

FRAGMENT OF A FUNERAL RELIEF

Egyptian, ca. 1985-1795 B.C.

Limestone

36 x 28 cm

Reference: 15796



This rectangular fragment is adorned with a scene featuring figures represented in very low relief and richly embellished with a variety of pigments.

The image still retains parts of two registers, unfortunately incomplete. The upper scene shows a large offering table delineated by a green border. It is abundantly laden with food, including bread and/or cakes, plants, the long black legs of a wading bird, poultry, a leg of meat and the head of an ox. On the left appears the suspended body of another plucked bird.

The lower scene shows three female figures (characterized as such by the pale color of their skin), whose busts only are still visible. On the left stands a little girl, her hair arranged with two locks falling over her shoulders; she holds a flabellum to keep insects away. The inscription does not indicate her name, but simply the words *his daughter*; she is therefore a daughter of the owner of the tomb. Behind her, the two women each wear a long white dress, which leaves the breast partly uncovered, and a tripartite wig. With their left hand, they each hold a flowering stem of papyrus, a plant known for its aphrodisiac powers. Since they are not mentioned as daughters, one can imagine that they were two concubines of the deceased, which would confirm the inscription (partially faded) behind the second woman, *his beloved*.

CONDITION

Good condition, with abundant remains of ocher, black, light blue, green and brown pigments. Some chips; faces pitted, perhaps intentionally.

PROVENANCE

Ex-private collection of a European art dealer of paintings.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

On tombs in the Middle Kingdom, see:

KLEBS L., *Die Reliefs und Malereien des Mittleren Reiches*, Hildesheim-Zurich, 1990.

MANNICHE L., *L'art égyptien*, Paris, 1994, pp. 100 ff.

NEWBERRY P.E., *Beni Hasan*, Vol. 4, London, 1893.