

The False Door of Ipy at Beni Hassan

Study II¹

L.M. Azzam

Department of Archeology and Civilization, Faculty of Art, Helwan University

THE FALSE DOOR of Ipy which form the subject of this paper occupies the western wall of his tomb at Beni Hassan. But before we deal with Ipy's false door I will give a brief description of the tomb that will be published by the author of this article in the near future. The rock-cut tomb of Ipy no.481, lies in the lower cemetery of Beni Hasan.² It consists of one chamber (A) that measures about 3.5m in depth, 2.5m in width and is about 1.95m high. Two burial shafts occupy the eastern part of the tomb floor, measuring 1.70m in length, one meter in breadth and 2m in depth. The southern shaft leads to the burial chamber of the tomb owner Ipy, while the northern one leads to the burial chamber of his wife Senet and her two daughters.³

An entrance in the middle of the eastern wall leads to a roughly-cut and undecorated chamber (B) that measures 4.80m by 2.75m. A shaft leading to an undisturbed burial chamber that dates back to the Old Kingdom⁴ was discovered in the eastern part of chamber (B). The latter could be either an additional room of Ipy's tomb or an independent tomb which is not related to that of Ipy, but dates back also to the Old Kingdom [fig. 1]. This date can be confirmed by analysing the style of the un-inscribed false door carved on the western wall of chamber (B) which looks very similar to the style of the two false doors of chamber (A)⁵ [fig. 2].

The first chamber (A) was decorated with scenes of offerings on the southern wall; agriculture on the northern wall; and a marsh, boat-fighting scene, and a scene of the tomb owner with his son on the eastern wall. The western wall of the tomb is occupied by two false doors flanking either sides of the tomb entrance. The false door on the right hand side belongs to Ipy's wife lady Senet,⁶ while that to the left belongs to Ipy. The two false doors are simply designed and carved in the rock. They consist of an upper and a lower lintel between which is a flaring T-shaped panel. Each false door has four door jambs, two on each side of the central

¹ "Study I" was concerned with studying and publishing the false door of Lady Senet the wife of Ipy see: L. AZZAM, "The False Door of Senet at Beni Hassan", in F. Haikal (ed), *Mélanges offerts à Ola el-Aguizy*, BdE 164, 2015, p. 39-49. The author of this article was granted the consent of the Supreme Council of Antiquities in 2008 for studying and republishing the tomb of Ipy.

² J. GARSTANG, *The Burial Customs of Ancient Egypt*, London, 1907, p. 36-42; PM IV, 161.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 39f.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40f.

⁵ Compare the style of the false door of Ipy in figure 3 and that of Senet: L. AZZAM, "The False Door of Senet at Beni Hassan", p. 49, fig. 2.

⁶ See footnote 1.

niche, which is surmounted by un-inscribed drum. The outer jambs start directly beneath the upper lintel, while the inner ones are surmounted by the lower lintel. The door is framed at the top and two sides by a torus-moulding, and surmounted by a cavetto cornice that traces of which only remain in the false door of Senet. The empty space between the torus moulding of the false door of Ipy and the tomb ceiling indicates the existence of the cavetto cornice also in the false door of Ipy.

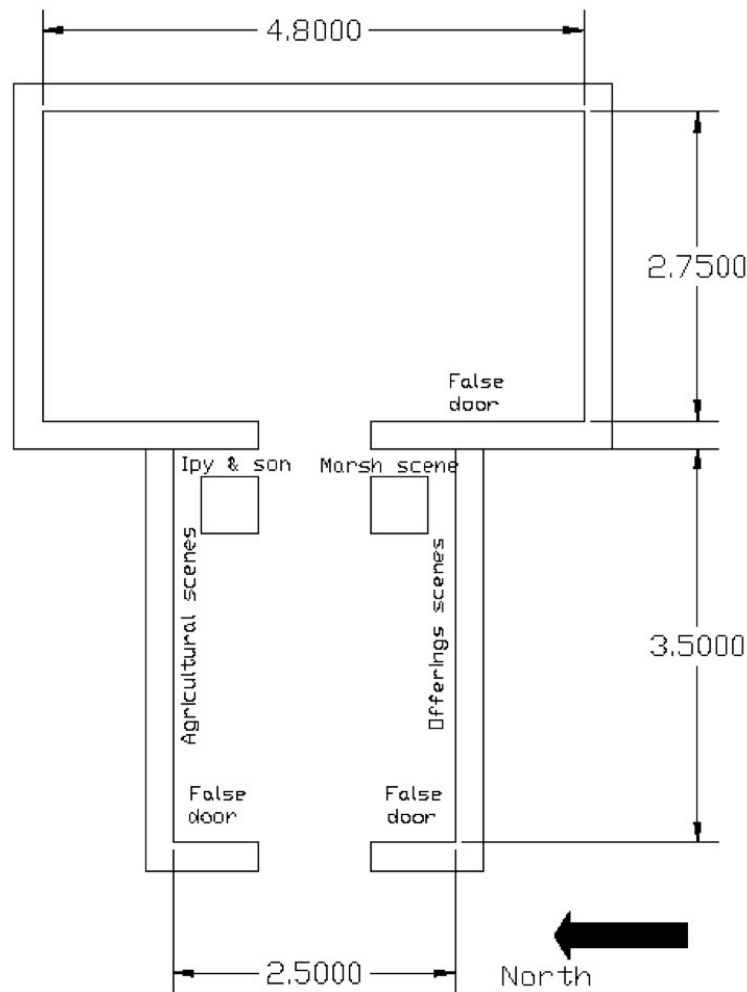


Fig. 1. Tomb plan.

In front of each false door there is a rectangular *Htp* sign shaped offering table with two rectangular libation basins that were cut in the bed rock of the tomb ground.⁷

The false door of Ipy is the subject of this paper. It is in a fair state of preservation, although it is heavily pitted in some areas due to an opening in the upper part of the adjacent wall which allows the penetration of air and sand, and causes the erosion of the false door surface.

⁷ For the *Htp*-shaped offering tables see: M.F. MOSTAFA, *Untersuchungen zu Opfertafeln im Alten Reich*, HÄB 17, 1982, p. 129f; R. HÖLZL, *Ägyptische Opfertafeln und Kultbecken: eine Form-und Funktionsanalyse für das Alte, Mittlere und Neue Reich*, HÄB 45, 2002, 16.



Fig. 2. Un-inscribed false door of Chamber B.

Scenes

The scenes are executed in sunk-relief and colored with red and yellow pigments [fig. 3-4].⁸

A- The Panel

The scene that used to occupy the panel is very weary although some of its traces show a seated figure most probably of Ipy in front of an offering table.

B- The Outer Door Jambs

The scenes depicted on the two outer door jambs show two standing male figures facing inward, toward the central niche. There are traces of red pigments on their bodies.

Ipy is represented on the left outer jambs wearing a shoulder length wig and a short pointed knee-length kilt. He holds in one hand a short staff, while the other arm hangs by his side with a closed-fist-hand. On the right door jambs Her-iby is represented with short-cut hair and a

⁸ I would like to thank Dr. Fayza Abd el Naam for the line drawings of figure 4 and 5.

short pointed kilt. He holds in one hand probably a short staff or a lotus flower that is now completely erased, while the other arm hangs by his side with a closed fist.



Fig. 3. False door of Ipy.

Text

The main text consists of one horizontal line of incised coloured hieroglyphs oriented from right to left. The text comprises the *hṯp dī nsw* formula that occupies the upper lintel, and continues in one vertical column on the left outer door jamb.



Fig. 4. False door of Ipy, Fac-simile.

A- Upper Lintel and Left Outer Door Jamb

Htp di nsw Īnpw tp(y)-dw.f prt-ḥrw n ḥkꜣ ḥwt smḥr w'ty Īpj.

An offering that the King gives, and Anubis, who is upon his mountain, an invocation Offerings to the estate manager and sole companion Ipy.

B- Right Outer Door Jamb

Ḥkꜣ ḥwt smḥr w'ty Hr-ibj.

The estate manager and sole companion Her-ibi.

C- Lower Lintel

Īmꜣḥw ḥr ntr ʿ.

The honored one⁹ before the Great God.

⁹ For the interpretation of *īmꜣḥ*, see K. JANSEN-WINKELN, "Zur Bedeutung von *jmꜣḥ*", *BSEG* 20, 1996, p. 29-36; For *īmꜣḥ ḥr ntr ʿ*, see H. JUNKER, *Giza II*, II, Wien, 1934, p. 53f.

The term *ntr* 𓎃 “Great God” is usually unspecified; it could refer to Ra, Osiris, or to the deceased king himself.¹⁰ However, it seems that in most non-royal texts it probably refers to the god Osiris. This assumption could be proved by a text that was carved on the false door of a man named Ipy also from Saqqara¹¹ where the two outer false door jambs were inscribed with the same text:

Left jamb



Heribi “the Middle” was an epithet that distinguishes between more than one member of the family bearing the same name.¹⁶ Heribi was therefore, and most probably, Iby’s nickname. This assumption could be reinforced by the occurrence of a text on the coffin of Iuew where Heribi was used as his nickname:



İww rn.f nfr Hrj-ib.

Iww is his beautiful name Herjib.¹⁷

It is worth noting that the two names end with the consonant *ḳ, j*, which according to Ranke could be either a substitute for the determinative *ḳ*, or a vowel added to the name to transfer it into a nickname.¹⁸ I believe that the *j* was added to give a long musical sound as Mahmoud Abdel Gaffar stated in his thesis about: “Nicknames in Ancient Egypt”.¹⁹



Fig. 5. Standing figure of Ipy.

¹⁶ H.G. FISCHER, *Varia, Egyptian Studies* 1, New York, 1979, p. 85; N. KANAWATI, *The Rock Tombs of el-Hawawish* VI, Sydney, 1986, p. 45.

¹⁷ GC 28003 = P. LACAU, *Sarcophages antérieurs au Nouvel Empire* I, Le Caire, 1904, p. 8f. The coffin was wrongly dated by Lacau from the New Kingdom. But it is now clear that it belongs to the owner of the 6th dynasty tomb number Q 13 at El Hawawish see N. KANAWATI, *The Rock Tombs of el-Hawawish* IX, Sydney, 1989, p. 59.

¹⁸ RPN II, 129.

¹⁹ M. ABDEL GAFFAR, *Nicknames and Metaphors in Ancient Egypt* (Unpublished Ph D. thesis in Arabic, Faculty of Archaeology Cairo University), Cairo, 1993, p. 247.

Titles

Hkꜣ ḥwt

This title was held by high and middle rank officials who were associated with land administration.²⁰ It could be translated as “estate manager”, “chief of estate”²¹, “headman of the village”²², “Ortsvorsteher”²³ and “district governor”.²⁴ It consists of two words *hkꜣ* “Ruler”²⁵ and *ḥwt* which is a common term used from the Archaic Period to the Ptolemaic era²⁶ that could be translated here as “administrative district or estate”²⁷. According to Jacquet-Gordon²⁸ the *ḥwt* seems to refer to a private or semi-private estates that could be either a small or a large area of land²⁹. Van der Boorn mentioned that: “in the Old Kingdom *ḥwt* denotes first of all the royal funerary estates that supplies the mortuary complex of the deceased king”. He further added that the term could also be used to indicate a private estate³⁰. The title was first attested from the Fourth Dynasty in the titularies of viziers and royal family members.³¹ In the Sixth Dynasty the title *hkꜣ ḥwt* was commonly used by many monarchs of Upper Egypt³² and it replaces the old title *hkꜣ ḥwt ʿjt* that has been long used by the administration of Upper and Lower Egypt during the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties.³³ The title appears during the Sixth Dynasty and later on without an appended name of any districts,³⁴ as the case we are dealing with here.³⁵

Smḥr wʿty

“Sole companion”³⁶ or “sole courtier”³⁷, the title consists of two words, *smḥr* which was a

²⁰ Kh. DAOUD, *Necropoles Memphiticae. Inscriptions from the Herakleopolitan Period*, p. 98.

²¹ D. JONES, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom*, p. 670f.

²² A. GARDINER, “The Eloquent Peasant”, *JEA* 9, 1923, p. 10, n. 2

²³ *Wb* III, 1, 6-8.

²⁴ *FCD*, 178.

²⁵ *Wb* III, 170, 23.

²⁶ P. SPENCER, *The Egyptian Temple. A Lexicographical Study*, London, 1984, p. 21ff.

²⁷ *FCD*, p. 165; the word *ḥwt* could also means Mansion, Temple and funerary chapel, see: *Wb* III, 1ff; P. SPENCER, *The Egyptian Temple*, p. 24; *FCD*, 165.

²⁸ P. PIACENTINI, “On the titles of the *hkꜣw ḥwt*”, in Sh. Allam (ed.), *Grund und Boden in Altägypten*, Tübingen, 1994, p. 235.

²⁹ H. JACQUET-GORDON, *Les noms des domaines funéraires sous l’Ancien Empire égyptien*, *BdE* 34, Le Caire, 1962, p. 4f.

³⁰ G.P.F. VAN DEN BOORN, *The Duties of the Vizier. Civil Administration in the Early New Kingdom*, London, 1988, p. 98.

³¹ The title was held by prince Rahotep, see: W.M.F. PETRIE, *Meidum*, London, 1892, pl. X; M. MURRAY, *Index of Names and Titles of the Old Kingdom*, London, 1908, pl. XXXIII.

³² H.G. FISCHER, *Dendera in the Third Millennium B.C. down to the Theban Domination of Upper Egypt*, New York, 1968, p. 72.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 68, 73.

³⁴ G.P.F. VAN DEN BOORN, *The Duties of the Vizier*, p. 100.

³⁵ It is worth noting that by the Eleventh Dynasty the title was still in use but no longer of monarchs H. FISCHER, *Dendera*, 73.

³⁶ *AEO* I, 20; D. JONES, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom*, 892, Doxey suggests that since title *smḥr wʿty* refers to the status of an acquaintance rather than an actual personal friendship. The term courtier might be more appropriate rendering.

³⁷ D. DOXEY, *Egyptian Non-Royal Epithets in the Middle Kingdom*, *ProblÄg* 12, 1998, p. 164.

title for princes who were responsible for the personal affairs of the king³⁸ and the epithet, *w'ty* was added to the title to make it more imposing³⁹. The title *smhr w'ty* was first attested probably from Third Dynasty, where it was found carved on two stone vessels discovered in the underground galleries of the step pyramid at Saqqara that bears the name of King Ninentjer⁴⁰. Starting from the beginning of the Fourth dynasty the title was held by Viziers and high-ranking officials.⁴¹ *Smhr w'ty* was widely used from the late Fifth Dynasty onwards and was considered as an honourific title⁴² that was commonly used in Upper Egyptian Nomes during the late Old Kingdom⁴³ and could refer to monarchs and high officials.⁴⁴

Dating

The false door could be dated to the second half of the Sixth Dynasty. This dating can be reinforced by the false door style and few paleographical criteria:

- The style of the false door corresponds to the Sixth Dynasty⁴⁵. This is quite clear from the torus that frames the door,⁴⁶ the undecorated niche which was the trend during the late Fifth to the Sixth Dynasties,⁴⁷ and the sunk-reliefs.⁴⁸ Also the narrow door jambs with only one column of inscriptions and the flaring T-shaped panel were the trend during the second half of King Pepi II's reign.⁴⁹
- The depiction of the false door owner on the two outer door jambs was only a trend in Upper Egypt starting from the reign of King Pepi II and onwards.⁵⁰
- The *Htp*-shape offering table with two rectangular libation basins was commonly used during the Sixth Dynasty.⁵¹
- The offering formula: the arrangement of the *hṭp dī nsw* signs,⁵² the invocation of Anubis,⁵³ and the arrangement of the *pṛt hrw n* in a horizontal way⁵⁴ were the common forms that were used during the Sixth dynasty. Also the writing of the Anubis-sign indicates a dating criteria of the Sixth Dynasty, since that form was attested in the

³⁸ W. HELCK, *Untersuchungen zu den Beamtentiteln des ägyptischen Alten Reiches*, *ÄgFo* 18, 1954, p. 24f.

³⁹ P. WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, *OLA* 78, 1997, p. 848.

⁴⁰ P. LACAU, J.-Ph. LAUER, *La pyramide à degrés IV*, Le Caire, 1959, pl. 22, nos. 121-122; J. KAHL, *Das System der ägyptischen Hieroglyphenschrift in der 0.-3. Dynastie*, Wiesbaden, 1994, 740, 745, 751.

⁴¹ M. BARTA, *Abusir V*, p. 12

⁴² N. STRUDWICK, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom*, London, 1985, p. 224f.

⁴³ H.G. FISCHER, "Two Old Kingdom Inscriptions Restored", *JEA* 65, 1979, p. 44.

⁴⁴ *Id.*, *Dendera*, p. 72.

⁴⁵ A. RUSCH, "Die Entwicklung der Grabsteinformen im Alten Reich", *ZÄS* 58, 1923, Taf. B. I 1a.

⁴⁶ S. WIEBACH, *Die Ägyptische Scheintür*, *HÄS* 1, 1981, p. 134; N. STRUDWICK, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom*, London, 1985, p. 35

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁴⁸ D.P. SILVERMAN, "The Priestess of Hathor, 'nh-hwt-hr", *ZÄS* 110, 1983, p. 89.

⁴⁹ N. STRUDWICK, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom*, p. 17ff. E. BROVARSKI, "False doors & History: the Sixth Dtnasty", in M. Barta (ed.), *The Old Kingdom Art and Archaeology*, Praha, 2006, p. 113.

⁵⁰ Y. EL MASRY, *False Doors* (unpublished Ph.D thesis, Faculty of Arts Asyut University), 1994, p. 397.

⁵¹ See footnote 8.

⁵² W. BARTA, *Aufbau und Bedeutung der altägyptischen Opferformel*, *ÄgFo* 24, 1968, p. 28, footnote 8.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁵⁴ E. BROVARSKI, "Akhmim in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period", in P. Posener-Kriéger (ed.), *Mélanges Mokhtar I*, *BdE* 97/1, 1985, p. 127.

Memphite cemeteries from the reign of King Teti, and shortly after in the provinces.⁵⁵

- The dative preposition *n* that introduces the name of the *pṛt ḥrw* recipient was first attested from the Sixth Dynasty.⁵⁶
- The bread sign in the *pṛt ḥrw* shows a broad bottom which was a feature attested from the Sixth Dynasty.⁵⁷
- The writing of the *nṯr* ‘*3*’ without a determinative appear during the reign of King Pepi II.⁵⁸

All the aforementioned facts indicate that the false door of Ipy could be dated from the late Sixth dynasty, more precisely from the second half of King Pepi II’s reign.

Conclusion

Ipy bears the title *ḥkꜥ ḥwt* “estate manager”; a title that could be held by either high or middle rank officials that were engaged in the land administration. Junker⁵⁹ and Baer⁶⁰ see that when the title *ḥkꜥ ḥwt* was held by household officials, it indicates a man of low rank official, engaged in managing a portion of his lord’s land, but when held by an official engaged in the administration of public domains it indicates a rather exalted office. Piacentini added that: “the high officials could either manage their *ḥwt* estate personally, bearing in this case the title of *ḥkꜥ ḥwt*, or could be assisted in the function by officials of low rank”. These are the *ḥkꜥw ḥwt* represented in the reliefs of their lord’s tomb; these officials hold, at most the titles *smḥr wꜥty*, *ḥkꜥ ḥwt* and rarely other titles”.⁶¹

Although Ipy held only the two aforementioned titles, he must have been considered one of the high officials and most probably played an important role in the administration of the Sixteen Nome of Upper Egypt during the second half of the Sixth Dynasty. This could be approved by the following:

1. The tomb of Ipy no. 481 is one of the only two decorated tombs in the lower cemetery of Beni Hassan.⁶²

⁵⁵ E. BROVARSKI, *The Inscribed Material of the First Intermediate Period from Naga-ed-Dêr*, Ann Arbor, 1989, p. 175.

⁵⁶ R. HÖLZL, *Ägyptische Opfertafeln und Kultbecken*, p. 80. For *pṛt-ḥrw n*, see G. LAPP, *Die Opferformel des Alten Reiches*, Mainz am Rhein, 1986, § 173.

⁵⁷ H.G. FISCHER, *Dendera*, 83 (13). For similar examples see J. WILSON, “A Group of Sixth Dynasty Inscriptions”, *JNES* 13, 1954, pl. XVIII. A & fig. 1, 3; The Sixth dynasty Mastabas of Mereri, and that of Her-Merw at Saqqara: S. HASSAN, *Mastabas of Princess Hemet-Rꜥ and Others*, Cairo, 1975, pl. XVII, XVIII, LIV, LVI B. The Mastaba of Idu at Giza that dates to reign of Pepi II or later see W.K. SIMPSON, *The Mastabas of Qar and Idu G 7101 and 7102*, Boston, 1976, pl. XXIX (a). The Sixth dynasty Mastaba of Khentika at Saqqara: T.G.H. JAMES, *The Mastaba of Khentika Called Ikhekhi*, London, 1953, pls. XIII, XVIII. The False door of Ššī Louvre Museum E 27 133 Sixth dynasty: Chr. ZIEGLER, *Catalogue des stèles, peintures et reliefs égyptiens de l’Ancien Empire et de la Première Période Intermédiaire*, p. 223.

⁵⁸ Y. EL MASRY, *False Doors*, p. 345.

⁵⁹ H. JUNKER, *Giza III*, Wien 1938, 90ff

⁶⁰ K. BAER, *Rank and Title in the Old Kingdom*, Chicago, 1960, p. 170.

⁶¹ P. PIACENTINI, “On the titles of the *ḥkꜥw ḥwt*”, p. 235.

⁶² J. GARSTANG, *The Burial Customs of Ancient Egypt*, p. 36.

2. Lady Senet Ipy's wife bore the honorific title *hḳrt nsw*, "lady in waiting",⁶³ that was held by high rank ladies during the Old Kingdom.⁶⁴ According to Drenkhahn when the title appears in connection with provincial Nomes ladies, it refers to either the wives or daughters of monarchs,⁶⁵ so Senet most probably belongs to the high society of the Sixteen Nome of Upper Egypt.

3. Theny, Ipy's daughter, held the title *hmt ntr Hwt-Hr*, "Priestess of Hathor".⁶⁶ During the Old Kingdom this title marked its bearer as belonging to the upper ranks of the elites.⁶⁷

⁶³ W.A. WARD, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom*, Beirut, 1982, p. 143, no. 1233. For the discussion of this title see L. AZZAM, "The False Door of Senet at Beni Hassan", p. 42f.

⁶⁴ D. NORD, "*hḳrt-nswt* = "Kings's Concubine?", *Serapis* 2, 1970, p. 12.

⁶⁵ R. DRENKHAHN, "Bemerkungen zu dem Titel *hḳr.t nswt*", *SAK* 4, 1976, p. 67.

⁶⁶ This title appeared on the right outer false door jamb of her mother Senet: L. AZZAM, "The False Door of Senet at Beni Hassan", p. 41, p. 43, fig. 2

⁶⁷ G. ROBINS, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 1993, p. 142.