

Original article

AN UNPUBLISHED STELE OF *Nmty-m-h3t* AND HIS SON *Ttw* IN THE SHARM EL-SHEIKH MUSEUM (CGC.20088)

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Abstract:

This paper aims to publish and study a limestone funerary stele from Abydos, which is now preserved in Sharm El- Sheikh Museum. Stele understudy was found at Abydos by Mariette and measures 57 cm high and 23 cm width. It belongs to the Chief of Physicians, Magician, and Scribe of the Archive *Nmty-m-h3t* and his son master of secret in the Funerary Workshop, the scribe, chief of his denomination *Ttw*. The state of preservation is very good; it is divided into four registers, including the offering formula which is dedicated to the standard gods at Abydos steles during the middle kingdom. This essay seeks to discuss the meanings of names and titles, copies and translates manuscripts, and comments on the spelling features and marks of the stele. The inscriptions contain some interesting features in the orthography of the epithets and offering formulae. On the basis of stylistic features, the stele dated to the Early 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty.

1. Introduction

The subject of this paper is the stele of *Nmty-m-h3t* and his son *Ttw*. The stele was preserved in the Egyptian Museum (CGC.20088) until 2003 then transferred to Alexandria National Museum and registered under accession number S. 42, then transferred to Sharm El- Sheikh Museum; to date, it has not been registered with a private number. It is round topped stele which was discovered by A. Mariette in 1861 in Abydos' Northern Necropolis [1]. This stele is designated 605 in the Mariette inventory, and it was discovered among the many steles uncovered while excavating at the site. Mariette's catalog includes a detailed inventory of antiquities discovered during the Abydos excavations. This applies exclusively to portable effects. Mariette's goal was to report on antiquities discovered in the Abydos ruins, introduce them briefly, and define their essential features. Mariette's discovery location notations are, at best, rather generic—"northern cemetery—northeastern zone," "middle cemetery—northern slope," and so on—and specifics like whether a certain stele was situated in or near a tomb or offering chapel. There are no photos of the stele being considered in this collection. Mariette only mentions the stele's substance, dimensions, and the hieroglyphic names of some of the people shown on it, but not their phonetic pronunciation. Simpson proposed in his landmark work that studying middle kingdom steles from Abydos should

start with the assumption that they were primarily components of chapels built by or for individuals or groups [2]. These individuals were able to forge and reap the benefits of "an eternal association with the mysteries of the local deities, at such time as they are celebrated" by employing these chapels. Lange and Schäfer both transcribed the hieroglyphs on this stele and provided photos of them, but neither did not look into the styles or contents of the inscriptions, nor did they translate any of them [3,4]. It is worth noting that Rita Freed [5] has included it (here I mean only the number of the stele, she did not publish the stele or even include a picture of it or comment on any of its texts in her article) among a group of steles called "Workshop 7"; some of these steles date back to the early part of the Senosret I region. Rita Fried classified them based on the style of relief carving, common features, and facial features that can be seen on the tablet in question. Because it was the sacred city of Osiris, Abydos was a significant religious location for the ancient Egyptians. Pilgrims traveled to Abydos and had at least one stele built there from the middle kingdom to the Late Roman period [6,7]. Many of the steles found by archaeologists nearly originated from tomb-related chapels as well as those constructed in the votive zone that overlooked the town and temple [8,9]. All of the middle kingdom steles from Abydos are currently in



(1) An Offering which the king gives (to) Osiris Khenty-  
imntyw (2) An Offering which Anubis gives the Lord of  
Necropolis, An Offering which (3) Heket, Khnum and the  
gods who are in (4) Abydos, they may give the invocation –  
Offering of bread, beer, oxen, fowl, alabaster, Linen and  
everything (5) Good and pure on which the god lives which  
the spirits love to eat (6) in the (beginning of the) month and  
(beginning of the) half month festival, in the Wag festival and  
(7) Thwt festival, to the spirit of the one honored, Chief of  
Physicians, Staff of Selkis (Magician), (8) Scribe of the  
Archive Nemty-m-Hat Justified. (9) May bread given to  
him on the great altar (on) day of Haqar Festival (10) May  
hand be given to him in the Neshmet bark on the ways of the  
west (to) (11) the honored Nemty-m-Hat, and his beloved  
wife Ankh- sn possessor of veneration.

**B)** The inscription of the right section belongs to Ttw. It  
reads as follow:

- (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- (5)
- (6)
- (7)
- (8)
- (9)
- (10)
- (11)
- (12)
- (13)

(1) *h̄tp di nsw Wsir nb Imnt* (2) *h̄tp di Hnty-Imntyw nb*  
*3bdw* (3) *p̄rt- hrw k3w 3bdw t hsb hnkt* (4) *h3m.t dβw nw*  
*nb 3bdw* (5) *p̄rt hr h̄tp n Wsir m-ht h̄tp k3.f im* (6)  
*n.k3 n im3h hry- h̄p(t) Ttw mst(w) n.f* (7) *ʿ(wy) hr h̄tpw*  
*m h̄pw nw hr.(t)- ntr hnʿ* (8) *šmsw n Wsir hr wʿrt di*  
*h̄tpt* (9) *dd n. Imnt iyw m h̄tp sʿh mn̄h* (10) *r̄h r.f m-m*  
*ʿnhw hry- tp hry- h̄p.t* (11) *m 3h s.wt Nb- hbt- Rʿ hm-ntr*  
*Hrw sm3 t3.wy* (12) *hry- sst3 n pr- nfr sš imy- h3t mitw.f*  
(13) *Ttw ir n ʿnh.sn sn.f mr.f S(t)m Wt-Inpw Šdwi*

(1) An Offering which the king gives (to) Osiris the Lord of  
Western (2) An Offering which Khenty-Imntyw the Lord of  
Abydos gives (3) An invocation offering of bread and beer,  
oxen, fowl, bread and count of jars of (4) beer and the Food  
presentation of the Lord of Abydos (5) what goes upon Osiris  
altar after his kA has been satisfied therewith (6) for the  
spirit of the one honored, the lector priest Ttw May hands be  
stretched to him with offerings (7) on the feasts of Necropolis  
together with the (8) Followers of Osiris on the ground that  
gives offerings (Necropolis of Abydos) (9) Says to the

Western this who is coming in peace is the Efficient Noble  
(10) His speech is known among the Living, the Chief Lector  
(11) In the Nebhepetre's pyramid most glorious of places,  
priest(God's servant) of Horus who united the two lands  
(12) Master of secret in the Funerary Workshop (house of  
mummification), the scribe, who is in front his equal? (chief  
of his equal) (13) Ttw born of Ankh-sn, his brother his  
beloved sm priest of embalmer of Anubis Shedwi.

#### 2.4. Third register

This register of the stele is clear that the couple depicted  
on it to the left is *Nmty-m-h3t* and his wife, although their  
names are not explicitly mentioned. This possibility is  
strengthened and supported by the offering formula inscrib-  
ed in the left part of the stele that belongs to *Nmty-m-h3t*, in  
which the name of his wife is mentioned at the end of the  
text, in contrast to the offering formula in the right part of  
the second record, in which the name of *Ttw* is mentioned,  
and at the end of the text only the names of his mother and  
brother are mentioned. Thus, the third record of the painting  
belongs to *Nmty-m-h3t* and his wife *ʿnh.sn*, *Ttw*'s parents.  
The scene depicts the deceased and his wife seated on a  
single lion-legged chair with a cushion, a low-backed chair  
set on truncated-cone supports, facing right. He is wearing  
a shoulder length-wig, a broad-collar, and a knee-length kilt.  
His left hand is folded on his chest, while his right hand is  
extended toward the offering before him. His wife clasps  
his left shoulder with her left hand, while she grasps a  
Lotus flower in her right hand. She wears a long lappet  
wig and a long tight-fitting dress. In front of the couple are  
two offering bearers dressed as priests; neither of them has  
their names inscribed. They are probably *Ttw* and his brother  
Shedwi, offering sacrifices to their parents. The first figure  
wears a broad-collar and knee-length kilt and raises both  
hands toward the deceased while holding a censer, while  
the second wears a broad-collar leopard skin and holds a  
bird in his right hand, and in his left holds what may be a  
piece of papyrus or cloth.

#### 2.5. Fourth register

It consists of two parts: inscription to the left and scenes to  
the right.

##### 2.5.1. Inscription

Inscribed words addressed by *Ttw* himself to all those who  
will visit the tomb, according to their social status and  
occupation, in four vertical columns that read from right to  
left as follows:

- |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
|     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |
|     |     |     |     |

(1) *im3h hry-h̄b Ttw dd.f I wʿb nb* (2) *hry-h̄b nb sš nb n*  
*r-pr pn rn pw nfr*  
(3) *sh3.tn iw sš.n.i m* (4) *hwt- ntrtn nt Hntyw im3h Ttw*  
*m3ʿ-hrw*

(1) *The honored priest Ttw says, hey all pure, (2) all priests, all scribes, who shall be at this temple which its name is the beautiful (3) I wish you remember that I wrote in (4) the temple which belongs to Khenty-Imntyw, Ttw true of voice.*

### 2.5.2. Scenes

The right-hand scene depicts two servants bringing geese, vessels, and vegetables. The man wears a tight knee-length kilt and has a shaved head; he holds an oval offering in his right hand, on his left he carries a jug on a string, and on his head, he carries a tray with an oval offering and green onions. The woman wears a tight-fitting dress and an ordinary hairstyle and carries a basket on her head which she adjusts with her right hand, her left hanging down before her. She grasps a bird and holds it by its wings. They turn to the left, where a representation of the tomb entrance is engraved in a rectangular shape, decorated on top with tree leaves colored green, and in the middle the Wedjat eyes surmounted by two leaves of a door, surmounted by decorations closer to the Egyptian cornice colored brown. In front of the man, a vertical column with his name reads: *k3ny ndm*

TT  
 ꜥ ꜥ  
 ꜥ ꜥ

In front of the woman a vertical column with her name reads: *hm.t 3bdy.t*

ꜥ  
 ꜥ  
 ꜥ  
 ꜥ

### 3. Results

Based on reading the previous texts and describing the scenes depicted on the stela, the following conclusions can be drawn: **a)** This stela is owned by two people, Scribe of the Archive *Nmty-m-h3t* and his son, the lector priest *Ttw*, which dates back to the reign of Senusret I. **b)** Owners' epithets reflect their social standing, formal rank, and their proximity to the royal palace. **c)** The Abydos Formula recorded on the stela, especially in the left part of *Nmty-m-h3t*, clearly indicates that it is part of the Abydos formula that was common on biographical steles in the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty, where the common practice was to combine the wishes of the Abydos formula with the offering formula, a matter that dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty and reached its peak in the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty. **d)** Through the scenes and texts of the stela, it becomes evident that the orthographical, paleographical, layout, and inscriptional characteristics of this stela indicate that it dates to the early 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty, such as: The arrangement of ꜥ ꜥ *htp di nsw* with the ꜥ t sign centered above *htp* sign after the *nsw* sign, Writing the name of the two gods Osiris and Khenty-Imntyw without determinative ꜥ it, Gods Khnum and Heket invoked in the *htp- di- nsw* formula appears most often share the honor early in the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty and become very common by the time of Senosert III, and the Phrase ꜥ ꜥ ꜥ *nht ntr im* "on which the god lives" appears first under Senosert I. **e)** This is in addition to the fact that on all dated steles from the time of Senosert I, the wife of the owner is seen

seated or standing behind him, clasping him. According to the dated stela of the 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty, the woman is the most important family member. She retains this posture until as late as the period of Amenemhat II. Also, the symbol of holding the lotus only in association with ladies first appears on dated steles under Senosert I. It vanishes after the reign of Amenemhat II.

### 4. Discussion


#### 4.1. Comment on the inscription of the left section

##### 4.1.1. Paleographical notes


**(a)** The arrangement of ꜥ ꜥ *htp di nsw* with the ꜥ t sign centered above ꜥ *htp* sign after the ꜥ *nsw* sign was common in the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty [17,18]. **b)** Name of two gods Osiris and Khnty-Imntyw have been written without determinative ꜥ it was common during the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty [19]. **c)** *n k3 n im3h*: the datival n was attested before the *im3hw* epithet during the Herakleopolitan period and the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty [20]. In the 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty and usually in the reign of Senosert I the deceased is designated *im3hw*, *im3hy*, etc. "honored one". By the time of Amenemhat II *k3 n* is placed in front making *k3 n im3hw* [19]. **d)** *Nšmt*: written in an abbreviated manner only with the sacred bark sign. **e)** The name ꜥ *nh.sn*: *Nmty-m-hat's* wife and *Ttw's* mother has been written in two ways with different determinatives, in the left side belong to *Nmty-m-h3t* has been written with stroke as determinative ꜥ ꜥ ꜥ, while *Ttw's* mother written with seated woman as the determinative ꜥ ꜥ ꜥ **f)** Writing the sign *im3h* ꜥ placed above vertical stroke ꜥ is typical of the middle kingdom [21].

##### 4.1.2. General commentary

**a)** Two divine names of gods invoked in the *htp-di-nsw* formula, Osiris and Anubis share the honor in 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty and early in the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty. But Ptah-Soker-Osiris started to appear more frequently in formula during the reign of Amenemhat III and later [15]. **b)** Gods Khnum and Heket invoked in the *htp- di- nsw* formula appears most often share the honor early in the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty [22] and become very common by the time of Sesostri III [19]. **c)** The Construction *di.sn* before *pri- hrw* was common in the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty [19]. But there a rare example to this construction after all the gods of Abydos appeared on another stela dated to the 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty from Abydos belongs to the Overseer of cattle Nakhty Iqr, So the appearance of this Construction on the stela of Nakhty Iqr confirm its existence during the 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty even if it was uncommon, but it has become the most common the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty [13,23]. **d)** The phrase ꜥ ꜥ ꜥ *nht ntr im* on which the god lives", which occurs in the formula after the list of offering, appears first under Senosert I according to Bennet. [19]. **e)** *mrrt 3hw wnm*: "which the spirits love to eat " common relative clause in offering formula during middle kingdom [24-26]. **f)** *dit.n.f ꜥ m nšmt hr w3t imntt* "May hand be given to him in the Neshmet bark": This is one of famous after life wishes during the middle kingdom [24,25]. The *nšmt* bark belongs to Osiris it was used to convey the god's cult picture during his annual religious festivities at Abydos. Private persons also used

papyri-form boats for pilgrimage to sacred sites and, as previously indicated, for conveying the mummies to the necropolis. The boat designation *nšmt* was first attested from the middle kingdom. According to Azzam the word *nšmt* could be derived from  meaning “feldspar” an opaque green semi-precious stone probably referring to the green material from which the boat was originally built [27].

#### 4.1.3. Festivals mentioned in Nmty m hat's text

1) *3bdw-ḥb*: It is the new moon festival *psdntyw*, it was *psdtyw* in the beginning. It is derived from *psdtyw* symbolizes the visible moon in the sky after the day when the moon is in full swing [28]. This feast is called also "*tpy 3bd*" "Begin-ning of the month" [29,30]. It was one of the important Feasts for the deceased, because the offerings were at the beginning and middle of the lunar month. The coffin texts explain the importance of this feast, as sacrifices are made and religious rituals are performed for the deceased in Utterance 45: "Incense burns for you in all seasons, and it will not be lacking in the feast of the new moon". The ancient Egyptians believed that the souls of the deceased were associated with the moon, because the moon is renewed every month, and the deceased wishes to be reborn like the months of the moon. It is mentioned in Pyramid Texts Utterance 412, "You are born in your months like the moon" [31]. 2) *smd.t- ḥb*: The fifteenth day of the lunar month is the half-month feast, and it is called "*iḥ wr*" the Full Moon Festival [28]. And the ancient Egyptian considered it the beginning of the second half of the month, so it was called "*tpy smdt*" the first half of the month [29], It was, from a mythological point of view for the ancient Egyptian, the day of meeting the sun and the moon and the victory of light over darkness, which is a symbol of the completion of the elements of strength [30,32,33]. The importance of this feast for the deceased [34,35] was mentioned in the pyramid's texts in utterance 373: "Barley is threshed for you, emmer is reaped for you, and offering thereof is made at your monthly festivals, and an offering thereof is made at your half-monthly festivals" [34,35]. Also in the pyramid texts, utterance 627 entitled "the king is reborn" the king was born in the month, and he was conceived in the half month [34]. The significance of this feast for the deceased is clear since he is reborn in the netherworld as the king [29]. 3) *Wag-Festival*: The name of this festival is derived from the verb  *w3g* rejoicing Wb.I,262 [36]. Therefore, this festival translates to a joy and happiness festival [35]. The first mention of this festival dates to the old kingdom, in the texts of the pyramids [34,35], And it continued to be known until the end of the new kingdom, The texts of Geffay Haapy, governor of the Asyut Nome during the middle kingdom, are recorded on the eastern wall of the great hall in his tomb. Her writings included a set of contracts concluded by Geffay Haapy with the priests of the Temple of Abydos to ensure that his statue will enjoy offerings and lighting torches on the Wag festival [37], And the same was mentioned on a stele erected by Ahmose for his grandmother, Queen Tity, in Abydos CGC.20326 [3,4]. This feast was celebrated on the night of the seventeenth day of the first month of the flood season (*I 3ḥt 17*) and continues for the

next day, the eighteenth day [38]. Wag festival was one of the festivals closely associated with the god Osiris. purpose of this feast is primarily to make offerings and sacrifices to the dead, and a feast for drinking [39], This is reinforced by the determinative in which the name of the feast is written, which is a holder surmounted by three jars. Perhaps it was a feast dedicated to offering offerings, especially wine, which reinforces this idea. A text from the Pyramids texts (PT.820a) indicates the association of the festival of Wag with the god Osiris as the Lord of Wine [34,35]. It seems that this feast was dedicated to drink and food for the living and the dead [40]. At this festival, people wish their dead a happy journey in Abydos, so they put models of boats on the tombs heading towards Abydos [41]. 4) *Thwt- ḥb*: The feast of Djehuti was mentioned for the first time in the Pyramid texts, and it was one of the feasts in which offerings were made to the deceased [42]. Djehuti had an important role in relation to the deceased, which is illustrated by the Pyramid texts, where Djehuti was sometimes associated with Anubis, the lord of embalming, and sometimes associated with Osiris, the god of the dead, in order to rebuild the body of the deceased again. This festival was held on the eighteenth day of the first month of the year. From the late old kingdom, the festival celebrated the birth of Thoth and the resurrection of Osiris. Thoth's actual function in the context of all the Abydos stelae is as a son of Osiris, who helps his other son, Sed-wep-wawet; avenge their father, Osiris [43]. 5) *Haker Festival*: Information about this festival can be found in the Middle Kingdom in the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty version of the Abydos formula, private feast list, autobiographies, and Book of the dead. The Haker-Festival formed part of the Mysteries of Abydos in the middle and new kingdoms, and at the same time it was a festival of the Dead [44]. The date of the Haker - festival is written clearly on the stele of Louvre.166 as *I 3ḥt 20* [45]. The Haker festival is also known through the private feast lists in addition to the previously listed sources. It frequently makes an appearance prior to the first procession and is described alongside the Thoth festival and the Wag festival which were associated with the Mysteries in Abydos [44]. On the stele of Wep-wawet-aa dated to the time of Senosert I-Amenemhet II (Leiden V 4 & Munich GL. WAF 35 [2,23,46]. Festivals are counted as follows: Wag-festival, Thoth-festival, Haker festival, First procession, and Great procession. Also, it usually appears before the First procession. Spiegel, comparing this sequence and these festival dates, found that it was the correct count of the festivals because Wag festival was celebrated on *I 3ḥt 17*, Thoth festival was on *I 3ḥt 19*, Haker festival was on *I 3ḥt 20*, the First procession was on *I 3ḥt 21*, and the Great procession on *I 3ḥt 22* [22].

#### 4.1.4. Name, titles and epithets of *Nmty-m-ḥ3t*, and his wife

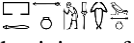
The three epithets most closely related with the offering formula are *m3c-ḥrw* (vindicated), *imḥy* (venerated), and *nb-imḥ* (possessor of a venerated status). These three words, or variations on them, form the heart of non-royal self-presentation throughout the middle kingdom, appearing in all but the shortest texts on steles and graves. In many


inscriptions, one or more of these epithets are only phrases that are used to identify the inscription's owner. Some of them also characterize ancillary figures, such as the spouses, children, and other close acquaintances of the monument's owners, whose texts frequently use only one or more of these epithets [47].

1) *im3h*: The epithet *im3h* was first attested at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> dynasty [48], contrary to what Fisher claimed that it first appeared in the 4<sup>th</sup> dynasty [49]. This epithet was originally supposed to be a special title for the deceased [50], he was considered to have acquired the state of *im3hy* in death by performing *m3ct* in life, ensuring the continuation of his memorial cult [51], but it was later discovered that it could be applied to both the dead and the living, [52]. During the old kingdom, the adjective *im3hy* was used to designate the elderly and those who were honored while alive, not just those who had passed away [51,53], and its bearer got a well-deserved wage throughout his lifetime as a result of his accomplishments, moral values, and social rank [54]. Following his death, he was also eligible for royal gifts like as food and funeral equipment [55]. This epithet was widely used throughout the middle kingdom and the late old kingdom. It typically appears at the end of the offering formula, following a list of requests. It always comes before the name of the person it illustrates. Monument owners' wives and lesser characters, whether male and female, are commonly referred to as *im3h(y)* or *im3h(t)* [47]. In the 11<sup>th</sup> and early 12<sup>th</sup> dynasties (during the reign of Senusret I), the inscription owner was simply termed *im3h(y)*, "the venerable one". By Amenemhet II's reign, the expression *k3 n im3h(y)* "the venerable ka" became the most popular designation. At the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> dynasties, *im3h(y)* was dropped completely, leaving only *k3.n*, "ka of" [19].

2) *m3c-hrw*: The most prevalent non-royal epithet is *m3c-hrw*, literally "true in speech." In the middle kingdom, this phrase alluded to the successful outcome of a heavenly trial when entering the afterlife [56]. *m3c-hrw*, which refers to legal processes, has been rendered as "justified," "victorious," or "vindicated." As an epithet for individual *m3c-hrw* first appears in the combination *ikr m3c-hrw* during the late first intermediate period [57], its use was well established by the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty and persisted until the middle kingdom and beyond. It also appears intermittently in offering formulas during the first intermediate period and middle kingdom. Simpson, in his study of polygamy, has postulated that by the middle kingdom the term *m3c-hrw* had come to refer exclusively to the dead, and could be effectively translated as "deceased". He based his assumption on a scene from Tomb No.1 at Asyut, in which one of Ghefai-Haapy's wives is named *m3c.t-hrw*, and the other *nbt im3h*. He suggests that the former was a deceased wife while the latter was still alive. The writer clearly intended to distinguish the two women in some way [58]. However, other studies have shown that this is not the case in fact. In some texts, such as expedition inscriptions and graffiti, *m3c-hrw* clearly appears to have been used as titles for living persons [59].

3) *Wr swnw*: This title means Chief of Physicians [60] is written in an abridged style. Two surnames *Wr swnw* and *hrp srkt* were written back-to-back to express a person's status as a magician and a Physician at the same time. This was not the first time,

these two titles appeared consecutively on the false door of khuy [61] in the old kingdom who was called  "Pr- 3 wr-swnw hrp-srkt wr swnw the great physicians of pharaoh, staff of magician, and great in medicine".

4) *hrp srkt*: This title is written with the goddess Serqet using the sign , its literal meaning translated as "he who has domination over the goddess Serqet" or "Scorpion-charmer". Serqet was known from old kingdom until 19<sup>th</sup> dynasty by the full name "She who releases the wind-pipe". She was renowned for her recovery from venomous stings and magical and medicinal talents. In ancient Egypt most priests were also magicians, specially "Lectors *hry-hb*", as were drenched in religious awareness. So, the same man might be chief priest, magician and physicians [62].

5) *ss-sm3yt*: Scribe of the archive [60].




6) *Nnty- m-h3t*: This name mentioned by Ranke, PN, I, 69(21)<sup>(c)</sup> [63]. This name is attested once as a masculine name in the old kingdom CGC.1525 [64], and attested once as a female name in the middle kingdom CGC.20544b,d [64], but it was common male name in the middle kingdom CGC.20544d, CGC.20577c [65-67].









7) *nh.sn*: This name used in the old kingdom as a feminine name, and became common in the middle kingdom according to Ranke, PN,I, 67(22) [63].



8) *Nb im3h* "possessor of a venerated state": The term *nb-im3h* first appears in the offering formula of dynasty four, in the request: *iw.f m nb im3h r imntt* "may he enter into the west as the possessor or veneration". The coffin texts (CT. 1011) also refer to the deceased as having a venerated status, which is attributed with causing him to behave in ways that contradict *isft* and resemble the behavior of the gods [68]. *nb im3h* first appear as an epithet in late 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty and becomes very common during 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty. It becomes less common during dynasty 13 and replaced by the epithet *Whm-nh* "repeating life" [47]. The epithet *nb-im3h* is closely linked to *im3hy* and may be nearly synonymous with it. This statement almost appears at the end of the offering formula, after the name of the inscription owner. The phrase *nb-im3h* does not necessarily imply that the person described has already died [47].

## 4.2. Comment on the inscription of the right section

### 4.2.1. Paleographical notes

a) *h3m.t*: There is a mistake in the writing of this sign (K4) . It should be written (K4A)  instead of  according to WB. 362(10-11).

b) *hb*: Festival is written by two different sign on Sharm Stela. At first time wrote in a singular form with wag, Djhwty and Haker festivals with the sign , but second time is written in a plural form to express Abydos festivals with the sign  The word *hb* was written with the sign , Its written with the sign is clearly known from dynasty four by the time of Seneferw in the title  *wc wrw hb* " [69], but its written with the sign  Combination of  and , the composite form  was used during reunification on the 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty [49].

c) *Wt- Inpw*: the sign *w* here in this title is not completely clear, it may be the sign  or . According to Fischer, it may be written by either of them [49,69].

### 4.2.2. General commentary

a) *m-hthtpk3.f im*: "after his ka has been satisfied therewith" common adverbial phrase in the offering formula and after

life wishes mentioned many times on stele during middle kingdom: Intef stele Ny carlesberg Glyptothek Inv 963 [70]. Two steles of Rudjahau CGC. 20514 and BM 159 [71], stele of Wepwawet-aa dated to the time of Amenemhet II [2]. **b) *mst n.f*** <sup>c</sup>(wy) *hr htp m hprw nw hrt-ntr hn<sup>c</sup> šmsw n Wsir "May hands be stretched to him with offerings on the feasts of necropolis together with the followers of Osiris ": was common in the offering formula in the afterlife wishes during the middle kingdom with slight difference in meaning sometimes in the 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty which has been written" May he tread the paths of the necropolis with the followers of Osiris" for example, stele of Henenu from Thebes, reign of Mentuhotep II [25], but in 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty it was written as the same as Nemty and Ttw's stele, for example: stele of Mery which dated to the reign of Senosert I [72], stele of *d33* at the British Museum (BM 573) dating by the region of Senosert II [23]. **c) *hn<sup>c</sup>***: The preposition *hn<sup>c</sup>* here means "together with", sometimes the preposition *m* [73] was used in parallel to "*hn<sup>c</sup>*" and means the same. **d) *W<sup>c</sup>rt***: is a term for the sacred Necropolis, it is clearly a designation of the cemetery regions. It written here in abbreviated writing. In the old kingdom *w<sup>c</sup>rt* with term *w<sup>c</sup>rt nbt m3<sup>c</sup>t* "ground of the mistress of right" designated a specific area of the Meir cemeteries. Later, in the middle kingdom, Abydos began to gain importance [23], which its texts have so far shackle "*w<sup>c</sup>rt rdit htp* the ground that gives offerings" [13,24,70,72], "*w<sup>c</sup>rt htp* ground of offering" [66], "*w<sup>c</sup>rt 3t hmhmt* ground great of fame" [74] "*w<sup>c</sup>rt nbt htp* ground Mistress of offerings" [23].*

#### 4.2.3. Name, epithets and titles of *Ttw* and his brother *Šdwi*:

##### 4.2.3.1. Name, epithets and titles of *Ttw*

*Ttw*'s titles and epithets can reflect his social standing and formal rank. He carried titles and epithets that indicated his proximity to the royal palace. His epithet, *jm3h.w*, was sufficient to secure his funerary equipment and tributes. In terms of religious rank, he holds the priestly title *hry-tp hry- hp.t m 3h s.wt Nb- hbt- R<sup>c</sup>* "Chief Lector Priest in Nebhepetre's pyramid most glorious of places" which entails overseeing the funerary rituals **1)**. *Ttw*: Ranke, PN. I, 385(27). This name is attested once as a masculine name in the old kingdom it was common male and female name in the middle kingdom [63]. **2) *s<sup>c</sup>h mnh***: The adjective *mnh* which means effective or efficient, is employed in epithets that both generalize about the owner of the inscription and change certain characteristics. It means "efficiency" in the sense that the person or thing to whom it is applied is said to be fulfilling the role designated for him or it in the divine counsel (*m3<sup>c</sup>t*). *Mnh* could describe both inanimate objects and the effective akhs of the deceased in addition to characterizing living individuals. The majority of the epithets that *mnh* introduced fall into one of four groups. (a) *mnh*, used by itself, designates the inscription's owner. (b) A noun with the suffix "*mnh*" that refers to a person or his position, like *w<sup>c</sup> mnh* efficient individual, *smnh* efficient man, *sr mnh* efficient official, and *s<sup>c</sup>h mnh* efficient noble. (c) Epithets that refer to the official's qualities, such as "efficient of action" (d) more complicated term that credit the official's effectiveness

for his success [47]. **3) *hry-tp hry- hp.t m 3h s.wt Nb- hbt- R<sup>c</sup>***: Chief Lector Priest in Nebhepetre's pyramid most glorious of places [60,69]. It is the name of funerary complex of King Monthu-hotep II, so *Ttw* could be a lector priest contemporary to the king mentioned above or to one of his successors. This title was common since the old kingdom [59,75] and continued to appear in the middle kingdom CGC. 205470 [76]. It was also common for it to be followed by the name of the pyramid complex or the place where he worked; preceded by a cartouche and the name of the king during whose reign he served. **4) *hry- s3t3 n pr- nfr***: Master of secret in the funerary workshop [60] (house of mummification). The state in ancient Egypt was managed from the royal palace, so every part of this palace had a role in those titles associated with secrets. Also, the association of secrets was not limited to life, but extended to interest in the secrets of the royal tombs<sup>(d)</sup>. The title of Keeper of Secrets is an honorary title rather than a functional title, so it was carried by the senior members of the royal court, clerics and ministers. Some classified this title as an honorary title [77], while others classified it as a religious title [80]. **pr- nfr** This name first appeared in the Middle Kingdom and means the place of mummification (Wb.I, 517(11) [36]. **5) *imy- h3t mitw.f***: who is in front his equal. This title was not mentioned in Word or Fisher, and it was mentioned at the end of the titles of Teto, as there are seven titles that precede this title, perhaps to emphasize his skill and position among his people and to distinguish him from people who bear the same titles. Titles describing one's personal self were particularly common during the early middle kingdom and continued the trend until the period before the reunification of Egypt in the 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty. As a rule, such titles became considerably less popular in the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty, when it resumed the old kingdom tradition of focusing on the king and the gods. Indeed, many middle kingdom examples come from a relatively small number of inscriptions from the reign of Senusret I, a period when the Abydian stelae and provincial tomb inscriptions of high officials were characterized by a sophisticated literary style that included detailed lists of titles describing the self or biography [47]. **6) *hm-ntr Hrw sm3 t3.wy***: The priest (god's servant) of Horus united of the two lands (Montu-hotep II) [60]. The title *hm-ntr Hrw* "The priest of Horus" was a common title in the middle kingdom [79]. The way the word Horus appears in titles shows that it is meant to relate to the king [57]. For example, Amenemhat, the vizier of the 11<sup>th</sup> dynasty, is known as the "Vizier of Horus in his appearance" [80]. The most prevalent form of these titles is *imy-ib hr*, which means "He who is in the heart of Horus" and is commonly translated as "Favorite of Horus [81,82]. Ukh-hotep III of Meir is known by another non-royal title, *imy-ib Hr(w) nb t3wy*, which translates to "Favorite of Horus, Lord of the Two Lands [83]".

##### 4.2.3.2. Name, Epithets and Titles of *Šdwi*

**1) *Šdwi-Inpwi***: I suggest that the name of the priest should be *Šdwi-Inpwi* and not just *Šdwi* as mentioned by Ranked, perhaps the reason for this confusion is due to the crushing

of the hieroglyphic signs under Anubis, which also made Fisher (Titles, 14, [754b] suggest reading it as *wl-Inpw* and translate it to embalmer of Anubis, perhaps this is due to a misreading of the sign  $\text{𓏏}$  instead of  $\text{𓏏}$  [69]. *Šdwi* is a common male and female name during the Old Kingdom until the late period [63]. It was often accompanied by the name of one of the gods like Amun, Ptah, Montu, Ra, Nefer-tm, Horus, Khonso, Bastet, or associated with one of the names of kings [63]. 2) *S(tm)*: Chief celebrant in the rite of opening the mouth [84]. This title has been known since the archaic period [85], and the title of the priest *šm* was carried at the beginning of the old kingdom by the sons of kings [86], considering that the deceased king unites with Osiris after his death, and his son Horus performs this ritual for his father to confirm his right to inherit him<sup>(c)</sup> [87]. Then, starting from the second half of the old kingdom and until the middle kingdom, this title became a job title given to courtiers, ministers, and provincial governors [88]. In the new kingdom, King Ay is depicted on the northern wall of the burial chamber in the tomb of his predecessor Tutankhamen performing the ritual of opening the mouth for the mummy of the king to confirm his role as the son Horus with his father Osiris and receiving his inheritance [89]. The priest of *šm* is depicted wearing a leopard skin in all ages, as is already depicted in the third register on the stele here, and is sometimes distinguished by a braid of hair hanging down the side of the head, as Helck [86] suggested that this garment represented a magical power that enabled the wearer to perform magical rituals and gave him the guarantee of the transfer of the powers of these animals to the wearer. This title was carried by the priests of various gods, such as the priests of Ptah, Soker [90], Anubis, and Khnum [33], as they were considered to perform the duties of this function in the burial rituals. Perhaps the reason for mentioning the name of the priest of *šm* *shedwi*, brother of *Ttw*, on the stele at the end of his text and also depicting him in front of his parents in the third register on the stele offering them offerings behind his brother is due to the main and important role played by the priest of *šm* in performing the ritual of opening the mouth of the deceased, the purpose of which was to rebirth the deceased so that he would regain the ability to receive the food offered to him in the afterlife [91], and to give the deceased after his burial the necessary strength for speech and the sense of hearing and sight, as mentioned in the pyramid texts [87].

#### 4.3. Comment on the fourth register

##### 4.3.1. Names of the two servants

1) *k3ny ndm*: "The gardener Ned-jem". *k3ny* is a common title [36,60] during old [92-93] and middle kingdom [63]. Reading the name of *ndm* with these two signs  $\text{𓏏}$  is not completely clear on the plate, so this is a suggested reading and it may be the closest to the truth. 2) *hm.t 3bdy.t* "The housemaid *3bdy.t*" is a common feminine name during middle kingdom [63].

##### 4.3.2. General comments on the fourth register

Wadjet Eye usually, steles are painted, intaglio, or relief-executed with images and inscriptions. The Wadjet Eye, a

protective emblem, is a common decorative motif. Since the middle kingdom, the Wadjet Eye, which translates to "healthy eye," has been seen on coffins. It serves to protect the owner who owned the stele while also letting the departed see the light and providing them with beverages. However, because the eye is involved in the opening-of-the-mouth rite, its appearance on steles indicates a ritual [14].

#### 4.4. Genealogy

The relationship between the people depicted on the stele: *Nmty-m-ḥ3t*, *Ttw*, *3nkh-sen* and *shedwy-Inpw*: The most correct interpretation based on the text written on the stele and the scenes depicted is that this stele is a memorial to *Nmty-m-ḥ3t* and his wife *3nkh.sn* depicted in the third register of the stele. *Ttw* is their eldest son who dedicates the stele to his parents, and his brother, the priest Sem, whose name appears at the end of *Ttw*'s offering formula on the right, may be the same person depicted with him in front of his parents in the third register offering the offerings, and it is most likely that *Ttw* is the first person carrying the censer and his brother is the one carrying the offerings and wearing the priest's clothes. The stele provides information regarding the genealogy of the family covering two generations. From the text on the stele, a possible genealogy of the family of *Nmty-m-ḥ3t* can be described in fig. (2).

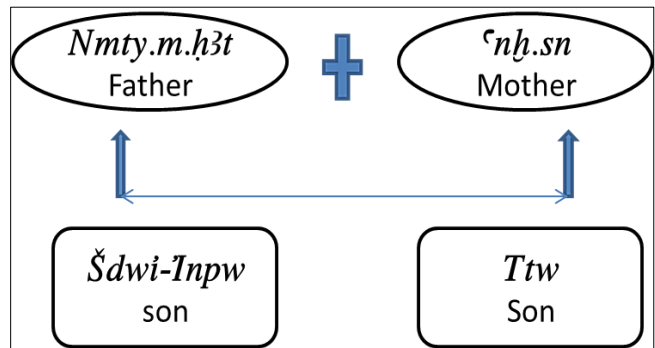


Figure (2) possible genealogy of the family of *Nmty-m-ḥ3t*

#### 5. Conclusion

This funerary stele from Abydos, dating back to the early 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty, belonged to a married couple, *Nmty-m-ḥ3t* and his wife *3nkh-sen*, and their son *Ttw*, who may have commissioned the stele for his parents. *Ttw* was keen to mention his name, titles and descriptions in a separate text in the second register of the stele to the right, as the second register of the stele displays two main texts separated by a double vertical line. The text on the left is dedicated to the deceased father, *Nmty-m-ḥ3t*, with his titles and epithets, preceded by the invocation for the deceased, *Htp di nsw*. The text on the right displays the names of the son, Chief Lector *Ttw*, with his titles and epithets, preceded by the invocation formula *Htp di nsw*. The text ends with the name of his brother, the *sm* priest of embalmer of Anubis *shedwi*. The two brothers, *Ttw* and *shedwi*, are depicted offering sacrifices to their parents in the third register of the tablet. They are wearing priestly clothes that indicate their job and social and religious status, but their names are not mentioned at all in this register, as if the viewer and reader should have known this implicitly after reading the text written on the stele.

#### Endnotes

- (a) Given that *hṭp-dj-njsw.t* was a component of the offering rites performed at the burial, Abd el-Sattar rejected the idea that it was a "formula" and substituted the word

"grant" instead. It was an honor and royal grant bestowed upon people by the monarch, the god, or both. Abd el Sattar, I., (2024). *htp-(r)dj-njsw.t* in the old kingdom pyramid texts. In: Kamrin, J., Khaled, I. & Leitz, Ch. (eds.) *The kingdom of the mummies, Supplément aux Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 46, pp. 55-80

- (b) For example, see stele of shen at Los Angeles County Museum dating to the region of Senwsert I: Faulkner, "stele of the Master-Sculptor Shen", *JEA* 38 (1952), 3-5, Pl. I; stela of DAA at the British Museum dating by the region of Senosert II: Lichtheim, M., *ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the middle kingdom, Astudy and Anthology, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 84, 1988, 94-95; Rosati, G., "Stela of the Master-Sculptor Shen-Setji: A Review", in: *Linguistic, Oriental and Ethiopian Studies in memory of Paolo Marrassini, Wiesbaden, 2014*, 629-645, fig.1.
- (c) For the reading of this name *Nmty-m-h3t* instead of *nty-m-h3t* see: Azam, L. (1994) *Wadjet: The tenth nome from Upper Egypt, Geographical study, MSC unpublished Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University. 72- 75*, (in Arabic).
- (d) For more discussion about this title, see Rydstrom, T.K. (1994) *hry s3t3* "in Charge of Secrets": the 3000-Year Evolution of a Title, *Discussions in Egyptology* 28; Beatty, M. (1999/2000). *The Title hry s3t3 "Master of Secrets": Functional or Honorific*, *ANKH* 8/9. 58-71; Balanda, S. Z. (2009). *The title "hry-s3t3" to the end of the new kingdom*, *JARC* 45. 319- 348.
- (e) For example: The tomb of *Kc-ni-nsw*, which dates back to the fourth dynasty. His titles also include the king's son, supervisor of the city of Botu, governor of the seventh region of Upper Egypt, and mayor of the city of Nekheb. See: Junker, H. (1934) *Giza II*, 159-160.

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