


An Offering Basin of  *Mr-sw-nh* (No. 519/1234)
حوض قرابين مرسو عنخ (رقم 519 / 1234)

Hayam Hafez Rawash

Prof. of Egyptology, Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University
hhafez762@gmail.com

Dalia Mohamed Elsayed Mohamed*

Lecturer, Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University
daliakmt77@yahoo.com

Abstract

The present paper is concerned with the study and publication of an unpublished offering basin belonging to an individual named *Mr-sw-nh*, who lived during the Fifth Dynasty. It was found in his mastaba at Giza, excavated by S. Hassan in 1929-1930, and is currently preserved in the Egyptian Museum of Faculty of Archaeology at Cairo University under the number (519/1234). The offering basin is in a good condition. It is made of white limestone, rectangular in shape with two semi- equal rectangular depressions that gradually incline from top to bottom. It contains two depressions for liquid offerings: water and wine. Five hieroglyphs' lines are carved in sunken relief around the rim of the basin, illustrating the formula of *htp di nws* and *Mr-sw-nh*'s titles as "Overseer of the Young Men of the Palace of his Companion *R-wr*" and "Inspector of the *k3*-servants." Some feasts are mentioned as occasions for receiving offerings. According to some criteria, the offering basin of *Mr-sw-nh* is dated to end of the Fifth Dynasty.

Keywords: *3bd*, Basin, *id(w)*, *Inpw*, *Mr-sw-nh*, *nfr*, *smdt*, *W3g*.

الملخص

تتناول تلك الورقة البحثية دراسة ونشر حوض قرابين خاص بالمدعو "مرسو عنخ"، الذي عاش في عصر الأسرة الخامسة. وقد عثر سليم حسن على هذا الحوض في مقبرة "مرسو عنخ" الكائنة في جبانة الجيزة سنة 1929-1930 م. والحوض محفوظ حاليا في متحف كلية الآثار بجامعة القاهرة تحت رقم (519/1234)، وهو في حالة جيدة من الحفظ. الحوض مصنوع من الحجر الجيري الأبيض وهو مستطيل الشكل ويضم فتحتين - لهما تقريبا نفس الاتساع - مخصصتين لوضع القرابين السائلة مثل الماء والنبيذ أو الجعة. ويوجد على حافة الحوض خمسة أسطر من الكتابة الهيروغليفية، تشمل صيغة القربان المعروفة بـ *htp di nsw* "حتب دي نسو"، بالإضافة إلى اسم وألقاب المتوفى والتي منها، لقب "المشرف على شباب القصر" ومثل "المشرف على كهنة الكا". ويوضح البحث أن القصر المقصود هنا هو قصر "رع ور" وليس القصر الملكي. كما يذكر النص بعض الأعياد التي يرغب المتوفى أن يتلقى القرابين فيها. ووفقا لعدة معايير يؤرخ حوض قرابين مرسو عنخ -محل الدراسة- بنهاية الأسرة الخامسة.

1. Introduction

Belief in a life after death and seeking for immortality motivated ancient Egyptian to devote his live to prepare for his afterlife. He built his tome, *pr dt*, equipping it with all good things, *ht nbt nfrt*, to ensure he would receive daily offerings for his *k3*, thus guaranteeing rebirth and eternity. Through the false door, the *k3* of the deceased could pass from the burial chamber to the offering place, which contained one or more

offering table before the false door.¹ The significance of offerings is linked to two concepts: *irt hr* “the eye of Horus”, which represents all kinds of gifts, and *mꜣt*, which indicates order and justice.

The essential offerings were bread and water. Some offering tables have a depression for liquid offerings beside the part designed for bread. However, some tombs contain independent offering basins, such as the tomb of *Mr-sw-ꜣh*, which has three offering basins.² It is worth noting that Hassan³ refers to them as offering tables. They were found in front of the false door. The first two were placed one above the other,⁴ and the third one⁵ was found lying beside the offering table (**fig.1**).

This article aims to publish one of those three basins (**fig. 2 a, b**)⁶ which is displaying at the Egyptian Museum of Faculty of Archaeology in Cairo University, under the number (519/1234). The study will translate the accompanying texts, followed by an analysis of the formulas, feasts, and titles of its owner, culminating in a conclusion.

1.1. The mastaba of *Mr-sw-ꜣh*

The Mastaba of *Mr-sw-ꜣh* was discovered by S. Hassan during the Cairo University Excavations at Giza, in 1929-1930.⁷ It is built on a slope of the native rock in the northwest corner of the path leading to Serdab No. 13 of Rꜥ-wr, in the Khafre cemetery. It measures 5.45 m. by 3.45 m. by 2.35 m. on the outside and features a corridor chapel.⁸

As mentioned in his tomb, *Mr-sw-ꜣh* was the “Companion of Rꜥ-wr, and the Overseer of the Young Men of the Palace”.⁹ He lived during the Fifth Dynasty, and his mastaba is dated to the end of the Fifth Dynasty.¹⁰

1.2. An overview on Offering basins

¹ Taylor, J.H., *Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt*, London & Chicago, the British Museum Press & the University of Chicago Press, 2001, p.136.

² Hassan, S., *The Egyptian University Excavations at Giza 1929-1930*, vol I, Cairo, 1932, pl. LXVIII no. I.

³ Hassan, Giza I, 110.

⁴ Hassan, Giza I, pl. LXVIII .2, LXIX.3.

⁵ Hassan, Giza I, pl LXIX.4.

⁶ fig. 2 a, b = Hassan, Giza I, pl. LXVIII.2.

⁷ Hassan, Giza I, 104-17, pls. LXVII- LXXXI.

⁸ Hassan, Giza I, 105; Porter, E. & Moss, R.L.B., *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*, vol. III, Memphis Part I: Abu Rawash to Abusir, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1974, 269- 70, pl. XXIII C8.

⁹ Hassan, Giza I, 104.

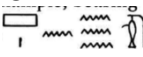
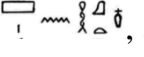
¹⁰ Baer, K., *Rank and Title in the Old Kingdom, The Structure of the Egyptian Administration in the Fifth and the Sixth Dynasties*, Chicago, 1960, 82- 83[200].

Offering basin is a rectangular shape stone with a depression carved inside it to contain liquids. All basic types of offering stones, tables or basins, had assumed their forms during the Old Kingdom.¹¹

During the 3rd and the 4th Dynasties, a stone trough was added to some offering tables for offerings of water, wine or beer.¹² Independent offering basin should be derived of those offering tables. However, the independent offering basins were rare; more common were offering tables that included one or more basins.¹³

As well as offering tables, offering basins were found just in front of the false door.¹⁴ Private individuals might have preferred to provide their tombs with a simple offering basin in place of an amenity; as more elaborate funerary equipment need more space, and would have been challenging to maintain over time.¹⁵ Offering basin was used to receive liquid offerings, particularly, water and beer or wine.

For the inner divisions of the offering basins,¹⁶ some contain only one depression¹⁷(single basin), while others have two depressions, (double basin), as the basin in question, or three (triple basin).

The name for offering basin in ancient Egypt might have been (š), as this word appeared on several offering basins in labels referring to the basin itself. For example, when there were two depressions, one was labelled as , *š n mw*, meaning "tank of water", and the other as , *š n hnkt*, meaning "tank of beer".¹⁸ However, during the Old Kingdom, š referred to any offering table contained one or more depressions for libations.¹⁹

¹¹ Bolshakov, A.O., Offering tables, Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, vol. II, Oxford: Oxford University press, 2001, 573.

¹² Taylor, Death and the Afterlife, 158.

¹³ Al-Garhi, A., Studying the tables and basins of offering in the Magazine of el- Ashmounin, Master diss., Faculty of Arts - Minia University. (in Arabic), 2019, 117.

¹⁴ Bolshakov, Offering tables, 573, Radwan, A., The Nun basin of Renpetnefert, In: Egypt and Beyond, Essays Presented to Leonard H. Lesko upon his Retirement from the Wilbour Chair of Egyptology at Brown University June 2005. Edited by Stephen E. Thompson and Peter Der Manuelian, Department of Egyptology and Ancient Western Asian Studies, Brown University, 2008, 280.

¹⁵ Fischer, G., An invocatory Offering basin of the Old Kingdom, MDAIK 47, 1991, 128- 129.

¹⁶ For more, cf. Abou-Ghazi, D. Catalogue General des Antiquites Egyptiennes du Musee du Caire Nos. 57001-57100. Denkmaler des Alten Reiches III. Altars and Offering Tables, Cairo 1980.

¹⁷ Fischer, An invocatory Offering basin, fig. 1; Radwan, A., The Nun basin, figs. 1, 2.

¹⁸ Fischer, An invocatory Offering basin, 127.

¹⁹ Bolshakov, Offering tables, 574.

Liquids in ancient Egyptian beliefs, were associated with rejuvenation, renewal, and purity of the deceased.²⁰ The depression for water was regarded as miniature lake. Sometimes, boasts were carved in relief on the rim of each side of the basin. Some of those boats convey the deceased owner who is rowed up and down the lakes within.²¹ Thus, this depression for water acts symbolically as the pool for the deceased to sail on in the next life.²²

In addition, the water depression resembles magically a sacred lake,²³ which in one hand connected with the tree-goddess, where the dead people and their spirits could enjoy receiving cool water and food offerings. In the other hand it was resembling the Nun-ocean, the eternal source of water.²⁴ Radwan would like to call offering basins, “Nun-basins” as the dead wishes to be born out of the lotus-flower emerging from the Nun-waters.²⁵ His hope rebirth morning after morning would be realized in the afterlife by means of those offering basins. Water has never lost its importance in ancient Egypt to the degree that in the late and Ptolemaic periods there were mortuary priests called *w3h mw*, “water pourers”.²⁶

Likewise, wine was very important. Some Pyramid Texts point out that it was used in purification rites, such as, spell 601 (Pepi I’s Spell 523) which reads: “[*Shezmu will come to you with*] wine-[water] and *Thighs-Forward [with the cups of those at the fore of] the Dual Shrines, and you will become clean with wine-water and become clean with the cups of those at the fore of the [Dual] Shrines*”.²⁷

Thus, if the deceased had an offering basin, he would ensure rebirth and eternity in the afterlife. Just as the offering tables were provided to continuously generate the *k3* - doubles of the depicted food placed on them²⁸ the depressions for liquid offerings would serve the same function.

2. Description of the offering basin

2.1. Shape and measuring (fig. 3 a, b)

²⁰ Rawash, H. H., An Offering Table of Sneferu-nefer II Egyptian Museum (JE 11527, CG 1328, SR 2/ 15727), JFA 25, 2002, 204, 214.

²¹ Fischer, An invocatory Offering basin, 128- 129; Bolshakov, Offering tables, 574.

²² Taylor, Death and the Afterlife, 158

²³ Bolshakov, Offering tables, 574.

²⁴ Radwan, A., The Nun basin, 281-82, cf. fig. 5.

²⁵ Radwan, A., The Nun basin, 282, fig. 6.

²⁶ Taylor, Death and the Afterlife, p. 177.



²⁷ Allen, J.P., The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts, Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, Writings from the ancient world 23, 2005, 367.

²⁸ Bolshakov, Offering tables, 574.

It is a white limestone container, rectangular in shape narrowing from top to bottom at an angle of about 45 degrees. The basin has two semi equal rectangular depressions that gradually incline from top to bottom. The measurements are as follows: the right-hand short side is 26.3 cm, and the left side is 26.5 cm. The two long sides measure 35.6 cm and 35.5 cm. The base of the rectangular container measures 19.3 cm by 12 cm, and the height is 8.9 cm.

The rim of both depressions decreases by about 0.6 cm from the level of the surface. For the right-hand depression (A): both long sides measure 20.3 cm, while the short sides measure 12.7 cm and 13.3 cm. For the left-hand depression (B): the long sides are 20 cm and 20.3 cm, while the short sides measure 13 cm and 13.3 cm. The average depth of the two depressions, A and B, is approximately 5 cm. However, depression B is slightly deeper than depression A.

2.2. Inscriptions (fig.4)

Hieroglyphs are executed in sunken relief around the rim of the basin, featuring two horizontal lines- one on the upper edge and one on the lower- and three vertical columns: one on the right- hand side, one on the left, and the third is in the middle between the two depressions. All Hieroglyphs are read from right to left. The Hieroglyphs are almost complete, with only two mutilated signs:  and  in the lower horizontal line, that are partially erased.

3- Transcription

- [1] top 
- [2] right-hand side 
- [3] bottom 
- [4] left-hand side 
- [5] center 

4- Transliteration

- [1] *hṭp dī nsw hṭp Inpw hnty sh ntr krst.f m hr(t) ntr smitt imntt*
 [2] *pṛt hrw n.f m dhwtyt W3g*
 [3] *m ʒbd smdt hb nb rꜥ nb imʒhw hr ntr ʒ*
 [4] *imy-r id(w) (n) hnw shd hm(w) kʒ Mr-sw-ꜥnh*
 [5] *mrr(w) nb.f hwn nfr Mr-sw-ꜥnh*

5- Translation

[1] An offering which the king gives, (and) an offering of Anubis, presiding over the divine booth, his burial is in the necropolis of the western desert

[2] may invocation offerings come forth for him, in the feast of Thoth, the feast of *W3g*

[3] in the monthly and half-monthly Feasts, in every festival (and in) every day, the Honored one before the great God',

[4] the overseer of the young men of the palace, the inspector of the ka-servants *Mr-sw-nh*.

[5] the beloved one of his lord, the adolescent *Mr-sw-nh*.

6. Comments

6.1. *htp di nsw*

The “*htp di nsw*” formula, which prefaced the lists of offerings recorded on funerary stelae, false doors, coffins, offering tables, and other funerary objects, literally means “an offering that the king gives”.²⁹ It was the ritual which would ensure the continued survival of the deceased. *htp di nsw* was repeated at intervals after the burial.³⁰ The magical power of the written and spoken words of *htp di nsw* was employed to ensure a continual supply of offerings.³¹ However, its exact meaning and grammatical structure have been controversial issue.

The formula of offering in the Old Kingdom mostly took the form $\text{𐎃𐎟𐎠𐎡} \textit{htp di nsw htp di inpw}$, sometimes, *Wsr*”, meaning an offering which the king gives, (and) an offering which Anubis/ Osiris gives”. Here, the king and the god are mentioned in parallel as donors of the offering.³² Inpw/Anubis was the most frequently mentioned god in the offering formula of the Old Kingdom, while Osiris was recorded less often.³³ The complete writing $\text{𐎃𐎟𐎠𐎡} \textit{htp di inpw}$ is frequently substituted by 𐎃𐎟 or abbreviated as: 𐎃𐎟 .³⁴ The paleographic variation in the writing of the word ‘Anubis’ by the late Old Kingdom—a change from the jackal over a *htp* -sign to a jackal on a stand—suggests that the transformation of the formula had already occurred by that time.³⁵

²⁹ Wb. III, 186 (7).

³⁰ Taylor, Death and the Afterlife, 192- 93.


³¹ Leprohon, R.J., Offering Formulas and Lists, Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, vol. II, Oxford: Oxford University press, 2001, 569.

³² Gardiner, A.H., Egyptian Grammar, 3rd Edition, Revised, (1st edition, 1927), Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 2007, 171; Leprohon, Offering Formulas, 572.

³³ Parker, R. A., The Calendars of Ancient Egypt, Chicago, 1950, 34.

³⁴ Gardiner, Egyptian Grammar, 171.

³⁵ For more about this formula in the Old Kingdom cf. Barta Winfried, Aufbau und Bedeutung der altägyptischen Opferformel Glückstadt, New York., 1968; Günther Lapp, Die Opferformel

By the First Intermediate Period, the offering formula took the form of “*htp di nsw n* a god name”, where the god introduced by a preposition, and the king remains the donor. In the twelfth Dynasty, *di.f* was added after the name of the god. Thus, the general meaning is “an offering that the king gives to a god, so that he/ she may, in turn, gives invocation offerings- food, drink, and clothing- to the deceased in the afterlife.³⁶ Therefore, it signifies the king's role as an intermediary between the people and the gods.³⁷ The writing order of  , literally reads: *nsw- htp- di*, changed in the late thirteenth dynasty into *nsw- di- htp*.³⁸

6.2. *Inpw hnty sh ntr*

Inpw, Anubis, was a fundamental figure in ancient Egyptian religion, associated with the sacred processes of mummification, the afterlife, and the judgment of the dead.³⁹ The origin of Anubis can be traced to the predynastic period. Before the rise of Osiris, *Inpw* was the most important funerary god in ancient Egypt.⁴⁰ Essentially, *Inpw* was responsible for embalming the body of the king, purifying it with unguent from the eight ‘*nmst*’ jars and the eight ‘*wbt*’ jars. He was the one who brought the ‘*hknu*’ oil to anoint the body of Osiris. He made the savor of corpses sweet with incense and wrapped them in linen bandages made by the goddess Tayet.⁴¹ He was believed to have taught the art of embalming to the Egyptian priests, who would invoke his name during the mummification rituals.

Inpw was credited with various fathers. Sometimes He was considered the son of *Rꜥ*, or the son of Seth or Osiris.⁴² He was often depicted as a jackal lying on his chapel or as a human with a jackal’s head⁴³ He is shown performing the “opening of the moth”

des Alten Reiches unter Berücksichtigung einiger späterer Formen, Mainz am Rhein:Philipp von Zabern, 1986.

³⁶ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 171-72; Wb. III, 187 (1); Leprohon, *Offering Formulas*, 572.

³⁷ Taylor, *Death and the Afterlife*, p. 96.

³⁸ Leprohon, *Offering Formulas*, 572; For further details, cf. Paul Smither, *The Writing of Htp-di-nsw in The Middle and New Kingdoms*, JEA 25, 1939; Bennet, C.J.C., *Growth of the Htp-di-nsw Formula in the Middle Kingdom*, JEA 27, 1941; Leprohon, R., *The offering formula in the first intermediate period*, JEA 76, 1990, pp. 163-164.

³⁹ Doxey, D. M., *Anubis*, Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, vol. I, Oxford: Oxford University press, 2001, 97.


⁴⁰ Doxey, *Anubis*, 97; Wilkinson, R. H., *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, New York& London: Thames & Hudson, 2003, 187.

⁴¹ Hart, G., *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian gods and goddesses*. 1st ed. 1945, London & New York, 2005, 26.

⁴² Doxey, *Anubis*, 98; Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 187; Hart, *Dictionary of Egyptian gods*, 28.

⁴³ Doxey, *Anubis*, 97; Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 189; Hart, *Dictionary of Egyptian gods*, 25.

ceremony on the mummy and escorting the spirit of the deceased into the underworld.⁴⁴ The jackal was associated with cemeteries and the desert places where the dead were buried. This iconography symbolized Anubis' role as the guardian of the necropolis and the protector of the deceased. As the god associated with mummification and the afterlife, Anubis was responsible for guiding and protecting the dead.⁴⁵ At the beginning of the Pyramid Age, the offering formulae “*hṯp dī nsw*” was addressed to Anubis alone;⁴⁶ later Osiris is incorporated and gradually supplanted Anubis.⁴⁷

Inpw had many titles and epithets relating to his role in ancient Egyptian religion. He is described on the basin in question as:  *Inpw hnty sh ntr*, meaning “*Inpw* who presides over the divine booth” or “foremost of the divine booth.”⁴⁸ The “divine booth” refers to either the sacred space or tent where the ritual of embalming is carried out, or to the burial chamber⁴⁹. In addition, it might be the shrine in which the coffin and sarcophagus were placed.⁵⁰ The epithet “*Inpw hnty sh ntr*” emphasizes his role as the overseer of the embalming process.

6.3. *krst.f m hr(t) ntr smît imntt*

Hassan⁵¹ translated the sentence of “*krst.f m hr(t) ntr smît imntt*” as: “his burial is in the necropolis of the western desert”, where the third person pronoun (.f) reflects on *Inpw*. *hr(t) ntr* means “that which is under the god” or “that which the god possess”, i.e. the necropolis.⁵² The question arises whether *Inpw* had a burial. No texts indicate a burial for *Inpw*. However, he held many titles emphasizing his supremacy over burial and desert such as:

- a) *Inbw nb krs*, “*Inpw* lord of burial”, which was one of his most prominent titles reflecting his dominion over the cemeteries and his responsibility as the guardian of the dead. As the lord of burial, Anubis oversaw the placement of the mummified body in the tomb, ensuring the deceased's safe passage to the afterlife.
- b) *Inbw nb hr(t) ntr*, “*Inpw* lord of the necropolis”,
- c) *Inbw nb imnt*, “*Inpw* lord of the west”,

⁴⁴ Doxey, *Anubis*, 97; Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 189.

⁴⁵ Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 120-121.

⁴⁶ Parker, *The Calendars*, 34; Doxey, *Anubis*, 97; Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 187.

⁴⁷ Hart, *Dictionary of Egyptian gods*, 27.

⁴⁸ Doxey, *Anubis*, 97; Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 188.

⁴⁹ Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 188; Hart, *Dictionary of Egyptian gods*, 26.

⁵⁰ Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 188.

⁵¹ Hassan, *Giza I*, 110.

⁵² Taylor, *Death and the Afterlife*, 140.




d) *Inbw nb t3 dsr* “Inpw lord of the sacred land”,⁵³ or “the pure land” as the word *dsr* is often translated “pure”.⁵⁴ ‘This title refers to the desert in which the necropolis was situated, emphasizing the geographical environment in which Anubis operated as God of burials.’⁵⁵

e) *Inbw nb hnty imntyw*, “Inpw the Foremost of the Westerners”. Here, *imnt* refers to the western desert where the necropolis and realm of the dead were located in ancient Egyptian cosmology. It was described as “the land that loves silence” and as “the beautiful West”. And the deceased were referred to as *imntyw*, meaning “westerners”. Therefore, this epithet refers to his leadership over those buried in the cemeteries of Egypt.⁵⁶

f) *Inbw tpy dw.f*, “Inpw, the One upon his hill/ mountain”.⁵⁷ This title adjoins him with the desert area to the west of the Nile rather than any particular mountain,⁵⁸ where the god watched from the heights of the desert cliffs overlooking the cemeteries.⁵⁹

All those titles confirm his supremacy as the lord of the west, not as one who is buried in a burial in the west. I suggest translating the sentence that reads: *krst.f m hr(t) ntr smit imntt*, as “**May he be buried in the Necropolis of the Western Desert**” reflecting on *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* not on *Inbw*. I refer to the sentence recorded on the false door of *Mr-sw-ꜥnh*, next the entrance of the chapel (fig.3), which reads: *hṭp dī nsw hṭp inw hnty sh ntr krst.f m hrt imntt wr*, which Hassan translates it as “..... that he be buried (i.e. *Mr-sw-ꜥnh*) in the Necropolis after old age”⁶⁰.

6.4 *prt hrw*

Offerings, in ancient Egypt, were preceded by this expression *prt hrw*. Its derivation and literal meaning are uncertain. It might have been a reduction of either  *pr hrw*, meaning “the voice goes forth” where  *pr* is a verb, or  *prt hrw*, where *prt* is an infinitive meaning “a going or sending forth”. Either verbal or nominal, *prt hrw* perhaps best translated as “invocation-offerings”.⁶¹ Over time *prt hrw* become a fixed expression used as a term for the offerings in general, possibly intended to mean “the ritual offerings”. It was written with the bread and beer signs, even when the offering itself did not contain any reference to the bread and beer. Sometimes, the expression *prt*

⁵³ Doxey, Anubis, 97.

⁵⁴ Wilkinson, The Complete Gods and Goddesses, 188

⁵⁵ Hart, Dictionary of Egyptian gods, 26.

⁵⁶ Wilkinson, The Complete Gods and Goddesses, 187; Hart, Dictionary of Egyptian gods, 25.




⁵⁷ Doxey, Anubis, 97.



⁵⁸ Wilkinson, The Complete Gods and Goddesses, 187.

⁵⁹ Hart, Dictionary of Egyptian gods, 26.

⁶⁰ Hassan, Giza I, 106.

⁶¹ Gardiner, Egyptian Grammar, 172.

hrw was written  with a loaf as the determinative for the whole phrase.⁶² It also appeared in the Old Kingdom in the form ,⁶³ with letter ϵ instead of . This feature is present on the basin under study.

After the Old Kingdom, the expression *prt hrw* was preceded by *di.f*. For example: *di.f prt hrw m t m hnkt*, meaning “that he. i.e. the God, may give an invocation offering consisting of bread and beer”. In the Eighteenth Dynasty  was sometimes interpreted as  *prt r hrw* “coming forth at the voice offerings”.⁶⁴

6.5. Feasts of *W3g*, *dhwtyt*, *3bd* and *smdt*

Ancient Egyptians observed many national and local festivals annually. A great deal of the information relating to these festivals is known from festival calendars found in some temples, tombs and papyri⁶⁵. These calendars often contain the names of the festivals, their dates, their duration, and the associated offerings.

Festivals were divided into “national feasts”, which were large-scale events of state importance, and “local feasts”, which were local and limited in scale.⁶⁶ Importance, numbers of feasts, and their duration varied over time to time and from place to place. For example, there were 164 feasts during the reign of Ramses III, while there were 59 festival days observed at Thebes, according to a Theban tomb.⁶⁷ At the Edfu temple, there were over 40 feasts.⁶⁸

⁶² https://www.bibalex.org/learnhieroglyphs/lesson/LessonDetails_En.aspx?l=88- accessed: 15/7/ 2023.

⁶³WB I, 529.

⁶⁴ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 172.

⁶⁵ Ancient Egyptian feasts were listed in what is known “festival calendars”. Those were found in some temple, as Medinet Habu (cf. Nelson., H.H, *The Calendar of Feasts and Offerings at Medinet Habu*, in: Nelson, H.H, Hölscher, U. & Schott, S., *Work in Western Thebes 1931-33*, OIC, no.18, Chicago, Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 1934, pp.1- 62; Kitchen; El Sabban, Sh., *Temple festival calendars of ancient Egypt*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000, 60-140), also in some tombs, as the tomb of Neferhotep (Manniche, *The Beginning of the Festival Calendar in the Tomb of Neferhotep (No. 50) at Thebes*, in: Posener-Kriéger (ed.), *Mélanges Gamal Eddin Mokhtar II*, 1985, 105–108), and on some papyri such as Ebers (Luft,U., *Noch einmal Ebers*, GM 92,1986, 69–77; and Illahun (Luft,U., *Die chronologische Fixierung des ägyptischen Mittleren Reiches nach dem Tempelarchiv von Illahun*,1992).

⁶⁶ Vymazalová, H., *Feasts in Written Evidence from the 5th Dynasty Royal Necropolis of Abusir*, RICH and GREAT, *Studies in Honour of Anthony J. Spalinger on the Occasion of his 70th Feast of Thoth*, edited by Renata Landgráfová and Jana Mynářová, Charles University in Prague Faculty of Arts, 2016, 331.

⁶⁷ Nelson, *The Calendar of Feasts - Habu*, 25.

⁶⁸ Fairman, H.W., *Worship and Festivals in an Egyptian Temple*, BRL 37, London, 1954-1955.182.

Regarding duration, the Feast of Opet, for instance, was celebrated for 24 days in the Medinet Habu temple of Ramses III, while it lasted as long as 27 days according to the Papyrus Harris. The number of days for this feast had increased from 11 since the time of Thutmose III.⁶⁹

El Sabban⁷⁰ pointed out that there is a deference between the temple calendars and the menus of funeral offerings in tombs. The former illustrates how the king fulfilled his role on earth reflecting the ideal image of the king's actions before his gods.⁷¹ The latter expresses the deceased's wishes or will of receiving offering in specific feasts to ensure their resurrection afterlife. Spallinger⁷² referred to these as "The Private Feast Lists".

Nevertheless, the focus of both is the offerings during specific occasions, "feasts.". Thus, they serve as valuable repositories of our knowledge about ancient Egyptian feasts, providing common feast names, their ordering, and some aspects of the celebrations.

6.5.1. Feast of *W3g*

The *W3g* or *W3gy*⁷³ Feast is one of the oldest mortuary festivals observed in ancient Egypt. According to the Medinet Habu calendar,⁷⁴ it was celebrated on the 18th day of the first month of the ancient Egyptian civil calendar⁷⁵ and was connected with the cult

⁶⁹ Schott, S., The Feasts of Thebes, in: Nelson, H.H, Hölscher, U. & Schott, S., Work in Western Thebes 1931-33, OIC, no.18, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934, 66.

⁷⁰ El Sabban, Temple festival calendars, XI.

⁷¹ Vymazalová, Feasts in Written Evidence, 336.

⁷² Spallinger, A., The Private Feast Lists of Ancient Egypt, *ÄA* 57, 1996.

⁷³ Some scholars read it as "WAg" (cf. Schott, The Feasts of Thebes), while others prefer to read it as "WAgy" (cf. Luft, U., The Date of the *W3gy* Feast, in: Spalinger (ed.), *Revolutions in Time. Studies in the Ancient Egyptian Calendars*, VA(S) 6. San Antonio: Van Siclen Books, 1994, pp. 39–44) Likewise, Spalinger, A., Further thoughts on the feast of WAgy, In: *ÉT* 26, 2013, pp. 616–624). However, no evidence prompts to read it as "WAgy".

⁷⁴ Parker (The Calendars, 1950) hypothesized that there were three calendars in ancient Egypt; original lunar, civil and later lunar. However, Spalinger (Ancient Egyptian Calendars: How Many Were There? In: *JARCE* 39, 2002 pp. 241- 250) argues that there were only two calendars: the original lunar calendar and the civil calendar. The most ancient of them was the original lunar calendar which might have been dated back to predynastic period (Spalinger, Ancient Egyptian Calendars, 241). Throughout the historical period, a lunar calendar was used alongside the civil calendar of 365 or $12 \times 30 + 5$ days. But there is no doubt that the civil calendar was the dominant calendar of daily life. By contrast, the lunar calendar was religious. One of its most important functions was to regulate the service in the temple. (Depuydt, L., The Calendars and the Year-counts of Ancient Egypt, *Chronique d'Égypte* XCII, fasc.184, 2017, 275).

⁷⁵ Parker, The Calendars, 36.

of Osiris.⁷⁶ The *W3g* feast first recorded, so far, on the tomb of *Mtn*,⁷⁷ lived from the third Dynasty to the reign of king Snfrw, located in Saqqara near the step pyramid⁷⁸

The *W3g* Feast mentioned in Pyramid texts linking to Osiris who is described as “Lord of *irb*, beer, in the *W3g* fest”. Allan⁷⁹ refers to the *W3g* feast in many spells as “*the Supply festival*”, one of which is Pepi’s Spell 524 where it followed the *dhwtyt* feast.⁸⁰ Likewise, in Teti’s Spell 285, reading: “... and nursing cows shall be slaughtered for Teti on the Supply festival”.⁸¹ In addition, Pepi’s spell 372 reads: “*and the seventh day meal is for my supper, and nursing cows will be slaughtered on the Supply festival*”.⁸²

The *W3g* Feast is plenty mentioned in the offering formula recorded on many tombs.⁸³ The following discussion is going to cover three points relating to this feast: (a) whether it was a local or nation feast, (b) its date and (c) aspects of celebration.

a) Local or Nation Feast

Based on the quantity of offerings associated with each feast, Vymazalová⁸⁴ classified ancient Egyptian feasts into five categories. One of these is the “local-size festival”, which she identifies it as an ordinary festival during which the usual food was distributed, including bread, beer and the meat of an ox. This type of festival seems to have been connected to the necropolis and had a specific significance for the funerary cults. Both the *Wag* Feast and the *Thot* feast were categorized as local-size festivals according to her classification.

In the New kingdom, and based on the amount of supplies, Nelson⁸⁵ argues that the *W3g* feast was not a major feast during this period, as the supplies for that feast were moderate compared to those of the grand Feast of Opet, the chief celebration of the Theban calendar. Supplies for the *W3g* feast included 40 *hkt* of grain, 100 loaves of *b3h* bread, and 50 loaves of *wdn* bread, while festal supplies of the Opet feast amounted to 11,341 loaves and 385 jars of beer.⁸⁶ Furthermore, the offering of the Eve of *W3g* and

⁷⁶ Schott, *The Feasts of Thebes*, 79.

⁷⁷ Spallinger, *The Private Feast Lists*, 30.

⁷⁸ Sethe, K., *Urkunden des Alten Reich*, vol.I, Leipzig, 1933, 1; For the tomb cf. Goedicke, H., *Die Laufbahn des Mtn*, MDAIK21, 1966) 1- 62.

⁷⁹ Allen, J.P., *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, *Writings from the ancient world* 23, 2005, 442.

⁸⁰ Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 295.

⁸¹ Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 93.

⁸² Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 144.

⁸³ Parker, *The Calendars*, 34-5.

⁸⁴ Vymazalová, *Feasts in Written Evidence*, 333.

⁸⁵ Nelson, *The Calendar of Feasts - Habu*, 56.

⁸⁶ Nelson, *The Calendar of Feasts - Habu*, 58.

the *W3g* Feast itself, as recorded on the Medinet Habu calendar, are almost identical, containing 295 loaves of various bread, 25 beer jars, 2 wine jars, along with fruits, fruits, vegetables, fresh flowers, meat, fowl and incense.⁸⁷

One could conclude that the *W3g* Feast in the old kingdom was more important for individuals than for kings, especially during the fourth and the fifth dynasties when it appears in almost all private tombs. It likely began as a family gathering between the living and their deceased in the cemetery, where they honored the deceased by presenting offerings. Over time, the scale of the celebration expanded to the precinct of some temples, evolving into a kind of public funerary occasion in the capital, much like the *Int* feast was in Thebes.

Based on the contracts of *Hꜥꜣi-dꜣꜣi*, the *W3g* Feast in the middle kingdom might have been a great celebration. However, during the New Kingdom, the *W3g* feast may have lost its prominence to other, more popular feasts in Thebes.

b) Date of the Feast of *W3g*

Two problems concern the *W3g* feast; its dating and its ordering among the ancient Egyptian feasts.⁸⁸ Scarcely to find the date of the *W3g* feast in the old kingdom. Fragmentally documents (documents I, II, IV) in the archive of Raneferef at Abusir places the *W3g* feast after that of *dꜥwtꜣt*.⁸⁹ Although, the date of the *W3g* feast in document III, is invisible, it was on III [*ꜣꜥt* 28?] in document IV. Both *W3g* feasts in Documents III and IV are the moveable one, and their dates set in the civil calendar.⁹⁰

Spalinger⁹¹ states that as early as Dynasty 5, the *W3g* feast occurred on I *ꜣꜥt* 18 in the civil calendar beside a lunar one which is the moveable *W3g*. Parker⁹² investigated a lot of private tombs of the 4th and 5th dyns. He calculated 12 feasts on them tend to follow a definite order where the first four are: *wꜣ rnꜣt*, *dꜥwtꜣt*, *ꜣꜣ rnꜣt* and *W3g*. He noticed that *dꜥwtꜣt* precedes *W3g* in most of them, while *W3g* comes before *dꜥwtꜣt* in scanty examples.⁹³

Spallinger⁹⁴ provides the names and order of 12 tombs from Saqqara, in 10 of them the *dꜥwtꜣt* feast preceded that of *W3g*. The other two tombs mentioned feasts in general

⁸⁷ El Sabban, Temple festival calendars, 88-90.

⁸⁸ Luft, U., The Date of the *W3g* Feast, 39-47; Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists, 37.

⁸⁹ Luft, U., The Date of the *W3g* Feast, 42; Vymazalová, Feasts in Written Evidence, 335.

⁹⁰ Luft, U., The Date of the *W3g* Feast, 42.

⁹¹ Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists, 37.

⁹² Parker, The Calendars, 34-35.

⁹³ Parker, The Calendars, 35.

⁹⁴ Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists, 25-27.

terms, such as “in every feast in the year”. The same order observed in the ten Saqqara tombs appears in PT, Pepi’s Spell 524, where the *W3g* follows the *dhwtyt* feast.⁹⁵

The repetition of *dhwtyt* – *W3g* in the Old Kingdom diminished over time.⁹⁶ In contrast, presence of the *W3g* feast preceding that of *dhwtyt* became a phenomenon typical of the First Intermediate Period and later.⁹⁷ This alteration in the old kingdom may be attributed to the lunar feast system.⁹⁸

In the Middle kingdom, the administrative papyrus from the Illahun archive, discovered in the pyramid temple of Sesostri II, provides some feast dates: the new year feast on I *3ht* 1, then Eve of *W3g* on I *3ht* 17 and the *W3g* feast on I *3ht* 18.⁹⁹ Likewise, *Hꜣꜣi-dꜣꜣi*’s contracts give the same dating of the Eve of *W3g*¹⁰⁰ and the *W3g* feast.¹⁰¹

However, it should be noted that the Illahun archive itself recorded both *W3g* feasts, the fixed on I *3ht* 18 and the movable one. The latter fell on various days during the tenth month of the civil year = II *šmw*¹⁰², on days 17, 29, 22, besides another *W3g* feast celebrated on III *šmw* without a given day.¹⁰³ As well as Spalinger, Luft¹⁰⁴ attributes transferring of the second *W3g* to a lunar-based system.

After calculations, Luft placed the moveable *W3g* celebrated in the Middle Kingdom, in the second lunar month after the heliacal rising of Sothis.¹⁰⁵ However, Spalinger¹⁰⁶ doubted Luft’s conclusion, arguing that it works within a specific temporal framework and may not be applicable at other times.

To sum up, there were two *W3g* feasts- fixed and moveable- evidenced in documents from the Old and Middle kingdoms. The moveable *W3g* feast was based on the lunar calendar. Notably, the lunar year (354 days long) is 11 day shorter than the civil year (365 days long). Thereupon, the moveable lunar feast- date cannot fall on the same day in the following civil year.

⁹⁵ Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 295.

⁹⁶ Spalinger, A., Further thoughts on the feast of *WAgy*, In: *ÉT* 26, 2013, 623–624.

⁹⁷ Spalinger, *The Private Feast Lists*, 29.

⁹⁸ Spalinger, *Ancient Egyptian Calendars*, 245.

⁹⁹ El Sabban, *Temple festival calendars*, 9.

¹⁰⁰ Breasted, J. H., *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. I, Chicago, London & Leipzig, 1906, 267, § 573.

¹⁰¹ Breasted, *Ancient Records I*, p.265, § 564.

¹⁰² Parker, *The Calendars*, 36; El Sabban, *Temple festival calendars*, 11.

¹⁰³ Luft, U., *The Date of the *W3g* Feast*, 39- 40.

¹⁰⁴ Luft, U., *The Date of the *W3g* Feast*, 40.

¹⁰⁵ Luft, U., *The Date of the *W3g* Feast*, 41.

¹⁰⁶ Spalinger, *Further thoughts*, 624.

By the time of the Twelfth Dynasty, if not earlier, the *W3g* feast occurred on I 3*ht* 18 in the civil calendar, with the feast of *dhwtyt* placed a day later.¹⁰⁷ In the New kingdom the *W3g* feast was fixed in the terms of the civil calendar on I 3*ht* 18, preceded by the Eve of the *W3g* on I 3*ht* 17.¹⁰⁸

c) celebration of the Feast of *W3g*

Very little is known about the *W3g* feast celebration in the Old Kingdom. Most information, despite not much, comes from later sources. The Pyramid Texts indicate a connection between the *Wag* festival and *Wisr/Osiris* who is referred to in Pepi's spell 38 as the lord of wine in *the Supply festival*¹⁰⁹. Presenting offerings, especially beer and bread, was an essential part of celebrating this feast. *Khenuka*, the confidant of king *Userkaf* from the fifth Dynasty, issued a decree asking his children for making the mortuary offerings for himself, his father, his mother and all his household at the feast of *W3g*, the feast of *dhwtyt*, and every feast-day.¹¹⁰

As evidenced in the papyrus archive of *Raneferef*, priests received new cloth as part of celebration or preparation for feasts in the old kingdom. A portion of linen allocated to the temple phyles, a portion to the lector priest, and another to the House of Statues. This linen was intended for the priest's cloths and for dressing the statues during renewal rituals.¹¹¹

More specific aspects of celebration of the *W3g* feast specifically can be traced through the ten contracts established by *Hꜥꜣ-dꜥꜣꜣ*, the Siut nomarch in the reign of *Snwesert I*, with the priests of *Wp w3wt* and *Inpw* for his posthumous services.¹¹²

It can be inferred from the seventh contract¹¹³ that the celebration of the *W3g* feast begins a day earlier, on the Eve of *W3g* (I 3*ht* 17), with kindling the fire. The Eighth contract illustrates what happened on the Eve of *W3g* or what *Hꜥꜣ-dꜥꜣꜣ* wished to receive that night. It states that after offering bread- a white loaf for each individual among the lay priests of the temple of *Anubis*- they should follow the mortuary priest in a kind of a fire-kindling procession until they reach the lower steps of the tomb of *Hꜥꜣ-dꜥꜣꜣ*,

¹⁰⁷ Spallinger, *The Private Feast Lists*, 37.

¹⁰⁸ Parker, *The Calendars*, 36; El Sabban, *Temple festival calendars*, 88, 89.

¹⁰⁹ as forementioned Allen, p. 442, referred to the *w3g* feast as "the Supply festival".

¹¹⁰ Breasted, *Ancient Records I*, 105, § 222.

¹¹¹ Spalinger, *Further thoughts*, 623; Vymazalová, *Feasts in Written Evidence*, 335.

¹¹² Breasted, *Ancient Records I*, §§ 535–593; Englund, *Offerings*, 566.

¹¹³ Breasted, *Ancient Records I*, 267, § 573.

glorifying him in the manner they glorify their noble ones on the day of kindling the fire.¹¹⁴ May this fire guide the dead in their journey to and from Abydos.

The amount of bread and beer offerings on the Eve of *W3g* appears in the last contract as “1 jar of beer, 1 large loaf, 500 flat loaves, and 10 white loaves.”¹¹⁵

In the *W3g* feast day, the third, the fourth and fifth contracts, talk about the presentation of offerings, specifically bread and beer.¹¹⁶ There is also a further kindling of the fire and glorification.¹¹⁷ The sixth contract mentions the slaughter of a bull and the preparation of a roast meal for each procession day.¹¹⁸

As in the old and the middle kingdoms, presenting offerings was also an aspect of celebrating this feast in the New Kingdom. The living carried out the journey to Abydos, symbolically, by setting up model boats at the tomb facing Abydos for one day and in the opposite direction on the following day, as a token of the return after was completed. The dead then return into their tombs.¹¹⁹ The sailing journey to Abydos on I *3ht* 17- 18, was contained in a spell found in the tomb of Ankhurhawwy (TT3592), dating to the reigns of Ramesses III and IV.¹²⁰

6.5.2. The Feast of *dhwtyt*

The *dhwtyt* feast is fixed in the fixed civil calendar on the 19th of the first month “Thoth” in the first season *3ht* (I *3ht* 19).¹²¹

Thoth, *dhwtty*,¹²² was known and revered from the predynastic period onward. He was originally a moon god; became associated with writing and wisdom in ancient Egypt and served as the messenger between the gods. He was connected to both Osiris and Horus. For Osiris, he protected and served him. In addition, he appeared at the judgment of the deceased, standing before the scales which weigh the heart of the dead and recording the verdict. In the contest between Horus and Seth, he healed the injured eye

¹¹⁴ Breasted, Ancient Records I, 267-268, § 577.

¹¹⁵ Breasted, Ancient Records I, 271 § 590.

¹¹⁶ Breasted, Ancient Records I, 262, 264, 265 § 550, 555, 564.

¹¹⁷ Breasted, Ancient Records I, 264 § 555 (the 4th contract), 265 § 564 (the 5th contract).

¹¹⁸ Breasted, Ancient Records I, 266 § 568.

¹¹⁹ Schott, The Feasts of Thebes, 79.

¹²⁰ Jauhiainen, H., Do Not Celebrate Your Feast Without Your Neighbours, A Study of References to Feasts and Festivals in Non-Literary Documents from Ramesside Period Deir el-Medina, Publications of the Institute for Asian and African Studies 10, Helsinki: Helsinki University Print, 2009; 200.

¹²¹ Spalinger, A.J., Thoth and the Calendars, in: Spalinger (ed.), Revolutions in Time. Studies in the Ancient Egyptian Calendars, VA(S) 6. San Antonio: Van Siclen Books, 1994, 51.

¹²² cf. Leitz, ch.(ed.), *DHwtty*, in: Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, VII, 2002, pp. 639–645.

of Horus.¹²³ The intact eye symbolizes the full moon and the perfect offering. He was honored throughout Egypt.

He is manifested in several forms; for instance, he was revered by the royal artisans' community of Deir el-Medina as an Ibis-headed god, a moon, and a baboon.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, his lunar identity remains the most important aspect of his character, as he was the lord of time and the reckoner of years.¹²⁵

The first Egyptian calendar of record was lunar, consisting of 354 days, with an intercalary month occurring almost every three, and rarely every two, years.¹²⁶ The *dhwtj* feast was celebrated in the occasional thirteenth lunar month of the year.¹²⁷ Although the name of the intercalary month was not given in any surviving Egyptian inscriptions,¹²⁸ Parker¹²⁹ assumed it would be Thoth/ *dhwtj*, and it was dedicated to that god *dhwtj* whose feast was celebrated in it. The first month, *thy*, was named after the *thy* feast which, was celebrated during that time.¹³⁰ Consequently, the *dhwtjt* feast found its place in the first month of the civil year alongside that of *thy*. Eventually, the *dhwtjt* feast superseded the *thy* feast and subsequently gave his name for that month.¹³¹

In the New kingdom, according to the Medinet Habu Festival Calendar, the *dhwtjt* feast was celebrated on day 19 of the first month of *ꜥht*,¹³² and was called *hb dhwtjt*.¹³³ It was preceded by the *Wꜥg* feast on day 18, and followed by the *thy* feast, on 20th of the first month of *ꜥht*.¹³⁴

As mentioned ahead (cf. *Wꜥg*), this chronological order differed during the old kingdom, as the *dhwtjt* feast preceded that of *Wꜥg*. In the Pyramid Texts, Pepi's Spell 524, the *dhwtjt* feast is mentioned before the feast of *Wꜥg*, referred to as "the Supply festival".¹³⁵ This sequence is evident in most private tombs of the Old Kingdom, where the *dhwtjt* feast was situated between *wp rnpt* and *tpy rnpt*.¹³⁶ Parker states¹³⁷: "there is no other

¹²³ Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 215- 216.

¹²⁴ Leitz, ch.(ed.), *DHwtj*, VII, 640; Jauhiainen, *Do Not Celebrate Your Feast*,85.

¹²⁵ Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*,.216.

¹²⁶ Parker, *The Calendars*, 31.

¹²⁷ Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*,442.

¹²⁸ Spalinger, *Thoth and the Calendars*,51.

¹²⁹ Parker, *The Calendars*, 31.

¹³⁰ Parker, *The Calendars*, 31, 45.

¹³¹ Parker, *The Calendars*, 8, 36, 45-46.

¹³² Spalinger, *Thoth and the Calendars*,51; El Sabban, *Temple festival calendars*,90.

¹³³ Jauhiainen, *Do Not Celebrate Your Feast*,85.

¹³⁴ Parker, *The Calendars*, 36.

¹³⁵ Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*,295.

¹³⁶ Parker, *The Calendars*, 34-35; Spalinger, *Thoth and the Calendars*,51.

¹³⁷ Parker, *The Calendars*, 36.

plausible explanation for the sequence wp rnpt, dhwtyt and tpy rnpt than the assumption that the latter two were lunar". He considered *tpy rnpt* as the first day of the new year, thus placing the *dhwtyt* feast in the intercalary lunar month which had no counterpart in the 12 months of the civil year.

In contrast, Spalinger¹³⁸ believes that the *dhwtyt* feast was originally civilly-based on feast, and there is no evidence for the contrary in the historical sources. He questioned why the *dhwtyt* feast was set on day 19 in the civil calendar, noting that day 19 initially appears to have no overt connection to the moon, as no specific "phase" is associated with it.¹³⁹ Thereupon, he credited himself to find the answer. He noticed that day 19 was very important and specific date. He articulated that the difference between the 384 days (12 lunar months of 354 days plus an intercalary month of 30 days) and the civil year of 365 days, actually is + 19. That is the *dhwtyt* feast- day.¹⁴⁰

However, I tend to agree with Parker's suggestion that all feasts in the old kingdom, with one exception, were lunar- based.¹⁴¹ I think the *dhwtyt* feast must have been represented a specific moon phase, likely the new moon or the full moon. The latter is more logical, as lunar feasts fixed in the civil calendar should have been celebrated on their original lunar days during the inauguration of first invented-civil year. Later, they moved on because of the lunar year was shorter than the civil year by 11 days. In the case of the *dhwtyt* feast day, it is plausible that it corresponded with the full moon, which would have aligned with day 19 in the first civil year. Consequently, it was fixed on day 19 during subsequent civil years, regardless of whether it was a full moon or not.

The specifics of how people celebrated the actual feast remain largely unknown.¹⁴² According Vymazalová,¹⁴³ it was a local-size festival during the old kingdom as well as the *W3g* feast. The archive of Raneferef at Abusir reveals that some priests received fine linen for their clothing and for dressing the statues in the temple in the feast of *dhwtyt*.¹⁴⁴ However, as evident in the Illahun archive, it played no significant there, suggesting that its existence was independent of the normal temple cult and rituals.¹⁴⁵

In the Habu calendar, the offerings for the *dhwtyt* feast included 160 loaves of various bread, 25 beer jars, 2 wine jars, 5 corn sacks, in addition, fruits, vegetables, fresh

¹³⁸ Spalinger, Thoth and the Calendars,51,54.

¹³⁹ Spalinger, Thoth and the Calendars,52.

¹⁴⁰ Spalinger, Thoth and the Calendars,53.

¹⁴¹ Parker, The Calendars, 31, 36.

¹⁴² Jauhiainen, Do Not Celebrate Your Feast,86.

¹⁴³ Vymazalová, Feasts in Written Evidence,333.

¹⁴⁴ Vymazalová, Feasts in Written Evidence,335.

¹⁴⁵ Spalinger, Thoth and the Calendars,52.

flowers, meat, fowl and incense.¹⁴⁶ Remarkably, the offerings of the *dhwtyt* feast were almost identical to those for the *W3g* feast, indicating that it may not have been a major festival at Habu. In the Deir el-Medina community, offerings should have presented in the *dhwtyt* feast as they would be for any god worshipped. The day of the Feast of Thoth was described in the Cairo Calendar, attributed to the beginning of the 19th Dynasty, as a day when the Ennead celebrated a great feast and when a procession of Thoth took place in the necropolis.¹⁴⁷ Not surprisingly, as Thoth was the scribe of the Ennead who recording the divine words and was responsible for all kinds of accounts and records.¹⁴⁸ Filling the scribal palette on the feast day of Thoth might have been a ritual performed in the community of Deir el-Medina.¹⁴⁹ There are also references to offerings made in private tombs on the day of Thoth, particularly by scribes.¹⁵⁰

6.5.3 *3bd* and *smdt*

3bd and *smdt* are usually regarded as two lunar feasts associated with the monthly festivals, reflecting the phases of the moon based its illumination, such as the new moon, the first quarter, the full moon, and the last quarter. The ancient Egyptians included them in *hbw nw pt*, literally meaning “feasts of heaven”.¹⁵¹ This term is sometimes translated as “regular monthly feasts”,¹⁵² “regular monthly offerings”¹⁵³ or simply “day feasts”.¹⁵⁴ At Medinet Habu, these recurring day feasts were designated within the civil year.¹⁵⁵

Sometimes, “*hbw nw pt*” is contrasted with *hbw nw t3*, literally meaning “feasts of the earth”. The latter often claimed to indicate festivities connected with the civil calendar, suggesting that *hbw nw pt* ought to be linked to a lunar-based system.¹⁵⁶ However, these feasts were also listed in the civil calendar. According to Spallinger,¹⁵⁷ the notion that *hbw nw pt* feasts were purely lunar, and *hbw nw t3* are civil cannot be maintained, although he himself acknowledges that this may have been the original distinction prior

¹⁴⁶ El Sabban, Temple festival calendars,90-91.

¹⁴⁷ Jauhiainen, Do Not Celebrate Your Feast,85-86.

¹⁴⁸ Wilkinson, The Complete Gods and Goddesses,216.

¹⁴⁹ Jauhiainen, Do Not Celebrate Your Feast,87-88, 297.

¹⁵⁰ Wilkinson, The Complete Gods and Goddesses, 217.

¹⁵¹ Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists,1.

¹⁵² Spalinger, A., The Lunar System in Festival Calendars: From the New Kingdom onwards, BSÉG 19, 1995, p.26.

¹⁵³ Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists,1.

¹⁵⁴ Eaton, K., Monthly Lunar Festivals in the Mortuary Realm: Historical Patterns and Symbolic Motifs, Journal of Near Eastern Studies 70, 2011, 229.

¹⁵⁵ Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists,30.

¹⁵⁶ Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists,9-11.

¹⁵⁷ Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists,18, 30.

to the New Kingdom. Eaton¹⁵⁸ investigated all monthly feasts, focusing on the importance of their lunar basis and how they were recorded in the civil calendar.

According to the Medinet Habu calendar, the monthly feasts are eight in number.¹⁵⁹ Lists 8- 14 indicate that they were celebrated on days: 29,30, 1, 2, 4, 6,10 and 15 of each month, and repeated twelve times a year.¹⁶⁰

Feasts of *3bd* and *smdt* are mentioned in the Pyramid Texts¹⁶¹ as occasions for cleaning and presenting offerings. For example, Pepi' s spell 524 reads [.....*My heart will not tire of invoking you every day, with an endowed offering on every festival—on the first of the month, on the middle of the month, on the placing of the brazier, on the Thoth festival, on the Supply festival, [on the meat-carving festival, on your yearly festivals]. You will be given birth at the first of your months and live as a god*”].¹⁶²

The feasts of *3bd* and *smdt* were usually recorded after each other without any interval. For example, *wp rnpt, tpy rnpt, tpy 3bd, tpy smdt*.¹⁶³ Noticeable, *tpy* before *3bd* which Parker¹⁶⁴ interpreted as “the new crescent day. Sometimes, *3bd* and *smdt* are preceded by “*m*”.¹⁶⁵

All monthly feasts, containing *3bd* and *smdt*, were regarded as one unit in the Habu calendar, so the source of supply for the grain used is accounted for the entire group.¹⁶⁶ List 15 details the offerings made in one month as follows: 1200 loaf of bread, 28 biscuits, 158 jars of beer, and 40 bowls of grain,¹⁶⁷ in addition to the usual offerings of incense, fowls, fruits, vegetables and fresh flowers.¹⁶⁸

These offering are relatively small when comparing them to the quantity used for the daily services, as, for example, the total number of various loaves of bread used in just one day is about 2222,¹⁶⁹ which is nearly double the amount of bread used for all eight monthly feasts.

¹⁵⁸ Eaton, Monthly Lunar Festivals, 229–245.

¹⁵⁹ Nelson, The Calendar of Feasts - Habu, 51.

¹⁶⁰ Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists, 1-2.

¹⁶¹ Allen, The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts, 84 (Teti's Spell 204), 295 (Pepi Neferkare's spell 524), 328 (Spell 251), 328 (queen Neith's Spell 251).

¹⁶² Allen, The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts, 295 (Spell 524).

¹⁶³ Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists, 25 (sarcophagus of mn xa, Giza, Dyn. 4).

¹⁶⁴ Parker, The Calendars, 11.

¹⁶⁵ Spallinger, The Private Feast Lists, 27 (tomb of idw II, Dendera, Dyn. 6) and for more examples cf. pp. 25-27.

¹⁶⁶ Nelson, The Calendar of Feasts - Habu, 51.

¹⁶⁷ El Sabban, *Temple festival calendars*, 81.

¹⁶⁸ El Sabban, *Temple festival calendars*, 75-77 (list 9, 10).

¹⁶⁹ El Sabban, *Temple festival calendars*, 72.

This observation may have prompted Spallinger to claim that moon festivals were unimportant during the new kingdom. However, Eaton¹⁷⁰ argues that monthly feasts gained greater significance in mortuary contexts after the Old Kingdom. I believe that monthly feasts, particularly the new moon and full moon, were more important during the Old Kingdom than in the New Kingdom, as evidenced by their recording in nearly all the Giza tombs and mastabas. While they did not lose their value in the New kingdom, they were overshadowed by many other feasts, which numbered over.

The importance of receiving offering at *ꜥbd* and *smdt* is clearly expressed in many texts, such as the contract of *Intf*, son of *Myt*, from the 11th Dynasty, which reads:” *I have made a contract with the lector priest Intef...in order that service may be performed in the tomb and that the liturgy may be read by the hm-kꜥ at every monthly festival and at every half-monthly festival, in order that my name may be beautiful and that my memory may exist up to this day*”.¹⁷¹

6.5.3.1 Date of the *ꜥbd* Feast

𓆎 reads: *ꜥbd*¹⁷² or *ꜥbd*.¹⁷³ Commonly, it is considered the first day of the lunar month known as “new crescent day”.¹⁷⁴ However, it is translated according to Wb¹⁷⁵ as “the month feast on the 2nd day of the month”. Parker¹⁷⁶ identified *psdtyw/psdntyw* as the first day of the lunar month, followed by *ꜥbd*. Depuydt,¹⁷⁷ and many scholars agree with him.

To support his argument, Parker¹⁷⁸ cites a Ptolemaic text that illustrates the connection and continuity of the first three days of the lunar month: “*he, i.e. Khonsu, the moon god, is conceived on psdntyw; he is born on ꜥbd; he grows old after smdt*”. He interprets this text to mean “*he i.e. Khonsu, is conceived in the darkness of invisibility on the first day of the month, that he is born as the new crescent on the second day, and that he waning after the day of full moon, the 15th day*”.

¹⁷⁰ Eaton, Monthly Lunar Festivals, 229.

¹⁷¹ Taylor, *Death and the Afterlife*, 176-77.

¹⁷² Wb II, 65.

¹⁷³ Gardiner, A.H., *Egyptian Grammar*, 3rd Edition, Revised, (1st edition, 1927), Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 2007, 486, sign. N 11; Wb II, 65; Parker, *The Calendars*, 11; Spallinger, *The Private Feast Lists*, 1,2.

¹⁷⁴ Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 84, 249, 295, 436.

¹⁷⁵ Wb II, 65.

¹⁷⁶ Parker, *The Calendars*, 11- 12.

¹⁷⁷ Depuydt, L., *The Calendars and the Year-counts of Ancient Egypt*, *Chronique d'Égypte* XCII, fasc.184, 2017, 276.

¹⁷⁸ Parker, *The Calendars*, 12 §.38.

However, Spallinger¹⁷⁹ states: “*Standing alone 3bd could equally represent the second day of a thirty-day civil month*”. 3bd was recorded in the civil calendar on various days according to the moon’s appearance. The Illahun Archive recorded the new moon on the 1st, 2nd, 4th of the 3ht months, on the 3rd day of a month of prt and on the 3rd day of a month of smw. It also documented the monthly feasts on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th of the 3ht months, the 1st- 4th of a month of prt, and on the 1st, 2nd, 4th of the smw months.¹⁸⁰ These lists reinforce Spallinger’s postulate. Comparatively, in the Islamic calendar, the first day of the lunar month is the day following the night of the new crescent’s birth, which can fall on any civil day in the Gregorian calendar.

6.5.3.2 Date of the smdt Feast

Gardiner interpreted the signs ⲛ and ⲛⲓ as a combination of half of crescent and star, used as ideogram in ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ. However, he did not provide a specific reading for it.¹⁸¹ Parker¹⁸² read it as smdt, interpreting it as “half-month day, day 15, day of full moon”. Wb¹⁸³ gives the forms ⲛⲓⲛⲓ, ⲛⲓⲛⲓ, ⲛⲓⲛⲓ. Depuydt¹⁸⁴ states: “*smdt refers to Day 15 and falls exactly 13 days after 3bd*”. Thus, there is a consensus among scholars that the smdt feast was celebrated at the midpoint of each lunar month. However, the smdt feast, was recorded in the Illahun Archive on other different dates.¹⁸⁵ It means the full moon-day of the lunar months synchronized with those dates in the civil calendar.

As well as the 3bd feast, the smdt feast was one of the regular monthly festivals and had almost the same offerings as the other monthly feasts, which consist of bread, beer, fruit and vegetables.¹⁸⁶

6.6. im3hw hr ntr 3

The epithet im3hw hr ntr 3, meaning “revered with the great god”,¹⁸⁷ appeared since the 4th Dynasty onward. It was used for individuals, kings and Gods.¹⁸⁸ Its importance reached a point where almost no funeral offering formulation in all the Old Kingdom missed it. All offerings were invoked to be presented to the im3hw hr ntr 3, followed by the deceased’s name, either directly or preceded by their titles.

¹⁷⁹ Spallinger, *The Private Feast Lists*, 2.

¹⁸⁰ El Sabban, *Temple festival calendars*, 11.

¹⁸¹ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 486, sign N 13.

¹⁸² Parker, *The Calendars*, 11.

¹⁸³ Wb IV, 147.1.

¹⁸⁴ Depuydt, *The Calendars*, 276.

¹⁸⁵ El Sabban, *Temple festival calendars* 11.

¹⁸⁶ Nelson, *The Calendar of Feasts - Habu*, 51.

¹⁸⁷ Wb I, 81; Jones, D., *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the old Kingdom*, vol. I, Oxford, British Archaeological Reports Series 866 (1), 2000, 30 [142].

¹⁸⁸ Rawash, *An Offering Table*, 211.



The epithet *imꜥhw* is written in various forms: *imꜥh*, *imꜥhy* besides *imꜥhw*¹⁸⁹. The form of the word changed from *imꜥhw* to *imꜥhy* during the reign of King Merikare. And when the offerings began to be invoked to the *kꜥ* of the deceased, using the phrase “*n kꜥ n PN*”, during the reign of Senusret I, both *imꜥhy* and *imꜥhw* gradually started to disappear due to changes in religious beliefs.¹⁹⁰

The *ntr ꜥ*, “Great God” to whom *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* was honored, is unidentified. Generally, *ntr ꜥ* might refer to Osiris as seen in the phrase: *imꜥhw hr ntr ꜥ wsir nb ꜥbdw ḏdw*, “revered with the great god Osiris, lord of Abydos and Busiris”.¹⁹¹ Sometimes it refers to Rꜥ, or even to the King.¹⁹²

Inpw was sometimes referred to as the “Great God” as in: “*imꜥhw hr ntr ꜥ nb krs*, “revered with the great god, the lord of burial”.¹⁹³ This epithet emphasizes his elevated status within the Egyptian pantheon and underscores the immense importance of *Inpw*’s role in the funerary rituals and the afterlife, making him a revered and powerful deity. Therefore, *Inpw* might have been the intended God referred to by *ntr ꜥ* on the basin under study, especially since his name is already included in the formula of *hꜥp ḏi nsw*, inscribed on the upper horizontal line.

The name of the diseased follows *imꜥhw hr ntr ꜥ*, sometimes directly or after some additional epithets and titles. In the case of *Mr-sw-ꜥnh*, the title “*imꜥhw hr ntr ꜥ*” is the last epithet on the bottom line followed by *ꜥnh*, which is the final part in the name of the basin’s owner *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* written vertically on the left hand- side column.

6.7 *imy-r id(w) (n) hnw*

This title, *imy-r id(w) n hnw* means “the Overseer of the Young Men of the Palace”.¹⁹⁴ *Wꜥꜥ- kꜥ*, from the Fifth Dynasty, held the title of *imy-r idw*, “the overseer of young men”.¹⁹⁵ However, *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* held the title of  *imy-r id(w) (n) hnw*, observing here *hnw* preceded *imy-r id(w)* to highlight its signification. The same title was written twice on his false door on the western wall of the chapel near the entrance: first in the form  *imy-r id(w) n hnw* with (n), and second, above the figure of

¹⁸⁹ Rawash, An Offering Table, 211.

¹⁹⁰ Abd El Karim. E.G., The Offering Table of xwy aA from the Twelfth Dynasty (RC-2990). *Bulletin of the Center Papyrological Studies* 38, 2021, 156.


¹⁹¹ Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles I*, 30 [143].

¹⁹² Rawash, An Offering Table, 211.


¹⁹³ Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles I*, 32 [150].


¹⁹⁴ Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles I*, 72[325].

¹⁹⁵ Baer, *Rank and Title*, 66[105 A]; Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles I* 72[322].

the owner seated before the offering table, in the form  “*imy-r id(w)*”¹⁹⁶ without *hnw*, just as *W3š- k3*.

The question is whether *hnw*, in his title, refers to the royal palace or not. In the same context, who was the lord of *Mr-sw-ꜥnh*, mentioned in the epithet “*mrr(w) nb.f*” recorded on the central vertical column of the basin in question.

Hassan¹⁹⁷ interpreted *hnw* as the royal palace, while Junker¹⁹⁸ preferred to translate it as a private estate pertaining to *Rꜥ-wr*, whom *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* served. To support his opinion, Junker¹⁹⁹ investigated the difference between *imy-r idw*, which denotes a non-official position and *nfr-idw*, which signifies an official one. *nfr-idw* means “one who has nice teams” and is particularly associated with military or semi-military organizations. Therefore *nfr* here not only refers to the youth in general, but also those of rank, corresponding to “cadet” or “recruit”. *nfr* undoubtedly held a command authority. Owners of several mastabas often had “*nfr*” as their only title, and some holder of the title “*nfr*” are referred to as royal descendants. This title has been presented since the old kingdom,²⁰⁰ while the form  *imy-r nfrw*, meaning “overseer of recruit”, appeared in the middle kingdom.²⁰¹

It is worthy to mention that *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* is described on an unpublished offering table found in his mastaba,²⁰² and on his triple statuette²⁰³ as , which can be read as *nfr-id*, or just *nfr*. Junker considers the title *imy-r id(w)*, associated with private individuals such as *Mr-sw-ꜥnh*, to mean “head or overseer of the teams”, with the members of those teams being part of a non-military state organization.

I agree with Junker’s interpretation that title *imy-r id(w)* held by *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* is not a royal or official. May investigating the title “*nb.f*”, in the epithet *mrr(w) nb.f* supports this perspective.

6.8. *mrr(w) nb.f*

¹⁹⁶ Hassan, Giza I, fig.182.

¹⁹⁷ Hassan, Giza I,106.

¹⁹⁸ Junker,H. *Giza, IV, Bericht über die von der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien auf gemeinsame Kosten mit Dr. Wilhelm Pelizaeus unternommenen Grabungen auf dem Friedhof des Alten Reiches bei den Pyramiden von Giza. Die Mastabas des "K3jm 'nh" (Kai-em-anch)*, Wien, Leipzig, 1940, 159-160.

¹⁹⁹ Junker, *Giza, IV*,158-160.

²⁰⁰ Wb I,151.

²⁰¹ Ward, W.A., *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom*, Beirut, 1982, 32 [231].

²⁰² Hassan, Giza I, pl. LXIX. 2.

²⁰³ Hassan, Giza I, pl. LXX.

The epithet *mrr(w) nb.f*, meaning “beloved of his lord”,²⁰⁴ is inscribed on the central vertical column of the basin in question, but without specifying the name of that lord. However, it is mentioned in other places, such as on the false door of *Mr-sw-ḥ* (fig. 5),²⁰⁵ where he proclaims himself “the companion of *Rḫ-wr*”. The Hieroglyphs on the left outer jamb of the false-door read: *smr-wt Rḫ-wr dt imy-r id(w) n ḥnw imy-r išt.f nbt nt ḥnw nt rwt Mr-sw-ḥ*, meaning “the companion of *Rḫ-wr* eternally, the overseer of the young men of the palace, the overseer of all his, i.e. *Rḫ-wr*, properties in the interior and those which are in the exterior, *Mr-sw-ḥ*”. While the Hieroglyphs on the right outer jamb state: “the companion of *Rḫ-wr*, I am his honored one more than any of his men. It is I, the honored one of the God (and) the honored one of his Master who did not commit anything against any man”.²⁰⁶

It is important to note that the title of *Mr-sw-ḥ* as “Overseer of the young men of the palace” inserted between his master’s name “*Rḫ-wr*” and the possessive masculine pronoun (.f) in the phrase *išt nbt*, which reflects on *Rḫ-wr*. Thereupon, it is plausible to think that the palace in the title *imy-r id(w) n ḥnw* is referring to a palace or residence of *Rḫ-wr* rather than that of the king. In addition, *ḥnw* is mentioned twice on the left outer jamb of the false-door: once in the title *imy-r id(w) n ḥnw*, and the other in *nt ḥnw*, meaning “interior”, as opposite of *nt rwt*, meaning “exterior”.

In vicinity of the mastaba of *Mr-sw-ḥ*, there are two tombs both of their owner is named *Rḫ-wr*. One of them is the instructor of the Royal singers, whose mastaba measures 3.45 m. by 2.25 m.,²⁰⁷ which is considerably smaller than that of *Mr-sw-ḥ* (5.45 m. by 3.45 m. by 2.35 m.).²⁰⁸ The second *Rḫ-wr* is the companion of the king and the Sem-priest. His tomb, located directly to the southwest of the Sphinx, is one of the largest private tombs from the Old Kingdom.²⁰⁹

It worthies to mention that the majority of burials at Giza, dated after the fourth and early fifth dynasties belonged to lesser individuals, particularly in the sixth dynasty.²¹⁰ The most important tomb in the area containing the mastaba of *Mr-sw-ḥ* is that of the second *Rḫ-wr*. His tomb was unique in many aspects, one of which is the number of its serdabs and niches; it has 25 serdabs and 20 niches. Many of these serdabs contained more than one statue or statuette, and in one instance, as many as five statues were

²⁰⁴ Wb II, 101 [6]; Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles I*, 444 [1659].

²⁰⁵ Hassan, Giza I, fig.182.

²⁰⁶ Hassan, Giza I, 106.

²⁰⁷ Hassan, Giza I, 66.

²⁰⁸ Hassan, Giza I, 105.

²⁰⁹ Hassan, Giza I, 1-4.

²¹⁰ Strudwick, N., *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom. The Highest Titles and their Holders*, London, 1985, 37.

found. This *Rc-wr* held 29 important titles, including Sem-priest and *smr- wct* of the king Neferirkarec?.²¹¹ Comparing the mastaba of the instructor of the Royal singers to the tomb of the second *Rc-wr*, confirms that the owner of the latter is the lord of *Mr-sw-ḥh*.

Obviously, a man of such status would possess many estates and palaces. Thereupon, it is plausible to propose that *hnw* in the title *imy-r id(w) n hnw*, held by *Mr-sw-ḥh* is referring to the palace of *Rc-wr*. In addition, the Royal palace was referred to by the term *pr-ḥ*, “the great house”, as seen in titles such as: *Imy-rḥ ḥsy (w) pr-ḥ (snfrw) nfr*, “The overseer of the singers of the great house Sneferunefer”,²¹² likewise in *imy-r ḥwt pr-ḥ*, “overseer of the fields? of the Great House”,²¹³ and in *imy-r irw-šn pr-ḥ*, “overseer of the hairdresser of the Great House.”²¹⁴

6.9. *shd hm(w) kḥ*

The title *shd hm(w) kḥ*, meaning “Inspector of the *kḥ* - servants/ funerary priests”, is sometimes written as: *shd hm(w) kḥ*,²¹⁵ and *shd hm(w) kḥ*.²¹⁶ Some scholars read *shd* as “*shnw-hm*”,²¹⁷ depending on the monogram *shn(w)-ḥh*.²¹⁸ Hannig²¹⁹ translated *shnw-hm* as “the Royal funerary priest”. Thereupon, he preferred to read *shd* as “*hm kḥ*”, i.e. the *kḥ*-servant.

According to Englund²²⁰ *shn(w)-ḥh* or *hm shn ḥh*, was the title of the priest in the charge of the private tombs in the Old Kingdom, where *shn* means: embrace, seek or meet, and *ḥh* is the designation of the deceased. Thus, the title *shn(w)-ḥh* denotes the one who is in contract with the deceased. This title was overshadowed by *hm kḥ* in Middle Kingdom. according to Englund. However, Bolshakov²²¹ refuted the opinion considering *shn(w)-ḥh* developed to *hm kḥ*, especially since there is no evidence to support that claim. The function of the archaic “*shn(w)-ḥh*” remains unknown.

²¹¹ Hassan, Giza I, 1-61.

²¹² Rawash, An Offering Table, 203- 226.

²¹³ Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles I*, 53[260].

²¹⁴ Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles I*, 60[284].

²¹⁵ Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles II*, 943.

²¹⁶ Wb. III, 90 [12-13].




²¹⁷ cf. Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles II*, 833.

²¹⁸ Bolshakov, A.O., *Man and his Double in Egyptian Ideology of the Old Kingdom*, Wiesbaden, 1989,157.

²¹⁹ Hannig, R., *Die Sprache der Pharaonen: Großes Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch : (2800-950 v. Chr.)*, Lexica 3. Kulturgeschichte der Antiken Welt, vol.64. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, (1st ed. 1995), the 4th edition, 2006, 809.

²²⁰ Englund, Offerings, 568.

²²¹ Bolshakov, *Man and his Double*, 157-8.





Moreover the plural form of  is spelled as , where *hmw* evidently denotes priests, while  *kꜣ* is the object of their service.

The *kꜣ* comes into existence at a person's birth.²²² Bolshakov²²³ identifies it as the double of the man. The duty of *hm kꜣ* is performing rituals to keep the *kꜣ* of the deceased vital. Sometimes the tomb owner establishes agreements during his lifetime with the *hm kꜣ* such as in the case of *hꜥꜣꜣ dfꜣꜣ*, the Siut monarch. He stipulated the duties of the priestes in the cult of his temple and tomb statues as well as the payment commitments of the monarch.²²⁴

Hꜥꜣꜣ dfꜣꜣ addressed his funerary priest saying: "*Behold, all these things, which I have secured by contract from these priests, are under thy charge. For, behold, it is the mortuary priest of a man, who should maintain his possessions and maintain his offering.*"²²⁵

Worthy to mention that there is another title relating to *hm kꜣ*, that is *imy-r hmw kꜣ*, meaning "overseer of *kꜣ* – servants".²²⁶ All holders of this title served members of the Royal family. It prompts to conclude that *shꜣ hm(w) kꜣ* is relating to non-royal individual. In the case of *Mr-sw-ꜥnh*, it is logical to think that he was the inspector of *kꜣ* -servants of his lord *Rꜥ-wr*. However, the name of *shꜣ hm(w) kꜣ* whom *Rꜥ-wr* mentioned in his tomb is called, Shepseskaf- rankh.²²⁷ Thereupon, the title *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* held, was either arbitrary title, or a real one. If it was real, then *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* might have died before his lord, which would explain why he was not mentioned as *shꜣ hm(w) kꜣ* in the tomb of his lord, who would have needed to find another *shꜣ hm(w) kꜣ* for his afterlife.

6.10 *hwn nfr*

The reading and meaning of  *hwn nfr*,²²⁸ are controversial. It was translated as "the adolescent",²²⁹ or "young man".²³⁰ The word *hwn* alone means "young, youth, young man".²³¹ It was written as  and  in the old kingdom, while as  in the middle kingdom.²³² The term *nfr*, has multiple meanings, one of which is "youth". (cf.

²²² Taylor, *Death and the Afterlife*, 19.

²²³ Bolshakov, *Man and his Double*, 158, 194.

²²⁴ Bolshakov, *Man and his Double*, 202- 205; Englund, *Offerings*, 566.

²²⁵ Breasted, *Ancient Records I*, 260 § 538.

²²⁶ Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles I*, 176-77 [673].

²²⁷ Hassan, *Giza I*, 27, pl. XXIX; Porter & Moss, *Topographical Bibliography* 267.

²²⁸ Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles I*, 498 [1866].




²²⁹ Hassan *Giza I*, 110, pl. 68.2.




²³⁰ Hannig, *Handwörterbuch*, 553.

²³¹ WB III, 52.

²³² WB III, 52.

imy-r id(w) n hnw). In this context both *hwn* and *nfr* have almost the same meaning relating to youth and juvenile. Therefore, I would suggest “everlasting youth” as the interpretation of the combination of the two words *hwn nfr*.

Jones²³³ read  alone as *nfr*, translating it to “cadet, recruit or conscript”, while Wb²³⁴ reads it as *nfr-id/ nfr-idw*, meaning “one who has beautiful young men”. Given that  on our basin is *nfr-id*, then  could be read *hwn nfr-id*. As previously mentioned, *nfr-id* was a title from the old kingdom (cf. *imy-r id(w) n hnw*). Thereupon, *hwn nfr-id* should be translated as “the youth who has beautiful young men”, which closely aligns with the meaning of *id(w) n hnw*, “young men of the palace”, written on the left-hand side vertical column, suggesting a kind of symmetry.

It is worth noting that *Mr-sw-eh* is described on another basin as  “*nfr*” or “*nfr id*”. Given that the plural form  “army’s young men or young soldiers”, appeared in the middle and New Kingdoms,²³⁵ it likely held the same meaning in the Old Kingdom, thus  written on the basin on question is the singular form which appeared during the old kingdom. Therefore, we can conclude that *Mr-sw-eh* held both the official title “*nfr/ nfr id*”, and the non- official title *imy-r id(w) n hnw*.

6.11. The Name of *Mr-sw-eh*

Mr-sw-eh, a masculine name that appeared in the old kingdom, means “may life loves him”.²³⁶ The only well-known holder of this name from that period is *Mr-sw-eh*, the owner of the offering basin under study. This name has not been found in any other tombs in Giza, or in Saqqara from the old kingdom.²³⁷ In addition, this name did not appear neither in the middle²³⁸ nor in the New kingdoms. However, other names with similar syllables existed in ancient Egypt such as *Mr.ns-eh/ Mr.s eh*,²³⁹ *Mr-sw*,²⁴⁰ *Mr-sw R*²⁴¹ and *Mr-eh*.²⁴²

²³³ Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles I*, 483 [1807].

²³⁴ Wb I, 151; the same translation was repeated in (Wb.II, 255 (10).

²³⁵ WB III, p. 52.

²³⁶ PN I, 421.12.

²³⁷ cf. Baer, *Rank and Title*, 82- 83[200].

²³⁸ for personal names of the Middle Kingdom cf. <https://pnm.uni-mainz.de/3/names>, accessed: 7/12/2023.




²³⁹ PN I,157.5.






²⁴⁰ PN I, 157.18.

²⁴¹ PN I, 157.20.

²⁴² PN I, 155.28.

The name of *Mr-sw-ḥb* is written twice on the offering basin in question: once on the


central column  and once on the vertical left-hand side column . The only difference is in the writing of *ḥb*, which is presented in the latter as a group writing  perhaps due to lack of space to write it completely as in the case on the central column. Alternatively, it may have been intentional, allowing it to be read vertically as part of the full name *Mr-sw-ḥb*, while also reading horizontally, (*ḥb*) as the last word on the bottom line. Thus, it would be read: “*imḥw ḥr ntr ʿḥ ḥb*”. If this is the case, *ḥb* could represent a nickname for *Mr-sw-ḥb*.

It is worth mentioning, that the name *Mr-sw-ḥb* was written on his false door by entrance as ,  and .²⁴³ In addition, his name was inscribed on another offering basin as .²⁴⁴ And on one of his statues, using the determinative for a man of rank seated on a chair ,²⁴⁵ a sign of reverence from the Old Kingdom.²⁴⁶ This could indicate a high rank he attained at a later stage of his life.

Ancient Egyptian paid great attention to preserve his name as a personal name was vital for the survival of the deceased. It was necessary to pronounce the name in the offering ritual to provide nourishment for the dead. As long as the name was remembered, the dead would continue to live.²⁴⁷

7. Dating

Logically, all contents of the *Mr-sw-ḥb* mastaba should be attributed to the same date when the mastaba was built, around the fifth Dynasty. Indeed, the style and paleographical features of our offering basin are dated to the fifth Dynasty and are similar to those found on the other two basins in the same mastaba, as follows:

- a. The shape of offering basins, like that of the *Mr-sw-ḥb* basin, was known during the Old Kingdom according to the Hölzl classification.²⁴⁸
- b. From a linguistic point of view, the arrangement of the formula *ḥtp di nsw* was known during the sixth to eleventh Dynasties.²⁴⁹ The use of monosyllabic  was

²⁴³ Hassan, Giza I, 106, fig. 82, pl. LXVIII.3.

²⁴⁴ Hassan, Giza I, 110, pl. LXIX.3.

²⁴⁵ Hassan, Giza I, 115, pl. LXX.

²⁴⁶ Gardiner, Egyptian Grammar, 447, sign A51.

²⁴⁷ Taylor, *Death and the Afterlife*, 23.

²⁴⁸ Hölzl, R., *Ägyptische Opfertafeln und Kultbecken. Eine Form- und Funktionsanalyse für das Alte, Mittlere und Neue Reich*, Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 2002.

²⁴⁹ Leprohon, *Offering Formulas*, 572; Rawash, *An Offering Table*, 214.

a feature of the writing of *h̄tp d̄i nsw* in the old kingdom.²⁵⁰ Additionally, *im̄ḥ(w)* appears without the initial (*i*), and the writing of *n̄tr-ḥ* lacks a determinative, both indicating dating criteria from the late Old Kingdom.²⁵¹

However, determining the date of the offering basin under study presents two problems:

- a) **Dating of the mastaba of *Mr-sw-ḥ***: Baer²⁵² dates it to around the end of the 5th Dynasty.²⁵³ However, *Mr-sw-ḥ* was the “Companion of *Rḥ-wr* and the overseer of the young men of his palace. *Rḥ-wr* himself was the companion of the king Neferirkare?, and his tomb, located in the Khafre cemetery at Giza, dates to the mid-5th Dynasty during the reign of Neferirkare.²⁵⁴ *Mr-sw-ḥ* likely lived during *Rḥ-wr*'s lifetime. I assume he died before *Rḥ-wr*, which is why *Rḥ-wr* did not mention him as the inspector of his *k̄ḥ*-servants. Therefore, the tomb of *Mr-sw-ḥ* should also be dated to the mid- fifth Dynasty, just like that of *Rḥ-wr*.
- b) **Placing the basin in question above another inscribed basin**²⁵⁵ is strange, questionable, and out of its normal position, as it would eliminate the function for which the other offering basin was established, which is to receive offerings. Additionally, when comparing the good condition of the basin under study with the poor condition of the basin lying beneath it,²⁵⁶ it can be concluded that they should not have been made and placed in the mastaba at the same time.

To reconcile these issues, there are two suggested dates for the basin in question:

- a) The end of the fifth dynasty.
- b) The Late Period, which was marked by a revival of Old Kingdom traditions, with careful reproductions of the Old Kingdom forms.²⁵⁷ Thus, the inscription on the basin is completely identical to that of the Old Kingdom.

The former dating, i.e. the end of the fifth dynasty, is the more appropriate date. The sequence of events should be that *Mr-sw-ḥ* died and was buried in his mastaba in the mid- fifth dynasty. Later, at the end of the fifth dynasty, one of his descendants observed the poor condition of the nearest basin to the mastaba entrance (the basin beneath the

²⁵⁰ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, Rawash, An Offering Table, 215.

²⁵¹ Rawash, An Offering Table, 215.

²⁵² Baer, *Rank and Title*, 82- 83[200].

²⁵³ Baer, *Rank and Title*, 82- 83[200].

²⁵⁴ Baer, *Rank and Title*, 98 [300].

²⁵⁵ Hassan, pl. LXIX.3.

²⁵⁶ Hassan, Giza I, pl. LXIX.4.

²⁵⁷ Bolshakov, *Offering tables*,576.

one in question). He then provided the mastaba with a new offering basin as a votive for his predecessor *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* and placed it over the older basin. This explains why the offering basin in question was placed over another offering basin. **Thus, the offering basin of *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* (No. 519/1234) is dated to the end of the Fifth Dynasty.**

8. Conclusion:

This research paper aimed to publish the inscribed offering basin of *Mr-sw-ꜥnh*, which is displayed in the Egyptian Museum of Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University, under the number (519/1234). After examination and analysis, the study concluded that:

- 1- *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* was *imy-r id(w) n hnw*, “the Overseer of the Young Men of the Palace” of his lord *Rꜥ-wr*, not of the Royal palace as the Royal palace was referred to by the term *pr-ꜥ*, “the great house”.
- 2- His title *shd hm(w) kꜣ*, ‘the Inspector of the *kꜣ* - servants, was a titular title, as his name was not mentioned as *shd hm(w) kꜣ* in the tomb of *Rꜥ-wr*.
- 3- *Mr-sw-ꜥnh* held both the official title *nfr/nfr-id* and the non- official title *imy-r id(w) n hnw*.
- 4- The style of the offering basin, its hieroglyphs, and its position above another offering basin date it to the end of the Fifth Dynasty.

Bibliography

- 1) Abd El Karim. E.G., The Offering Table of *hwy ꜥ* from the Twelfth Dynasty (RC-2990). *Bulletin of the Center Papyrological Studies* 38, 2021, pp.149-164.
- 2) Al-Garhi, A., *Studying the tables and basins of offering in the Magazine of el- Ashmounin*, Master diss., Faculty of Arts - Minia University. (in Arabic), 2019.
- 3) Allen, J.P., *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, Writings from the ancient world 23, 2005.
- 4) Baer, K., *Rank and Title in the Old Kingdom, The Structure of the Egyptian Administration in the Fifth and the Sixth Dynasties*, Chicago, 1960.
- 5) Bolshakov, A.O., *Man and his Double in Egyptian Ideology of the Old Kingdom*, Wiesbaden, 1989.
- 6), Offering tables, *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. II, Oxford: Oxford University press, 2001, pp. 572-576.
- 7) Breasted, J. H., *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. I, Chicago, London & Leipzig, 1906.
- 8) Depuydt, L., The Calendars and the Year-counts of Ancient Egypt, *Chronique d'Égypte XCII, fasc.184*, 2017, pp. 271-294.
- 9) Doxey, D. M., Anubis, *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, vol. I*, Oxford: Oxford University press, 2001, pp. 97 – 98.
- 10) Eaton, K., Monthly Lunar Festivals in the Mortuary Realm: Historical Patterns and Symbolic Motifs, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 70, 2011, pp.229–245.
- 11) El Sabban, Sh., *Temple festival calendars of ancient Egypt*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000.

**JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY OF ARCHAEOLOGY -VOLUME 28 -
JANUARY 2025**

- 12) Englund, G., Offerings, An Overview, *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. II, Oxford: Oxford University press, 2001, pp. 564-569.
- 13) Erman, A. & Grapow, H. (eds.), *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Sprache*, vols.I-V, Berlin: Akademie Verlage, 1950- 1971. [= Wb.].
- 14) Fairman, H.W., Worship and Festivals in an Egyptian Temple, *BRL 37*, London, 1954-1955.
- 15) Fischer, G., An invocatory Offering basin of the Old Kingdom, *MDAIK 47*, 1991, 128-129.
- 16) Gardiner, A.H., *Egyptian Grammar*, 3rd Edition, Revised, (1st edition, 1927), Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 2007.
- 17) Hannig, R., *Die Sprache der Pharaonen: Großes Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch : (2800-950 v. Chr.)*, Lexica 3.Kulturgeschichte der Antiken Welt, vol.64. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, (1st ed. 1995), the 4th edition, 2006.
- 18) Hassan, S., *The Egyptian University Excavations at Giza 1929-1930*, vol I, Cairo, 1932.
- 19) Hart, G., *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian gods and goddesses*. 1st ed. 1945, London & New York, 2005.
- 20) Hölzl, R., Ägyptische Opfertafeln und Kultbecken. Eine Form- und Funktionsanalyse für das Alte, Mittlere und Neue Reich, Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 2002, 13-38.
- 21) Jauhiainen, H., Do Not Celebrate Your Feast Without Your Neighbours, A Study of References to Feasts and Festivals in Non-Literary Documents from Ramesside Period Deir el-Medina, *Publications of the Institute for Asian and African Studies 10*, Helsinki: Helsinki University Print, 2009.
- 22) Jones, D., *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the old Kingdom*, vols. I, II, Oxford, British Archaeological Reports Series 866 (1), 2000.
- 23) Junker, H., *Giza, IV, Bericht über die von der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien auf gemeinsame Kosten mit Dr. Wilhelm Pelizaeus unternommenen Grabungen auf dem Friedhof des Alten Reiches bei den Pyramiden von Giza. Die Mastabas des "K3jm'nh" (Kai-em-anch)*, Wien, Leipzig, 1940.
- 24) Leitz, ch.(ed.), *dhwtj*, in: *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, VII, 2002, pp. 639–645.
- 25) Leprohon, R.J., Offering Formulas and Lists, *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. II, Oxford: Oxford University press, 2001, pp. 569-572.
- 26) Luft, U., The Date of the W3gy Feast, in: Spalinger (ed.), *Revolutions in Time. Studies in the Ancient Egyptian Calendrics*, VA(S) 6. San Antonio: Van Siclen Books, 1994, pp. 39–44.
- 27) Nelson., H.H, The Calendar of Feasts and Offerings at Medinet Habu, in: Nelson, H.H, Hölscher, U. & Schott, S., *Work in Western Thebes 1931-33*, *OIC, no.18*, Chicago, Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 1934, pp.1- 62.
- 28) Parker, R. A., *The Calendars of Ancient Egypt*, Chicago, 1950.
- 29) Porter, E. & Moss, R.L.B., *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*, vol. III, Memphis Part I: Abu Rawash to Abusir, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1974.
- 30) Radwan, A., The Nun basin of Renpetnefert, In: *Egypt and Beyond, Essays Presented to Leonard H. Lesko upon his Retirement from the Wilbour Chair of Egyptology at Brown University June 2005*. Edited by Stephen E. Thompson and Peter Der Manuelian, Department of Egyptology and Ancient Western Asian Studies, Brown University, 2008.
- 31) Ranke, H., *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen*, Vol. I, Verzeichnis der Namen, Glückstad, 1935.[=PN]
- 32) Rawash, H. H., An Offering Table of Sneferu-nefer II Egyptian Museum (JE 11527, CG 1328, SR 2/ 15727), *JFA 25*, 2002.

- 33) Schott, S., The Feasts of Thebes, in: Nelson, H.H, Hölscher, U. & Schott, S., *Work in Western Thebes 1931-33*, OIC, no.18, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934, pp.63- 90.
- 34) Sethe, K., *Urkunden des Alten Reich*, vol.I, Leipzig, 1933.
- 35) Spalinger, A.J., Thoth and the Calendars, in: Spalinger (ed.), *Revolutions in Time. Studies in the Ancient Egyptian Calendrics*, VA(S) 6. San Antonio: Van Siclen Books, 1994, pp. 45- 54.
- 36), The Lunar System in Festival Calendars: From the New Kingdom onwards, *BSÉG* 19, 1995, pp.25–40.
- 37), The Private Feast Lists of Ancient Egypt, *ÄA* 57, 1996.
- 38), Ancient Egyptian Calendars: How Many Were There? In: *JARCE* 39, 2002 pp. 241- 250.
- 39), Further thoughts on the feast of WAgy, In: *ÉT* 26, 2013, pp. 616–624.
- 40) Strudwick, N., *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom. The Highest Titles and their Holders*, London, 1985.
- 41) Taylor, J.H., *Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt*, London & Chicago: the British Museum Press & the University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- 42) Vymazalová, H., Feasts in Written Evidence from the 5th Dynasty Royal Necropolis of Abusir, RICH and GREAT, *Studies in Honour of Anthony J. Spalinger on the Occasion of his 70th Feast of Thoth*, edited by Renata Landgráfová and Jana Mynářová, Charles University in Prague Faculty of Arts, 2016, pp. 331-340.
- 43) Ward, W.A., *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom*, Beirut, 1982.
- 44) Wilkinson, R. H., *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, New York& London: Thames & Hudson, 2003.

Web sites

- 1) <https://pnm.uni-mainz.de/3/names>, accessed: 7/12/2023.

Figures



Fig.1. the offering basin of *Mr-sw-eh* in situ.
 (Hassan, Giza vol. I, p. 110, pl. LXVIII no.I)



Fig.2 a



Fig. 2 b

Fig. 2 a, b. Photos of the offering basin in the museum of Faculty of Archaeology at Cairo University. (by the author)

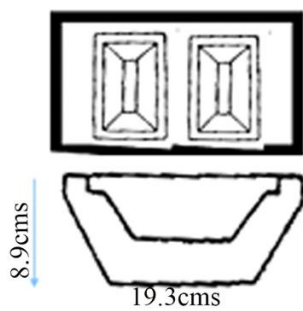


Fig. 3 a

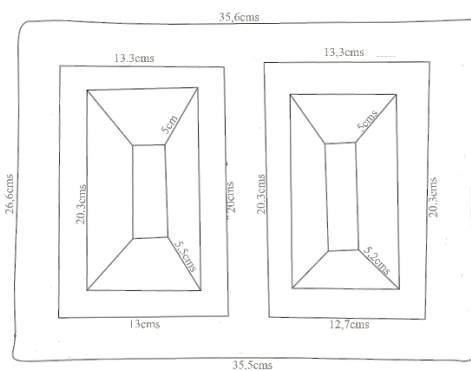


Fig. 3 b

Fig. 3 a, b. outlines and measuring (by the author)

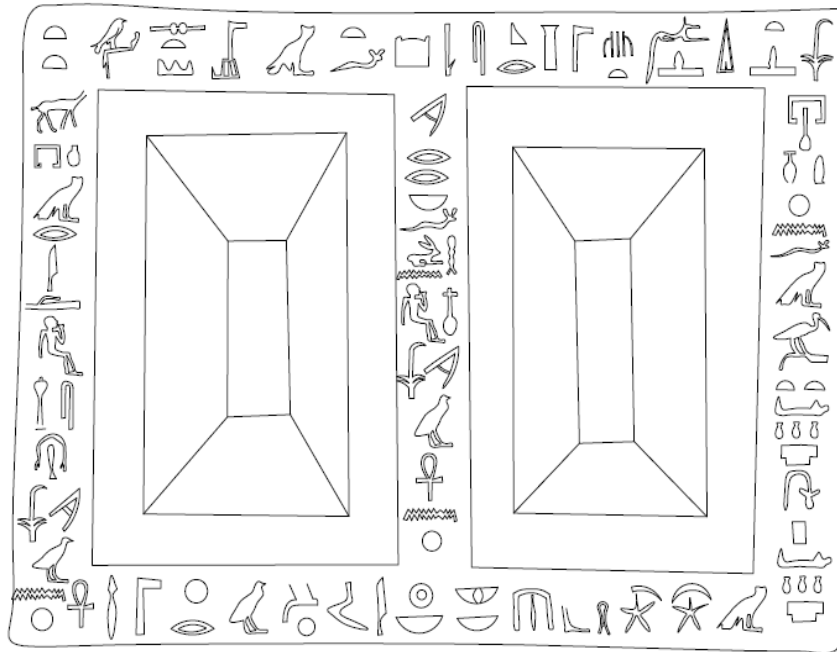


Fig. 4. Hand drawing of the inscriptions of the offering basin. (by the author)

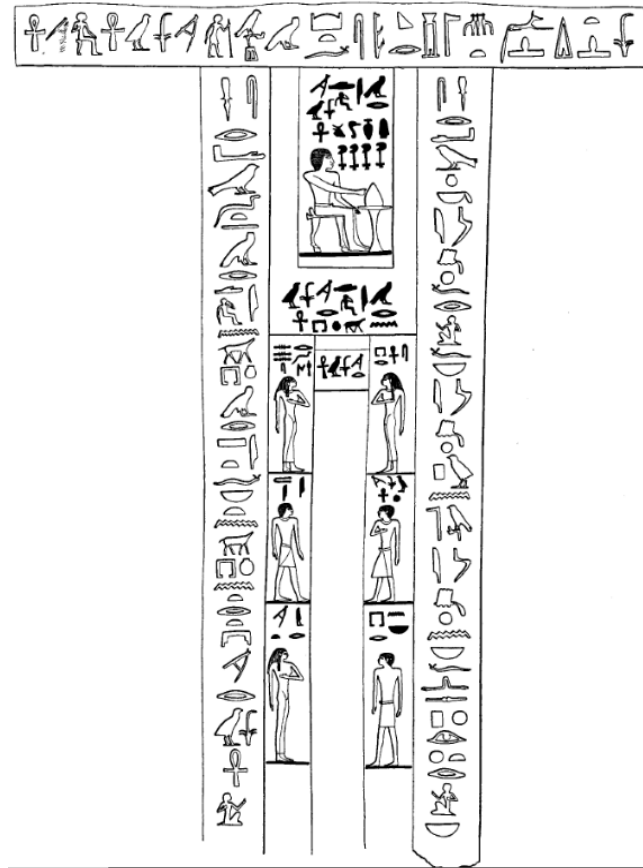


Fig.5. The false door of *Mr-sw-enh* next the entrance of the chapel

(Hassan, Giza I, fig. 182)