

## **The Stela of *W3h-ḥrt-nḥt* (J.E.57112)**

**Mostafa A. SHALABY\***

### **ABSTRACT:**

The article deals with the study of the stela no. JE 57112 (fig 1), is currently housed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. The stela is from Abydos. The article is showing the typical provincial art of the First Intermediate Period. The scene and inscriptions of the stela are to be published studied and compared with other parallel stele.

### **General Description (Pl.1):**

The stela under discussion is a round topped limestone stela<sup>1</sup> in shape measuring 84 cm. in height and 81 cm. in width. It is in poor state of preservation. The inscription and scene are surrounded by the typical painted board that characterized of the First Intermediate Period (a). There are traces of various pigments that were used in the decoration of the stela: blue, red, yellow and black. There is also another property which is the use of colored dough to cover the deep marks after carved. In addition, it's noted the use of colors on a thin layer of mortar, because the limestone absorbs colors. The stela is divided into two sections, the upper part is occupied with a horizontal text and the lower part is depicts the owner and his wife.

### **I. The scene of the owner:**

The scene occupies the left side of the stela; it depicts the owner and his wife standing facing right. The deceased wears a shoulder-length wig and a broad collar, knee-length

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\* Faculty of Education, Ain Shames University (Egypt)

<sup>1</sup> For more details about round topped stelae see: R. Hözl, 'Round-Topped Stelae from the Middle Kingdom to the Late Period. Some Remarks on the Decoration of the Lunettes', *SCIE* 1, (Wien, 1992), 285-289.

kilt<sup>2</sup>. He holds a long staff in his left hand,<sup>3</sup> and maybe he grasps a scepter in his right hand. An elongated eye, which is one of the most attributes in the First Intermediate period. There are also remains of colors on his body. In front of him one vertical line:



| *im3ḥw ḥr ntr ʿ3 nb pt*

| *The one honored (b) by the great god, lord of heaven<sup>4</sup>.*

Behind him stands his wife shown almost on the same scale (c), with her left hand on his left shoulder usually the other arm hanging free. She wears a long wig without lappet<sup>5</sup>, a broad collar and her dress is not appearing. Above her one horizontal line reads as follows:



| *ḥmt.f mryt.f ḥkrt nsw šdt it.s*

<sup>2</sup> For more details about kilts see: G. Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Pharaonic Egyptian Clothing*, (Leiden, 1993), 53-56.

<sup>3</sup> For more examples see: J. Černý, 'The Stela of Merer in Cracow', *JEA* 47, (1961), pl. 1; H. Selim, 'Two Unpublished First Intermediate Period Stelae from Cairo Museum', *SAK* 35, (2006), Fig.2; E. Brovarski, 'Two Monuments of the First Intermediate Period from the Theban Nome', in: *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes*, (Chicago, 1977), 38-39.

<sup>4</sup> *im3ḥw ḥr ntr ʿ3 nb pt*: The construction *im3ḥw ḥr ntr ʿ3 nb pt* is attested on many stelae dating to the First Intermediate Period, See: H. F. Lutz, *Egyptian Tomb Steles and Offering stones of the Museum of Anthropology Ethnology of the University of California*, (Leipzig, 1927), pl.20, (n.38), Stela of *Ibw*; K, Daoud, *Necropoles Memphiticae Inscriptions from the Herakleopolitan Period*, (Alexandria, 2011), 37-39, stela of *Ipi*, fig: 13; 49-50, stela of *Nit-Htp*, fig: 17; 63-68, stela of *Ipi-nḥw/Ipi*, fig:21; 70-73, stela of *ḥry-šf-nḥt I*, fig 23; 73-75, stela of *ḥry-šf-nḥt II*, fig:24. H.G. Fischer, *Inscriptions from the Coptite Nome, VI-XI*, (Roma, 1964), 82-84, (no.29), stela of *Nmt*, pl. XXVI; Y, El- Masry, 'An unpublished Stela from the Ancient Cemetery of Thinis', *SAK* 31, (2003), 271.

<sup>5</sup> The long wig without lappet was worn in Upper Egypt during Tenth Dynasty, For more examples see: Lutz, *Egyptian Tomb Steles and Offering stones*, pl. 12, No. 22: Stela of a Hathor priestess from Naga ed-Dêr; H.G. Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 64-65, pl.XVI, No.17 Stela of *ḥnms*; J.J. Clere, & J. Vandier, *Textes de la première période intermédiaire et de la XIème dynastie I*, Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca X,(Bruxelles, 1948), 6, No.10. ; A. Gardiner, "A Stela of the Earliest Intermediate Period", *JEA* 8, (1922), 191-192, Stela of *ḥnm ms*, pl.XVIII.





her side had been known from Fifth Dynasty<sup>22</sup>, and became common in the First Intermediate period<sup>23</sup>.

- d- *ḥkrt- nsw***: “Lady- in- waiting”: This title appeared since Fourth Dynasty, many women took this title in the First Intermediate Period like *Mr- irt.f*<sup>24</sup>, *Ty*<sup>25</sup>, *ḥnh -n.s-ppy*<sup>26</sup>. *ḥmt.f mryt.f ḥkrt nsw* is usual form in the First Intermediate Period<sup>27</sup>. Lady-in-waiting is the proper sense of the *ḥkrt-nsw*<sup>28</sup>.
- e- *ḥtp di nsw***<sup>29</sup>: (an offering that the king gives). The Old kingdom formula until First Intermediate Period “An offering that the king gives, and the offering that Osiris gives”. By the Middle Kingdom, the god had been introduced by a preposition usually (*n*) and (*hr*) also usually unwritten<sup>30</sup>. Offering formula is a wish for the different kinds of everything that could be brought to the deceased person to keep his vital power in the otherworld<sup>31</sup>. The arrangement of the signs refers that the stela from First Intermediate Period<sup>32</sup> and was known during the Sixth to Eleventh Dynasties<sup>33</sup> and is

<sup>22</sup> N. Kanawati, & A. Mcfarlane, *Akhmim in the Old Kingdom, I: Chronology and Administration*, ACE: Studies 2, (1992), 43-45.

<sup>23</sup> For more examples dating to the First Intermediate Period, see, Dunham, *Naga-ed-Dêr Stelae of the First Intermediate Period*, 52-53 (no.39), Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 75-77 (no. 25) stela of *Ikr*, 87-89 (no.32 ) stela of *Ihy*, pls. XXII, XXIX; L. Azzam, “Stela of *Ḥm-Ppi*”, in: *Echoes of Eternity” Studies presented to Gaballa Aly Gaballa*, (Wiesbaden, 2010), Fig: 1, pl.1, Gardiner, *JEA* 8,191-192; Leprohon, Boston *MFA* 2, 116 (no. 25.671), Stela of *In-hr.t-nḥt*.

<sup>24</sup> Dunham, *Naga ed-Dêr*, 17, pl.4.

<sup>25</sup> Dunham, *Naga ed-Dêr*, 23, pl.6.

<sup>26</sup> Dunham, *Naga ed-Dêr*, 37, pl.12.

<sup>27</sup> Leprohon, Boston *MFA* 2, 15-17, 98.1031, Stela of *bb.i*.

<sup>28</sup> R. Drenkhahn, ‘Bemerkungen zu dem Title *ḥkr.t nswt*’, *SAK* 4, (1976), 59-67.

<sup>29</sup> For the *ḥtp di nsw* formula in general, see W. Barta, *Aufbau und Bedeutung der altägyptischen Opferformel*, Äg 24, (Glückstadt, 1968); T.G.H. James, “*Egyptian Funerary Stelae of the First Intermediate Period* in: *The Biritish Museum Quarteleay*, V.20, N.4, 1956, 87-89. pl.XXX, a. Stela of Khenty.

<sup>30</sup> G. Lapp, *Die Opferformel des alten Reiches: unter Berücksichtigung einiger späterer Formen*, SDAIK 21, (Mainz, 1986), 32-33&50-51; Barta, *Opferformel*, 254-261.

<sup>31</sup> D. Franke, “The Middle Kingdom Offering Formula – A Challenge”, *JEA* 89, (2003), 39.

<sup>32</sup> For similar examples see: Leprohon, Boston *MFA* 2, 40-42, 98.1050, Stela of *sn.t.thi*. Boston *MFA* 2, 45:48, 03.1848, Stela of *nsw*, Boston, *MFA* 2, 66-68, 12.1476, Stela of *rh.wi*: Boston, *MFA* 2, 69-71, 12.1477, Stela of *šd-it.s*, Boston, *MFA* 2. 72:74, 12.1478, Stela of *hn.ii*, Boston *MFA* 2 79:81, 12.1480, Stela of *mniw*, Ch. Ziegler, *Catalogue des stèles, peintures et reliefs égyptiens de l’Ancien Empire et de la Première Période Intermédiaire*, (Paris, 1990), 74-77, Stela of *Iri*, 82-85, Stela of *Isi*. Clere & Vandier, *Textes de la première période intermédiaire et de la XIème dynastie*, 5-6, FISCHER, *COPTITE NOME*, 43, PL.XXXI.

found in most of the late First Intermediate Stelae from Naga ed-Dêr<sup>34</sup>. This written form appeared from Fourth Dynasty and its most common in the stelae<sup>35</sup>, but uncommon from the Fourteenth Dynasty to the Twentieth Dynasty<sup>36</sup>. The arrangement of *h̄tp di nsw* is characteristic of the Naga-ed-Deir stelae from the early Heracleopolitan Period<sup>37</sup>.

**f- *Wsir*:** The name of the god *Wsir* is attested under several orthographies<sup>38</sup>. The one that attested under the stela under discussion. The writing of the god Osiris by this way is usually used in the First Intermediate Period<sup>39</sup>. Osiris appears for the first time in private funerary inscription at the Memphite cemeteries in the reign of Neuserre<sup>40</sup>. At Naga-ed-Der in the late Old Kingdom, Osiris was the great god, lord of the Thinite nome<sup>41</sup>.

**g- *nb ḏdw*:** Lord of Busiris, indicative of an Eleventh Dynasty<sup>42</sup>. The writing of *ḏdw*, as represented on the stela, characterizes the First Intermediate Period, The sign  come before the sign  in the stela of Hathor priests *Mrit* from Naga ed-Dêr<sup>43</sup>. The writing of *ḏdw* by this way prove a Herakleopolitan date for this stela<sup>44</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> C.M.Firth, & B. Gunn. *Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, I, (Cairo, 1926), 122; H.G. Fischer, A Stela of the Heracleopolitan Period in Saqqara: the Osiris *Iti*, *ZÄS* 90, (1963), pl.5.

<sup>34</sup> Dunham, *Naga ed-Dêr*, no. 15, 40, 63.

<sup>35</sup> Barta, *Opferformel*, 4, 12, 21, 24, 36, 43, 45, 53, 72, 81, 85,107.

<sup>36</sup> Batrta, *Opferformel*, 72, 85, 107,162.

<sup>37</sup> Brovarski, *The Inscribed Material of the First Intermediate Period from Naga-ed-Dêr*, 209.

<sup>38</sup> Ch. Leitz, *Lexicon der ägyptischen Götterbezeichnungen*, II, (Leuven, 2002), 529-535.

<sup>39</sup> E. Brovarski, "An Unpublished Stele of the First Intermediate Period in the Oriental Institute Museum", *JNES* 32, (1974), Stela of *Mry*. Cairo 1592; Stela of *hm-wr*. Louvre C. 198; Stela of *Nfr-prt*. Berlin 7512; Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 86-87 Stela of *In-it.f*, pl. XXVIII, 81-82, Stela of *Grht*, pl.XXV; Fischer, Dendera, Stela of *h̄tpi*, pl.XXVII; Stela of *snni*, 195, 209, pl. XXVI; Fischer, *ZÄS* 100, 17; Leprohon, Boston MFA 2,18:20, 98.1034, Stela of *mmi*, 97-99, 25.625, Stela of *hnnii.*, 106-108, 25.628, Stela of *sip.t*; M.

Abdelrahim, 'The Treasurer of the King of Lower Egypt Meru', *SAK* 31, (2003), 3.

<sup>40</sup> Bear, *Rank and Title*, 297.

<sup>41</sup> Brovarski, *Naga ed-Dêr*, 87.

<sup>42</sup> For the spelling of *ḏdw* as a part of the Osiris epithet *nb ḏdw* see: C.J.C. Benneth, 'Growth of the *h̄tp-di-nsw* formula in the Middle Kingdom', *JEA* 27, (1941), 78-80.

<sup>43</sup> Lutz, *Egyptian Tomb Steles and Offering stones of the Museum of Anthropology Ethnology of the University of California*, pl. 11 (no.20), stela of sole royal favorite and Hathor priests *Mrit*.

<sup>44</sup> D. Spanel, *Beni Hasan in the Herakleopolitan Period*, (Ph. D., University of Toronto, 1984), 91.

- h- *hnty imntyw***: The title appeared since the Old Kingdom<sup>45</sup> and continued to use until the New Kingdom. In the Old Kingdom *hnty* was written , but in the Middle Kingdom was written , and the mark  which is first exemplified above ground in the Sixth Dynasty in the terrace of *hnty-k3*<sup>46</sup>. The end piece of  are joined by a band through the neck of the vessels; the end pieces than become consistently shorter. A few examples of the short end pieces are to be found at Dendera and other places, most of them Dyn. XI or a little earlier<sup>47</sup>. The Upper Egyptian “white crown” is not usual in the determinative of Osiris until Dyn. XI<sup>48</sup>, but it exists in Abydos and Sheikh Said<sup>49</sup> and became common during the First Intermediate Period<sup>50</sup>. The west sign as it appears in *imntyw* characteristic of the late Sixth Dynasty and the First Intermediate Period<sup>51</sup>. Since the region of *snt-srt* III all titles are disappeared after the name of *Wsir* except *hnty imntyw*<sup>52</sup>. Back to the sign for *imnty*, it is notable that it is written by . It seems that the colored layer used here to cover the inscriptions was over written by .
- i- *prrt-hrw***: “Invocation-offering”. The arrangement of signs of  *prrt-hrw n* is attest in most stelae in Heracleopolitan Period<sup>53</sup>, Naga-ed-Dêr<sup>54</sup> stela, Dendera<sup>55</sup>, in the Coptite nome<sup>56</sup>, and at Thebes in the Heracleopolitan period<sup>57</sup>. The expression

<sup>45</sup> Leprohon, Boston, *MFA* 2, 59:62, 06.1894, offering stela of *ss3t-shntiw*.

<sup>46</sup> H.G. Fischer, *The Tomb of Ip at el Saff*, (New York, 1996), 30; R. Caminos & H.G. Fischer, *Ancient Egyptian Epigraphy and Palaeography*, (New York, 1976), 33, note 21.

<sup>47</sup> Fischer, *Dendera*, 83; Dunham, *Naga-ed-Dêr Stelae of the First Intermediate Period*, Stelae. 67, 80.

<sup>48</sup> E., Brovarski, ‘Akhmim in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period’ in: *Mélanges Gamal eddin Mokhtar I*, (Cairo, 1985), 128.

<sup>49</sup> Fischer, *Dendera*, 199.

<sup>50</sup> Brovarski, ‘Akhmim in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period’, 128.

<sup>51</sup> Brovarski, *Naga ed-Dêr*, 587.

<sup>52</sup> C.J.C. Bennett, ‘Growth of the *Htp di nsw* Formula in the Middle Kingdom’, *JEA* 27, (1941), 78.

<sup>53</sup> Brovarski, *Naga ed-Dêr*, 211; Fischer, *Dendera*, 118-119, Stela of *Nfr-s3m-Ppy*, pl. XVI a; Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 87, Stela of *Ihy*, pl. XXIX,

<sup>54</sup> Brovarski, *Naga ed-Dêr*, 211.

<sup>55</sup> Fischer, *Dendera*, 118-119, Stela of *Nfr-s3m-Ppy*, pl. XVI a; Leprohon, Boston *MFA* 2, 24-26, 98.1039, upper left corner of a stela.

<sup>56</sup> Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 87, Stela of *Ihy*, pl. XXIX.

<sup>57</sup> Leprohon, Boston *MFA* 2, 79-81, 12.1480, Stela of *mniw*.

*pṛt-ḥrw* means “the voice goes forth” and came to mean “invocation offering”. The construction was usually *pṛt ḥrw n* before the Eleventh Dynasty<sup>58</sup>. So, this stela before Eleventh Dynasty in Herakleopolitan Period.

### III. Dating:

To sum up, as already shown in the foregoing pages, general style of the text, figures and the outline board, most of the paleographic and epigraphic features date this stela to the First Intermediate Period especially Herakleopolitan Period, also according to the following criteria:

1. The frame around the stela.
2. The writing of *ḥtp-di-nsw*.
3. The long wig without lappet was worn in Upper Egypt during Tenth Dynasty.
4. Standing couple on the same scale and the woman put her hand on the man’s shoulder.
5. Writing of the name of god Osiris indicates to the First Intermediate Period “see above”.
6. Writing of *ḏdw*.
7. The construction *pṛt ḥrw n* was usual before Eleventh Dynasty.
8. Furthermore, the word *im3ḥw* replaced *im3ḥy* during the time of king Merikare so, the stela might be before the region of Merikare, in the Herakleopoliten period.

In conclusion, taking into consideration the results of the paleographic and epigraphic study on the one hand, and the study of the artistic features on the other, the stela is dated to the First Intermediate Period especially Herakleopolitan Period.

<sup>58</sup> Daoud, *Inscriptions from the Herakleopolitan Period*, 43-46, Stela of *Nit-ḥtp*, 51-53, Stela of *Mrt-ḥti-ḥtpi*.



**Fig. I**

**The Stela of *W3h-hrt-nht***



Plate I

The Stela of *W3h-ḥrt-nḥt*