

Two funerary stelae in the Cairo Museum (1)

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Abstract

This research is dealing with two funerary stelae preserved in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (CG 1626-1649). They belong to the period intermediate between the Old and Middle Kingdoms. The stelae are mostly in good condition.

1.Stela CG.1626 (Pl.1-Fig.1)

A rectangular stela made of limestone and measuring 90 cm in width, was found in Salamieh⁽²⁾. It belongs to the priestess of Hathor, king's concubine Henyt⁽³⁾ who probably lived in the First Intermediate Period⁽⁴⁾ and the early Middle Kingdom.

1.1 The scene

The main part of the stela depicts a traditional scene of the funerary meal. It shows the deceased s'wife on the left facing right and sitting on a fine low-backed chair with legs carved in the shape of the front and hind legs of a lion and painted black for ebony. She is wearing a long white clinging tunic, adorned with a collar, bracelets and anklets, while her long black hair is hanging on her shoulders. She is stretching her left arm towards the food in front of her. Her name is written against her shoulder *hniit*.

Under the offering table on the right side there are five pitchers with many gifts upon them, and on the left side there is a man who is

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²JE.26940

³ *hniit* Female name from the Middle Kingdom see: H. Ranke, *PN I*, 241(27)

⁴ Her name is mentioned between the priestesses of Hathor in the First Intermediate Period

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Transliteration

1)[*hṭp di*] *nsw* *Ṭnpw tpi ḏw.f prt ḥrw nt*⁽⁶⁾ *ḥkrt nsw ḥmt nṯr Ḥwt Ḥr ḥniit*

2)*hṭp di nsw* *Wsir prt ḥrw ḥ3 t ḥ3 ḥnkt ḥ3 k3w 3pdw nt im3ḥit*

3)*špst nsw ḥmt nṯr ḥwt Ḥr smr*(4)*pr 3 imit-r st nb ddtw* (5)*ḥr Ḥwt Ḥr nb(t) Ṭwnt* (6)*im3ḥit ḥr ḥnwt .s ḥniit*

Translation

"(1)[An offering which] the king [gives] and Anubis⁽⁷⁾ who is upon his mountain⁽⁸⁾. An invocation offering⁽⁹⁾ of¹⁰ the king's concubine⁽¹¹⁾, the priestess of Hathor⁽¹²⁾ Henyt

⁶ Junker believes that *nt* here is a wrong writing of the *n* of dative but Lapp believes that *nt* is a genitival adjective. G.Lapp, *Die Opferformel des alten Reiches*, Mainz, 1986, p.93 §161; H.Goedick, *Ein Verehrer des weisen Ddfhr aus dem späten alten Reich*, *ASAE* 55, 1958, 42. *Wb* I, 530(1)

⁷ The first appearance of this formula was in the early fourth Dynasty and the latest examples are from the later Roman period; D.Franke, *The Middle Kingdom offering formulas*, *JEA* 89, 2003, 39.

This offering formula should be interpreted as "an offering which the king has given and Anubis has given and not as is usually translated in the tradition of Gardiner "an offering (or boon)which the king has given (to) Anubis" see: A.H.Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, Third Edition, London, 1973, 170. There are no convincing examples from the Middle Kingdom to the Eighteenth Dynasty for a dative construction with *n* that would make the god(s) the recipient(s) of the offering only parallel to the king, the gods are always the givers of the offerings, according to the custom of the reversion of offering. see: G.Lapp, *op.cit*, 29; Idem, *Eine spezielle Opferformel des Mittleren Reiches*, *SAK* 14, 1987, 181ff; D.Franke, *op.cit*, 39ff.

⁸ *tpj ḏw.f* "who is upon his mountain" is a famous title of Anubis see: Ch.Leitz, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, VII, 2002, 393.

⁹ *Prt ḥrw* is translated as invocation offerings see: R.O.Faulkner, *op.cit*, 91; A.H.Gardiner, *op.cit*, 170

¹⁰ See above FN.6

¹¹ *ḥkrt nsw* is a title for the women who probably had intimate relation with the king and may have been his concubine or his secondly wife. R.O.Faulkner, *op.cit*, 205. This title appears in the Fourth Dynasty and have survived until the Eighteenth Dynasty. *Wb* III, 401(9). There are different translation of this title. It may be translated as "the ornament of the king" H.A.Gardiner, *op.cit*, 587. Kees translated it as "she who ornament the king" H.Kees, *Kulturgeschichte des Alten Orients*, Erster Abschnitt, Ägypten Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, München, 1933, 77. Drenkhahn translate it as "the women whom the king ornamented", he suggest that *ḥkrt* is P.P.P. Ward see that this title designating women who formed part of entourage of Queens and translate it as "lady in waiting" W.A.Ward, *Essays on feminine titles*, 14, 22. There is a close relationship between this title and the priestesses of Hathor for example: CG.1357, 1589, 1590, 1609, 1611, 1622. For more information about this title see: R. Drenkhahn, *Bemerkungen zu dem Titel ḥkrt nswt*, *SAK* 4, =

(2)An offering which the king and Osiris give⁽¹³⁾, an invocation offering (of) a thousand of bread, a thousand of bear a thousand of cattle and birds for the venerated, (3)king's noblewoman⁽¹⁴⁾, priestess of Hathor⁽⁴⁾, friend of the palace⁽¹⁵⁾, overseer of all storehouses⁽¹⁶⁾who was given⁽¹⁷⁾ (5) by⁽¹⁸⁾ Hathor mistress of Dendara⁽¹⁹⁾, (6)venerated by her mistress Henyt"

1.3. Comment

It is clear from the titles of the stela's owner that she was a women of high status. The stela can be dated to the early Eleventh Dynasty on the basis of the form of the offering formula and the titles as follow:

=1976, 59ff. For the relationship between the priestess of Hathor and the god's harem see: H.G.Fischer, in: *LÄ IV*, 1100 ff. L.K.Sabbahy, *The Titulary of the Harem of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep, Once Again*. *JARCE* 34, 1997, 164

¹² *hmt ntr Hwt Hr* priestess of Hathor. One of the most common women's titles of the Middle Kingdom, it was held by women of high status who were married to men of the highest ranks of officialdom. W.A.Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and religious titles* no.947-54; *Idem, Essays on feminine titles*, 10. For more information about this title see: Robyn A.Gillam, *Priestesses of Hathor: Their Function, Decline and Disappearance*" *JARCE* 32(1995), 231ff; A.Sch, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult (bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches)* *MÄS* 4, Berlin 1963.

¹³ Osiris appears in the offering formula for the first time in the Fifth Dynasty. R.Hözl, *Ägyptische Opfertafeln und Kultbecken*, *HÄB* 45, 79.

¹⁴ *špst nsw* "king's Noblewoman". This title was very common in the old kingdom and was in active use in the Eleventh Dynasty, but it seems not to have been used after the Eleventh Dynasty. Ward, *Essays on feminine titles*, 19-22. Edel suggests that the right reading of the title must be *špsj (nj) niswt* see: E. Edel, *Beiträge zum ägyptischen Lexikon IV*, *ZÄS* 85, Berlin, 1960, 12ff. This title is identified with *hkrt nsw*. *Wb* IV, 450

¹⁵ *smr pr 3* means friend of the palace see: W.A.Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and religious titles*, 151 no. 1301; R.O.Faulkner, *op.cit.*, 229

¹⁶ *imjt-r st nb* overseer of all storehouses; W.A.Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and religious titles*, 41 no.313; H.G.Fischer, *Egyptian titles of the Middle Kingdom*, New York, 1997, 7 no.321

¹⁷ *ddt* here is imperfective relative form see: H.A.Gardiner, *op.cit.*, 426. this relative form used also as a name see: H.Ranke, *PN I*, 402f.

¹⁸ The preposition *hr* used here to introduce the agent instead of the preposition *in* see: H.A.Gardiner, *op.cit.*, 42 §39; *Wb* III, 315(a)

¹⁹ Hathor mistress of Dendara is a common epithet of Hathor see: Ch.Leitz, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, IV, 2002, 11

1-*pṛt ḥrw* "an invocation" is used in the Eleventh Dynasty; while in the Twelfth Dynasty *di.f pṛt ḥrw* "that he may give an invocation" is preferred.

2-In the Eleventh Dynasty the deceased is designated *im3ḥj* "honored one", in the Twelfth Dynasty by the time of Amenemes II *k3 n* is placed in front making *k3 n im3ḥj* "the spirit of the honoured one"²⁰

3-The usual offerings mentioned in the formula in the Eleventh Dynasty are Bread, beer, oxen, fowl, alabaster and linen. In the Twelfth Dynasty incense and oil are added.

4-Of the gods invoked in the *ḥtp di nsw* formula, Osiris and Anubis share the honours in the Eleventh Dynasty. But in the Twelfth Dynasty Osiris is replaced by Ptah-Soker-Osiris, and Anubis is replaced by Wepwawet.⁽²¹⁾

5-The determinative $\overset{0}{\text{Ⲕ}}$ after *pṛt ḥrw* is used in the late Old Kingdom and the early Middle Kingdom, but in the Middle Kingdom the determinative $\overset{0}{\text{Ⲕ}}\text{ⲛ}$ is preferred.⁽²²⁾

6-The title *špst nsw* seems not to have been used after the Eleventh Dynasty⁽²³⁾

7- The name of the soul priest is one of the most common names in the Eleventh Dynasty.⁽²⁴⁾

2.Stela CG.1649(Pl.2-Fig.2)

A rectangular stela made of limestone and measuring 83cm in width. The provenance is unknown according to the Cairo Museum CG but I believe that it was found in Assuit as I will clear below. It belongs to the great one of the south *ḥ3si* who probably lived in the First Intermediate Period. The stela displays a traditional scene of the funerary meal, and an inscription which consists of seven

²⁰ K.Pflüger, *The private funerary stelae of the Middle Kingdom and their importances for the study of ancient Egyptian history*, *JAOS* 67,1947,133

²¹ C.J.C.Bennett, *Growth of the ḥtp di nsw Formula in the Middle Kingdom*, *JEA* 27, 1941,77ff.

²² G.Lapp, *Die Opferformel des alten Reiches*, §161

²³ W.A.Ward, *Essays on feminine titles*, 22

²⁴ Ranke, *PN I*, 154 no.21

horizontal lines. The hieroglyphs are in sunk relief, while the scene is in high relief.

2.1.The Scene

The left part of the stela depicts a scene with a man and a woman facing right and sitting on a wide low-backed chair with legs carved in the shape of the front and hind legs of a lion. The feet of the chair stand on the usual truncated cones. The man is wearing a short, tight kilt, adorned with a wide collar and bracelets. He has a shoulder length full wig behind his ear, decorated with curls arranged in vertical parallel rows. He is represented smelling a sealed ointment jar⁽²⁵⁾ which he holds in his left hand, while his right hand is stretching towards the offerings in front of him. His wife is represented behind him in a small size in proportion to him. She wears a long , close-fitting dress, the shoulder straps of which are visible over her breast. She has a long striated lapped wig exposing her ear and one long lappet falling in front, over her breast, while the second lappet falls down behind her back. Like her husband, she wears a similar broad collar, and holds a similar jar with her right hand. The wife embraces her husband in the conventional manner, her left arm is round her husband's waist. Her name and titles are written above her head as follows:



hmt.f mrt.f rht nsw mrt it.s

"his wife, whom he loves, king's acquaintance (²⁶) *mrjt it.s*(²⁷)"□

²⁵ A.H.Gardiner, *op.cit*, 547 sign-list W 1; The motif of the owner smelling a jar of ointment in the offering scene was introduced in the six Dynasty and rarely appears during the First Intermediate Period. This motif occurs fairly frequently in the Eleventh Dynasty representations, but seems to have been abandoned after the reunification. It was revived, albeit much less frequently on stelae dating to the end of the Twelfth Dynasty and to Thirteenth Dynasty. It is noteworthy that in almost all the Eleventh Dynasty examples, the jar and its stopper seal are seen in the profile with tow ties on the rim of the jar, depicted by the sign , but in the middle kingdom such details were readily omitted. H.Selim, *An Eleventh Dynasty stela in the cairo Museum*, *MDAIK* 57, 2001, 260

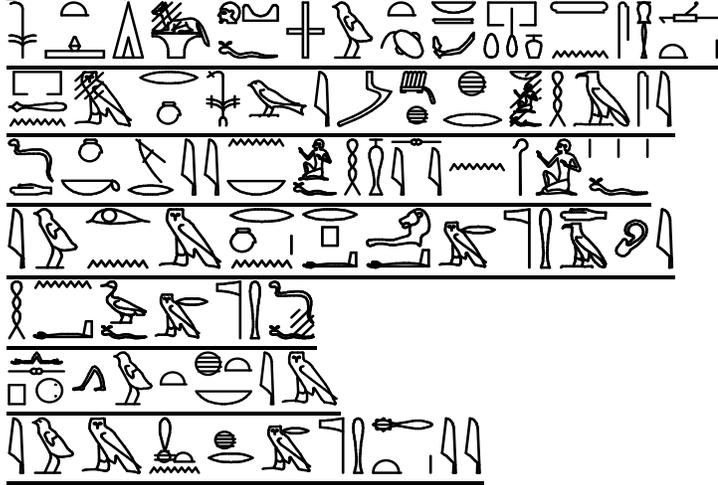
²⁶ A.H.Gardiner, *op.cit*, 578; R.O,Faulkner, *op.cit*, 152

²⁷ A female name. means beloved of her father Ranke, *PNI*, 158, 18

under the chair are a big chest and a dog with collar. This dog is reminiscent of the stela of the nomarch Antef. The dog is represented with long legs and a tightly curled tail. He looks like the *beledi* dogs.⁽²⁸⁾ In front of the pair is a short offering table laden with offerings consisting of a bread, a leg of an ox or a bull, and an upside-down goose. Under the table are different vessels.

2.2.The Text

The text occupies most of the stela and is read from right to left. It consists of seven horizontal lines and contains the traditional funerary formula *htp di nsw* and the titles of the stela's owner. It is noteworthy that the text mentions the names of three men who worked as nomarches and entitled as "overseer of the priest". They probably are all the same family



Transliteration

- 1) *htp di nsw Inpw tpi dw.f imi wt nb t3 dsr prt hrw n smr w^ct*
- 2) *pr 3 n imi-r šm^c wr⁽²⁹⁾ im3hi hr nb.f h3si*
- 3) *dd ink mri n nb.f hsi n hk3w.f*
- 4) *iw ir.n.(i)⁽³⁰⁾ imi-r niwt n r-p^ct h3ti-^c imi-r hm ntr D3gi*
- 5) *hn^c s3.f imi-r hm ntr Df*

²⁸ M.G.A. Wainwright, *Three Stelae from Nag^c Ed-Deir*, *ASAE* 25, 11

²⁹ This title is used for the nomarchs of Assiut in Nineteenth and Tenth Dynasty J.H.Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, Chicago, 1906

³⁰ this is *iw sdm .n.f* form and the subject is omitted see: A.Gardiner, *op.cit*, 309

6) *n sp iwt ht nb im*

7) *iw m mit n hr⁽³¹⁾ imi-r hm ntr Hti*

Translation:

"An offering which the king gives and Anubis, who is upon his mountain, he who is in the place of embalming⁽³²⁾, lord of the sacred land⁽³³⁾. An invocation offering of ³⁴ the sole friend of the palace⁽³⁵⁾ of the great overseer of upper Egypt⁽³⁶⁾ venerated by his lord *H3si*⁽³⁷⁾ says⁽³⁸⁾: I was one beloved by his lord praised by his governors. I acted as a mayor⁽³⁹⁾, for the hereditary prince and count, the overseer of the priests⁽⁴⁰⁾ *D3gi*⁽⁴¹⁾ with his son overseer of the priests *Df*⁽⁴²⁾ never was any shortcoming therein⁽⁴³⁾ likewise with the overseer of priests *Hti*⁽⁴⁴⁾

³¹ *hr imi-r* here serves as a noun by the help of the genitival adjective *n* and it means here literally "of with" see: A.Gardiner, *op.cit*, 121 §158; *Wb* III, 315(11-12)

³² *imy wt* An epithet of Anubis R.O.Faulkner, *op.cit*, 18; This epithet stresses Anubis's role in mummification by calling him "he who is in the place of embalming" G.Hart, *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*, London and New York, 2005, 26 (5); *LÄ* I, 328; *LÄ* III, 149; *Wb* I, 73(15)

³³ *nb t3 dsr* This title referring to the desert in which the necropolis were situated and emphasizes the geographical environment in which Anubis moves as god of burials. G.Hart, *op.cit*, 26 (4)

³⁴ See above FN.(6)

³⁵ W.A.Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and religious titles*, no.1300 this title is used by the high officials like vizier, princes and nomarchs *Wb* IV, 138(11)

³⁶ *smw* refers to the southern end of Upper Egypt from Assiout or Thebes to Elephantine. A.Gardiner, *op.cit*, 594.

³⁷ This name is not in Ranke, *PN*

³⁸ *dd* is used in texts of the early Middle Kingdom as *dd.f* A.Gardiner, *op.cit*, 366, §450 (1)

³⁹ *imj r niwt* translated as mayor. W.A.Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and religious titles*, 31 no.220

⁴⁰ *imj-r hm ntr* "overseer of priests" see: H.G.Fischer, *op.cit*, 5f

⁴¹ The complete writing of this name is  according to: Ranke, *PN I*, 396(4)

⁴² This name is used in the old kingdom. Ranke, *PN I*, 406(15)

⁴³ This translation is parallel to A. Gardiner, *op.cit*, §456(2)

⁴⁴ Male name used in the Old and Middle Kingdom see: Ranke, *PN I*, 277(26). He may be the owner of the stela which found in Naga el-Deir PM V, 27; H.F.Lutz, *Egyptian Tomb steles and offering stones*, Leipzig, 1927, catalogue no.36

Comment:

It is clear from the title of the stela's owner that he was a high official. His high status is confirmed also by the title of his wife as *rht nsw*. He worked with three nomarchs of the southern as he says. *Df* is the son of *D3gi* and may be the father of *Hti* (⁴⁵). It is possible that Assuit is the provenance of this stela on the basis of the similarity between the titles of the three nomarchs and the titles used by the nomarchs of Assuit in Nineteenth and Tenth Dynasty(⁴⁶). Also the name of *Hti* who probably lived on the Nineteenth Dynasty appear on a stela and on a statue in Naga El-Dair beside Assuit.(⁴⁷) The scribe inscribed the text in a hurry and that caused many mistakes in the hieroglyphic inscription as is usual in the stelae of the First Intermediate Period. The stela can be dated to the First Intermediate Period on the basis of her style, the form of the offering formula, and the subject of the text which is similar to the autobiographies known in the First Intermediate Period.

⁴⁵ If *Hti* was the owner of the statue which found in Assuit and bear the name of *Hti ms n Df* who lived in Nineteenth Dynasty ; A.Kamal, *Fauilles a deir Dronka et a Assiout(1913-1914)*, *ASAE* 16,74

⁴⁶ J.H.Breasted, *op.cit*, §391-408

⁴⁷ *PM* V,26; A.Kamal, *op.cit*,74

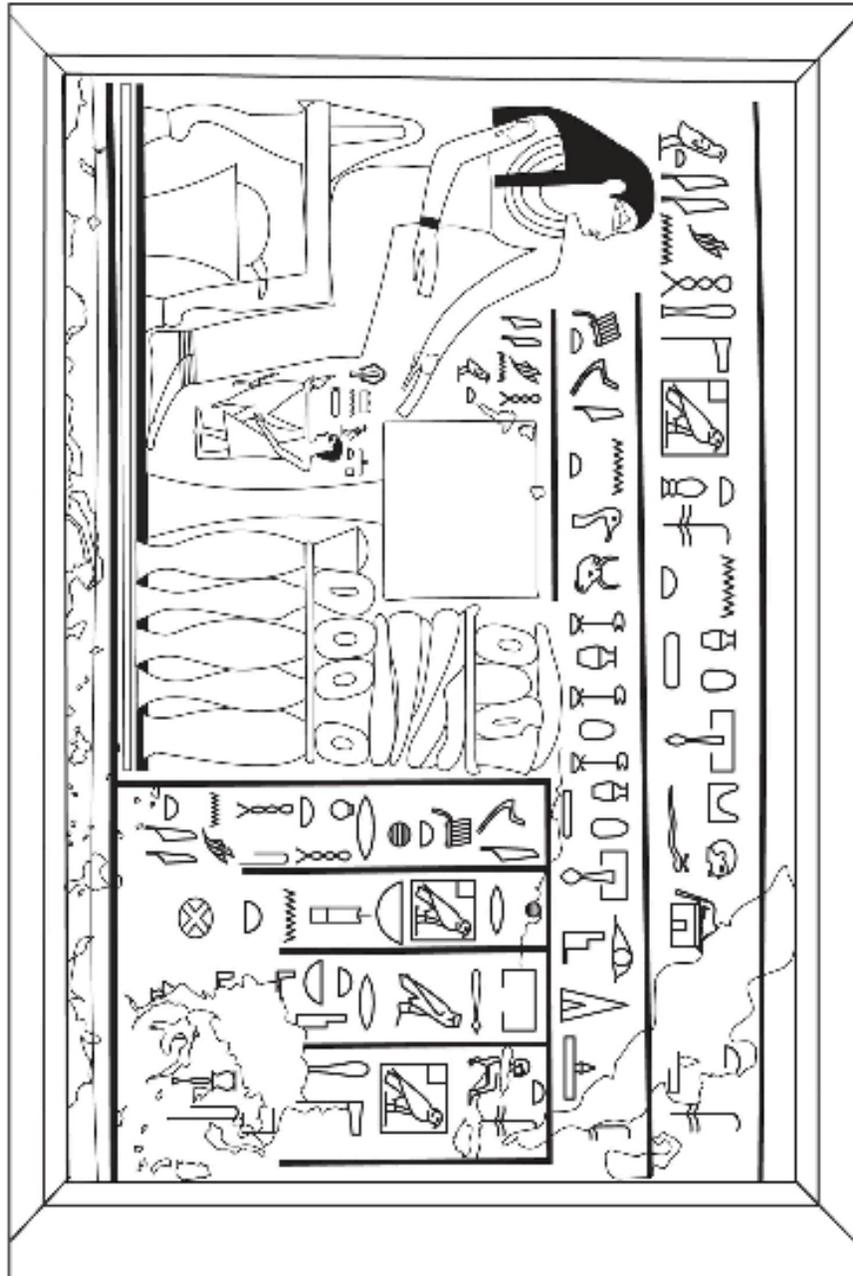


Fig.1. The funerary stela of *ḥniit*

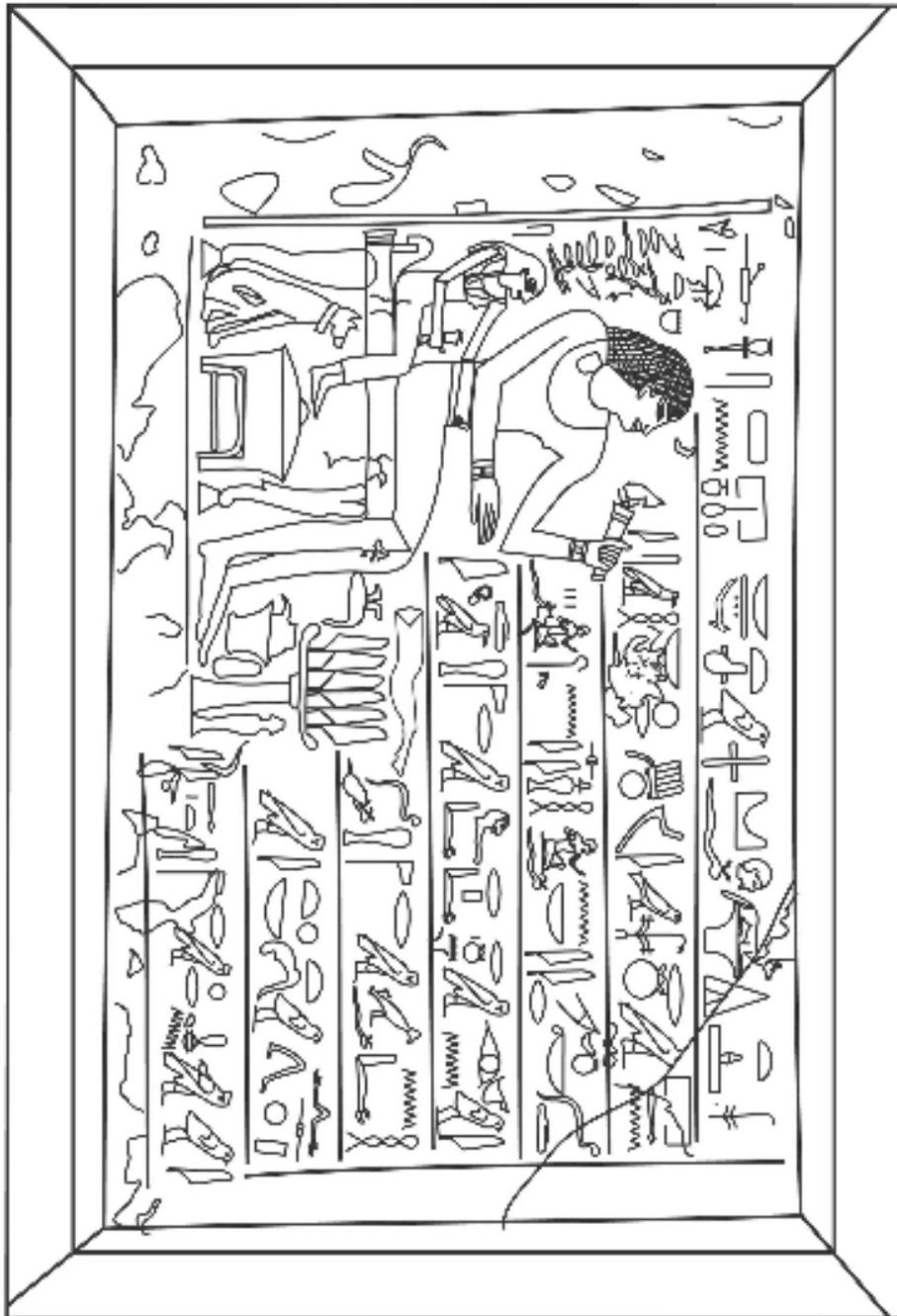


Fig.2 the funerary stela of *h3si*