Trabajos de Egiptología
Papers on Ancient Egypt

The High Priesthood of Memphis during the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period: An Updated Study and Prosopography
Josep CERVELLÓ AUTUORI

Quelques observations sur l'écriture rétrograde dans les tombes thébaines de l'époque tardive
Silvia EINAUDI

Interpreting Three Gold Coins from Ancient Egypt and the Ancient Near East at the Museo Casa de la Moneda, Madrid
Miguel JARAMAGO

Egyptian Predynastic Lice Combs: Analysis of an Ancestral Tool
Candelaria MARTÍN DEL RÍO ÁLVAREZ

Who Painted the Tomb of Sennedjem?
Gema MENÉNDEZ
The High Priests of Memphis during the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period: An Updated Study and Prosopography

Josep CERVELLÓ AUTUORI

The inscriptions recovered from the looted necropolis of Kom el-Khamaseen, located in southwest Saqqara and dated between the end of the Old Kingdom and the beginning of the First Intermediate Period, document a hitherto unknown high priest of Memphis: Imphot Impy Nikauptah. This character must be incorporated into our prosopographical repertoires and placed in his historical and cultural context. This provides a good opportunity to return to the issue of the Memphis pontificate during the third millennium B.C. as a whole. The aim of this article is therefore to offer, on the one hand, a systematic and updated overview of the subject by integrating the new data from Kom el-Khamaseen, drawing upon the complete sources, and critically reviewing the literature on the matter. On the other hand, it is also about providing a new reasoned chronological list and a prosopography of the Memphis high priests of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period.

Los sumos sacerdotes de Menfis durante el Reino Antiguo y el Primer Período Intermedio. Un estudio de actualización y una prosopografía

Las inscripciones recuperadas de la necrópolis saqueada de Kom el-Khamaisin, situada en Saqqara suroeste y fechada entre finales del Reino Antiguo y comienzos del Primer Período Intermedio, documentan un sumo sacerdote de Menfis hasta ahora desconocido: Imphot Impy Nikauptah. Este personaje debe ser incorporado a nuestros repertorios prosopográficos y colocado en su contexto histórico y cultural. Esto constituye una buena ocasión para retomar la problemática del pontificado menfita durante el III milenio a.C. en su conjunto. El objetivo de este artículo es, pues, ofrecer, por un lado, un estado de la cuestión sistemático y actualizado, integrando los nuevos datos de Kom el-Khamaisin, referenciando todas las fuentes y revisando críticamente la literatura sobre el tema. Por otro lado, se trata también de ofrecer una nueva lista cronológica razonada y una prosopografía de los sumos sacerdotes menfitas del Reino Antiguo y el Primer Período Intermedio.

Keywords: Greatest of the directors of craftsmen, Memphite cults, Ptah, Saqqara, Sokar.

Palabras clave: Jefe de los directores de los artesanos, cultos menfitas, Ptah, Saqqara, Sokar.

1 | A new Memphite high priest from Kom el-Khamaseen (South-West Saqqara)

Kom el-Khamaseen is a small and isolated necropolis located in the southwestern area of the Saqqara desert, 3 km to the west of the pyramid of Djedkare Isesi, and dated to the end of the Old Kingdom and the beginning of the First Intermediate Period.° Due to its isolation, it has long been subject to robbery and looting. Following the latest and most comprehensive plunder, which took place in 1999, the Saqqara Inspectorate recovered a set of fifty-seven limestone blocks or block fragments and five little granite fragments from the site, all of them with inscriptions or reliefs.

1 Cervelló Autuori 2007; 2016; Cervelló Autuori and Díaz de Cerio 2009.
The High Priesthood of Memphis... An Updated Study and Prosopography
Josep Cervelló Autuori

Two years before, in 1997, a team from the Institut d Estudis del Pròxim Orient Antic of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, led by the author, had conducted a survey on this hitherto unknown site and had documented in situ four limestone fragments also with inscriptions and reliefs. No architectural structures or shafts were visible or detectable at that time, but only loose architectural materials scattered on the surface of the hill upon which the site lies, especially white limestone blocks of great dimensions (wall covering or angle blocks, lintels, and jambs) and many pink granite fragments. Neither white limestone nor pink granite are materials existing naturally in the area of Saqqara, so they were obviously brought from outside (probably from Tura and certainly from Aswan, respectively). Despite the remoteness of the site, the communication with the valley is assured by the Wadi Tafla, which divides Saqqara into North and South, and by one of its tributaries.

In 2005-2006, the author carried out a study of the materials recovered after the looting of 1999, stored in the El-Mohemat magazine in Saqqara. Since 2003, several limestone blocks and block fragments and statuettes, all of them with inscriptions, have begun to appear on the antiquities market around the world. All the items for sale in the art galleries that we have been able to track have also been registered and examined by us, in some cases directly and in others through the information provided by the sellers on their web pages.

The study of all this material has allowed us to know six of the characters buried in Kom el-Khamaseen. However, while five of them are recorded on only one document, the sixth character is recorded on twenty-five of the limestone blocks or block fragments and on the five granite block fragments stored at El-Mohemat, as well as on all the limestone blocks or block fragments (twelve until now) and statuettes (ten until now) tracked in the antiquities market. To this list, a weight with the names of the character must be added, which was purchased by H. Brugsch in 1881 from a merchant of antiquities in Saqqara and is now kept in the Ägyptisches Museum Berlin. This proves that his tomb and, by extension, the necropolis have been the focus of robberies from long ago.

Although we do not know the structure of the necropolis of Kom el-Khamaseen and the number, type, and size of its tombs, it is clear that the tomb of this character must have been one of the most remarkable in the site. A set of elongated and trapezoidal limestone blocks stored in the El-Mohemat magazine are inscribed with his names and titles on their polished, “interior”, face, arranged in two parallel lines that cross all of them in their width. These blocks formed the gable roof of an underground chapel the walls of which were most likely lined with part of the limestone covering blocks also stored in the Saqqara magazine or tracked in the art galleries, which are inscribed with his names and titles as well. A close parallel in space and dating of this type of chapel can perhaps be found in the two priests’ tombs of the late Sixth Dynasty which were recently discovered in the necropolis of Tabbet el-Gesh, south Saqqara, although with them the roof is flat and not gabled. Moreover, the aforementioned granite fragments also belonged to the tomb of this character, as their inscriptions clearly attest. As is well known, granite is a material reserved for specific uses in the royal funerary complexes and the wealthy tombs of the Memphite elite. Indeed, the difficulty of quarrying, transporting, and working granite made it impossible to use it on a large scale in building construction.

This remarkable tomb belongs to an enigmatic character called Imephor Impy Nikaupath, who was a ser (priest) /jmwt, “greatest of the directors of craftsmen”, that is to say, a high priest of the temple of Ptah at Memphis. His tripartite name and different epigraphical, palaeographical, and archaeological data allow us to date him very late in the Old Kingdom and/or early in the First Intermediate Period (see Prosopography, [14]). Although he was already identified by the aforementioned Berlin weight, the fact that the only title recorded there is that of sm, “sem-priest”, prevented his identification as a greatest of the directors of craftsmen and his inclusion in the lists of the Memphite high priests. He partially fills the documentary gap between the end of the Old Kingdom and the beginning of the Middle Kingdom. It seemed pertinent to me, therefore, to incorporate the new character in our prosopographical repertoires and place him in his historical and cultural context. This led me to again examine the issue of the Memphite pontificate during the third millennium B.C. as a whole. So far, the Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period have been the subject of two comprehensive studies and three lists, two of them in the form of synthetic prosopographies. The studies, now old, are due to Ch. Maystre and E. Freier. Maystre’s study is included in a general prosopographical work about the Memphite high priests throughout the history of Egypt, which remains the seminal work on this matter; it is actually his PhD thesis, defended in 1948 but only published in 1952, “sans modifier l’ouvrage”. Freier’s article, on the other hand, is monographically devoted to the high priests of the Old Kingdom and was published in 1976. The lists, more recent, are due to D. Wildung (1977), B. Porter and R.L.B. Moss (1981), and B.S. El-Sharkawy (2008). The aim of the present article is therefore to offer, on the one hand, a systematic and updated overview by integrating the new data from Kom el-Khamaseen, quoting the complete sources, and critically reviewing the literature on the matter. On the other hand, it is also about providing a new reasoned chronological list and a prosopography of the Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period. The article is therefore divided into two distinct parts: the study and the prosopography.

In the references within the main text and in the notes, the words “above” and “below” followed by a number refer to a section of the article (which is divided into seven sections

---

1. Dobrev, Lavalle and Onézime 2015: 115-126, 118-119, figs. 11-14, 19-23.
4. Freier 1956: 316-317; El-Sharkawy 2008. B.S. El-Sharkawy has devoted to the history of the Memphite priesthood his unpublished M.A. dissertation: “The Memphite Priesthood till the Beginning of the Predynastic Period in Arabic” (Faculty of Arts, Ain-Shams University, 2005) (see El-Sharkawy 2008: 35 n. 13). He has synthesized the results of his research into two broad articles in English, one of which is quoted above.
2 | The title w xrp Hmwt: reading and significance

As is well known, the title that identifies and defines the high priesthood of Memphis is w brp(w) Hmwt, “greatest of the directors of craftsmen”. We should start by putting it in the context of the full titulary of its holders

The titles of the high priests of Memphis of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period can be classified into five categories, according to the fields of activity to which they refer:

1) titles relating to the cult of the Memphis gods, mainly w(m) nswt Hmwt, or the administration of their sacred and profane places (temples, sanctuaries, offices, estates…)
2) titles relating to the cult of Re, associated with the solar temples of the Fifth Dynasty;
3) titles relating to the funerary cult of the king, specifically associated with the pyramids of Unis and Teti;
4) titles relating to the management of the craftsmen work, the category to which the defining title of the Memphis high priest belongs: w(m) smr waty Hmwt (m prwy).

Since the mid-Sixth Dynasty and the pontificate of Sahu IV Tjety (112), titles of another category were progressively added to the Memphite high priests titulatures: general cult titles, such as w(m) sm and w(r) brr(brr)(brr)-tp, the first of which will eventually become distinctive of the office.

Besides all these functional titles, the Memphite high priests held some status or membership titles (the so-called honorific or ranking titles). The sole title of this kind they had until the mid-Sixth Dynasty was w xrp Hmwt, “greatest of craftsmen”, and w r-p tsp were significantly incorporated to their titulatures. Let us look at this in some detail.

As already noted, the most important of all these titles is w xrp Hmwt, “greatest of the directors of craftsmen” (hereafter abbr. GDC), since it is the one that distinguishes the Memphite high priest par excellence (our prosopography is based on it). It very often appears under the variant w brp(w) Hmwt m prwy, “GDC in the Two Houses”, which connects the office to the central administration of the State, most likely due to the movement of twofold division of the State institutions that took place at the beginning of the Fifth Dynasty and mainly affected the offices related to the craftsmanship and the care of the king.

The GDC title raises three main issues: its graphic-linguistic significance, the number of people in office, and its origins and the field of activity of its holders at first (civil or religious).

As for the first issue, three basic patterns of interpretation of this opaque title have been proposed.

a) w brp(w) Hmwt is to be identified with the title holder. The interpretations according to this pattern can be divided into two categories.

To the first category belong the translations according to which the phrase refers to two ranks of people: the title holder and his subordinates, or to a person and a field of activity: the title holder and the craftsmanship. In the first case, some authors refer to the second sign/term of the title spelling/phrase to the first and some others to the third. This has led to translations such as: “Oberster der Werkmeister” (w brp(w) Hmwt), “grand maître/chef de l’ouvrage” (w krpv kṣerta), “great leader of the artisans”, “supreme leader of handicraft” (w brp Hmwt), “greatest of artificers” (w brp(w) Hmwt), “Grosser und Leitender des Handwerks” (w brp Hmwt), “greatest inspector of the craftsmen” (w brp Hmwt), “greatest controller of craftsmen” (w brp hmrw), and “great director of crafts” (w brp hmrw).

14 Respectively: WS I: 303.12; III: 86.1; Piemce 1932-1935, I: 74, 218 n. 1; II: 250; Sehe in Murray 1937: 12; Sandman Holmberg 1946: 56–57; 59–61; Gardiner 1947: 38*, 54; Freier 1976: 7–8; Krey 1987: 26; Krejčí 2000: 71; Strudwick 2005: 304, 306–309, and Raedler 2011: 155. As Maystre (1934[1948] 6) correctly points out, some of these translations are impossible if we take them and not as free interpretations, since they seem to consider the adjective w as the complement of the noun brp, which is not possible because of the syntactic position of these words.


16 Fischer (1966: 64 n. 27) considers that brp(w) is to be understood as a participle ("those who direct") rather than a title in itself, since there is no single title "brp-brt" held by mid-ranking officials, as the authors who support the other interpretations of the GDC title had objected. There is a title brp bsbt (brt), "director of (all) craftsmen" (see below, 5), but it is not held by mid-ranking officials, but by the GDC title holders themselves. Then, Fischer concludes, the participle brp(w) should refer to officials who held titles such as imy-r kṣerta, "under-supervisor of craftsmen" (see below, 6, and 9.), Kinsch (195), Kinsch, imy-r kṣerta, “overseer of craftsmen” (Jones 2000: 16–8, 680–683), w brp Hmwt, “greatest of craftsmen” (Jones 2000: 351 n. 146–1467), and shb bsbt, “inspector of craftsmen” (Jones 2000: 345–346 n. 348–3487).

17 The word hmrw should be understood as a collective name: WS III: 85; AL 17: 245 n 2694; HLQ 8: 810.


P. Kaplony (1981: 250–251, pl. 74.14) proposes to identify an alternative (and unique) spelling of the title of a seal impression from Giza with the Horus name of Niuserre (Hib-hiby), the sequence, badly preserved especially in its
Kingdom onwards some graphic variants with phonetic complements or determinatives appear and they never show the plural of [p]. In the majority of cases, the second term of other wr titles is addressed as [3].

The main objections to this interpretation are due to Ch. Maystre and H.G. Fischer. On the one hand, some New Kingdom complemented writings of the title seem to contradict it openly: [4] ([5] var. 28) where, if the first sign referred to the god, the indirect genitive would be redundant; and 29 where the plural wr, clearly alluding to various high priests, excludes the reference to the god. On the other hand, neither the term Wr, "Great One", nor the epithet wr zwnw, "great of power", are exclusive to Ptah. In the Old Kingdom, the first is a generic designation that can refer to many gods, including Ptah and the solar gods Atum and Re. The second, which is not among the epithets of Ptah, being the attestation quoted by De Meulenaere exceptionnal, can also exceptionally be attributed to other gods, such as Wespes. 26

b) Sgw, wr is to be identified with the god Ptah. According to this pattern, two main reads and translations have been proposed, one tripartite 'holder-craftsmen-god': "Leiter der Handwerker des Grossen (hpt wmr Wr), due to H. Junker; and one bi-partite 'holder-god': "Artisan du Très Puissant" (hpmw Wr xmr, lit. "craftsmen of the Great of power"), due to H. De Meulenaere. 27 The latter is based on a Twen- ty-sixth Dynasty text where Ptah is addressed as [6].

The objections to this interpretation are due to Ch. Maystre and H.G. Fischer. 22

On the one hand, some New Kingdom complemented writings of the title seem to contradict it openly: 23 where, if the first sign referred to the god, the indirect genitive would be redundant; and 24 where, the plural wr, clearly alluding to various high priests, excludes the reference to the god. On the other hand, neither the term Wr, "Great One", nor the epithet wr zwnw, "great of power", are exclusive to Ptah. In the Old Kingdom, the first is a generic designation that can refer to many gods, including Ptah and the solar gods Atum and Re. The second, which is not among the epithets of Ptah, being the attestation quoted by De Meulenaere exceptional, can also exceptionally be attributed to other gods, such as Wespes. 28

He notes that the demotic spelling and reading of the title of the Memphite high priest is wr hwm(w) (phonetic sign wr + group hwm(w)) and suggests that it could have been the same in earlier times. This leads him to read the original title as wr hwm(w), the signs Sw indicate being the spelling of a word wr, "scer- tre-ver" (phonogram + logogram). The transliteration of the phrase would then be: "scer- tre-ver de l'artisan" or "scer-tre-ver de la corporation des artisans", where wr should be understood in the same way as iwm or mhw in the titles iwm kntt and mhw rhyt: "support of kingnet" and "staff of the myths-people". The main objection that can be made to this interpretation is that, while there is no proof of the existence of a term wr with the suggested spelling and meaning, which would then be attested only in this title, many Old Kingdom titles consist of wr, "the greatest", referring to the title holder as a chief or primus inter pares, followed by a collective or plural noun in direct genitive referring to his subordinates or colleagues, among them wr ml(w) (hmr), "greatest of priests (of Helio- polis)" , the title of the high priest of the sun god at Helopolis. 29 It does not seem appropriate, therefore, to interpret the Memphite title as an isolated case. It is worth noting that the research on the title of the high priests of Mem- phis and the high priests of Helopolis has raised similar issues and generated similar controversies. 30 Also for the heliopolitan ti- title, for example, a reading ml Wr (hmr), "he who sees the Great One of (Heliopolis)", the Great One being the solar god, has been sug- gested (by H. Junker himself, 31 among oth- hers). And in fact, both titles appeared in the Thinite Age (see below, 3), and most likely re- spond to the same cultural-linguistic-graph- ic conception. In both cases, two divinities are concerned: Ptah and Sokar for Memphis, and Re and Atum for Helopolis; and in both cases, as we will see for Memphis (see below, 4), one of the divinities, Sokar/Atum, seems to have a deeper relationship with the third element of the title (hmr, "the craftsmen", and hmr, Helopolis) than the other, Ptah/
Re, who seems to be assuming the prerogatives of his partner as the Old Kingdom goes on.34 This is perhaps the reason why the titles do not refer to any particular god. The most likely linguistic-structural graphic of the two titles is therefore: *wr – the holder as the leader + bpr(w)/m(w) – his *pares or assistants (officials and officiants) + hmwt/(f)wms – the field/place of activity*.

3 | The title $m$ prwy : nature and origin of the institution concerned

Let us now turn to the second of the issues raised by the GDC title, which concerns the number of people simultaneously holding the office. It refers to whether the office of GDC was performed by a college of two or by a single person. The oldest literary attestations of the GDC title are to be found in the inscriptions of the tomb that king Menkaure offered to the nobleman Debehen in Giza35 and the false door stela of king Sahure’s physician Niankhchemektawy from Saqqara.36 In these inscriptions, which concern the transport and carving of the Tura limestone and the manufacture of statues for the construction and decoration of the tombs of these individuals, the spelling of the GDC title involves the writing of two persons who exercised it simultaneously. If that was the case, perhaps the two-headed nature of the office corresponded to the dualization of the State institutions discussed above.37 It is important to note, however, that no allusion at all is made to this possible collegiality of the office in the titulary of the GDCTitle holders of the period concerned (where the GDC title is always written in singular, by definition); indeed, the phrase $m$ prwy refers to the eventual division of the institutions, not necessarily to the collegiality of the offices, as the variants of the same non-collateral titles which include it, such as bry–tp nst w prwy, “king’s liegean in the Two Houses”, and smsw i(t) m prwy, “elder of the (ef) chamber in the Two Houses”, clearly indicate.38

Be that as it may, sometime in the mid or late Sixth Dynasty the charge of GDC was exercised by a singular character called Sabu Tjetjy ([12]). Unfortunately, his false door stela, coming from his tomb at Saqqara, is very fragmentary and the text of his “biography” is only very partially preserved.39 From it, however, important changes regarding the office of GDC can be deduced,40 which will be discussed here and recurrently in the next few pages. Here too, however, we must be cautious. In his edition of the inscriptions on the stela, for example, K. Sethe suggests some text restorations that are entirely hypothetical but mean that a certain preconception existed from the beginning in relation to the historical interpretation of this monument.41 In this biography, we have a third and last attestation of the GDC title written in the dual. A preserved fragmentary passage, in fact, reads: “...$k m$ b(y) [hs-nb nb] (nfr) (ir$t) nb$t (r$t) wr w$[rp](w) hmwt... (38 $[mprw]y$)...” Solak in the Shejt-sanctuary, every divine ritual and every duty regularly performed by the two greatest of the directors of craftsmen...”. Now, in two occasions the text reads: “$w d$ (nfr) nw$.”42 His majesty appointed me...”, with the words that followed being lost. Sethe reconstructs the continuation of the first of these two passages as: “…$m$ wr $bpr(w)$ hmwt w$k(w)$,... “as a greatest of the directors of craftsmen, I alone”, a sequence that does not appear in any of the other old editions of the text. Sethe does the same with another passage that begins: “…$s k$ nfr-n wnn...”, “while there has never been...”, and he completes: “…$w$ bpr(w) hmwt w$k(w)$ dr $b$,$b$, “...a greatest of the directors of craftsmen, he alone, from the beginning”. No reference to the uniqueness of the office is made in the preserved part of the inscription, and Sethe’s reconstructions clearly make the text say more than it actually does. On the other hand, in two other preserved passages one can read: “…$s k$ nfr-n (r$tw$) m$n $w$ bpr(w) hmwt nb $h$r $h$h$w$...” “...whereas never was the like done for any greatest of the directors of craftsmen in the time...”; and: “…$s k$ nfr n lw$ $mnt$ f$r$t) nb$t (nfr) (r$t) im$,... “while the heart of his majesty is stronger than anything usually done there”. This leads Ch. Maystre to conclude that the reform of the Memphite pontificate was the personal work of the king, probably Pepy I.43 However, although it is true that the text constantly refers to the acts and wishes of the king, it is very difficult to know to what extent the phraseology is historical or archetypical, how far the royal intention went, and what the transformation of the office consisted of. There is no doubt, in any case, that there was a transformation, because from Sabu Tjetjy onwards, in all the legal acts and wishes of the king, it is very difficult to know to what extent the phraseology is historical or archetypical, how far the royal intention went, and what the transformation of the office consisted of. There is no doubt, in any case, that there was a transformation, because from Sabu Tjetjy onwards, in all the legal acts and wishes of the king, it is very difficult to know to what extent the phraseology is historical or archetypical, how far the royal intention went, and what the transformation of the office consisted of. There is no doubt, in any case, that there was a transformation, because from Sabu Tjetjy onwards, in all the legal acts and wishes of the king, it is very difficult to know to what extent the phraseology is historical or archetypical, how far the royal intention went, and what the transformation of the office consisted of. There is no doubt, in any case, that there was a transformation, because from Sabu Tjetjy onwards, in all the legal acts and wishes of the king, it is very difficult to know to what extent the phraseology is historical or archetypical, how far the royal intention went, and what the transformation of the office consisted of. There is no doubt, in any case, that there was a transformation, because from Sabu Tjetjy onwards, in all the legal acts and wishes of the king, it is very difficu...
ing activity of the kings of the Second Dynas-
try in Saqqara, the necropolis of Memphis. The
first and third kings of that Dynasty, Hotepse-
hemry and Ninherer, built their tombs south of
what would later be the Step Pyramid com-
plex; although nothing remains of their super-
structures, the substructures consist of wide
complexes of underground galleries, the largest
funerary apartments excavated into the desert
rock in Egypt so far. On the other hand, at the
end of the Dynasty, a new and intense building
activity seems to have taken place in Saqqara.
Recently, two other complexes of underground
galleries, albeit somewhat smaller, have been
discovered a little south of the aforementioned
royal tombs, under the New Kingdom tombs
of Maya and Meryneith; the ink inscriptions men-
tioning Khasekhemwy found there prove that they
are the tombs of two of his high officials
or family members, or, even as has been
suggested very recently,56 the unfinished funerary
complex (main and subsidiary tomb) of king
Sekhemib, his possible immediate predeces-
seur, whose burial he would have taken care of.

Sekhemib, his possible immediate predeces-
sor, whose burial he would have taken care of.

In the discussed inscriptions of Debehen
and Niankhkhekhmet, the GCD title holders ap-
pear only as directors of craftsmen and no men-
tion is made to any ritual function. The same
goes for Sabu I ([g]), who, in the only docu-
ment identifying him as a GCD, is also record-
ed in his capacity as a craftsman. On the other
hand, in the inscriptions of another well-known
high official buried at Saqqara, Khabausokar,
who lived at the end of the Third Dynasty
and the beginning of the Fourth, had a title relat-
ed to the direction of craftsmen, and, in his
image, wears the sub-pectorals which is distinctive
of the GDC title holders, there is no mention of
the cults of Ptah and Sokar (despite the char-
acter’s name).47 These early monuments (ex-
ccept Sabu’s, recently discovered) have led D.
Wildung to classify the GDC title holders of
the Old Kingdom in two groups: those who
51

held the title as a craft title (“Handwerker-
titel”—the oldest—and, those who held it as a
priestly title (“Priestertitel”—the latest, since
Sabu Tjety—.48 However, this division seems
too strict and can be misleading. It is true that
the texts of Debehen and Niankhkhekhmet do
not refer to any priestly function of the GDC ti-
tle holders, but this is due to the fact that they
are mentioned in passing, in short and some-
times fragmentary sentences, and in their exclu-
sive quality as directors of craftsmen, with the
aim of emphasizing the participation of royal
high officials in the construction and decora-
tion of the concerned tombs. To deduce from
these sentences that the GDC title was original-
ly of an exclusively civil nature seems excessive.

The same can be said of Sabu I, represented in
a banquet scene before the king along with oth-
er dignitaries, in one of two registers reserved
for craftsmen overseers. It is also true that the
inscriptions of Khabausokar do not refer to the
cults of Ptah and Sokar, but he was not a [fr][wr
hrpt(w) hmrwt], “greatest of the directors of
craftsmen”, but a [fr][hrpt wmr t3k(t)], “director of
craftsmen of the workroom[royal] tomb”49 (this
is the reason why we have not included
him in our prosopography), and he wears the
sub-pectorals in his capacity as a priest of oth-
er cults, this badge being characteristic, but
not exclusive, of the Memphite high priests.50

Finally, Wildung considers that the original-
ly profane nature of the GDC title means that its
holder does not have a prominent position and
his rank is clearly lower than, for example,
that of the high priest of Heliopolis.51 This
is probably true, but not because of the alleged-
ly profane nature of the title. On the one hand,
we must not forget the pre-eminance of the cul-
ture of Re in this time and its decisive impact
on the royal funerary cult. However, on the other
hand, the fact that Ptahshepses I, the first
well-known high priest of Ptah, took a king’s daugh-
ter as his wife ([2]), Kidushi52 and the fact
that two other high priests, Sabu Ibehi ([g]), and
Ptahshepses Impy ([j]), held the title

53

The High Priesthood of Memphis... An Updated Study and Prosopography
Josep Corròel-Arro u}
tions the GDC title holders lose the craft sphere of activity. Again, there is no evidence that supports this claim, at least for the times we are dealing with. On the contrary, as we have seen, the title we just referred to is held by Ptahshepses Impy (193b), who is a high priest of Wilmshurst’s second group, and clearly links its holder to building and craftsmanship; and another of the last high priests in our prosopography, Impy Nkaujatap (144), already at the beginning of the First Intermediate Period, was still able to manage the construction and decoration of a remarkable tomb at Kom el-Khamseen, in the southwestern area of Saqqara, using expensive and unusual materials such as white limestone, probably from Tura, and pink granite from Aswan (see above, 1). According to Ch. Raedler, the “traditional role” of the Memphite high priests as responsible for the production of the gods still existed in the New Kingdom.

4 | The titles and titularies of the Memphite high priests: titles most closely linked to the GDC title

There are different reasons to suggest that the GDC title was related to priestly functions from the very beginning. First of all, this is the title that identifies the high priests of Memphis par excellence and is systematically present in all their titularies: otherwise, it should be admitted that this high priesthood was not designated by any specific title at the beginning of its history, or even that it did not exist at all, which seems unlikely, especially in comparison with other contemporary high priesthoods, such as that of Heliopolis. A quick glance at our prosopography clearly shows that, in the titularies of the Memphite high priests of the Fifth and the first half of the Sixth Dynasties, the GDC title is inextricably accompanied by the titles of the hmr-nfr Ptb, “priest of Ptah”, and of the hmr-nfr Zkr, “priest of Sokar”. In the monuments or sections of monuments belonging to the GDC title holders of this period where only a few defining titles are listed, these three titles are systematically present, always in the same order, as representing two complementary aspects of a single reality. However, the titles “priest of Ptah” and “priest of Sokar” were not exclusive to the GDC title holders, but were held by all the high-ranking priests attached to the service of these gods. We can agree with Ch. Maystre that, in the period concerned, “il est vraisemblable que le grand des chefs des arts sansa partage alors avec ces autres prophètes de Ptah au moins le service régulier du dieu”;57 we can even take into consideration his suggestion that these priests should be organized into phylai that would alternate in worship, as documented for the Ptolemaic period. But it seems unlikely that the cults of Ptah and Sokar lacked a principal officiant, or that this responsibility would be shared alternately by different people: as there was a high priest of the sun god from the beginning of Egyptian history,58 it is highly probable that there was a high priest of the Memphite cults. In this sense, very significantly, one of the GDC title holders of the Fifth Dynasty ([6.c]) bore the title hmr-nfr m m z-py, “unique one of the sanctuary”, which is exclusive to him and is only attested once:59 it obviously alludes to the uniqueness of the principal officiant of the cult in the sanctuary of the temple. On the other hand, as can also be seen from our prosopography, the GDC title is almost always followed by the epithet m-m (varr. m, m m), which is exclusive to the GDC title holders. This epithet has been read and interpreted both, as n(y) hh R, “belonging to the day of festival”60 and n(y) hh R’, “belonging to the festival of Re/the sun”.61 In both cases, the ritual meaning of the epithet is evident, and its close relationship to the GDC title speaks of the priestly dimension of the latter. Indeed, it would not make sense for an exclusively civil title to have a cultural epithet. This close relationship is also the reason why we have retained here the first of the two interpretations proposed for the epithet: it seems hard, indeed, that the defining epithet of the main title of the Memphite high priest refers to the cult of Re. Furthermore, Ch. Maystre, E. Freier, and M. El-Khadragy link this “festival of Re” to the titles related to the cult of Re and associated with the worship of the sun in the solar temples of the Fifth Dynasty held by Ptahshepses I and Sabu Ibebi (see below, 5 and [2.c/d], [9.g]),62 however, the relationship between the epithet and these titles is indirect (the former is never listed along with the latter), and the titles in question occur only in the titularies of these two GDC title holders, while the sequence wr hpt(n) nwtr (m prwy) + n(y) hh hh R is present in the titularies of almost all the GDC title holders and forms a defining unit.63

On the other hand, the GDC title holders bear a prominent ritual title that is exclusive to them: that of Hm-nTr=f, “priestling-priest”, which alludes to the ornament of the statue of the god during the daily service.64 According to E. Bovarski, this function is a prerogative of the high priests of Memphis. The ti
tle is present in their titulatures since the second half of the Sixth Dynasty and disappears with the reform in Sabu Tjety’s time; in the title sequence, it is always placed immediately below very close to the GDC title, which shows, again, the close relationship between them. Sabu Tjety replaces it with a title of equivalent meaning: /\r/hrf-nfr mn bkr Phb, “keeper of the headress in adorning (the statue of) Ptah.”

Finally, we must not forget that, according to the Egyptian mind, the craftsman is a creator in cosmogonic terms: his activity is not merely technical, but has an essential ritual dimension, because it results in completing the creation. The transcendent nature of this activity is the reason for the association of craftsmanship with the gods Ptah and Sokar from the very beginning, as we shall see, and is probably also related to the cosmogonic aspects of Ptah. The direction of craftsmanship and the service to Ptah and Sokar must be understood as two complementary fields of activity of the Memphite high priests from the start. As we have seen (see above, 3), Sabu Tjety says it very eloquently: “fr. nfr nh(t) ir nh(t) iri vv wy rh(n) lwmn...”


67 The oldest literary references to Ptah as a creator god date back to the Middle Kingdom (Coffin Texts), but they convey notions that are probably older (Sandman Holmberg 1946: 31-56; Allen 1988: 38-47; Vercoutter 1993: 50-70, 81-83; Borchardt 1937: 232-245). The name of the iun-temple-sanctuary (see note 70) and Old Kingdom proper names such as 3w-n-Pt, “the whom Ptah created”, /\r/hrf-nfr Pt, “the one created by the ka of Ptah”, “he who may be created by Ptah live”, “he who may be created by Ptah live, “great is he whom Ptah created”, with phrases that only or preferably apply to Ptah (PV 1. 39 = 26, 40-4, 62 4, 80, 8, 60 8 21; Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 132 = 306, 255 4, 410, 293 = 675, 355 8 95; Beglbsachser-Fischer 1981: 147-250), could be evidence of this, as well as the name of a royal estate depicted in the funerary temple of Salitre at Abusir: “he who is created by Ptah,” “he who created Ptah live”, referring to the king (Borchardt 1937: 105-106, pl. 27). Beglbsachser-Fischer 1981: 147-250). The female proper name 3w-n-Sok-ar, “the one created by Khentimentiu” (PN 1: 273 8 10; Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 257 4 426; see note 90), combines all these mythical notions. The very name of the god has been related to the verbal root Pt, “to model”, “to create”, although his root does not seem to be attested before the New Kingdom (W 3. 955 d1, 42 1777, 141 = 510, Vercoutter 1993: 71, 8 8). 68 J. Krejci (2000: 71), wondering why the GDC title appears so exceptionally in the titulatures of the overseers of craftsmen, argues that the reason may have “to be looked for in the religious character of this title – the great inspectors of the craftsmen may have seen themselves to be more priestly than civil dignitaries. Therefore, contrary to the position of the overseers of works, this office may have been more elevated above the everyday problems of the building and its logistics”.

69 In general, on the oldest evidence of the relationship between Ptah and especially Sokar with crafts and craftsmen, see Sandman Holmberg 1946: 45-62; Feifer 1976: 26-29.

70 Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 435 4 159.

71 Eaton 2013, for the oldest attestations of this epithet, see Beglbsachser-Fischer 1981: 125. E. Feifer (1976: 5-29) argues that there is no evidence of the existence of a temple of Ptah before the reign of Sahure; however, the figure of the god inside his shrine carved next to his name on a stone vessel from TidchAm-dated mid-First Dynasty (Peter, Wainwright and Gardiner 1913: 21, pl. 3, 1-37 3; Sandman Holmberg 1946: 11, 6* fig. 8; Vercoutter 1993: 70, Kahl 2002: 161) clearly indicates that already in the Nineteenth Dynasty there existed a chapel or ntw that contained a cult statue of the divinity, and, consequently, a place of worship; the image is the same, for example, as in Palermo Stone cases vs TdE9 (Sahure – here as a god Khentimentiu, “he who is created by Ptah” – see below, 4, and note 90) and vs N (Nefireirke – here as a determinative of the name of Ptah himself), clearly associated to Memphis and the temple of Ptah (Sandman Holmberg 1946: 12, 6* fig. 8; Williamon 2000: 160-161, 163-164, 178-180, 219-221). On the other hand, the theonym iun-tmt, “he who is in front of the temple,” (see below, 4, and note 90), and proper names such as iun-n-im-tmt, “he who lives in the temple”, or /\r/hrf-n-im-tmt, “my ka is in the temple” (PV 1. 64 = 10, 340 1; see Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 257-258 7 100, 700 8 314), the theonym being most likely a Memphis sanctuary where the existence of the temple of Ptah before the Early Dynastic period.

72 This is the case, for example, with the overseer of sculptors (mnh-pwtwy) and vase-makers (mnh-pwtwy) Pehenptah (Phb-Ptn, PV 1. 126 8 1; Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 350 8 10), known from inscriptions carried on a stone vessel from the tomb of Pehnephtah at Unas Qaib (Abydos) and six stone vessels from the Step Pyramid in Saqqara, and dated at the end of the Second Dynasty: Ameline 1905: 753, pl. 32 40; Laux and Lauer 1955: 19-140 145, pl. 59-145 45; Kaplony 1953: 1, 356. For other examples from the Old Kingdom, see below, 6d, 4, and, A. Monuments & documents.


...every divine ritual and every duty regularly performed by the two greatest of the directors of craftsmen… referring to his predecessors in office, that is, the oldest holders of the title. The opposition is not between civil and cultic functions, but between priestly-craft and priestly-ritual functions; it is the ara et labana, if we are allowed the license.68 In other words, the Memphite high priests would not have been directors of craftsmen if they had not been priests. The opposition civil/priestly responds more to the classification logic of the modern scientific method than to the Egyptian integrative “Weltanschauung”.

At this point, an important issue must be addressed. It is true that sometimes the origins of institutions are seen in excessively teleological terms and that features of later and well-known times are projected to earlier and more obscure times and assumed as inherent to these institutions. In the second and first millennium BC, the high priesthood of Memphis is clearly associated with Ptah. However, in the third millennium it is inextricably linked to both Ptah and Sokar. As we have seen, it is the craft and cosmogonic dimension of these gods that determines the double function—technological and ritual—of the GDC title holder. It is important to note, on the one hand, that Ptah and Sokar are associated with craftsmanship from the very beginning, but on the other hand, that this association is, in origin, stronger for Sokar than for Ptah.69 Regarding the latter, the Old Kingdom proper name Nihemutptah (Nfr-nemw-PtHb), “craftsmanship belongs to Ptah” (or “Ptah belongs to craftsmanship”), speaks for itself,70 and recently it has been suggested that Ptah’s epithet rsi ỉn-f, “South-of-his-Wall”, recorded since the beginning of the Fifth Dynasty, is related to him in his role as a patron of craftsmen.71 Nor should we forget that one of the fifteen GDC title holders, as well as other holders of craft titles since the earliest times,72 has a theophoric name embedding the name of Ptah, and four more of them have a name also related to Ptah in some way (see below, 6c). Regarding Sokar, he is explicitly called a kwtnw, “craftsmen,” in the tomb of Tepemank in Saqqara (Fifth Dynasty), and he is alluded to as ỉty( ), “sovereign”, in a dialo- sugo between two metal workers in the tomb of Kaezmeh from Saqqara (Fifth Dnyas- ty).73 In the Pyramid Texts, he is referred to as a metal and stone worker.74 Be that as it may, one thing is clear: in the sequence of ti-tles 3w-n-Pt Hb 3w-n-Zkr, “priest of Ptah, priest of Sokar”, as well as in the dou- ble title 3w-n-Pt Hb Zkr, “priest of Ptah and Sokar”,75 held by some of the overse- rors of craftsmen (ib.1b, ii.1), Ptah is always men- tioned first, which is certainly an expression of some kind of primacy.
All this does not mean, however, that two main periods cannot be distinguished in the history of the Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period. Indeed, since the pontificate of Sabu Tjety, in the second half of the Sixth Dynasty ([12]), the titles "priest of Ptb", "priest of Sokar", and "priest of Ptah and Sokar" disappear from their titularies. At the very end of the Old Kingdom or the beginning of the First Intermediate Period, the epithet "belonging to the day of festival" also disappears ([14], [15]). This means that from now on the GDC title alone will represent both the craft and the ritual aspects of the charge. On the other hand, with Sabu Tjety the titles Ptb sm, "sem-priest", and P densely h-hbt (h-hyp), "lector priest (in charge)" are incorporated into the titularies of the Memphite high priests ([16] to [19]). From the Middle Kingdom onwards, the former will become one of the two distinctive titles, forming a doublet with the GDC title. This sem-priest must not be confused with the sem-attendants of the title Ptb sm(w), "director of sem-attendants", where the word sm(w) is always written with the sign M21 (sometimes var. M20); while the former is a high-ranking priest related to the daily divine service and funerary ritual, the latter are low-ranking auxiliary priests, as the etymology of the word sm(w), from the verb sm, "help", "sacrum", seems to indicate; the title's variant M29, [h-p] sm(w) Zkr, "director of the sem-attendants of Sokar" ([6.b]), shows that they were attached to the service of Sokar. This title also disappears from the titles of the Memphite high priests from Sabu Tjety onwards. Other titles that are also incorporated at this very moment are the statuses Zkr tny-pat smr waty, "foremost", Zkr tny-pat smr w'ty, "sole friend", and, shortly after, Zkr tny-pat smr, "member of the pot" (see below, [10], [12] and [14] to [15]). These titles, especially the first and the last, are placed at the beginning of the title sequences. As Ch. Maystre notes, the titular tend to be inverted and, whether up to Sabu Tjety the titles seem to be presented in order of greatest to least importance or, perhaps, in reverse order of acquisition, with the GDC title systematically at the start ([2] to [13]), from his pontificate, as far as the brief or fragmentary inscriptions allow us to appreciate, the arrangement of the titularies seems to be the opposite. Indeed, the three preserved columns of his stela where his titles are listed, which should be understood as separate sequences because the title smr w'ty is repeated in all three, start significantly with the titles Zkr tny-pat, h-bht h-bht, sm, and Zkr tny-pat sm(w) Zkr, while the GDC title is the last in one column and the second to last in another column (only followed by its epithet n(y) hrw bb) ([12], [13]). As far as can be seen in the sort of fragmentary inscriptions of his probable second successor Imephor Impy Nikauptah, the layout is the same ([14], [15], [16]); and the last character of our prosopography, Impy son of Ankhuk, introducing the title tny-pat and giving his titular the meaningful order: tny-pat, h-bht, sm, and [h-p] Zkr ([15], [16]).

Another title closely linked from the beginning to the GDC is Zkr sm(w) nsnw tnv, "intimate of the king", which is to be considered a status title. Linguistically, it consists of a "bivalent" passive participle with direct genitive agent: "the given of the king", that is to say, "the given (to him) by the king", "he (to whom) the king gives (something)". According to Ch. Eyre, this could mean that the person holding it was a sort of pensioner of the king. This applied to both, craftsmen and king's body-attendants (hairdressers and manicurists). This again stresses the close relation between the Memphite high priests: other outstanding titles related to the worship of certain entities that appear to be ancient independent deities of Memphis that eventually became manifestations or hypostases of Ptb: [h-p] mnt hr-tbr; "priest of Khentihotep"; [h-p] mnt imy-bt as, "priest of Imnikhenet"; [h-p] mnt Ntr; "priest of Ntr", [h-p] mnt Dk-wr; "priest of Djeshepes", [h-p] mnt Dk-wr; "priest of Djeshepes", also indicates (see above, 2, and [6.b]). It is undoubtedly this close relationship that leads a high priest to proclaim himself [h-p] smr tnt nsnw tnv, mnt n Wnt, GDC of Unis" ([6.b]).

5. The titles and titularies of the Memphite high priests: other outstanding titles

Let us discuss now other titles of the titularies of the Memphite high priests following the categories set out above (see above, 2). Among the titles related to the cult of the Memphite gods and the administration of their places are those of Zkr nbs Ptb, "sub-priest of Ptb", which are always at the end of the titularies and therefore probably received at the beginning of the career; and Zkr imy-bt, Zkr n(y) hrw Zkr, "overseer of the temple of Sokar", a title of administrative nature closely related to that of GDC and therefore received with it. Other six meaningful titles almost exclusively to the Memphite high priests are those related to the worship of certain entities that appear to be ancient independent deities of Memphis that eventually became manifestations or hypostases of Ptb: [h-p] mnt hr-tbr; "priest of Khentihotep"; [h-p] mnt imy-bt as, "priest of Imnikhenet"; [h-p] mnt Ntr; "priest of Ntr", [h-p] mnt Dk-wr; "priest of Djeshepes", [h-p] mnt Dk-wr; "priest of Djeshepes", also indicates (see above, 2, and [6.b]).

90 Only one of these titles, that of dim-ntr n(y) hrw, "priest of Khentihotep", is also documented for two individuals who were not Memphite high priests: Hetepuni and Sefekhu, who date from the Sixth Dynasty and built their tombs at Abusir South. Daubovet 2006: 57-37, figs. 1-2.
“privy to the secret of all of the king, they also appear only in the titles related to the funerary cult of Re, they are present only in the titles of the Memphite cults of the GDC title holders of two most complete titularies we have, those of Tjahpeses IV; see below, 6), and that all these titles disappear with the deep transformation of the Memphite pontificate that took place in the time of Sabu Tjety, in the second half of the Sixth Dynasty. Finally, two other common titles of the category related to craftsmanship are .protector of the Pharaoh, “overseer of the temple of Ptah and the funerary and solar temples of the kings during the Fifth Dynasty. As for the category of the titles related to the funerary cult of the king, they also appear only in the titles of two high priests of the first period and the pyramids involved are only those of Unis and Teti ([9.c/d], [11.c/g]). It is noteworthy that these two couples of high priests are most likely linked by close family ties (Tjahpeses I and Sabu Ibbieh; Sabu Ibbieh and Tjahpeses IV; see below, 6). And that all these titles disappear with the deep transformation of the Memphite pontificate that took place in the time of Sabu Tjety, in the second half of the Sixth Dynasty. Finally, two other common titles of the category related to craftsmanship are  or f.  According to Baines (1988: 127) the close link between these two titles and the GDC title is illustrated by the fact that, in the Ninakhsekhemet stela (see above, 3), the greatest directors of the craftsman are called , “two of the GDC and the craftsman of the temple”. Exceptionally, two high priests ([9.d], [13.b]) held the important title , “the temple of the Memphite cult of the king’s architectural works, although from a somewhat lower rank. From this discussion about the titles of the Memphite high priests an important conclusion can be drawn: the career of the Memphite priests, in both the ritual and craft spheres, is highly specialized and “idiosyncratic”: they do not hold civil titles or participate in the administration of the State and, with rare exceptions, they do not hold titles outside their specific curus honorum. Conversely, many of their titles are unique to their status as (high) priests attached to the cults of Pah and Sokar and are not held by officials of the State administration or priests of other cults. There is one exception to this rule: the enigmatic Imeper Phry Nikaupatah from Kom el-Khama seen (south-west Saqqara) (see above, 1, and [14]). As we have had occasion to point out elsewhere, Imeper’s documentation, although fragmentary, indicates that he possessed some of the characteristic titles of the Memphite high priests of his time, but he also possessed other courtly or priestly titles, such as , “gracious of arm”, and , “director of every divine office”, which they never held and would never hold later if as Imeper, exception-
ally, had acted in two different fields—at the same time or successively—and this may have to do with the convulsive moment he had to live, in the transition from the Old Kingdom to the First Intermediate Period, when the fall of the Memphite State took place. Only new documentation, coming from excavations at Kom el-Khamaseen or from the antiquities market as a consequence of the looting of the site, will allow us to better understand his trajectory.

6 | Kinship and inheritance of the GDC office

Having discussed the most important titles held by the Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period and the important changes that took place in their titularies during that time, let us now move on to another important issue: how the high priests were appointed and what kind of relationships there were between them. In his monography on the high priests of Ptah, Ch. Maystre insists that the office of GDC was hereditary and that the office was inherited in the Old Kingdom, none of the high priests explicitly indicate their affiliation in their monuments (the only one who does is already dated to the end of the First Intermediate Period: [15]) and the fact that nine of the fifteen office holders are named Ptahshepses or Sabu is not proof enough; according to him, the great closeness shown by some high priests to each other is not due to kinship, but to affectionate relations between colleagues. He gives the example of Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV, who share the same mastaba, in which they each built and decorated their chapel ([9], [11]). He rightly observes that the former is depicted in his chapel as both a young and an old man, and that the reliefs show his sons and grandsons ([9], Kinship); on the contrary, the latter is always depicted in his chapel as a young man, accompanied by his wife and sons but not grandsons ([11], Kinship). This probably means that Sabu was an old man and Ptahshepses was a young man when they built or finished decorating their double mastaba. Maystre himself underlines that “Sabou-Ibebi a donné le nom de Ptahshepses à son fils préféré et Ptahshepses IV celui de Sabou au sien”, but he concludes that it is not because they were father and son, but because there was an “entente profonde entre ces collègues”. Maystre’s view is very much conditioned by the weight he gives to the collegial nature of the Memphite pontificate; other scholars, who feel no incompatibility between kinship and the dual nature of the office, have suggested or even claimed the affiliation between Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV.

Actually, different but converging facts strongly suggest that the Memphite pontificate was hereditary and that the office was in the hands of a single family during the Old Kingdom, at least to a large extent. Let us see them in detail.

a) The two best known Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom, through the relatively well-preserved inscriptions and reliefs of their chapels, are precisely Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV. These monumients give us abundant and very meaningful information about their families ([9], Kinship; [11], Kinship). In Sabu Ibebi’s reliefs, five sons and two grandsons are depicted as offering bearers or statue pullers, and the only one of these sons labelled as “his beloved”, is also depicted as a ritualist. Among their names, there are two Ptahshepses (the ritualist being one of them) and one Sabu, as well as two Shepespuptah (a theophoric name embedding the name of Ptah). One of the latter is nicknamed Kerm, “the Black”, as Sabu II, one of Ibebi’s predecessors ([7]). Does this nickname respond to an actual physical trait of some members of this lineage? In the chapel of Ptahshepses IV, four sons are represented again as offering bearers and the only one labelled as “his beloved”, also as a young official standing next to his father and touching his staff. Their names are: Sabu (the “beloved” son, most likely Sabu Tjety; [12]), Ptahshepses (two of them), and Shepespuptah. In the reliefs of another of Sabu Ibebi’s predecessors, Ptahshepses III ([8]), two sons are also depicted, again named Sabu and Ptahshepses. The concentration of the names Ptahshepses and Sabu in this family is directly proportional to the concentration of these names among the GDC title holders and does not occur in any other family or in any other office, and this cannot be a simple coincidence.

b) Most of these sons and grandsons hold the title of their illustrious elders. This means that, if some of the sons and grandsons depicted in these reliefs were later high priests, they did not retain in their titularies the titles of the functions exercised before access to the pontificate, perhaps because the new position was felt to be qualitatively different and the earlier leg of the career was taken for granted or not relevant. This also means that titles such as bry-hbt had different scopes depending on whether they were held (and performed) by the sons (before Sabu Tjety) or the parents, the high priests (after Sabu Tjety). E. Freier wonders whether the high priests were chosen from among several bry-hmtw (pr=?) or the career consisted of moving from bry-hmtw (pr=?) to lpr bmtw (nbt) and GDC, with only the last two titles present in the titularies of the high priests. With the available evidence, it is not possible to answer these questions. This is the main difficulty in relating all these characters, but it does not seem enough to rule out that they are all members of the same family and that the GDC title holders were chosen within this family, that is to say, that the pontifical office was a prerogative of a single lineage and was inherited within it. The opposite

105 Maystre 1992 [1948]: 54. E. Freier (1976: 11), without denying the possibility that the pontificate was hereditary, considers that there is not enough evidence to support that. According to M.A. Murray (1995: 26), “it is not possible to determine” the relationship between Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV. L. Borchardt ([13], 122), on the other hand, assumes that the office was hereditary in the Old Kingdom, and M. El-Khadragy (2005: 191-192) writes: “As suggested by location and name similarities, the office of the high priest of Ptah probably descended from father to son within the same family”.
would mean that none of the family members holding the mid-ranking craftsmanship title had acceded to the pontificate, which does not seem likely either: as we have seen, the names of the high priests and their offspring are always the same, and the offices, without being identical, belong to the same field (crafts and cult). This does not mean, however, that the position was automatically inherited: it follows from the texts that the election was a king’s prerogative, but it took place, for customary reasons, within the same lineage, undoubtedly an influental lineage of the Memphite area, which we have seen has been closely linked to kingship. As E. Brovarski writes: “In all periods priestly offices tended to become hereditary and seem frequently to have been vested in one family for several generations, although the power of appointment seems to have rested with the sovereign”.


111 As a sentence of nominal predicate, this can be read both as Ptáhp-es or Ptáhp-es (Allen 2003: 79). Read as Ptáh-Phá, it can also be interpreted as a sentence of adjectival predicate: “Ptáh is noble” (PV I: 208 r. 10). Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 676–678 n. 1950). We have retained the first reading because it is the most accepted and most widely used in the literature.


113 PV I: 26 n. 12; Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 237 n. 295.


115 PV I: 208 r. 117; PV II: 35; Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 623 n. 2939.

116 Mariette 1889: 453 n. 16, map XLVI D2, 16 (fig. 1, 16).

117 Mariette 1889: 293–312 (E4); FM III: 453 n. 16, map XLVI D2, 36 (fig. 1, 36).

118 On Old Kingdom clusters of family tombs of high officials or family cemeteries, see Verner 1980: 164–165 (Abusi, south-east sector); Brovarski 1981 (Giza Western Cemetery, north-west sector, north-western corner of the great pyramid); Weicks 1994: 4–7 (Giza Western Cemetery, south-central sector, cemetery G 6000); Roth 1965: 45–45 (Giza Western Cemetery, north-central sector); Bárta 2005: 116–117; 203a: 161–165 (general); 2007 (South Abusi); Nuzzolo 2007: 288 (general). The practice was not new in the Old Kingdom, for family tomb clusters in predynastic times, see Campagnuolo 2005: 16–18, with further references.

119 The contemporary tombs of the priests Sahs and Ankh, in the cemetery of Tablet el-Grish, south Saqqara, not far from Kom el-Khamaseen, were violated since antiquity, probably at the end of the Old Kingdom or during the First Intermediate Period. Doherty, Laville and Onézime 2005: 116–120. On the crisis of the Memphite State at the end of the Old Kingdom and the beginning of the First Intermediate Period, see ultimately (with sometimes divergent views) Müller-Wollermann 2014; Moreno Garcia 2015; Schneider 2017; Kanwati and Swinton 2018: chaps. 6, 7; Bárta 2005a: 174–175; 2009: 173–179.

112 private name Sabuipat (Sulyby-Pph), “how colorful is Ptáh!”, which could be significant. Finally, Impy, Impy is a fairly wide-spread nickname in the second half of the Old Kingdom, still used during the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom (1513, Date); according to H. Ranef, it is related, as a nickname or a “beautiful name”, to toephoric names with the theonym Ptáh, such as Ptáhp-es or Nkápatáh.

115 In fact, the latter is the “great name” of the high priest Imephor Impy Nkápatáh from Kom el-Khamaseen (1141). As can be seen, most of the names of the Memphite high priests and their offspring are related to Ptáh; this shows a privileged relationship with this specific god (see above, 4) and strengthens the perception of a lineage entirely dedicated to his service. For the last three individuals of our prosopography, those named Impy, it is completely impossible to suggest any kind of kinship (as, however, has been done) (144). As a mere hypothesis, it could be suggested that, at the end of the Old Kingdom and in the First Intermediate Period, the hypocritical Impy was adopted by the members of the Ptáhp-es-Sabu lineage. The four remaining names of the high priests are: Nfí-imy-d-Pth, Nferdjejdpáh (another toephoric with the name of Ptáh; see above, 3, below, 7, and 11); Rnfr-nfr, Ranef (toephoric with the name of Re) (143); Nfr-fit-Afh-d-Pth, w, Neferfhrnkh (toephoric with the name of king Nefererefr) (151); and Zb, Satju (which means “the water dispenser”, “he who purifies with water”, clearly a name with a ritual meaning (151)) (108). We have no information on the kinship of these characters, except for Ranef’s wife, Khnemet. Regarding the same Ranef, however, his tomb is located among the tombs of most of the Old Kingdom GDC title holders, which could be an indication of family ties, as we are going to see.

d) An important archaeological and sociological fact, which in our opinion has not been given enough attention, is that eight (or nine) of the thirteen Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom are buried in large mastabas a few meters away from each other located in the same cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid complex in Saqqara (fig. 1). This sector of the Saqqara necropolis, well defined in topographical terms, mainly comprises tombs of GDC title holders, to which the tombs of some other individuals related to them must be added. The first of these individuals is Sabu, contemporary and probably relative of Ptáhp-eses I (113). Monuments and documents, Khnemut; if he is to be identified with Sabu I (113), as is likely, then he also is a GDC title holder and the total number of high priests buried here is nine. The other three are the official Ptáhp-eses, contemporary and probably relative of Ptáhp-eses I and/or II (116, Khnemut); the lady Ini, most likely to be identified with the wife of Ptáhp-es I V, of the same name (111, Khnemut); and the official Nkéríhsmntáhp (another name embedding the name of Ptáh), who bears the title imy-rA imy-rA “he who makes crafts”, and is generically dated to the Sixth Dynasty. All these individuals occupy twelve of the twenty-two tombs of the cemetery. These twelve tombs form the core of the cemetery, while the tombs of the rest of the individuals buried here (among them Kasper, the Sherb el-Rbed, contemporary of Ptáhp-eses I(117) are located mostly on the east and west ends (table 1, see fig. 1). Thus, everything seems to indicate that this is large a family cemetery, a cluster of mastabas of members of the same lineage and linked to the same sphere of activity. The only character in our prosopography who is not buried here and whose tomb is known is Imephor Impy Nkápatáh from Kom el-Khamaseen (1141); for unknown reasons, perhaps related to the times of political and institutional crisis he lived through, at the very end of the Old Kingdom and the beginning of the First Intermediate Period, he chose this seclu-
ed cemetery to build his tomb (see above, 1, 5). Another character, Neferefreankh, known from a false door of another individual, could be the Neferefreankh buried in a tomb located east of the Step Pyramid complex, but the identification is problematic ([15], Monuments and documents). Of the four GDC title holders not mentioned here or in table 1, we do not know the tombs ([1], [10], [13], [15]).

(c) In later periods of the history of Egypt, from the Middle Kingdom to Ptolemaic times, it was often the case, and even the rule, for the office of high priest of Ptah to be hereditary and passed down within the same family.120

7. Chronology and succession of the Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period

On the basis of everything we have exposed so far and the data set out in the sections “Kinship” and “Date” of the entries of our prosopography, let us present our proposal about the succession, relationship, and chronology of the high priests of Memphis in the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period.121

Of the fifteen characters in our prosopography, five are relatively well known to us due to the greater extent of the texts and reliefs recorded or recovered from their tombs (door lintels and jambs, false door stelae, Figure 1. Location of the tombs of most of the Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom and some of their probable relatives, in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid complex at Saqqara (source: PM III = maps XLV and XLVI).

Table 1. The Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom (roman type) and their probable and possible relatives (italic) buried in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara. The numbers in the third column are those on fig. 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Mariette 1889 (MM)</th>
<th>PM MAP Nº</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[2] Ptahshepses I</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[4] Ranefer</td>
<td>C5</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[6] Ptahshepses II</td>
<td>C9</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[7] Sabu II Kem</td>
<td>C23</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[8] Ptahshepses III</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Ptahshepses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[9] Sabu III Ibeb</td>
<td>E1/2</td>
<td>37-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[12] Sabu IV Tjety</td>
<td>E3</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabu (= [3] Sabu I?)</td>
<td>C16</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ptahshepses</td>
<td>C10</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inty</td>
<td>C17</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neferseshemptah</td>
<td>E4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Location of the tombs of most of the Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom and some of their probable relatives, in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid complex in Saqqara (source: PM III = maps XLV and XLVI).


In pink (printed version: light grey): tombs of some probable relatives of the GDC title holders: 39 – Sabu (to be identified with the GDC title holder Sabu I?); 49 – Ptahshepses; 43 – Inty; 16 – Neferseshemptah.

In white: 36 – Kaaper.
and wall reliefs and inscriptions). They are: Ptahshepses I (I2), Ptahshepses II (I6), Sabu III Ibebi (I9), Ptahshepses IV (I11), and Sabu IV Tjety (I12). The inscriptions of Ptahshepses I, Sabu Ibebi, and Sabu Tjety include biographies, well preserved in the case of the first two and unfortunately very fragmentary in the case of the latter, but all of them precious sources of information. As can be seen from table 3, in three cases texts allow us to date the characters with relative accuracy. Other characters who can be well dated are Neferefreankh (see above, 6c, and [5]), since his name embeds the name of king Neferefre. As we have seen, nothing absolutely certain can be said about the family relationships between the different GDC title holders. However, the shape of the chapels and the lists of titles of Ptahshepses I and II suggest close proximity between them, and the same can be said for the lists of titles of Ptahshepses II and Sabu Ibebi. D. Wildung has suggested that Sabu Ibebi could be Ptahshepses I’s son, but this seems unlikely for chronological reasons. Indeed, Ptahshepses I died during Niuserre’s reign and Sabu Ibebi held the office in the reigns of Unis and Teti. A gap of about 50 years separates one moment from the other, in which Ptahshepses II, Sabu Kem, and Ptahshepses III (and Neferefreankh as well) could well have exercised their pontificates, probably in pairs. These three characters are generically dated to the second half of the Fifth Dynasty, without being able to be more precise (as for the order we have assigned them, see below, a). Sabu Ibebi must then be seen not as a son, but as a grandson or, generically, a second-generation offspring of Ptahshepses I. On the other hand, Wildung assumes that Ptahshepses IV is the son of Sabu Ibebi, and indeed all archaeological and epigraphic data seem to indicate it. The same goes for Ptahshepses IV and Sabu Tjety. Therefore, a relative succession Ptahshepses I – Ptahshepses II – Sabu Ibebi – Ptahshepses IV – Sabu Tjety can be reasonably proposed. With respect to the relationship between these characters and the sons and grandsons depicted and named in the tombs of Ptahshepses III, Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV (see above, 6a), the available information is not clear enough to make sure identifications, except for the z3=f mry=f imy-xt Hmwt %Abw, who had been depicted fivefold in the reliefs of his father’s tomb but whose figures and labels were then systematically chiseled out ([I9], Kinship), could have succeeded his father and become involved in a conspiracy against Pepy I that would have led to his expulsion from office.122

If we now consider the titles of the GDC title holders (table 3), the following can be noted: a) As we have just seen, three high priests are generically dated to the second half of the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GDC title holder</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Family relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Neferefreankh</td>
<td>Reigns of Khasekhemwy and Netjerkhent</td>
<td>Ptahshepses II, Sabu Ibebi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ptahshepses I</td>
<td>First half of the Fifth Dynasty, until Niuserre</td>
<td>Ptahshepses II, Sabu Ibebi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sabu I</td>
<td>Reign of Niuserre</td>
<td>(if Sabu I and Sabu, the owner of tomb MM C16 at Saqqara, are the same individual) Ptahshepses I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ranefer</td>
<td>First half of the Fifth Dynasty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Neferefreankh</td>
<td>Mid-Fifth Dynasty (from the reign of Neferefre on)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ptahshepses II</td>
<td>Second half of the Fifth Dynasty</td>
<td>Ptahshepses I (father), Sabu Ibebi (son)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sabu II Kem</td>
<td>Second half of the Fifth Dynasty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ptahshepses III</td>
<td>Second half of the Fifth Dynasty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Sabu III Ibebi</td>
<td>Reigns of Unis and Teti</td>
<td>Ptahshepses I (foresfather), Ptahshepses II (father), Ptahshepses IV (son)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Satju</td>
<td>Plausibly end of the Fifth Dynasty and/or beginning of the Sixth Dynasty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Ptahshepses IV</td>
<td>Reigns of Teti and Pepy I</td>
<td>Sabu Ibebi (father), Sabu Tjety (son)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Sabu IV Tjety</td>
<td>Mid- and late-Sixth Dynasty</td>
<td>Ptahshepses IV (father)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Ptahshepses V Impy I</td>
<td>Second half of the Sixth Dynasty or beginning of the First Intermediate Period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Imephor Impy II Nikaupstah</td>
<td>End of the Sixth Dynasty and/or beginning of the First Intermediate Period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Impy III</td>
<td>Late First Intermediate Period or early Middle Kingdom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. The list of the Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period, their sure (italics) or suggested (roman type) dates, and their almost certain (italics) or possible (roman type) family relationships.
Fifth Dynasty: Ptahshepses II ([6]), Sabu Kem ([7]), and Ptahshepses III ([8]). The first, however, does not yet hold the title dbt-hryt, "robing-priest", which appears for the first time in the titulatures of the other two (see above, 4, and [7], Date). According to this, Ptahshepses II must have been the first of the three to hold the office, while the actual order of succession of Sabu Kem and Ptahshepses III remains unknown, being the one we have adopted here, therefore, totally conventional.

b) The only two high priests to hold the double title hm-n Tr Pt H Zkr, "priest of Ptah and Sokar", are Satju ([10.b]) and Ptahshepses IV ([11.f]); although Satju’s date is very uncertain,124 this most likely indicates proximity between the two, and this is the reason for the position we have assigned him.

c) As we have seen, with Sabu Tjety some important titles disappear from the titulatures of the Memphite high priests and some others are incorporated. The former are: hm-n Tr Pt H Zkr, "priest of Ptah", hm-n Tr Zkr, "priest of Sokar", hm-n Tr Ptb Zkr, "priest of Ptah and Sokar" (which Ptahshepses IV uses for the last time125), and hryt Sm(w), "director of sem-attendants", titles that, in fact, no longer appear in the titulatures of the last four characters of our prosopography, the first three undoubtedly because the functions they were related to were definitively linked to the GDC title. On the other hand, the new titles are the priestly titles Sm, "sem-priest", and hryt-hb (hryt-tp), "lector priest (in charge)", and the status titles hnty-", "foremost", and Smr wtpy, "sole friend". All this allows us to place

Ptahshepses V ([13]): Smr wtpy and hryt-hb and Imephor Impy Nikaupth (14): hnty-", Sm, and hryt-hb hry-tp) after Sabu Tjety. Indeed, if Sabu Tjety is to be dated in the second half of the Sixth Dynasty and the Memphite pontificate was held by only one person since the reform of the office that took place in his time, then these characters must be dated at the end of the Sixth Dynasty and/or the beginning of the First Intermediate Period. The fact that Ptahshepses V still holds the title m(n) hry hbt, "belonging to the day of festival", which disappears after him, and bears the title imy-rA kl st nt nswt, "overseer of all works of the king", suggests an earlier date for him than Imephor Impy Nikaupth. In turn, different archaeological and epigraphic evidence suggests for the latter a somewhat later chronology, already at the very end of the Old Kingdom or, better, the beginning of the First Intermediate Period (see above, 1, and [14], Date).126

d) The last character in the list, Impy III son of Ankhu ([15]), introduces another new status title: iy-tp, "member of the pat", and the doublet iy-tp hnty-", which places us already at the end of the First Intermediate Period or even at the beginning of the Middle Kingdom. He is therefore the last character in our list and cannot be the son of Ptahshepses V, as D. Wildung and B.S. El-Sharkawy claim ([13], Kinship and Date, and [15], Kinship and Date). Let us make some final remarks. Firstly, nothing can be said about the earliest attested GDC title holder, Neferdjepet (11), except that he has a theophoric name embedding the name of

125 However, see note 76.
The office of GDC is first attested at the end of the Second Dynasty ([1]). Its emergence seems to be related to the funerary building activity of the kings of that dynasty in Saqqara, then the only necropolis of Memphis. From the first moment (Ptahshepse I, [2]), the GDC title appears indissolubly linked to other titles in the titularies of the GDC title holders, some of which clearly indicate that these dignitaries always combined the tasks of directing craftsmanship and leading the worship of the Memphite gods Ptah and Sokar, which was due to the very cosmogenic and artisanal nature of these gods. On the one hand, until the mid-Sixth Dynasty, the GCD title is systematically accompanied by the titles *hm-nr Pth*, “priest of Ptah”, and *hm-nr Zkr*, “priest of Sokar” (at *hm-nr Pth Zkr*, “priest of Ptah and Sokar”); on the other hand, this triplet of titles is usually accompanied by other titles and epithets that are exclusive to the high priests of Memphis of the Old Kingdom until the end of the Sixth Dynasty, such as *m n th mn nb n(w)*, “belonging to the day of festival”, *g(n) ntr w ty*, “standing of the character and the reason for this choice of this burial place.

**Conclusions**

The office of GDC is first attested at the end of the Second Dynasty ([1]). Its emergence seems to be related to the funerary building activity of the kings of that dynasty in Saqqara, then the only necropolis of Memphis. From the first moment (Ptahshepse I, [2]), the GDC title appears indissolubly linked to other titles in the titularies of the GDC title holders, some of which clearly indicate that these dignitaries always combined the tasks of directing craftsmanship and leading the worship of the Memphite gods Ptah and Sokar, which was due to the very cosmogenic and artisanal nature of these gods. On the one hand, until the mid-Sixth Dynasty, the GCD title is systematically accompanied by the titles *hm-nr Pth*, “priest of Ptah”, and *hm-nr Zkr*, “priest of Sokar” (at *hm-nr Pth Zkr*, “priest of Ptah and Sokar”); on the other hand, this triplet of titles is usually accompanied by other titles and epithets that are exclusive to the high priests of Memphis of the Old Kingdom until the end of the Sixth Dynasty, such as *m n th mn nb n(w)*, “belonging to the day of festival”, *g(n) ntr w ty*, “standing of the character and the reason for this choice of this burial place.

**Conclusions**

The office of GDC is first attested at the end of the Second Dynasty ([1]). Its emergence seems to be related to the funerary building activity of the kings of that dynasty in Saqqara, then the only necropolis of Memphis. From the first moment (Ptahshepse I, [2]), the GDC title appears indissolubly linked to other titles in the titularies of the GDC title holders, some of which clearly indicate that these dignitaries always combined the tasks of directing craftsmanship and leading the worship of the Memphite gods Ptah and Sokar, which was due to the very cosmogenic and artisanal nature of these gods. On the one hand, until the mid-Sixth Dynasty, the GCD title is systematically accompanied by the titles *hm-nr Pth*, “priest of Ptah”, and *hm-nr Zkr*, “priest of Sokar” (at *hm-nr Pth Zkr*, “priest of Ptah and Sokar”); on the other hand, this triplet of titles is usually accompanied by other titles and epithets that are exclusive to the high priests of Memphis of the Old Kingdom until the end of the Sixth Dynasty, such as *m n th mn nb n(w)*, “belonging to the day of festival”, *g(n) ntr w ty*, “standing of the character and the reason for this choice of this burial place.

**Conclusions**

The office of GDC is first attested at the end of the Second Dynasty ([1]). Its emergence seems to be related to the funerary building activity of the kings of that dynasty in Saqqara, then the only necropolis of Memphis. From the first moment (Ptahshepse I, [2]), the GDC title appears indissolubly linked to other titles in the titularies of the GDC title holders, some of which clearly indicate that these dignitaries always combined the tasks of directing craftsmanship and leading the worship of the Memphite gods Ptah and Sokar, which was due to the very cosmogenic and artisanal nature of these gods. On the one hand, until the mid-Sixth Dynasty, the GCD title is systematically accompanied by the titles *hm-nr Pth*, “priest of Ptah”, and *hm-nr Zkr*, “priest of Sokar” (at *hm-nr Pth Zkr*, “priest of Ptah and Sokar”); on the other hand, this triplet of titles is usually accompanied by other titles and epithets that are exclusive to the high priests of Memphis of the Old Kingdom until the end of the Sixth Dynasty, such as *m n th mn nb n(w)*, “belonging to the day of festival”, *g(n) ntr w ty*, “standing of the character and the reason for this choice of this burial place.

**Conclusions**

The office of GDC is first attested at the end of the Second Dynasty ([1]). Its emergence seems to be related to the funerary building activity of the kings of that dynasty in Saqqara, then the only necropolis of Memphis. From the first moment (Ptahshepse I, [2]), the GDC title appears indissolubly linked to other titles in the titularies of the GDC title holders, some of which clearly indicate that these dignitaries always combined the tasks of directing craftsmanship and leading the worship of the Memphite gods Ptah and Sokar, which was due to the very cosmogenic and artisanal nature of these gods. On the one hand, until the mid-Sixth Dynasty, the GCD title is systematically accompanied by the titles *hm-nr Pth*, “priest of Ptah”, and *hm-nr Zkr*, “priest of Sokar” (at *hm-nr Pth Zkr*, “priest of Ptah and Sokar”); on the other hand, this triplet of titles is usually accompanied by other titles and epithets that are exclusive to the high priests of Memphis of the Old Kingdom until the end of the Sixth Dynasty, such as *m n th mn nb n(w)*, “belonging to the day of festival”, *g(n) ntr w ty*, “standing of the character and the reason for this choice of this burial place.
The High Priesthood of Memphis... An Updated Study and Prosopography
Joseph Cervello Autuori

The AUC History of Ancient Egypt: From Generation to Generation among the Memphite High Priests of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period and also among their sons and grandsons; the meaning of these names and other names borne by the high priests and their relatives, which are almost always related in one way or another with the god Ptah; the titles held by the sons and grandsons of the high priests, most often associated with craftsmanship; and the fact that eight (or nine) of the thirteen Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom and some of their relatives are buried in the same cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid complex; all suggests that, during the time period considered in this study, the pontifical office was a prerogative of a single lineage and was inherited within it.

The critical review of the available documentation has allowed us to draw up an updated list, a prosopography, and the chronology (absolute or relative) of the known Memphite high priests of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period: fifteen characters—certainly not all those who held the office in those periods—are included in this prosopography, which is presented in the second part of this article.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my colleague and friend Andrés Diego Espinell (Instituto de Lenguas y Culturas del Mediterráneo y Oriente Próximo, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid), who kindly agreed to read and discuss this article before being submitted for publication. It has benefited greatly from his learned and generous feedback and suggestions. Of course, the approaches advocated, the conclusions reached, and any possible omissions or failures remain my sole responsibility.

Abbreviations

CGC : Catalogue Général du Caire.
HL5 : Hannig Lexica 5; Hannig 2006.
MM : Mariette Mastabas: Mariette 1889.

Egyptisches Museum Berlin

Alegre García, S.

ALEN, J.P.

AMELINEAU, É.

BAER, K.
1960 : Rank and Title in the Old Kingdom. The Structure of the Egyptian Administration in the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties. Chicago.

BAINES, J.

BARTE M.

BAUD, M.

BEGELSCHER-FISCHER, B.L.

BECKEL, S.
1993 : La cosmogonie égyptienne avant le Nouvel Empire (BO 154). Göttingen.

BOCHI, P.A.
Proseography

Four lists of the high priests of Memphis during the Old Kingdom have been compiled so far, which do not always coincide with each other: Maystre 1992 (1948), Wildung 1977, Porter and Moss 1981 (PM III), and El-Sharkawy 2008. In the section “Other lists” of the entries of this prosopography, they are referred to by superscript letters: M = Maystre, W = Wildung, PM = Porter and Moss, and S = El-Sharkawy.

When compiling this prosopography, we decided to follow a restrictive criterion and we included only those individuals for whom the title of GDC is clearly attested. This is what led us to leave off the list some characters included in the lists compiled by Wildung (Nebu) and El-Sharkawy (Imhotep, Khabausokar, Nebu, Nimaatre, and Iznianh) (see, for reasons, above, 3; and Maystre 1992 [1948]: 9-10, 14-15, 119; 1949: 84-85), and to keep in it some characters not considered by Porter and Moss (Nefertjedptah, Ptahshepses V and Impy III). Regarding Sabu, contemporary of Ptahshepses I, included in the lists of Wildung and El-Sharkawy, see below, [2]. Kinship: [3].

For each character, all the titles are listed in their precise order of appearance, since this order proves to be meaningful (see above, 4). When for a single character we have several documents, one or more inscriptions (or parts of them), which, together, contain all his titles, have been chosen. General epithets or phrases, such as (m)lny-imy-tb n nb=f, “favourite of his lord”, or (m)lny=mrw(w) nb=f, “beloved of his lord”, are not recorded. On the contrary, the exclusive epithet of the Memphite high priests (m)lny=wr xrp(w) Hmwt (m prwy), “beloved (with)”, “revered (with)”, and translation of titles, we essentially follow Jones 2000. For the abbreviations used, see the Bibliography; as in the rest of the article, the abbreviation GDC corresponds to “Greatest of the Directors of Craftsmen” (title).

In relation to the sections “Monuments and documents”, “Kinship”, “Date”, and “Titles” of the different entries, see also tables 1, 2, and 3, and fig. 1 in the main text of the article.

[1] Nefertjedptah

(sic) Nfr-dl-PtH (one single attestation)

Other lists: M = absent; W = Nfr-dl-PtH; PM = absent; S = Nfr-dl-PtH.

GDC title is not recorded in the inscriptions labelling these characters in the temple. Even so, the character labelled as Ptahshepses could be Ptahshepses I and the one labelled as Sabu could be Sabu I (f).


Titles:
(a) [tomb doorway lintel, fourth line] sm[w] prwy Hm-nTr Hwt Thnt, n(y) hrw Hb, hm-nr Pth, hm-nr Zkr, hry sm[w], mhkw nswt, n(y)-ti pr Zkr, n(y)-ti 2m(w), hry hmrw, hry-siti n tr(f)nbi, sm(w) nb(w), Pth; GDC in the Two Houses, belonging to the day of festival, priest of Pah, priest of Sokar, director of sem-attendants, intimate of the king, overseer of the temple of Sokar, overseer of the waqet, director of craftsmen, privy to the secrets of his god, aatb-priest of Pht.
(b) [false door stela, central niche] sm[w] prwy Hm-nTr Hm-nTr PtH, n(y) hrw Hb, hm-nr Ht-ta-š(w), hm-nr Iy-ny-wr; GDC in the Two Houses, intimate of the king, belonging to the day of festival, priest of Khentiautef, priest of Imikhenur.
(c) [false door stela, two-column right jamb] wrs prwy Hm-nTr Zkr m swt=f nb(wt), hm-nr Ht-ta-š(w), hm-nr Dd-sps, wr hpy(w) hmrw m prwy, lw m hw Pht / hm-nr R”m Nfr-Ht-Mi, hm-nr Rd m Szpw-b Irr, wrr hpy(w) hmrw, n(y)-ti 2m(w), n(y)-ti-st gfr; priest of Pht, priest of Sokar in all his places, priest of Khentitjenenet, priest of Djedhespes, GDC in the Two Houses, elder one of the mansion of Pah / priest of Re in Nekhenre (sun-temple of UserkaF), priest of Re in Shezepuihre (sun-temple of Niuserre), GDC, overseer of the waqet, overseer of the place of provisions.
(d) [false door stela, two-column left jamb] n(y) hrw Hm-nTr Zkr m swt=f nb(wt), hpy(w) hmrw, n(y)-ti 2m(w), hpy(w) hmrw, n(y)-ti 2m(w), hpy(w) hmrw, n(y)-ti 2m(w), hpy(w) hmrw; GDC in the Two Houses, elder one of the mansion of Pah / priest of Re in Nekhenre (sun-temple of UserkaF), priest of Re in Shezepuihre (sun-temple of Niuserre), GDC, overseer of the waqet, overseer of the place of provisions.
(e) [another title: niched wall, left side, first column, inside the biographical text] hry-siti n ktt nbi, privy to the secret of all works.

The High Priesthood of Memphis… An Updated Study and Prosopography Josep Covelló Autuori

[3] Sabu I

šlw (one single attestation; however, see below)

Other lists: unknown to the compilers of the other lists; however, see below.

Monuments and documents: Inscribed relief on a limestone block (SC/South/2005/06) that was originally part of the lower course (above the dado) of the south wall of the causeway of Sahure’s pyramid complex at Abusir, El Awady 2009: 166-168, figs. 82-87, pl. 6. The main scene represents king Sahure celebrating the bringing of anac-3-trees from Punt. Sabu is depicted in a banquet scene, in a subsidiary register along with another character named Ptahber (a toponymic name with the title of Pht: PV 1: 150 # 6; Schele-Schweitzer 2014: 357 # 908), who holds the difficult to interpret title mhyg wnytw msytw,… (?), “overseer of sculptors/makers of stone vessels (?), in any case clearly associated with craftsmanship [Jones 2000: 469 # 1744; HL 4: 1542; related to the title mhytw (?), see [6.6.1]]. The subsidiary register immediately above is also reserved for craftsmen leaders: the mhyg wnytw msytw, “overseer of sculptors in the Two Houses Neferemka(?),” and the mhyg wnytw msytw Nfr-Hm-nTr, “overseer of sculptors Neferhetepetah”, the two proper names not being recorded in Ranke’s KV or in Schele-Schweitzer 2014 Sabu could be identified with the owner of another great mastaba located in the cemetery westnorth of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara (MM C16, Mariette 1888: 142-147; PM III1: 461, map XLVI # 39; see fig. 1); in the few remaining inscriptions of this tomb the title GDC is not recorded, but other titles characteristic of Memphite high priests are known, such as hpy(w) hmrw nb(wt), “overseer of all semi-attendants”, mhkw nswt, “intimate of the king,” and probably [n(y) hrw Hb, “belonging to the day of festival” (Mariette 1888: 144; see above). This led Wildung (1977: 1258) and El-Sharkawy (2008: 23) to include the owner of the tomb C16 in their lists, albeit somewhat improperly in view of the absence of any attestation. He could also be the Sabu depicted in the funerary temple of Sahure (see [2].Kinship).

Inscriptions (editions and/or translations): El Awady 2009: 177, pl. 6.

Kinship: very probably, a close relative of Ptahshepses I. The close relationship of the Sabu who owns tomb C16 with Ptahshepses I is clear from several pieces of evidence: the location of the tomb, just north of the latter’s (see above, 6d); the almost identical plan of these great mastabas and their chapels; and the fact that the fragmentary inscriptions of the tomb record a son of Sabu called Ptahshepses, as well as the names of Pah and Sokar and the private name Nefertumy, “he who belongs to Nefertum” (PV 1: 200 # 24; Schele-Schweitzer 2014: 487 # 2011), which clearly links the tomb’s owner to the Memphite gods. As we have seen, on the other hand, a Pahshepses and a Sabu, who could be Ptahshepses I and Sabu I, are depicted together in the funerary temple of Sahure (see [2].Kinship).

Date: reign of Sahure.

Titles: sm[w] prwy hmrw, GDC [+ name].
[4] Ranef

Other lists: 4Ra-ra, 5R-afr

Other prosopographies: Baer 1960: 99 # 304.

Monuments and documents: great mastaba located in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, MM CG; two inscribed statues from this tomb kept in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, CGC 19 and 19. Mariette 1889: 121-123, CG; Borchardt 1911: 19-20 # 18-19, pl. 5-18/19, Maystre 1992 [1948]: 109-111; PM III: 461-462 # 40, 416, map XLVI D2, 40.


Inscription: married to the intj+ stela belonging to the "director of the dining-hall, inspector of funerary-priests Senimen" (brpr 26, sh[tš hm-wk] S-r-w ntn-mk [w]), a gift from the GDC Neferefreankh, mentioned in it, CGC 1410. Borchardt 1937: 74-75 # 1410; Maystre 1992 [1948]: 111; PM III: 698 (Senimen). Baer 1960: 91 and El-Sharkawy (2005: 23) respectively claim and suggest that the GDC Neferefreankh is the same character as the nameake owner of the tomb MM D68 at Saqqara, east of the Step Pyramid (Mariette 1888: 335, D38), and the statue CGC 87, probably coming from it (Borchardt 1911: 69 # 87, pl. 19-87) (PM III: 585, D58). However, the documented titles of both, although scarce, are very different and do not seem to support this identification or, in any case, do not allow for a conclusion.


Date: mid-Fifth Dynasty; Borchardt 1937: 74, "Dyn. 5"; Maystre 1992 [1948]: 109, mid-Fifth Dynasty; Freier 1976: 10, "ahabeschicke (...). 5. Dynastie"; Wildung 1977: 1258, "Mitte 5. Dyn."; PM III: 917, "Ra-neferefr or later"; El-Sharkawy 2008: 23 (quotes the dates given by Wildung and PM). Neferefreankh is a basilophoric name embedding the name of king Neferefre, which is an accurate time indicator.

Titles: [Senimen's stela] tš tš sḏk nswt wr brpr(w) hmr w, iry-r pr Zkr; GDC, overseer of the temple of Sokar [+ name].

[6] Ptahshepses II

Other lists: 4Ptahshepses II; 5Ptahshepses (III); 4PM-Ptahshepses; 5Ptahshepses (III).

Other prosopographies: Baer 1960: 75-76 # 164 (surprisingly, within the entry for Ptahshepses I).

Monuments and documents: great mastaba located in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, MM CG, with a chapel very similar in shape and dimensions to that of Ptahshepses I; doorway lintel from this mastaba, now in the University of Aberdeen Museums (former University of Aberdeen Anthropological Museum), 1556, with a list of titles almost identical to the GDC Ptahshepses, map XLVI CD2, 50. Two seated and headless statues of a Ptahshepses kept in the University of Aberdeen Museums (former University of Aberdeen Anthropological Museum), 1556, with a list of titles almost identical to that on the doorway lintel of the latter. Mariette 1888: 129-130, CG; Reid 1912: 194-195; Maystre 1992 [1948]: 109; Baer 1960: 75; PM III: 464-465 # 50, 416 [Ptahshepses], map XLVI CD2, 50. Two seated and headless statues of a Ptahshepses kept in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, CGC 93 and 358, most likely come from this tomb, although it has also been suggested that they might come from the tomb of Ptahshepses I: the titles inscribed on them match perfectly with the titulaires of both. Borchardt 1937: 75 # 93, pl. 31-35; 193-194 # 368 (undecided about
the owner); Maystre 1992 [1948]: 109 (undecided about the owner); El-Sharkawy 2005: 23 * 5 (prefers Ptahshepses I). Something similar happens with a round door lintel also kept in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, CGC 1701, of which it is also not known whether it came from the tomb of Ptahshepses I or Ptahshepses II (Borchardt 1964: 143 * 1701).


Kinship: no data. The shape of the chapel of his tomb, very similar to that of Ptahshepses I ([1]), and the list of titles on the lintel of its doorway, almost identical to that of the latter and to Sabu Ibebi's ([5]), suggest close proximity between these three characters, both familiar and chronological. A fourth character, also called Ptahshepses, seems closely linked to these three by his name and the location and structure of his mastaba, which lies in the same cemetery and has a plan almost identical to that of the mastabas of Ptahshepses I and II (MM C10; Mariette 1889: 131-132, C10; PM III: 464 * 49, map XLVI C2d, 49; see fig. 1); he is not, however, a GDC, but a zib sHy wbr mHf, "juridical inspector of archivists", and a hm-npr R’ Hw-Hr, "priest of Re and Hathor".


Titles:
(a) [tomb doorway lintel, fourth line] n(y) hrw Hb: small tomb located in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, south to the tombs of Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV (excavated but not recorded). Kinship: no data. The nickname Kem, "the Black", is also carried later by a son of Sabu Ibebi ([9]). Kinship: if these characters have family ties, could it refer to a physical trait of some members of their lineage?


Tales:
[a] (false door stele) n(y) hrw Hb: small tomb located in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, south to the tombs of Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV (excavated but not recorded). Kinship: no data. The nickname Kem, "the Black", is also carried later by a son of Sabu Ibebi ([9]). Kinship: if these characters have family ties, could it refer to a physical trait of some members of their lineage?


Tales:
[a] (false door stele) n(y) hrw Hb: small tomb located in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, south to the tombs of Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV (excavated but not recorded). Kinship: no data. The nickname Kem, "the Black", is also carried later by a son of Sabu Ibebi ([9]). Kinship: if these characters have family ties, could it refer to a physical trait of some members of their lineage?


Tales:
[a] (false door stele) n(y) hrw Hb: small tomb located in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, south to the tombs of Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV (excavated but not recorded). Kinship: no data. The nickname Kem, "the Black", is also carried later by a son of Sabu Ibebi ([9]). Kinship: if these characters have family ties, could it refer to a physical trait of some members of their lineage?


Tales:
[a] (false door stele) n(y) hrw Hb: small tomb located in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, south to the tombs of Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV (excavated but not recorded). Kinship: no data. The nickname Kem, "the Black", is also carried later by a son of Sabu Ibebi ([9]). Kinship: if these characters have family ties, could it refer to a physical trait of some members of their lineage?


Tales:
[a] (false door stele) n(y) hrw Hb: small tomb located in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, south to the tombs of Sabu Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV (excavated but not recorded). Kinship: no data. The nickname Kem, "the Black", is also carried later by a son of Sabu Ibebi ([9]). Kinship: if these characters have family ties, could it refer to a physical trait of some members of their lineage?


Tales:

Inscriptions (editions and/or translations): Murray 1905: pl. 26–27; Sethe in Murray 1937: 21, § 23 (titles); Maystre 1992 [1948]: 234 n. 11.

Kinship: two sons are represented as offering bearers in a register of the fragmentary decoration of the chapel of his tomb (east wall): zA=f Sibw, "his son, Sabu", and zA=f Pbḫ-nps, "his son, Ptahshepses" (Murray 1905: pl. 27) (see above, 6a). However, the register is incomplete; in front of first of these figures is another identical fragmentary figure whose label is lost; and, unlike what happens with Sabu I'Ibebi and Ptahshepses IV, a zA=f mr(y)=f or his label does not appear in the preserved reliefs (§9, Kinship; [11], Kinship).


Titles: [false door stela] Smw-sp, Frz-st, Frz-md, Frz-md, Hm-nTr W, N(y) Hrm, n(y) Hrm-w, Hm-nTr Pb, Hm-nTr Zkr; GDC, belonging to the day of festival, robing-priest, Prah, priest of Sokar.

[9] Sabu III I'Ibebi

Fš(fr) Sibw-rn=f Frz I'Ibi

Other lists: SmSabou-I'Ibebi; WSIbw-Jbhh; PMSabou (I'Ibebi); Sibw II, he whose beautiful name is Jbhh.

Other prosopographies: Baer 1960: 121 n. 421; Strudwick 1985: 130 n. 116; Kloot 2002: 30 n. 64.


Kinship: probably son (suggested by Wildung) or better second-generation offspring (see above, 7) of Ptahshepses I ([E12]); the similar monuments and texts (niched wall/false door stelae with (auto-)biographies) and the same phraseology (Breasted 1906: 131; Dorman 2002: 102–106; Kloot 2002: 158–239; Strudwick 2005: 306; Duliková 2016: 37; Stauder-Porchet 2017: 241–244) as well as an extensive mention of priestly offices related to ancient Memphite divinities (see above, 5) in those texts suggest close relationship between them, both familiar and chronological. An almost identical list of titles also closely links these two characters to Ptahshepses II ([E3]). Almost certainly (sure, according to Wildung and El-Sharkawy) father of Ptahshepses IV. Maybe married to a noblewoman called Meritites (Mariette 1889: 386). Five sons and two grandsons are represented in the reliefs of his chapel as offering bearers or statue pullers, and the only son labelled as "his beloved", also as a ritualist: zA=f mr=f Pbr-hh-bh zI ml II n-pr Pbḫ-nps, "his beloved son, lector priest, scribe of the god’s book, Ptahshepses" (depicted twice); zA=f Imy-HT hm-wt pr=f Sibw, "his son, under-supervisor of craftsmen of the Great House, Sabu"; Imy-HT pr=f zA=f Hm-wtw, "under-supervisor of the Great House, his son, Hemimu"; zA=f Imy-HT hm-wtw(n)y pr=f Sps-pr=Pb-hm, "his son, under-supervisor of the kentiuhe of the Great House, Shepespuptah Kem" ([§7], Kinship); and zA=f Sps-pr=Pb-hm, "his son, Shepespuptah; zI=f Imy-HT hm-wt pr=f Ptahshepses, "the son of his son, under-supervisor of craftsmen of the Great House, Ptahshepses; zI=f Hm-wtw, "the son of his son Khemu". According to Kanawati (2003: 135–137) and El-Khadragy (2014: 180, 182–183, 188, 191–192, figs. 3–6), Sabu had a sixth son depicted fivefold in the chapel but whose images and accompanying labels were systematically chiseled out; from the traces of these labels it can be deduced that he was Sabu’s eldest son (zA=f smw [m]y[n]=f) he was a priest (hm-n) or his label does not appear in his titles (above, 7, and note 123).


Titles: (a) [tomb doorway lintel, fourth line] SmW-rm=f Wšn, N(y) Hrm, n(y) Hrm-w, Hm-nTr Pb; Hm-nTr Zkr, hmr smw(m)it; smw pr Zkr, imy-r wšt, hmr smw(m)it, hmr-smw(m)it n-pr=f, wšt Pbh; GDC in the Two Houses, belonging to the day of festival, priest of Prah, priest of Sokar, director of zA=f TdE9... An Updated Study and Prosopography Josep Covello Auturo
The High Priesthood of Memphis... An Updated Study and Prosopography
Josep Cerviño Autuori

(10) Satju

Monuments and documents: group-status of the character (seating) and his wife (kneeling on his right, in smaller proportions), once in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, CGC 190, and now in the Karanis Museum (Kom Ausim, El-Fayoum; El-Sharkawy 2008: 23 # 14); offering-stand, now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, CGC 190. Borchardt 1937: 3 # 190; pl. 1.190; Borchardt 1937: 3 # 190, pl. 1.190; Maystre 1992 [1948]: 107–108; PM III: 69.16, 916. Borchardt (1911: 190) and Maystre (1912 [1948]: 107 n. 1) suggest, respectively, that the tombs MM B6 and MM B7, located in the cemetery north of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara (Mariette 1889: 97–98, B6, B7), may have belonged to this Satju. However, this seems unlikely for two reasons: 1) the completely different titles recorded in the inscriptions on the statue and the offering-stand, on the one hand, and in the tombs, on the other; and 2) the discrepancy between the objects belonging to the GDC Satju and those found in the tombs (no objects come from tomb B6; from tomb B7 come two offering-stands, two little false door stelae, and a slab with reliefs, now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, but they belonged to a Satju with completely different titles from those of the GDC Satju: Borchardt 1937: 2 # 198, 4 # 1901, 35–36 # 1377–1378, 159–200 # 1414; pls. 1.198, 8.1377–1378, 43.1414; Baer 1960: 120 # 417). A stela now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli (MANN 1017) that represents a lyr. hi nswt 25w, hm-nr Ptb, hm-nr Zkr, “king’s acquaintance Satju, priest of Ptb, priest of Sokar”, and his wife, the lyr. hi nswt Hry-sStA, “king’s acquaintance Khentiata”, could have belonged to this character, but the absence of the title of GDC in this document prevents confirmation (Hölbl 1983: 3 # 5 = Maystre 1992 [1948]: 108).

Inscriptions (editions and/or translations): Borchardt 1911: 130 # 190; Borchardt 1937: 3 # 1500; Maystre 1992 [1948]: 235–236 # 14–15.

Kinhup: no data.

The High Priesthood of Memphis... An Updated Study and Prosopography
Josep Cervelló Autuori

Date: reigns of Teti and Pepy I. Maystre 1992 [1948]: 115–116; Unis-Teti; Freier 1976: 11, ”6. Dynastie”; Wildung 1977: 123, ”Teti–Pepy I.”; Baer 1960: 77, ”Teti–Pepy I”; PM III: 917, ”Teti or later”; El-Sharkawy 2008: 23, ”Ty to Pjy I. (6th Dynasty)”. He was probably born under Djedkare Isesi, but he made his priestly career and held the charge of GDC during the reigns of Teti and Pepy I.

Tities:
(a) [statue, two-column inscription] sAb[d], m3h3 / sAb[d] m3h3, wr hr(w) hmwt, hm-nfr Ptah / wr hr(w) hmwt, hm-nfr Zkr; GDC, priest of Ptah [+ name] / GDC, priest of Sokar [+ name].
(b) [offering-stand, one column inscription] sAb[d], m3h3 / wr hr(w) hmwt, hm-nfr Ptah Zkr; GDC, priest of Ptah and Sokar [+ name].


Other lists: MPtahshepses IV; WPtahshepses IV (II); PMPtahshepses IV; S Ptahshepses IV.

Other prosopographies: Baer 1960: 76–77 # 168.

Monuments and documents: mastaba with two chapels (the one in the north belonging to Ptahshepses and the one in the south belonging to Sabu III Ibebi) located in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, MM E1/2, doorway lintel, drum, and jamb from the southern chapel of this mastaba, now in the National Museum of London; MM E1/2, doorway lintel, drum, and jamb from the southern chapel of this mastaba, now in the National Museums Liverpool; MM E1/2; Maystre 1992 [1948]: 115–116; PM III: 28, pls. 29, 30, 31.3; Murray 1905, pl. 31.1/2; Maystre 1992 [1948]: 115, almost certainly (sure, according to Wildung and El-Sharkawy) the son of Sabu III Ibebi.

Kinship: almost certainly (sure, according to Wildung and El-Sharkawy) the son of Sabu III Ibebi. Married to the iry h3 nswt hm(t)-nfr Htet-nfr Nt Ini, ”king’s acquaintance, priestess of Neit, priestess of Hathor, Ini” (Murray 1905, pl. 31.1/2), in all probability the same Ini who owns a tomb located in the cemetery northwest of the Step Pyramid (MM C17, Mariette 1889: 148; Maystre 1992 [1948]: 64–65, 116–118; PM III: 465 # 43, map XLVI D2, 43). Four sons are represented in the reliefs of his chapel as offering bearers, and the only one labelled as ”his beloved”, also as a young official standing next to his father and touching his staff: zIr=f nyn=f hr(w) hmwt Ptah-sps, ”his son, under-supervisor of craftsmen, Sabu”; zIr=f nyn=f hr(w) hmwt Ptah-sps, ”his son, under-supervisor of craftsmen, Ptahshepses”; zIr=f nyn=f pr=f Ptah-sps, ”his son, overseer of the Great House, Ptahshepses”; and zIr=f nyn=f hr(w) hmwt Ptah-sps, ”his son, Shepeshuptah” (Murray 1905, pl. 29, 30.1–32.3). The first is in all likelihood Sabu Tjety, who would begin his career in the priesthood of Ptah under his father’s pontificate and then succeed him in the office of GDC (see above, 6a).
[1948]: 116-118; Borchardt 1964: 148 * 1709, 177-178 + 1756, pl. 100.1756; PM III: 463 + 47, 917, map XLVI CD2, 47. In all probability, Sabu Tjety is the Tjety(y) recorded in the funerary temple of Pepy II as "sem-priest, director of every kilt (wardrobe)," sealer of the king of Lower Egypt, keeper of the headress, GDC" (Jacquier 1958: 60, pl. 74; Maystre 1992 [1948]: 249-250). He is also probably the Tjety recorded as "GDC in the Two Houses" in the tomb of the noblewoman Inti at Saqqara, where the bottom end of a stela and other fragmentary inscriptions were found (Mariette 1889: 148, C17; Maystre 1992 [1948]: 64-65, 116-118, 250); since Inti is most likely his mother ([11], Kinship), it seems that she survived her husband and was buried by her son, already in the office of high priest. Finally, a character labelled as GDC in the funerary temple of Pepy II could also be Sabu Tjety (see [11], Monuments and documents, Inscriptions).


Kinship: most likely, the son of Ptahshepses IV and the noblewoman Inti (see above and [11], Kinship).


Titles:
(a) [false door stela, inner jamb, first column] \textit{bty-\textit{smr waty}, smr \textit{wr xrp(w) Hmwt}, mr \textit{Hmwt m prwy}, n(y)-\textit{kAw-PtH}}; sole friend, lector priest, GDC, belonging to the day of festival [+ first name].
(b) [false door stela, inner jamb, second column] \textit{bty-\textit{smr waty}, smr \textit{Hmwt m prwy}, n(y)-\textit{kAw-PtH}}; overseer of all works of the king, sole friend, lector priest, GDC, belonging to the day of festival [+ second name].
(c) [false door stela, inner jamb, third column] \textit{sm, hry-\textit{smr waty}, smr \textit{wr xrp(w) Hmwt m prwy}, n(y)-\textit{kAw-PtH}}; semi-priest, director of every kilt (wardrobe), sole friend, GDC in the Two Houses, belonging to the day of festival.

The High Priesthood of Memphis... An Updated Study and Prosopography Josep Cervello Autuori

[13] Ptahshepses V Impy I
\[\text{\textit{hry-\textit{kAw-PtH}}, \textit{kAw-PtH} (one single attestation)}\]

Other lists: M\textit{Ptahshepses-Impy-I}; W\textit{Phb-gpss, Impy} (PM III: 215, "Phb-gpss V" incorrectly added: "he whose beautiful name is Impy", since the name Impy is not recorded as a rv-f nfr).


Kinship: no data. Wildung and El-Sharkawky suggest that Ptahshepses V could be the son of Impy III (which they call Ankhu and place in the position before him in their lists), but this seems unlikely for chronological reasons ([15], Date).


Titles:
(a) [statue inscription, first column] \textit{iry nfr-HAt m Xkr PtH-Spss-Impj}, sole friend, lector priest, GDC, belonging to the day of festival [+ first name].
(b) [statue inscription, second column] \textit{iri m Xkr \textit{Hry-tp Nxb} HAty-a imy-rA wabty smr waty, hry-\textit{smr waty}, hry-\textit{smr waty}, hry-\textit{smr waty}, hry-\textit{smr waty}}; overseer of all works of the king, sole friend, lector priest, GDC [+ second name].

[14] Imephor Impy II Nikauptah
\[\text{\textit{Hr-tw-f njt \textit{Impy I tw-f njt}}, Impy (one single attestation)}\]

Other lists: unknown to the compilers of the other lists.

Monuments and documents: looted and destroyed tomb in Kom el-Khemaseen, south-west Saqqara, currently only known from twenty-five limestone blocks or block fragments and five
granite fragments, at present stored in El-Mohemat magazine in Saqqara, twelve blocks or block fragments and ten statuettes tracked in the antiquities market since 2009 (some of these pieces have been returned to Egypt and are today kept in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo), and one weight purchased by Brugsch in Saqqara in 1881 and today in the Ägyptisches Museum Berlin (AM 8032). Brugsch 1881: 1451-1452 # 82; PV I: 26 # 13 (name Impy on the aforementioned weight); Ägyptisches Museum Berlin 1967: 28 # 244; Cervelló Autuori 2007, 2016; Cervelló Autuori and Díaz de Cerio Juan 2009.

Inscriptions (editions and/or translations): [partially published] Cervelló Autuori 2007; 2016. All the blocks quoted below (Titles) are published in these articles. The blocks KKh01/A/B/C/D/E, KKh-02/03 and KKh-05/B/C/D/E formed an incomplete wall with a long inscription of at least six lines more than 2 m long recording the names and titles of the character (see above, 1). The text is oriented left to right. The beginning of the lines is preserved, but not the end. The first line preserved was not the first of the original inscription, while the sixth line preserved was the last, because underneath it there is a wide uncarved space. In the preserved text, the names of the character are repeated several times (thirteen at least, always all three together judging by the preserved text); some titles are repeated three (fbISP), smISP (tw times, while some others appear only once (fbISP), bISP, smISP, or two (fbISP) times, while some others are repeated) in Berlin’s weight: [14]. As for a post-Imephor dating, the titulary of Impy III starts with the short variant of the same name in Imephor Impy Nikauptah’s documents (see above, 7d), which is a feature of the titularies of the GDC title holders in the Middle Kingdom and residually in the Middle Kingdom, while there is no attestation dated after the Middle Kingdom. On the other hand, in Impy’s statue, the spelling of the name is identical to the particular style (...) an Eleventh Dynasty date might seem more possible than a Thirteenth Dynasty date”; PM VIII: 314. “First Intermediate Period”; El-Sharkawy 2008: 24, “First Intermediate Period” ([nhw, w]). Despite Delange’s hesitation, one factor seems to be decisive for a dating in the first of the two periods between which she doubts: according to Ranke (PV I: 26 # 13; see also Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 237 # 295), the name Impy is mainly used in the Old Kingdom and residually in the Middle Kingdom, while there is no attestation dated after the Middle Kingdom. On the other hand, in Impy’s statue, the spelling of the name is identical to the short variant of the same name in Imephor Impy Nikauptah’s documents (for example, in Berlin’s weight: [14]). As for a post-Imephor dating, the titulary of Impy III starts with the couple of titles iry-p’t/ḥty-r (see above, 7d), which is a feature of the titulary of the GDC title holders in the Middle Kingdom (Maystre 1992 [1948]: 72, 251), but not with the couple iry-p’t/ḥty-r, he must have preceded Impy III in the charge. Impy III is, in any case, absent from Fischer’s list of the Memphite high priests of the Twelfth Dynasty (Fischer 1976: 63-66).

**Date**

- end of the Sixth Dynasty and/or beginning of the First Intermediate Period. Cervelló Autuori 2007: 81-83. The title iry-p’t is followed (or accompanied) by the epithet -sm, hty-r, sm; foremost, sem-priest (one/three occurrences).

**Titles**

- (a) [wall text, at the start of a line, introducing the main name Impy-Hr] bISP; hty-r, sm; foremost, sem-priest (one/three occurrences).
- (b) [wall text, at the start of a line, followed by a gap in the text] smISP; wr hbrp(w) hmtwt, GDC (two occurrences).
- (c) [wall text, within the text] smISP; [wr hbrp(w) hmtw]; bISP, hty-r, sm; foremost, sem-priet (two occurrences).
- (d) [block KKh01/4, in absolute initial position of titulary, as a dative in the context of the offering formula] bISP; hty-r, foremost [- name] (one occurrence).
- (e) [weight] bISP, sm, sem-priest [- name].
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The High Priesthood of Memphis during the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period: An Updated Study and Prosopography</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josep CERVELLÓ AUTUORI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quelques observations sur l’écriture rétrograde dans les tombes thébaines de l’époque tardive</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silvia EINAUDI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreting Three Gold Coins from Ancient Egypt and the Ancient Near East at the Museo Casa de la Moneda, Madrid</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miguel JARAMAGO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Predynastic Lice Combs: Analysis of an Ancestral Tool</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candelaria MARTÍN DEL RÍO ÁLVEDRA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Painted The Tomb of Sennedjem?</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gema MENÉNDEZ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tendrils of the Bat Emblem</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea RODRÍGUEZ VALLS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers in Perpetuity? Notes about the mrt Workers of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom Based on the Stela CG 20516</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pablo M. ROSELL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And Everything Began with Laughs and Tears...The Creation of the Gods According to Esna II, 163, 16-17; III 206, 8-9 (§13) and III, 272, 2-3: Precedents, Interpretation and Influences</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josué SANTOS SAAVEDRA, Roger FORTEA BASTART</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabasety, the Temple Singer in Aarhus</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogério SOUSA, Vinnie NØRSKOV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission Guidelines</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>