



## AN UNPUBLISHED STELA IN THE EGYPTIAN MUSEUM (CAIRO JE 49637)

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### ABSTRACT

This article studies the stela of Mertanahy at the Egyptian Museum Cairo (JE 49637). The provenance of this stela is unknown. The database of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo did not provide any data about this stela. It belongs to Mertanahy, who was Sole companion and Overseer of cloth. It probably dates to the late Old Kingdom to Early First Intermediate Period, based on its style, epigraphical and orthographical study. It is worth noting that the text recorded on this stela is very common. It contains the offering formula associated with the god Anubis accompanied by the owner's title and name, followed by the name of his son Iti, wife Qedi, and daughter Ankhenes.

### KEYWORDS

JE 49637, Mertanahy, prosopography, Overseer of cloth, genealogy, late Old Kingdom, Early First Intermediate Period.

### INTRODUCTION:

The stela of Mertanahy is currently preserved in the Egyptian Museum Cairo under inventory no. JE 49637. The stela is kept in the store of the Museum (R 27, N 4) among Middle Kingdom objects. Unfortunately, the museum database does not provide any information except for the dimensions and material.

### المخلص

تدرس هذه المقالة لوحة غير منشورة للمدعو مرتانهي بالمتحف المصري بالقاهرة تحت رقم (JE 49637). ومكان اكتشاف اللوحة غير معروف. كما أن قاعدة بيانات المتحف المصري بالقاهرة لم تقدم أي بيانات عن هذه اللوحة. وصاحب اللوحة المدعو مرتانهي حمل لقبى السمير الوحيد والمشرف على الملابس. ومن المحتمل أنها تؤرخ بنهاية عصر الدولة القديمة وبداية عصر الانتقال الأول، طبقاً لأسلوب اللوحة، وطريقة الكتابة والدراسة الهجائية. ومن الجدير بالذكر أن النص المدون على اللوحة كان شائعاً، إذ تحتوي على صيغة القران المرتبطة بالمعبود أنوبيس مصحوباً بأسم وألقاب صاحب اللوحة، ومتبوعاً باسم ابنه إتي، وزوجته قدي، وابنته عنخ إن إس.

### الكلمات الدالة

JE 49637، مرتانهي، ألقاب، المشرف على الملابس، علم الأنساب، نهاية الدولة القديمة، بداية عصر الانتقال الأول.

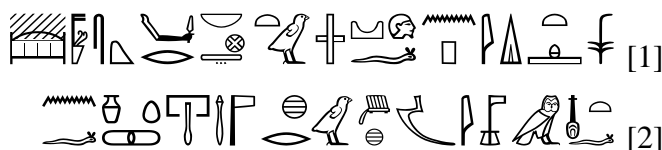
## DESCRIPTION

The stela is round-topped, made of limestone, and measures H. 102cm W. 53cm Th. 11cm. It is divided into two registers that comprise the scenes and texts carved in raised relief. It is in a good state of preservation, except for the pitted surface (Plate 1, Fig. 1).

## FIRST REGISTER

### A. Main Inscription

The main inscription consists of the offering formula in two horizontal lines of hieroglyphs which read from right to left:



[1] *htp dj nsw<sup>(a)</sup> Inpw<sup>(b)</sup> tpj ḏwꜣf<sup>(c)</sup> imy wt<sup>(d)</sup> nb t3-dsr<sup>(e)</sup> krs*

[2] *twꜣf nfr m hrt-ntr<sup>(f)</sup> im3ḥw ḥr ntr-ꜣ3<sup>(g)</sup> prt-ḥrw t ḥnkt p3t nꜣf<sup>(h)</sup>.*

[1] An offering that the king gives to Anubis, who is upon his mountain, who is in the place of embalming, lord of sacred land, may he be buried

[2] well in the necropolis, the revered before the great god, an invocation offering of bread, beer, and cake to him.

a. The arrangement of the  $\overline{\text{𓏏}} \overline{\text{𓏏}} \overline{\text{𓏏}}$  formula on the stela was commonly used from the Sixth Dynasty.<sup>1</sup>

b. *Inpw*: Anubis was one of the most important gods invoked in the offering formula after Osiris between the Fourth Dynasty and the Eleventh Dynasty.<sup>2</sup> From the Twelfth Dynasty, Osiris became very common, while Anubis lost favour in the offering formula.<sup>3</sup>

c. *tpj ḏwꜣf*: ‘who is upon his mountain’<sup>4</sup> is one of the most popular epithets of the god Anubis. It was first attested in the offering formulas of the Fifth Dynasty.<sup>5</sup> The arrangement of the epithet *tpj-ḏwꜣf* in this form  $\overline{\text{𓏏}} \overline{\text{𓏏}} \overline{\text{𓏏}}$  occurred rarely during the Fifth Dynasty<sup>6</sup> but became commonly used in the Sixth Dynasty.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Barta, W., *Aufbau und Bedeutung der altägyptischen Opferformel*, ÄF 24, Glückstadt, (1968), 21; Lapp, G., *Die Opferformel des Alten Reiches unter Berücksichtigung einiger späterer Formen*, in *Sonderschrift 21*, Mainz/Rhein, (1986), 10, § 20; Leprohon, J., “The offering formula in the First Intermediate Period”, in: *JEA* 76, (1990), 163-164.

<sup>2</sup> Barta, W., *Opferformel*, 8, 15, 25, 38, 45.

<sup>3</sup> Bennett, C.J.C., “Growth of the Htp-D’i-Nsw Formula in the Middle Kingdom”, in: *JEA* 27, (1941), 80, *Criteria* no. 9.

<sup>4</sup> *LGG* VII, 393.

<sup>5</sup> Barta, W., *Opferformel*, 15; Azzam, L.M., “An Unpublished stela in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 88011”, in: Z. Hawass/K.A. Daoud/S. Abd El-Fattah, *The Realm of the Pharaohs. Essays in Honour of Tohfā Handoussa I*, CASAE 37, Cairo, (2008), 70, no. c.

<sup>6</sup> Borchartd, L., *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches (Ausser den Statuen) im Museum von Kairo I, Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du musée du caire, Nr. 1295-1808*, Berlin, (1937), 87, no. 1416; 152, no. 1464.

<sup>7</sup> Borchartd, L., *Denkmäler I*, 17, no. 1335, 55, no. 1395, 60, no. 1399, 62-63, nos. 1402-1403, 66-67, nos. 1404-1405, 72, no. 1409, 76-77, nos. 1411-1412, 79, no. 1413, 121, no. 1439, 128, no. 1445, 129, no. 1446, 133, no. 1449, 138, no. 1453, 142, no. 1455, 146-147, nos. 1457-1458, 149, no. 1460, 151, no. 1463, 174, no. 1483, 203, no. 1499, 208, no. 1504, 210, no. 1505, 221, no. 1520; Borchartd, L., *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches*

d. The writing of the epithet of Anubis, *imy-wt*, with a town determinative ☉ appears from the end of the Sixth Dynasty.<sup>1</sup>

e. *nb t3 dsr*: ‘lord of sacred land’ is one of Anubis’s epithets, first attested in the offering formula from the Fourth Dynasty.<sup>2</sup>

f. *ḳrs.tw.f nfr m ḥrt-ntr*: ‘may he be buried well in the necropolis’. This epithet *ḳrs.tw.f nfr* was first attested from the Fourth Dynasty but was rarely used.<sup>3</sup> While *m ḥrt-ntr* occurs during the Fifth Dynasty<sup>4</sup> and continues to be use till the Herakleopolitan period.<sup>5</sup>

g. *im3ḥw ḥr ntr* ʕ: ‘the revered before the great god’,<sup>6</sup> the first occurrence of this epithet is dated to the Old Kingdom,<sup>7</sup> and it was common during the First Intermediate Period.<sup>8</sup> While the term *ntr* ʕ occurs in the offering formula from the Fourth Dynasty,<sup>9</sup> it is thought to refer to Osiris or Re.<sup>10</sup> Given the non-royal nature of the stela, the great god is probably Osiris.<sup>11</sup>

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(*Ausser den Statuen*) im Museum von Kairo II, Berlin, (1964), 33, no. 1565, 51, no. 1573, 69, no. 1590, 86, no. 1615, 103, no. 1638; Leprohon, R.J., *Stelae I, The Dynastic Period to the Late Middle Kingdom*, CAA, Mainz/Rhein, (1985), 15-17 (MFA 98.1031), 131-133 (MFA 25.676). For similar examples from the First Intermediate Period, see: Leprohon, R.J., *Stelae I*, 40-42 (MFA 98.1050), 103-105 (MFA 25.627), 125-127 (MFA 25.674).

<sup>1</sup> Schenkel, W., *Frühmittelägyptische Studies*, Bonn, (1962), 40; *Urk I*, 120 (10); Davies, N. de G. *The Rock Tombs of Deir el Gebrâwi II*, London, (1902), pls. XI, XII; *BMHT I*, pls. 33 (no. 85), 40 (no. 1480), 41 (nos. 86, 89); Borchardt, L., *Denkmäler I*, 63, no. 1403, 66, no. 1404, 67, no. 1405, 79, no. 1413, 102, no. 1421, 114, no. 1434, 128, no. 1445, 138, no. 1453, 142, no. 1455, 147, no. 1458, 174, no. 1483, 203, no. 1499; Borchardt, L., *Denkmäler II*, 33, no. 1565, 69, no. 1590, 103, no. 1638; Quibell, J.E., *Excavations at Saqqara I (1905-1906)*, Le Caire, (1907), 24, pl. XV; Quibell, J.E., *Excavations at Saqqara II (1906-1907)*, Le Caire, (1908), pl. VII (no. 1); Brovarski, E., “Abydos in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period”, Part II, in *Essays Offered in Memory of K. Bear*, SAOC 55, Chicago (2004), 26, fig. 2.3 (a); Barta, W., *Opferformel*, 25, note 2; Fischer, H.G., *Varia Nova*, in *Egyptian Studies III*, New York, (1996), 14, fig. 1; Fischer, H.G., “Inscriptions from the Coptite Nome”, *AnOr* 40, (1964), pls. V, VI, VIII, X, XI; Fischer, H.G., “Some Early Monuments from Busiris, in the Egyptian Delta”, in: *MMJ* 11, (1976), figs. 1-2, 13; El-Khadragy, M., “A late First Intermediate Period stela of the estate manager Khuy”, in: *SAK* 27, (1999), 229, note (o); Lutz, H.L.F., *Egyptian Tomb Steles and Offering Stones of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology of the University of California*, in *University of California Publications* 4, Leipzig, (1927), pl. 10, no. 19; Blackman, A.M., *The Rock Tombs of Meir. Part IV. The Tomb-Chapel of Pepi'onkh the Middle Son of Sebkhotepe and Pekhernefert*, in *Archaeological Survey of Egypt Memoir* 25, London, (1924), pl. IV. A.

<sup>2</sup> Barta, W., *Opferformel*, 8 (c).

<sup>3</sup> Barta, W., *Opferformel*, 9, Bitte 4 (a).

<sup>4</sup> Barta, W., *Opferformel*, 16, Bitte 4 (a).

<sup>5</sup> Barta, W., *Opferformel*, 27, Bitte 4 (c); Fischer, H.G., *Varia Nova*, 28; *Urk I*, 253 (11); Simpson, W.K., *The Mastabas of Qar and Idu. G 7101 and 7102: Many contributions*, in *Giza Mastabas* 2, Boston, (1976), fig. 33; Davies, N. de G., *The Rock Tombs of Sheikh Saïd*, ASEG 10, London, (1901), pl. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Jones, D., *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom*, in *British archaeological reports* 866, Oxford, (2000), 30, no. 142; For this title, see: Junker, H., *Giza II*, Wien, (1934), 53.

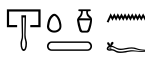
<sup>7</sup> See: *BMHT I*, pls. 22, no. 63, 24, no. 53, 27, no. 81, 30- 31, no. 80, 40, no. 1480, 41, no. 86-89.

<sup>8</sup> El-Masry, Y., “An Unpublished Stela from the Ancient Cemetery of Thinis”, in: *SAK* 31, (2003), 271, note 16; Leprohon, R.J., *Stelae I*, 54 (MFA 04.1851), 66 (MFA 12.1476), 72 (MFA 12.1478), 97 (MFA 25.625), 100 (MFA 25.626), 122 (MFA 25.673), 128 (MFA 25.675), 139 (MFA 25.679).

<sup>9</sup> Barta, M., *Abusir V. The Cemeteries at Abusir South I. Excavations of the Czech Institute of Egyptology*, Praha, (2000), 40; *BMHT I*, pls. 15, no. 18, 65, no. 65.

<sup>10</sup> Gardiner, A.H and Sethe, K., *Egyptian letters to the dead: mainly from the Old and Middle Kingdoms*, London, (1928), 11; Barta, M., *Abusir V*, 40.

<sup>11</sup> Azzam, L.M., “The False Door of Ipy at Beni Hassan. Study II”, in: *ENIM* 9, (2016), 160.

h. The horizontal arrangement of  *prt hrw n.f* was first attested during the Sixth Dynasty.<sup>1</sup>

The invocation offering formulas are followed by preposition *n* + suffix pronoun 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular masculine or feminine instead of writing the name of the owner of the stela. This writing appeared in the reigns of Kings Teti and Pepi I.<sup>2</sup>

## B. Scene


The stela is divided into two registers: the first one comprises a scene representing the stela owner with his family. The four individuals are all standing facing right with their names and titles.

*Mr-t3-n3hi* wears a close-short hair revealing the ear, a broad collar, and knee-length kilt with a belt. He holds a long staff<sup>3</sup> in his left hand while he grasps a *sh̄m*-scepter<sup>4</sup> in his right. His left wrist has a bracelet. His son *K̄di* with the same appearance as his father follows. Behind him stands his wife *Itj*. Her hair is also surprisingly short and cropped. She wears a broad collar and a tight-fitting dress. She holds in her left hand a lotus flower in the direction of her nose, while her right hand hangs by her side with a lotus flower.<sup>5</sup> Her daughter *ḥn̄.n-s*, depicted behind her, wears an identical dress. She grasps lotus flowers in both of her hands.<sup>6</sup>

## Inscriptions

Three horizontal lines of hieroglyphs, including the titles and name of the owner of the stela before him, are:

<sup>1</sup> Fischer, H.G., *Dendera in the third millennium B.C. down to the Theban domination of Upper Egypt*, New York, (1968), 108; Fischer, H.G., *Denderah in the Old Kingdom and its Aftermath*, UMI Dissertations, University of Pennsylvania, (1955), 179, pl. 5a; Lapp, G., *Opferformel*, 97, § 168 (no. 5), 98, § 171 (no. 2); Brovarski, E., in: *SAOC* 55, 23, fig. 2.1; Brovarski, E., *The Inscribed Material of the First Intermediate Period from Naga-ed-Dêr*, Ann Arbor, (1989), 152, 575.

The sign appears in this form , see: Wilson, J.A., "A Group of Sixth Dynasty Inscriptions", in: *JNES* 13, (1954), pl. XVIII (A), figs. 3, 5 (VIII); Hassan, S., *Mastabas of Princess Hemet-Ra and Others*, Cairo, (1975), pls. XVII, XVIII, LIV, LVI (B); James, T.G.H., "The Mastaba of Khentika called Ikhekhi", in: *ASEM* 30, (1953), pls. XIII, XVIII.

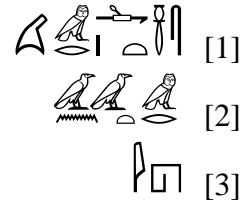
<sup>2</sup> Brovarski, E., *SAOC* 55, 22, note. 29; Affara, M., "A False door Stela from the Old Kingdom", in: *GM* 193, (2003), 13.

<sup>3</sup> The staff is common in the Old Kingdom tombs and stelae. For similar example in tombs; see: Harpur, Y., *Decoration in Egyptian tombs of the Old Kingdom: Studies in orientation and Scene content*, in *Studies in Egyptology*, London, (1987), 128-129. For similar examples of the stelae and false door; see: Leprohon, R.J., *Stelae I*, 17 (MFA 98.1031), 20 (MFA 98.1034), 23 (MFA 98.1036), 56 (MFA 04.1851), 111 (MFA 25.629); *BMHT I*, pls. III, no. 1169, VI, no. 157A, X, no. 1324, XI, no. 1282, XIV, 130, XXXIII, no. 1319A, XXXIV, no. 128, XXXVI, no. 1263, 1818, XXXVII, no. 1264, 1262, XXXVIII, no. 212.

<sup>4</sup> The words *sh̄m*, *ḥb̄* and *hrp*, all designate the same staff, see: Gardiner, A.H., *Eg.Gr.*, Oxford, (1957), Sign list (S 42), 509; For the *sh̄m*-sceptre, see: Barta, W., "Sekhem", in *LÄ V*, Wiesbaden, (1984), col. 772-776.

<sup>5</sup> The lotus flower at the nose of the deceased is to symbolize her resurrection or rebirth; see: Radwan, A., *The Nun-basin of Renpetnefert*, in *Egypt and Beyond. Essays Presented to L.H. Lesko upon his Retirement from the Wilbour Chair of Egyptology at Brown University June 2005*, (2008), 279-280.

<sup>6</sup> It is worth noticing that the daughter of the owner holds in her left hand the stem of the lotus flower held by her mother in a hint of the continuation of life from mother to daughter.



[1] *smr w<sup>c</sup>ty*<sup>(i)</sup>, *imy-r sšr* (?)<sup>(i)</sup>,

[2] *Mr-t3-n3-*


[3] *hj* (?).

[1] Sole companion and overseer of cloth (?),

[2] Mertana

[3] *hy* (?)<sup>1</sup>.

**i.** *smr-w<sup>c</sup>ty*: “sole companion”<sup>2</sup> or “sole friend”<sup>3</sup> or “sole courtier”.<sup>4</sup> This title was first attested in the Third Dynasty,<sup>5</sup> and was common from the beginning of the Fourth Dynasty. It was held by viziers and high officials.<sup>6</sup> At the end of the Old Kingdom, it became an honorary title,<sup>7</sup> and commonly used in Upper Egyptian districts.<sup>8</sup> It seems that the holders of this title carried similar tasks than the royal envoys.<sup>9</sup>

**j.** *Imy-r sšr* (?): This title probably reads *imy-r sšr*, according to a scene in the tomb of &j that shows a man who bears this title carrying bags of linen. Behind, stands his servant carrying over his shoulder an object shaped .<sup>10</sup> The title could be translated ‘overseer of

<sup>1</sup> This name was not mentioned by Ranke and Scheele-Schweitzer. I was not able to find any parallel for it. The name can be read as *Imy-r t3-n3hj* but this is still uncertain reading.

<sup>2</sup> Jones, D., *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom*, in *BAR International Series 866 (I)*, Vol. II, Oxford, (2000), 892, no. 3268; Al-Ayedi, A.R., *Index of Egyptian Administrative, Religious and Military Titles of the New Kingdom*, Egypt, (2006), 493, no. 1670; Davies, N. de G. *Rock Tombs of Shaikh Saïd*, 24, 27, 30-31.

<sup>3</sup> *Wb.* I, 278 (11); *Wb.* IV, 138 (11); Ward, W.A., *Index of the Egyptian Administrative and Religious titles of the Middle Kingdom*, Beirut, (1982), 151, no. 1299; Leprohon, R.J., “Administrative Titles in Nubia in the Middle Kingdom”, in: *JAOS* 133, (1993), 425, no. 10; Gardiner, A.H., *AEO* I, 20\*.

<sup>4</sup> Doxey, D., *Egyptian Non-Royal Epithets in the Middle Kingdom*, *ProblÄg* 12, (1998), 164; Meeks, D., *Année lexicographique Égypte ancienne*, Vol. 3, Paris, (1979), 245, no. 79.2572.

<sup>5</sup> Barta, M., *Abusir V: The Cemeteries at Abusir South I*, (2001), 12.

<sup>6</sup> Helck, W., *Untersuchungen zu den Beamtentiteln des Ägyptischen Alten Reiches*, in *ÄF* 18, Glückstadt, (1954), 24-25.

<sup>7</sup> Helck, W., “Titel und Titulaturen”, in: *LÄ* VI, Wiesbaden, (1986), col. 596; Strudwick, N., *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom*, London, (1985), 224-225.

<sup>8</sup> Fischer, H.G., “Two Old Kingdom Inscriptions Restored”, in: *JEA* 65, (1979), 44.

<sup>9</sup> Dawood, K.A., *The inscribed stelae of the Herakleopolitan Period from the Memphite Necropolis I*, Published Dissertation, Liverpool University, (1998), 241.

<sup>10</sup> Steindorff, G., *Das Grab des Ti*, in *Veröffentlichungen der Ernst von Sieglin Expedition in Ägypten* 2, Leipzig, (1913), Taf. 115.

cloth',<sup>1</sup> or 'overseer of linen'.<sup>2</sup> Bearers of this title were responsible for the royal dressing room.<sup>3</sup>

The caption above the head of the son reads:



[1] *Kdj*

[1] Qedi<sup>4</sup>.

In front of *Ity*'s face there is a short line of hieroglyphs with her name and titles:



[1] *hkrt nswt w<sup>c</sup>tt, Itj*

[1] Sole royal ornament<sup>k</sup>, *Iti*.<sup>5</sup>

**k.** *hkrt nswt w<sup>c</sup>tt*: it is one of the honorary titles of priestesses and ladies of high ranking officials, often married to priests or royal court officials.<sup>6</sup> The title *hkrt nswt w<sup>c</sup>tt* was first attested from the beginning of the Fifth Dynasty,<sup>7</sup> although it rarely appeared, in the offering formulas from the Late Old Kingdom while it was used commonly in the Herakleopolitan Period.<sup>8</sup> The title could be translated into 'lady in waiting 'of the first rank', 'sole lady in waiting of the king',<sup>9</sup> or 'sole ornamented of the king',<sup>10</sup> According to Hassan, the title could be translated into 'sole concubine of the king'.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jones, D., *Index*, Vol. II, 234-235, no. 864.

<sup>2</sup> *Urk I*, 146 (13) (= Davies, N. de G., *The Rock Tombs of Deir El Gebbrâwi I*, London, (1902), 16); Junker, H., *Giza II*, 165 (1-2), fig. 18; El-Khouli, A., *The Old Kingdom Tombs of el-Hammamiya. With many Contributions*, in *The Australian Center for Egyptology Reports 2*, Sydney, (1990), 29, no. 16, pl. 57; Gardiner, A.H., "Two hieroglyphic signs and the egyptian words for "Alabaster" and "Linen" ect.", in: *BIFAO 30*, (1931), 174, fig. 4; Fischer, H.G., *Varia Nova*, 216-217, fig. 26 (a); Ward, W.A., *Index*, 46, no. 360.

<sup>3</sup> Blackmann, A.M., "The House of the Morning", in: *JEA 5*, 1918, 152; Gardiner, A.H., in: *BIFAO 30*, 170.

<sup>4</sup> The personal name *Qdi* appeared from the beginning of the Old Kingdom and continued to be used down to the New Kingdom, see: *PN II*, 320, no. 27; Scheele-Schweitzer, K., *Die Personennamen des Alten Reiches: Altägyptische Onomastik unter Lexikographischen und sozio-kulturellen Aspekten*, in *Philippika 28*, Wiesbaden, (2014), 691, no. 3410.

<sup>5</sup> The personal name *Iti* appeared from the beginning of the Old Kingdom and continued to be used down to the Middle Kingdom, see: *PN I*, 50, 5; Scheele-Schweitzer, K., *Personennamen*, 272, no. 548.

<sup>6</sup> Haslauer, E., "Harem", in *D. Redford (ed.), The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, Vol. III, Cairo, (2001), 77.

<sup>7</sup> Junker, H., *Giza II*, figs. 7-10; Reisner, G.A., *Giza I*, Cambridge, (1942), fig. 258.

<sup>8</sup> Fischer, H.G., *Egyptian Women of the Old Kingdom and the Herakleopolitan Period*, New York, (1989), 31, 31.

<sup>9</sup> Jones, D., *Index*, Vol. I, 795-796 [No. 2900]; Nord, D., "𓆎𓅓, *hkrt-nswt* = "king's concubine?", *Serapis 2*, 1470, 12.

<sup>10</sup> Troy, L., Patterns of Queenship in ancient Egyptian myth and history, in *Boreas 14*, Uppsala, (1986), 186 (81/18).

<sup>11</sup> Hassan, S., *Giza II*, Cairo, 1936, 204 [No. 2].

The caption above the head of his daughter reads:

[1]

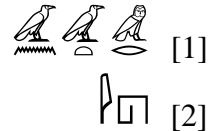


[1] ḥnḥ-nꜣs.

[1] Ankhenes.<sup>1</sup>

## SECOND REGISTER

The second register presents a scene with three standing figures<sup>1</sup> of *Mr-t3-n3hj*, facing right. They are identical, each wearing a broad collar and a knee-length kilt. They hold a long staff in their left hand, while grasping a *shḥm*-scepter in the right. They wear short wigs, lacking inner details, and uncovering the ears. The third male wears a beard, while the first and second are without. The figures show brown pigment on their face, torso, arms, and legs, while the broad collar shows yellow pigment. Their names are written in two lines in front of their face:



[1] *Mr-t3-n3-*

[2] *hj(?)*.

[1] Mertana

[2] *hy(?)*.

1. The owner of the stela is depicted three times on the second register. This uncommon feature could be explained:

1. The three figures represent the different life stages of the stela owner, or it may represent the owner and two statues of him.

2. The number three indicates plurality in ancient Egypt.<sup>2</sup> It could also refer to the immortality of the owner of the stela.

Depicting the stela's owner twice<sup>3</sup> was a common feature at Naga-ed-Dêr and other sites in the Late Old Kingdom and the Early First Intermediate Period.<sup>4</sup> However, an individual

<sup>1</sup> The personal name ḥnḥ.s-nj was used from the beginning of the Old Kingdom and continued to be used into the Middle Kingdom, see: *PN* I, 67, no. 22; This name could be read ḥnḥ.n-s, see: Scheele-Schweitzer, K., *Personennamen*, 300, no. 723.











<sup>2</sup> Gardiner, A.H., *Eg.Gr.*, Sign-List (Z 2), 536.

<sup>3</sup> Stela of Ty (*Wty* ?) (Edinburgh 1910-94), Old Kingdom: Brovarski, E., "Akhmim in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period", in *Mélanges Mokhtar* I, in: *BdE* 97, Cairo, (1985), pls. II (c), V; Stela of *In-hrt-nht* from Naga-ed-Dêr (Stockholm MME 1977-8), first Intermediate Period: Brovarski, E., "A Stela of the First Intermediate Period from Naga-ed-Dêr", in: *Medelhavsmuseet* 18, Stockholm, (1983), 4, fig. 1; Stela of *1tpi* from Naqada (Archaeological Museum, Florence no. 6375), First Intermediate Period: Fischer, H.G., in: *AnOr* 40, (1964), pl. XXIII (No. 26); Corten, R., "Ein Relief aus der zeit Zwischen Altem und Mittleren Reich", in: *ZÄS* 68, (1932), 109.

<sup>4</sup> Brovarski, E., in: *BdE* 97, 122.

appearing three times on a stela is rarely depicted. It could represent the different ages of the owner as shown beard and wig of the third figure in the second register.

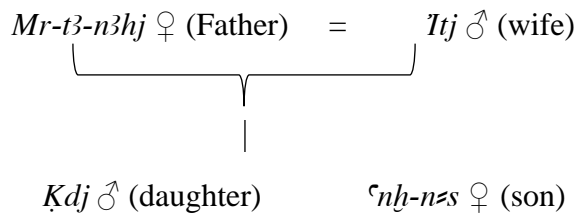
### PALAEOGRAPHICAL REMARKS

1. The sign  (R4) in the word *htp* was commonly used during the Sixth Dynasty.<sup>1</sup>
2. The occurrence of Anubis name  in the phonetic writing without the sign  (G43) and determinative god from the end of the Sixth Dynasty.<sup>2</sup>
3. The head  sign (D1) in the word *tpj* had the beard, as seen during the Sixth Dynasty.<sup>3</sup>
4. The sign  (T19) of the *krs* has one projection at the bottom, as commonly used during the Old Kingdom.<sup>4</sup>
5. The title  written without a god determinative  (A40) was first attested during the reign of King Pepi II.<sup>5</sup>
6. The following signs,  (G43),  (G17) and  (G1) are written without extending the line of the legs. This starts appearing from the Sixth Dynasty<sup>6</sup> until the Eleventh Dynasty.<sup>7</sup>

### GENEALOGY

The stela provides the genealogy of its owner and his family. Although the name Mertanahy of the stela owner is uncommon, his family members bore common names in use during the Late Old Kingdom and Early First Intermediate Period.

The genealogical table of the family of *Mr-t3-n3hj* contains:



<sup>1</sup> Azzam, L.M., in: *ENIM* 9, 163.

<sup>2</sup> Lapp, G., *Opferformel*, 3, Abb. 2, 26, 27; Borchardt, L., *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches* I, 60, no. 1399, 61, no. 1400, 62, no. 1402, 129, no. 1446, 147, no. 1458, 224, no. 1523; Borchardt, L., *Denkmäler* I, 118, no. 1659; Junker, H., *Giza* VII, Abb. 104, 105; Junker, H., *Giza* XI, 71, Abb. 40; Fischer, H.G., *MMJ* 11, 7, note. 9, fig. 1-2; Quibell, J.E., Excavations at Saqqara (1905-1906), in *Excavations at Saqqara*, Le Caire, (1907), 24, pl. XVI; Simpson, W.K., Mastabas of Qar and Idu, figs. 9, 12; Dawood, K.A., The inscribed stelae of the Herakleopolitan Period II, pl. XXIV, no. 4.1.29. As for some of the First Intermediate Period examples, see: Leprohon, R.J., *Stelae* I, 125-127 (MFA 25.674); El-Khadragy, M., in: *SAK* 27, 225, fig. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Fischer, H.G., *Dendera in the third millennium B.C. down to the theban domination of Upper Egypt*, New York, (1968), 79- 80, fig. 15 (no. 3). For similar example, see: Leprohon, R.J., *Stelae* I, 15- 17 (MFA 98.1031), 45- 48 (MFA 03-1848); 54-56 (MFA 04.1851), 63- 65 (MFA 12.1475), 69-71 (MFA 12.1477), 103-105 (MFA 25.627), 125-127 (MFA 25.674), 139-141 (MFA 25.679).

<sup>4</sup> Fischer, H.G., *Denderah in the Old Kingdom*, 138 (6).

<sup>5</sup> El-Masry, Y., *False Doors*, unpublished Ph.D thesis, Faculty of Arts Asyut University, (1994), 345; Azzam, L.M., *ENIM* 9, 164.

<sup>6</sup> For examples, see: Simpson, W.K., Mastabas of Qar and Idu, figs. 20-21, 23.

<sup>7</sup> Fischer, H.G., *Denderah in the Old Kingdom*, 138 (7).



**DATE**

The offering formula, style and the personal names date the stela to the Late Old Kingdom or Early First Intermediate Period.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. L. Azzam, for drawing my attention to this stela. I am also very grateful to Ms. Eman E. Ali for the facsimile of the stela.

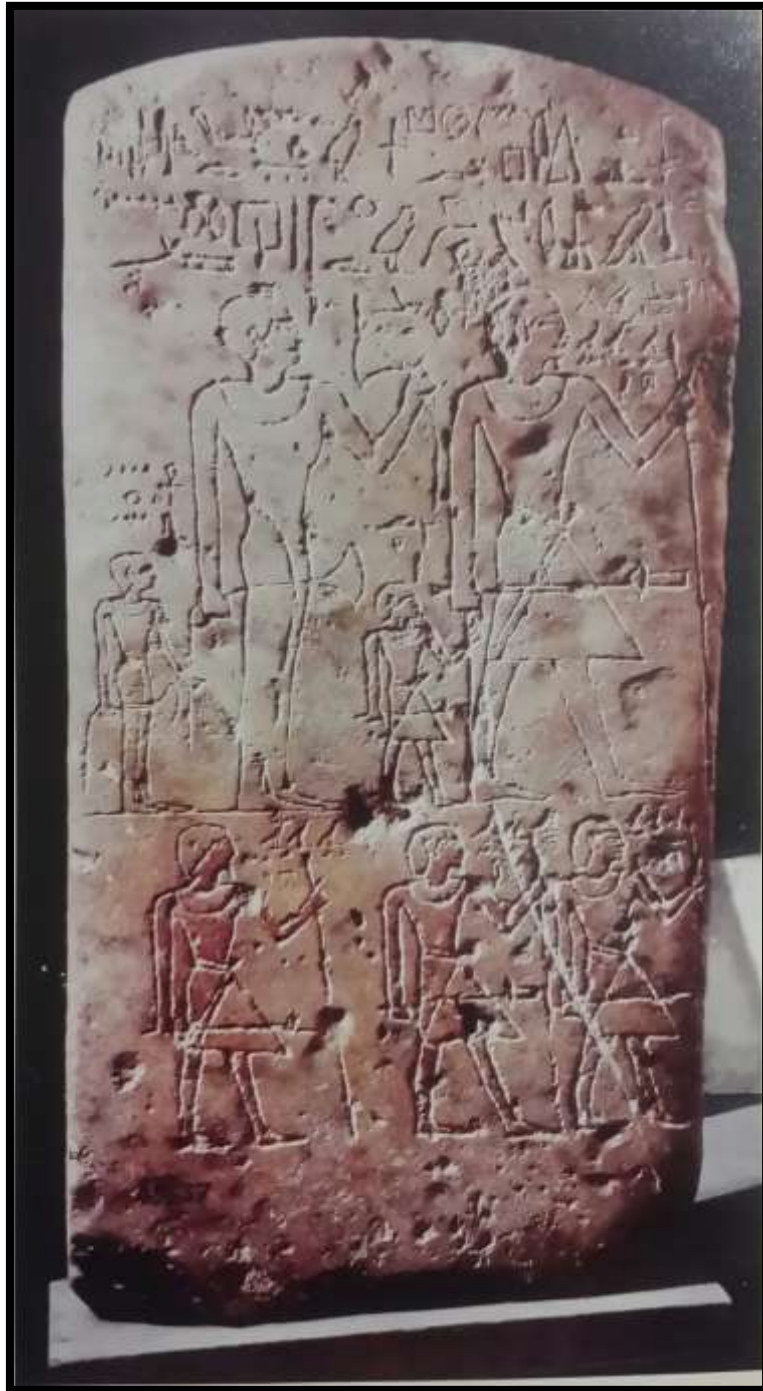
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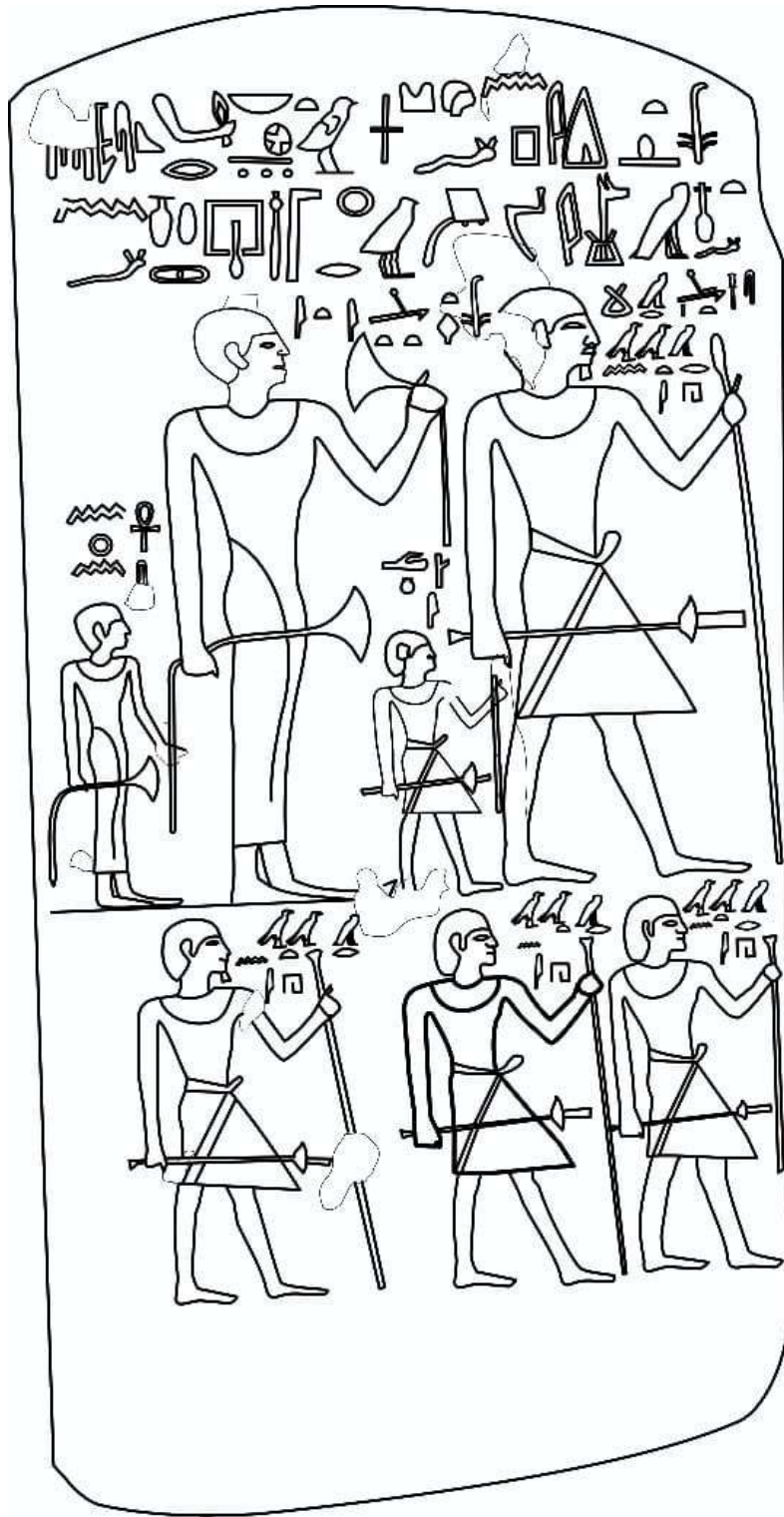
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PLATES



Pl. 1 Stela in the Egyptian Museum Cairo (JE 49637)



**Fig. 1** Stela in the Egyptian Museum Cairo (JE 49637); © Facsimile by Eman E. Ali