

The Stela of *hry-mw* and his Family in the Egyptian Museum of Cairo

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Abstract

This study concerns the stela of *hry-mw* and his family. It was discovered at Abydos. It is currently on display in the Egyptian Museum at Cairo (CG 1637). Although, Porter and Moss (*PM V: 267*), Auguste Mariette (*Catalogue Gèneral des Monuments d' Abydos: 98- 99*) listed this stela as well as Borchardt did the text drawings of this stela but it directed in a poor photograph (*Denkmäler des Aalen Reiches, II: 103, pl. 85*). Neither translated the texts nor assigned a definite date for it, although Borchardt suggested a date in "Dynasty 6 oder später". Accordingly, this study is done.

According to some aspects as titles, costumes and calligraphy of writing, the stela might be later than the Sixth Dynasty. Possibly, it dates to the late Old Kingdom, Dynasties Six-Eight.

Keywords: Stela, Egyptian Museum, Abydos, *hry-mw*.

Introduction

Abydos is called by the ancient Egyptian *3bdw*. It was a part of the eighth Nome of Upper Egypt. It is spread over eighth square kilometer. As it was the main cult center of Osiris; it whispered many cult structures and a vast cemetery (Wegner, 2001: 7).

The stela of *hry-mw* was discovered in the Middle Cemetery (Mariette, 1880: 98- 99) which was established from the Old Kingdom onward (Wegner, 2001: 10).

Due to the lack of data about the current stela, thus there is not a comprehensive study representing its date and complete description. Besides, the position of its owner is unknown. Therefore, this study aims to date this stela and shows its owner's social standing.

Description of the scenes

This stela is made of limestone. It measures 74 cm high and 50 cm wide¹ (Pl. 1). The deceased and his family are depicted on the bottom of the stela. On the left side, the owner

¹ The Egyptian Museum's database at Cairo.

of the stela is shown standing with his right leg advanced while holding a long staff in his left hand and whilst the right hand hanging beside him. He is wearing a calf-length kilt with flaring front panel kilt knotted around his waist and a collar with two rows around his neck. His wife is shown behind him; she places her left hand on his right shoulder, while the other hand hangs beside her body. She dressed a tight-fitting dress that is undefined above and below. A collar of one row is worn around her neck. Their daughter is shown behind them and places her left hand on the right shoulder of her mother while the right-hand hangs by her side. She is wearing a dress as her mother's and a collar around her neck.

The son of the deceased is shown on the right part of the stela. He is represented in front of his father holding a bird in his right hand, wears a kilt like his father's and one-layer collar around his neck.

Four offering bearers are shown behind the son of the deceased. They represent three men and a possibly girl. The men are loading a loaf of bread on the right hand and the other hand hanging by them. They wear calf-length kilts with projecting side panels knotted around their waists and collars with one row around their neck. The girl depicted behind them balances a basket of fruits on her head supported by her hands. However her dress is not apparent, although she may be wearing a tight-fitting dress undefined above and below.

It can be noted that all figures in this stela were depicted with their natural (short) hair, convex eyes, and eyebrows. The collar on the third bearer has completely disappeared.

Texts and Translation

The stela contains five lines of hieroglyphic inscriptions above the scenes. Additionally,

there are another three lines which have written as follow; two above the deceased and his wife and the third line above his son and offering bearers. Borchartd (Borchartd, 1964: 103) provided a diagram for the texts (**Fig. 1**) but a facsimile is provided here to identify the scenes and the texts (**Faci. 1**). The direction of all texts is from right to left.

The hieroglyphic inscriptions could be read as follow:

1- 

h̄tp di nsw inp tpy dw.f imy wt

A boon which the king and Anubis, (who) is upon his mountain, who is in Ut (the place of the embalming).

2- 

nb t3 dsr krs.t nfr(t) m is.f n

The lord of the sacred land, the good burial in his tomb in

3- 

h̄rt ntr imntt pr h̄rw n im3h̄w hr ntr ʕ3

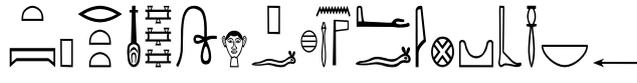
The western necropolis, that offerings may be invoked for the one revered with the great god.

4- 

h̄tp di nsw wsir nb ddw h̄nty imntiw

An offering which the king and Osiris give, Lord of Djedu (Busiris), the Foremost of the Westerners,

5-

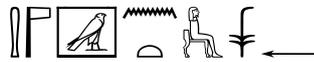


nb 3bdw i^c.f n ntr 3 hpi.f hr w3wt nfrt pt

The lord of Abydos, that he may ascend to the great god and travel upon the beautiful ways of heaven.

Above the deceased and his wife and daughter, two lines of Hieroglyphics are written. They contain the names and titles of the owner, his wife, and the name of their daughter as follows:

a-



imy-r k3t hk3 hwt smr w^cty hry-mw hmt.f mrt.f 3st

špst nswt hm(t) ntr hwt-hr nist

The overseer of works, the manager of an estate, (and), sole companion, Gherymw. His beloved wife, Isis, the king's noblewoman, (and), priestess of goddess Hathor. Neist (the name of the daughter).

The names of the son of the dead man and the offering bearers (men only) were inscribed above their heads. The text was separated by two lines; firstly, two names of offering bearers were written, then third name of the third was written in the middle, and lastly, the

name of the son was inscribed after the second lines. It can be read as follows:



hnw hp.i, šn-sti, s3.f mr.s.f hnw

The name of offering bearers were (from right to left), Henw, Hepi and Shensetji.

Above the head of the son the text reads "whom she (the mother) and he (*hry-mw*) love" Khenu."

Comment on the writing of the text

Borchardt (1964) draws *pr-hrw* with as  not ,  (T19) of Eighteenth Dynasty not  (T20), and  with a square at the top right although the sign on the stela is shown without. Besides, Borchardt (1964) and Mariette (1880) draw the name of the owner of the stela  replacing  with  sign. Accordingly, Porter and Moss read the name of the owner *Pmwmw*. The sign  in the word  it should be .

I could be noted that the artist of this stela was not skillful enough; this was clear from the way of carving of scenes and signs.

The titles on the stela

The owner of this stela held four titles; the first one is *im3hw hr ntr 3*, "the revered with the great god" (Jones, 2000: 30 (142)). The phrase was known during the Old Kingdom, particularly the Sixth Dynasty; it was held by *st-k3* (Junker, 1944: 198; Porter and Moss,

1974: 160- 161), *r^c-wr* (Hassan, 1932: 66; Porter and Moss, 1974: 265, *in n 3ht* (Hassan, 1950: 26; Porter and Moss, 1974: 250- 251) and *šsi* (Ziegler, 1990: 224).

The second title is *imy-r k3t*, "the overseer of works" (Helck, 1954: 140; Ward, 1982: 51 (399); Strudwick, 1985: 43; Jones, 2000: 261 (944); Al-Ayedi, 2006: 157- 158). It was held by both viziers and non-viziers during the Old Kingdom (Vymazalova, 2013: 178). It was held in the Fifth Dynasty by *sndm ib* (Mariette, and Maspero, 1985: 105; Murray, 1908: PL. XXIV; Borchardt, 1964: 98, 125-126; Porter and Moss, 1974: 451), *d3ty* (Murray, 1908: PL. XXIV; Lepsius, 1849 : PL. 86a; Porter and Moss, 1974: 161) and in the Sixth Dynasty by *mry pth mry r^c* (Murray, 1908: PL. XXIV; Porter and Moss, 1974: 451; Strudwick, 1985: 83- 84) and *mry r^c i3m* (Porter and Moss, 1974: 683; Strudwick, 1985: 95- 96).

The third title is *hk3 hwt* the ruler of the Nome (district governor), chief of the estate/field district (Kahl, 1994: 2090; Jones, 2000: 670-671 (2453)) Manager of an estate (Baer, 1960: 170 (3/7); Fischer, 1968: 170; Ward, 1986: 127; Grajetzki, 2013: 220) the leader of a royal funerary domain (Helck, 1954: 113, 126). It is popular during the Old Kingdom. This title was coupled with viziers then held by governors (Pirenne, 1985: 349). It is known in the Fourth Dynasty (as *nfr*) (Fisher, 1924: PL. 50; Porter and Moss, 1974: 72- 74; Strudwick, 1985: 109- 110), the Fifth Dynasty (as *pn mrw*) (Porter and Moss, 1974: 82- 83; Simpson, 1980: 25), and between the highest official titles during the Sixth Dynasty such as: *d3w* (Davies, 1902: 1, PL. 1; Murray, 1908: PL. XXXIII), *idw* (Petrie, 1898: 8- 9, PL. 6), *wiw* (Davies, 1901: 27, PL. 21), *pth šps* II (Mariette, 1885: 373- 385; Porter and Moss, 1978: 483), and *mrrw k3i* (Duell, 1938: PL. 37; Strudwick, 1985: 100- 101).

The fourth title is *smr w^ctt* the sole companion (Murray, 1908: PL. XXXIX- XL; Strudwick, 1985: 205; Jones, 2000: 892, 3268). It becomes more common with all categories of officials especially during the Sixth Dynasty (Strudwick, 1985: 225). It was held by people in the Sixth Dynasty such as: *idw* ((Petrie, 1898: PL. 10), *tp m ʿnh* I (Mariette, 1885: 195; Porter and Moss, 1978: 483), and *ihy* (Newberry, 1903: 97).

The wife of the owner has two titles; the first one is *špst nswt* lady of the king, royal lady (Davies, 1901: 30, PL. 25; Helck, 1954: 118-119), the king's noblewoman (Sethe, 1903: 137; Murray, 1908: PL. XLV; Erman, and Grapow, 1971: 449 (3); Helck, 1954: 118 - 119; Baer, 1960: 164; Allam, 1963: 15; Ward, 1982: no. 1510-1511; Leprohon, 1994: 43; Jones, 2000: 988 (3648)). The title was held by women like *ht-ḥr htpt*, *ht-ḥr m h3t* (Quibell, 1902: 256- 257) and *hnwt* (Davies, 1901: 30, PL. 25). The masculine counterpart was held by men such as *s3bw* (Porter and Moss, 1974: 460- 461; Strudwick, 1985: 130) and *špsi* (Daressy, 1898: 567).

The other title held by the wife is *hm(t) hwt-ḥr* priestess of goddess Hathor (Murray, 1908: PL. XXIX; Ward, 1982: 10; Gillam, 1995: 211; Jones, 2000: 540- 41 (2012)). It was among the commonplace titles of women during the Old Kingdom (Blackman, 1921: 25; Junker, 1934: 111; Allam, 1963: 50- 52; Fischer, 1968: 23; Galvin, 1984: 42- 49; Gillam, 1990: 160, 220; Leprohon, 1994: 45; Galvin, 1996: 8- 10; Fischer, 2000: 30). The title is known throughout Egypt at this period (Leprohon, 1994: 45). It was held by *mr.s ʿnh* III (Baud, 1999: 340, 445), *htp ḥr.s* (Mariette, 1885: 206- 207; Porter and Moss, 1978: 482), *ndr k3 bw nfr* (Troy, 1987: 187), *ini* (Petrie, 1898: PL. 7) and *ht-ḥr ʿnh* (Quibell, 1902: 256).

Dating

Paleographical and orthographical details propose significant features of the Old Kingdom date in general. The offering formula *hṯp di nsw* is written in a form found from the Fifth Dynasty to the First Intermediate Period (Davies, 1915: 90; Barta, 1968: 4, 12- 13, 21- 22, 36).

The form  (A50) is particularly normal in the Old Kingdom (Davies, 1902:PL. XVII; Fischer, 1968: 130; Simpson, 1976: PL. XVII). The paleographical writing of *hwt* , without small square inside, predominated during the Sixth Dynasty (Galvin, 1996: 134- 135). The sign *hnt*  (W18) with four pots was a standard linguistic feature of the Old Kingdom (Murray, 1905: PL. 20; Gardiner, 1969: 529).  *imnt* (R14) in the name of the god *hnty imntiw* omitting the falcon from Dynasty sixth onward (Gardiner, 1969: 502) while the falcon with feather on the divine standard  (G5 + R12 with feather) in the word *imntt* is the tradition during the Old Kingdom (Borchardt, 1913: PL. 5; Gardiner, 1969: 502; Brovarski, 1973: 464).

The writing of *dd*  (R11) before the hand in the word *dd*, is a traditional Old Kingdom writing (Fischer, 1968: 78- 79). The signs  (R8+T28) and  (T20) were common during the Old Kingdom (Davies, 1900: 15, 20; Gardiner, 1969: 514).

The city determinative with the diagonal cross  is the usual design in the Old Kingdom, compared to the horizontal and

vertical cross, which is fairly common in the eleventh Dynasty but Fischer (Fischer, 1968: 78- 79; Leprohon, 1994: 45) mentioned there were some scattered examples in the Old Kingdom (Junker, 1947: 141, Fig. 66, 145, Fig. 70; Junker, 1950: 55, Fig. 21).

The form of the heaven-sign  (N1) in the last line of the stela is a form that first appears in late Dynasties tenth and eleventh at Naga-ed Deir, Thebes, and Akhmim (Brovarski, 2018: 135). In addition, the mutilated viper

 (I 9) without a head is not mutilated in the Pyramid Texts (Firth and Gunn, 1926: 176), but Fischer notes it is commonly decapitated in the burial chambers around the pyramid of Pepy II of Dynasties Sixth -Eight at South Saqqara (Fischer, 1956: 102).

According to Henry G. Fischer (Fischer, 1976: 7), The phonetic writing of Anubis without the figure of a jackal occurs in coffins and burial chambers of the Sixth Dynasty but probably did not begin to appear in the offering chamber or in other parts of the superstructure of the tomb, before the collapse of the Old Kingdom, particularly in the Eighth Dynasty. The same holds true for stelas.

The title *imy-r k3t* was an abbreviation of the title *imy-r k3t nbt nt nswt* from the end of the Fifth Dynasty². In the first part of the Fourth Dynasty it is mainly held by members of the royal family but after the reign of king Pepi I, Sixth Dynasty, it is held by viziers (Strudwick, 1985: 235). The title *smr w^cty* has been found in the texts dating to the end of the Fifth Dynasty onwards (Strudwick, 1985: 235). Furthermore, the title *hk3 hwt* was considered a very famous title during the Sixth Dynasty (Garcia, 2013: 125).

² A text in the tomb of *sndm ib inti* is indicate this opinion: (Sethe, 1903: 63.6).

Indeed, the Old Kingdom private women were considered as priestesses of Hathor (Barbara, 1981: 73- 74), but the title *hm ntr hwt-hr* was flourished only from the middle of the Old Kingdom till the beginning of the Middle Kingdom. It occasionally occurs thereafter and was held by such elites as *Mry.t Imn*, daughter of Ramesses II (Kitchen, 1969: 924; Troy, 1986: 74). It was held by Old Kingdom queens (Gauthier, 1924: 198- 209) as well. Furthermore, the majority of priestesses of Hathor were found in the Sixth Dynasty (Brunner, 1977: col. 1237; Galvin, 1996: 8- 9).

špst nswt, "King's noblewoman", predominates during the Old Kingdom particularly during the Sixth Dynasty in Upper Egypt (Junker, 1938: 96; Fischer, 1968: 72- 73, 295- 296, 299- 300; Galvin, 1996: 246, 251). Fischer suggested that the first appearance of this title in the Sixth Dynasty (Jequier, 1928a: Fig. 24; Jequier, 1928b: Fig. 33; Jequier, 1929: Fig. 24; Dunham, 1937: nos. 33, 53, 75; Jequier, 1940: Fig. 51; Fischer, 1961a: 423; Fischer, 1961b: 26; Borchardt, 1964: 45- 51, 55- 58, 86- 87; Fischer, 2000: 30) and often used by men rather than women but after the Old Kingdom disappeared while the feminine form continued (Fischer, 2000: 30). Moreover, this title was familiar with the title *hm ntr hwt-hr* during the Sixth Dynasty (Galvin, 1996: 22).

The first appearance of the term *krs.t nfrt* was during the reign of the Heracleopolitan Period king *Mery-ka-re* (Tenth Dynasty) (Daoud, 2005: 10). The style of kilts (triangular kit) is known during the Old Kingdom (Borchardt, 1937: 58- 59, 89- 91, 177- 181) but it was popular during the Sixth Dynasty (Borchardt, 1937: 68- 69, 144- 145, 148, 149, 174- 176; Borchardt, 1964: 86- 87, 90).

The triangular kilt became popular during the Sixth Dynasty although firstly appears in late

of the Fifth Dynasty (Swinton, 2014: 55). Besides, the narrow collar that does not reach as low as the deceased armpit appeared from the Fourth Dynasty and continued to the Sixth Dynasty (Swinton, 2014: 56).

After the previous discussion of Paleographical and orthographical details, titles, and clothes, it is concluded that this stela most likely dates back to the late Old Kingdom, Dynasties Six- Eight³.

Conclusion

The current paper tried to study the stela of *hry-mw* and his Family from Abydos. He held admiration titles as well as a religious one. His wife was the priestess of Hathor. Therefore, the owner was one of the high officials at Abydos.

In sum, by discussing some points such as inscriptions, titles, and costumes, it is requisite to mention that this stela often dates to the end of the Old Kingdom. Probably, it dates back to the late Old Kingdom, Dynasties Six- Eight.

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³ The researcher depend on that the Old Kingdom was from the First Dynasty until the Eighth Dynasty.

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Plates



Pl. (1) the Stela of *hry-mw* and his Family.
After: The courtesy of the Egyptian Museum at Cairo.

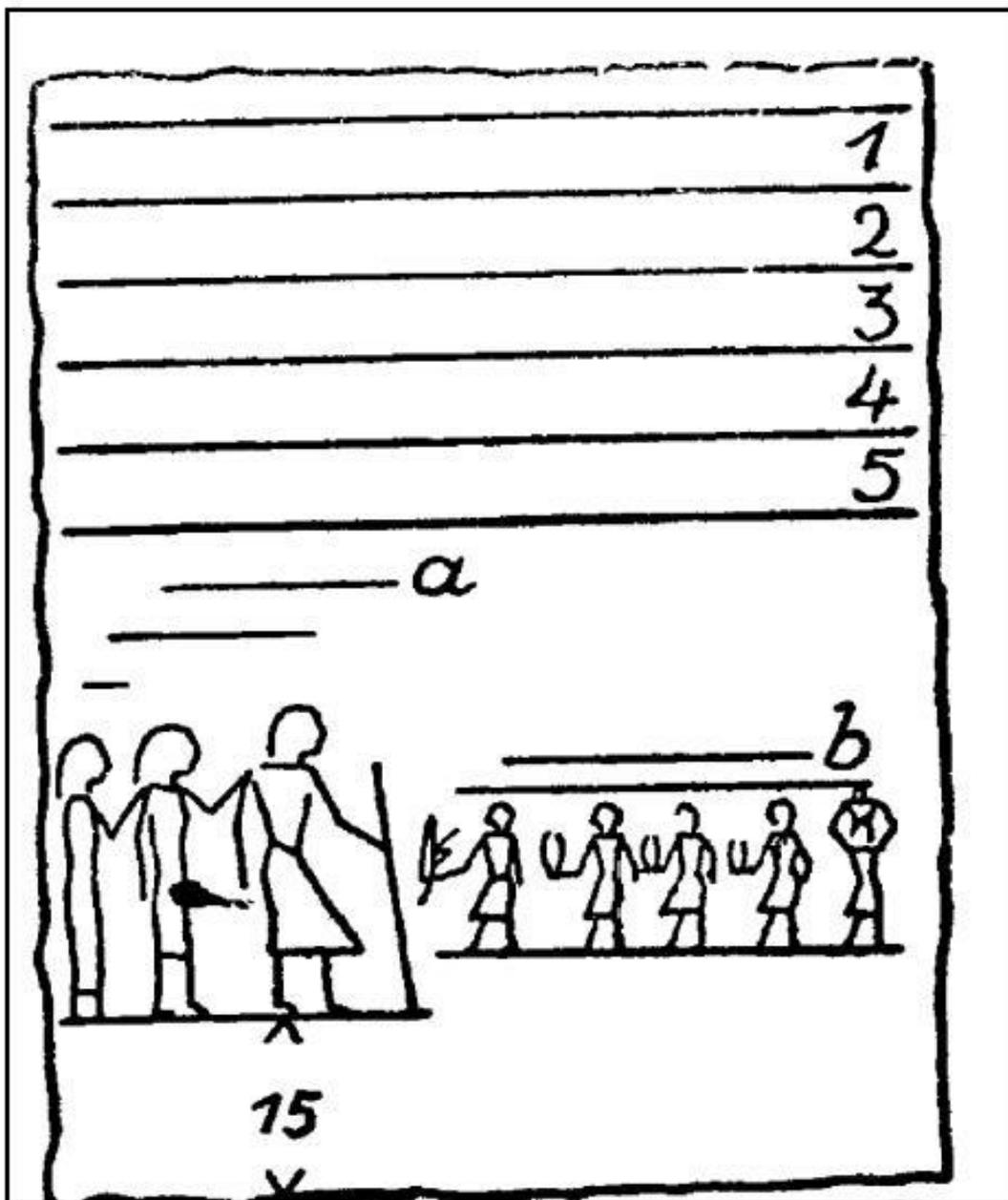
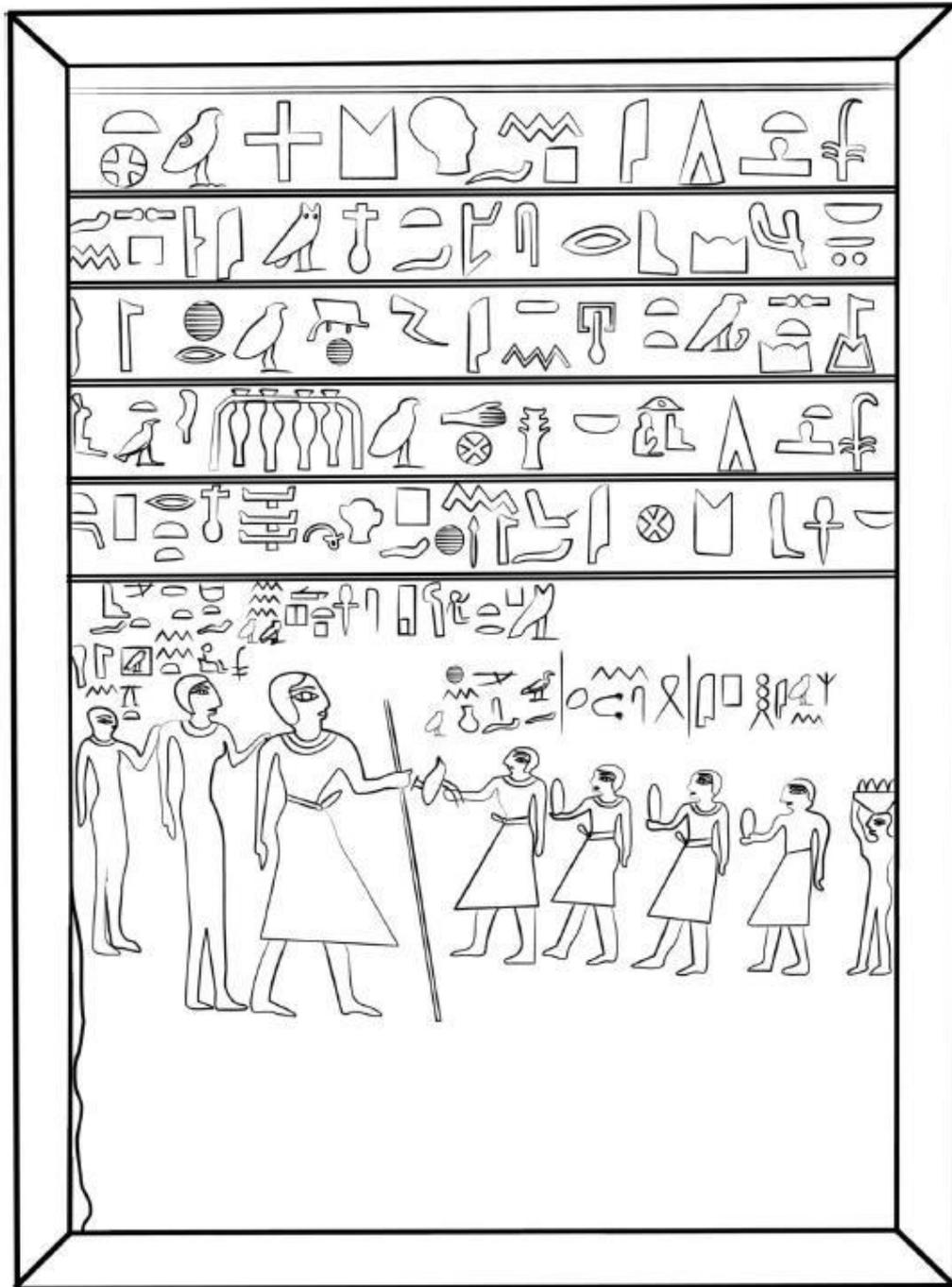


Fig. (1) Diagram of the texts,
After: (Borchardt, 1964: 103).



Facsimile (1) The Stela of *hry-mw* and his Family, © Mina Samy.