Abstract: For your ka! How to give something as a present to the tomb owner?

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to describe the variety of means in ‘daily life’ scenes in Old Kingdom private tombs for workers to speak to or to offer something to the tomb owner. Starting from the comment made by Detlef (2003, 54): ‘from the sixth Dynasty, the phrase n k# ‘for the ka-spirit’, was used in tomb relief, accompanying the presentation of offerings to the tomb’s owner as a kind of label,’ this comprehensive study of the formula n k# and its variants in Old Kingdom speech captions — also known as Reden und Rufe — reveals that the expression already appeared in fifth-dynasty private tombs and not exclusively in scenes of offering bearers. Moreover, I retrace the development of this formula from the fifth Dynasty to the beginning of the First Intermediate Period in these ‘daily life’ scenes. In a second step, I investigate all the other means, which seem to be more single types. For the sake of comparison, I then enlarge the scope of the study by taking into account speech captions of offering bearers in Middle Kingdom tombs, which have more set expressions. By considering the diachronic dimension, I eventually offer a typology during the Old Kingdom, based on a statistical approach.