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A late First Intermediate Period stela of the estate manager Khuy

VON
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(Tafel 5)

Abstract

Publication of a stela of the late First Intermediate Period of the estate manager Khuy, now in the magazine of Luxor Temple.

The object of this article is a stela in the magazine of Luxor Temple bearing no. 47* (fig. 1, pl. 5). Its original provenance is not recorded and according to the magazine's register the stela belonged to the private collection of the late antiquarian Zaki Mohareb.

Although simple in appearance and in a rather poor state of preservation, the stela bears some details of considerable interest concerning its palaeography and artistic features.

Description

The stela is of limestone with the following measurements: 48 cm max. height, 37 cm max. breadth, 10 cm in thickness.

It is roughly rectangular in shape and was prepared with incised borderline at the top. Its surface is generally smooth and even, except in certain damaged areas. The edges of the stela are chipped and its sides were probably left rough. The decoration and the text were well executed in sunk relief with some internal details.

Representation and Text

The owner and his wife stand on the left, facing right. He wears a close-fitting wig with overlapping rows of locks, a broad collar and a flaring knee-length kilt. A belt is shown in raised relief against the sunk surface of the garment. In his left hand, he holds what seems to be a *wj*-staff¹⁾, of which only the upper part can be seen. It seems that the lower part of the staff

¹⁾ I am very much obliged to Dr. Mohamed El-Saghir, Director General of the Egyptian Antiquities Sector, for his approval to publish this stela.

was intentionally ignored for the sake of providing enough space for other minor scenes depicted in the limited area below the owner's left arm. The right arm of the owner hangs by his side with a papyrus stem in hand⁽⁶⁾.

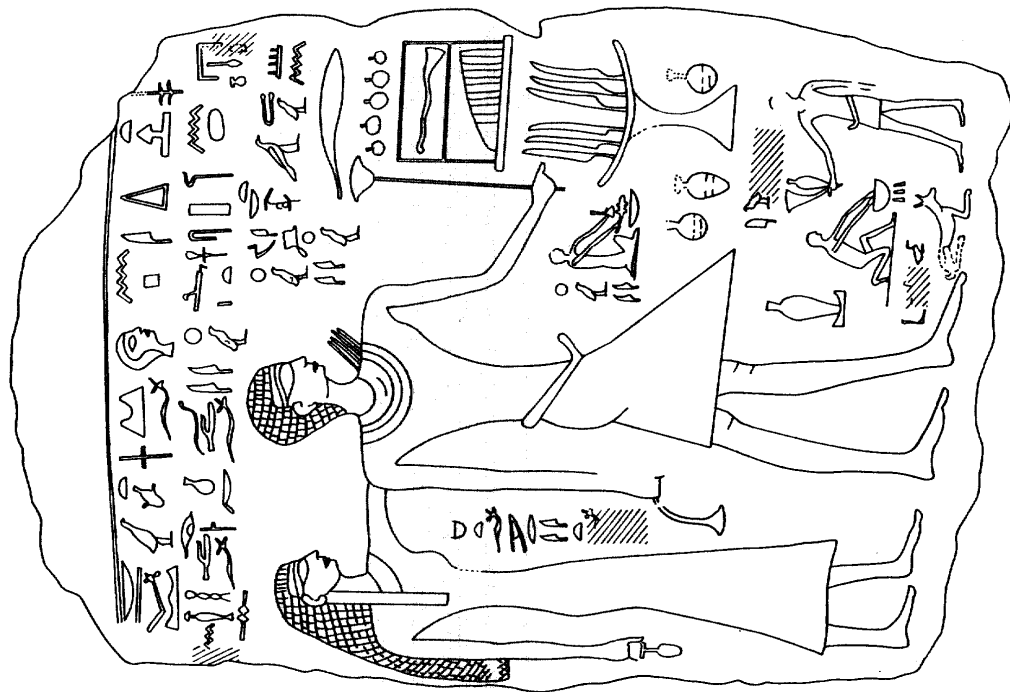


Fig. 1. Stela of Hwjj

Behind him stands his wife shown almost on the same scale, with her left hand on his left shoulder but curiously with an open upright palm,⁽⁶⁾ while her right arm hangs by her side

holding a small spherical pot with a tall neck and a stopper⁽⁶⁾. She wears a lappet wig, a broad collar, and a calf-length tight-fitting dress, the bottom of which is slightly everted⁽⁶⁾, while the details of its upper part are not defined. As regards the facial features of the couple, the details of their eyes, eyebrows and ears are in raised relief against the sunk surfaces of their faces.

Represented before them are food items, an offering table⁽⁶⁾, some jars, and offering bearer, two attendants preparing food⁽⁶⁾, and a dog⁽⁶⁾. The offering table consists of a stand flaring at the bottom and a round tray loaded with six stylized half-loaves. Beneath the offering table are three jars of different shapes, two on the left side of the stand and one on the right side.

Above the table there are some offerings arranged from top to bottom as follows: a lettuce, five fruits, probably pomegranates^(?), a foreleg of an ox and ribs placed on mats⁽⁶⁾.

At the bottom right corner of the stela, stands an offering bearer facing left and wearing a short kilt. His right arm is extended towards the owner and his wife, holding a lotus flower and a jar, while his left arm hangs by his side.

Immediately under the left forearm of the owner is a cook, squatting on the floor beside a brazier over which he is roasting a bird on a spit held in his right hand, while fanning the fire with a fan in his left hand.

The space between the owner's advanced left leg and the opposite offering bearer is occupied by a second cook kneeling on a short ground-line and boiling food⁽⁶⁾ in a cauldron supported by three conical supports. His two arms are extended towards the cauldron, probably supporting it with one hand, while stirring the contents with the other⁽⁶⁾. Behind him is a tall jar on a stand. In front of the owner's left foot is a dog crouching on the ground, facing right.

The main inscription (A) is arranged in three lines at the top of the stela. The owner's name is repeated vertically before his face (B), and again in front of the upper part of his kilt (C). A label, identifying his wife, is inscribed in the space between the figures of the couple (D), while two more labels, now illegible, are inscribed horizontally, one of them near the face of the offering bearer (E), and the other above the crouching dog (F):

A - (1) *hpt dj nswt Jnpw⁽¹⁾ tpf^(m) ḡw.f⁽ⁿ⁾ jmj wj⁽⁶⁾ nb t3 ḡsr (2) prt-ḡrw⁽⁶⁾ n hqj hwt smr w'fj Hwjj⁽⁶⁾ ḡd.f jmk jr qd.f hzj n (3) Mntw nb W3st*

„(1) An offering which the king gives and Anubis, who is on his mountain, who is in the place of embalming, lord of the sacred land, (2) that funerary offerings be presented to the estate manager, the sole companion, Khuy, who says: I am one who made his reputation⁽⁶⁾, one praised of (3) Monthu, Lord of Thebes⁽⁶⁾.“

B - *jm'hw Hwjj*

The revered Khuy

C - *Hwjj*

Khuy

D - *hmt.f mrrjt.f...*

His wife, his beloved...

E - *Jw...⁽¹⁾*

Iu...

F - *f'...b*

Tha...b⁽²⁾

Comments

(a) According to Hassan, *w'gd*-staffs were essentially related to women; at least until the end of the New Kingdom¹. And hence, we have here an exceptional instance of a man holding a *w'gd*-staff² in a much earlier period.

(b) In his study of the daily life scenes, Vandier³ points out that such an attitude of the standing male figure, either alone or accompanied by his wife, with the far hand holding a staff, while the near arm hangs by his side holding some kind of flowers in the hand, was not known before the Middle Kingdom.

(c) The scenes which depict a standing couple on the same scale with the woman placing her hand on the man's far shoulder, while the other arm hangs by her side, with an empty hand, had been known probably as early as the Fifth Dynasty⁴, and became common during the First Intermediate Period⁵. However, as far as I know, the open upright palm of the woman in our stela is unique.

¹ A. Hassan, *Stöcke und Stäbe im pharaonischen Ägypten*, MÄS 33, 1976, 199-200. See also: Y. Harpur, *Decoration in Egyptian Tombs of the Old Kingdom*, 1987, 134-135. For some examples dating to the Old and Middle Kingdoms, see: *Deir el-Gebrāwī II*, pls. VI, X; K. Lange/ H. Schäfer, *Grab-und Denksteine II*, 1908, CG 20400-20780, 182-183, no. 20552; IV, pl. X L III.

² Another instance of male children holding *w'gd*-staffs on a stela dated to the Middle Kingdom can be cited here: *ibid.* I, 11-13, no. 20012; IV, pl. II.

³ Vandier, *Manuel IV*, 62 (no. 1), 70-72 (4fö), figs. 18 (no. 23), 21 (no. 93).

⁴ For a probable Fifth Dynasty example in *Jufi's* chapel at Deshasheh, see: Deshasheh, pl. IX. In fact, the dating of this tomb is problematic, since some scholars date it to the Fifth Dynasty, such as: H. Brunner, *Die Anlagen der ägyptischen Felsgräber bis zum Mittleren Reich*, ÄF 3, 1936, 38; N. Kanawati/ A. McFarlane, *Akhmin in the Old Kingdom, Part I: Chronology and Administration*, ACE: Studies 2, 1992, 43-45. While some others date the tomb to the Sixth Dynasty, as: Smith, *Sculpture*, 219-220, Fischer, *Dendera*, 11 (n. 5); F. Gomaa, *Ägypten während der Ersten Zwischenzeit*, TAVO 27, 1980, 120; Baer, *Rank and Title*, 227, 288 (no. 44); Harpur, *op.cit.*, 279 (no. 622).

⁵ For some examples dating to the First Intermediate Period, see: R.J. Leprohon, *Stelae I: The Early Dynastic Period to the Late Middle Kingdom*, CAA 2, 1985, 24-26 (no. 98, 1039), 109-111 (no. 25.629), 116-118 (no. 25.671), 139-141 (no. 25.679); D. Dunham, *Naga-ed-Dêr Stelae of the First Intermediate Period*, 1937, 52-53 (no. 39), 68-69 (no. 56), pl. X VII, 2; Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 75-77 (no. 25), 84-86 (no. 30), 87-89 (no. 32), pls. XXII, XXVII, XXIX. As for some Middle Kingdom examples, see Meir II, pls. XIII, XIV.

(d) Apart from minor female figures of offering bearers and other attendants in the different contexts of the scenes, there is no other standing major figure known to me holding such a pot up to the Middle Kingdom. The major standing female figures are usually depicted holding in hands, if anything, lotus blossoms⁶, and sometimes they are seen holding objects in the form of the hieroglyphic *'nh*-sign⁷, while in one instance at least a mirror is held in hand⁸, in addition to the above-mentioned *w'gd*-staffs⁹. Nevertheless, a similar vessel was depicted with two others on a mat upon a Middle Kingdom stela from Abydos, and is described as an ointment pot¹⁰.

(e) This detail characterizes some of the First Intermediate Period stelae from Naqada¹¹. (f) It is important to notice that representations which show the major figures standing in table scenes are a feature characteristic of the decoration of both tomb chapels and stelae dating to the First Intermediate Period¹².

(g) No similar scenes of cooking are known to me on stelae up to the Middle Kingdom, although other motifs were depicted on these stelae, such as slaughtering and cutting up oxen¹³, tending cattle and milking cows¹⁴, harpooning a hippopotamus¹⁵, grinding grain and heating bread moulds¹⁶, in addition to the customary scenes of presentation of offerings and offering bearers.

⁶ For some examples, see: Leprohon, *op.cit.*, 34-36 (no. 98.1047); 54-56 (no. 04.1851), 122-124 (no. 25.673); Dunham, *op.cit.*, 45-46 (no. 33), 54-55 (no. 41), 107-108 (no. 87), pl. XXXIV; Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 81-82 (no. 28); 91-92 (no. 35), pls. XXV, XXX I (bottom).

⁷ Dunham, *op.cit.*, 40-41 (no. 27); Lange/Schäfer, *op.cit.*, 6, no. 20006; II, 261, No. 20621.

⁸ Dunham, *op.cit.*, 44-45 (no. 31) = Lutz, *Stèles*, pl. 15 (no. 28).

⁹ See n. 1 above.

¹⁰ Lange/Schäfer, *op.cit.* II, 169-171, no. 20545; IV, pl. LXXXVII (no. 482)

¹¹ Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 53, fig. 5 (nos. 17-18, 21, 25, 30, 32-33, 35-36).

¹² For some examples in tomb chapels, see: Athribis, pl. IX = N. Kanawati, *Hagaras III, ACE: Reports* 7, 1995, pl. 37; *idem*, *El-Hawawish IX*, 1989, fig. 11. As for some examples on stelae, see: Leprohon, *op.cit.*, 37-39 (no. 98.1049), 63-65 (no. 12.1475), 97-99 (no. 25.625), 106-108 (no. 25.628), 109-111 (no. 25.629), 122-124 (no. 25.673); Lutz, *op.cit.*, pls. 10 (no. 18), 14 (no. 27), 16 (no. 36), 17 (no. 32), 19 (no. 37), 24 (nos. 46, 47); Dunham, *op.cit.*, pls. XXIV (2), XXIX (1), XXXI (1), XXXIV; Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, pls. XXXV (no. 27), XXXV (no. 41); CG 1295-1808 II, no. 1654, pl. 86.

¹³ See for example: CG 1295-1808 II, no. 1613, pl. 82; Lange/Schäfer, *op.cit.* I, 8-9, no. 20009; J.J. Clère/J. Vandier, *Textes de la Première Période Intermédiaire et de la XIe Dynastie*, BAe 10, 1948, 21-22 (no. 25); T.G.H. James, *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian stelae, etc. I*, 2nd ed., 1961, pls. 46-47.

¹⁴ See for example: *loc.cit.*; Lange/Schäfer, *op.cit.* II, 94-95, no. 20504; IV, pl. XXX IV.

¹⁵ Only an unpublished example is known to me, it was referred to in: Fischer, *Dendera*, 57.

¹⁶ For the only known example to me, see: Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 75-77 (no. 25), pl. XXII. As for some other examples dating to the Eleventh Dynasty, see: Petric, *Denderah*, pls. XI (bottom left), XII (top right, right third from top), XII (right second from bottom); Dunham, *op.cit.*, 66-67 (no. 54), pl. XVI (2); Lange/Schäfer, *op.cit.* I, 6-7, no. 20007; IV, pl. 1.

However, the repertory of scenes on stelae were enlarged through the Middle Kingdom by adding some other motifs, such as cooking food, agriculture, backing, and brewing¹⁷, in addition to musicians and singers¹⁸.

In this respect, and in agreement with Kitchen¹⁹, I believe that most of these stelae with scenes other than presentation of offerings and offering bearers were probably meant to act as substitutes for the scenes of similar activities normally found on the walls of tomb-chapels.

(h) It is noticed that the representation of dogs became a very popular detail on provincial stelae during the First Intermediate Period, especially at Naqada, Gebelein, and Dra' Abū El-Naga²⁰.

(i) It is interesting to notice that the way of depicting the offerings within the rectangles representing mats on this stela differs from other similar scenes, as it was customary to depict the mats in the form of narrow rectangles with the things supposed to be on them shown on top of the long sides of the rectangles²¹.

(j) The food in similar scenes is always either meat or birds²².

(k) Although no stick can be recognized in either hands of the cook on this stela, most of the similar scenes show sticks in one of the cook's hands with which he could stir the hot contents of cauldrons²³.

¹⁷ See for example: K.A. Kitchen, in: JEA 47, 1961, 10-18 and the plate of the reverse; Lange/Schäfer, op.cit. II, 230-32, no. 20592; 386-87, no. 20752; IV, pls. XLVII; LVIII.

¹⁸ See for example: Lange/Schäfer, op.cit. II, 362, no. 20732; IV, pl. LV.

¹⁹ Kitchen, op.cit., 17.

²⁰ Examples from Naqada: Fischer, *Coptite Nome*, 65-67 (no. 18), 80-81 (no. 27), 89-90 (no. 33), 93-98 (nos. 37-40), pls. XVII, XXIV, XXX, XXXII (bottom) - XXXIV.

Examples from Gebelein: Leprohon, op.cit., 45-48 (no. 03.1848); H.G. Fischer, in: Kush 9, 1961, fig. 3, pl. XI; CG 1295-1808 II, nos. 1622, 1651, pp. 92-94, 111-112, pl. 84. For the examples from Dra' Abū El-Naga, see: Lange/Schäfer, op.cit. I, 8, 10-11, nos. 20009, 20011; II, 99-101, no. 20512; I V, pl. II.

As for some examples from other sites, see: Leprohon, op.cit. 79-81 (no. 12.1480); Dunham, op.cit., 55-56 (no. 42) = Lutz, op.cit., pl. 20 (no. 38).

²¹ H. Schäfer (translated and edited by J. R. Baines), *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 1974, 166-172. Cf., for example: Lange/Schäfer, op.cit. I, 56-57, 125-127, 135-136, 365, nos. 20047, 20103, 20357; II, 8, 58-59, 202-203, nos. 20407, 20459, 20566; IV, pls. V, XXVII, XXIX, XXXII, XLV.



²² Vandier, *Manuel IV*, 260. For some examples of cooking meat, see: Deir el-Gebrāwi I, pls. IX, XII; C.N. Peck, *Some Decorated Tombs of the First Intermediate Period at Naga-ed-Dér*, University Microfilms, Ph. D. Thesis, Brown University, 1958, pl. V; Vandier, *Mo'alla*, pl. XXVII; Davies/Gardiner, *Antefoker*, pl. VIII. For other examples of cooking birds, see: A. El-Khouli/N. Kanawati, *The Old Kingdom Tombs of El-Hammamiya*, ACE: Reports 2, 1990, pl. 48; Beni Hassan II, pl. XXXVI.

²³ Vandier, *Manuel IV*, 263. Cf. for example: Deir el-Gebrāwi I, pls. IX, XII; El-Khouli/Kanawati, op.cit., pl. 48; Meir IV, pl. XIII; Junker, *Giza IV*, pl. VIII; De Morgan, *Cat. des Mon. I*, 179; Vandier, *Mo'alla*, pl. XXV; Davies/Gardiner, *Antefoker*, pl. VIII.

(l) According to Brovarski²⁴, the phonetic writing of Anubis is uncommon before the First Intermediate Period, although sporadic earlier examples are known.

(m) We should notice here that the head sign in the word *tpj* lacks the beard. And according to Fischer's²⁵ extensive study of the evidence from Dendera, the beard is usually present in the head sign in his groups dated to the Old and Middle Kingdoms, and it is as often omitted as it is present in the Eleventh Dynasty, while it is totally absent in his group ranging in date from the Eighth Dynasty to the Tenth Dynasty.

(n) One of the important criteria for dating this stela is the sloping sides of the sand-covered mountain sign²⁶ of the word *ḡw*, for it was suggested to be characteristic of the Dendera inscriptions from the Eighth Dynasty, or slightly earlier, down to the Eleventh Dynasty²⁷.

(o) The writing of the epithet *jmj wt* of Anubis determined with the pustale sign²⁸ is a useful criterion for the dating of this stela. For according to Schenkel²⁹, *jmj wt* is written with the determinative  till the end of the sixth Dynasty, then with  or the like till the Twelfth Dynasty. We should also notice here the abnormal grouping of *jmj wt*, of which only few examples are known³⁰.

(p) The transposition of the preposition *n* with the sign of the roll of bread³¹ determining *pr-r-ḡrw* is rarely attested elsewhere³².

(q) It was a common name during the Old and Middle Kingdoms³³.

(r) In addition to the short offering formula, the main inscription contains some kind of self-presentation. Although condensed, it has the two main themes of autobiographies established since the Old Kingdom, i.e., the owner's career, but summarized here into his only two

²⁴ E. Brovarski, in: *Mélanges Gamal Eddin Mokhtar I*, BdE 97, 1985, 134-135. For some Sixth Dynasty examples, see: CG 1295-1808 I, 60, 138-140, nos. 1399, 1453, pls. 16, 34.

As for some of the First Intermediate Period examples, see: Leprohon, op.cit., 125-127 (no. 25.674); Dunham, op.cit., 50-51 (no. 38), pl. XIV, 2; H.G. Fischer, in: ZÄS 90, 1963, 36 with n. 2, pl. VI.

²⁵ Fischer, Dendera, 79 (no. 3), with the chart in fig. 15.

²⁶ Gardiner, EG, Sign-list, 489; N26.

²⁷ Fischer, Dendera, 136.

²⁸ Gardiner, EG, Sign-list, 539; Aa2.

²⁹ W. Schenkel, *Frdhmittelägyptische Studien*, 1962, 40-41; see also: Fischer, Dendera, 84 (15); Brovarski, op.cit., 127, 135.

³⁰ Cf. Dunham, op.cit., 83-84 (no. 81), pl. XXV, 1; Lange/Schäfer, op.cit. I, 34-35, 198-199, nos. 20027, 20167; IV, pl. III.

³¹ Gardiner, EG, Sign-list, 532; X4.

³² Only one instance of this transposition is known to me, see: Jéquier, *Tombeaux*, fig. 129.

³³ Ranke, *PN I*, 267: 13.

titles, and his moral personality³⁴. The statement *jnk jr qd.f* ... expressing the moral personality on this stela is quite rare, and all its parallels known to me date to the Eleventh Dynasty³⁵.

(s) The reference to „Monthu, Lord of Thebes“ and the close resemblance of artistic style with stelae from Gebelein³⁶ and Dra^c Abū El-Naga³⁷ may suggest a Theban origin for our stela.

(t) Although defaced at present, the first sign of this label seems to be the flowering reed³⁸ as is obviously shown on the photograph of the magazine's register. However, this could be a part of a personal name identifying the offering bearer³⁹.

(u) Probably we have here the dog's name, of which only the first and the last signs are legible now. Nevertheless, no comparable name is known so as to help in reconstructing it⁴⁰.

Dating

As already shown in the foregoing pages, most of the palaeographic and epigraphic features of this stela indicate a date ranging from the beginning of the First Intermediate Period to the end of the Eleventh Dynasty (cf. comments m, n, o). However, the writing of *jnk jr qd.f* might limit the date to the Eleventh Dynasty (cf. comment r).

³⁴ M. Lichtheim, Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom, OBO 120, 1988, 5, 21ff.

³⁵ Only four examples are known to me: 1) Stela of *Rdj-wj-Ḥnmw* from Dendera, dated either to the reign of Antef II or Antef III: Lange/Schäfer, op.cit. II, 164-167, no. 20 543 (line 23); Lichtheim, op.cit., no. 18, 42-46; Schenkel, Memphis, Herakleopolis, Theben, no. 81, 112-115; 2) Stela of *Ḥj* from Thebes, he was contemporary of both Antef II and Antef III: Clère/Vandier, op.cit., 15-17, no. 20 (line 14); Lichtheim, op.cit., 46-49, no. 19; Schenkel, Memphis, Herakleopolis, Theben, 103-107, no. 75; 3) Stela of *Ḥnmw* from Thebes, he was contemporary of Antef II, Antef III and Mentuhotep II: Clère/Vandier, op.cit., 20-21, no. 24 (line 12); Schenkel, Memphis, Herakleopolis, Theben, 228-230, no. 375; 4) Stela of *Rwꜥ-ḥꜥw* from Abydos, dated to the late 11th Dynasty: James, Hieroglyphic Texts I, pls. 46-47 (line 12); Lichtheim, op.cit., 71-72, no. 29; Schenkel, Memphis, Herakleopolis, Theben, 292-295, no. 497.

³⁶ Fischer has convincingly proved that the region of Gebelein belonged to Upper Egyptian nome 4 (Thebes), in: *Kush* 9, 1961, 44, n. 2. As for the former suggestion that the region of Gebelein belonged to Upper Egyptian nome 3, see: Vandier, Mo'alla, 38.

³⁷ See the comment (h) above.

³⁸ Gardiner, EG, Sign-list, 481: M17.

³⁹ For the possible personal names which begin with *yw*..., and were common during the Old and Middle Kingdoms, see: Ranke, PN I, 13 (nos. 15-17, 20-22), 14 (nos. 5, 7, 9-11, 15, 20, 22), 15 (no. 4), 16 (nos. 10, 11(?), 15, 17, 20, 25, 28, 30-31), 17 (nos. 1, 9), 18 (nos. 8-9, 16, 18, 20, 26), 19 (no. 2).

⁴⁰ Cf. J.M.A. Janssen, in: *MDAIK* 16 (Fs Junker), 1958, 176-182; H.G. Fischer, in: *JEA* 47, 1961, 152-153.

As regards the artistic features, while the representation of the owner standing in front of the offering table suggests a date in the First Intermediate Period (cf. comment f), the attitude of the owner and the depicting of cooking scenes are in favour of a relatively later date, perhaps even within the Middle Kingdom (cf. comments b, g). Accordingly, the stela could be dated either to the Late First Intermediate Period, or to the Early Middle Kingdom.

Taking into consideration the irregularity of some of the artistic details, which might agree more with the First Intermediate Period artistic style such as the representation of a *wꜥd*-staff in the owner's hand, the open upright left hand of the woman, the spherical pot in her right hand, and the depicting of offerings within the rectangles representing mats (cf. comments a, c, d, i), then, a late First Intermediate Period date seems more likely for this stela.

In conclusion, taking into consideration the results of the palaeographic and epigraphic study on the one hand, and the study of the artistic features on the other, a date at the beginning of the Eleventh Dynasty before the reunification of Egypt by Neb-hepet-ra Mentuhotep II is suggested.