

C H R O N O L O G Y
A N D A R C H A E O L O G Y
I N A N C I E N T E G Y P T
(THE THIRD MILLENNIUM B.C.)

Hana Vymazalová, Miroslav Bárta
editors



**CHRONOLOGY AND ARCHAEOLOGY
IN ANCIENT EGYPT
(THE THIRD MILLENNIUM B.C.)**

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CHRONOLOGY AND ARCHAEOLOGY IN ANCIENT EGYPT (THE THIRD MILLENNIUM B.C.)

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editors

**Czech Institute of Egyptology, Faculty of Arts,
Charles University in Prague
Prague 2008**

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Foreword

The subject of the chronology of ancient Egyptian history remains of particular interest. The new excavations as well as the explorations of the so far known monuments and written sources have brought many interesting results which enlarge our knowledge about the history of ancient Egypt and the development of different aspects of the Egyptian culture.

The Czech Institute of Egyptology invited a group of scholars working on subjects relevant to the ancient Egyptian chronology to a conference in Prague in June 2007. The meeting offered the opportunity to exchange information and to present the latest results of the research. The various papers presented, and for a large part gathered in the present volume, provided different and highly stimulating approaches to chronological issues.

The nineteen contributions to the volume approach the subject of Egyptian chronology from different perspectives. Some of them concern the use of modern methods (^{14}C) and natural sciences in Egyptology; others analyze the development of various aspects of the Egyptian culture during the whole period of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period, or try to specify the date of certain monuments and personalities. The question of calendars and festivals is also alluded to, and some new archaeological discoveries are presented. A study and interpretation of archaeological as well as textual sources and iconographical material is combined in the papers in order to attain a deeper knowledge and better understanding of the Egyptian chronology, archaeology and the ancient history.

The overview of individual contributions also shows that Egyptology dealing with the third and early second millenium B.C. still prefers to follow rather traditional paths of research. The reasons for this tendency may be manifold, one of them yet relates to the fact that sampling and subsequent analysis abroad (in many case no other solution would have been possible) is strictly prohibited in Egypt, indeed a very rare exception in the whole Middle East.

During the editing of the text we did not attempt to unify the transliteration of ancient Egyptian, and several different variants may occur depending on the choice of the authors. The personal names and the names of places were, however, in most cases unified in order to simplify the orientation in the text for the reader. The bibliographical references follow the pattern of the *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, and the list of journals and the bibliography are given in a list at the beginning of the volume.

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Our thanks go, above all, to Filip Coppens for his help during the editorial work and to Vivienne Gae Callender who kindly revised some of the articles in the volume.

We also wish to thank all members of our Institute for their help and encouragement.

Prague, May 2008

The Editors

Abbreviations and journals

ACME – Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell' Università degli Studi di Milano, Milano.

AcOr – Acta Orientalia, Kopenhagen – Leiden.

AEPHE 5^e Section: Sciences Religieuses – Annuaire, École Pratique des Hautes Études 5^e Section: Sciences Religieuses, Paris.

AJA – American Journal of Archaeology, New York – Baltimore – Norwood.

AJSJL – American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures, Chicago.

Ä&L – Ägypten und Levante, Wien.

AmAnt – American Anthropologist. Organ of the American Anthropological Association, Washington.

Annales de la Société Entomologique de France (N.S.) – Annales de la Société Entomologique de France, Paris.

Antiquity – Antiquity. Quarterly Review of Archaeology, Cambridge.

AOF – Altorientalische Forschungen, Berlin.

ArchGeo – Archaeologia geographica, Hamburg.

Archaeometry – Archaeometry. Bulletin of the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, Oxford.

Archéo-Nil – Archéo-Nil. Revue de la société pour l'étude des cultures prépharaoniques de la vallée du Nil, Paris.

ArOr – Archiv orientální, Praha.

ArtAs – Artibus Asiae. The Journal of Asian Art and Archaeology, Zürich.

ASAE – Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, Le Caire.

BES – Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar, New York.

BIFAO – Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Le Caire.

BMFA – Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

BSEG – Bulletin de la Société d'égyptologie de Genève, Genève.

BSFE – Bulletin de la Société française d'égyptologie, Paris.

Canadian Journal of Zoology – Canadian Journal of Zoology=Journal canadien de zoologie, Ottawa.

CCE – Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne, Le Caire.

CdE – Chronique d'Égypte, Brussel.

CRAIBL – Comptes Rendus de séances. Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Paris.

CRIPeL – Cahier de recherches de l'Institut de papyrologie et égyptologie de Lille, Lille.

DE – Discussions in Egyptology, Oxford.

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EA – Egyptian Archaeology, London.

Enchoria – Enchoria. Zeitschrift für Demotistik und Koptologie, Wiesbaden.

Entomologist's Monthly Magazine – Entomologist's Monthly Magazine, Oxford.

Environmental Archaeology – Environmental Archaeology. The Journal of Human Palaeoecology, Oxford – London.

Fauna of Saudi Arabia – Fauna of Saudi Arabia, Basle.

GM – Göttinger Miszellen, Göttingen.

De Ibis – De Ibis. Tijdschrift van de Nederlandse egyptologische Vereniging Sjemsoethot, Amsterdam.

JARCE – Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt, New York.

JAS – Journal of Archaeological Science, London – New York.

JEa – Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, London.

JEOL – Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch genootschap ex Oriente Lux, Leiden.

JNES – Journal of Near Eastern Studies, Chicago.

Journal of Applied Entomology – Journal of Applied Entomology, Berlin.

Journal of Pest Science – Journal of Pest Science, Heidelberg.

JSA – Journal of Social Archaeology, London.

JSSEA – Journal for the Society of the Study of Egyptian Antiquities, Toronto.

Kemi – Kêmi. Revue de Philologie et d'Archéologie Égyptiennes et Coptes, Paris.

KMT – K.M.T. A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt, San Francisco.

Kush – Kush. Journal of the Sudan Antiquities Service, Khartum.

LingAeg – Lingua Aegyptia. Journal of Egyptian Language Studies, Göttingen.

MDAIK – Mitteilungen des Deutschen archäologischen Instituts. Abteilung Kairo, Mainz – Wiesbaden – Berlin.

Méditerranées – Méditerranées, Paris.

Mémoires de la Société Entomologique d'Égypte – Mémoires de la Société Entomologique d'Égypte, Le Caire.

MMJ – Metropolitan Museum Journal. Journal of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Nature – Nature, London.

Nekhen News – Nekhen News. Published for the Friends of Nekhen, Chicago.

OMRO – Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden.

Or – Orientalia. Nova Series, Roma.

OLZ – Orientalistische Literaturzeitung. Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft von ganzen Orient, Berlin.

Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology – Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology. An International Journal for the Geo Sciences, Amsterdam.

PAPS – Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.

PAM – Polish Archaeology in Mediterranean, Warsaw.

PPS – Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society. Journal of the Prehistoric Society, London.

Pubblicazioni del Museo Entomologico "Pietro Rossi" – Pubblicazioni del Museo Entomologico "Pietro Rossi" Duino, Udine.

Radiocarbon – Radiocarbon. An International Journal of Cosmogenic Isotope Research, New Haven.

RAr – Revue archéologique, Paris

RdÉ – Revue d'égyptologie, Paris.

Rec. Trav. – Recueil des travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes, Paris.

RevArch – Revue archéologique, Paris.

RIDA – Revue internationale des droits de l'Antiquité, Office international des Périodiques.

SAK – Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur, Hamburg.

SbWien math.-nat.Kl. – Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Mathematisch-naturwissenschaftliche Klasse, Wien.

Sicilia Archeologica – Sicilia Archeologica, Roma.

Sphinx – Sphinx: Revue critique embrassant le domaine entier de l'égyptologie, Uppsala – Stockholm.

SSEA – The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities, Toronto.

Studie a Zprávy Oblastního Muzea Praha-východ – Studie a Zprávy Oblastního Muzea Praha-východ v Brandýse nad Labem a Staré Boleslavi, Brandýs nad Labem.

Transactions of the Royal Entomological Society of London – Transactions of the Royal Entomological Society of London, London.

WA – World Archaeology, London.

WZKM – Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, Wien.

ZÄS – Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde, Berlin.

Zeitschrift für Physik – Zeitschrift für Physik, Berlin.

Old Kingdom funerary domains: a question of dating!¹

Mohamed Ismail Khaled (Prague)

In October 2002, the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) decided to continue excavations around the causeway of Sahure at Abusir. T. El-Awady, field director of the SCA expedition, unearthed sixteen decorated blocks from the northern and southern parts of the causeway in two seasons (partly published in El-Awady 2006a; 2008).

Five huge limestone blocks were discovered in the second season of excavation in 2003 to 2004. These blocks were originally from the northern wall of the causeway of Sahure. Each block has four registers with painted relief decoration depicting the funerary domains of Sahure. The reliefs show female offering bearers facing left (west) towards the mortuary temple of the king. They carry different commodities, including vegetables, fruits and bread. They



Fig. 1 The causeway of Sahure.

¹ I am indebted to Dr. Laurel Flentye for reviewing and editing my English, any mistakes rest with the author.



Fig. 2 The newly discovered block from the causeway of Sahure.

also lead various types of animals, such as oxen, gazelles and sheep. In front of each figure is the name of the domain. Several of the domains are followed by gods from different provinces who present offerings.²

The discovery of reliefs depicting funerary domains seemed to be an old issue. However, their discovery raises one important question: can we use features in the scenes of the funerary domains as artistic criteria in dating Old Kingdom tombs?

Through an analysis of scenes decorating Old Kingdom tombs, and after a detailed comparison, one might say that there are various differences between the scenes of funerary domains dating from the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Dynasties. These differences will be discussed in this paper.

Fourth Dynasty

The royal funerary procession

The only surviving scenes of funerary domains from the Fourth Dynasty belong to the statue temple of King Sneferu at Dahshur South. These scenes

² In my Ph.D. thesis the scenes of the newly discovered funerary domains will be discussed in more detail.



Fig. 3 Scene from the newly discovered block from the causeway of Sahure.

represent the funerary offering procession of Sneferu but here the personifications are *hwt* estates, which will not be discussed in our research here, due to the particular style of depicting this type of funerary bearers (for the difference between *hwt* and *niwt*, see Jacquet-Gordon 1962, 3–13). The *hwt* estate is usually a female figure with the name of the king inside the *hwt*-sign. This sign rests on a standard placed on her head. Both arms are outstretched in front of her body carrying an offering table shaped like the *hwp*(offering)-sign, on which is placed a loaf of bread. She holds a *w3s*-sceptre in one hand, and an *ʿnh*-sign in the other hand. In other words, *hwt* personifications are always depicted carrying only the symbolic offering table (fig. 4). They do not carry any commodities or baskets which form the corpus of my research, which is based on a detailed comparison of basket types and shapes, commodities and animals.

King Khufu followed the style of his father, Sneferu. A fragment of a personified estate is also represented as a *hwt*-type, and is attributed to the mortuary temple of Khufu at Giza (Goedicke 1971, 16–7).

Regrettably, there are no other scenes depicting the procession of domains on any royal monuments of Khufu's successors during the Fourth Dynasty.



Fig. 4 A funerary domain from the so-called valley temple of Sneferu (after Fakhry 1959).

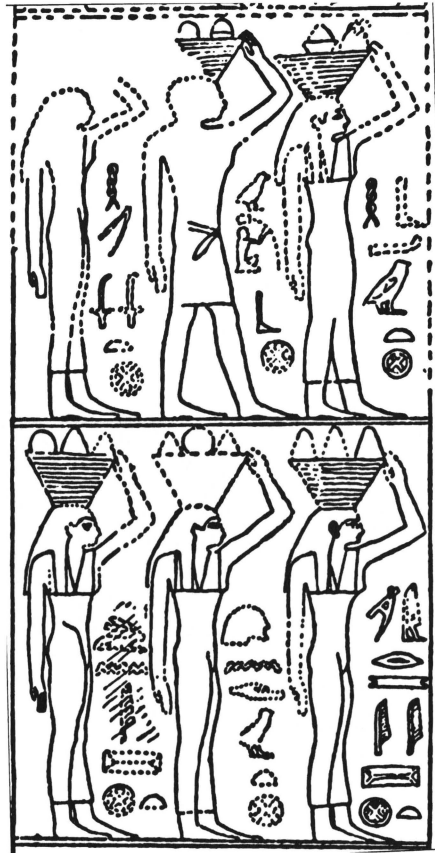


Fig. 5 Scene from the tomb of Khufukhaf (after Simpson 1978).

Therefore, one can assume that the scenes of at least the first two kings of the Fourth Dynasty exclusively consisted of funerary estates of the *hwt*-type.³

The private tomb procession

With regards to Fourth Dynasty private tombs, scenes of the funerary domains are very simple. They always depict both male and female offering bearers (alternating) carrying small, simple bucket-baskets on their heads (Harpur 1987, 82–3); originally, each domain raised a hand to keep the basket balanced (fig. 5).

At the beginning of the Fourth Dynasty, one hand of the funerary bearer was sometimes depicted empty (attested in the tomb of *Wnš.t* (G4840) at Giza, Junker 1929, 254, Abb. 63), but probably around the beginning of Khafre's reign or later,

³ This assumption is due to the special position of the first two kings of the Fourth Dynasty; Sneferu and his successor Khufu were called *ntr* ʕ "great god" in contrast to their ancestors and predecessors who were called *ntr nfr* "good god."

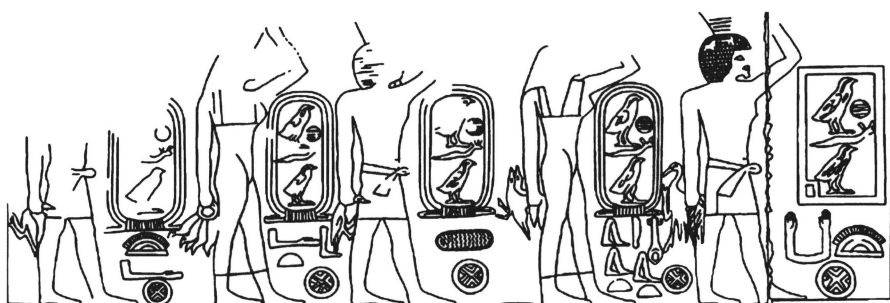


Fig. 6 Tomb of Khufukhaf (after Simpson 1978).



Fig. 7 Tomb of Meresankh III (after Dunham & Simpson 1974).

the hand is shown holding different articles, such as ducks, vessels and fish (attested in several tombs, e.g. Seshathotep and Nesutnefer, Kanawati 2002, pls. 45, 53), or leading an animal, including gazelles, calves or antelopes (the tomb of Khufukhaf I, Simpson 1978, figs. 32–3) (see fig. 6).

One of the exceptions to the scenes of funerary domains is the tomb of Queen Meresankh III at Giza (attributed to the reign of Khafre by Dunham & Simpson 1974, 3); one might observe that it is decorated in the same Fourth Dynasty style. However, the shape of the baskets is more developed, and bags appear for the first time (Dunham & Simpson 1974, female bearers nos. 3, 5, 7). For the first time, the personifications carry flax bundles⁴ together with a bag in one hand. Due to these changes, one may assume that the artisans who decorated the tomb of Meresankh III were brought from a royal workshop. This assumption is due to the evolution of procession scenes on the one hand, and the unique position of Queen Meresankh III on the other (fig. 7).

By the end of the Fourth Dynasty, a new feature has appeared. This feature is the crescent basket or “the banana shape” (as Y. Harpur calls it), although

⁴ W. K. Simpson and D. Dunham incorrectly described what is carried by these female bearers as a stick, because it clearly is a flax bundle (Dunham & Simpson 1974, 10).

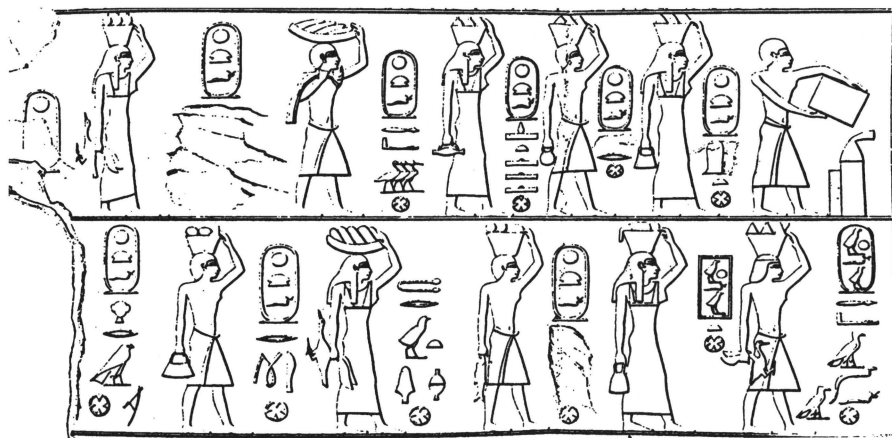


Fig. 8 Tomb of Nikaure (after Lepsius 1849–59).

Y. Harpur dated this type of basket to the beginning of the Fifth Dynasty (1987, 83). Nevertheless, this type of basket is attested in several tombs dated to the end of the Fourth Dynasty,⁵ such as those belonging to Nebemakhet (end of the Fourth Dynasty, Baer 1960, 89; Lepsius 1849–1859, pl. 12b; Hassan 1943, 125–50) and Nikaure (end of the Fourth Dynasty, Baer 1960, 88; Lepsius 1849–1859, II, pl. 15b) (see fig. 8).⁶

Fifth Dynasty

The royal funerary procession

At the beginning of the Fifth Dynasty, scenes of the procession of funerary domains are more developed.

Our information concerning these scenes comes from the mortuary temples of Userkaf (Labrousse & Lauer 2000, 77–89, figs. 120–38), Sahure (Borchardt 1913, 105–11, pls. 26, 27, 28, 29, 31) and Niuserre (Borchardt 1907, 68–9, 78–9, pls. 14, 15) at Abusir, in addition to the mortuary temple of Djedkare Isesi (Jacquet-Gordon 1962, 160–7) and the causeway of Unas at Saqqara (Labrousse & Moussa 2002, 88–107, figs. 124–95).

The funerary domains are usually depicted carrying various types of baskets. One hand is raised to support the basket by its rim, while the other

⁵ From this attribution, one might say that the shape of the crescent basket was also depicted on royal reliefs of the later Fourth Dynasty kings, because it is logical that an official would imitate his master.

⁶ N. Strudwick believes that Nikaure was born in the time of Khafre, thus his tomb must have been built in the reign of Menkaure or later. See Strudwick 1985, 78, 107. This statement seems to prove our theory.

hand clutches an article, such as a vessel, cheese mat⁷, flower or bag. Sometimes, the hand may hold a rope that is attached to an animal in addition to the aforementioned articles.

By comparing the artistic style of these depictions, many remarkable observations can be made. However, the surviving scenes are in a poor state of preservation, which makes this comparison somewhat difficult.

From the surviving scenes of the royal funerary domains of Userkaf and Sahure, it is apparent that many features appeared during this period, and continued until the end of the Old Kingdom:

- The crescent basket with its completely developed shape (*fig. 9*);
- The birdcage (*fig. 10*);
- The bread tray (*fig. 11*);
- The padded ring (*hawaya*)⁸ (*figs. 9, 11*);
- The grain bundle held in one hand (*fig. 12*).

Our knowledge of the development of scenes of the royal funerary domains in the middle and late Fifth Dynasty is limited, due to the destruction of scenes (similar to Niuserre, see above), or the lack of relevant publications (with regards to Djedkare Isesi, only the names of the funerary domains are published by Jacquet-Gordon 1962).

In the scenes from the causeway of Unas, new features have appeared which probably occurred earlier, possibly in the time of Djedkare (see below):

- The miniature size of the animals (*fig. 3*);
- The green onion bundle held in one hand (*fig. 4*).

The private tomb procession

The scenes of the procession of funerary domains in private tombs of the Fifth Dynasty expanded in conjunction with the development of royal art. Officials imitated royal scenes of the domains, or they perhaps used the same artisans to finish their tombs.⁹ For example, by comparing the scenes in the

⁷ In fact, many scholars attempted to identify the purpose of this mat, however, they could not introduce a specific identification; some of them identified it as a small jar on a rope (see Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 1999, 21). However, S. Hassan was the first who suggested that this mat was perhaps for cheese (1950, 50, 51).

⁸ It is noteworthy that the padded ring is in Lower Egypt known as *hawaya*, which is derived from the verb "to contain". The main purpose of using this type of *hawaya* is to keep the balance of the crescent basket; however, it was used also with others shapes of baskets. It is also noteworthy that the Polish mission discovered in the tomb of Merefnebef, in the main west chapel, a crescent shaped basket. It was attached with a fragment of yellowish bandages which lies 0.08 m above the base of the basket. Kowalska interpreted this bandage as a handle, see Myśliwiec et al. 2004, 192, pl. 88k, but in my opinion it could have been intended to be a padded ring connected with the basket.

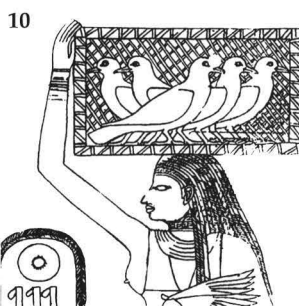
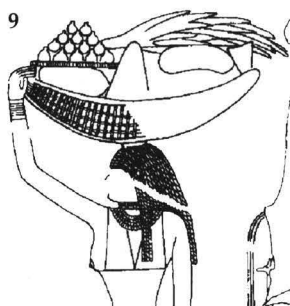
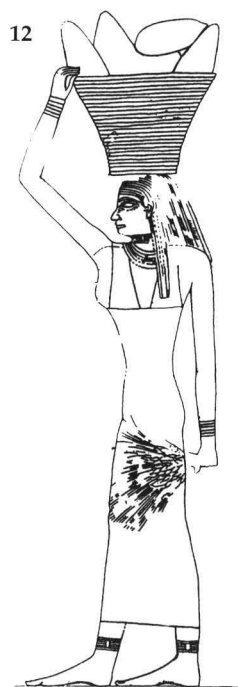


Fig. 9 The crescent basket, funerary temple of Userkaf (after Labrousse & Lauer 2000).

Fig. 10 The birdcage, the newly discovered blocks from the causeway of Sahure (author).

Fig. 11 The bread tray, the newly discovered blocks from the causeway of Sahure (author).

Fig. 12 The grain bundle held in one hand, the newly discovered blocks from the causeway of Sahure (author).



tomb of Persen (Petrie & Murray 1952, 20–1, pl. IX) with scenes from the pyramid complex of Queen Neferhetepes (Labrousse & Lauer 2000, fig. 365 doc. 272), they are almost an exact copy.

In some (well-dated tombs) attributed to the mid-Fifth Dynasty, two new features appeared:

« ⁹ We must take into consideration that some of these officials were gifted some royal domains by their kings, in addition to the royal domains which an official inherited from his family and those they possessed on their own. For the different types of domains, see Málek 1986, 65–79; Altenmüller 2006.



Fig. 13 The miniature size of animals, causeway of Unas (after Labrousse & Lauer 2000).

Fig. 14 The green onion bundle held in one hand, causeway of Unas (after Labrousse & Lauer 2000).

- The *nb*-shaped basket;
- Carrying an animal in one arm.

The *nb*-shaped basket is depicted in scenes of the procession (probably from the reign of Neferirkare on, or later), especially in the tombs of Rawer (attributed to Neferirkare, see Hassan 1932, 18, fig. 13; Harpur 1987, 187), Iymery (attributed to Niuserre by Weeks 1994, 5), Seshemnefer II (Kanawati 2002, 31, 51, pl. 65) and Seshemnefer III (Junker 1938, 209–10, pl. IV).

An early representation of an animal carried in one arm can be observed in the tomb of Akhtihotep (Davies 1901, pl. XIII) at Saqqara (fig. 15). According to N. Strudwick, this tomb can be attributed to the early reign of Unas (Strudwick 1985, 55–6). This means that Akhtihotep finished the decoration of his tomb in the time of Djedkare (Baer 1960, 75 [161] (Djedkare – Unas), whereby one might predate the appearance of this feature to the later king. It is also noteworthy that the depiction of an animal carried in one arm by a funerary bearer before the time of Unas had an unrealistic appearance. This was due to the large size of the animal, which would be very difficult to carry in one arm in reality. Therefore, one might assume that the miniature size of the animal by the time of Unas was an attempt to correct an artificial mistake, and the desire to imitate reality.

Fig. 15 Tomb of Akhtihotep –
(after Davies 1901).



Another observation that one might make is that this period ushers in the “crammed” procession, in which many objects are carried (see below).

Sixth Dynasty

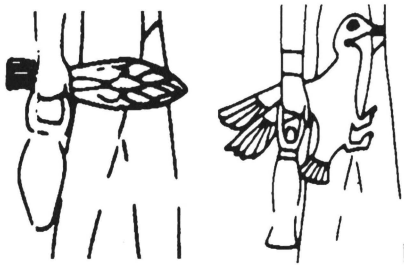
The royal funerary procession

Information concerning scenes of the royal funerary domains at the beginning of the Sixth Dynasty is either very rare, or does not exist at all. This lack may be due to the poor state of preservation of these monuments, or because several of them were not fully excavated.

The only surviving scenes are from the mortuary temple of Pepy II (Jéquier 1940, 14–7, pls. 21–3, 25–8). After studying the scenes and comparing them with the scenes from the causeway of Unas, several significant changes can be observed in the royal procession of the Sixth Dynasty:

- The “double handgrip” of the grain bunch together with a vessel or a bird (*fig. 16*);
- The conical baskets covered with a vaulted lid (*fig. 17*);
- An offering tray resting on the hand (*fig. 18*);
- The appearance of an onion bundle along with bread resting on a tray (*fig. 19*).

16



18



17



19

*Fig. 16 The double handgrip,
tomb of Hesi
(after Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 1999).*

*Fig. 17 The conical basket covered with
a vaulted lid, funerary temple of Pepy II
(after Jéquier 1940).*

*Fig. 18 Offering tray resting on the hand,
funerary temple of Pepy II
(after Jéquier 1940).*

*Fig. 19 An onion bundle along with
bread resting on a tray, funerary temple
of Pepy II (after Jéquier 1940).*

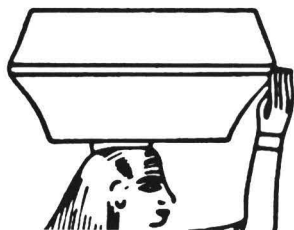


Fig. 20 Hexagonal basket with lid, tomb of Hesi (after Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 1999).



Fig. 21 Conical basket with crutches, tomb of Mereruka (after Duell 1938).

The private tomb procession

With regards to the procession in private tombs of the Sixth Dynasty, the load carried by the funerary domains becomes richer. They are always depicted carrying different types of baskets, full of various commodities. Both hands are now more occupied; even the raised hand supporting the basket was used, holding one more article. Also, a bunch of lotus flowers, a bag or cheese mats on a rope hang on the crook of the raised hand; while the other hand which hangs down by the side usually holds two articles, including a vessel with a bunch of grain or a vessel with a bird.

One of the notable features of Sixth Dynasty tombs is the aforementioned “double handgrip” of the vessel and grain bunch. The hexagonal basket with lid (or the flatter shape with a lid) also appears (Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 1999, 42, pl. 62), which probably occurred in the reign of Pepy I, or earlier (*fig. 20*). These features can be clearly seen in the tombs of Hesi (Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 1999, 42, pl. 62) and Mehu (attributed to Pepy I by Altenmüller 1998, 202–5; Jacquet-Gordon 1962, 419 (Teti or later); Baer 1960, 83 [202] (Pepy I or slightly later); Porter & Moss 1981, 619 (Pepy I or later); Strudwick 1985, 101–2 [69] (early to middle reign of Pepy I); Harpur 1987, 274 [424] (VI.2M middle reign of Pepy I)).

From the well-dated tomb of the vizier Mereruka, dated to the time of Teti (attributed to Teti by Porter & Moss 1981, 525ff; Baer 1960, 82 [197]; Strudwick 1985, 100–1 [68] (end of the reign of Teti); Harpur 1987, 274 [420] (VI.1M-L middle to the end of the reign of Teti)), a new feature appears, namely the conical basket with crutch (probably a wooden box) (*fig. 21*). Also, the “double handgrip” is depicted, which serves as a clue in predating this feature to the time of Teti (Duell 1938, pl. 49).



Fig. 22 Tomb of Ey (after Jéquier 1929).

Other features occur in tomb no. 5 of an official named Ey in the northern group of tombs around the pyramid of Pepy II, including the offering tray resting on the hand and the occurrence of an onion bundle along with bread resting on one tray carried on the head. These features are also proof that officials imitated their masters (Jéquier 1929, 108–9, fig. 122).¹⁰ (fig. 22; compare with figs. 18, 19)

All the aforementioned features represent important markers in scenes of the procession during the Old Kingdom, which provide potential dating criteria for some tombs as well as helping to re-date others that were improperly dated in the past:

Tomb of Nikanesut at Giza (G 2155)=(G 4870)

H. Junker attributed the tomb of Nikanesut at Giza to the early Fifth Dynasty (Junker 1934, 135–72; Porter & Moss 1981, 78). N. Cherpion pointed out, however, that the tomb was said to belong to the middle of the Fifth Dynasty in Junker's first report, while he put it at the end of the Fourth Dynasty in his second report (for more details see Cherpion 1989, 118).

¹⁰ It is noteworthy to mention that G. Jéquier incorrectly read the name of the official as Peri, because he mixed up the name with a part of his title. However, his name is Ey, and his title is "Overseer of the Upper Egyptian *pr šn*".

N. Cherpion made a very detailed analysis of this tomb, and she predates it to the reign of Khufu, by using different criteria (Cherpion 1989, 11). According to the stylistic criteria, using the procession of the funerary domains, the dating by Cherpion is closer to the truth (*fig. 23*).

Tomb of Seshathotep at Giza (G 5150)=(L 36)

H. Junker attributed the tomb of Seshathotep at Giza (Lepsius 1849–1859, pl. 23; Junker 1934, 182, *fig. 28*; Kanawati 2002, 11–30) to the beginning of the Fifth Dynasty (Junker 1938, 16), while other scholars have placed it in the middle of the Fifth Dynasty (Jacquet-Gordon 1962, 251).

Scholars have also dated it to the end of the Fourth Dynasty (Smith 1946, 165). N. Kanawati, in fact, disagrees with Junker's dating, and places it in the late Fourth Dynasty (Kanawati 1977, 4). N. Cherpion re-dates this tomb to the early Fourth Dynasty and the reign of Khufu (Cherpion 1989, 34 (*Critère 10*), *fig. 10*, table 155–6). In the recent publication of this tomb, N. Kanawati has returned to this topic. He states that the tomb was probably built and decorated during the middle of Sahure's reign. Moreover, he points out that Seshathotep Heti is probably the same man named Heti who was depicted as a lector priest in the mortuary temple of Sahure (Borchardt 1913, pls. 17, 33, 34). Therefore, if Kanawati's hypothesis is correct, why would Seshathotep Heti, who bears the title *s3 nswt n ht.f* "king's son of his body", not be able to decorate his tomb like Persen, who bears the title of "overseer of the royal toilet and perfumes" (this tomb is attributed to the early Fifth Dynasty, Petrie & Murray 1952, 20–1, pl. IX).

N. Strudwick believes that the tomb dates to the end of the Fourth Dynasty and the beginning of the Fifth Dynasty. His dating is based upon changes that occur in the design of chapels, namely the appearance of the two-niched chapel type (Strudwick 1985, 43, table 4). He also made another important statement regarding the offering lists in the tombs of both Seshathotep and Nikanesut: The tomb of Seshathotep was established earlier than the tomb of Nikanesut. This conclusion is correctly based on the scenes of the funerary domains (*fig. 24*).

Finally, if we compare the scene of funerary bearers in the tomb of Seshathotep with the same scene in the tomb of Khufukhaf I (attributed to Khufu, Simpson 1978, 9),¹¹ they are executed in a similar artistic style or, in other words, are almost an exact copy of one another (see and compare *fig. 6*).

Tomb of Merefnebef at Saqqara

K. Myśliwiec dates the tomb of the vizier Merefnebef to the time of Pepy I (Myśliwiec et al. 2004, 247). He believes that his biography, mentioning the

¹¹ This date is also according to the new theory by R. Stadelmann which states that Khufukhaf I is the old name of Khafre before his ascension to the throne, see Stadelmann 1984, 165–172.

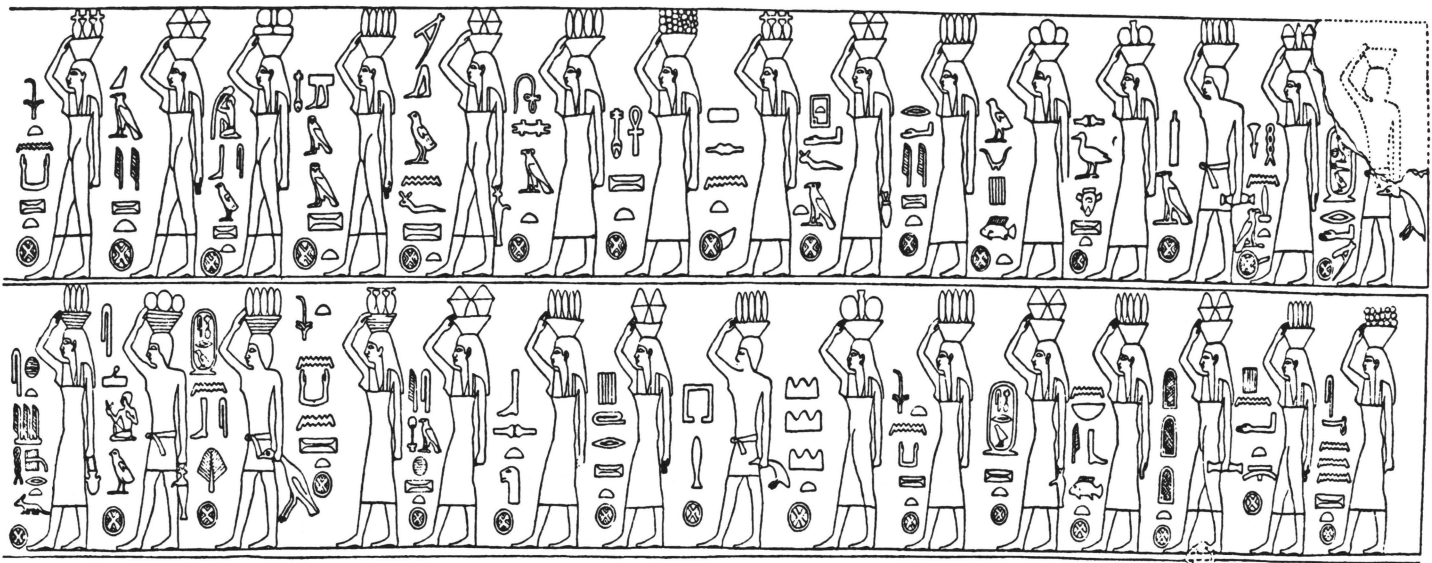


Fig. 23 Tomb of Nikanesut
(after Junker 1934).

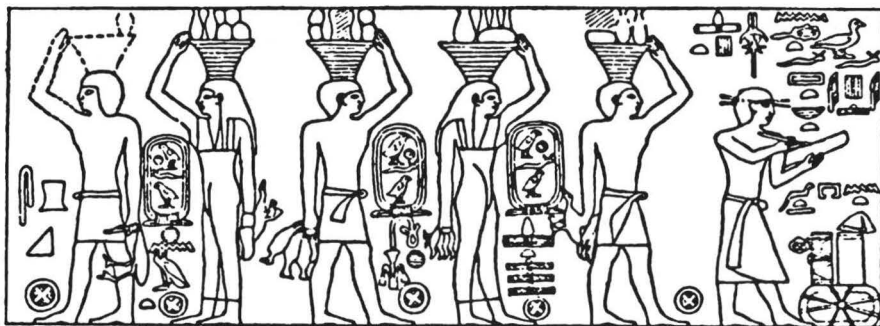


Fig. 24 Tomb of Seshathotep (after Kanawati 2002).

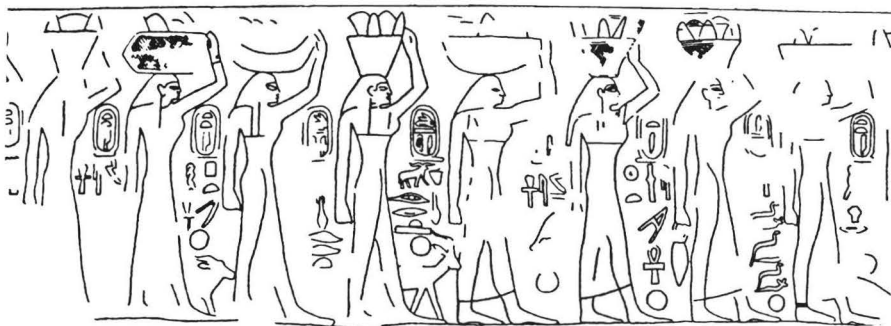


Fig. 25 Tomb of Merefnebef (after Myśliwiec et al. 2004).

title of vizier once as well as other titles, on his chapel's walls place him within the middle ranks of court hierarchy.

K. Myśliwiec suggests that "Merefnebef may have been born or had started his career in the second half of Teti's reign, reached the culminating point of his career during the short rule of Weserkare and died in the time of Pepy I" (Myśliwiec et al. 2004, 247).

According to the scenes of the funerary domains in the tomb of Merefnebef, the artistic style of the procession predates the tomb to the end of the Fifth Dynasty and the beginning of the Sixth Dynasty (fig. 25).

By comparing the scenes of the procession of the funerary domains in the tomb of Merefnebef with that in Mereruka's tomb (Strudwick 1985, 100–1 [68] (end of the reign of Teti); Harpur 1987, 274 [420] (VI.1M-L); Porter & Moss 1981, 525 (Teti); Baer 1960, 82 [197] (Teti)), one can say that the tomb of Merefnebef does not contain any of the Sixth Dynasty features (see above). Another important observation can be made in this instance: the space between the cartouche of Teti and the raised arm of the funerary bearers is

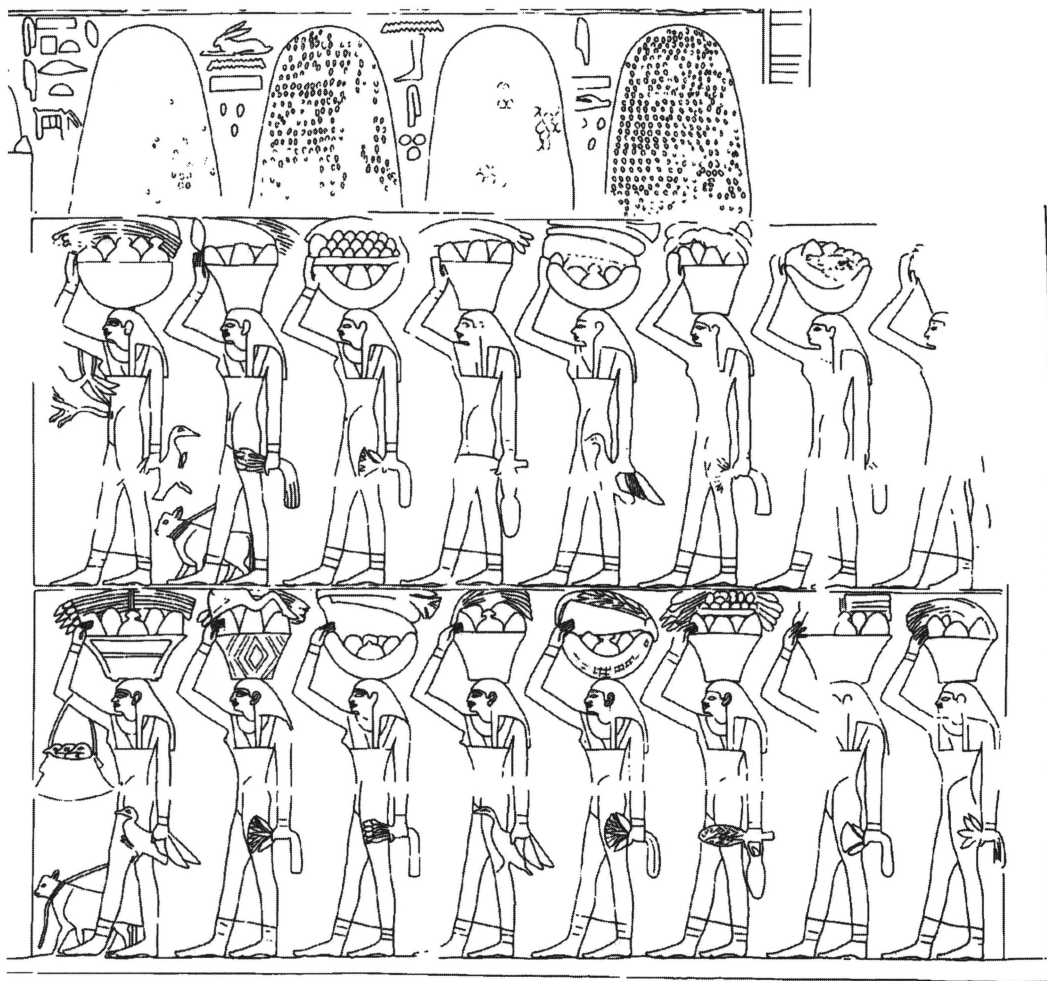


Fig. 26 Tomb of Nikauisesi (after Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 2000).

almost non-existent, while there is quite enough space for the other cartouches of Unas and Iseki. This leads us to assume that the cartouches of Teti were added only after the scenes were finished (Myśliwiec et al. 2004, pl. 57).

Tomb of Nikauisesi at Saqqara

The dating of the tomb of Nikauisesi, “overseer of Upper Egypt”, is problematic and still debated (Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 2000, 17–23, pls. 53–5).

Due to his name, Nikauisesi could have been born under Djedkare. N. Kanawati, however, believes that the tomb of Nikauisesi was built earlier than the tombs of Hesi and Kagemni (Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 2000, 18–9).

Fourth dynasty



Fifth dynasty



Sixth dynasty



Fig. 27

Further biographical data comes from the reliefs decorating the causeway of Unas, where the name of Nikauisesi is attested with his high title, “sole friend” (Strudwick 1981, 70; Labrousse & Moussa 2002, 55–6, fig. 75 (doc. 58)). In addition, the name of the tomb owner is mentioned in the decree of Teti at Abydos (Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 2000, 19 footnote 87).

According to the scenes of the procession of funerary domains of Nikauisesi, the decoration of his tomb begins at the end of Unas’s reign and the beginning of Teti’s. This speculation is based on the artistic style of the funerary procession; also the late Fifth Dynasty shape of the baskets; in addition to several female offering bearers holding a green onion bundle in their hand, this feature has been attested in the causeway of Unas (see Fifth Dynasty above). At the same time, the only female offering bearer carrying a conical basket with a crutch (probably a wooden box) is attested in the tomb of Mereruka, dated to the beginning of the Sixth Dynasty (see Sixth Dynasty above) (*fig. 26*).

Conclusion

The analysis and the comparative study between the scenes of the funerary domains which date from the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Dynasties prove that there are various differences between these scenes.

In the Fourth Dynasty, the scenes of the personification of the funerary domains are very simple, both male and female offering bearers (alternatively) were depicted carrying small, simple bucket-baskets on their head; they raise

a hand to support and keep the balance of the basket. The other hand was sometimes empty, holding an object, or leading an animal.

In the Fifth Dynasty, the scenes of the personification of the funerary domains were more elaborated, new features occurred which were never depicted before, such as trays for carrying bread, a birdcage, a padded ring (*hawaya*), and a grain bundle held in one hand. New features have been attested in the scenes of some well-dated Old Kingdom tombs which help in suggesting the date of their occurrence in the royal reliefs.

In the Sixth Dynasty, the scenes of the personification of the funerary domains become richer, both hands were occupied with articles, and new features occurred, however, one notable feature in the scenes of the Sixth Dynasty is (a double handgrip), in which the offering bearers were usually holding in the same hand two articles (a vessel or bird and a bunch of grains).

By applying these new criteria for dating Old Kingdom tombs, it was possible to introduce a potential date for some tombs as well as helping to re-date others that were improperly dated in the past.

Table 1 The table contains selected Old Kingdom tombs and their dating based on the new criteria of the scenes of the funerary domains.

Tomb owner	Location	Reference	Suggested dating
Metjen	Saqqara	Lepsius 1849–1859, vol. II, pl. 6, 7	beginning of the Fourth Dynasty, Sneferu
Iabtet	Giza G 4650	Junker 1929, fig. 51	first half of the Fourth Dynasty, Khufu
Wenshet	Giza G 4840	Junker 1929, fig. 63	first half of the Fourth Dynasty, Khufu
Khufukhaf I	Giza G 7140	Simpson 1978, figs. 32–3	first half of the Fourth Dynasty, Khufu
Seshathotep	Giza G 5150	Kanawati 2002, vol. II, 11–30	first half of the Fourth Dynasty, Khufu
Djedefmin	Giza G 7760	Lepsius 1849–1859, vol. II, pl. 33	first half of the Fourth Dynasty, Djedefre
Nikanesut	Giza G 2155	Junker 1934, 137	first half of the Fourth Dynasty, Khafre
Seshemnefer I	Giza G 4940	Lepsius 1849–1859, vol. II, pl. 28	first half of the Fourth Dynasty, Khafre
Meresankh III	Giza G 7530	Dunham & Simpson 1974, pl. 4	middle of the Fourth Dynasty, Khafre and Menkaure
Merib	Giza G 2100	Lepsius 1849–1859, vol. II, pl. 21	middle of the Fourth Dynasty, Khafre and Menkaure
Sekhemankh	Giza G 7660	Lepsius 1849–1859, vol. II, pl. 32	middle of the Fourth Dynasty, Khafre and Menkaure

Table 1 The table contains selected Old Kingdom tombs and their dating based on the new criteria of the scenes of the funerary domains. – *continuation*

Tomb owner	Location	Reference	Suggested dating
Nebemakhet	Giza L. 86	Hassan 1943, 125–50.	end of the Fourth Dynasty, Menkaure and Shepseskaf
Nikaure	Giza L. 87	Lepsius 1849–1859, vol. II, pl. 15b	end of the Fourth Dynasty, Menkaure and Shepseskaf
Persen	Saqqara D 45	Petrie & Murray 1952, pl. 9	beginning of the Fifth Dynasty, Userkaf and Sahure
Rawer	Giza	Hassan 1932, 18, fig.13	first half of the Fifth Dynasty, Sahure and Neferirkare
Phenuka	Saqqara D 70	Lepsius 1849–1859, vol. II, pl. 47	first half of the Fifth Dynasty, Sahure and Neferirkare
Khufukhaf II	Giza G 7150	Simpson 1978, fig. 48	middle of the Fifth Dynasty, Neferirkare to Niuserre
Iymery	Giza G 6020	Weeks 1994, 5	middle of the Fifth Dynasty, Neferirkare to Niuserre
Seshemnefer II	Giza G 5080	Kanawati 2002, vol. II, 31, 51, pl. 65	middle of the Fifth Dynasty, Neferirkare to Niuserre
Seshemnefer III	Giza G 5170	H. Junker 1938, 209–10, pl. 4	middle of the Fifth Dynasty, Neferirkare to Niuserre
Akhtihotep	Saqqara D 46	Davies 1901, vol. II, pl. 13	end of the Fifth Dynasty Djedkare to Unas
Senedjemib-Inti	Giza	Brovarski 2001, vol I, 70	end of the Fifth Dynasty
Merefnebef	Saqqara	Myśliwiec et al. 2004, 247	end of the Fifth and beginning of the Sixth Dynasty, Unas and Teti
Nikauisesi	Saqqara	Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 2000, 17–23, pls. 53–5.	end of the Fifth and beginning of the Sixth Dynasty, Unas and Teti
Mereruka	Saqqara	Duell 1938	beginning of the Sixth Dynasty, Teti
Mehu	Saqqara PM 619	Altenmüller 1998, 202–5	first half of the Sixth Dynasty Pepy I
Hesi	Saqqara	Kanawati & Abdel-Raziq 1999, 42, pl. 62	first half of the Sixth Dynasty, Pepy I
Ey	Saqqara	Jéquier 1929, 108–9, fig. 122	end of the the Sixth Dynasty, Pepy II