosed in the east by a wall, which surrounded the court of the great pyramid, and in the south by the huge enclosure of the Chephren plot; to the north, the verge of the plateau is the natural border. This large cemetery, matched by a similar one to the east of the pyramid, for the first time allows us to form a true notion of the imposing constructions of that time (about 2900-2800 B.C.). There are not only the pyramids, those colossal tombs of the kings with their wide-stretched precincts:—temples, ascents, temples of the dead—but also the large necropolises for the royal court. The tombs of the royal family are close to the pyramid, and those for the other members of the royal house and for the court, adjoining, are to the east, and on the western plateau. The scheme represents, so to speak, a perpetuation of the relations on earth: the king, the god incarnate in the centre rising above all, his family at his side, his followers and officers, who enjoy his grace, being at his call. The



Plate 1. A Section of the Site (X the Tomb of Kaninisut).

whole plot deserves our unbounded admiration with regard to the artistic effect. The colossal pyramid of the king joins in the contour of the mountain-side and gives it a powerful termination. The monuments around the pyramid are in full accordance with the general plan. Only a few among the tombs of members of the royal family are in the shape of pyramids, but their size is such a modest one comparatively, and they are so arranged that they do not impair the general effect. The other constructions all have flat, square shapes, fitting in the lines of the country, and render the grand monument of the king in their centre more striking.

## 2.

## THE ACQUISITION.

(Plate 2.)

During the excavations we began to wish we could obtain for the Museum at Vienna one of the mastabas of this city of the dead, in the streets of which we were wandering. The inhabitants with all their titles and dignities we had learned to know. Many sculptures, steles, sarcophaguses a. s. o. excavated in this cemetery had been brought to the Museum in Vienna before. After a good deal of consideration, we selected the Offering Room of Prince Kaninisut, which had been uncovered in January 1913. Our choice was decided by the material which is Egyptian limestone of the best quality, apt to stand the proof of our climate, and by the state of preservation of the mastaba which is perfect on the whole, and last but not least by the representations executed in carving, which give us a very clear idea of sculptor's work of that time. The chamber was purchased on January 27th, 1914. The preparations for the removal were begun on March 17th. First of all, the chamber was closed and filled with fine sand up to the ceiling. The huge slabs on the top were lifted, and let down along the south wall. Then the packing of the carved blocks began; the carved sides were covered with a layer of clean cotton, fastened with gauze bands, and a thicker layer of raw cotton was put round the blocks. The whole was wrapped in large blankets and packed in a strong chests. A gang of the best workmen we had employed in the digging were working about a month, and when they packed the largest pieces they were assisted by a reserve. Nearly by hand of man alone, aided only occasionally by a small draw-beam





Plate 2. The Removal of the Funerary Chamber: The Lifting of the Top Slabs.

(called "Afrite," that is "evil spirit" by the natives), the heavy blocks were moved over the difficult site. Some of the pieces weighed 2000 kg. The packing was finished on April 13th. Next came the difficulty of transporting it to the place which was accessible to the waggons. On April 16th the conveyance to Cairo took place, and some weeks afterwards the 32 chests arrived at Vienna. They remained in a depot until the beginning of the year 1925, and when they were opened it showed that the reliefs had stood the transporting without damage.

The chamber was raised in room VI of the Collection of Egyptian Antiquities because it was considered indispensable for the due effect that it should be recognisable as a part of the tomb. By means of the stone material which had been brought to Vienna for that purpose, the section of the tomb which contained the chamber was reconstructed according to the original. In order to avoid mistakes, the reconstruction and all pieces restored in the interior of the chamber are marked.

### 3.

## THE TOMB.

(Plates 3 and 4.)

The tomb of Prince Kaninisut belongs to a type generally described as the type of the tombs of the Old Empire (2900 to 2400 B.C.). However, it has been made evident by the results of the excavations of the Academy of Sciences that the tombs found at Giza show this type in the last phase of its development. The arrangements primarily planned for the western cemetery were wholly different. The tombs in this part are altogether of an archaic type, oblong rectangular massive square stone buildings with flat tops slightly sloping, and oblique walls, called Mastaba. On the stela, a slab of fine white limestone inserted in the south part of the east wall about half way up, there are painted reliefs showing scenes and inscriptions. On the left side we see the ritual meal of the deceased. On the right, there is a list of woven materials and cereals for clothing and food for the deceased in the Elysian fields. Above, a horizontal scroll is inscribed with the titles and names of the dead. In front of this stela there were, as a rule nearly without an exception, the store

rooms and offering rooms, built of brick. A rectangular shaft led down from the top of the mastaba through rubble and rocks to the sepulchral chamber, about 12–20 m. below the ground, on the south side of the shaft. The chamber is of exceptionally large proportions. It is lined with slabs of fine white limestone. The walls were plastered with red granite speckled with pink, dark red and black in imitation of the royal chambers. In this chamber stood the beautifully shaped limestone sarcophagus with the cover showing rabbeted joints, and handles.\*

During the excavations of the Academy of Sciences of Vienna, a considerable number of tombs of this type have been uncovered, and it was proved, at the same time, that all other types of Mastabas of the Fourth Dynasty found in this cemetery were enlargements or other modifications of this original type. According to the first scheme, only the massive stone structures were built in the necropolis, and they were bestowed on the members of the court by favour of the king. As it was a habit with the Egyptians to provide for their tombs in lifetime, it is probable that the changes were made by the owners of the tombs.

The modifications of the original type can be grouped as follows:

1. A tendency is manifest to give more stableness to the offering rooms primarily built of brick. Therefore, stone structures were built against the east façade instead of the brick chambers, or the offering room was transferred within the exterior lines of the main structure. As the stone structures built according to the royal general plan did not allow for such modifications to be easily executed, other methods were necessary: The mastaba was enlarged to the east or to the south, and a recess offering room thus provided. The mastaba of Kaninisut had the recess offering room to the south. The dimensions of the structure primarily planned can be clearly traced in the plot (plate 4): the length is 23.50 m., the width 10.10 m., which means that the extensions would have been the same as those of the adjoining mastabas which have remained unchanged. The distance between the parallel ranges is 7 m., so that the narrow sides of the structures, to the north and to the south, are facing the street.

A recess was constructed to the south, in the same width as the primary structure, and in this a space of 3.70 m.—1.50 m. in

\* One of these sarcophaguses is exhibited in Room VI, between the windows.



Plate 3. A Section of the Site: Range of Tombs from the Beginning of the IV<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

extension was left open for the offering room, to which a door in the east wall at a distance of 4.5 m. from the south corner gave access. The whole building was then cased with limestone. The funerary chamber and the chamber of the statue (see description below) were cased with white limestone, a very solid material. The slabs used are of great thickness, especially those with which the rooms were roofed. Two of them have a weight of about 2000 kg. each.

The store room in which the vessels and dishes for the meat and drink of the deceased were placed, was constructed adjoining to the funerary chamber. It was a plain brick structure with a door to the north, and only a few remnants of it have been preserved. This annex must have impaired the pure lines of the main structure, but as it had a coat of white stucco it harmonised in colour with the white limestone.

2. There are two other changes of the archaic type which can be traced in the plan of the mastaba of Kaninisut: the false door and the room of the statue.

a) The archaic type (the Tumulus) had no door. The door was found only in tombs of that second type which had developed in other necropolises earlier than in this. The tombs of this type were considered as the house or palace of the deceased, where he was imagined to go in and out. Two doors, one at the south, the other at the north of the east façade, connect the tomb with the world outside. In the tomb of Kaninisut we find two of the characteristics of the mentioned type: the outer door of the offering room and the false door in the east façade of the mastaba. The false doors in the interior of the offering room which are at the southern and northern ends of the west wall correspond with the outer doors. The door at the south corner was more important than the other one. Before all, it was the place for the offering basin upon which the meat and drink for the deceased were deposited. This false door was usually straight above the sarcophagus in the burial chamber below. The deceased was believed to pass out through it and take the offered meal.

b) Behind this false door is the chamber of the statue, the "serdab," of which we may be sure that it originally contained a life-size stone statue of the deceased. This image was believed to act instead of the deceased. It is closely connected with the Egyptians' belief in life after death. They believed in a continua-

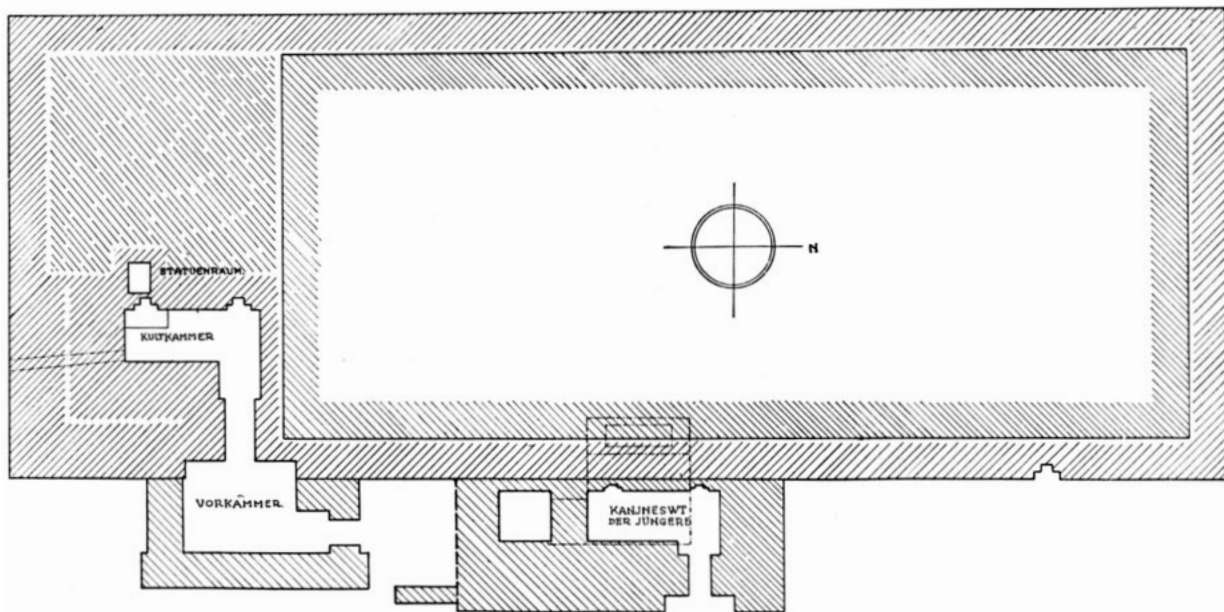


Plate 4. The Ground-plan of the Tomb. Scale: 1 : 200.

tion of earthly life in the Elysian fields, with all its wants and pleasures. This idea is deeply interfused with the rites concerning the worship of the dead in ancient Egypt, and it can be traced in the great solicitude for the preservation of the corpses. The art of mummification was only beginning to develop in that period, and it was applied only to the body of the king. It could not easily be imagined that the deceased could live hereafter in his body disfigured by decomposition, which could not be prevented, as experience showed, by careful bandaging. Moreover, the soul of the deceased flying in and out of the tomb, was supposed to be in danger not to recognise the body anymore. Therefore, a spare head was laid in the tomb, bearing the features of the deceased, by which the soul could know him. Such spare heads—portraits sculptured in fine white limestone—were found only in the burial chambers of tombs belonging to the archaic type of the tumulus, as described above. One of the best specimens of this kind is exhibited in Room VI A, beside the window.

In other cases full length statues of the deceased were made and erected in the superstructure instead of the burial chamber, usually behind the false door in front of which the offerings were deposited.

There was sometimes a small, oblong opening in the wall of the false door, for communication of the statue, which was believed to be animated by the soul of the deceased, with the bearer of offerings. The statue was considered not only as a representation, but as a form of existence hereafter.

We, therefore, must consider the tomb of Kaninisut as a real house of the deceased, where his soul was believed to fly in and out, and were he was supposed to live as on earth, taking his meals, and to last through eternity in his human form, rank and dignity.

## 4.

#### THE HISTORY OF PRINCE KANINISUT AND HIS DESCENDANTS.

The scheme of the cemetery to the west of the great pyramid was made under the reign of Cheops. A considerable number of the ranges of mastabas were built in his time, and the work was continued, according to the same plot, under Chephren and Myke-

rios. The structures of later periods generally differ remarkably from the first plan. The situation of a mastaba within the area of the cemetery is therefore of great importance for the placing of date. It would not have been possible by this indication alone to tell with exactitude the period in which the tomb of Kaninisut was built. Although it lies in a range which can be traced in the ancient plan, the adjoining monuments clearly show modifications of the original type, and the tomb itself has characteristics which indicate that it belongs to the period of transition before the Fifth Dynasty (about 2700 B.C.). The offering chamber constructed in the interior with two false doors, and the walls thoroughly decorated in carving do not allow for a dating of the mastaba from an earlier period. The condition of the funerary chambers lead to the same conclusion. The slabs of stone which cover the opening of the shaft are of inferior material and show rough work, and the sepulchral chamber is wholly different from those of the Fourth Dynasty, described above; the casing with limestone is missing, so that the walls show the rough, irregularly hewn rock, the ground is uneven. Such conditions were impossible in a tomb of the original cemetery; they appear in isolated cases towards the end of the Fourth Dynasty, and they are common during the Fifth Dynasty. It might be objected that the two names of kings which appear in the inscriptions of the mastaba are those of Senefru and Cheops, the first kings of the Fourth Dynasty, but the occurrence of names of kings in proper names and village names proves nothing, as we know from inscriptions on other monuments. The foundation estates were transmitted from generation to generation, and children were often given the names of former kings.

The tombs of the descendants of Kaninisut offer us further indications. His wife Neferhanisut had borne him three children: a daughter, Utohetep, and two sons, Haroëris and Kaninisut the younger. The tomb of Kaninisut II was constructed adjoining the mastaba of his father, against the middle of the east façade (see plan, ill. 4). It was erected, or completed, by the offspring of Kaninisut II, Kaninisut III, as we know from an inscription on the western wall of the offering chamber. The tomb of this grandson of our prince has been found in the year 1926. It lies in front of the structures described, in the street that leads to them from the east. In the inscriptions of this tomb, there appear, beside Kaninisut III, his son Iri-en-Ré and his grandson Anch-em-Ré, so



that we can trace five generations of the family: 1. Kaninisut I, 2. Kaninisut II, 3. Kaninisut III, 4. Iri-en-Ré, 5. Anch-em-Ré.

The precise indications we have for the dating of the tombs of Kaninisut's offsprings give us new material for the dating of his own mastaba. Four pottery jars made to contain the bowels which were found in the burial crypt of Kaninisut II, are of a type which appears for the first time in the second half of the Fifth Dynasty. The tombs of Kaninisut III and his descendants belong to the Sixth Dynasty. We must conclude from this that Kaninisut I lived in the time of the close of the Fourth Dynasty.

The plan of the structures is very instructive concerning the history of the family. The ancestor was doubtlessly a man of great property, as it is testified by his splendid tomb, and by the list of the foundation estates among the inscriptions in the offering chamber (see page 28). Another proof of his wealth is the beautiful mastaba of the superintendent of his house, Wehemkaj, the offering room of which is now in Hildesheim. The tomb of Kaninisut II, remarkable as it is, cannot be compared to his father's. It is even surpassed in grandeur by that of Wehemkaj. The scanty tomb of the grandson Kaninisut III shows again a considerable decline. The offering room is insignificant, with inscriptions only on the two small false doors, one of which is now in Room VI, at the right of the entrance of the mastaba.

A comparison of the functions the chiefs of the family held in the different generations offers the same aspect of decline. Kaninisut was "Son of the King, of his body," bestowed with the highest dignities of the court. Kaninisut II was "privy councillor, greatest of the Ten in Upper Egypt, priest of Ma'at, priest of Cheops." Iri-en-Ré had to earn his life as a foremost of the priests in the necropolis. He was "foremost of the priests, first of the priests of the Dead and of the King's priests." He no more bore the title of "royal kinsman," which preceded the names of his father and grandfather. Together with wealth and dignities, the family traditions gradually declined. One of the shafts in the tomb of Kaninisut III was roofed with a false door from the tomb of a man by the name of Hekenew, which had been stolen and roughly hewn for the purpose.

The sudden change in the social position may be connected with the conditions of the Empire in that time. The welfare even of the highest officials in this thoroughly bureaucratic state depended

in a high degree on the favour of the court. This dependence on the one side and the change of the kings and dynasties on the other can easily be imagined to have caused circumstances similar to those we find in the history of our prince's family.

## 5.

## THE CARVINGS.

## a) GENERAL NOTIONS.

1. The walls of the offering chamber are covered with inscriptions and carvings up to a height of 1'60 m., and the two walls of the entrance likewise show representations.

The type of the carving is very characteristic for the sculpture of that period. Although flat, they stand out effectively, the modeling of the figures is fine but not too smooth (see the figure of the prince on the north wall and that of his wife on the west wall). The hieroglyphics are carefully carried out with all details.

The design and representation of the scenes clearly show the marks of a comparatively early period. The arrangement of the different scenes on the walls is not clear. In many places they are joined abruptly or interrupted by other representations.

The representations are limited to the depicting of primitive scenes. Beside the ancient representation of the deceased seated at his ritual meal most of the space is filled with representations in rows: the procession of the villages, the long rows of servants bearing bowls of food, the procession of the scribes. There are no representations of the works of the fields, or of trades and diversions, which are so frequent in the carvings of the Fifth Dynasty. The figures are represented pacing calmly and gravely, only the representations of the slaughtering of beasts and of the boat crews show more life and movement. Although the lively, varied representations of later periods appeal more strongly to our interest, the austere simplicity of the earlier reliefs has a peculiar effect. We feel that they harmonise perfectly with the lines of the monumental structures.

2. *The meaning of the carvings.* In studying the reliefs of Egyptian tombs we must understand that they were not only intended to be a decoration of the monument, or a perpetuation of the achievements of the deceased. Their understanding requires a

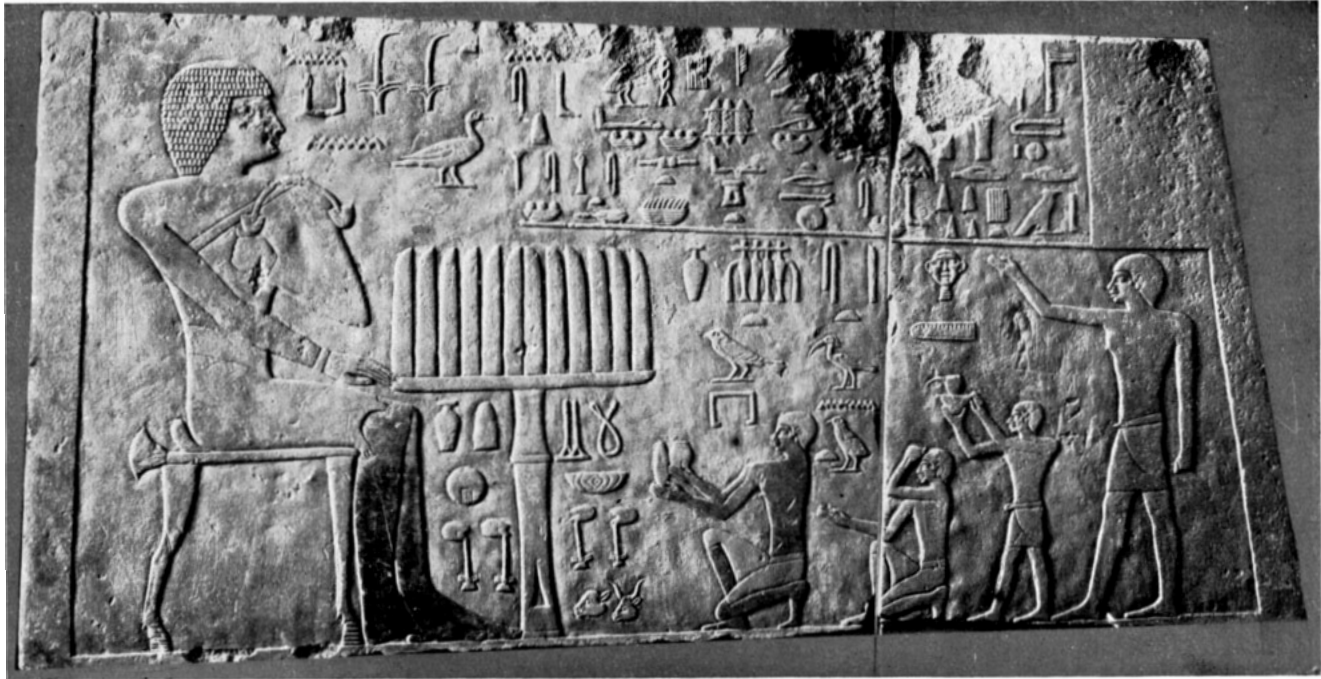


Plate 5. A Scene of Offering in the Entrance of the Tomb.

knowledge of the ancient Egyptians' belief in life hereafter. We must think of the spare heads and statues of the dead as animated by their souls, and likewise the carved likenesses of the deceased in the room of offerings are animated by the soul (ka), and all the scenes of which they are the centre have real life: the table of offerings is constantly laden with real food, the villagers bring their tributes, butchers, bakers, cooks and cup bearers approach bearing plates and jugs of meat and drink for the festival. The deceased lasts for ever with his dignities, functions and titles enumerated in the inscriptions, in the midst of his family, surrounded by his officials and servants, all perpetuated by their likenesses and the inscriptions of their names. Representations and inscriptions were painted in brilliant colours, which must have enhanced the impression of liveliness very much.

It is the same idea we find in both the structure and the decoration of tombs in ancient Egypt: a house is built for the deceased to live in for eternity with his family and his servants. All the events of which his life was made up are perpetuated there.

We owe our knowledge of life in this ancient time to this conception the Egyptians had of the burial of their dead. The mastabas of Giza and Sakkara with their numerous reliefs and inscriptions give us a true notion of the way of living of the Egyptians of the Old Empire, and a period which lies back 5000 years rises vividly before us.

#### b) DESCRIPTION.

##### *The Entrance.*

(Plates 5 and 6.)

The entrance to the offering room is a passage 1.60 m. long which once was closed by a wooden door. A round beam above it was inscribed with the principal titles and names of the deceased. The sidewalls are covered with representations of the ritual meal.

On the right side we see Kaninisut seated at the table of offerings, on a chair the legs of which have the shape of bull's legs. The ends of the seat on which a cushion is laid terminate in lotus-flowers. The deceased is wearing a leopard's skin, reaching down to his knees and covering his plaited apron. His head is covered by a wig imitating short curls of frizzled hair. He is wearing wide wristbands. His left fist is clinched and lifted unto his breast, his

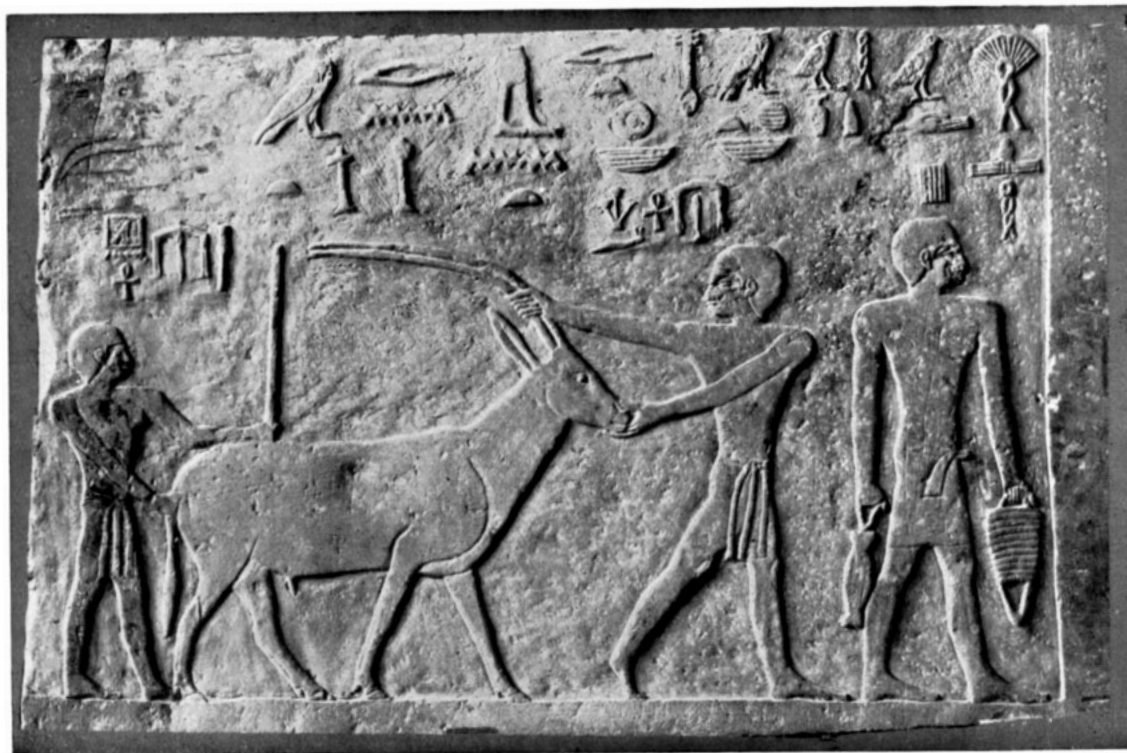


Plate 6. Two Servants leading an Antelope (Entrance-passage, left wall).

right hand is outstretched to take the meal. The hieroglyphic inscription beside his head says: "The son of the King Kaninisut" (= "Spirit of the King").

The table of offerings which rests on a slender base is charged with tall loaves of bread.

The lines of inscription below the table are a list of offerings: "may there be 1000 loaves of bread, beer, cakes, and cattle," and likewise for the clothing of the dead: "1000 of garments." Above the table of offerings, to the right, and separated from the scene below by a line, there is an inscription containing more particulars: incense, ointment, face-paint which the deceased was believed to use when preparing for the meal, further: wine, different kinds of bread, figs and other fruits. Below this inscription there is a representation of the ritual meal: four men are arranged in a row. The first is a priest, the "steward of the temple." He is kneeling, his right hand is holding a wine jar, his left a cup of beer. The next is the Wet priest. One of his hands is lifted to his forehead, the other one is stretched out. The meaning of the gesture is unclear. The inscription says: "The nourishing of the glorified." The deceased was to partake of the meal by means of the ceremony. The next figure is reduced in size. It represents a servant, bearing a basin in which stands a water-can. The last is the "priest of Heriwedeb," his right hand stretched forward and lifted to the height of his head, the left hanging down. His attitude is that of one who is calling. We know from inscriptions accompanying the same scene in representations of later periods, that this priest had to recite the list of the offerings to the deceased: "the recital of the things belonging to the ritual meal."

Opposite on the left side a similar scene is depicted. Here, the deceased is represented wearing a wig of long locks. The leopard skin robe reaches nearly to his ankles. Before the table of offerings the "steward of the great hall" is again depicted kneeling and offering wine and beer. Deposited in front of him there is a flat plate mounted on short feet, and containing an ox joint. The Wet priest is likewise represented in the same attitude as on the opposite wall, and the hieroglyphics again designate his gesture as "the nourishing of the glorified," whereas the Heriwedeb priest, this time, is represented with his right hand lifted to the level of his shoulder, which gesture accompanied the "laying down of the

food." Behind the priest a servant "Imisecher" carries an ox joint destined for the meal.

Adjoining this scene is the representation depicted in illustration 6. The figures are represented on their way to the offering room. On a comparatively small space a double scene is depicted: The laying of the offering table "with all good things, daily." The servant Hetep brings a piece of the ribs and a joint. Next follows "the offering of a young antelope, a present of the foundation estate." The last hieroglyphics of this inscription are only painted in red colour, not carved. Two servants are leading the antelope. They are wearing a belt from which three stripes of leather are hanging in the front, which characterizes them as peasants, whereas the other servants are wearing the white apron. The first man, Anch-haf (= "there is life around him") is holding the muzzle and horns, the second, the overseer of the hall, Ni-anch-Hathor (= "who receives life from Hathor"), holds the tail of the antelope and drives it with a stick. In ancient Egypt antelopes as well as hyenas, fowls, &c., were caught when young, and fattened.

### *The Western Wall.*

(Plate 7.)

The western wall opposite the door is the most important in respect of the offering rites. It encloses the two false doors which gave the deceased access to this world, through which he came out to take the offerings from the priest's hands. The space of wall between the two doors is crowned by a wide band of inscriptions. They contain an enumeration of the titles and dignities of the deceased in short vertical columns: "Sem priest, master of the royal apron, priest of Horus, governor of Dep (a city in Lower Egypt), the mouth of the people of Pe, the one friend (of the King), he who presides over the secrets of the Per-dewa, the head of Eileithyaspolis (a city in Upper Egypt), the Heriwedeb of the House of Life . . . . . the priest of the lord of Imt (Pellusium) . . . . . steward of the god Ha, the only Great of the Temple, Kaninisut."

Below the inscription there are two rows of representations. In the upper row, at the right, there is a life size representation of Kaninisut, dominating the whole scene, to express his exceedingly high rank among the others. The office and name of all persons represented are indicated in this scene and in all other scenes of



Plate 7. The Southern False Door in the Western Wall of the Chamber.



the offering room. It was the intention not only to perpetuate the one buried there, but with him his family and his whole house. His wife and children should be around him, his officials should carry on his affairs, his servants should be at his call in eternity. In the same way as Kaninisut's soul animates his likeness, the other persons depicted on the wall are animated by their souls and attend to their duties.

Kaninisut stands upright, holding a long staff in his left hand, and in his right the attribute of his dignity, a baton, together with a short stripe of tissue the meaning of which could not be explained until now. He wears a short apron, plaited in the lower part, and tied in a knot in the front. The leopard's skin is laid over his left shoulder. His wife Nefer-ha-nisut, represented on a smaller scale, is standing behind him, her right hand laid against her breast, her left hand hanging down. She wears a wig of long locks reaching down over her shoulders. Her clothings consist of a tightly fitting white linen skirt, fastened to her shoulders and breast by two wide bands. There were coloured bands round her wrists and ankles.

Before the figures of Kaninisut and his wife their children are ranged in a row. First comes "his son, of his body, the royal kinsman, Haroëris" (his name is that of the hawk-god Haroëris, one of the ancient gods in Lower Egypt). The next is "his daughter, of his body," by the name of "Grace-given-by-Uto" (Uto is a serpent-goddess, the tutelary goddess of Lower Egypt). Then follows "the son of his (father's) body," Kaninisut the younger, depicted as a naked baby, with his left forefinger at his mouth, as it is the manner of children. Unfortunately, the faces of Kaninisut and his children have been partially destroyed by strokes of a hammer. This act of destruction must not be attributed to the robbers who searched for treasures behind the false doors, but to iconoclastic Moslems who had penetrated there in an earlier time.

The row of the children is followed by two rows of servants and officials. In the upper range there are the scribes. They are depicted somewhat larger in size, as it becomes their dignity. The inscription explains the scene as "the inspection of the documents." The most important person of this scene as well as in the similar representation on the northern wall is Wehemkaj, the overseer of the house. The longer skirts of Wehemkaj and the other scribes

differ from the short aprons of the peasants, workmen and servants. He is holding an open papyrus in his left hand and making entries into it with his pen. Two spare pens are sticking behind his ear. Wehemkaj seems to have been an important personage in his function as a superintendent of the princely house. His tomb, found 1907, though not as large as that of his master, is a stately structure, and has a beautiful offering room decorated in carving. His colleagues, "the scribe Kajemwehem," "the scribe Mesy" and "the scribe Tenty" are standing behind him in full attire, but they are to be imagined standing at his sides. Their oblong shells are sticking in their belts, their styles behind their ears. Under their arm they are carrying papyri, rolled up and tied with cord. Before the figure of Mesy there is a leather box destined for the papyri, before Tenty a bundle of papyri.

The scene below this shows five servants walking toward the deceased. They are priests of the dead, that is persons who had engaged themselves to do the service in the tomb and who received a certain income in return, which was paid in natural produce or in the profits of a piece of land. The first is "the priest of the dead Penw" (= mouse), who carries a water basin and can. The second, Wah-ib, is carrying a vase filled with grains, the third, Itef, a crane, the fourth, Chufu-seneb (= Cheops is in good health) and Itij, a goose each.

In the bottom row, there is a procession of persons bearing offerings, walking in the same direction as those in the two rows above. They must be supposed to be walking toward the right hand false door, through which the deceased comes out to receive the offerings, or they belong to the scene above, in which case the figure of Kaninisut is to be imagined surrounded by his servants. This kind of representation was very often used by Egyptian artists.

The ten persons of this row are bearing: the first, "the Uedepu (= steward) Ni-anch-Hathor" and the second, "the Uedepu Kairi" each an ox joint; the third, "the foremost of the acts, Favourite of the Gods of Cheops" and the fourth, "the foremost of the linen Seschemu" geese, which they grasp by the neck and wings; the fifth, "the servant Seneb" four ducks; the sixth, "the slaughterer Inefret" a gazelle; the seventh, "the priest of the dead Schendu" a goose on the spit in his left, and a fan to blow into the flame in his right hand; the eighth, "the priest of the dead Chufu-

anch" (= Cheops lives), a plate containing a piece of joint on his shoulder; the ninth, "the priest of the dead, Favourite of the Gods of Cheops" a goose in his right, and an oblong basket work bag in his left hand; the tenth, "the priest of the dead Senebdisu" a goose and a cup of fruit.

The false doors are at both ends of the western wall. They consist of two parts: below, there are the two pillars, and the round beam forming the upper threshold, and the architrav as a conclusion. Above it is the stela, which corresponds to that of the archaic mastaba. The whole is crowned by a second, and longer, architrav, which juts out of the wall.

*The right hand false door.* On the upper architrav is the following inscription: "May the King give an offering, and Anubis (= the jackal-headed god of the dead), the foremost of the temple. May there be buried in the western desert, as a lord of reverence, may there be given an offering every day, the royal prince, Kaninisut." On the quadrangular slab below the deceased is represented seated at the table of offerings, wearing a long garment. Above the figure, there is a scroll containing his names and titles. The hieroglyphics around the table contain a list of offerings: incense, green and black eye-paint, Ished-and Nebes-fruit, two kinds of bread, and: 1000 (portions) of bread, beer and wine, 1000 of garments. On the lower architrav, there is a selection from the titles of the deceased, and his name, and on the lintel the name only. On each of the two jambs of the door there is a man-servant bearing a libation vase. The "priest of the dead Imisecher" in the right hand corner, bearing a water basin and can belongs to the same group, whereas the figure above, the "Granddaughter of the King, Nefer-han-isut," the wife of Kaninisut, belongs to the scene on the northern wall.

*The left hand false door* (illustration 7): On the upper architrav there are lines of inscription: "May the King give an offering, and Anubis, the foremost of the temple. May there be buried in the western desert, as a lord of reverence, before the great god, in a good great old age, the Sem priest, the master of the King's apron, Kaninisut." In the inscriptions of the libation slab the deceased is named "the one friend of the King, the overseer of the palace, the Sem priest, Kaninisut." The representation below this inscription, the smaller architrav and the round beam are similar to those of the right hand false door. On the door-jambs are represented: at

the right Herimeru, bearing a piece of cloth, folded up (?), and another man-servant with a sack on his shoulders; at the left: "the overseer of the linen Pernedu" with an ointment-jar, and below him another man-servant bearing an ointment-jar. At the right hand corner, at the top, "the scribe of the house of books Wehemkaj" is represented, bearing writing utensils and a papyrus, and, below him, the servant Idneferhotep with two long stripes of clothing.

### *The Southern (Left Hand) Wall.*

This wall is wholly consecrated to the ritual meal of the deceased. In the right hand bottom corner remains of a representation showing the owner of the tomb seated at table are discernible. He is extending his arm toward the meal. Above him is the inscription: "the Sem priest, the master of the King's apron, the priest of Horus, the son of the King, of his body, Kaninisut." Before him, to the left, there was a representation of the priest of the dead in action, similar to the representations in the entrance corridor. The remaining portion of the wall is covered with the list of offerings, in long horizontal columns. The top line—the hieroglyphics run from the right to the left—contains the preparations for the meal: the washing, the bringing of the clothes, the washing of the hands. Then comes the burning of incense, the anointing of the body with different ointments, the painting of the eyes with green and black paint. The list of the dishes begins with different sorts of bread and cake, beer and wine. The principal dishes are: joints of cooked meats, thigh of meat, pieces of the ribs, breast-cut, liver; several sorts of geese, ducks and pigeons; finally various cakes, fruit and wine.

The window was in the left hand top corner. The room was lit only by this one window, the brick recess keeping off the light from the door to the north. The distributing of lights in the mastaba has been arranged in such a way that the effect comes as near the original as possible.

### *The Eastern Wall.*

(Plates 8—10.)

The lowest row of representations of the back wall continues the scene on the southern wall described above. We see the long row

of men-servants bearing different dishes, walking toward the deceased, who is represented there, seated at the table of offerings:

1. "The steward of the temple, Tenty," with basin and water-can for the washing preceding the meal. 2. "The servant Kairy" bearing loaves of bread. 3-5. "The servants Ni-anch-Hathor, Anchy and Seneb" bearing plates mounted on feet [like those we use for serving cake] charged with fruit. 6-8. "The bakers My-Mrt and Tenty" and "the cook Wenew" bearing similar dishes with cakes and bread. 9 and 10. Medew and Beby bearing live geese which they grasp at the beck and wings, whereas "the priest of the dead Mery-Neteru-Chufu" (= Favourite of the Gods of Cheops) bears a fried goose on a dish. 12. "The priest of the dead Semerkay" bears three geese, one of which is fried, and seems to be decorated with greens, and the other two are plucked and stuck on spits, which he is holding in his right hand, together with a fan to blow into the flame. 13. "The keeper of the seals Persen" bearing a piece of thigh on a dish.

The right hand part of the row above likewise belongs to the representations on the southern wall: two heads of cattle are being slaughtered and cut up in preparation for the meal. The inscription at the corner says: "the slaughtering by the butcher." Three slaughtered beasts tied with ropes are lying on the ground, and some men are about to cut off their shoulders by means of knives made of flint. On either side of the scene is the figure of a butcher sharpening a knife. The grindstone is fastened to their belt with a band, in the same way as it is in our day. The inscription gives the names and titles of all persons represented.

The other representations on this wall, that is the two upper rows and half of the third, are in connection with the scenes on the northern wall, where the scribes are making notes of the taxes of the foundation estates. The reliefs above the door are perfectly detached from the other scenes.

In the two upper rows, the villages are represented walking toward Kaninisut, bringing the taxes. Those which have feminine names are represented by women, those with masculine names by men. The figure of Kaninisut is facing toward them. They are bearing wine, bread, cakes, fruit, &c., in bright baskets. In the manner always used by Egyptian artists, the contents of the baskets are showing above the rim. Some of the offering persons are bearing particular presents in their left hand, e. g. a goose, a vase,

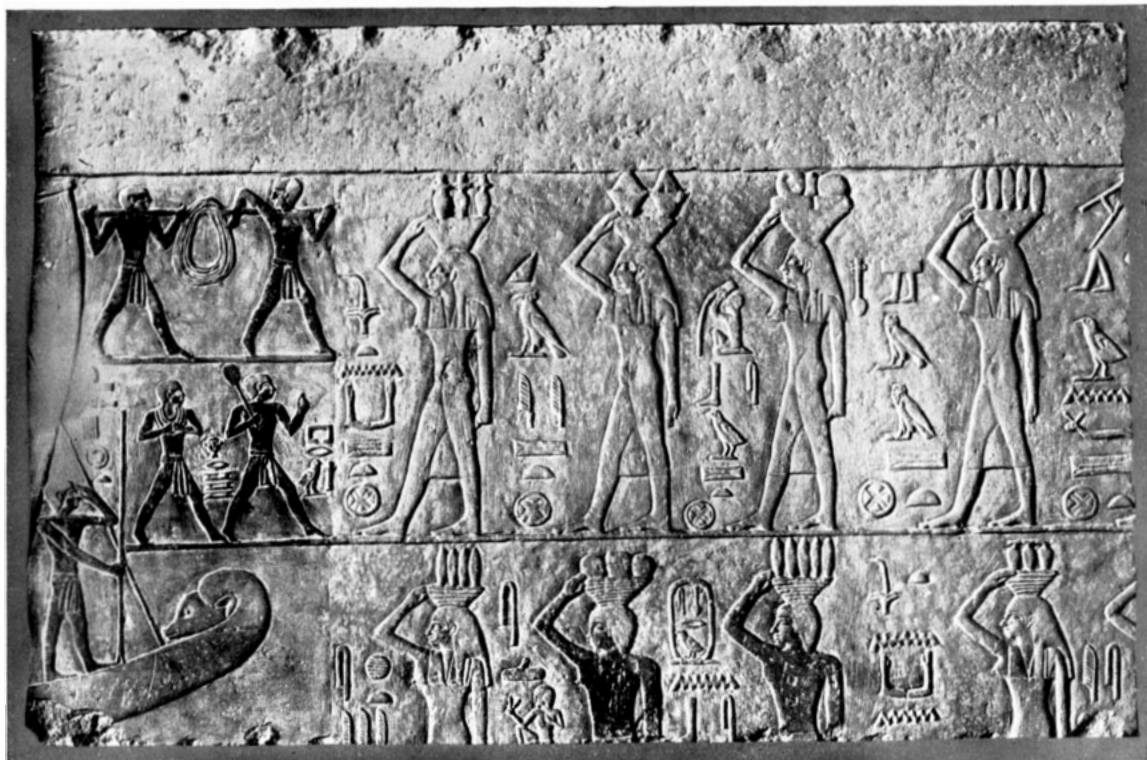


Plate 8. A Section from the Scenes on the Eastern Wall: The Procession of the Villages.

a basket work bag, &c. The thirty village-names are of considerable interest. Some of them contain the names of the two first Kings of the Fourth Dynasty, as: "Senefru's locust-tree," "Senefru's Foundation," &c. The name "Kaninisut's Foundation" occurs three times. Evidently, these villages had been founded by Kaninisut in person. Other names are: "The Field of the Lynx," "The Opening of the Valley," "The Barns," &c.

The scenes of the third row from the top represent "the foundation villages bearing offerings." The peasant Hesj wearing a fringed belt is leading a stable-fattened ox by means of a short rope fastened to its muzzle. A second peasant wearing a piece of stuff instead of an apron leads an ox in the same way as the first. The third peasant brings a head of cattle without horn which is tied to a rope fastened to the strap which it has round its neck.

The reliefs above the door (illustrations 8 and 9), as it has been mentioned before, are detached, and without connection to the adjoining scenes. They are very remarkable because of the scenes represented, and because they are extremely well cut. Kaninisut is here represented sailing in a boat. This representation was carved above the door because the deceased was believed to come out through it and go on board his boat. We find the same arrangement in a number of other offering rooms from this period. Two boats are represented: the upper one is a sail boat with a high stern and decorated bow. The double mast is fastened by six strong ropes, the sail reaches from the topmost yard to the foot of the mast. The braces are fastened to a ring at the end of the stern. The sailor Penw (mouse) is bracing the sail. Three men are steering the boat by means of large, flat-pointed, leaf-shaped paddles. In the stern the cabin is built, an airy wooden frame intended to be draped with mats and pieces of cloth. Before it, larger in size than the others, stands Kaninisut, "the Sem priest," leaning on his staff. He is wearing the wig of long locks and the long linen apron. The pilot Hetepsejpt, standing in the bow, is commanding the boat crew. His commands are transmitted to the others by a sailor seated a-squat on the top of the cabin. The rest of the crew are standing in bent postures, their arms hanging down, waiting for commands. Kaninisut is attended by Wahjeb who stands before him, turning his head toward him. He alone is wearing the linen apron whereas the others wear the fringed belt. In the northern corner above the ship, there is an inscription: "the coming from Dep (ancient capital in Lower Egypt),

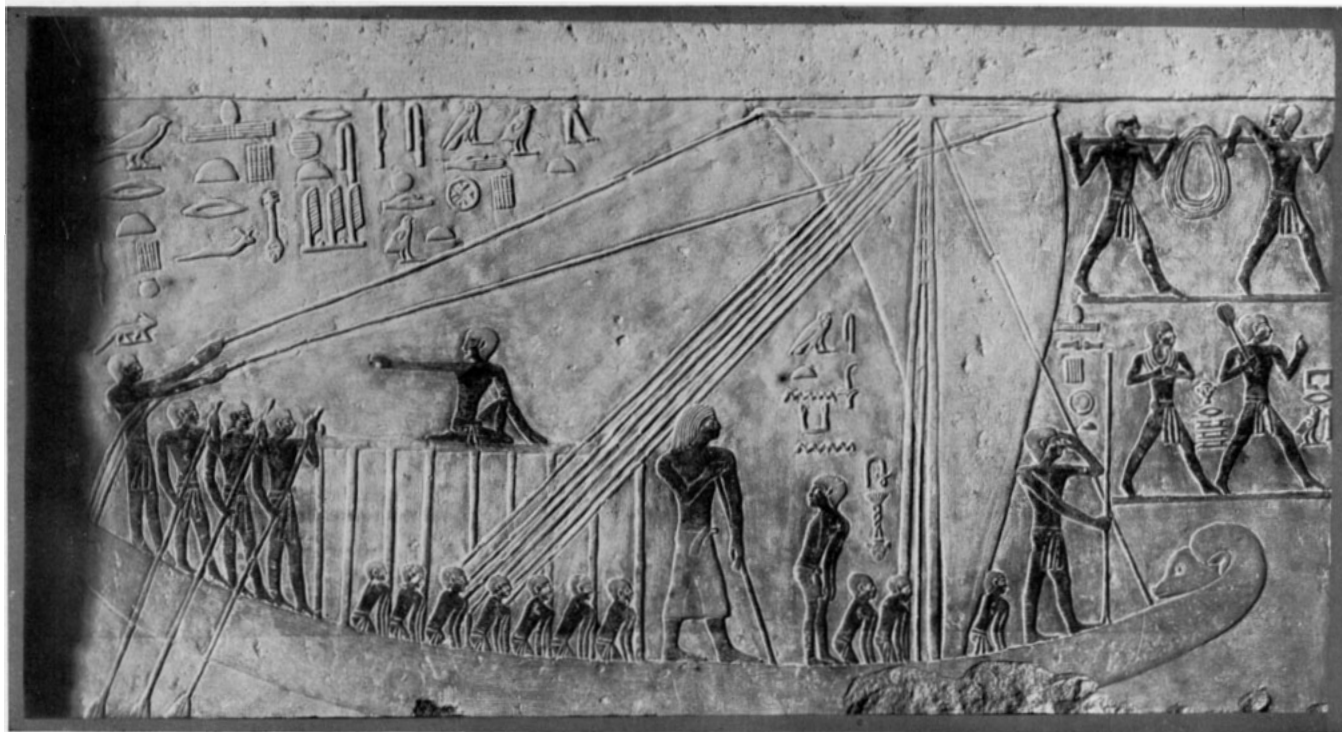


Plate 9. The upper Representation above the Door: The Cruise to the Elysian Fields in a Sail-Boat.



and the crossing to the beautiful field of eatables." The scene seems to represent the moment of the landing. Above the bow, two pairs of sailors are represented. They are on shore, and run to help in the landing. The upper pair is bearing a rope rolled up, on a long stick. One of the lower pair is bearing a short oar, the other one has a piece of rope tied round his shoulders.

The lower boat is a row-boat made of bundles of papyrus. Seven sailors on each side row it, keeping the stroke. Three men are steering it with long oars. The pilot *Kajemhesut*, standing in the bow, cries the commands, accompanying his words by impressive gestures, to *Seteb*, a sailor who is seated on the top of the cabin, and transmits them to the steersmen. *Kaninisut*, this time represented wearing a short apron and a wig of short curls, stands in the centre of the scene, leaning on his staff. A stripe of linen is laid over his breast and left shoulder. The servant *Wahjeb* stands before him in a humble posture. Inscription below the boat: "The cruise to *Heliopolis*."

What we know of the meaning of these cruises in Egyptian religion is as much as nothing. Only one thing is clear, namely, that they have nothing to do with the worship of the dead of later periods, the centre of which is the god *Osiris*. The name of this god appears only in inscriptions from the time of the close of the Fifth Dynasty.

### *The Northern Wall.*

(Plates 11 and 12.)

A large representation of *Kaninisut* fills the whole space of the northern wall. The figure is a remarkably fine piece of art. Full of calm dignity he faces his busy officials. His staff is advanced. He bears the sceptre in his right hand. He wears his official attire, the plaited apron, the leopard skin, and the wig of long locks. A wide gold chain inlaid with stones in various colours is laid round his neck. The carving is not deep, but the figure stands out very well against the plain wall. The fine modeling, especially of the neck, shoulders, and legs, enhances the impression of vigour. The face shows a wellshaped nose and full lips. The eye, unproportionately large, according to the Egyptian manner is depicted in front-view.



Plate 10. The lower Representation above the Door: The Cruise to Heliopolis in a Papyrus-Boat.



Plate 11. The Figure of the Prince on the Northern Wall.

Behind Kaninisut, there is the figure of "the grandson of the King, his son, of his body, Haroëris." He is represented very small in size, as a little child keeping hold of his father's leg. The representation of Kaninisut's wife on the same wall likewise belongs to this scene. Three rows of scribes are walking toward Kaninisut. In the upper row, "the delivery of the book (list) of villages to the lord" is represented. The superintendent of the house, Wehemkaj, is handing over an open papyrus to Kaninisut. The scribes Testy and Imysecher are making notes.

In the row below, a similar scene represents the "writing down of the list of men." "The overseer of the house Kajemnefret" is handing over the document. He is attended by "the scribe Chnumhotep," "the actuary Kedmerer." In the third row, we see the scribes Sahj Menchkaj, Pehnefer and Rahotep, busily working (illustration 12).

The postures and equipment of the scribes are very remarkable. Crouching on the ground, they seize the half-open papyrus with their left hand and hold the palette between the thumb and forefinger. With only one exception, the palettes are shells. Two round spots on the inside of the shells mark the places where they prepared the black and red used for the summary. Two spare reed pens stick behind the ear of each scribe. The boxes, destined to contain the papyri, show interesting forms.

The whole scene is crowned by a wide scroll with the inscription: ". . . . . the governor of Dep, the mouth of the people of Pe, he who presides over the secrets of the Perdewa, the head of Eileithyaspolis, the son of the King and (his) one friend, Kaninisut."

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Plate 12. The lower Range of Representations on the Northern Wall: The Group of Scribes.

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