

Representation of 'S3w' and 'Pr-nw' Shrines in the Funeral Procession in Some Non-Royal Mastabas During the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties

Representation of 'S3w' and 'Pr-nw' Shrines in the Funeral Procession in Some Non-Royal Mastabas During the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties¹

تصوير مقاصير "ساو" و"بر-نو" في الموكب الجنزي في بعض مصاطب الأفراد غير الملكيين إبان الأسرتين الخامسة والسادسة

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Abstract

This study sheds light on the symbolic depiction of both Sais and Buto shrines, whether they were depicted by the kings or later by the individuals, such as viziers and high officials. It deals with the subject from the second half of the Fifth Dynasty to the Sixth Dynasty, especially during the reigns of Djedkare Isesi and Unas kings. These shrines were depicted in the funeral procession as part of a river trip to the sacred religious shrines before the completion of the burial. The study depends on seven non-royal mastabas in Saqqara and Dahshur as sources for the visits to Sais and Buto shrines. It also attempts to link that visit to the high social and administrative status of the viziers and high officials. Last but not least, the study attempts to indicate the shrines' number, symbolism, building material, and architectural features in addition to their religious and funeral roles.

Keywords: S3w, Pr-nw, Sais, Buto, Saqqara, Shrine, Symbolism, Funeral Procession, Old Kingdom.

المخلص

تسلط الدراسة الضوء على التصوير الرمزي لكل من مقصورة مدينتي سايس وبوتو، سواء تصويرها بواسطة الملوك أو لاحقاً بواسطة الأفراد مثل الوزراء وكبار المسؤولين. وتتناول الدراسة الموضوع منذ النصف الثاني من الأسرة الخامسة وحتى الأسرة السادسة، خاصة في عهدي الملكين جد-كارع إيسسي وونيس. تم تصوير هذه المقاصير في موكب الجنازة كجزء من رحلة نهريّة إلى المزارات الدينيّة المقدسة قبل إتمام عملية الدفن. إعتمدت الدراسة على سبعة مصاطب غير ملكية في سقارة ودهشور كمصادر لزيارة مقاصير سايس وبوتو. كما تحاول ربط تلك الزيارة بالمكانة الاجتماعيّة والإدارية العالية للوزراء وكبار المسؤولين. وأخيراً وليس آخراً، تحاول الدراسة الإشارة إلى أعداد المقصورتين، ورمزيتهما، ومواد البناء خاصتهما، وخصائصهما المعماريّة بالإضافة إلى دورهما الديني والجنازي.

الكلمات الدالة: ساو، بر-نو، سايس، بوتو، سقارة، مقصورة، رمزية، موكب جنزي، دولة قديمة.

1. Introduction:

The first known representation of the 'pr-nw' shrine was on the Ivory knife handle of the Metropolitan Museum MMA 26.241.1. It appeared in the context of a religious visit by one of Naqada II or III rulers.² The 'pr-nw' shrine is also depicted on the

¹ This Paper is extracted from the author's Master's thesis entitled: "The Symbolic Sanctuaries and Blind Chapels in Ancient Egyptian Architecture and Art till the End of the New Kingdom", which is enrolled in Ancient Egyptian Archaeology Department- Faculty of Archaeology- Cairo University.

² Petrie, F., *Ceremonial Slate Palettes*, BSEA, London, 1953, 12-13; Williams, B., et al., "The Metropolitan Museum Knife Handle and Aspects of Pharaonic Imagery before Narmer", *JNES* 46, (1967), n°4, 248-249.

Hunters' Palette, and the Libyan features of the hunters suggest that the event took place in one of the western delta regions.³ Two shrines, most likely the 'pr-nw' and 'pr-nsr', were depicted on the Scorpion's Macehead.⁴ The macehead of Narmer shows the old shrine of the temple of Buto 'Dbwt'⁵ and the king wearing the red crown which either implies extending his power over Lower Egypt,⁶ or shows him in the temple of 'Dbwt' in Buto during the 'hb-sd'.⁷ Similarly, on the two wooden labels belonging to Hor-Aha (fig.1) the shrine of Sais and the shrine of 'Dbwt' temple were depicted in the context of a religious visit to Sais and Buto.⁸ The 'pr-nw' shrines were also presented on two ivory labels of Djer (fig.2) in two rows separated by a water canal.⁹ Furthermore, both the 'pr-nw'  and 'pr-wr'  shrines were depicted on two ivory labels of Djet; this time, the 'pr-nw' was topped by a red crown, while the 'pr-wr' was topped by a vulture goddess Nekhbet.¹⁰

The royal religious visits to the symbolic shrines of the holy cities continued from the Third Dynasty up to the Late Period. The best examples of these visits can be seen in the 'hb-sd' celebrations during which the king is represented symbolically dead and then resurrects so both his power and legitimacy are renewed post his symbolic visits to the shrines of the deities of Upper and Lower Egypt.¹¹ The kings pyramid complexes of Djoser,¹² Sneferu,¹³ Sahure,¹⁴ Niuserre,¹⁵ Pepi II,¹⁶ Senusret III¹⁷ and Amenemhat Sobekhotep I¹⁸ are great attestations of such depictions. Such depictions can be also witnessed on both the gate of Osorkon II in Tell Basta¹⁹ and the palace of Apries in Memphis.²⁰ However, it is thought that the models of small boats found in Badari tombs

³ **Spencer, A. J.**, *Early Egypt: The Rise of Civilisation in the Nile Valley*, London, 1993, 57, fig. 37.

⁴ **Millet, N. B.**, "The Narmer Macehead and Related Objects", *JARCE* 27, (1990), 55, fig. 2.

⁵ **Quibell, J.**, *Hierakonpolis I*, London, 1900, 9.

⁶ **Emery, W.**, *Archaic Egypt*, London, 1961, 45-47.

⁷ **Badawy, A.**, *Le Dessin Architectural chez les Anciens Egyptiens*, Le Caire, 1948, 16.

⁸ **Petrie, F.**, *The Royal Tombs of the First Dynasty II*, MEEF 21, London, 1901, pl. X-2, XI-2.

⁹ **Quibell, J.**, *Excavations at Saqqara (1912-1914): Archaic Mastabas*, Le Caire, 1923, pl. XI, 3; **Emery, Archaic Egypt, 59, fig. 20.**

¹⁰ **Vikentiev, V.**, "Les Monuments Archaiques: II- La Tablette en Ivoire de Naqâda", *ASAE* 41, (1942), 291ff; **Emery, W.**, *Great Tombs of the First Dynasty II*, London, 1954, 102-103, fig.105, pl.XXXV-b; **Gardiner, A.**, "The Personal Name of King Serpent", *JEA* 44, (1958), 38.

¹¹ **Martin, K.**, "Sedfest", *LÄ* V, 783-785.

¹² **Friedman, F. D., Friedman, F.**, "The Underground Relief Panels of King Djoser at the Step Pyramid Complex", *JARCE* 32, (1995), 3, fig. 2-a, b.

¹³ **Fakhry, A.**, *The Monuments of Sneferu at Dahshur II, I: The Temple Reliefs*, Cairo, 1961, 60, figs. 35-42.

¹⁴ **Borchardt, L.**, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Sahure I: Der Bau*, Leipzig, 1910, 52, taf. 58; **Borchardt, L.**, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Sahure II: Die Wandbilder: Text*, Leipzig, 1913, tafs, 19, 21, 22, 70.

¹⁵ **Borchardt, L.**, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Ne-User-Ra^c*, Leipzig, 1907, 38, abb.17.

¹⁶ **Jéquier, G.**, *Le Monument Funéraire de Pepi II, II: Le Temple*, Le Caire, 1938, pls. 53, 60; **Jéquier, G.**, *Le Monument Funéraire de Pepi II, III: Les Approches du Temple*, IFAO, Le Caire, 1940, pls. 5, 8.

¹⁷ **Bisson de la Roque, F.**, *Médamoud: Rapport sur les Fouilles de Médamoud, Rapports Préliminaires: FIFAO VIII* (1930), 1^e partie, Le Caire, 1931, pl. VIII.

¹⁸ **Bisson de la Roque, Médamoud, pl. X.**

¹⁹ **Naville, E.**, *The Festival Hall of Osorkon II in the Great Temple of Bubastis* (1887-1889), MEEF 10, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London, 1892, pls. IV, VII, VIII, XII.

²⁰ **Petrie, F.**, *The Palace of Apries: Memphis II*, London, 1909, fig. VI.

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and the pottery drawings of the Naqada I and Naqada II Periods may indicate beliefs related to the afterlife and visits to sacred places of deities.²¹

For non-royal individuals, those visits were originally peculiar to the ancient rulers of Buto, as their funeral processions had to first set off to the main religious centers in the Delta before it headed back to the cemetery of Buto. The king was welcomed there by his predecessors, the ‘mww’ dancers, who performed ritual dances in the cemetery while the funeral procession.²² As from the Fifth Dynasty, non-royal individuals began to depict the shrines of Sais and Buto in their mastabas as part of the funeral procession, and it has become a constant tradition since then.²³

By the end of the Fourth Dynasty and the beginning of the Fifth Dynasty, the divine monarchy began to crumble, and the divine kingship and royal authority were clearly declining. At that point, the influence of high officials was increasing, and they began to hold almost all the high positions. The intermarriages between the royal family and elites have further increased their influence²⁴ which is reflected in their tomb's wealth and prominent location near their kings' pyramids.²⁵ Their diverse titles were also evidence of their authority.²⁶ As a result, non-royal art peaked during that period in Memphis, especially in Saqqara.²⁷

2. The Two Shrines in the Funeral Visit: Between Reality and Symbolism:

Before the second half of the Fifth Dynasty, the funerary procession goes on a journey to the beautiful West.²⁸ Then, the rituals of visiting the shrines of Sais and Buto started to be depicted. They began to be visited or symbolically erected on the cemetery's land while crossing the winding *wrt*-canal. The religious and funeral rites were performed

²¹ Eissa, A., “Pilgrimage, Funeral and Symbolic Visits in Ancient Egyptian Scenes and Texts”, MA Thesis (unpublished)- in Arabic, Faculty of Archaeology- Cairo University, Cairo, 1983,71-72.

²² Spencer, J., *Death in Ancient Egypt*, Harmondsworth, 1984, 160-161.

²³ Van de Walle, B., Review of “Junker, H., Der Tanz der Mww und das Butische Begräbnis im Alten Reich, *MDAIK* 9, heft I, (1940), 1-39”, *Les Livres (Égypte Pharaonique), CdÉ* 16, issue 32 (1941), 225; Altenmüller, H., “Butisches Begräbnis”, *LÄ* I, 887.

²⁴ Kanawati, N., *The Egyptian Administration in the Old Kingdom: Evidence on its Economic Decline*, Aries & Phillips LTD., Warminster, 1983, 1; Bárta, M., “Egyptian Kingship during Old Kingdom”, A. J. Hill, P. Jones & M. J. Antonio (eds.), *Experiencing Power, Generating Authority: Cosmos, Politics, and the Ideology of Kingship in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia*, Publisher: UPenn, Philadelphia, 2013, 274ff; Bárta, M., “Kings, Viziers, and Courtiers: Executive Power in the Third Millennium B.C”, García, J. C. M., (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian Administration*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2013, 165-166; Sabbahi, L. K., *Kingship, Power, and Legitimacy in Ancient Egypt: from the Old Kingdom to the Middle Kingdom*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2021, 24.

²⁵ Kanawati, *Egyptian Administration*, 9ff; Harpur, Y., *Decoration in Egyptian Tombs of The Old Kingdom: Studies in Orientation and Scene Content*, London and New York, 1987, 9.

²⁶ Strudwick, N., *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom: The Highest Titles and their Holders*, KPI Limited, London, 1985, 174.

²⁷ Kanawati, N., Woods, A., *Artists in the Old Kingdom: Techniques and Achievements*, Supreme Council of Antiquities, Cairo, 2009, 2.

²⁸ Settgast, J., *Untersuchungen zu Altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen*, ADAIK, Ägyptologische Reich, III, Verlag J.J. Augstin, Hamburg, New York, 1963, 72.

before them as it was supposed to happen in their original sites in the delta.²⁹ The purpose of crossing the *wrt*-canal in the Old Kingdom's scenes was to transition from the regular state to the '3h' state, while hymns were being chanted. These scenes which were like the deceased's journey above the lake of knives in the Book of the Dead in the New Kingdom, considering the deceased as the sun god 'R^c' who must cross it on Netherworld journey.³⁰

The depiction the symbolic shrines within the so-called 'pilgrimage' to the shrines of the holy cities³¹ has lacked a chronological or spatial sequence; however, the main event, the reception of the funeral procession before the shrines, was always highlighted. That was probably due to the space limitation on the mastabas' walls.³² It continued to be depicted during New Kingdom, nevertheless, in a reduced form which is obvious when compared to the examples dating back to the Old Kingdom where the scenes were depicted in a more orderly, clearer, and sequential manner.³³ By the beginning of Middle Kingdom, the pilgrimage to Abydos, where the legendary tomb of Osiris is located,³⁴ became more preferred than the pilgrimage to the shrines of the north.³⁵

The shrines of Sais and Buto were depicted in two rows during the Old Kingdom unlike during the New Kingdom when they were depicted all together in one scene as shown in the tomb of *Rekhmire*, from the Eighteenth Dynasty, in Western Thebes.³⁶ Starting from the Fifth Dynasty, a fixed area in the cemetery was allocated to the ritual imitating the sacred areas in the delta. It probably contained shrines, palm trees, canals, and water lakes on the way between the embalming tent and the entrance to the tomb, all of which haven't been archaeologically proven yet.³⁷ During the Old Kingdom, high officials in Saqqara visited the shrines in Sais and Buto, unlike the New Kingdom high officials who settled down for depicting them or simply sending the deceased statue to the cities to complete the funeral rites.³⁸ The rituals of visiting the delta shrines became a

²⁹ Eissa, "Pilgrimage, Funeral and Symbolic Visits", 2, 149.

³⁰ Abbas, E., "Crossing of the Lake Ritual", Judith Corbelli, Daniel Boatright and Claire Malleson (eds.), *CRE* (2009): Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Symposium, University of Liverpool, 7–9 January 2009, Oxbow Books, 2011, 1-3.

³¹ Servajean, F., "Enquête sur la Palmeraie de Bouto (I): Les Lymphes d'Osiris et la Résurrection Végétale", Sydney H. Aufrère (ed.), *Encyclopédie Religieuse de l'Univers Végétal, Croyances Phytoreligieuses de l'Égypte Ancienne I*, Orientalia Monspeliensia X, Centre d'Égyptologie Francios Dumas, Université Paul Valéry- Montpellier III, 1999, 229.

³² Van de Walle, 222; Brunner-Traut, E., *Der Tanz im Alten Ägypten: nach Bildlichen und Inschriftlichen Zeugnissen*, ÄF 6, Begündet von Alexander Scharff, Herausgegeben von Hanns Stock, Universität München, Second Edition, Verlag J.J. Augustin, Hamburg, New-York, 1958, 57.

³³ Servajean, "Enquête sur la palmeraie de Bouto", 229.

³⁴ Helck, W., "Die Herkunft des Abydenischen Osirisrituals", *ArOr* 20, (1952), 72; Griffith, J., "Osiris", *LÄ* IV, 630.

³⁵ Van de Walle, 225-226; Settgast, *Untersuchungen zu Altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen*, 65.

³⁶ Spencer, *Death in Ancient Egypt*, 161; Davies, N. G., Wilkinson, K., *Paintings from the Tomb of Rikh-Mi-Re*, MMA, New York, 1935, pl.XXIV.

³⁷ Settgast, *Untersuchungen zu Altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen*, 72-73.

³⁸ Abdul-Qader, M., *The Development of the Funerary Beliefs and Practices displayed in the Private Tombs of the New Kingdom at Thebes*, Cairo, 1966, 173.

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revival of ancient rituals for cities that had political and religious significance during ancient times.³⁹

Those visits were, most likely, paid by ancient kings of historical times. However, when they started to be carried out by non-royal individuals, they began to gradually lose their initial value and were replaced by a simulation of the pilgrimage. This simulation was through erecting light symbolic shrines along the cemetery way that linked the purification tent and mastaba.⁴⁰ Alternatively, these shrines were not even erected along the way, the ritual was just symbolically performed as a dramatic play after the funeral boat had crossed the Nile *wrt*-canal towards the west instead. During the ritual, the shrines, in front of which recitations were performed by the lector priest, were dummy ones.⁴¹ In other cases, they were just symbolically depicted on the walls of the mastaba.⁴²

Perhaps during the embalming of the body which, as Herodotus mentioned, lasted in some instance for seventy days, it was the deceased's statue that took part in the visit to Sais and Buto shrines.⁴³ It is still obscure what the deceased's relatives did while the deceased's body was in the embalming tent though.⁴⁴ The deceased's statues were then dragged to the mastaba after the completion of the visit. The best example is given in the Mastaba of Ty in Saqqara.⁴⁵ It is also argued that post the embalming the rituals were re-performed but with the deceased's coffin this time rather than/along with his statue(s).

3. Destinations and the Purpose of the Visit:

The funeral visit used to proceed to two destinations west of the delta; the first one is Sais, the capital of the fifth nome of Lower Egypt, known today as Sa-Al-Hajar, which was the center of the cult of the goddess Neith.⁴⁶ The second one is Buto, located within the sixth nome of Lower Egypt and consists of two districts, ‘P’ and ‘Dp’. It was called

³⁹ Vandier, J., “Quelques Remarques sur Les Scènes de Pèlerinage aux Villes Saintes dans Les Tombes de la XVIIIe Dynastie”, *CdÉ* 37, (1944), 52.

⁴⁰ Van de Walle, 223; Gaballa, G. A., *Narrative in Egyptian Art*, DAIK, Printed in West-Germany, Imprimé en Allemagne, Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz, 1976, 30.

⁴¹ Van de Walle, 223-224; Kees, H., *Totenglauben und Jenseitsvorstellungen der Alten Ägypter Grundlagen und Entwicklung bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches*, Zweite, neubearbeitete Auflage, Verlag Akademie, Berlin, 1956, 18; Spencer, *Death in Ancient Egypt*, 162.

⁴² Spencer, *Death in Ancient Egypt*, 162.

⁴³ Herodotus II, with an English Translation by A. D. Godley, II, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, William Heinemann LTD, London, 1920, 371.

⁴⁴ Kanawati, N., *The Tomb and Beyond: Burial Customs of Egyptian Officials*, Aris & Phillips, Warminster, 2001, 28.

⁴⁵ Steindorff, G., *Das Grab des Ti*, Sieglin Exp. II, Leipzig, 1913, tafs. 62-81; Épron, L., Dumas, F., *Le Tombeau de Ti: Les Approches de la Chapelle*, Fascicule I, Mémoires Publiés par les Membres de IFAO, LXV, Le Caire, 1939, pls. XLVII- LV.

⁴⁶ Gauthier, H., *Dictionnaire des Noms Géographiques Contenus Dans les Textes Hiéroglyphiques V*, IFAO, Le Caire, 1928, 2; Gomaà, F., *Die Besiedlung Ägyptens Während des Mittleren Reiches II: Unteraägypten und die Angrenzenden Gebiete*, TAVO 66/2, Verlag Dr. Ludwig Reichert, Wiesbaden, 1987, 87ff.

in prehistoric times ‘*Dbwt*’ and known nowadays as ‘Tell el-Fara’in’.⁴⁷ Buto was the capital of the kingdom of the western delta during pre-dynastic times.⁴⁸ There were other religious cities that had religious and political importance during pre-dynastic times, such as Abusir Banna, Behbeit el-Hagar, Mendes and Heliopolis.⁴⁹

If the deceased wished to walk in the beautiful ways of the venerated ones,⁵⁰ his body needed to visit the ancient shrines of Sais, Buto, and Heliopolis before burial. This visit took place symbolically in a water canal branching from the Nile and leading to the cemetery in the west along which there were two stations for performing rituals, one for the shrine of Sais and the other for the shrine of Buto. The Field of Offerings of Heliopolis was symbolically depicted as a garden before the tomb. These simple symbolic rituals were an attempt by the ancient Egyptian priests to mimic the actual rituals that used to happen before the real shrines of the holy cities of the Delta.⁵¹

4. Numbers and Materials of the Shrines:

As for Sais shrine, the Egyptians used to depict one or two of it, while the ‘*pr-nw*’ shrines were depicted, throughout historical times, in varying numbers. Some would say that the fixed number for depicting ‘*pr-nw*’ shrines is often nine shrines and nine palm trees alternating.⁵² They were sometimes depicted in the shadow of palm trees and other times without them. The damage to the shrine's scenes was a primary reason for not knowing the actual numbers that were depicted on the walls of the Mastabas.

The primitive shrines of deities arose in the Early Dynastic Period in local communities⁵³ compared to the later massive temples of deities.⁵⁴ They were small and built from lightweight materials, such as reeds, mats, trunks, branches of trees and plant leaves. They were roofed with wooden battens, reeds, straw as well as palm leaves and were covered with mud to protect them against the rain. By the beginning of the First and Second Dynasties, those shrines began to be built of mud bricks.⁵⁵ These botanical

⁴⁷ **Gauthier, H.**, *Dictionnaire des Noms Géographiques* II, IFAO, Le Caire, 1925, 35; **Wilson, J.**, “Buto and Hierakonpolis in the Geography of Egypt”, *JNES* 14 (1955), 231-232; **Altenmüller, H.**, “Buto”, *LÄ* I, 887; **Gomaà, Die Besiedlung Ägyptens**, 105ff.

⁴⁸ **Kees, H.**, *Der Götterglaube im Alten Ägypten*, Sechste, unveränderte Auflage, Verlag Erschienen im Akademie Berlin, 1987, 178.

⁴⁹ **Abdul-Qader**, *The Development of the Funerary Beliefs*, 173; **Gaballa**, *Narrative in Egyptian Art*, 29.

⁵⁰ **Lepsius, C. R.**, *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*, Zweite Abtheilung, *Denkmäler des Alten Reichs Blatt LXXXII- CLIII*, Berlin, 1849, b1.101-a.

⁵¹ **Junker, H.**, “Der Tanz der Mww und das Butische Begräbnis im Alten Reich”, *MDÄIK* 9, (1940), 39; **Junker, H.**, *Die Mastabe des Kai-em-anch: Giza IV*, Bericht über die von der AAWWien auf gemeinsame Kosten mit Dr. Wilhelm Pelizaeus unternommenen, Grabungen auf dem Friedhof des Alten Reiches bei den Pyramiden von Giza, Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky A. G., Wien und Leipzig, 1940, 18.

⁵² **Settgast**, *Untersuchungen zu Altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen*, 67.

⁵³ **Eaton, K.**, *Ancient Egyptian Temple Ritual: Performance, Patterns, and Practice*, Routledge Studies in Egyptology, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, New York and London, First Publish, New York, Oxon, 2013, 4.

⁵⁴ **Bussmann, R.**, “Urbanism and Temple Religion in Egypt: A Comment on Hierakonpolis”, *JEA* 100, (2014), 334.

⁵⁵ **Firth, C. M., Quibell, J. E.**, *Excavations at Saqqara: The Step Pyramid*, with Plans by Lauer, J-Ph., I. Text, Imprimerie de IFAO, Le Caire, 1935, 12-13; **Baines, J.**, “Trône et Dieu: Aspect du Symbolisme Royal et Divin des Temps Archaiques”, *BSFE* 118, (1990), 29-30; **Serrano, A. J.**, *Royal Festivals in the Late Predynastic Period and the First Dynasty*, Oxford, 2002, 29; **Arnold, D.**, “Pr-nu”, *LÄ* IV, 932; **Arnold, D.**, *The Encyclopedia of Ancient*

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materials were the basic raw material for building in the Nile Valley during the Prehistoric and Early Dynastic periods⁵⁶ as they were available in the Nile Valley and easily obtained. Later, they were imitated in the architectural features of the deities' stone temples to refer to the botanical elements of the primitive shrines.⁵⁷ For example, the shrines of the south of 'pr-wr' and the north of 'pr-nw' were built in the 'hb-sd' courtyard of the Step Pyramid Compound⁵⁸ of Djoser in Saqqara from stone imitating the botanical elements. Later, shrines began to be built from stone even in their original places.⁵⁹

5. The Symbolism of 'S3w' Shrine:

During pre-dynastic times, Sais and Buto were rival kingdoms.⁶⁰ Sais is referred to as the home of the Red Crown⁶¹ and *Hwt-bit* , which means House of the Bee or House of the King of Lower Egypt.⁶² It was dedicated to the cult of goddess Neith, who was depicted wearing the red crown of Lower Egypt.⁶³ She was considered the goddess of war, linen, weaving, a national goddess of Lower Egypt, one of the creator deities and protector of the coffin of Osiris. On top of that, she helped the king and sun god 'R' during the underworld journey.⁶⁴

During the Old Kingdom, Sais, along with its temple, became a mythical sacred area for funeral rites. Its significance increased during the Twenty-sixth Dynasty when it became the capital of ancient Egypt.⁶⁵ The reason behind that is that the ancient Egyptians believed that the mythical tomb of Osiris was located behind the shrine of the temple of Neith in Sais,⁶⁶ as per Herodotus. The Egyptians used to role-play the final events of the tragic legend of Osiris around the temple's lake at night during a grand celebration called The Festival of Lanterns, in which they lit up flat circular lamps that

Egyptian Architecture, Translated by Sabine H. Gardiner and Helen Strudwic, Edited by Nigel and Helen Strudwick, Princeton University press, New Jersey, 2003, 173.

⁵⁶ **Frankfort, H.**, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion of Society and Nature*, with a New Preface by Samuel Noah Kramer, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Edition, 1978, 95.

⁵⁷ **Snape, S.**, *Ancient Egypt: The Definitive visual history*, Penguin Random House, published by Dorling Kindersley Limited London, 2021, 37.

⁵⁸ It is worth mentioning, that the "Compuond" term is more suitable for the pyramid compound of king Djoser which contains diverse architectural elements served various purposes. In contrast, the "complex" term served for a sole purpose.

⁵⁹ **Lauer, J-ph.**, *La Pyramide à Degrés: L'architecture I*, Texte, FouillesSaqq, Imprimerie de IFAO, Le Caire, 1936, 131ff; **Giedion, S.**, *Ewige Gegenwart: Der Beginn der Architektur: Ein Beitrag zu Konstanz und Wechsel*, Verlag M.DuMont Schauberg, Köln, 1964, 180.

⁶⁰ **Kees**, *Totenglauben*, 112.

⁶¹ **Wainwright, G. A.**, "The Red Crown in Early Prehistoric Times", *JEA* 9, (1923), 28.

⁶² **Kees**, *Der Götterglaube*, 178.

⁶³ **Gauthier, H.**, *Dictionnaire des Noms Géographiques IV*, 65; **Helck, W.**, *Die Altägyptischen Gaue*, TAVO n°.5, Verlag Dr. Ludwig Reichert, Wiesbaden, 1974, 158-163; **LGG III**, 510-513.

⁶⁴ **Wilkinson, R. H.**, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, Thames & Hudson Ltd, London, 2003, 156-159.

⁶⁵ **Wilkinson, R. H.**, *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt*, Thames & Hudson, New York, 2000, 106.

⁶⁶ **Mysliwiec, K.**, "Sais", Redford, D. B. (ed.), *OEA III*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, 174.

illuminated throughout the night just as in the myth.⁶⁷ Unfortunately, the main temple of the goddess Neith in Sais has been destroyed, and many pieces have been moved to other places. As a result, the exact location of Sa El-Hajar is still unknown.⁶⁸ The results of the topographical survey of the ancient city of Sais, however, indicate that Sa El-Hajar was most likely located on a Nile Island,⁶⁹ which complies with the funeral procession reception scene in the tombs in which the priest chants before the shrine of Sais while the funeral boat is seen towed towards the island's shore.

6. The Architecture of ‘S3w’ Shrine:

The shrine of the temple of Neith in Sais is depicted on two ebony labels of Hor-Aha from the First Dynasty. The two labels represent the primitive image of the ancient Egyptian temple.⁷⁰ It seems that the king went on a religious or political visit to the temple of Neith in Sais to extend his rule and authority over Lower Egypt.⁷¹ In the center of the open courtyard of the temple stands the symbol of the goddess Neith,  the shield along with the two crossed arrows.⁷² The temple's facade is flanked by two tall wooden flagpoles representing the  ‘ntr’ sign.⁷³ The shrine had a vaulted ceiling with four corner posts that rose from the level of the shrine's ceiling. Besides, there was a side door which was perhaps for the priests. There's also a low-high wattle fence shown surrounding the courtyard.⁷⁴

The architectural scenes of Sais shrine in the Early Dynastic Period and the scenes depicted on a group of Naophorous statues (fig. 3) from the Late Period are more detailed than the shrines depicted in the funeral visits of individuals. It's noteworthy to mention that the scenes of the Late Period do not have remarkable differences from the examples dating back to the Early Dynastic Period. In both cases, a frontal image of the shrine is depicted with simple lines and a vaulted ceiling, and on either side of it, there is a shield, two crossed arrows, and two pennants  . While in front of the shrine there's what can be seen as a triangle offering for Neith.⁷⁵

The depiction of the primitive form of Neith's shrine continued in the pilgrimage scenes of individuals to the holy cities from the Old Kingdom until the New Kingdom. Sais was represented in the pilgrimage by a flat-roofed shrine surrounded by two high

⁶⁷ Herodotus II, 349, 483, 485.

⁶⁸ Arnold, *Encyclopedia of Ancient Egyptian Architecture*, 207.

⁶⁹ Wilson, P., “Sais (Sa el-Hagar), 1999”, *JEA* 86, (2000), 5.

⁷⁰ Petrie, *Royal Tombs II*, 21, pl. X-2, XI-2.x; Emery, *Archaic Egypt*, 51.

⁷¹ Emery, *Archaic Egypt*, 50.

⁷² Petrie, *Royal Tombs II*, pl. X-2, XI-2; Ricke, H., *Bemerkungen zur Ägyptischen Baukunst des Alten Reichs I*, BÄBA 4, Verlag im Borchardt-Institut für Ägyptische Bauforschung und Altertumskunde in Kairo, Zürich, 1944, 37, abb.10, 1-2.

⁷³ Spencer, *Death in Ancient Egypt*, 161.

⁷⁴ Badawy, *Le Dessin Architectural*, 11-12; Badawy, A., *A History of Egyptian Architecture: from the Earliest Times to the End of the Old Kingdom I*, Giza, 1954, 34.

⁷⁵ Jéquier, G., “Les Temples Primitifs et la Persistance des Types Archaïques dans l'Architecture Religieuse”, *BIFAO* 6, (1908), 27ff; El-Sayed, R., *La Déesse Neith de Saïs: Importance et Rayonnement de son Culte I*, BdE 86, IFAO, Le Caire, 1982, 34.

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masts ending with a pennant, indicating the sign ‘ntr’.⁷⁶ The shrine is crowned by a *hkr*-frieze  decoration and is preceded by a large offering table for the deceased.⁷⁷ Sais shrine was the main purpose and destination of the funeral journey. Before the shrine stood a chief lector priest ‘*hry-hb hry-tp*’ to receive and welcome the funeral procession while reciting the hymns from a papyrus roll. The papyrus boat was dragged by a random number of priests. It carried a shrine under a canopy, either with the statue or the deceased's coffin next to which the two mourners ‘*drty*’ Isis and Nephthys appeared along with two embalmer priests who supported the shrine.⁷⁸ It seems that the depiction of Sais shrine with these architectural features in pilgrimage scenes has become a symbol of the city and its entrance. These previously mentioned architectural features might be referring to one of the stages of the development of the temple.

7. The Symbolism of ‘Pr-nw’ Shrine:

Buto played an essential role in religious and funeral rites at the beginning of the Pre-Dynastic Period as it was the center of the capital and the cemetery of the ancient rulers of the delta.⁷⁹ Meanwhile, both shrines, ‘*pr-nw*’  and ‘*pr-nsr*’  of Lower Egypt had the primitive design of the ancient Egyptian temple  with vaulted ceilings symbolizing the two districts of Buto, ‘*P*’ and the ‘*Dp*’.⁸⁰ The two shrines were depicted on the *Scorpion* King's macehead from the Pre-Dynastic Period.⁸¹ The ‘*pr-nw*’ shrine and the ‘*pr-nsr*’ house of flame were known as the national shrines of Lower Egypt. The ‘*pr-nw*’ shrine was sometimes referred to as ‘*Trt-mht*’  ‘the North of shrine’. It also represented one of the rooms in the ancient Egyptian temple as a counterpart to the ‘*pr-wr*’ shrine.⁸² Both the ‘*pr-nw*’ and the ‘*pr-wr*’ were meant to symbolize the deities of Lower and Upper Egypt collectively.⁸³ In addition, they represented miniature versions of actual temples.⁸⁴ Further, both shrines together symbolize the united Egypt and represent the primitive palace of the rulers in Buto and Hierakonpolis during the pre-unification period.⁸⁵ These shrines were set up in the vicinity of the royal palace in Memphis during the ‘*hb-sd*’ rituals, where the king visited the main deities' shrines in the provinces of Upper and Lower Egypt; in particular Nekhbet, the lady of ‘*pr-wr*’, and Wadjet, the lady of ‘*pr-nsr*’ and ‘*pr-nw*’.⁸⁶ Therefore, ‘*pr-nw*’ shrine became a symbol of the entirety of

⁷⁶ El-Sayed, *La Déesse Neith de Saïs*, 33-34.

⁷⁷ Van de Walle, 223, 224.

⁷⁸ Settgest, J., *Untersuchungen zu Altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen*, 66, 67.

⁷⁹ Vandier, “Quelques Remarques sur Les Scènes de Pèlerinage aux Villes Saintes”, 52.

⁸⁰ Gardiner, A., “Horus the Behdetite”, *JEA* 30, (1944), 27, n.3.

⁸¹ Millet, “The Narmer Macehead”, 55, fig. 2.

⁸² Stadelmann, R., “Tempel”, *LÄ* VI, 355.

⁸³ Bonnet, H., *Reallexikon der Ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*, Walter De Gruyter & Co., Berlin, 1952, 630-631.

⁸⁴ Spencer, N., “Shrine”, Willeke Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA: Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles, (2010), 2.

⁸⁵ Junker, “Der Tanz der Mww”, 6; Ricke, *Bemerkungen zur Ägyptischen Baukunst*, 36-37, abb.10, figs. 3-9.

⁸⁶ Borchardt, *Sahure II*, 94, 101; Arnold, “Pr-nu”, 932.

Lower Egypt when the goddess Wadjet, whose one of her epithets is ‘*Pyt*’  ‘who belongs to Buto’,⁸⁷ became the heraldic goddess of the area.⁸⁸

Accordingly, when the shrines of Buto were depicted in religious rituals, they actually referred to the temple in general. In contrast, when they were depicted in the funeral rites, they symbolized the cemetery and tombs of the ancient Buto rulers, where the ‘*mww*’ dancers who represent ancient Buto rulers go out to receive the funeral procession.⁸⁹ Buto also had significance in the afterlife as the deceased wished to be buried in the shade of a sacred grove in Buto to be satisfied and blessed.⁹⁰ Besides, it is the area where the goddess Isis gave birth to her child Horus.⁹¹

8. The Architecture of ‘*Pr-nw*’ Shrine:

Although there are no archaeological remains of the ‘*pr-nw*’ shrine, its shape can be traced from the hieroglyphic determinative , as well as the north house and eastern shrines in the pyramid compound of Djoser. Likewise, many ushabti boxes and granite sarcophagi dating back to the Middle and New Kingdom had taken the form of ‘*pr-nw*’ shrine.⁹² Further, several ancient Egyptian words associated with burials, such as the verb ‘*Krs*’ , to bury⁹³ and ‘*Krst*’ , the burial,⁹⁴ had the same determinative.⁹⁵ It seemed that one of the types of boat shrines that were engraved on pre-dynastic vessels had a vaulted U-shaped ceiling. These shrines held sacred ritual-related human figures.⁹⁶ Consequently, the ‘*pr-nw*’ has become a symbol of the deities' shrines in general.⁹⁷ That type of shrine retained the vaulted ceiling from the Early Dynastic Period until the Greek-Roman Period, and it was later dedicated to funerary deities, particularly Osiris and Sokar.⁹⁸ The ‘*pr-nw*’ shrine had a vertical rectangular form with a barrel vault consisting of annular layers of bevelled bricks. The sides of the shrine were sometimes depicted at

⁸⁷ **Wb** I, 490.

⁸⁸ **Regulski, I.**, *A Paleographic Study of Early Writing in Egypt*, OLA 195, Uitgeverij Peeters and Department Oosterse Studies Publishers, Leuven- Paris- Walpole, MA, 2010, 157.

⁸⁹ **Van de Walle**, 224; **Altenmüller**, “Butisches Begräbnis”, 887; **Altenmüller**, “Buto”, 888; **Bietak, M.**, “Zu den heiligen Bezirken mit Palmen in Buto und Saïs- Ein Archäologischer Befund aus dem Mittleren Reich”, M.Bietak, J.Holaubek, H. Mukarovsky, and H.Satzinger (eds.), *Zwischen den beiden Ewigkeiten*, Festschrift Gertrud Thausing, Eigenverlag des Institutes für Ägyptologie der Universität Wien, Vienna, (1994), 10.

⁹⁰ **Wallert, I.**, *Die Palmen im Alten Ägypten: Eine Untersuchung ihrer Praktischen, Symbolischen und Religiösen Bedeutung*, MÄS: Herausgegeben von Hans Wolfgang Müller und Wolfhart Westendorf, Verlag Bruno Hessling, Berlin, 1962, 129ff; **Gamer-Wallert, I.**, “Palme”, *LÄ* I, 659.

⁹¹ **Münster, M.**, *Untersuchungen zur Göttin Isis vom Alten Reich bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches*, MÄS 11, Verlag Bruno Hessling, Berlin, 6.

⁹² **Wilkinson, R. H.**, *Reading Egyptian Art: A Hieroglyphic Guide to Ancient Egyptian Painting and Sculpture*, Thames and Hudson Ltd, London, 1992, 143; **Arnold**, *Encyclopedia of Ancient Egyptian Architecture*, 173.

⁹³ **Urk** IV, 1825,4.

⁹⁴ **Urk** IV, 32, 11; 113, 7; 414, 2.

⁹⁵ **Wb** V, 63-66.

⁹⁶ **Quibell, J. E., Green, F. W.**, *Hierakonpolis II*, London, 1902, pl. LXXVII.

⁹⁷ **Arnold, D.**, “Per-wer II”, *LÄ* IV, 935.

⁹⁸ **Jéquier**, “*Les Temples Primitifs*”, 30; **El-Yahky, F.**, “The Origin and Development of Sanctuaries in Predynastic Egypt”, *JSSEA* 14, 3, (1984), 73.

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the same height of the vault and other times higher to support the barrel vault from both sides.⁹⁹

9. ‘Pr-nw’ and ‘S3w’ Shrines in the Non-Royal Mastabas:

The shrines of Sais and Buto were depicted within the funeral procession on the walls of the non-royal mastabas, particularly those of viziers and high officials during the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties in the Memphite necropolis. Six of these tombs are in Saqqara, namely the mastabas of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, Ptahhotep I, Ptahhotep II, Nebkawhor, Iyenefret, Idut as well as the mastaba of *SneferuinIshtef* in Dahshur.

9.1 The Mastaba of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep :

The so-called ‘two brothers’ mastaba’ is located south of the causeway of the pyramid complex of Unas in Saqqara.¹⁰⁰ It belongs to Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep and dates to the reign of either Niuserre or Menkawhor. Both held many titles some of which are ‘*hm-ntr R^c m šspw-ib-R^c*’ the sun priest of the sun temple of Neuserre and ‘*iri nwt niswt*’ the manicurist of the King.¹⁰¹ This tomb contains the oldest known depiction of the Sais shrine in non-royal mastabas. And even though the texts accompanying the scenes do not refer plainly to Sais shrine, it is understood that this was where the visit headed based on similar scenes and texts from other mastabas. The shrine was depicted, for example, twice in a scene from Nebkawhor and SneferuinIshtef mastabas.

9.1.1 Description of the Scene (Fig. 4-a, b):

Sais Visit was depicted on the eastern and western walls of the mastaba's front courtyard; the eastern wall visit was dedicated to Khnumhotep, while the western one to Niankhkhnum. Each of the scenes is divided into four registers and is identical to the other in most artistic and ritual elements.¹⁰²

On the eastern wall, Khnumhotep's visit to Sais is arranged bottom up. The burial rites are performed on the deceased's statue, and not his mummy, inside a shrine. The lower register shows the ‘*š3bt*’ papyrus boat carrying a closed shrine under a canopy containing the statue of Khnumhotep next to which sit the two mourners ‘*drty*’. It is towed by two rowing boats and nine men who pull the boat with a long rope. Sais's journey begins in the second register from the bottom, where a papyrus boat *š3bt* is depicted on a winding water canal ‘*wrt*’. The journey was referred to in the text as ‘*d3t wrt*’, crossing the *wrt*-canal. The boat carries a closed shrine under a canopy holding the

⁹⁹ Ricke, *Bemerkungen zur Ägyptischen Baukunst*, 37, abb.10, figs. 5,8,9; Van de Walle, 224; Gaballa, *Narrative in Egyptian Art*, 30.

¹⁰⁰ Moussa, A., Altenmüller, H., *Das Grab des Nianchchnum und Chnumhotep*, AV 21, DAIK, Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz, 1977, 13.

¹⁰¹ PM III², 641; Moussa, Altenmüller, *Grab des Nianchchnum und Chnumhotep*, 25-29, 44; Harpur, Y., Scremin, P., *The Chapel of Niankhkhnum & Khnumhotep: Scene Details*, Oxford Expedition to Egypt, Egypt in Miniature 3, Oxford, 2010, p.XIII.

¹⁰² PM III², 642.

statue of Khnumhotep and is supported by two priests, one of whom is ‘w(i)t(y)’ embalmer. Next to the boat’s shrine sit the two mourners ‘*drty*’ as well as two oarsmen on the boat’s bow. In the stern, the helmsman stands.

The procession goes south of towards a sacred area where a *hkr*-frieze crowns the two shrines, one of them is fronted by a high flagpole that ends with a ‘*ntr*’ sign. The same shrine is depicted behind the boat once again. There are also various offerings and slaughter scenes. The text reads:



stp stpt int m pr n dt n krst

The selection of food/offerings brought from the house of eternity for the burial

The upper register shows the dragging of the statue's shrine by seven funeral priests and a group of oxen. On both the right and left sides there are two ladies ‘mourners’ shown next to a variety of offerings of fruits, bread, lettuce, beer and meat. The next scene is showing the rest of an open shrine which there’s a standing statue of Khnumhotep accompanied by a text that reads:



ḥꜥ m tp is shꜥ iriw ꜥnwt pr-ꜥ3 Hnm-ḥtp

Standing in front of the tomb, the inspector of manicurists (at) the royal palace, Khnumhotep¹⁰³

While on the two sides of the entrance after the front courtyard one can see the scenes of dragging the statues of the two brothers with ropes by a group of priests. The statues were shown in sitting and standing positions inside open wooden shrines. This perhaps happened after visiting Sais and finishing the required funeral rituals and before the burial process. This is what can be seen in the Mastaba of Ty in Saqqara after the statues visited the Delta.¹⁰⁴



šms twtw nfr m ḥtp m ḥtp ḥr ntr ꜥ3

The good bringing of the statues in peace in peace before the great god



šms twtw r is n ḥrt-ntr m ḥtp

Bringing the statues to the tomb of cemetery in peace¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Moussa, Altenmüller, *Grab des Nianchchnum und Chnumhotep*, 48-55, tafs. 6-15.

¹⁰⁴ Steindorff, *Das Grab des Ti*, tafs. 62-8; Épron, Dumas, *Le Tombeau de Ti*, pls. XLVII- LV.

¹⁰⁵ Moussa, Altenmüller, *Grab des Nianchchnum und Chnumhotep*, 61-64, tafs. 16-17.

shrines crowned by  *hkr*-frieze are depicted; beside them are four figures that are thought to be canopic jars in the shape of the ‘*pr-nw*’ shrines , but the palm trees are not shown next to them. At the far right, the sacred visit to the shrines of Buto ‘*pr-nw*’ is represented and the boat carrying a statue's shrine is towed over the winding water canal ‘*wrt*’ by three men.

The upper register represents the last part of the ritual which involves dragging the deceased's coffin by oxen towards the cemetery in the presence of a group of dancers and three men performing a mourning rite to express sorrow. Above the scene there are the remains of seated statues, probably belonging to the deceased, post completing visiting the shrines of Sais and Buto.¹¹¹ It's noteworthy to mention that the offerings and sacrifices represented the supplies from the earthly field of offerings, the ‘*sht-htpw*’. This was a vital part of the reception of the deceased on his funeral journey. Additionally, the bull's foreleg was of an utmost significance as it was used in the rites of opening the mouth, resurrection and rebirth.¹¹²

9.3 The Mastaba of Akhethotep and Ptahhotep II :

The mastaba is located to the west of the pyramid compound of Djoser and to the south of the tomb of Ptahhotep I.¹¹³ Ptahhotep I was the father of Akhethotep and grandfather of Ptahhotep II.¹¹⁴ Both were judges and viziers during the reigns of Djedkare Isesi and Unas.¹¹⁵

9.3.1 Description of the Scene (Fig. 6):

The funerary journey of the symbolic shrines of Sais and Buto is shown here on a limestone fragment (58 cm x 52 cm). Since it was found in the rubble of the mastaba, It is not easy to figure out its original location inside the mastaba, but it, most likely, belongs to Ptahhotep II.¹¹⁶ It is divided into three registers; in the lower register, the remains of a rope suspended far to the right to tow the boat are seen while the lector priest ‘*hry-hb hry-tp*’, who recites from a large papyrus scroll, is heading to the funeral procession. Behind him is an official holding the honorary cane.

Then two ‘*mww*’ dancers receive the funeral procession and hitting their chests with their fists and having three papyrus leaves  on their heads as a symbol for Lower Egypt. Behind them stands a priest who puts his hands by his sides before the Sais shrine  that is preceded by a flagpole ending with the sign  *ntr*. Above it is a rectangular

¹¹¹ Junker, “Der Tanz der Mww”, 6ff.

¹¹² Kees, *Totenglauben*, 117.

¹¹³ Davies, N. G., *The Mastaba of Ptahhetep and Akhethetep at Saqqareh II*, ASEG 9th memoir, Edited by F. Ll. Griffith, London, 1901, 2.

¹¹⁴ Harpur, Y., Scremin, P., *The Chapel of Ptahhotep: Scene Details*, Oxford Expedition to Egypt, Egypt in Miniature 2, Oxford, 2008, p.xv.

¹¹⁵ PM III², 599-600.

¹¹⁶ Hassan, *Mastabas of Ny-‘ankh-Pepy*, 25ff; Bolshakov, A. O., “The Old Kingdom Representations of Funeral Procession”, *GM* 121, (1991), 34.

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part with parallel horizontal lines, perhaps indicating  *hkr*-frieze. Above the lector priest, there are two ‘*pr-nw*’ shrines .¹¹⁷

As for the upper register, the remains of the scene of dragging the coffin or statue of the deceased to the cemetery can be seen. The coffin is dragged by two bulls with the help of three men using a long rope to regulate the movement of traction. There are also traces of a woman figure with her hands raised. The woman is probably the head of the musical ensemble that performs a ritual rhythmic funeral dance in front of the funeral procession along the way to the mastaba.¹¹⁸

9.4 The Mastaba of Nebkawhor/ Idu :

The mastaba is located north of the causeway of King Unas and south of the enclosure wall of the step pyramid at Saqqara.¹¹⁹ It dates back to the end of the Fifth Dynasty or the beginning of the Sixth Dynasty. The tomb was usurped by Nebkawhor from  Akhtihotep/Hemi.¹²⁰ Nebkawhor, also known as Idut, held many titles, the most important of which were  *‘Byty s3b Bty’*, he of the curtain, chief Justice and vizier,  *‘s3-nswt n ht.f smsw’*, king’s eldest son of his body and  *‘shd hm-ntr Nfr-iswt-Wnis’*, inspector of the prophets of the pyramid of Unas.¹²¹

9.4.1 Description of the Scene (Fig. 7):

The scene is on the eastern side of the north wall in the colonnade hall. At the far west of the scene, four shrines are depicted, decorated with *hkr*-frieze . Next to them is the Sais shrine flanked by flagpoles in the shape of  ‘*ntr*’ sign; Between the  ‘*ntr*’ signs  ‘*s3w*’ is written. The boat above *wrt*-canal carrying the coffin is depicted towed with ropes by four men towards the Sais shrine. Meanwhile, two lector priests ‘*hry-hb hry-tp*’, each wearing a distinctive piece of cloth that covers one shoulder, stand before the shrine reciting hymns from two long papyrus rolls. Behind the priests, two men stand holding ‘*hrp*’ scepters in their right hands. While on the left hand they each hold a long cane. On the far right, a man is shown holding a long cane in his right hand and looking to the west. There’s also a lector priest standing inside what could be the shrine of Sais but with the *hkr*-frieze decorated ceiling missing. Behind the shrine, the bulls are being slaughtered, and their hearts are extracted  ‘*sd h3t*’.

¹¹⁷ Junker, “Der Tanz der Mww”, 4; PM III², 605.

¹¹⁸ Junker, H., “Der Tanz der Mww”, 4.

¹¹⁹ Hassan, S., *The Mastaba of Neb-Kaw-Her*, re-edited by Dr. Zaky Iskander, Excavations at Saqqara, 1937-1938, I, Arab Republic of Egypt: Antiquities Department, Published by Government Printing Office, Cairo, 1975, 5.

¹²⁰ PM III², 627; Kanawati, N., *Conspiracies in the Egyptian Palace: Unis to Pepy I*, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York, 2003, 25ff; Hassan, *Mastaba of Neb-Kaw-Her*, 5.

¹²¹ Hassan, *Mastaba of Neb-Kaw-Her*, 1-4

As for the upper register, it shows the visit to Buto. The scene includes a lector priest reciting hymns from a long papyrus roll. Above the roll, a text mentions  'sdi ss in hry-hb' the chanting of the document (hymn?) by the lector priest. The priest is depicted welcoming three mortuary dancers 'mww' who wear conical crowns on their heads and are rushing towards him.  'di iwt mww' They hit their fists into their chests, and the text above them reads 'Causing the coming of mww'.¹²² The texts describe these dancers as the ancient rulers of Buto from the people of 'P' and 'Dp'. Generally, the chanting priest would recite hymns and magic incantations, which in turn venerates the deceased and helps him become righteous '3hw'.¹²³

It is suggested that nine 'pr-nw' shrines might have originally occupied the space next to the Sais shrine in the scene.¹²⁴ What proves this theory is the presence of the lector priest 'hry-hb hry-tp' receiving the 'mww' dancers.¹²⁵

9.5 The Mastaba of Iy-nefret :

The mastaba is located south of the enclosure wall of the step pyramid of Djoser and north of the pyramid complex of Unas.¹²⁶ The mastaba of Iy-nefret dates back to the Middle and the end of Unas' reign¹²⁷ or to the Sixth Dynasty.¹²⁸ Iy-nefret had many titles including  't3yty s3b t3ty', he of the curtain, chief justice and vizier,  'imy-r wd(t)-mdw nb(t) nt nswt', overseer of all commands of the king and  'imy-ib n nswt' confidant of the king.¹²⁹

9.5.1 Description of the Scene (Fig. 8):

The scene is not inscribed. The artist has rather drawn the outline of the figures and signs.¹³⁰ This scene is located on the south wall of the first hall, and it goes as follows: In the lower register, there is a papyrus boat above a winding water channel, on which traces of blue color can be seen. Six men tow the boat towards the shore, and four 'pr-nw' shrines alternating with palm trees are drawn above them referring to the delta swamps. Once again, the procession is welcomed by two lector priests who recite hymns from large papyrus rolls. The text next to them is  'sšmt hb (i)n hry-hb' conducting the festival by the lector priest'.

¹²² Hassan, *Mastaba of Neb-Kaw-Her*, 23ff; Hassan, S., "Excavations at Saqqara (1937-1938)", *ASAE* 38, (1938), 513.

¹²³ Kanawati, *Tomb and Beyond*, 29.

¹²⁴ Settgast, *Untersuchungen zu Altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen*, 68.

¹²⁵ Foucart, G., "Étude Thébaines (Série 2), Les Voyages Mystiques aux Villaees Saintes", Samuel A.B. Mercer (ed.), *Egyptian Religion III*, Published by The Alma Egan Hyatt Foundation, New York, 1935, 9-10.

¹²⁶ PM III², 616, Hölscher, U., Munro, P., "Das Unas-Friedhof in Saqqara: 2. Vorbericht über die Arbeiten der Gruppe Hannover im Frühjahr 1974", *SAK* 3, (1975), 118.

¹²⁷ Strudwick, *Administration of Egypt*, 58-59; Kanawati, N., Abder-Raziq, M., *The Unis Cemetery at Saqqara II: The Tombs of Iy-nefret and Ihy (reused by Idut)*, *ACER* 19, Aris and Phillips, Oxford, 2003, 12-13.

¹²⁸ PM III², 616.

¹²⁹ Kanawati, Abder-Raziq, *Unis Cemetery at Saqqara II*, 11-12.

¹³⁰ Saad, Z., "A Preliminary Report on the Excavations at Saqqara, 1939-1940", *ASAE* 40, (1940), 685.

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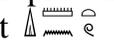
Behind them stands another man who puts his hands by his sides. The procession is followed by a shrine decorated with the Egyptian cornice with an open door containing a standing statue holding a long cane and ‘hrp’ scepter. Above the scene is a narrow register on which distinctive offerings are depicted. On the other hand, the second register from the top shows the coffin dragged above a sledge and into the tomb.¹³¹ Here, it is assumed that the shrine remains on the far right of the scene represented Sais shrine with hkr-frieze and based on the scenes from the mastabas of the two brothers, NebkawHor, and the *Sneferuinishtf*, it’s suggested that another one was supposed to be depicted on the far left as well behind the priest carrying the loaf of bread.

9.6 The Mastaba of Sesheshet / Idut :

The mastaba is located north of the causeway of Unas pyramid, and south of the enclosure wall of Djoser’s pyramid compound. The tomb dates back to the Sixth Dynasty¹³² as it was usurped by Idut from the vizier  ‘Thy’.¹³³ She held many titles, such as  s3t-nswt nt ht.f the king's daughter from his body.¹³⁴ She may have been the daughter of either Unas or Teti.¹³⁵

9.6.1 Description of the Scene (Fig. 9):

On the eastern wall of Hall B, as labeled by Makramallah, or Hall 3, as labeled by Kanawati, the scene of the pilgrimage to the holy cities in the delta was depicted towards the north. In contrast, the burial scene in the cemetery was depicted towards the south.¹³⁶ As most of previous mastabas, the scenes start from the lower registers and continue in an ascending direction.¹³⁷

The bottom register shows the mooring process and is accompanied by the text: ‘Thy im3hw hr Inpw Krs.f m hrt-ntr t3yty s3b t3ty...’ meaning ‘The venerated one before Anubis, who is buried in the necropolis, he of the curtain, chief Justice and vizier...’.¹³⁸ Two wooden boats with rowers are shown dragging the papyrus boat containing the coffin or the statue of Idut with a long rope connecting the three boats altogether. A woman sits on the bow of the papyrus boat representing one of the two mourners. In one of the two boats dragging the papyrus boat  ‘di-mnit’ causing mooring is written next to the helmsman.

In the second register from the bottom, there are six men shown dragging the papyrus boat with a long rope. Behind them a huge list of offerings can be seen as well as

¹³¹ Kanawati, Abder-Raziq, *Unis Cemetery at Saqqara II*, 20-22.

¹³² Firth, C. M., “Excavations of the Service des Antiquités at Saqqara (November 1926- April 1927)”, *ASAE* 27, (1927), 107.

¹³³ PM III², 617, pl. LXI,

¹³⁴ Macramallah, A., *Le Mastaba d’Idout*, FouillesSaqq, Le Caire, 1935, 10-11.

¹³⁵ Kanawati, *Conspiracies in the Egyptian Palace*, 30-31.

¹³⁶ Kanawati, Abder-Raziq, *The Unis Cemetery at Saqqara II*, 48.

¹³⁷ Gaballa, *Narrative in Egyptian Art*, 30.

¹³⁸ Kanawati, Abder-Raziq, *The Unis Cemetery at Saqqara II*, 48.

a bull's right foreleg with its heart. In the third register, a lector priest $\Delta \text{hry-hb}$ dominates the scene reciting from a large papyrus roll. Behind him stands a man holding the long honorary cane and the 'hrp' scepter, behind who are the remains of three 'mww' dancers hitting their chests with their fists performing the rituals. Behind the 'mww' dancers, a lector priest was supposed to be standing in front of the Sais shrine welcoming the funeral procession. Above them, nine 'pr-nw' symbolic shrines III of the sacred Buto are depicted in the shade of six palm trees.¹³⁹

As for the upper scene, it is just like the scene of the funeral journey in Nebkawhor and Ptahhotep I and Ptahhotep II mastabas. The upper register here certainly had the scene of the reception of the funeral procession visit in front of the Sais shrine with two high flagpoles as 'ntr' sign. Similarly, the funerary papyrus boat was to be towed on the wrt-canal carrying the deceased statue, not the coffin just like with Ptahhotep I. This is evidenced by the traces of a man raising his hand to support the statue's shrine¹⁴⁰ similar to the one in the tomb of Ptahhotep I and the two brothers mastabas. Notably, the fifth register scene depicting the return from the visit starts from the opposite direction.¹⁴¹

9.7 The Mastaba of Snfrwinishetef :

The mastaba is located near the pyramid of Amenemhat II. It is built out of mud bricks while the walls were covered in plaster for drawing and painting purposes.¹⁴² The tomb dating has been controversial. It dates back from the reign of Snefru,¹⁴³ or to the Fifth and the Sixth Dynasties.¹⁴⁴ The remaining-colored pieces of the tomb are preserved in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo under the numbers CGC 1769-1780¹⁴⁵ including the funeral procession and visit to Sais under the number CGC 1776.¹⁴⁶ Snfrwinishetef held a title of $\text{III} \text{hnty}(w) \text{-} \text{š} \text{pr-} \text{ʿ3}$ 'shd hnty(w)-š pr-ʿ3' the inspector of tenants of the great house.¹⁴⁷

9.7.1 Description of the Scene (Fig. 10):

The scene consists of three registers representing the funeral procession. The upper one is largely damaged. The lower register is dominated by a boat in the wrt-canal carrying a coffin placed on wooden stands within a canopy. A seated priest and a mourner $\text{h} \text{drty}$ 'drty' is shown sitting on both sides of the coffin.

¹³⁹ Macramallah, *Le Mastaba d'Idout*, 12-13

¹⁴⁰ Junker, "Der Tanz der Mww", 6, abb.4.

¹⁴¹ Kanawati, Abder-Raziq, *The Unis Cemetery at Saqqara II*, 49.

¹⁴² De Morgan, J., *Fouilles à Dahchour en 1894-1895*, Avec la collaboration de M. G. Legrain, M.G. Jéquier, Adolphe Holzhausen, Vienne, 1903, 4-7, pl.XXII.

¹⁴³ Balcz, H., "Zur Datierung der Mastaba des Snofru-ini-ištef in Dahšûr", *ZÄS* 67 (1931), 9; Werbrouck, M., *Les Pleureuses dans l'Égypte Ancienne*, Éditions de la Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, Bruxelles, 1938, 79-80.

¹⁴⁴ Borchardt, L., *CGC: Denkmäler des Alten Reiches (Ausser den Statuen): im Museum von Kairo nos. 1295-1808*, SAE II: Text und Tafeln zu nr.1542-1808, Reichsdruckerei, Le Caire, 1964, 197; Balcz, "Zur Datierung der Mastaba des Snofru-ini-ištef", 12; *PM III*², 891.

¹⁴⁵ *PM III*², 891.

¹⁴⁶ Borchardt, L., *CGC*, 197-199.

¹⁴⁷ Jones, D., *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom II*, 949.

Representation of ‘S3w’ and ‘Pr-nw’ Shrines in the Funeral Procession in Some Non-Royal Mastabas During the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties

The scene is accompanied by a text:  ‘*d3t wrt*’ crossing the *wrt*-canal. Three priests are shown dragging the boat towards the shore where Sais shrine is erected and is decorated with  *hkr*-frieze. Before the shrine, a priest stands to welcome the procession carrying a loaf of bread and a vessel that perhaps contained beer. He is followed by a lector priest ‘*hry-hb hry-tp*’ reciting the hymns from a papyrus roll. The shrine is flanked by two flagpoles in the form of the  ‘*ntr*’ sign. Behind the shrine, there is an offerings scene. Sais shrine is shown again on the far right with a lector priest *hry-hb hry-tp*, but without the two masts of the ‘*ntr*’ sign that adorned the pylon facades of ancient Egyptian temples.

The scene is accompanied by a text:  *ssm hb-mw in hry-hb ii-mh*,¹⁴⁸ conducting the water festival by the lector priest *ii-mh*.¹⁴⁹ That festival of the water was part of similar celebrations of visiting the shrines of the holy cities, transporting statues of the deceased and crossing the *wrt*-canal towards the cemetery in the west.¹⁵⁰

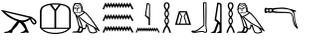
10. Results:

- Sais shrine had standard distinguishable architectural features, such as *hkr*-frieze and dual flagpoles, but in some instances, it was depicted without flagpoles and only decorated with *hkr*-frieze. In contrast the vaulted ceiling was the main distinguishable architectural element of ‘*pr-nw*’ shrine throughout the historical ages.

The oldest depiction of the Sais shrine is in the two brothers' mastaba, while the oldest depiction of the Buto shrine ‘*pr-nw*’ is in Ptahhotep I's mastaba in Saqqara.

- It is noticed that some mastabas depicted both Sais and Buto shrines while others depicted only one of them. This could be attributed to the destruction of the scenes or the limited space the artist had. In the two brothers' mastaba, only Sais shrines are depicted. Based on the known scenes, we can say that the ancient Egyptian artist focused on the most important scenes during the burial rites, namely the depictions of the Sais and Buto shrines.

- Many traditions that were originally peculiar to kings were gradually carried out by high officials. This was concurrent with the decline of royal power in the second half of the Fifth Dynasty to the Sixth Dynasty that not only gave the high officials the opportunity to bequeath their positions to their sons after it was restricted to kings' sons, but also to wear

¹⁴⁸ Additionally, it could be read as:  ‘*ssm hb m mww in hry-hb ii-mh*’, conducting the ritual in the water in the water by the lector priest *ii-mh*.

Wilson, J. A., “Funeral Services of the Egyptian Old Kingdom”, *JNES* 3, n°.4, (1944), 207, n.33, 209, n.45; **Abbas**, “Crossing of the Lake Ritual”, 2.

¹⁴⁹ **Junker, H.**, “Der Tanz der Mww”, 10-11.

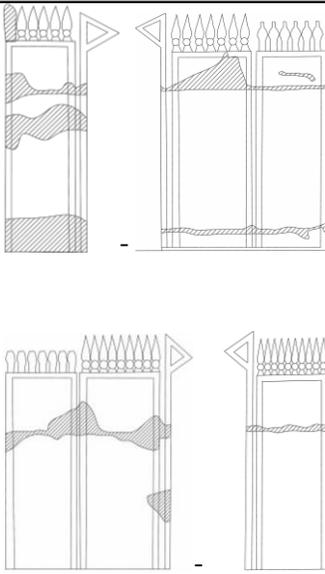
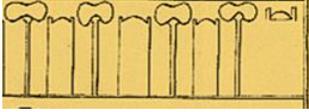
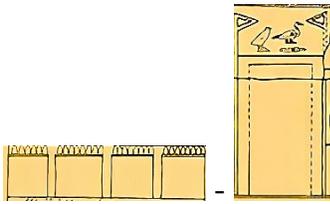
¹⁵⁰ **Kees**, Totenglauben, 117-118.

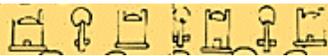
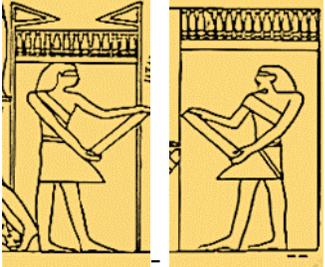
the royal shendit, carve statues, build massive mastabas and visit the symbolic primitive shrines in the delta just as kings.

- High officials mastabas were built in the vicinity of the pyramid complexes of their kings which reflects their authority and closeness to their kings not only in their lifetime but also in the afterlife.
- Perhaps the adjacency of the cities of Sais and Buto to the capital of the Old Kingdom 'Memphis' was a significant reason for visiting the shrines of the holy cities in the delta.
- The study proved that the visits to Sais and Buto shrines were not depicted in all high officials' mastabas, which either means that the visits were not obligatory or the kings allowed only a few officials to depict them in their mastabas.
- While the embalming process, which lasted for up to seventy days, the deceased statue(s) was taken to visit the shrines. It's argued, however, that post the embalming, the rituals were re-performed but with the deceased's coffin this time rather than/along with his statue(s).
- It is thought that a combination of rituals of the Journey of the Beautiful West and the Journey to Sais and Buto occurred in the Old Kingdom, which could be witnessed in the two brothers' mastaba.
- The titles and epithets these high officials held reflect the high social rank they enjoyed during their lifetime as well as the close relationship with their kings and the royal palace.
- The purpose of individuals' journey to the sacred shrines before completing the burial rituals was to visit the temples of ancient Egypt's national deities of ancient times and to be under their patronage and care in the other world.

11. Illustrative Table:

Representation of ‘S3w’ and ‘Pr-nw’ Shrines in the Funeral Procession in Some Non-Royal Mastabas During the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties

Wall	Shrine of Sais	Shrine of Buto	Dating	Mastaba
Eastern and Western wall of Vestibule	 <p>(Author's drawings)</p>	✘	Fifth Dynasty- reigns of Neuserre and Menkawhor	Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep
Western wall of the Pillared Hall			Fifth Dynasty- reign of Djedkare Issi	Ptahhotep I
Unlocatable Fragment			Fifth Dynasty- Beginning of reign of Unas	Ptahhotep II
East part of the north wall of the pillared hall		✘	Fifth Dynasty to Middle reign of Unas	Nebkawhor

<p>South wall of the first room</p>	<p>✘</p>		<p>Fifth Dynasty- Beginning to Late reign of Unas</p>	<p>Iy-Nefret</p>
<p>Eastern wall of the second room B</p>	<p>✘</p>		<p>Fifth Dynasty- Late reign of Unas</p>	<p>Idut</p>
<p>Unknown location in the Mastaba CGC 1776</p>		<p>✘</p>	<p>From the second half of Fifth Dynasty to the first half of Sixth Dynasty</p>	<p>Snefrunishetef</p>

Representation of 'S3w' and 'Pr-nw' Shrines in the Funeral Procession in Some Non-Royal Mastabas During the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties

12. List of Figures

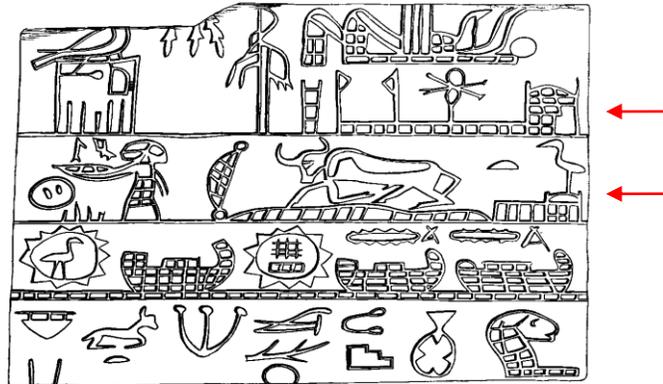


Fig. 1. Wooden label from the reign of Hor-Aha- First Dynasty- from Abydos
(Petrie, 1901, pl.X-2)

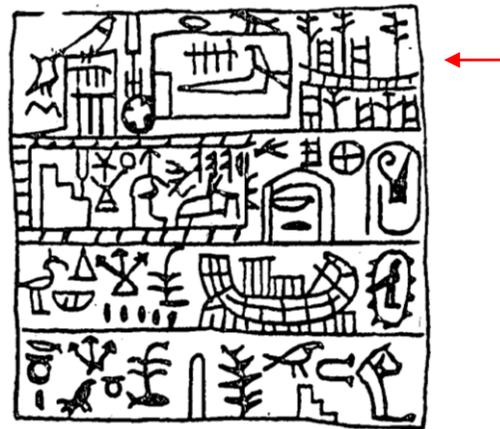


Fig. 2. Ivory Label from the reign of Djer- First Dynasty- from Abydos
(Emery, 1961, 59. fig. 21)

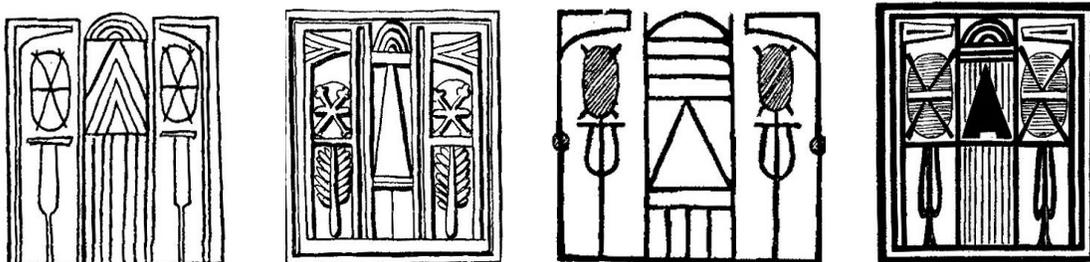


Fig. 3. Frontal depiction for the temple and shrine of Neith in Sais- from the Naophorous Statues dated back to the Late Period
(Jéquier, 1908, figs.7-10)

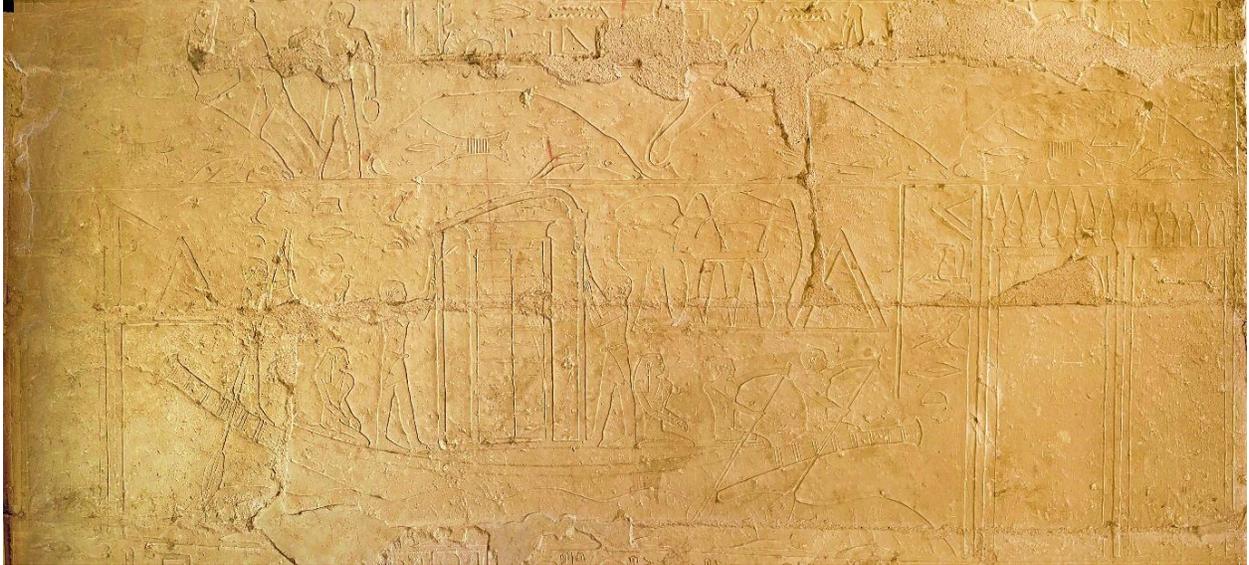


Fig. 4-a. Khnumhotep's funerary visit to Sais shrines- Eastern wall of the Portico of the tomb- Fifth Dynasty- Saqqara

(Author's Photo)

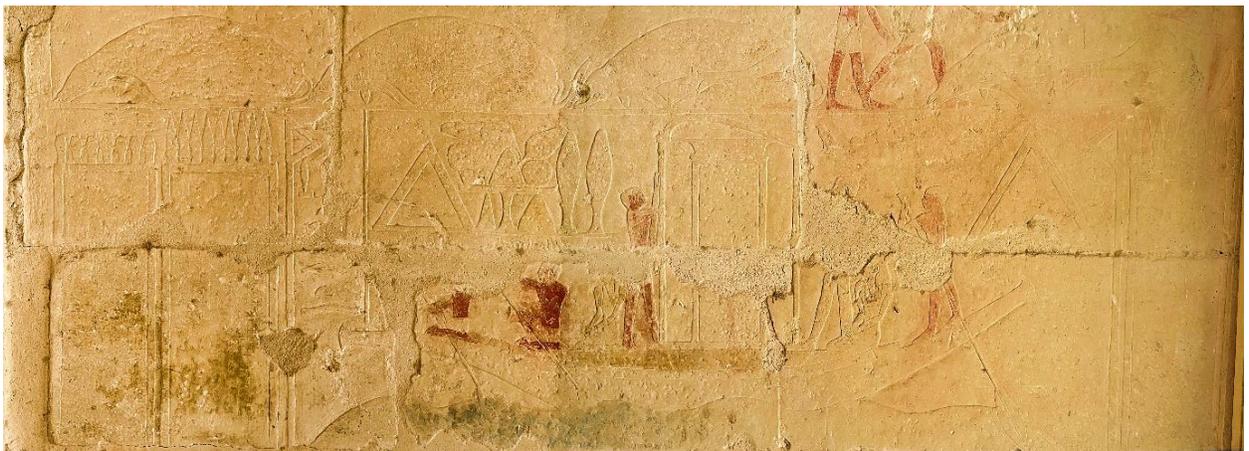


Fig. 4-b. Funerary visit of Niankhkhnum to Sais shrines- Western wall of the Portico of the tomb- Fifth Dynasty- Saqqara

(Author's Photo)

Representation of ‘S3w’ and ‘Pr-nw’ Shrines in the Funerary Procession in Some Non-Royal Mastabas During the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties

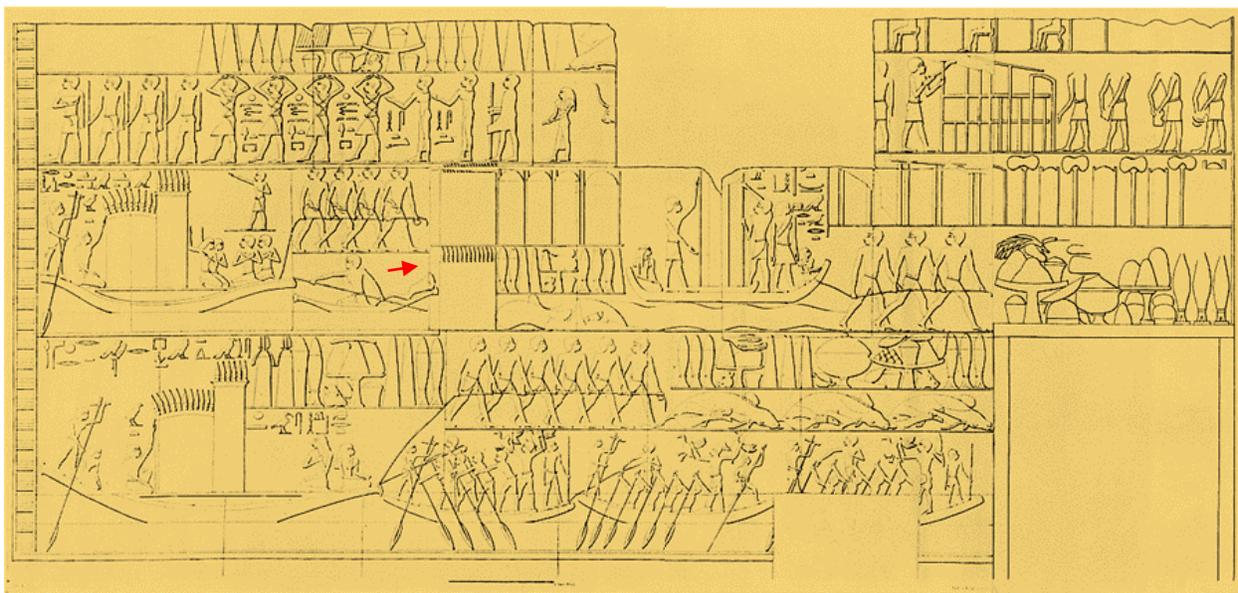


Fig. 5. Sais and Buto shrines in the funerary visit to the delta- mastaba of Ptahhotep I - Fifth Dynasty- Saqqara
(Wilson, 1944, pl.XIII)

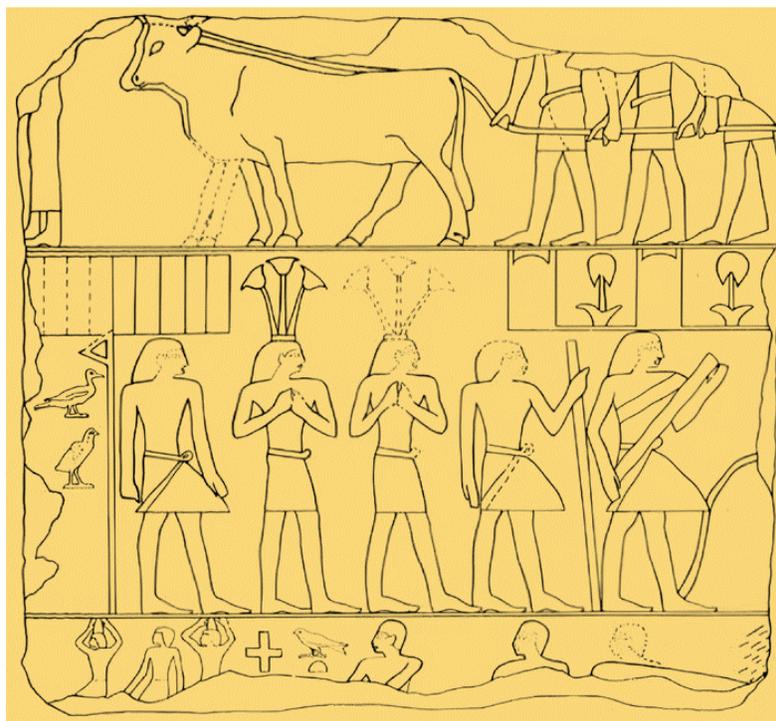


Fig. 6. Sais and Buto shrines in the funerary visit to the Delta- mastaba of Ptahhotep II- Fifth Dynasty- Saqqara
(Junker, 1940, Abb.3)

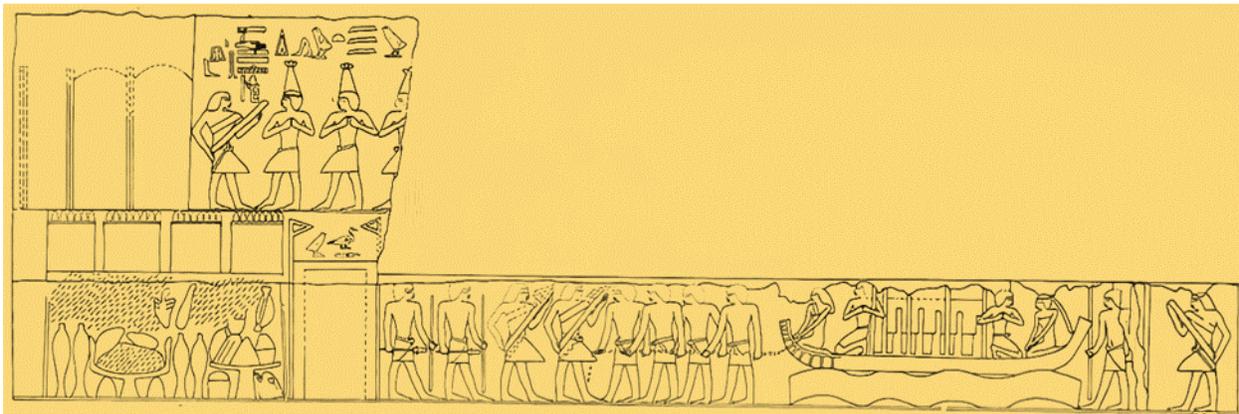


Fig. 7. Sais shrine in the funerary visit to the Delta- mastaba of Nebkawhor- Fifth Dynasty- Saqqara

(Junker, 1940, 6, abb-2)

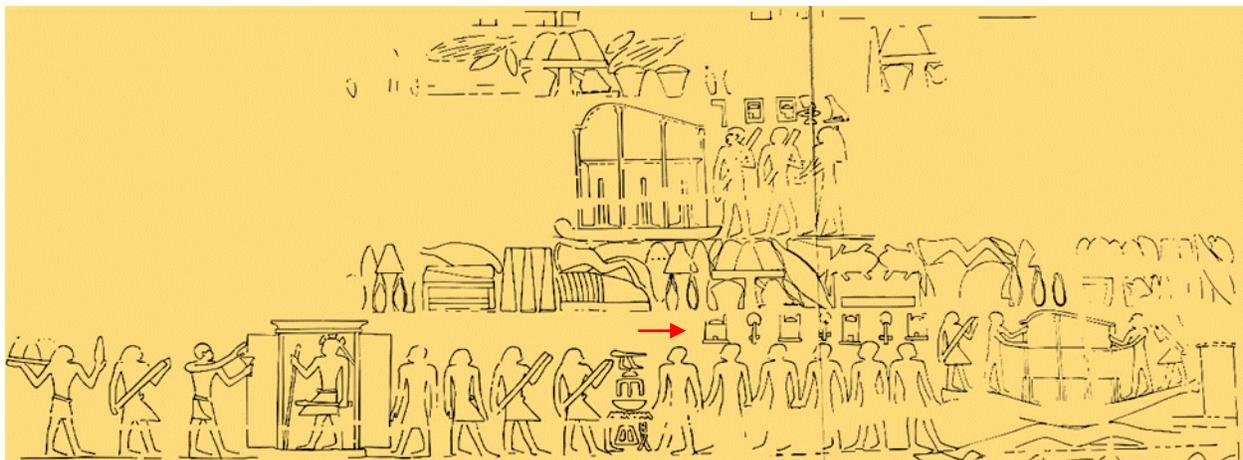


Fig. 8. Sais and Buto shrines '*pr-nw*' in the funerary visit to Sais and Buto- South wall of Room 1- mastaba of Iy-Nefret- Fifth Dynasty- Saqqara

(Kanawati, & Abder-Raziq, 2003, pl.38)

Representation of ‘S3w’ and ‘Pr-nw’ Shrines in the Funeral Procession in Some Non-Royal Mastabas During the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties

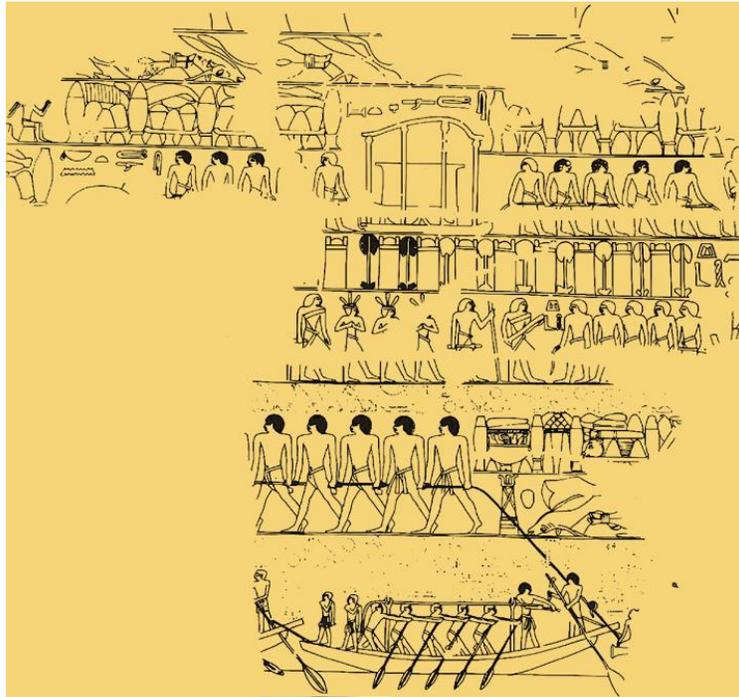


Fig. 9. Buto shrines ‘*pr-nw*’ in the funerary visit to the Buto and Sais? Mastaba of Idut- Sixth Dynasty- Saqqara

(Kanawati, & Abder-Raziq, 2003, pl.56)

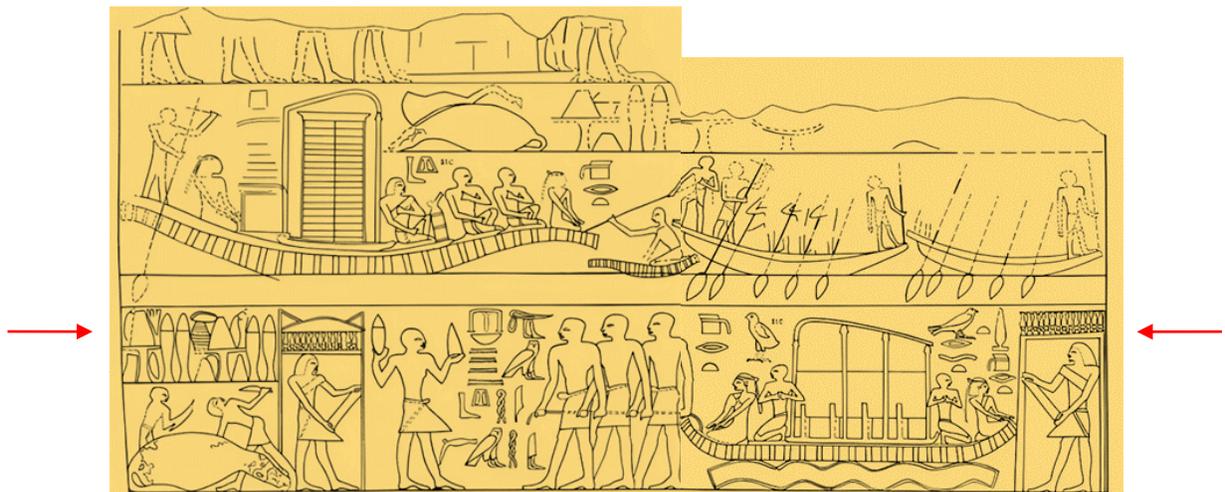


Fig. 10. Sais shrines in the sacred funerary visit to Sais- mastaba of Snefruinishtef- from Fourth to Sixth Dynasty- from Dahshur- CGC 17776

(Wilson, 1944, pl. XIV)

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