



## Uncovering an Unusual Saff-Tomb at Draa Abu el-Naga in Western Thebes

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### ABSTRACT

This article presents a distinctive and unique tomb in Theban necropolis, discovered following the demolition of the houses at Qurna during the 2006/2007 season that I supervised as inspector of Antiquities. It is a *Saff* tomb and was assigned the number NTTMP 91 season 2014/2015 according to the New Theban Tombs Mapping Project (NTTMP) that I supervised. The significance of this tomb is attributed to its rare architectural elements that are not attested elsewhere including the second elongated passage and the cult chamber, which motivate the author to present this tomb in elaborated publication using case studies from the Theban tombs TT81, TT155, TT232 and -150- tombs.

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### INTRODUCTION:

Death and resurrection lie at the core of the Egyptian philosophy of the afterlife. So the ancient Egyptians developed various types of tombs throughout their history, including shaft tombs, mastabas, pyramids, and rock-hewn tombs, ranging from the earliest times to the end of the late period, and even into Greco-Roman times, particularly in the Theban necropolis. The tomb was established as the sacred, eternal house of the owner's dead body as a transmission point between life and the afterlife, where the deceased could worship the gods in the house of eternity. (Davis 1975, 109-110) (B. Ockinga 2007, 139) (Bunson 2002, 408) (Grajetzki 2014, 8) (Taylor 2001, 10ff) (Lloyd 1989, 117ff)

The Egyptian authorities decided to relocate the villagers who lived in Theban necropolis

and demolish their modern houses to protect the archaeological Site. Upon my suggestion, the idea of the New Theban Tombs Mapping Project (NTTMP) came first to be and formed a team of my colleagues to document all the new tombs. (O. Abou Zaid 2015, 71-77) The aims of this project, which started in April 2014 (O. Abou Zaid 2015, 71-77), was to register and document all the new tombs discovered beneath the demolished village that had been inhabited for over one hundred years. The main target of the work was to produce high-definition maps of the discovered tombs, classify and date the new tombs, complete the previous surveys of the entire necropolis, define a consistent numbering system for the whole necropolis, create plans with full documentation of the discovered tombs and complete the topographical studies of Porter & Moss, F. Kampp and P. Picconie. (Kampp 1996, I-II. 1-775) (Porter and Moss 1960, 1-200) The NTTMP produced global maps with the newly discovered tombs of the Theban necropolis, defined the new identification number of each new tomb, and detailed publications on the most significant discoveries, such as the catacomb tomb of Qurnet Murai. (O. Abou Zaid 2018, 9-27)

The first topographical study of the Theban necropolis was started by J. Bonomi (1796-1878), who stopped when he learned that J. G. Wilkinson was engaged in a similar project. In 1906, P. Newberry published Bonomi's list of Arabic toponyms, probably those used by the local inhabitants of the sites, including Deir el-Bahari, Deir el-Medina, and Deir el-Rumi (formerly Deir el-Luli). Many attempts to record the Theban tombs were made, thereafter, including the publications of A. H. Gardiner and A. E. P. Weigall, and those of the MMA under the direction of J. Capart. (O'Connell 2007, 41) (Malek 1981, 7) (Gardiner and Weigall 1913, 12-13, 16-39) Other works were completed and some are still in progress in Draa Abu el-Naga, such as the Australian mission (that has been working for over 20 years), the Egyptian, the Spanish, the Italian and German missions (that have been working for over 30 years and have discovered *saff* tombs, including K.95.1, K01.4. (O. Abou Zaid 2015, 71-77) (O. Abou Zaid 2021, 237-244) (Ockinga and Binder 2012, 205-247) (D. Polz 2012, 115-134) (Jiménez-Higueras 2020, *passim*) (Galán 2007, 777-787) (Betrò, Del Vesco and Miniaci 2009, *passim*) (Polz and Rummel 2017, 8-20)

The *saff tomb* type, to which NTTMP 91 belongs, is one of the well-known tomb styles of Theban necropolis. (H. Winlock 1915, 19-20) (R. Soliman 2009, 31) (Roehrig 1995, 259) (Strudwick and Strudwick, *Thebes in Egypt: A Guide to the Tombs and Temples of Ancient Luxor* 1999, 140) (Dodson and Ikram 2008, 86-87) (Bard 1999, 1094) *Saff* is an Arabic word that means "row" and is used to refer to the façade of the tomb with rows of pillars cut into the hill slopes or the ground. The style first appeared in the Eleventh Dynasty (2125-1805 B.C.) probably under the King Intef at El-Tarif. (H. Winlock 1915, 20) (R. Soliman 2009, 4) Beyond the row of pillars, a corridor leads to a chapel with one or two columns. (R. Soliman 2009, 4) Some scholars have posited that the façades of Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari and those of the early Eighteenth Dynasty tombs were influenced by the style of these Middle Kingdom tombs. (Roehrig 1995, 259) As well as the King, Nebhepetre himself was influenced by the style of his forefathers Intefs at el-Tarif in his funeral complex (Lehner 1997, 166).

It was long known that there was a tomb underneath the house of Mohammed Abdo Ahmed Hussein Sayed El-Hassani. He had refused entry to anyone and, as a result, the tomb could not be examined until the owner was relocated to New Qurna. We called it "The Tour Guide's Tomb" (مقبرة المرشد) because Mohammed used to have worked as a tour guide. Once the tomb became accessible, the Qurna Inspectorate fixed an iron door to protect it.

Although the Author has published many *Saff* tombs from the Middle Kingdom during the work of NTTMP as (NTTMP 28, NTTMP 91) and other styles from Draa Abu el-Naga and Qurnet Murai. However, The NTTMP 91 -as discussed below- dates to different period, and demonstrated by several distinguishing architectural features, specifically two elongated passages, a cult chamber with statues and two shaped entrance corners that are unusual according to Kampp's classification. For this reason, the publication of NTTMP 91 alone is a

priority because still unique and its design and architectural features which changed the understanding of the *saff* tomb dating. (O. Abou Zaid 2021, 237-244), but The NTTMP 91 (O. Abou Zaid 2015, 71-77) (O. Abou Zaid 2018, 9-27).

### 1- SITE AND LOCATION (fig. 1, pl. 1)

There are several kinds of rock-hewn tombs with distinctive features in Draa Abu el-Naga, such as large shafts with two chambers at the bottom and others with mud brick superstructures. (O'Connell 2007) (Gauthier 1908, 121-164) One of the early missions that worked at Draa Abu el-Naga [South] was the University Museum of Pennsylvania, during seasons 1921-1923, under the direction of C. Fisher, followed by seasons 1967-1974, under the direction of L. Bell. (O'Connell 2007, 132) Boyo G. Ockinga discussed the importance of the Draa Abu el-Naga area as a part of the Theban necropolis focusing on two main ideas. The first is the fact that Draa Abu el-Naga faces the complex of the Amun-Re temple at Karnak. The second is its relationship with the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, where the god Amun crossed the Nile near the end of the necropolis. The festival probably dated back to the Middle Kingdom (Foucart 1924, 1ff) (Graefe 1986, VI. Cols. 187-188) and may have been held to celebrate the dead at the new Moon of the second month of the summer season -called Shemu- (Schott 1950, 107[50]). The grand rejoicing procession involved the people of Thebes for several days to accompany the god Amun from Karnak temples to Theban necropolis. In other words, one of the main significances of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley was the remembrance of the dead by locals and relatives in an annual celebration. In addition, the area was the site of some of the oldest New Kingdom tombs (B. Ockinga 2007, 139), including the royal tombs of the Seventeenth Dynasty (particularly those of the warrior kings Ta'o and Kamose), with later tombs extending to the Roman Period. (Redford 1967, 28-49) (H. Winlock 1947, 113ff) (D. Polz, The Royal and Private Necropolis of the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Dynasties at Draa Abu el-Naga 2005, 234) (B. Ockinga 2007, 139) (O'Connell 2007, 133) (Saleem and Hawass 2021, 1-10) (Shaw 2009, 159-176)

NTTMP 91 is located in the southern part of Draa Abu el-Naga close to the old *Saha* *الساحة* of Sheikh el-Tayeb. Its coordinates are: N: 5.17'25°44 E: 59.89'32°36.

This location would have commanded a distinctive view over the route of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley to Deir el-Bahari, according to Ockinga's observation, (B. Ockinga 2007, 139) and would have faced the entire ritual landscape of the rest of the Theban necropolis as well (Ullmann 2007, 3)

### 2- DESCRIPTION (fig. 2, pl. 2a-d) (*all the photographs were taken using a digital camera and appear in black and white due to lack of lighting and the state of conservation*).

Little is known about the ancient Egyptians who lived and worked in Thebes and its cemetery, which functioned as the city of the dead, a ritual and sacred landscape (Ullmann 2007, 3) incorporating the concept of "democratization of burial" (N. Strudwick 1995, 97-98) for the physical body (Lloyd 1989, 117-120), although the population of ancient Egypt during the New Kingdom was approximately 5 million (C. Simpson (June) 2008, passim) (Dodson and Ikram 2008, 23). People inhabited the cemetery of Thebes, observing ancient and modern socio-cultural practices and beliefs (Van der Spek 2007, 177-192). Even scholars, such as J. G. Wilkinson [1799-1875] and R. Hay [1799-1863] built their houses around and inside TT 83 and TT 46 (O'Connell 2007, 39), not unlike the families of Qurna (Van der Spek 2007, 182) (C. Simpson (June) 2008, passim), who were known as the Qurnawi in the travel accounts of the Anonymous Venetian. (Van der Spek 2007, 180) The community was well established and inhabited the entire necropolis for two centuries until being relocated in the years 2005-2008,

despite several NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) declaring the community as an example of “Social Archaeology” worth preserving. (Newman 1997, 12-24)

The tomb (pl. 2a) suffered from human activities over time, including domestic occupation, daily life activities, blocking off the *saff* entrances, damage to the wall surfaces, and illegal digging. It was registered as an (unusual) *saff* tomb and have the following architectural elements:

- 2.1 A forecourt: with unclear boundaries in front of the *saff* pillars (pl. 2a) which somewhat resembled those of the Eleventh Dynasty (Arnold 1971, 39ff, pl. IVb), except for their square shape.
- 2.2 The main entrance: (about 2m wide) faces south (*the owner of the house refashioned all the saff openings by blocking them with mud brick to form a hall bordering the passage*) (pl. 2a).
- 2.3 A transverse colonnade: (about 17m × 2.55m), with a doorway (2m) leading to the long hall (11.25m × 2m). From here, an entrance (1.75m × 1.25m), leads to a broad hall (12m × 2.5m) parallel to the façade. On the east (right) side of this broad hall are the outlines of an unexcavated shaft (pl. 2c). Another doorway (1m × 1.50m) leads to the second section of the long hall (10m × 2 m) with a small recess in its left wall (probably added at a later time), followed by an incompletely excavated shaft (2m × 1.25m) (pl. 2d), that we cleaned to a depth of about 4m in season 2007/2008 when we entered the tomb for the first time.
- 2.4 The second elongated passage: ends in a large cult chamber with a vaulted ceiling, containing three life-size seated engaged statues, probably representing the tomb owner with his wife and his mother. The floor of the cult chamber lies about half a meter higher than the floor level of the other rooms.
- 2.5 The large statue-niche: at the end of the tomb appears to be much like that of TT81. (V. E. Dziobek 1987, 72) Unfortunately, although it is one of the biggest tombs [NTTMP 91] recorded by the NTTMP (more than 30m long), all of the inscriptions and wall decoration have suffered damage and deterioration, and even the three statues of the niche have been defaced.

### 3- DISCUSSION:

#### 3.1 Estimation of the Date:

The spatial relationships among the Deir el-Bahari cliff tombs of the Middle Kingdom (Roehrig 1995, 266ff) to the south of this tomb and the Middle Kingdom cemetery in the majority of Draa Abu el-Naga may help us estimate the date of this tomb (particularly in the north area) (R. Soliman 2009, 134ff) (R. Soliman 2005, 54ff, 214-219, pls. 71, 79) (H. Winlock 1947, 113ff, pl. 46) (Allen 1970-1971, 1-26). Several criteria are used to place a date for tombs in the Theban necropolis (D. Polz 1987, 120-121) (Hartwig 2004, 1-2) (Mackay 1921, 154-168), including its architectural layout and architectural structures, as well as a typological comparison. (Correll 1985, 6-7) (D. Polz 1987, 120, 124) In this paper, however, the most likely date of this tomb is based on:

##### 3.1.1 Design

The architectural complexity and the location in context are the main features to be considered to date a new tomb which its inscriptions were deteriorated. (Dodson and Ikram 2008, 23) (Correll 1985, 6-7) According to F. Kampp’s complete and comprehensive classification of the Theban Necropolis (Kampp 1996, I. 3) (Kampp-Seyfried 2003, 2-10) there are two groups of tombs: **Group (1)** Tombs without interior supporting elements (Pillars/Columns) [*Types I-V*]. **Group (2)** Tombs with interior supporting elements [*Types VI-X*]. (Kampp 1996, I. 1) (Kampp-Seyfried 2003, 2-10) This tomb belongs to the first group, Type IVb (fig. 3). (Kampp 1996, I. 22-23) However, it appears that the date of the tomb could

not be determined solely upon this consideration. Indeed, the design of the tomb (see, fig. 2) is unusual compared to Kampp's Type IVb (see fig. 3), although the classification as Type IVb is suggested by its similarity with the first phase of TT232, which is also classified as Type IVb by Kampp. (Kampp 1996, I-II. 13, 21, 510) Therefore, according to Kampp's complete typology and classification of Theban necropolis, NTTMP 91 dates to the late of Seventeenth Dynasty/early of Eighteenth Dynasty.

### 3.1.2 Statues of the Niche/Cult chamber (pl. 3):

One of the main features of the New Kingdom private tombs particularly the T-shaped ones is the presence of an elongated passage ending with statues in a niche. (Ranke 1925, 45) (Hartwig 2004, 116) (Weeks 2005, 424-435) The statues inside tombs started as reserve heads or statues during the Old Kingdom, then developed into large-scale stone and wooden statues. In the New Kingdom, a pair of stone statues of the tomb owner and his wife became typical during the reign of king Thutmosis III (McDermott 2006, 110, 150), while a group of statues was characteristically used in the Ramasside period (1295-1069 B.C.) (Hofmann 1995, 271-279, fig. 1) (Assmann 1995, pls. XIV-XVII) The presence of the niche with the statues of the tomb owner and his family, therefore, suggests the Thutmoside period. (Fitzenreiter 1995, 100)

Fortunately, many tombs in the Theban necropolis ended with a niche with engaged statues or cult chamber, regardless of the number of the statues. Since the statues in the niche could offer a more specific criterion than that of the tomb layout for dating NTTMP 91, the author revised and compared approximately 1000 plans of Theban private tombs illustrated in Kampp [551 tombs] and PM [450 tombs]. (Kampp 1996, I-II. 1-775) (Porter and Moss 1960, I.i. 1-200) (see table 1).

**Table 1** below lists all tombs in Thebes that end in a niche with engaged statues or cult chamber, except the new discovery NTTMP 91:

No.	Tomb no	Site	Period	Number of statues in the niche	<i>Saff</i> façade	
1	TT 11	Draa Abu el-Naga	Dyn. 18	3		×
2	TT 21	Draa Abu el-Naga	Dyn. 18	4		×
3	TT 23	Sh. Abd Qurna	Merenptah	7 [on three facing sides]		×
4	TT 41	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	Ramesside	2		×
5	TT49	Khokha	Aye	2		×
6	TT 50	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	Horemheb	5		×
7	TT 56	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	A. II	3		×
8	TT 57	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	A. III	2		×
9	TT 66	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	Thut. IV	2		×
10	TT 81	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	Dyn. 18 (Porter and Moss,	4	√	



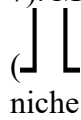
			Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings 1960, I. i. 159) (V. E. Dziobek 1987, 69) (N. Strudwick 1995, 150)			
11	TT 123	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	Thut. III	2		×
12	TT 125	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	Hatshepsut	3		×
13	TT 148	Draa Abu el-Naga	Ramesside	3		×
14	TT 149	Draa Abu el-Naga	Ramesside	2		×
15	TT 159	Draa Abu el-Naga	Dyn. 19	2		×
16	TT 172	Khokha	Dyn. 18	2		×
17	TT178	Khokha	R. II	4		×
18	TT 264	Khokha	Dyn. 19	1		×
19	TT 296	Khokha	Ramesside	3		×
20	TT 343	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	Dyn. 18	3		×
21	TT 348	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	Dyn. 18 [ Reused in 22 Dyn.] (Porter and Moss 1960, I. i. 415)	4		×
22	TT 349	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	Dyn. 18	3		×
23	TT 370	Khokha	Ramesside	4		×
24	TT 371	Khokha	Ramesside	2		×
25	TT 409	Assassif	Ramesside	4		×
26	-23-	Assassif	Dyn. 19	3		×
28	-57-	Khokha	Dyn. 18	1		×
29	-62-	Khokha	Dyn. 18	3		×
30	-402-	Draa Abu el-Naga	Dyn. 17/18 (Kampp 1996, II. 769, fig. 695)	5	√	

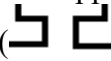
As a result, the chart (fig. 4a-b) (based on table 1) shows all tombs in Thebes that end in a niche with engaged statues or cult chamber, before and after the discovery of NTTMP 91:

### 3.2 Case Study of Eighteenth Dynasty TT81 of Ineni:

Ineni was the architect of king Thutmose I [1506-1493 B.C]. He built the first royal tomb in the Valley of the Kings and the central part of Karnak temples. His tomb TT81 is situated halfway up the eastern slope of the Sheikh Abd el-Qurna hill. It is considered one of the earliest tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty at Thebes. (V. E. Dziobek 1987, 69)

One of the main reasons of treating NTTMP 91 was to compare it with the tomb of Ineni TT 81 (V. E. Dziobek 1992, 28-33), because it is the only tomb in the same category that contained the whole architectural elements of NTTMP 91 as: elongated passage (with the shaped entrance corners) to its end (the niche with statues/cult chamber (V. E. Dziobek 1992, 28, 32), and even the shaft in front of the statues), which are same as NTTMP 91, although Kampp classified TT 81 as both Type IIIb and Type IVb and dated it to the Middle Kingdom [in type IIIb] (Kampp 1996, I. 19 [Table 6]) and to the New Kingdom [in type IVb]. (Kampp 1996, I. 21 [Table 8]) This merits comparison with the model of Type IIIb and TT 81, taking into consideration that *saff* tombs are primary New Kingdom (V. E. Dziobek 1987, 70-75) (Kampp-Seyfried 2003, 4-7). Moreover, it is clear that the elongated passage begins here with the squared corners/edges

() which distinguish the Middle Kingdom tombs, and NTTMP 91 also has statues in the niche [main feature of the New Kingdom], like TT81. However, the tombs of Kampp's Group

1 have a different configuration at the beginning of the elongated passage () which dates to the Seventeenth Dynasty and the New Kingdom. (Kampp 1996, I. 21-27) (O. Abou Zaid 2021, 237-244) Since TT 81 dates to the age of Amenhotep I - Tuthmosis III (Porter and Moss, Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings 1960, I. i. 159) (V. E. Dziobek 1992, 28-33), this is a good chance to modify Kampp's classification of TT 81 (IIIb and IVb) to be IVb (fig. 5), like NTTMP 91, which will be demonstrated further by comparing them to the anomalous Type IVb below.

As mentioned, Ineni was the architect of Thutmose I from the Eighteenth Dynasty. Kampp's classification did not depend on this historical evidence and was based solely on the tomb plan, which led to the fault in the dating of TT81. Meanwhile, choosing TT81 as a case study with its architectural features to establish the real date of NTTMP 91.

#### 4- SIGNIFICANCE AND UNIQUENESS OF NTTMP 91:

Significantly, there are three Type IVa, b tombs in the Theban necropolis having engaged statues in the niche, TT81 and TT348 in Sheikh Abd el-Qurna (TT81, TT 348) dating to the Eighteenth Dynasty (Porter and Moss, Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings 1960, I. i. 159) (V. E. Dziobek 1987, 69-79), and NTTMP 91 in Draa Abu el-Naga, which is the first tomb of this unusual/advanced type to be found.

The comparison of NTTMP 91 with other tombs [same style] (TT81, TT 155, TT232, -150-) also in Kampp's Type IVb (fig. 6) resulted in the considerations shown in **Table2** below: The similarities, differences, and uniqueness between NTTMP 91 and other similar tombs listed in the table are summarized below, taking into consideration the fact that the second long hall of NTTMP 91 is a distinctive feature not found in other related tombs. As a result, NTTMP 91 may be called an unusual *saff* tomb):



**4.1** TT 81, located at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, Eighteenth Dynasty. The long hall and cult chamber resemble those of NTTMP 91, as do the forecourt and the *saff* façade.

**4.2** TT 155, located at Draa Abu el-Naga, Eighteenth Dynasty. The broad hall and the long hall and their entrances are the same as NTTMP 91, as are the forecourts and the *saff* façade, but the interior niche is without statues.

**4.3** TT232, located at Draa Abu el-Naga, Ramasside period. It is similar to NTTMP 91 except for the corners of the first entrance of the long hall and the niche, which is without statues.

**4.4** -150-, located at Draa Abu el-Naga, Seventeenth/Eighteenth Dynasty. This tomb resembles NTTMP 91 except for the corners of the first entrance of the long hall and the niche, which is without statues.

Tomb No.	Forecourt	Saff facade	1 <sup>st</sup> Entrance		1 <sup>st</sup> elongated Passage	2 <sup>nd</sup> Entrance		Transverse Passage	1 <sup>st</sup> Shaft	3 <sup>rd</sup> Entrance		2 <sup>nd</sup> elongated Passage	2 <sup>nd</sup> Shaft in front cult	Cult chamber with Statues	Niche without Statues
			a	B		a	b			a	b				
NTTMP 91	√	√	√		√		√	√		√	√	√	√	√	X
TT 81	√	√		√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	√	√	X
TT 155	√	√		√	√		√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√
TT 232	√	√		√	√		√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√
-150-	√	√		√	√		√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√

**Table 2:** Architectural comparison to consider the main elements and uniqueness of NTTMP 91 with same type IVb of Kampp (Kampp 1996, I. fig. 20) with case studies of Draa Abu el-Naga tombs and one more (TT81) of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna [Entrances (a , b )].



## 5- COMMENTARY AND RESULTS:

**5.1** The tombs of Qurna deteriorated from being used as dwellings (C. Simpson 2003, 244-249), as well as the tombs of Draa Abu el-Naga suffered greatly from human activity when they were occupied by the Hasasna, Atiyat, Ghabat, and Batlanin families, and among of them is NTTMP 91 which is located at the southernmost part of Draa Abu el-Naga, facing Sheikh Abd Qurna, an area that is distinguished by *Saff* tomb type. Nonetheless, no tomb in Draa Abu el-Naga matches NTTMP 91.

**5.2** The tomb -402- has a row of pillars (2 squared + 2 rounded + 2 squared) behind the *saff* façade, which is not aligned with the *saff* entrances, as well as a shaft, probably added later, to the right of the *saff* façade. As a result, this tomb may have been modified for reuse as it is the case with NTTMP 91. The transverse passage



of -402- also has a row of square pillars, and the inner room has two squared pillars. These pillars represent the difference between NTTMP 91 and -402- where NTTMP 91 is classified as Group I according to Kampp's classification (*tombs without interior supporting elements*), whereas all saff-tombs that are classified as Type IIIb and IVb by Kampp. (except for -402-) belong to Group II (*tombs with interior supporting elements*) and represent the first case of a *saff* tomb with interior supporting elements. So -402- could represent a new Group II type within Kampp's classification (i.e., that of *saff* tombs with interior supporting elements).

- 5.3 The NTTMP 91 has a unique architectural design compared to other examples of its type (IVb) and the *saff* tomb style as a whole. It has two long halls, along with a wide transverse passage parallel to the *saff* façade, in addition to the corners of the entrance (a , b , style a typically distinguishing the entrances of tombs of the Middle Kingdom, while style b normally marks the entrances of those of the Eighteenth Dynasty. We may therefore conclude that NTTMP 91 was probably originally carved in the Middle Kingdom, then reused and enlarged during Eighteenth Dynasty. Meanwhile, NTTMP 91 could be the first example of Group I, *saff* type tomb with statues inside its niche, hence it is called an "unusual" *saff* tomb. So, NTTMP 91 is the third *saff* tomb at Thebes (after TT81 and -402-) and it is the second in Draa Abu el-Naga (after -402-) that contains statues inside the niche.

## 6- CONCLUSION:

The earliest known tombs in Theban necropolis date back to the Old Kingdom (2980-2181 B.C) at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna. Tombs were later developed and spread over the whole necropolis (Draa Abu el-Naga, Khokha, Qurnet Murai, Assassif) until the end of the Pharaonic times. At the beginning of the Middle Kingdom at Thebes, a rock-hewn tomb style came into use, with a façade design known as the *saff*, probably derived from the portico of the mortuary complex of king Montuhotep II and his predecessors Intefs, the first example of the temple-tomb in Thebes. This represented a new style of the tomb façade for a king or a private individual at this time, before the beginning of the New Kingdom. Indeed, the *saff* style was the distinguishing feature of the "*saff* tomb" category, but the inner parts of the tomb were altered from time to time.

The only classification of Theban tombs was produced by F. Kampp as a dissertation (1989) and published in 1996. She depends on two main groups of classification, i.e.: Group I (*tombs without interior supporting elements*) and Group II (*tombs with interior supporting elements*), and with various types based on these criteria (Group I: Types I-V – Group II: Types VI-X). Dating NTTMP 91 should not be attributed to this classification only. It [NTTMP 91] presents good criteria for dating based on simple architectural elements, such as the corners of the entrances and the rare second long hall with its cult chamber. The unusual plan of NTTMP 91 helps to understand the issue of dating and reuse of the *saff* tombs of the Theban necropolis in the Middle and New Kingdoms, particularly in the Draa Abu el-Naga cemetery, which contained both the royal and the private necropolis of the Middle Kingdom.

The date of NTTMP91 also required a comparison with TT81 of the Eighteenth Dynasty to give an exact date of NTTMP 91 and to reclassify TT81 as a Type IVb not as a Type IIIb according to Kampp. It also involved comparing NTTMP91 with -402-, which is classified as Group II. But, as this paper clarifies, -402- has no types of its group (Group II has no *saff* tombs with inner supporting elements). So, NTTMP 91, TT81, and -402- suggest the need to review

Kampp's classification according to the new discoveries as a priority, particularly as there are tens of foreign missions working in Theban necropolis from various nationalities.

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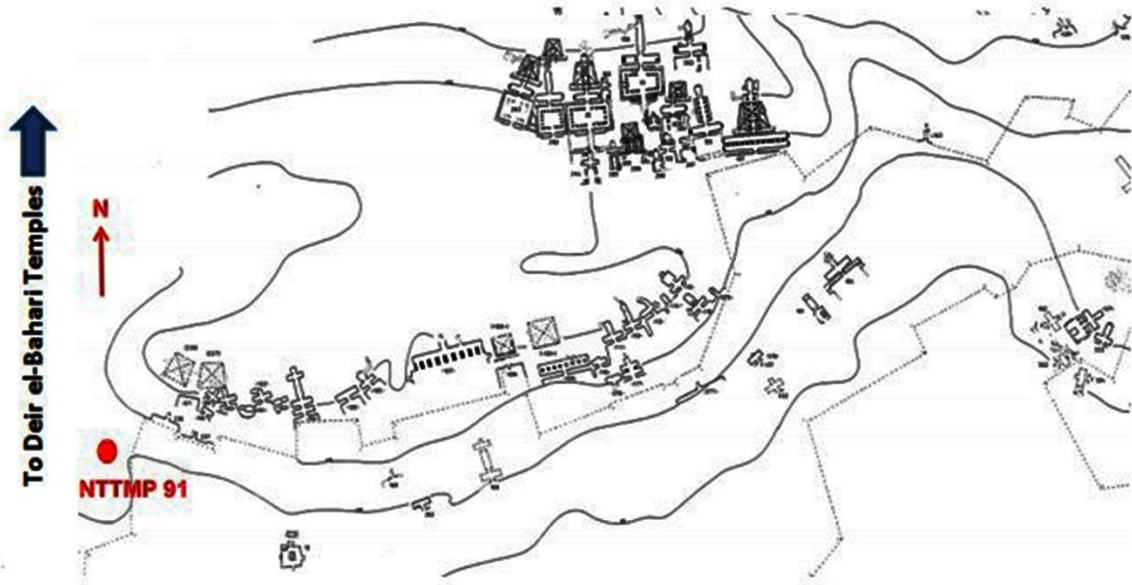


Fig. (1)  
Site and location of NTTMP91

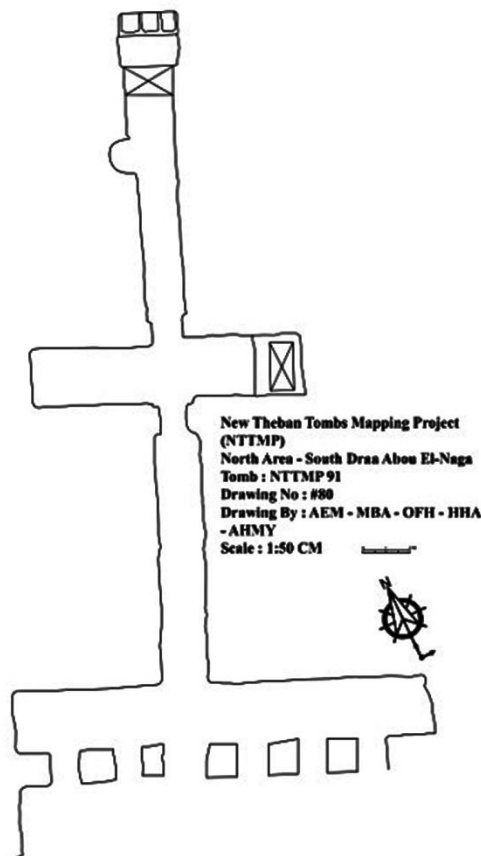


Fig. (2)  
Plan of NTTMP91

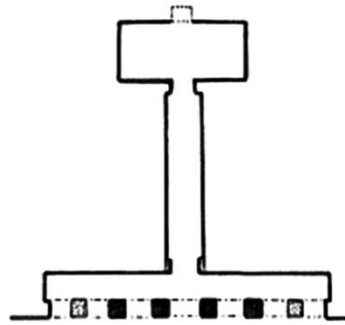


Fig. (3)  
Type IVb of Kampp's classification

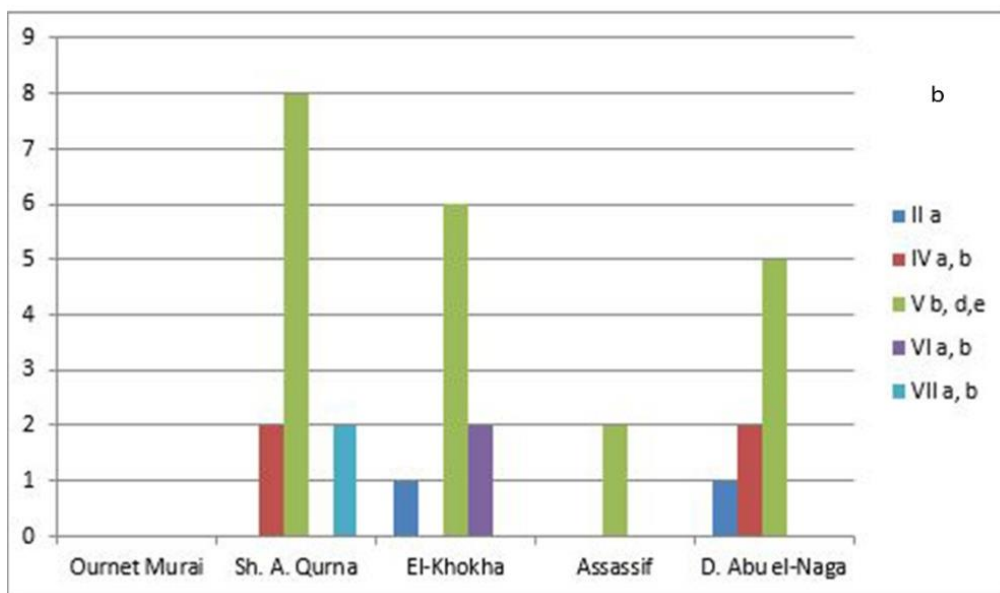
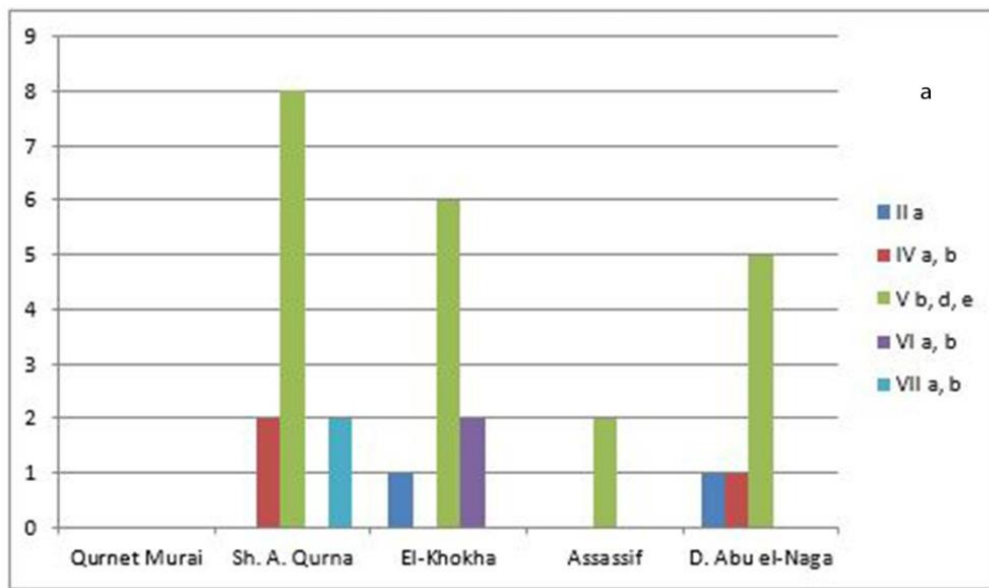


Fig. (4)

shows all tombs in Thebes (based on table 1) that end in a niche with engaged statues or cult chamber, (a) before and (b) after the discovery of NTTMP 91.

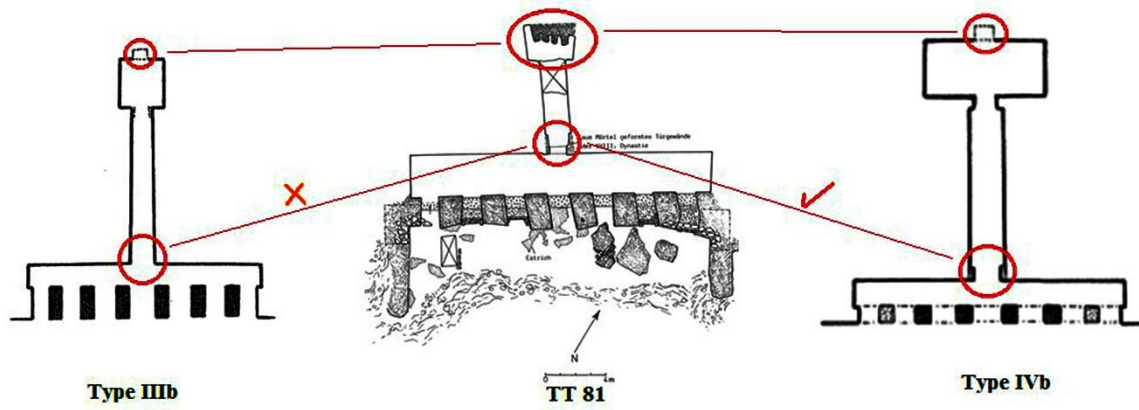


Fig. (5)  
Comparing TT81 with Kampp's type IIIb

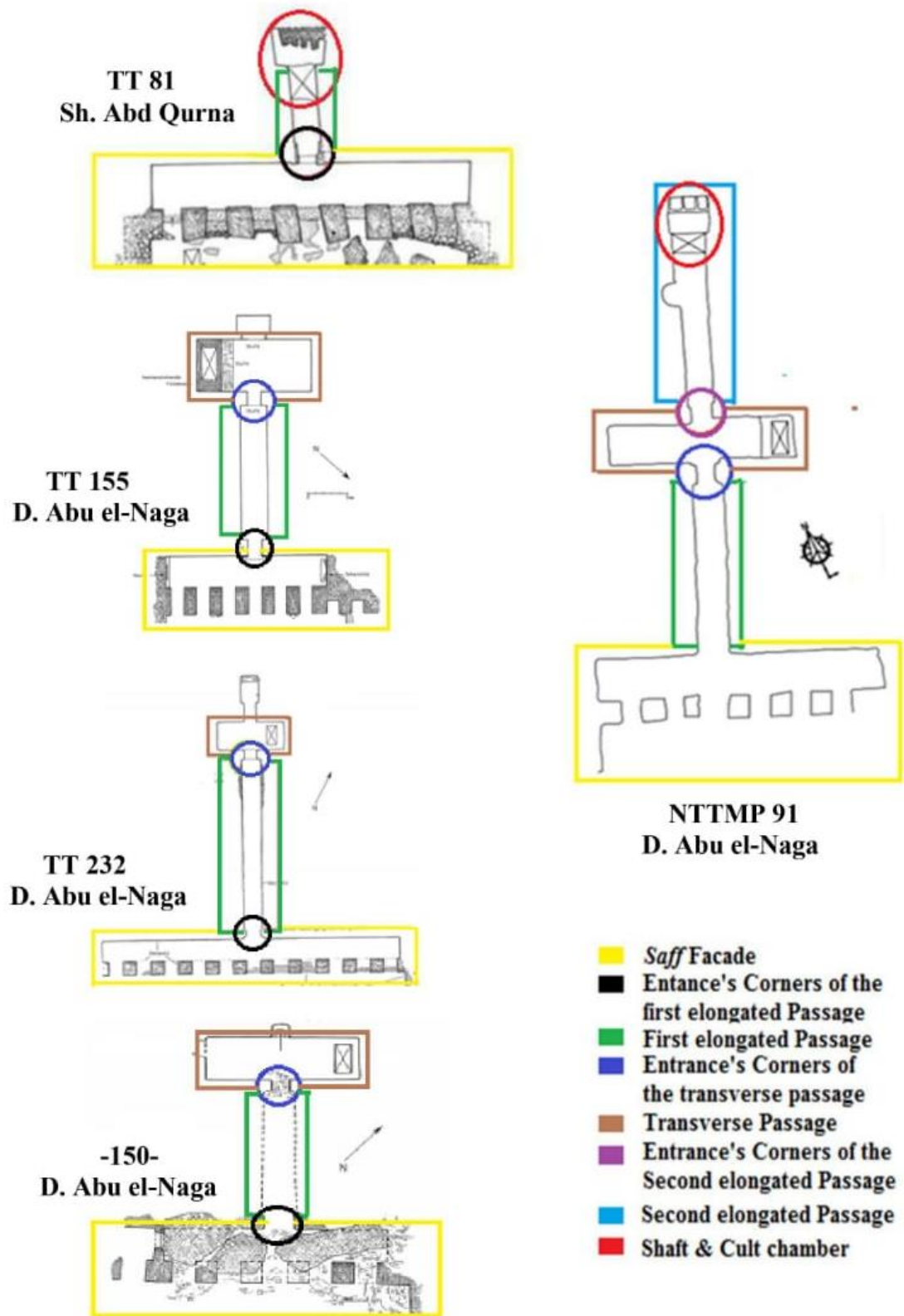


Fig. (6)  
Comparing architectural elements of NTTMP91 with other tombs [same style] (TT81, TT 155, TT232, -150-)





Pl. (1)  
Site and location of NTTMP91



Pl. (2)  
NTTMP91



Pl. (3)  
Statues of the Niche (Cult chamber)

## "اكتشاف مقبرة-صف غير اعتيادية في نراع أبوالنجا بطيبة الغربية"

### المخلص

يقدم هذا البحث مقبرة مميزة ومتفردة في جبانة طيبة اكتشفت أثناء هدم منازل القرنه موسم ٢٠٠٦/٢٠٠٧ بأشرافي وأثناء عملي كمفتش اثار، وهي من الطراز المعروف بـ"صف" وتم ترقيمها برقم ( NTTMP ) 91 موسم ٢٠١٤/٢٠١٥ حسب مشروع رفع مقابر طيبة الجديدة (NTTMP) الذي أشرف عليه. ترجع اهمية هذه المقبرة إلى عناصرها المعمارية الفريدة حيث بعض العناصر غير الموجودة في أي مقبرة أخرى من هذا الطراز مثل الصالة الطولية الثانية وحجرة الطقوس، وهو ما حدا بالباحث لنشرها بمفردها نشرأ تفصيلياً مع استخدام حالات دراسية أخرى مثل المقابر (-150, TT232, TT155, TT81)

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### بيانات المقال

تاريخ المقال

تم الاستلام في ٢٥ فبراير ٢٠٢٣

تم استلام النسخة المنقحة في ١ اكتوبر

٢٠٢٣

تم قبول البحث في ٢٨ اكتوبر ٢٠٢٣

متاح على الإنترنت في ١٠ يناير ٢٠٢٤

### الكلمات الدالة

مقبرة،

مقبرة-صف،

نراع أبوالنجا،

شيخ عبد القرنه،

جبانة طيبة،

حجرة الطقسه،

طيبة،

الدولة الحديثه،

الدولة الوسطى،

تمثال