The $spst\ nswt$ Women in Ancient Egypt

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Abstract
The present article focuses on the non-royal feminine title $spst\ nswt$, “noblewoman of the king,” first attested in the Sixth Dynasty and held by elite Memphite and provincial women, and which continued to be used in the First Intermediate Period but to a lesser degree. The significance of this title comes from its association with the female relatives of nomarchs and high provincial officials in the Sixth Dynasty. This study intends to assess the social status of those women, and more broadly, to address the connections between the rulers of the Sixth Dynasty and provincial families. Some eighty $spst\ nswt$ women are known in the period extending from the late Old Kingdom through the First Intermediate Period, with a later unique occurrence of the title dating to the late Twenty-fifth–early Twenty-sixth Dynasty and found in the tomb of Padiamenope (TT 33) in the Asasif. Nearly half of the $spst\ nswt$ women were priestesses of Hathor in the provinces or in the Memphite area, and very few cases from Akhmim belong to women who served in the cult of Min.

Keywords: Old Kingdom; First Intermediate Period; feminine title; social status; priestess of Hathor; women in ancient Egypt

Introduction to the Title
The title $spst\ nswt$ is one of three titles associating their holders with the king and held by non-royal women of the high rank. The other two titles are $rxt\ nswt$ and $Xkrt\ nswt$ (watt).

1 Thanks go to Dr Hratch Papazian, University of Cambridge, for his revision and valuable commentary on this article.


3 This title was subject to different readings and interpretations: Cecil M. Firth and Battiscombe Gunn, Excavations at Saqqara, [1920-25]: Teti Pyramid Cemeteries, vol. 1 (Cairo: IFAO, 1926), 157 (6), n. 5 (iri ixt ni.swt, “Concerned with the King’s Affairs”); Mohamed Saleh, Three Old-Kingdom TOMBS at Thebes. 1. The Tomb of Unas-Ankh No. 413. 2. The Tomb of Khenty No. 405. 3. The Tomb of Ihy No. 186. (Mainz Am Rhein: Von Zabern, 1977), 12, n. 23 (rht nswt “She whom the king knows”); Henry G. Fischer, Dendera in the Third Millenium B.C.: Down to the Theban Domination of Upper Egypt (New York: J. J. Augustin, 1968), 69–70, n. 282; idem, “Offerings for an Old Kingdom Granary Official,” Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts 51, nos. 2 and 3 (1972): 73 (“one who is concerned with the king’s property” (male), “one who is known to the king” (female)); idem, Varia, 8, n. 15, 69 (“Acquaintance of the King” (male/female)); idem, Egyptian Women, 30, n. 176 (rht nswt, “she who is known to the king”); Ronald J. Leprohon, “The Sixth Dynasty False Door of the Priestess of Hathor Irti,” JARCE 31 (1994): 46–47 (iry/iryt-ht nswt, “connected to royal affairs”/“One connected to the cultic largess of (i.e. from) the king”); Jones, Index, 327–28 (1206).
nswt “king” and ṣpst “noblewoman.” The title is commonly translated into English as “noblewoman of the king,” “King’s Noblewoman,” or “Royal noblewoman.” The Wörterbuch states that the Old Kingdom feminine title ṣpst nswt refers to women who belong or had belonged to the royal harem. Allam translates the title as “vornehme Dame in der Umgebung des Königs,” arguing that it was not a very common title which occurred in connection with the title ḫkr t nswt (w’tt), and that its holder was a kind of “lady-in-waiting.” Bissing translates the title as “kgl. Haremdame,” while Reiser interprets it as “Kgl. Dame.” These notions of a harem are no longer tenable, because they are very orientalistic and very likely had no basis in reality when it comes to ancient Egypt. As is clear then, the translations vary, but the current study is not a lexical one, but is rather focused on uncovering the social status of the ṣpst nswt women.

Drenkhahn read the title as ṣps.s.t nswt and offered the translation “Königssedle.” She argues against the interpretation of the ṣpst nswt women as royal concubines, highlighting that the wives and daughters of provincial nomarchs, who were among the holders of the title, are hardly to be regarded as royal concubines. Edel states that the title ṣps nswt/ṣpst nswt was granted as the lowest court rank, and it is generally

For the masculine form of the title, see Miroslav Barta, “The Title ‘Property Custodian of the King’ during the Old Kingdom Egypt,” ZÄS 126 (1999): 79–89.


2 Ṣb IV, 450: 2.

3 Fischer, Dendera, 111; Jones, Index, 990–91 (3664).

4 Fischer, Varti, 122; William A. Ward, Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom: With a Glossary of Words and Phrases Used (Beirut: American University, 1982), 175 (1511); idem, Feminine Titles, 18.

5 Leprohon, “Inti,” 47.

6 Ṣb IV, 450: 2; Raymond O. Faulkner, A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian (Cairo: Griffith Institute, 1962), 265.

7 Schafik Allam, Beiträge zum Hathorkult bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches (Berlin: Hessling, 1963), 15.


10 Drenkhahn, “ẖkr t nswt,” 65.

11 Drenkhahn, “ẖkr t nswt,” 65; Troy, Queenship, 78.

12 Edel, QH (2008), LIII.
The title $\text{Spst} \text{ nswt}$ is the feminine form of $\text{Sp} \text{ nswt} \text{ (nj)}$ “noble of the king.” Helck states that $\text{Sp} \text{ nswt}$ is first attested as the lowest ranking title at the end of the Old Kingdom and that it was held by the sons of high officials. He adds that the title was also held by lower ranking palace officials, following the title $\text{Smr} \text{ wty}$ “sole companion” in their titulary. Edel points out that the title was held by young officials at the beginning of their careers. Krämer states that it was among the lowest honorific titles used by members of high-ranking families since the Sixth Dynasty. One of the earliest attestations of this title comes from the tomb of the nomarch and vizier $\text{Izi}$ of Edfu, dated to Teti–Pepy I, and was given to his son $\text{Qfr}$. Another early occurrence is found in the tomb of the vizier ‘nh-m-t’-Hr at Saqqara, dated to the period from mid Teti–Pepy I, where his brother $\text{Trmr}$ had the title along with the offices of “supervisor of the $\text{Hnty}$-($\text{w}$)-$\text{s}$ of the Great House” and “overseer of the department of the $\text{Hnty}$-($\text{w}$)-$\text{s}$ of the Great House.” Fischer suggests that the masculine version started to be used as an official title for courtiers in the reign of Pepy I, and that it does not imply a specific function.

Fischer further argues that the feminine title $\text{Spst} \text{ nswt}$ is first attested in the Sixth Dynasty, mostly held by provincial women, and that it continued in use during the acceptance to be an honorific title from the late Old Kingdom, without an actual function.

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1 Henry G. Fischer, “Three Old Kingdom Palimpsests in the Louvre,” ZÄS 86, no. 1 (1961): 28; idem, *Varia*, 69; Drenkhahn, “$\text{Hkr} \text{ t nswt},” 65.
3 Chigh number of and given the complexity and the creating ranks between different titles is risky not a good idea, attested titles.
5 Edel, *QH* (2008), 570, n. 142.
Herakleopolitan Period. He referred briefly to some examples of provincial and Memphite holders of the title. Ward considered this title as belonging to the ‘aristocracy’, but which did not continue in use during the Middle Kingdom. Among the very final attestations Ward cited some examples, which he dated to the Eleventh Dynasty, in his Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom.

The usual writing of the title $\text{Spst nswt}$ includes the hieroglyphic signs $\phi$ and $\hat{\alpha}$ with the addition of a feminine $t$. In some cases, the title is written without the feminine $t$ after the seated figure. The title is written phonetically without the seated figure in the following instances from the late Sixth Dynasty or after: $\text{Iti/Hnt-k3w.s}$ ($\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ r} / \phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ kl}$), $\text{W3dt}$ ($\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ h}$), $\text{St-ibti/Bb-ibi}$ ($\phi\text{ h} n\hat{\alpha}$), and $\text{Sntt}$ II ($\phi\text{ w}\text{ m} \phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ tr}$) from Saqqara; $\text{Ini/Hnwti}$ ($\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ m} \phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ kl}$), $\text{Hnyt}$ ($\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ h}$), and $\text{Snt/Mrwt}$ ($\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ h}$) from Akhmim; $\text{Qdt-ns}$ from Deir el-Gebrawi ($\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ h}$); and $\text{Mr}$ from Deshasha ($\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ h}$).

Gillam noticed that these phonetic writings of the title were found in their burial chambers or on their coffins. They were used to eliminate or reduce the figures of men and animals in places of burial during the Sixth Dynasty. A semi-phonetic writing of the title is found in the case of $\text{wAw-Htpi}$ from Saqqara as $\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ h}$, and also in the case of $\text{Ipwt}$ from Naga ed-Deir (or probably Dendera?) as $\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ h}$. The ideogram for $\text{Sps}$ appears in the latter case with two arms.

The Scope of the Study

The present study examines the $\text{Spst nswt}$ women, their familial lineage, any other titles or functions they held and what they may tell us about their social status. It examines the appearance of the title $\text{Spst nswt}$ in the late Old Kingdom and its use by women of an elevated social status, especially in the provinces, and what it may tell us about the relationship between the king and the provincial families in this period. The study intends to examine whether holding the title was related to the rank and offices

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1. Henry G. Fischer, “An Occurrence of ḫmn-Nśwt ‘Ehnasya’ on Two Statuettes of the Late Old Kingdom,” JAOS 81, no. 4 (1961): 423, n. 1; idem, Titles of the Middle Kingdom, 79 (1511); idem, Egyptian Women, 30.
2. Fischer, Egyptian Women, n. 179.
3. Ward, Feminine Titles, 18–19, 22.
4. The title $\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ h} \text{ Spst nswt}$ on stela CG 1626 of $\text{Hnyt}$ has been mistakenly cited by Ward as an attestation of a holder of the feminine title. However, it is one of the titles of the man mentioned on the stela, presumably her husband, Denkmäler 2, 96; Fischer, Dendera, 29 (12); Ward, Index, 175 (1511).
5. See Edel, “Lesung des Titels $\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ h}$,” 13; Naguib Kanawati and Ann McFarlane, Akhmim in the Old Kingdom, Part 1: Chronology and Administration (Sydney: Australian Centre for Egyptology, 1992), 246. For these women, see further below.
8. Firth and Gunn, Teti Pyramid Cemeteries 1, 259; Edel, “Lesung des Titels $\phi\hat{\alpha}\text{ h}$,” 14.
of a woman’s male relatives or to the functions that she herself actually carried out, and whether its use was affected by the political conditions during the First Intermediate Period and early Middle Kingdom. It aims to understand and analyze this period in ancient Egyptian history through the status of these individuals. Was there a political and religious dimension to that social classification? The examination of the $pswt$ nswt is based mainly on the brief captions with the names and titles of women on wall scenes in the tombs and the funerary monuments of their male relatives, and also on the women’s own monuments.\textsuperscript{1} The evidence for the $pswt$ nswt from Aswan comes mostly from pottery inscriptions recovered from the cemetery of Qubbet el-Hawa, with few cases deriving from wall scenes or coffin inscriptions.

The study provides information about the $pswt$ nswt women, including the name of the woman who held the title and her nickname (rn.s nfr), if available, the source, a suggested date, other titles the woman held, other monuments upon which she appears, if any, and her prominent family members with their titles. The most comprehensive grouping possible has been provided. Eighty attestations of this title have been compiled, dating to the late Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period, with the exception of one later example from the late Twenty-fifth–early Twenty-sixth Dynasty.

### Analysis of the $spst$ nswt Women

Female holders of the title $spst$ nswt are known from the Memphite area as well as from the provinces, at Aswan (UE 1), Edfu (UE 2), Dendera (UE 6), Qasr es-Sayyad (UE 7), Abydos (UE 8), Naga ed-Deir (UE 8), Akhmim (UE 9), El-Hagarsa (UE 9), Deir el-Gebrawi (UE 12), Quseir el-Amarna and Meir in El-Qusiyah (UE 14), Sheikh Said (UE 15), Zawiyet el-Mayetin (UE 16), and Deshasha (UE 20/21). This geographical diversity is important to highlight, because it is indicative of the fact that the appearance of this title in the late Old Kingdom was not specific to a region but was prominent across Egypt.

### The Memphite Area

One of the earliest occurrences of a Memphite $spst$ nswt is from Saqqara and belongs to $\text{nh.n.s-Ppy}$, who held the offices of $\text{hnty}$-š of Pepy I’s pyramid and priestess of Hathor and the additional title of $\text{hkrt}$ nswt w’tt $\text{m$t}$ on stela CG 1522 of her husband Tš, who was $\text{hnty}$-š of the same pyramid and “oversee of the $\text{hnty}(w)$-š of the Great House.”\textsuperscript{2} $\text{nh.n.s-Ppy}$ was probably as early as Pepy I, based on their titles associating them with this king’s pyramid. Eyre demonstrated the difference between a $\text{hnty}$-š n pr-š and a $\text{hnty}$-š of a royal pyramid in the Old Kingdom, stating that “a $\text{hnty}$-š gave personal service to the king: court service to the living king as $\text{hnty}$-š n pr-š, or temple service to the dead king as $\text{hnty}$-š of his pyramid” and that the $\text{hntyw}$-š

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\textsuperscript{1} Fischer, Egyptian Women, 1.

\textsuperscript{2} Denkmäler 1, 222–23, pl. 46. For the feminine title $\text{hnty}$-š, see Wb III, 311. For examples of female holders of the title $\text{hnty}$-š of a royal pyramid, see Fischer, Varia, 72 (17), n. 24; idem, Dendera, 170; idem, Egyptian Women, 43, n. 253, fig. 31; Jones, Index, 692. For the $\text{hnty}$-š n pr-š, see Murray, Index, pl. 33; Jones, Index, 692–93 (2532); Christopher Eyre, The Use of Documents in Pharaonic Egypt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 56 (“duty-holder(?) of the Great House”).
were holders of land in return for their service.¹ The office of overseer of the hnty(w)-š of the Great House, for example, was carried out by Wni the elder of Abydos before his promotion to the offices of overseer of Upper Egypt and vizier, respectively.² The titles of ‘nh.n.s-Ppy and her husband indicate her high social status.

Seventeen Memphite ṣpst nswn women are known, most of whom are dated to the end of the Sixth Dynasty or after. Eleven of them were priestesses of Hathor, and six were both hkrts nswn wsḥt and priestesses of Hathor (see table 1). The following are holders of all three titles:

1) St-itš, False door stela from tomb N I at south Saqqara: ḫnh.t, ḫnh.h.š, ... ²
2) Hnt-khw.s, her tomb at Saqqara: ḫnh.h.š, ḫnh.h.š, ... ḫnh.h.š. ³
3) ‘nh.n.s-Ppy, False door stela CG 1522 of her husband Ty: ḫnh.h.š, ... ²
4) St-ibbi, her tomb at Saqqara: ḫnh.h.š, ... ²
5) Šmś, her burial chamber in the tomb of Mḥš at south Saqqara: ḫnh.h.š, ... ḫnh.h.š. ⁴
6) Ṣpt, Mstn, False door stela CG 57206 from Saqqara: ḫnh.h.š, ... ²

Additionally, St-ibbi/Bb-ib and Šmś were also hkrts nswn. They appear to have held the title hkrts nswn, before being promoted to the higher rank of hkrts nswn wsḥt. Šmś is known from her burial chamber in the late Sixth Dynasty tomb of Mḥš at south Saqqara, who held the rank of srms wsḥ “sole companion,” and was a ıntjw “chief of estate,” hnty-bity “sealer of the king of Lower Egypt,” hry-tpl nswn “royal chamberlain,” and sš ‘(w) nswn “scribe of the royal documents.”⁵ Her relationship to Mḥš is unknown, but the fact that she had a burial chamber in his tomb indicates that she was a close relative (wife or daughter). One may add to the previous cases that of ḫmr Mṛti, who listed the titles ṣpst nswn and hkrts nswn on her offering

³ Gustave Jéquier, Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II (Cairo: IFAO, 1929), 89, fig. 98; PM III/2, 676, map LXVII [2]; Allam, Hathorkult, 15, n. 8.
⁴ Gustave Jéquier, La pyramide d’Aba (Cairo: IFAO, 1935), 22–23; PM III/2, 674–75.
⁵ Denkmäler I, 222–23, pl. 46.
⁶ Jéquier, Tombeaux de particuliers, 56, fig. 62; PM III/2, 688.
⁷ Jéquier, Tombeaux de particuliers, 76, pl. 11; PM III/2, 682.
⁸ James E. Quibell, Excavations at Saqqara, 1905–1906 (Cairo: IFAO, 1907), 24, pl. 16; PM III/2, 563.
table CG 1355, and who is probably identical with the similarly named woman who appears as hkr nt swt w’tt hm(t)-ntr Hwt-ḥr on her false door CG 1523 and lintel CG 1634 of her husband Tirti, dated to Merenre or later. Tirti appears with the titles smr smr w’ty, “overseer of the ḫnty(w)-ḥ of the Great House,” “lector priest,” “w’b-priest of the two hundreds of Merenre’s pyramid,” and “overseer of accounting” on CG 1634, and additionally bears the higher ranking title of ḫḥty-c in his tomb, north-west of Merenre’s pyramid at south Saqqara. These Memphite women belonged to the highest social strata and served in the Memphite cult of Hathor.

The titles hm(t)-ntr Hwt-ḥr and hkr nt swt w’tt are listed by Ward among the titles held by Middle Kingdom non-royal women of the highest social strata, while considering the title hkr nt swt as belonging to women of the intermediate strata. His argument for the difference in social standing between the hkr nt swt w’tt and hkr nt swt was based on the rank and administrative positions of their husbands. He argued that the holders of the latter title never held the office of priestess of Hathor or any other titles and that they were lower in status than the holders of the former title. However, the periods in which the titles are recorded need to be taken into account when advancing certain proposals. For instance, ḫỉnfr ḫḥdt who was a priestess of Hathor held the title ḫḥk nr swt in combination with the titles ṣḥt nt swt and hkr nt swt in her burial chamber in tomb M XII at Saqqara, dated to the end of the Sixth Dynasty.

A woman named ḫḥfr Snt (I) is repeatedly designated as ḫḥk nr swt and priestess of Hathor on her false door from Saqqara, dated to the late Sixth–Eighth Dynasty. Allam argues that this case proves that women with only the designation ḫḥk nr swt can be priestesses of Hathor. However, this Snt may be identical with the similarly named owner of a burial chamber in the late Sixth Dynasty tomb of Pnw at south Saqqara ( ḫḥfr Snt (II), var. ḫḥfr Snt), where she bears both the titles hkr nt swt w’tt and ḫḥk nr swt in the offering-list on the left wall. She was probably a wife of Pnw, who held the rank of smr w’ty, and was a ḫmr ḫwt “chief of estate,” ḫnty-bity “sealer of the king of Lower Egypt,” and ḥry tp nr swt “royal chamberlain.” It should be noted, however, that two other Memphite cases (Ismt and Rwi) and many other provincial

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1. Denkmäler 1, 25.
2. Bernhard Grdseloff, “Deux Inscriptions Juridiques de l’Ancien Empire,” ASAE 42 (1943): 29, fig. 1; Denkmäler 1, 224; 2, 101–02, pl. 85; PM III/2, 674.
3. Baer, Rank and Title, 53 (15); Piacentini, Scribes 1, 556–57.
4. Grdseloff, “Deux Inscriptions,” 27, 29, fig. 1; Borchardt, Denkmäler 2, 101–02, pl. 85; Gaston Maspero, Trois années de fouilles dans les tombe de Thèbes et de Memphis (Cairo: IFAO, 1883), 200 (3).
7. Jéquier, Tombeaux de particuliers, 80–81, fig. 90; PM III/2, 683.
8. Gustave Jéquier, Le Mastabat Faraoun (Cairo: IFAO, 1928), 29, n. 1, fig. 24; PM III/2, 688; Allam, Hathorkult, 15.
10. Jéquier, Mastabat Faraoun, 29 n. 1; idem, Tombeaux de particuliers, 47, 50, fig. 54, with plan, fig. 45; PM III/2, 681.
11. Jéquier, Tombeaux de particuliers, 40–47; PM III/2, 681.
ones are known for priestesses of Hathor who had only the title špst nswt (see tables 1 and 2), which agrees with Allam’s assumption.

It should be noted that the title špst nswt precedes the two titles ūkrt nswt w‘tt and ħm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr in the case of ṯstī. However, it follows the title ūkrt nswt w‘tt in the sequences of ītī/Hnt-kꜣw.s, ʿnh.n.s-Ppy, and ṯstī/Mstnī. The same order occurs in the case of ṯstī II as follows: ṯkrt nswt w‘tt. It is, nevertheless, problematic to try to rank the two titles špst nswt and ūkrt nswt w‘tt.

StringRef Mrri of statue CG 369 from Saqqara held the title špst nswt alongside ṭḥt nswt ħm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr on the same statue. Mrri’s statue was found at Saqqara together with the statues CG 70–75 of her husband Ggi,3 the nomarch of the Thinite nome (UE 8) who built a tomb at Saqqara and another at Naga ed-Deir (N 90).4 Brovarski suggests that she may be identical with his wife Mr.s-ʿnh depicted in a relief in his tomb at Naga ed-Deir, and that Mrri is her nickname.5 Ggi was ḫry-tp ‘3 n T3-wr wr “great chief of the Thinite nome,” imy-r ħm(w) ntr n īn-ḥrt “overseer of priests of Onuris,” and mniw kmt “keeper of the black cattle.” He also held the high ranking title of ḫḥty-c “count” and the offices of “inspector of priests of Merenre’s pyramid” and “overseer of the ħnty(w)-š of the Great House,”6 rarely held by nomarchs.7

Fischer dates Ggi to the late Sixth Dynasty, after the Deir el-Gebrawi family of Tbi, D‘wšmī, and D‘w, the nomarchs of UE 12 who governed UE 8 as well, though he does not exclude the reign of Merenre as a possibility.8 Other arguments for dating Ggi to late Pepy I–Merenre before the nomarchs of Deir el-Gebrawi were based on his title associating him with Merenre’s pyramid and on the style of his false door.9 Brovarski, however, prefers to place Ggi in the reign of Pepy II after Tbi’s family, who only had the title ḫry-tp ‘3 of UE 8, based on Ggi’s combination of the highest administrative and temple offices in his nome, which, he argues, marks the increase of the authority of nomarchs at the end of the Sixth Dynasty. He suggests that Ggi’s construction of his tomb at Saqqara may reflect the policy of Pepy II to reassert central authority late in his reign,10 and high officials of this king are known to have been buried near his pyramid.11
A špst nswt woman named 𓊵𓊳 nb Htpt who added that title on her Obelisk CG 17005,3 while the second is 𓊵𓊳–𓊱𓊳 hm(t)-nTr and "chief of estate."6 Another woman named 𓊵𓊳–𓊳 wAw-Htpi, dated to the period from the First Intermediate Period to the Eleventh Dynasty,7 listed the title špst nswt on her coffin from her tomb HMK 37 at Saqqara.8 The title rḥt nswt also appears on her false door stela with Sṯt-Gm.n.i.9 Dwḏw-htpi’s relationship with this woman is not specified, but the fact that Sṯt-Gm.n.i held the titles ḥkrt nswt w’tt hm(t)-nTr Hwt-hr on the same stela indicates that she also belonged to the higher social stratum.

Aswan (UE 1)

In his overview of court titles attested at the elite cemetery of Qubbet el-Hawa at Aswan at the end of the Old Kingdom, Edel compiled 18 female holders of the title špst nswt.10 Most of them are known from the offering pottery vessels, which were inscribed in hieratic with the names of foodstuff and the names and title(s) of the individuals who donated the offering. The practice of offering to the funerary cult of relatives or other high officials was also adopted at Qubbet el-Hawa by the family

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1 Gustave Jequier, La pyramide d’Oudjebten (Cairo: IFAO, 1928), 26, fig. 33; PM III/2, 686.
2 Harpur, Decoration, 277. Khaled A. Daoud, Corpus of Inscriptions of the Herakleopolitan Period from the Memphite Necropolis: Translation, Commentary, and Analyses (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2005), 122, dated it to the very end of the Old Kingdom or shortly after.
3 Kuentz, CG 1308-1315 et 17001-17036, 11–12, pl. 4; PM III/2, 774.
4 Gustave Jequier, Le monument funéraire de Pepi II, vol. 3 (Cairo: IFAO, 1940), 54, fig. 51; PM III/2, 683.
5 Strudwick, Administration, 95–96.
6 Fischer, “Some Early Monuments from Busiris,” 8, figs. 1–2. For the title imy-r gs-pr, see Jones, Index, 269 (969).
7 Krämer, Privatpersonen, 313.
8 Firth and Gunn, Teti Pyramid Cemeteries 1, 258–59 (14), cf. 54; PM III/2, 539.
9 Firth and Gunn, Teti Pyramid Cemeteries 1, 188 (17); 2, pl. 75; PM III/2, 539; Krämer, Privatpersonen, 313–15.
10 Edel, QH (2008), LIII, LVII, CXLII.
members of high officials at Aswan.\(^1\) The tombs from which these attestations are derived have been dated to the long reign of Pepy II or generally to the end of the Sixth Dynasty.

\(\text{Ipt I (Ipt)}\) is identified as \(\text{Spst nswt} \) and \(\text{Hkrt nswt wty} \) on offering vessels found in tomb QH109 of \(\text{Hb(t)}\) and Iqri,\(^2\) who themselves held the titles \(\text{Hmnty-bity smr wty hry-hb(t)} \) \(\text{Imy-r i3w} \) “sealer of the king of Lower Egypt, sole companion, lector priest, and overseer of foreign mercenaries.”\(^3\) Another \(\text{Spst nswt} \) named \(\text{Spst nswt} \) is known from pottery offerings from the same tomb.\(^4\) The relationship between the two tomb owners remains unknown. Edel suggested that the social equality—both held the office of \(\text{Imy-r i3w} \)—may have been the reason for sharing one tomb.\(^5\) The office of \(\text{Imy-r i3w} \) was the highest office held by the officials of Aswan who were responsible for expeditions into Nubia.\(^6\) Given Aswan’s proximity to Nubia high officials there were involved in Nubian trade and expeditions during the Sixth Dynasty on behalf of the state, which is reflected in their titles, such as \(\text{Imy-r Hbswt} \) and \(\text{Imy-r i3w} \). The common titles held by contemporary provincial high officials, especially the title \(\text{Hry-tp i3} \) of a nome, are not attested at Aswan.\(^7\)

\(\text{Ipt I}\) is also known from pottery vessels from tomb QH92 among others as the wife of \(\text{Ti-n-hnt}\), buried in Shaft II (main shaft) in tomb QH92 and thus probably the tomb owner, and the mother of \(\text{Sbk-htp}\) identified by Edel as the owner of tomb QH90,\(^8\) which, along with QH92, has been dated to the middle of Pepy II’s reign.\(^9\) Her husband \(\text{Ti-n-hnt}\) held the titles \(\text{Hmnty-bity smr wty} \),\(^10\) while her son \(\text{Sbk-htp} \) was also \(\text{Hmnty-bity smr wty} \) and \(\text{Hmnty ntr} \) “god’s sealer.”\(^11\) The \(\text{Spst nswt} \) \(\text{Tbs-t}: \) \(\text{Spst nswt} \),

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known from a pottery vessel from tomb QH92 of ı-n-hnt, was the wife of his son Sbk-htp.

Ipi II (\(\text{Ip}(i)\)) is identified as “daughter of the companion Sbk-htp, the noblewoman of the king, Ipi” on pots from the tomb of ı-sm3 St-k3 (QH98), dated to the middle of Pepy II’s reign. \(\text{Ii-}\text{sma3} \text{St-k3}\) held the titles ḫmtnty-bity snrw w’ty ḥry-hb(t) ḥry-tp ’3 (n) nsrw. The latter title has been interpreted by Edel as “hoher Repräsentant des Königs,” who was representative of the central government in monitoring the expeditions’ officials of Elephantine. Edel suggested the identification of this Ipi with one of the two daughters of Sbk-htp (QH90), Ipi(wt) or Ipi ndst.

It remains uncertain whether the ṣpst nswt Stt-htp (\(\text{Spst nswt Stt-htp}\)), whose name occurs in tomb QH88, dated to the reign of Pepy II, is to be identified with the ḫkrt nswt Stt-htp, mother of ı-n-hnt (QH92) and grandmother of Sbk-htp (QH90) and Ḥnb3b3, or with the similarly named daughter of Ḥnb3b3 and Ipi. Yet another ṣpst nswt named Ny-⟨nh⟩-sbk(i) (\(\text{Ny-⟨nh⟩-sbk(i)}\)), is known from QH88, but her familial status is unknown.

The ṣpst nswt \(\text{Mrst}\) (var. \(\text{Mrst}\)) is known from tombs QH99 and QH109. The owner of QH99 remains unknown; Edel assigned a high social status to it on the grounds that pottery vessels from this tomb were donated by persons belonging to the high-ranking families at Aswan. He also suggested that the owner of tomb QH99 may have been at least similar in rank to ı-sma3 St-k3, the owner of the neighboring tomb QH98, on the basis of their architectural lay-out, and dated the tomb to mid Pepy II. The ṣpst nswt named Sibts \(\text{Sibts}\) (\(\text{Sibts}\)), known from tombs QH90, QH105, and QH109, are probably one and the same person. This lady also held the title ḫkrt nswt. The owner of QH105, Snw/Sni/⟨nh⟩-b(w)t, dated to late Pepy II, was a ḫnty-⟨hnty⟩-bity snrw w’ty ḥry-hb(t), showing the traditional stages of

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1 Edel, *Qubbet el Hawa* 2:1:1, pl. 66 (187); 2:1:2, 41 (name mistakenly read as Tbs-nfr-i); idem, *QH* (2008), CXX, CXLII, 1272.
3 Edel, *Qubbet el Hawa* 2:1:1, pl. 82, 83; 2:1:2, 33 (8 c. d), 88 (19), 97; idem, *QH* (2008), CIII, 1346, 1351. For further evidence of this person in tomb QH92, see Edel, *QH* (2008), 1270, 1351.
6 Edel, *Qubbet el Hawa* 2:1:2, 84, 101, 102.
8 Edel, *QH* (2008), 1056.
the career of a high official at Aswan in reverse order. A špst nswt named Ḥm(t) Tn̄-t.i.s offered pottery vessels in tomb QH105. It remains uncertain whether she is identical with the similarly named špst nswt woman known from pottery offerings from tomb QH109.\(^2\)

\(\text{Ip}(i) \text{wr}(t), \text{Ip}(i) \text{ndst}, \text{and} Hm(t) \text{Spw} \) are known from offerings recovered from tomb QH34h of the late Sixth Dynasty official Hwi.n.s,\(^3\) who held the titles shd hmw-ntr [pyramid name] Ḥt-y-c Ḥmnty-bity smr w’ty hry-hb(t).\(^4\) It has recently been suggested that these ladies may be identical with the family members of the smr w’ty hry-hb(t) Sbk-ḥtp of tomb QH29, since a large part of Sbk-ḥtp’s family offered pottery vessels in tomb QH34h. According to this suggestion, Ip(i) wr(t) and Ip(i) ndst may be the two daughters of Ḥtpi (Sbk-ḥtp’s son) and Spš/tpti. Spw may be identical with Ḥtpi’s wife Spš/tpti, who held the title Ḥkr t nswt. Ḥtpi and his son Ḥrw both held the titles šps nswt imy-r iśw.\(^5\)

The family relationships of the title holders known from offering vessels are difficult to ascertain, but the fact that their pottery was found in the tombs of the late Sixth Dynasty high officials at Aswan indicates their high social status and that they were contemporaries of that particular social environment.

Another attestation of a špst nswt woman comes from tomb QH89 of a certain Sbk-ḥtp, who held the rank of smr and the title shd pr-’c “inspector of the Great House,”\(^6\) a title attested only twice at Aswan.\(^7\) The woman is named [Mrš]i/Ḥptti and is known from her coffin found in Shaft I, burial chamber γ. She is the only attested holder of the title špst nswt in combination with [ḥkr] nswt [w’t]t and hm(t)-ntr Ḥwṭ-hr from Aswan, which indicates her high social status and relationship with a high official at Aswan. A close relationship is assumed between this lady and the Ḥmnty-bity smr w’ty hry-hb(t) [shd pr]-’c [Sš]bni/[Ḥrw]-m-ḥtp, who is also buried in QH89 in the adjacent burial chamber (Shaft I, burial chamber β),\(^8\) and who is one of two attested holders of the title shd pr-’c at Aswan.\(^9\)

A lady named Ḥbs-tš (nicknamed Tš/Ttš/Ttš?) with the titles špst nswt Ḥm(t)-ntr Ḥwṭ-hr is shown with her brother Ḥi-šml/i/Stš-kš.i on a false door from QH207,\(^10\) dated to mid–late Pepy II.\(^11\) Edel suggested that this lady was probably the

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1 Edel, QH (2008), 1604–05.
2 Edel, QH (2008), 1601, 1702.
3 Edel, QH (2008), CIII, CIV, 575; Alejandro Jiménez-Serrano, “Different Individuals Named Khunes in the Cataract Region,” ZÄS 140 (2013): 20–21, 23 (late Pepy II); Krämer, Privatpersonen, 389.
6 Edel, QH (2008), 1071, 1109.
7 Edel, QH (2008), CXXXVII. For the title shd pr-’c, see Jones, Index, 924–25 (3401).
8 Edel, QH (2008), CVIII, CXXXV, 1094, 1110, 1111, figs. 34, 38.
9 Edel, QH (2008), CXXXVIII.
10 Edel, QH (2008), CXX, 1866–67, Abb. 5.
wife of the anonymous owner of tomb QH207, who had survived her husband, and to whom her brother had donated this false door in tomb QH207.¹

The title is attested in the tomb of Sōbni II (QH35e), dated to late Pepy II.² His daughter, identified as śtš.f mrt.f śpst nswt Mrtd (𓊷𓊴𓍢𓊳𓊳𓊴𓊳), is represented in a scene from his tomb standing behind the tomb owner and facing her sister the ḥkrt nswt wʾtr Hʾi-nfri.³ Another lady is represented in the fishing and fowling scene seated to the right, namely the śpst nswt Sntti (𓊷𓊴𓍢𓊳). Edel has suggested that she may have been another daughter of Sōbni II based on her position in the scene opposite his daughter Hʾi-nfri represented sitting to the left.⁴ Sōbni II was possibly the son of Pepynakht Heqab II (QH35d), and is the only attested official in the cemetery of Qubbet el-Hawa to combine the titles of imy-r ʾSmʾw “overseer of Upper Egypt,” imy-r ḫḥswt “overseer of foreign lands,” imy-r ḫʾbw “overseer of foreign mercenaries,” and ḥr-tp 𓊘 n nswt.⁵

Edfu (UE 2)
The wife of the nomarch Mry-Rˇ (Ppy)-nfr/Qʿr of Edfu was a śpst nswt. She is represented sitting beside him on his large architrave in his tomb at Edfu with the designation śpst nswt, but only the signs for ...tk remain of her name.⁶ According to his autobiography on the same architrave, Qʿr started his career in the residence under Pepy I as “sole companion” and “overseer of the ḫnty(w)-š of the Great House.” He was then appointed by Merenre as “great chief of the nome,” that of Edfu (UE 2), “overseer of grain of Upper Egypt,” and “overseer of priests.”⁷ He was later promoted to the higher rank of “count” (ḥṣty-ˇ) and the office of “overseer of Upper Egypt,”⁸ probably in the early reign of Pepy II.⁹ He was likely the son of the nomarch nomarch and vizier Izi of Edfu,¹⁰ who was appointed as “great chief of the nome” by Teti, and as vizier, probably by the same king.¹¹ It has recently been suggested that

² Edel, QH (2008), 854, 1349; Vischak, Qubbet El-Hawa, 236–37; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 295.
³ Edel, QH (2008), CVIII, 815, 848, Abb. 8.
⁴ Edel, QH (2008), CXVIII, CXLI, 820, 848, Abb. 15; Vischak, Qubbet El-Hawa, figs. 59, 60.
⁵ Vischak, Qubbet El-Hawa, 237.
⁶ Mahmoud El-Khadragy, “The Edfu Offering Niche of Qar in the Cairo Museum,” SAK 30 (2002): 205, fig. 2, pl. 4; Kanawati, “Memphite Tomb of Qar,” fig. 3; Kanawati and Swinton, Sixth Dynasty, fig. 32.
⁸ Qʿr’s false door at Edfu, El-Khadragy, “Niche of Qar,” 218–27, fig. 7, pl. 9; Kanawati and Swinton, Sixth Dynasty, 127.
¹⁰ Kanawati and Swinton, Sixth Dynasty, 99–100, 126; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 35.
¹¹ For the reconstruction of line 8 of Izi’s autobiography referring to his appointment as vizier (tštyt zḥb tšty), which is also recorded in his tomb at Edfu, see Elmar Edel, “Inschriften des Alten Reichs I.
Teti’s wife named Zeshet was probably of royal origin based on her name carried by the royal women during Teti’s reign.1 Kanawati and Swinton further suggest that Zeshet was Teti’s son-in-law.2 The wife of Qir did not hold any other titles or offices and it seems that her holding of the title Spst nswt was related to the rank and office of her husband.

**Dendera (UE 6)**

A Spst nswt named Hwiti is known from her late Sixth Dynasty stela from Dendera, on which she is also identified as rht nswt and priestess in the cult of Hathor at Dendera (hm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr nbt Twnt).3

**Qasr es-Sayyad (UE 7)**

One Spst nswt woman named Nfrti, with the nickname Iti, is known from two preserved scenes from her tomb at Qasr es-Sayyad (Chenoboskion) in UE 7, dated to the Sixth Dynasty. She also held the titles hkrt nswt w’tt hm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr. Her titles are in the following order: Nfrti, with the nickname Iti, is known from two preserved scenes from her tomb at Qasr es-Sayyad (Chenoboskion) in UE 7, dated to the Sixth Dynasty. She also held the titles hkrt nswt w’tt hm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr. Her titles are in the following order: Nfrti, with the nickname Iti, is known from two preserved scenes from her tomb at Qasr es-Sayyad (Chenoboskion) in UE 7, dated to the Sixth Dynasty. She also held the titles hkrt nswt w’tt hm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr. Her titles are in the following order: . She also had the title hntryt- of a royal pyramid, whose name is missing.4

**Abydos (UE 8)**

The earliest attested Spst nswt woman known from Abydos is Nbt, Pepy I’s mother-in-law. She appears with that title on stela CG 1575 of her son the vizier Idi,5 who probably dates to the early-middle reign of Pepy II.6 She held the title hkrt nswt on stela CG 1431 of her son Dw,7 who was vizier in the early years of Pepy II’s reign.8 Dw is identified on his stela as a brother of ‘nhs-Mry-R’ I and II, the queens of Pepy I and mothers of Merenre and Pepy II, respectively.9 Nbt was also iry-p’tt, hntryt- 4, tity zib tity, smrt bity “hereditary princess, countess, she of the curtain, judge, die Biographie des Gaufürsten von Edfu, JZf,” ZÄS 79 (1954): 11–17; Kanawati and Swinton, Sixth Dynasty, 46–47, n. 193, 67.


2 Zeshet was probably identical with his wife S’t-Hr, Alliot, Tell Edfou, 23, 25, 26, 28; Kanawati and Swinton, Sixth Dynasty, 47, 74, 99.


4 LD II, pl. 114 (k–l) and LD—Text II, 181; Fischer, Egyptian Women, 41–43, fig. 31.

5 Auguste Mariette, Catalogue général des monuments d’Abidos découverts pendant les fouilles de cette ville (Paris: L’Imprimerie Nationale, 1880), no. 526; Denkmäler 2, 55, pl. 75; Kanawati and McFarlane, Akhmim, 1, 271, n. 1752; Fischer, Varia, 75; Blumenthal, “Gottesväter,” 12–14.

6 Baer, Rank and Title, 61–62 (73a); Strudwick, Administration, 253, 302.


8 Baer, Rank and Title, 156–57 (591), 236, 295; Strudwick, Administration, 302.

and vizier, and companion of the king of Lower Egypt” on her stela CG 1578. She adopted the feminine versions of the highest ranking titles and that of the highest administrative office of the vizier. She is the only attested female holder of the title of vizier (ḥmn tḥty z窖b tḥty) until the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. It should be noted that this title is not included in the titulary of her husband Ḥwi, who was it ntr, iry-pʾt, imy-r niwt, ḫḥy-tʾ “father of the god, hereditary prince, overseer of the pyramid town, and count” on the same stela. He appears with the highest ranking titles of iry-pʾt and ḫḥy-tʾ on stela CG 1431 of his son ḫw, and iry-pʾt and smr wʾty on stela CG 1575 of his son Iḏi.

This provincial family was closely connected with the royal court. Nbt’s two daughters married Pepy I and became the mothers of Merenre and Pepy II. It is uncertain whether she was appointed vizier before or after Pepy I’s marriage to her daughters. Fischer stressed that her titles are totally honorific and that they were granted to her as a way to enhance the social status of a woman of non-royal origin who became the mother-in-law of Pepy I and the grandmother of Merenre and Pepy II. Fischer further posits that her stela CG 1578, on which she held her highest ranking and administrative titles, was erected after Pepy II’s accession. Fischer’s argument was rejected by Kanawati who suggests that she may have actually been appointed to that office after the vizier ḫzi of Edfu, with her residence at Abydos. Kanawati and Swinton are more inclined to place her appointment to the vizierate after or about the time of Pepy I’s marriage to her daughters.

That Nbt was a king’s daughter was first proposed by Kees. Kanawati has suggested that she may have been the daughter of Unas and the sister or half-sister of Queen Iput I who was probably a daughter of Unas and certainly the wife of Teti and mother of Pepy I. In this case Pepy I married the daughters of his aunt Nbt, and not two sisters of a non-royal origin, which means that the king appointed a member of the royal family and his mother-in-law to the highest administrative office of the

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1 Mariette, Catalogue, no. 525; Denkmäler 2, 59–60, pl. 76; Elke Blumenthal, “Die Gottesväter des Alten und Mittleren Reiches,” ZÄS 114 (1987): 11–12; Fischer, Varia, 74; idem, Egyptian Women, 37, fig. 27; Nigel Strudwick, Texts from the Pyramid Age (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 395 (no. 295). For the feminine title ḫḥy-tʾ, see Wb III, 26: 3; Henry G. Fischer, “A Daughter of the Overlords of Upper Egypt in the First Intermediate Period,” JAOS 76, no. 2 (1956): 105, n. 28; Blumenthal, “Gottesväter,” 12; Ward, Index, 107 (890); idem, Feminine Titles, 117; Jones, Index, 496.


3 Denkmäler 2, 59, pl. 76; Fischer, Egyptian Women, 37, fig. 27; Denkmäler 1, 111; Urk. 1, 119: 2; Denkmäler 2, 55, pl. 75. See also Blumenthal, “Gottesväter,” 11–12; Fischer, Varia, 74; Kanawati, Reforms, 31.

4 Kanawati and Swinton, Sixth Dynasty, 103 n. 132.

5 Fischer, Varia, 75; idem, Egyptian Women, 37, fig. 27.

6 Kanawati, Reforms, 31.

7 Kanawati and Swinton, Sixth Dynasty, 103.

A woman named Irt.n.s is identified as śpst nswt on the false door stela of her daughter H.Atty (CG 1576), while her daughter herself is designated as rht nswt and repeatedly as śpst nswt and priestess of Hathor. The stela clearly identifies Irt.n.s as the daughter of the vizier Iww and H.Atty/Mztnt as her daughter and as such H.Atty/Mztnt was the granddaughter of the vizier, who probably succeeded Nbt to the office of vizier at Abydos, presumably in the period from late Pepy I–Merenre. Iww’s kinship to the family of Nbt and Hwi is a matter of debate. The suggestion that Iww was the eldest son of Hwi by an earlier wife, and as such he was the half-brother of ‘nh.n.s-Ppy I, daughter of Nbt and Hwi and queen of Pepy I, was based on the representation of Iww on a false door (CG 1439), seated in front of an offering table opposite the queen. The vizier Iww of Abydos was the father of Wni the elder, who according to his autobiography from Abydos started his career at the palace in the reign of Teti and was later appointed by Pepy I as overseer of the hnty(w)-ś of the Great House before his promotion to the rank of count (ḥty-ś) and the office of overseer of Upper Egypt under Merenre. Wni was finally promoted to the office of vizier to succeed his father presumably in the period from late Merenre–early Pepy II. His own successors in the office of vizier were D‘w and Idi, sons of Nbt and Hwi, respectively. Based on his kinship to the vizier Iww, Wni was thus the brother of Irt.n.s and the uncle of H.Atty/Mztnt.

Stela CG 1615 of Hnw from Abydos identifies his wife Hıpwt/Mztnt P.t.s as śpst nswt and priestess of Hathor. Hnw held the rank of smr w‘ty and the titles śqd hm(w) ntr hwt-k3 Mr-n-R “inspector of priests of the ka-house/funerary temple of Merenre,” hk3 hwt “chief of estate,” hry-tp nswt pr-ś3 “royal chamberlain of the Great House,” and imy-r nšt T3-wr “overseer of disputes of the Thinite nome.” Fischer prefers to date the stela to the end of the Eighth Dynasty and not before the end of the Sixth.

1 Kanawati, “Nebet,” 115–125; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 107–08.
2 Mariette, *Catalogue*, no. 540; Dunham, *Naga-ed-Dér*, no. 74; *Denkmäler* 2, 57–58, pl. 75; Brovarski, “Abydos, Part II,” fig. 2.4.
4 *Denkmäler* 1, 121, pl. 31; Brovarski, “Abydos, Part II,” 22, fig. 2.1; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 108.
5 Wni is represented offering to the vizier Iww on a limestone doorjamb and is identified as “his eldest son, the count, overseer of Upper Egypt, and sole companion, Wni the elder” (Richards, “Weni the Elder,” 90, 94, fig. 16; Kanawati, “Nebet,” 116).
7 Lashien, El-Qusiya, 108, 228–232. Wni is identified as vizier on his second false door CG 1574 (Richards, “Weni the Elder,” 90, 93, fig. 15).
8 Richards, “Weni the Elder,” 90.
Another špst nswt from Abydos is  \( \text{Snbt} \) of stela CG 1450. The text also mentions her daughter named Ini.\(^1\) Snbt also held the title on the false door stela CG 1507 of her husband Sfhi, who was a  smr wty “sole companion.” This stela mentions a son and six daughters, including Ini.\(^2\) A špst nswt named  \( \text{Imyt} \) appears on stela CG 1616 from Abydos of her husband Ndm-ib/Hnms, who held the modest rank of smr wty “sole companion” and the offices of imy-r wp(w)t “overseer of commissions/apportionments” and hry-tp nswt pr-\(\text{f}^{3}\) “royal chamberlain of the Great House.”\(^3\) Stela CG 1637 of Pmw from Abydos, generally dated by Borchardt to the period from the Old to Middle Kingdom, refers to his wife the špst nswt  \( \text{Nzt} \). Pmw was also a  smr wty and imy-r k\(\text{f}^{4}\) “overseer of works” and hkt3 hwt “chief of estate” on a local level.\(^4\) Both Ini and Nzt were also priestesses of Hathor. Ward dated the cases of Ini (CG 1616) and Nzt (CG 1637) to the Eleventh Dynasty, considering them as “archaizing or as representing the last phase of the time during which the title was in active use,”\(^5\) though Fischer does not accept this dating,\(^6\) while Awad dated CG 1450 and CG 1616 to the end of the Old Kingdom or beginning of the First Intermediate Period.\(^7\) In sum, these women from Abydos seem to be among the last holders of the title špst nswt.

**Naga ed-Deir (UE 8)**

The earliest attested špst nswt woman from the cemetery of Naga ed-Deir (UE 8) is  \( \text{Imyt} \) who was a priestess of Hathor. She is known from her stela from tomb N 961, which was generally dated among other inscriptions from Cemetery 500–900 to the Fifth–Sixth Dynasties. The text also mentions a daughter who does not carry any titles.\(^8\) The stela presumably dates to the Sixth Dynasty, since the title špst nswt has not been attested before that period. The other title holders from Naga ed-Deir date to the First Intermediate Period. The špst nswt  \( \text{Nni} \), nicknamed Nni, is known from stela CG 37737 (JE 57123), dated to the First Intermediate Period. She also held the titles hkr\(\text{t} \) nswt rht nswt hmt(t)-ntr Hwt-hr and was designated as Imyt-wrt  \( \text{nt nfr kd} \) “great Imyt-wrt of beautiful character.”\(^9\)

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3. Mariette, *Catalogue*, no. 538; *Denkmäler* 2, 87–88, pl. 83; Awad, “Drei Stelen,” 46–52, fig. 3, pl. 4. The sign  \( \text{i} \) appearing before the identification of Ini as hmt.f mrt.f špst nswt hmt(t)-ntr Hwt-hr is presumably a scribal error.
Gillam notes that she was among the few attested priestesses of Hathor who were also Tmyt-wrt.\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Idw} and \textit{Zt-nt-nfr[t]}, the wife and daughter of the “sole companion and overseer of sandal-makers in the temple” \textit{Hwti}, appear with the title $\textit{spst nswt}$ on his stela from tomb N 3914, dated to the early Ninth Dynasty.\textsuperscript{2} The $\textit{spst nswt}$ and priestess of Hathor $\textit{Smt-kht}$, $\textit{Mrt}$ is known from her stela from tomb N 4748, also dated to the early Ninth Dynasty.\textsuperscript{3}

The case of the $\textit{spst nswt}$ $\textit{Tpwt}$ of stela BM 1658 of unknown provenance, who additionally held the title \textit{rht nswt}, was firstly dated to the Eleventh Dynasty by Edwards, followed by Ward.\textsuperscript{4} Brovarski has recently suggested that it may have originated from Naga ed-Deir and placed it in the Ninth Dynasty, though he does not exclude the Dendera provenance.\textsuperscript{5}

**Akhmim (UE 9)**

Six $\textit{spst nswt}$ women are known from Akhmim (UE 9).\textsuperscript{6} The attested holders of the title include $\textit{Spst nswt}$ $\textit{Tti}$, known from El-Hawawish tomb N20 of her father \textit{Ty},\textsuperscript{7} who was “sole companion, lector priest, inspector of priests and overseer of the pr-\textit{snr},” and probably dates to the reign of Pepy I or shortly after.\textsuperscript{8} She is probably the same as \textit{Nfr-tntt} who appears with the title \textit{hkrt nswt} on the architrave of her husband \textit{Tti} in the Field Museum in Chicago (FM 31700) with two sons and a daughter.\textsuperscript{9} This \textit{Tti} is probably identical with \textit{Khi-hp/Tti} of tomb M8 at El-Hawawish and coffin CG 28004,\textsuperscript{10} who is generally agreed to be the first nomarch at Akhmim.\textsuperscript{11} The wife of the nomarch \textit{Khi-hp/Tti} (M8), \textit{Nfr-tntt}, held the titles \textit{hkrt nswt}, \textit{hkrt nswt w/tt}, \textit{hm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr nbt nht} and \textit{wr$t Mnw} on her coffin CG 28001.\textsuperscript{12} It has been suggested that \textit{Ty}’s daughter, \textit{Nfr-tntt}, is likely identical with the similarly named wife of the

\textsuperscript{1} Gillam, “Priestesses of Hathor,” 225, n. 144.


\textsuperscript{6} Kanawati and McFarlane, \textit{Akhmim} 1, 113, 251.

\textsuperscript{7} Kanawati, \textit{El-Hawawish} 6, fig. 23b; Kanawati and McFarlane, \textit{Akhmim} 1, 11, 192, 249.

\textsuperscript{8} Kanawati, \textit{El-Hawawish} 6, 52, pl. 4a, fig. 23b; Kanawati and McFarlane, \textit{Akhmim} 1, 192, 296.


\textsuperscript{11} McFarlane, “First Nomarch at Akhmim,” 63–72.

\textsuperscript{12} Lacau, \textit{CG} 28001–28086, 1–5, pl. 1; Kanawati, \textit{El-Hawawish} 6, 61, 63–64, pl. 16, fig. 32; Kanawati and McFarlane, \textit{Akhmim} 1, 10, 19.
nomarch K3i-hp/Ttī, and that her titles represent the different stages of her life. The feminine title wršt Mnw “watcher of Min,” associated with the cult of Min, is only attested in the Sixth–Eighth Dynasty at Akhmim.

Zttt, the daughter(?) of the nomarch K3i-hp/Ttī of El-Hawawish, was also a ūpsn nswt in his tomb M8. No other titles or functions are attested for her. According to the biography of K3i-hp/Ttī (Louvre Museum fragment + FM 31700), he started his career under Pepy I. He was appointed judge and administrator (zdḥ “d-mr) and royal chamberlain (ḥṛy-tp nswt). He was promoted to companion (srn) and overseer of priests (imy-r ḫm(w)-ntr). He was then promoted to sole companion (srn wʿty) under the same king, which gave him access to the royal administration (pr nswt). He was later appointed by Merenre as [srn] Mnw. His titulary recorded in his tomb at El-Hawawish (M8) reveals the various stages of his career, both at Memphis and at Akhmim, compared to other officials buried at El-Hawawish. Among the various offices he carried out in the residence are the offices of imy-r ipt nswt “overseer of the apartments of royal females” and wr mʿw “greatest of seers,” a title usually held by the high priests of Re at Heliopolis and never held by any other provincial official. He was later appointed as hṛy-tp ʿ3 n Hnt-Mnw “great chief of Akhmim,” late in the reign of Merenre or early in that of Pepy II. He also held the additional offices of imy-r ṣmṭw “overseer of Upper Egypt,” imy-r ṣmʿ “overseer of Upper Egyptian grain,” and imy-r ṣnwt ṣḥt ntr “overseer of the two granaries of the divine offerings,” and the highest ranking titles of ḫy-pʿt and ḫḥty-. It appears that Zttt’s holding of the title ūpsn nswt was related to the rank and high status of her father K3i-hp/Ttī.

Wnnw-Mnw is identified on her false door from her tomb at El-Hawawish (G79), dated to early–mid Pepy II, as ūpsn nswt, as well as ḫkr nswt wʿtt. Her high status is indicated by the fact that she owned her own tomb. It should also be noted that she is the first attested holder of the title ḫmn Mnw “wife of Min,”

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3 Kanawati, El-Hawawish 3, 9, 25, fig. 13; Kanawati and McFarlane, Akhmim 1, 10. For the reading of her name, see Kanawati, El-Hawawish 10, 22.
4 McFarlane, “First Nomarch at Akhmim,” 63–72, pls. 1, 2; Christiane Ziegler, Catalogue des stèles, peintures et reliefs Égyptiens de l’Ancien Empire et de la Première Période Intermédiaire; Vers 2686-2040 Avant J-C (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1990), 270–73. For the restoration of the sign(s) after the Mnw sign as srn, see McFarlane, “First Nomarch at Akhmim,” 67 (g).
5 Kanawati, El-Hawawish 3, 7; McFarlane, “First Nomarch at Akhmim,” 69.
6 Brovarski, “Akhmim,” 130, 137; McFarlane, “First Nomarch at Akhmim,” 69; Kanawati, El-Hawawish 3, 7–9, 14, figs. 8, 11–17; Kanawati and McFarlane, Akhmim 1, 98–99; Kanawati and Swinton, Sixth Dynasty, 116, 133–34; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 24.
7 Kanawati and McFarlane, Akhmim 1, 295.
8 Kanawati, El-Hawawish 3, 33–34, fig. 26; Kanawati and McFarlane, Akhmim 1, 2, 251.
and the only attested one in the Old Kingdom.¹ Gauthier suggested that the $\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}}$ hmt Mnw at Akhmim is equal to the $\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}$ hmt ntr “god’s wife” at Thebes.²

Other holders of the title špst nswt from Akhmim are $\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}{\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}}}$ Ini $\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}$ Hnwti, $\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}{\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}}}$ Hnty, and $\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}{\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}}}$ Snt $\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}{\text{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{\textcircled{}}}}}}}}}}$ Mrwt, known from their coffins CG 28017, CG 28015, and CG 28011, respectively. The three women held the title špst nswt in combination with the titles hkr t nswt. Additionally, Hnty had the title hmt(n)-ntr hwt-hr “priestess of Hathor,” Snt/Mrwt had the title wršt Mnw “watcher of Min,” and Ini/Hnwti had both titles.³ Kanawati suggested the identification of Ini/Hnwti with her name is destroyed.⁴

The title is found in the tomb of the nomarch Špsi-pw-Mnw/Hni (El-Hawawish, H24) named Ḥny, who appears in a scene in his tomb with the title hkr t nswt w.tt.⁵ A similarly named woman with the titles hkr t nswt w.tt hmt(n)-ntr hwt-hr is represented on a false door and in another scene. It is not certain whether she is his daughter Ḥny or another wife, as Špsi-pw-Mnw/Hni is known to have a wife named Ḥtiṭ/Htp.⁶

**El-Hagarsa (UE 9)**

An additional occurrence of the title špst nswt comes from El-Hagarsa, a cemetery most likely belonging to UE 9.⁷ The title is found in the tomb of Mry (C2), dated to mid–late Pepy II,⁸ who held the rank of smr w’ty and the title hry-t ṣ ns wt “royal chamberlain,”⁹ but did not hold the titles common to contemporary provincial high officials. Mry’s wife is represented with her husband on the south wall of the chapel and is identified as hmt.f mrt.f špst nswt imi: “his wife, his beloved, the noble woman of the king, the honoured one(?)…,” but her name is destroyed.¹⁰ She was presumably identical with 1bi, the owner of one of the two false doors on the west wall. The other false door belongs to Mry. However, Kanawati does not exclude the possibility that Mry had two wives.¹¹

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² Gauthier, *Dieu Min*, 109. For the office of hmt ntr and its historical development, see Ayad, *God’s Wife of Amun*.
⁴ Kanawati, *El-Hawawish* 7, 50, pl. 10b, fig. 37a; idem, “Watchers/Dependents of Min,” 13–14, fig. 13.
⁵ Kanawati, *El-Hawawish* 2, 10, 37, fig. 25.
⁸ Kanawati, *El-Hagarsa* 1, 57; Kanawati and McFarlane, *Akhmim* 1, 296.
⁹ Kanawati, *El-Hagarsa* 1, 55, pls. 12a, 13a, 15, 43, 46.
¹⁰ Kanawati, *El-Hagarsa* 1, 55, 60, pls. 12a, 13a, 43.
¹¹ Kanawati, *El-Hagarsa* 1, 55, 61, pls. 14, 44.
Deir el-Gebrâwi (UE 12)
The earliest attested holder of the title $spst\ nswt$ from Deir el-Gebrâwi, the cemetery of UE 12, is $Nfr\ldots\ wtt\ldots\ s$, who is represented in the tomb of her father(?) the nomarch and vizier $Hnwq\ II$ (N67), dated to early–mid Pepy I, among others bringing offerings to his wife the $hkrt\ nswt\ wtt\ Nbt$ seated before an offering table.  

The wife and three daughters of Ibi of Deir el-Gebrâwi held the title $spst\ nswt$ in his tomb (No. 8) dated to Merenre–early Pepy II. Ibi was nomarch of UE 8 and UE 12 and was buried at Deir el-Gebrâwi. According to his autobiography, he was appointed as great chief of UE 12 by Merenre. Later, he was promoted to the rank of hereditary prince and to the office of overseer of Upper Egypt and then to that of great chief of UE 8, presumably in the early years of Pepy II. Ibi passed his office of nomarch of UE 12 to his son $D\w/\Sm\ddot{i}$ during his lifetime. $D\w/\Sm\ddot{i}$ later held the office of nomarch of UE 8 after his father’s death together with the office of nomarch of UE 12.

Ibi’s wife $\Hm\R\ Hmi$ held the title $spst\ nswt$, as well as $hkrt\ nswt$, $hkrt\ nswt\ wtt$, $rht\ nswt$, and $hmt\nlntr\ Hwt\hr$. In a scene in his tomb at Deir el-Gebrâwi four daughters are represented bringing offerings to the tomb owner seated before an offering table. The first two, $\Thyt$ and $\Mrt\ib$, held the title $spst\ nswt$. The third and fourth, $Hnwti$ and $Sr\dyt$, are identified as $hkrt\ nswt\ wtt$. Drenkhahn suggests that the order of the daughters of Ibi in the scene implies that the designation $spst\ nswt$ is higher in rank than $hkrt\ nswt$, arguing that such a sequence is always from the oldest and highest ranking child. Ibi’s daughter $\Hnwt$, who is presumably identical with $\Hnwt\ddot{i}$, also bears the title $spst\ nswt$ in the fowling scene on the south wall.

The $spst\ nswt$ $Qdt\ns$ is known from her coffin from a burial chamber at Deir el-Gebrâwi, on which she also listed the titles $hkrt\ nswt$, $hkrt\ nswt\ wtt$, $rht\ nswt$, and $hmt\nlntr\ Hwt\hr$. Another $spst\ nswt$ named $Wn\wtn$ dates to the end of the

2. Kanawati, Deir El-Gebrâwi 1, 63, 74.
5. Davies, Deir el Gebrâwi 1, pl. 23; Ùrk. 1, 142: 8–10; Fischer, “Four Provincial Administrators,” 33; Kanawati and Swinton, Sixth Dynasty, 115.
7. Kanawati and McFarlane, Akhmim 1, 112.
8. Davies, Deir el Gebrâwi 1, pls. 3, 5, 11, 12, 15, 18.
9. Davies, Deir el Gebrâwi 1, pl. 17; Kanawati, Deir el-Gebrâwi 2, 74a.
11. Davies, Deir el Gebrâwi 1, pl. 5; Kanawati, Deir el-Gebrâwi 2, pl. 68.
Sixth Dynasty, or shortly after, and derives from the tomb of her husband (?) Nfr-tp-wr(?) at Deir el-Gebrawi (S41), who held the modest rank of smr wirty ‘sole companion.’

El-Qusiya (UE 14)
The nobles of El-Qusiya (UE 14) in the Sixth Dynasty were overseers of priests of Hathor, lady of Qusiya (imy-r hm(w)-ntr Hwt-hr nbt Qs), which was the highest office there. The earliest known holder of the office of hry-tp 3 of UE 14 is Hnyt (Hni)/Nfr-k3 who lived in the very end of the Sixth Dynasty. The succession of the overseers of priests of El-Qusiya, first established by Blackman, was reestablished by El-Khouli and Kanawati in 1989, and again later by Kanawati in 2010. Accordingly, Hw.n-wh/Ti is now accepted as the first overseer of priests of Hathor at El-Qusiya, presumably under Pepy I. He and his presumed successor Ppy-‘nh wr were buried at Quseir el-Amarna (tombs 2 and 1). The other overseers of priests of El-Qusiya were buried in the cemetery of Meir.

Eight $pswt ns wt$ women are known from El-Qusiya. The wife, four daughters, and granddaughter of the overseer of priests Hw.n-wh/Ti of Quseir el-Amarna (tomb 2) were $pswt ns wt$. His daughters $\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ Ht$p$-Hwt-hr, $\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ Htp-Hwt-hr, and $\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ Dw$t-Hwt-hr bear the title in the scene of offering bearers on the east wall. His wife $\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ Mrr (var. $\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ Mrr) $\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ Tbi, daughter $\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ S$\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ Ht$i$ $\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ ‘n[f], and granddaughter $\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ Hwt-hr-m-h$i$ are designated as $pswt nswt$ on the left panel of Hw.n-wh’s statue niche in the south wall in three registers, respectively. His wife also bears the title on the façade and false door on the west wall (right). All of them, except his daughter Dw$t-Hwt-hr$, were also priestesses of Hathor of El-Qusiya.

One may add to the above evidence the case of $\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ Hwt-$i$‘h$/\text{\textbackslash \textbackslash}$ Hwt$i$, the wife of Ppy-‘nh (Mry-Rc-‘nh) Hry-ib/Hny/Hnii/Nfr-k3(i) of Meir. She is depicted in his

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1. Davies, Deir el Gebrâwi 1, 26, pl. 23; Kanawati, Deir el-Gebrawi 2, 90, 92, pl. 65b.
8. El-Khouli and Kanawati, Quseir El-Amarna, 25–26; Lashien, El-Qusiya, chapter 1, fig. 13.
tomb seated on a chair beneath the figure of her husband and identified as špsn nswt, ṛḥt nswt, and ḥm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr [ntŋ Qs]. She also held the title ḫwnt (nt) Hwt-hr [ntŋ Qs] “sistrum player of Hathor, (lady of Qusiya).”¹² Ṣpy-nḫ Hry-ib is the owner of the first known tomb in the cemetery of Meir (D2) dated to early–middle Pepy II.³ He was appointed in UE 14 either in the reign of Merenre or early in the reign of Pepy II, as a successor to Ṣpy-nḫ wr, almost certainly his grandfather.⁴ He held the highest court titles of iry-p’t “hereditary prince” and ḫnty “count” and the offices of “overseer of priests of Hathor, lady of Qusiya,” the highest office in this nome, “overseer of Upper Egypt in the middle provinces,” which gave him control of the region of the middle provinces of Upper Egypt, and “vizier,” the highest administrative office in the land, but he did not hold the office of hry ṭp of the nome.⁵ Kanawati, followed by Lashien, argued for the royal lineage of Ṣpy-nḥ Hry-ib and his wife Hwt-ḥt/Hwti. They established that his grandfather Ṣpy-nḥ wr was married to a woman named Zšššt, who was probably a princess, based on her name carried by royal princesses at the time.⁶ The argument for their royal lineage was also based on their depiction seated on block chairs with the ḫwnt-sign referring to a royal origin, and her special status in his tomb is indicated by her representation equal in size to him and her elaborately decorated burial chamber.⁷ Lashien suggested that the ruling family of El-Qusiya held offices in the central administration in the residence, as demonstrated by their titles, before being appointed in the highest provincial offices at El-Qusiya. She argued that such provincial appointments were a result of marriage alliances between nobles from El-Qusiya and women of royal descent.⁸

A closer look at the titles of the daughters and female relatives of Ṣpy-nḥ Hry-ib shows that they all held the honorific title of ṛḥt nswt.⁹ His mother Pḥr-nfr/Bbi held the titles ṛḥt nswt, ḥm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr, and ḫwnt “sistrum player.”¹⁰ His mother-in-law Nfr-irw.s/Fpi was ṛḥt nswt and ḥm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr.¹¹ The title špsn nswt was only applied to his wife Hwt-ḥt/Hwti. The argument for his wife’s royal lineage seems unlikely.

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² Blackman, Meir 4, pls. 4, 7, 9, 11, 14–15, 17; Kanawati, Meir 1, pls. 76b, 80, 88.
³ Kanawati, Meir 1, 26; Kanawati, “Chronology,” 217; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 44–50, 220, 294.
⁴ Kanawati and Swinton, Sixth Dynasty, 115; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 220. Ny-nḥ-Ppy (Ny-nḥ-Mry-R’)/Sbk-ḥtp/Hpi, the owner of a small tomb in the Unas cemetery at Saqqara, was most probably the son of Ṣpy-nḥ wr and the father Ṣpy-nḥ Hry-ib, Naguib Kanawati, “Niankhpepy/Sebekhetep/Hepi: Unusual Tomb and Unusual Career,” GM 201 (2004): 49–61, figs. 1–3; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 30–31, 50, 217, fig. 13.
⁵ Brovarski, “Overseers of Upper Egypt I,” 93, 95; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 221–222.
⁷ Blackman, Meir 4, pl. 5 (2); Kanawati, Meir 1, pls. 4, 75 (a); Kanawati, “Nebet,” 117; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 41, 282, fig. 11, and 276–83 (for the significance of the block chair with the ḫwnt-sign as referring to royal lineage).
⁸ Lashien, El-Qusiya, 218–19.
⁹ Blackman, Meir 4, pls. 14, 15.
¹⁰ Blackman, Meir 4, pls. 4, 15; Kanawati, Meir 1, 13, pls. 76b, 83.
¹¹ Blackman, Meir 4, pl. 15; Kanawati, Meir 1, pl. 83; Lashien, El-Qusiya, 41.
Another occurrence of the title is found in the tomb of Ny-ʻnh-Ppy (Ny-ʻnh-Mry-Rʿ) km/Hpi km/Sbk-htp (Meir, A1), where his wife †ḥḥ.s-n-Tt is identified as ṣpstinu and priestess of Hathor.¹ The tomb was dated to mid–late Pepy II.² Ny-ʻnh-Ppy km was the eldest son of Ppy-ʻnh Hry-ib (Meir, D2).³ He held the second highest ranking title of ḫty-ʿ and the offices of overseer of priests of Hathor and overseer of Upper Egypt, but did not hold the highest ranking title of ṭy-pʿt nor the office of vizier held by his father.⁴ All the ṣpstinu women known from El-Qusiyā served in the local cult of Hathor. The only exception was Dwʿt-Hwt-hr, the daughter of Hw.n-wḥ/Tt. The ranking of the female relatives of the higher officials of El-Qusiyā seems to have been connected with the rank and offices of their male relatives.

**Sheikh Said (UE 15)**

One attested case from Sheikh Said, the cemetery of UE 15, is that of ḫḥ/Tn who was the wife of Mrw (tomb 18). She held the title ṣpstinu in combination with the titles ḫkrtnu wʿrt and ḥm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr on her false door.⁵ Her husband Mrw, dated to early–mid Pepy II,⁶ held the titles ḫk3 hwt, ḥmty-bity, and smr wʿty.⁷ The list of his titles, however, is almost certainly not complete due to the poorly preserved inscriptions of his tomb. It remains uncertain whether he held the title ḫry-tp of UE 15 in succession to his father Wiw/Tyw (tomb 19), who held the office, presumably under Merenre.⁸

**Zawiyet el-Mayetin (UE 16)**

Two cases of the title ṣpstinu from the Sixth Dynasty are attested at Zawiyet el-Mayetin (ancient Hebenu),⁹ the ancient capital and cemetery of UE 16.¹⁰ The first case is that of Ṣmr.Tt, known from her stela in tomb 10 of her husband Biw, who is the only attested holder of the high ranking title ḫty-ʿ in this province. Mrt-it.s/Tt was also ḫkrtnu and ḥm-t-ntr Hwt-hr.¹¹ The second comes from tomb 19

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¹ The title ṣpstinu is followed by ṟ; the feminine ṟ was most probably miscopied as ṣ (Naguib Kanawati et al., *The Cemetery of Meir*, vol. 3: *The Tomb of Niankhpepy the Black* (Oxford: Aris & Philips, 2015), 42, pl. 68; Lashien, *El-Qusiyā*, 70–71, fig. 20).
³ Lashien, *El-Qusiyā*, 50, 55, 261, fig. 13.
⁶ Kanawati and McFarlane, *Akhmim* 1, 123, 300.
⁹ Kanawati and McFarlane, *Akhmim* 1, 123.
¹² LD II, 110 (o); PM IV, 137; Piacentini, *Zawiet El-Mayetin*, 58–59, 100. For the stela of her husband Biw, see LD II, 110 (p) and LD—Text II, 64.
of the smr w’ty Nhri at Zawiyet el-Mayetin and belongs to his wife P3ḥwt(?), who was also hkr nswt, rḥt nswt, hmt-ntr Ḥwt-hr, and ḥkr nswt w’itt. It is remarkable that P3ḥwt(?) is one of two attested holders of the titles ṣpst nswt and ḥkr nswt w’itt at Zawiyet el-Mayetin, despite the modest rank of her husband Nhri. One may suggest that her holding of the title ṣpst nswt was related to her family’s and father’s high status.

Deshasa (UE 20/21)

The earliest attestations of the title ṣpst nswt come from the tomb of the nomarch Ttti/Sdw at Deshasha. Ttti/Sdw was the last of three governors known from Deshasha. His tomb was dated to the early Sixth Dynasty, reign of Teti. He held the title sšm-t3 n niwty n(t) ‘ṛt ṣpȝwt “leader of the land of the two goat cities of the two provinces.”“ His daughter named Nart ḥwyt and sister named Mry and Mrt-it.s are identified as ṣpst nswt in the scenes of fishing and fowling and offering bearers on the south and north walls of the chapel, respectively. Both of them were priestesses of Hathor. Another fragmentary scene in his tomb, representing a row of seven female relatives, shows at least two holders of the title ṣpst nswt. It is possible that all seven women held the title. The name of one of them, Mḥtt, is preserved. Mry and Mrt-it.s may have been among the seven women represented in this scene.

Another case is that of Mri who repeatedly described herself as ṣpst nswt and priestess of Hathor on her coffin from her tomb at Deshasha dated to end of the Sixth Dynasty.

A Late Attestation of the Title ṣpst nswt

A later occurrence of the title comes from the tomb of Padiamenope (TT 33) in the Asasif, dated to the late Twenty-fifth–early Twenty-sixth Dynasty (Taharqa-Psamtik I), where his mother N(ḥ)-mnh-ḥst held the title ṣpst nswt, in addition to “chantress of Amun” (ihy n ḫm-R”) and “lady of the house” (nḥt pr). The importance

1 LD II, 111 (l) and LD—Text II, 68; PM IV, 138–39; Piacentini, Zawiet El-Mayetin, 66, 100.
2 Piacentini, Zawiet El-Mayetin, 100, 106.
3 Naguib Kanawati and Ann McFarlane, Deshasha: The Tombs of Inti, Shedu and Others (Sydney: Australian Centre for Egyptology, 1993), 12, 42–44.
4 Kanawati and McFarlane, Deshasha, 39, pl. 53; Jones, Index, 977–78 (3608).
5 Kanawati and McFarlane, Deshasha, 12–13.
6 W. M. Flinders Petrie, Deshasheh, 1897; with a chapter by F. Ll. Griffith (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1898), pl. 22; Kanawati and McFarlane, Deshasha, pls. 16b, 48, 52. Mry is identified by Petrie as the daughter of Ttti/Sdw, but only traces of the adjective mṛḥ after the suffix ḥ can be seen in the scene at present (Petrie, Deshasheh, 10; Kanawati and McFarlane, Deshasha, 41).
7 Kanawati and McFarlane, Deshasha, 51, pl. 50a.
8 Petrie, Deshasheh, 20, 46–47, pl. 28; PM IV, 123.
9 Johannes Dumischen, Der Grabpalast des Padiamenop in der thebanischen Nekropolis, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1884), pls. 1, 3, 15, 16, 17; Bissing, “Petamenophis,” 10 and n. 2; Claude Traunecker, “Le palais funéraire de Padiamenopé redécouvert (TT 33),” Égypte, Afrique & Orient 51
importance and high social status of her son Padiamenope is indicated by his many statues and 22-room-tomb (TT 33) exceeding the royal burials in the Valley of the Kings. He held the ranking titles of knty-p’t, h3ty-4, h3nty-bity, and smr w’ty. He was also “chief lector priest” (hry-ḥb(t) hry-tp), “scribe of the royal documents in the presence” (sš ‘(w) nswt n hḥt-hr), “privy to the secret(s) of his god” (hry-sšt n ntru), “overseer of all the king’s work” (imy-r ḫt nb(t) n nswt), “overseer of scribes of the royal documents” (imy-r sq(w) ‘(w) nswt), and “overseer of all property of the king” (imy-r ḫt nb(t) n nswt). Padiamenope did not hold positions of local authority or in the Theban priesthood of Amun, compared to Montuemhat who was fourth prophet of Amun, mayor of Thebes, and overseer of Upper Egypt, but his titles and the size of his tomb suggest that he may have been close to the royal court. Traunecker is convinced that Padiamenope was a man of power at Thebes during the late Kushite Period, and not just a bibliophile, collecting ancient funerary texts. He argued that his tomb was a substitute place of pilgrimage replacing the Abydos Osireion for the Theban devotees. This is the only known later attestation of the title in question. The Kushite and Saite periods are known for archaism, evoking the texts and scenes of much earlier times. It seems that this title may be an example of such archaism.

Discussion and Conclusions
The attestation of the feminine title ṣpst nswt in the ancient Egyptian sources remains limited. The corpus of sources dates mainly to the late Old Kingdom, and the majority of attestations dates to the Sixth Dynasty. The title first appears in the evidence in the reign of Teti, the first king of the Sixth Dynasty, in the tomb of the nomarch Itti/.Dispatch at Deshasha, from which the earliest examples derive. The totality of the material relating to this title from Aswan dates to the reign of Pepy II or generally to the late

Sixth Dynasty. I know of no attestation for the periods before the Sixth Dynasty, and no occurrence of the title has been noted for the Middle Kingdom. The title totally disappeared with the reunification of Egypt under Nebhepetre Mentuhotep II, the founder of the Middle Kingdom, which coincided with the decrease in the power of nomarchs.\(^1\) The evidence shows that the feminine title špst nswt was held by wives and daughters, and in very few cases by two granddaughters (H’ét-k3w/Mznt, the granddaughter of the vizier Iww of Abydos, and Hwt-hr-m-h3t, the granddaughter of Hw.n-w/Hi of Quseir el-Amarna) and a sister (Mr3-it.s, the sister of the nomarch Itti/Sdw of Deshasha) of high Memphite and provincial officials, particularly the nomarchs during the Sixth Dynasty.

Most of the holders of the title were provincial women. The surviving examples show a great geographical diversity— the title is found everywhere in Upper Egypt, in addition to the Memphite area. This may reflect the relationship that existed, or was attempted to be fostered, between the king and the provincial elite families in the late Old Kingdom. The title špst nswt appears to have been used as indicator of the social status of women, and only a few among them were probably of royal origin or had royal connections.

Of the eighty women in the corpus, some 41 holders of the title špst nswt were also priestesses of Hathor, namely just over fifty percent of all the špswt nswt, with more than two-thirds being provincial women. At least 18 špst nswt women were also hkr3 nswt, 19 were also hkr3 nswt w’tt, and 14 were also rḥt nswt. The evidence shows that only three women held the title špst nswt compounded with the titles hkr3 nswt, hkr3 nswt w’tt, rḥt nswt, and hm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr. These are Hm-R HTm, the wife of the nomarch Ibi of Deir el-Gebrawi, Qdt-ns of Deir el-Gebrawi, and P3iḥwet(?), the wife of Nhri of tomb 19 at Zawiyet el-Mayetin. At least nine špswt nswt were also hkr3 nswt w’tt and hm(t)-ntr Hwt-hr. Five špswt nswt women additionally held the titles hkr3 nswt and rḥt nswt. These are Wd3t from Saqqara, ’nh.n.s-Ppy/Nn3 from Naga ed-Deir, Tni/Hnwiti, Hnyt, and Snw/Mrwt from Akhmim. All of these women were priestesses of Hathor, with the exception of Snw/Mrwt who served in the cult of Min at Akhmim as wr3t Mnw. Tni/Hnwiti was both priestess of Hathor and wr3t Mnw. The family relationships of some holders are unknown, but their high social status is indicated by their ownership of tombs, coffins, or stelae.

Most of the daughters of provincial high officials, and in two cases a granddaughter and a sister, only held the honorific title špst nswt. The only exceptions are Thyt and Hnwet, the daughters of the nomarch Ibi of Deir el-Gebrawi, who

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\(^1\) It should be noted that very rare attestations are known for royal or high-ranked women in the New Kingdom who held the title špst “the noblewoman.” Examples include Akhenaten’s secondary wife t3 špst Kiya (Jacobus van Dijk, “The Noble Lady of Mitanni and Other Royal Favourites of the Eighteenth Dynasty,” in Essays on Ancient Egypt in Honour of Herman te Velde, ed. Jacobus van Dijk (Groningen: Brill, 1997), 33); a certain špst Isisnofret, the owner of a sarcophagus from Saqqara and probably a daughter of Prince Khaemwaset (see Nozomu Kawai, “The Tomb of Isisnofret at Northwest Saqqara,” in Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2010, eds. Miroslav Báta, Filip Coppens and Jaromir Krejčí (Prague: Czech Institute of Egyptology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University, 2011), 504, 507–10; and Ramesses II’s granddaughter špst Isisnofret, the daughter of Prince Merenptah (cf. P. Leiden I 350 verso, Jacobus J. Janssen, Two Ancient Egyptian Ship’s Logs: Papyrus Leiden I 350 Verso and Papyrus Turin 2008+2016 (Leiden: Brill, 1961), 10, fig. 2, 26; KRI II, 807: 13).
additionally held the titles ḫkt nswt and ḫkt nswt wʾtt respectively, and ṯp(i) wr(t) and ṯp(i) ndst, most probably the daughters of the overseer of foreign mercenaries Ḥtpi, son of Sbk-ḥtp of tomb QH29, who were also ḫkt nswt. Some of these provincial women were priestesses in the local cult of Hathor: Ṣmr and Ḥmr-ʾt.s, the daughter and sister of the nomarch ëtth/Sdw of Deshasha; Ḥy-ʾnḥḥ-Ḥwt-hr, Ḥtp-Ḥwt-hr, Ṣṭtiʾn[s], and Ḥwt-hr-mḥṭ, the daughters and granddaughter of the overseer of priests Ḥw.n-ḥḥ/Țtti of Quseir el-Amarna. It should be noted that Ṣmr-tntt, the daughter of Ṭy of El-Hawawish (N20), only held the title ṣps nswt in the tomb of her father. Later, she held the titles ḫkt nswt, ḫkt nswt wʾtt, ḫm(t)-nṛ Ḥwt-hr nḥt nḥt, and wršt Mnw on the Field Museum architrave (FM 31700) and coffin CG 28001, if she is to be identified with the similarly named wife of the nomarch Kši-hp/Țtti of Akhmim.

It appears then that the high provincial and Memphite officials, as holders of political power, placed their female relatives in religious functions in the local priesthood in an attempt to control the local temple and its income.

The title ṣps nswt continued in use during the First Intermediate Period but to a lesser degree, with the last attested cases deriving from Abydos and Naga ed-Deir in UE 8 and Saqqara: Ṣn, Ṣntb, ṯpw, Ṣnt-ʾnḥḥ-s-Pḥ/Ṣn, Ṣt-nt-nfr[t], Ṣmt-kš/Mr, Ṣt-ibth/Βb-ibš, Ṣṣt/Mṣn, and Dwʾw-hṭpš. The cases of Ṣn, Ṣt-ibth/Βb-ibš and Ṣntb were probably as early as the end of the Sixth Dynasty. Ṣt-ibth/Βb-ibš was also ḫkr Ṣn, ḫkr Ṣn wʾtt and ḫm(t)-nṯr Ḥwt-hr, and Ṣṣt/Mṣn was also ḫkr Ṣn wʾtt and ḫm(t)-nṯr Ḥwt-hr. These two women from Saqqara belonged to the highest social strata. Ṣnt-ʾnḥḥ-s-Pḥ/Ṣn from Naga ed-Deir additionally held the titles ḫkr Ṣn, ṣḥ Ṣn, ḫm(t)-nṯr Ḥwt-hr, and Ṣmty-wṛt ʾḥš(t) nt nfr kḏ. Three women from Abydos and Naga ed-Deir, namely Ṣn, Ṣnt, and Ṣmt-kš/Mr, were priestesses of Hathor. ṯpwšt from Naga ed-Deir (or probably Dendera?) and Dwʾw-hṭpš from Saqqara additionally held the title ṣḥ Ṣn. The familial status of ṯpwšt, Ṣnt-ʾnḥḥ-s-Pḥ/Ṣn, Ṣmt-kš/Mr, Ṣt-ibth/Βb-ibš, Ṣṣt/Mṣn, and Dwʾw-hṭpš remains unknown.

Some of the later attested holders of the title were female relatives of modest ranking provincial officials at the end of the Sixth Dynasty or after. This can be seen, for instance, in the cases of Ṣn and Ṣntb from Abydos, Ṣdw and Ṣt-nt-nfr[t] from Naga ed-Deir, Ṣṭbi(?!) from El-Hagarsa, Ṣnw.sn from Deir el-Gebrawi, and Ṣḥw(?!) from Zawiyet el-Mayetin. Their male relatives did not hold high administrative and priestly titles such as vizier, overseer of Upper Egypt, great chief of a nome, or overseer of priests, nor did they hold high ranking titles such as ʾṛṣ-pʾt or ḥṣty-ʾ. One may suggest that some of them probably brought their titles from their family’s side.

The masculine title ṣps nswt needs to be examined more closely to determine the period of its use, and to enable a comparison between the masculine and feminine titles to see whether they are held by individuals of the same rank and social status, and whether holding the title ṣps nswt was linked to the functions or activities of the holders, or related to the rank and status of their relatives.
Table 1: List of the Memphite $pol nswt women and associated titles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>$hkr nswt</th>
<th>$hkr nswt w'tt</th>
<th>rḥt nswt</th>
<th>$hnt(n)-nṯr $ḥwt-hr</th>
<th>$hnty-ꜣ of Pepy I's pyramid</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Ist, Iṣt</td>
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<td>2 Iṣmt</td>
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<td>3 ḫr/Ḥmt-kꜣw.s</td>
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<td>4 ḫr, ḫ. ᵀ. Ppy</td>
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<td>5 Ṣḏḥt</td>
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<td>6 Ṣḥrī</td>
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<td>7 Ṣḥrtl</td>
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<td>8 Ṣṯi</td>
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<td>9 ḫ党史</td>
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<td>10 ḫ党史-Sfrw</td>
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<td>11 Ṣt-.stub/ꜣb-šub*</td>
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<td>12 Ṣṇt I</td>
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<td>13 Ṣṇt II, Ṣnt</td>
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<td>14 Ṣnt II</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Ṣṣr/Mṣnt*</td>
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<td>16 Ṣṭi</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 Ṣḏwšw-štpton*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: List of the provincial $pol nswt women and associated titles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>$hkr nswt</th>
<th>$hkr nswt w'tt</th>
<th>rḥt nswt</th>
<th>$hnt(n)-nṯr $ḥwt-hr</th>
<th>$hnty-$ of a royal pyramid</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Ṣḥb? (El-Hagarsa)</td>
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<td>2 Ṣḥtp I (Aswan)</td>
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<td>3 Ṣḥtp II (Aswan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Ṣḥtp/ꜣb-šub (Aswan)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><em>Ipi ndst</em> (Aswan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Ipwt</em> (Naga ed-Deir or Dendera?)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td><em>Tni</em> (Aswan)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td><em>Tni/Hnwt</em> (Akhmim)</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Tnitt.s</em> (Aswan, QH105)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td><em>Tnitt.s</em> (Aswan, QH109)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td><em>Iny</em> (Abydos)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td><em>Trtn.s</em> (Abydos)</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td><em>Tdw</em> (Naga ed-Deir)</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td><em>nh.n.s-Ppy/Nnnt</em> (Naga ed-Deir)</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td><em>nh.s-n-Tnte</em> (Meir)</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td><em>Wnw-Mnw</em> (Akhmim)</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td><em>Wnn.s</em> (Deir el-Gebrawi)</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td><em>Wtn</em> (Dendera)</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td><em>P†hwn(?)</em> (Zawiyyet el-Mayetin)</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td><em>Mri</em> (Deshasha)</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td><em>Mrny</em> (Deshasha)</td>
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<td><em>Mrr1, Mrri/Iti</em> (Quseir el-Amarna)</td>
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<td><em>[M]rs/j/Hitn</em> (Aswan)</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td><em>Mrs, Mrsi</em> (Aswan)</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td><em>Mrt-ib</em> (Deir el-Gebrawi)</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td><em>Mrt-itt.s</em> (Deshasha)</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td><em>Mtr-tt.s/Tnte</em> (Zawiyyet el-Mayetin)</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td><em>Mrti</em> (Aswan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td><em>Ny-hnt-Hwnt-br</em> (Quseir el-Amarna)</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td><em>Ny-hnt-shk(i)</em> (Aswan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td><em>Nht</em> (Abydos)</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td><em>Nj...wnt</em> (Deir el-Gebrawi)</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td><em>Nj-nwnt</em> (Aswan)</td>
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<td><em>Nj†n†tti</em> (Qasr es-Sayyad)</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td><em>Njr-nnt</em> (Akhmim)</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td><em>Nzt</em> (Abydos)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

160
The names followed by an asterisk are later attested holders of the title *spst nswt.*
**Abbreviations**

All abbreviations not included in this list follow those used in the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*.

**BSAK** Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur, Beihefte


**MMJ** *Metropolitan Museum Journal*


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النساء حاملى لقب spst nswt في مصر القديمة

دعاء الكاشف

ملخص

تلقى هذه الورقة البحثية الضوء على اللقب النسائي غير الملكي، "spst nswt"، "تبيلة الملك"، والذي يظهر لأول مرة في عصر الأسرة السادسة وكانت تحمله نساء من منطقة منيف والأقاليم، واستمر في الاستخدام في عصر الانتقال الأول ولكن بدرجة أقل. تأتي أهمية هذا اللقب من ارتباطه بالنساء أقرب النساء وكبار المسؤولين في الأقاليم في عصر الأسرة السادسة. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم الوضع الاجتماعي لهذه النساء، وعلى نطاق أوسع، معرفة الروابط بين ملوك الأسرة السادسة وعائلات الأقاليم. ويعتبر حوالي ثمانية امرأة حاملة لللقب spst nswt. ويعرف وجهات متأخرة لفريد لهذه اللقب في نهاية الأسرة الخامسة والعشرين حتى عصر الانتقال الأول، مع ظهور متأخر فريد لهذا اللقب يرجع لنهاية الأسرة الخامسة والعشرين حتى بداية الأسرة السادسة والعشرين ويجدر في المقبرة بدي إمون (33) على الحاسب. ما يقرب من
نصف النساء حامل لقب spst nswt، لكن كاهنات حتحر في الأقاليم أو في منطقة منف، وقليل جداً من حالات أخميم تنتمي لنساء خدمن في عبادة مين.

الكلمات الدالة: الدولة القديمة؛ عصر الانتقال الأول؛ ألقاب النساء؛ الوضع الاجتماعي؛ كاهنة حتحر؛ المرأة في مصر القديمة.