The Two Elements of a Late Middle Kingdom Stela-Chapel

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Upright, rectangular, limestone slab (23 x 62.9 cm), the left element of a stela-chapel.1 The slab is divided into four registers (A, B, C, D). The depicted figures and hieroglyphs are carved in sunk relief with very little internal detail of modelling. No traces of colour are preserved. It may be supposed that at one time further slabs on the left and in the middle continued the scene in both directions.

Register A displays a man presenting the foreleg of a slaughtered ox. Above, in the field, is a slaughtered duck.

Register B displays a standing figure of an offering bearer (facing right), presenting a bird in front of an offering table which is piled with various types of food. Under the table there are three big vessels on stands. The man wears short hair, which leaves the ear uncovered, and a knee-length kilt.

Below the scene, there are two lines of inscription, written from right to left, with an offering-formula, whose form suggests a date in the late XII to XIII Dynasties,2 on behalf of the persons mentioned in the lower part of the slab.

1 See ANOC 57 (Hermitage 1063; Hermitage 1064; Hermitage 1075), ANOC 52 (Louvre C 16; Louvre C 17; Louvre C 18), and Louvre E 20909A & B & C.
1) Htp di nsw wsjr nb ḏw ḏw frt-ḥrw t ḥkt ksw ṣdw
2) ṣṣ mnḥt snḥr ṣḥḥt ḫt nb ṣḥfr wfrt wfrt

1) A boon which the King has given to Osiris, lord of Abydos, that he may give invocation offerings of bread and beer, cattle and fowl, alabaster and clothing, incense and oil, and all good and pure things...

Register C displays the kneeling figures of three men facing right, each with one hand extended over the leg, the other one held to the chest. They wear bagwigs, knee-length kilts. Above the scene, there is an inscription, which also serves as a caption for the persons depicted.

3) n³ imy-r pr³ wr-n-b³ ir n bbi³ n k³ f
for the estate overseer wr-n-b³, whom has born bbi — for his ka

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3 Not attested in Ranke, PN.
4 Ranke, PN I, 95/16.
4) \(n\ mty\ n\ s\d\ d\d\d\ y\ b\ n\ snt-\lhta\ n\ k:\ f\)
for the regulator of a watch \(d\d\d\ y\), whom has born \(snt-\lhta\) — for his \(ka\)

5) \(n\ imy-r\ pr\ imny\ ii-ib-r\ f\ b\ n\ snt-\shttlp-ib-r\ n\ k:\ f\)
for the estate overseer \(imny\ ii-ib-r\ f\), whom has born \(snt-\shttlp-ib-r\) — for his \(ka\)

Among the three male figures in register D, only the right-most is preserved. His appearance is almost identical with the figures in register C.

6) \(n\ stf\ imy-r\ pr\ imny\ rdi-n.i-pth\ b\ n\ snt-\hnty-hty\ n\ k:\ f\)
for his son, the estate overseer \(imny\ rdi-n.i-pth\), whom has born \(snt-\hnty-hty\) — for his \(ka\)

7) \(n\ stf\ imy-r\ pr\ snb\ b\ n\ hntw.t-pw\ n\ k:\ f\)
for his son, the estate overseer \(snb\) whom has born \(hntw.t-pw\) — for his \(ka\)

8) \(n\ stf\ mty\ n\ sb\ abw-k\h-nh\ b\ n\ snt-\hnty-hty\ n\ k:\ f\)
for his brother, the regulator of a watch \(abw-k\h\ n\对我来说

\(^a\) Cf. Satzinger, \(LingAeg\ 5, 1997, 177-188;\) Franke, \(JEA\ 89, 2003, 45ff;\) D. Franke, \(The\ Good\ Shepherd\ Antef\ (Stela\ BM\ EA\ 1628), JEA\ 93, 2007, 170-171.\)

\(^b\) There are two other Middle Kingdom examples of \(n\ plus\ name\ and\ ap-positional\ \(n\ \text{ka}\), such as ‘to NN., that is to say to his/her \(ka\)’, in the context of the offering formula: the offering table Leiden AM 12-c, and the slab London BM AS 1671. However, D. Franke has observed that the formula ‘for your spirit’ \(n\ \text{ka} k\ n\ \text{ka}\) is found frequently on the stelae of the XI Dynasty, as a kind of the abbreviated recital of the giver of the offering in the comparable offering scenes.\(^{15}\) It is also worth of noticing that in an offering list of

\(^{15}\) Franke, \(JEA\ 89, 2003, 54.\)
the Old Kingdom n kꜣf can be found in similar function: [n sṣš n kꜣf ššt mist nism etc., “[For Zezi,] (that is to say) for his Ka: an ascheret roast, liver, milt, etc.” (mastaba of Ankh-ma-hor, east wall of tomb chamber: N. Kanawati and A. Hassan, The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara, Vol II: The Tomb of Ankhmahor, ACE Report 9, 1999, pl. 63); and in a scene of slaughtering: ḫš ḫm n h-t n ḫš hryt n n sṣš n kꜣf, “Take meat of the ox’s front part for this animal sacrifice for Zezi, (that is to say) for his Ka” (same mastaba, east wall of room no. 4, lower-most register, 2nd col. from left: Kanawati — Hassan, The Tomb of Ankhmahor, pl. 49).

The ḥm-ṛ pr, ‘estate overseer, steward, majordomo’, is a very common Middle Kingdom title of middle rank; while unspecified, it can imply various duties (W. Ward, Index of Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom, Beirut 1982, no. 132; S. Quirke, Titles and bureaux of Egypt 1850-1700 BC, GHP Egyptology 1, London 2004, 61).16

For the title ṭm n ṣṣ see: Ward, Index MK, no. 803; Quirke, Titles and bureaux, 119-121. The title “regulator of a watch” involved some sort of responsibility over the “watch” (or phyle) on duty at a temple. Although S. Quirke points out that the title ḥm n ṣṣ can imply some duties within the temple administration, in the context of overseeing a group of people during their month of service at a temple,17 the title could also apply to men in charge of other types of assignments, including building projects.18

The general shape of the slab LA M.71.73.42, the appearance and arrangement of the figures, as well as the form of the offering formula, displays close similarities with the slab London, BM EA 1679,19 which seems to be the right element of the same stela-chapel.

With the three men recorded on the LACMA object, a possessive pronoun refers to a man: two are “his son” (ḥm-ṛ pr snb, “nd ḥm-ṛ pr ḫm n ṣš rdi-n.ỉ-pḥ), and one is “his brother” (ḥm n ṣš ṭm-kw-r’ ii-n-hḥ), whereas three persons (ḥm-ṛ pr wn-n-humw, ḫm n ṣš dšš, and ḥm-ṛ pr ḫm ṭm-ỉ-ỉ-r.f) are with no possessive reference. At least four of them belong to the same family. The same pattern of recording is attested on the slab London BM EA 1679: three


17 Quirke, Titles and bureaux, 119-121.

18 See stelae Louvre C 12 and C 11 (ANOC 58.1 and 58.2).

women are “his daughter” (ibt-ib(.i?), rn.s-snb, and hr-nht), two are “his sister” (hnwt and hr-m-hb), whereas one (sit-hnty-hty) is a “lady of the house,” with no possessive reference. The possible prosopographic ‘link’ between the two slabs are two ladies: sit-htr and sit-hnty-hty. On the other hand, both names are very common in the Middle Kingdom, and it is possible that they do not refer to the same persons.

As the monument represents a whole family, or two families, it certainly was not part of a real tomb, but rather of an Abydene cenotaph (an “ANOC”). In real tombs, it is only a very restricted number of persons – mostly the tomb owner and his wife – who receive offerings, whereas Abydos monuments do not know any such limits. However, its central element is still missing

Family tree: LA M.71.73.42

```
  sit-hnty-hty (1)   sit-hr-nht (1)
                     /
         w-ktw-r” li-n-hb,
           “brother”            imny rdi-n.i-pt
               /
        OWNER            “son”
                        /
     sit-hnty-hty (2)
                     /
       hnwt,            hr-m-hb,         3iy
        “daughter”       “daughter”
                        /
       rn.s-snb,        “daughter”
       “daughter”
                      /
    OWNER            pthi = ptw?
                      /
    sit-ib,              sit-hr-nht (2, “daughter”)
      “daughter”
                        /
    OWNER            hnwt-i-pw
                      /
                snb, “son”
```
Family tree: BM EA 1679

The family tree of \( \text{sIt-hr-nht} \) – the two possible reconstructions:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{sIt-hr-nht} \\
\text{nht pr} \\
\text{sIt-hnty-hty} \\
\hline
\text{nbt pr} \\
\text{sIt-hnty-hty} \\
\hline
\text{nbw-kAw-ra} \\
\text{X} = \text{sIt-hnty-hty} \\
\hline
\text{hr-nht} (I) \\
\text{hr-m-hb} \\
\text{hr-nht} (II) \\
\text{bnwt} \\
\text{hr-m-hb} \\
\text{hr-nht} (III) \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{sIt-hr-nht} \\
\text{nbt pr} \\
\text{sIt-hnty-hty} \\
\hline
\text{nbt pr} \\
\text{sIt-hnty-hty} \\
\hline
\text{nbw-kAw-ra} \\
\text{X} = \text{sIt-hnty-hty} (I) \\
\hline
\text{hr-nht} (I) \\
\text{hr-m-hb} \\
\text{hr-nht} (II) \\
\text{bnwt} \\
\text{hr-m-hb} \\
\text{hr-nht} (III) \\
\end{array}
\]

The family tree of \( \text{sIt-hnty-hty} \) – the two possible reconstructions:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{sIt-hr-nht} \\
\text{nbt pr} \\
\text{sIt-hnty-hty} \\
\hline
\text{nbw-kAw-r} \\
\text{imny} \\
\text{hnwIt} \\
\text{hnwIt} (I) \\
\text{hnwIt} (II) \\
\text{hnwIt} (III) \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{sIt-hr-nht} \\
\text{nbt pr} \\
\text{sIt-hnty-hty} \\
\hline
\text{nbw-kAw-r} \\
\text{imny} \\
\text{hnwIt} \\
\text{hnwIt} (I) \\
\text{hnwIt} (II) \\
\text{hnwIt} (III) \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{hr-nht} \\
\text{hr-m-hb} \\
\text{hr-nht} (I) \\
\text{hr-nht} (II) \\
\text{hr-nht} (III) \\
\end{array}
\]
The family tree of *sít-hthr*
Fig. 1: Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). The Phil Berg Collection (M.71.73.42). Los Angeles (CA) © 2012. Digital Image Museum Associates/LACMA/Art Resource NY/Scala, Florence.
Fig. 2: London, BM EA 1679 © Trustees of the British Museum, London