

---

# Discovery of a New Unique Tomb at Abusir

---

## Discovery of a New Unique Tomb at Abusir

A few days ago archaeologists from the Czech Institute of Egyptology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, discovered a unique tomb belonging to the priest and chief physician of Upper and Lower Egypt Shepseskafankh.

The Fall archaeological expedition of the Czech Institute of Egyptology, CU FA, at the pyramid field of Abusir in the vicinity of Cairo started in mid-September 2013. At that time, it was the only archaeological expedition working in the Saqqara area.

The excavations are conducted close to the site of the world-famous discoveries from 2012 – the rock tombs belonging to the high dignitary and priest Nefer and Princess Sheretnebti, dating to the middle of the 5th Dynasty (ca. 2400 BC). Information about the discovery of unique statues and other artefacts of immense scholarly and artistic value flew around the entire world at the end of last year.

In the immediate vicinity of this complex, the new tomb of the priest Shepseskafankh was now discovered. The stone tomb measures 21×14 meters and even now, 4500 years after its establishment, its walls are over 4 meters high. The eastern part of the tomb contains a corridor chapel, at the end of which there is a monumental stone stela, the so-called false door with the names and titles of Shepseskafankh. They document his career of priest of the sun god Re in the sun temples of several rulers of the 5th dynasty, then priest of the ram god Khnum, and finally priest of Both Houses of Life. The director of the Czech Institute of Egyptology, CU FA, and leader of the mission at Abusir Prof. Miroslav Bárta said concerning these discoveries: „The historical importance of the last discoveries of our team lies in especially in the fact that Shepseskafankh belonged to the highest-ranking physicians known from Egypt of the pyramid builders, i.e. the Old Kingdom. He thus is a de facto unique historical personality with no parallel. He was a personal physician of the king and a scholar with access to the most secret knowledge of his time. Given that two tombs of physicians were already discovered in this complex during the preceding seasons, it is equally important that this is a unique cemetery of physicians, who in their time belonged to the very important families at the pharaoh's court.”

The Dean of the Faculty of Arts, CU, Assistant Professor Michal Stehlík added: „I immensely appreciate the hard work of our colleagues, who despite unfavourable conditions continue to realize archaeological exploration in Egypt and do their best to maintain the continuity of our research. But this is also yet another of a series of exceptional discoveries, which proves that our Egyptology belongs to the best in the world.“

The work of the expedition, which is the largest Czech scientific expedition working abroad, continues, and more discoveries cannot be excluded.

Liaison officer for the media:

Mgr. Ing. Jana Kučerová

(co-ordinator of external relationships of CU FA)

e-mail: [jana.kucerova@ff.cuni.cz](mailto:jana.kucerova@ff.cuni.cz) ,

tel.: +420 221 619 822,

+420 608 860 282