

LATE MIDDLE KINGDOM FUNERARY STELA OF *intf ikr ʿnhw*
AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM (EA563)

By

Bassem Mohamed

Associate Professor at Faculty of Archaeology, Ain shams University, Egypt.

ABSTRACT

[AR] لوحة جنائزية من أواخر الأسرة الثانية عشرة لأنتف إقرعنخو تعود هذه اللوحة الجنائزية قيد الدراسة إلى إنتف إقرعنخو والذي كان حامل ختم ملك مصر السفلى، أمين الملك وخزانة *dd-b3w*، وهي معروضة الآن في المتحف البريطاني، وفقاً لأحمد فخري وبورتر موسى فقد كانت هناك لوحة جرانيتية أخرى تعود لنفس مالك هذه اللوحة مع اسم والدته مؤرخة بالعام الثالث عشر من حكم سنوسرت الثالث في وادي اليهودي، ووفقاً Ilin-Tomich، فإن صيغة حتب دي نسو تشير إلى أن تاريخها يعود إلى نهاية الأسرة الثانية عشرة، وبمقارنة هذه اللوحة مع لوحات أخرى من نفس الفترة من حيث أسلوب الكتابة والقاب المالك وصيغة *htp di nsw Wsir nb 3bdw*، والسمات العامة للوحة إنها تشبه إلى حد كبير لوحات الدولة الوسطى من أبيدوس.

[EN] This funerary stela belongs to *intf ikr ʿnhw*, the seal bearer of the king of Lower Egypt, the king's secretary, and *dd-b3w* treasury. It is now on displayed in the British Museum. According to Ahmed Fakhry and PM, it dates back to the 13th year of Senusret III's reign and is from Wadi al-Hudi. Ilin-Tomich reports that *the htp di nsw* formula could date this stela to the end of the twelfth dynasty. By comparing this stela with other stelae of the same period in terms of the writing style, titles of the owner, the form *htp di nsw Wsir nb 3bdw*, and general features of the painting. It seems evident that it is similar to the Middle Kingdom stelae found in Abydos.

KEYWORDS: Abydos, genealogy, Middle Kingdom, painting, Senusret III, the twelfth dynasty.

I. INTRODUCTION

At first, I would like to mention that all figures in this paper are published after the permission of the British Museum in October 2, 2021, Nr^o. EA563. The funerary stela in this study belongs to *intf ikr ʿnhw*, who seal bearer of the king of Lower Egypt, the trustee of the king, and the chamberlain of *dd-b3w*. It is now exhibited in the British Museum [FIGURE 1]¹.

According to Fakhry and *PM*², another granite stela from Wadi El-Hudi, dating to the 13th year of Senusret III, belongs to the same owner and included his mother's name. Ilin-Tomicha A.³ reports that the *h̄tp di nsw* formula indicates that it dates back to the end of the 12th dynasty. In comparing this stela with other stelae from the same period⁴ through the style of inscription, the titles of the owner, the formula of *h̄tp di nsw wsir nb 3bdw* and the general features of the stela, the resemblance of this stela to other Middle Kingdom stelae in Abydos is clear⁵.

It is noticeable that the owner of the stela attributed himself to his mother, as were all his brothers and sister, although his father *mnt.w m h3t* was represented on the stela without any titles.

¹ https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA563 Accessed on 17/11/2021.

² FAKHRY 1952: 16; *PM* 1995: vol.7, 319.

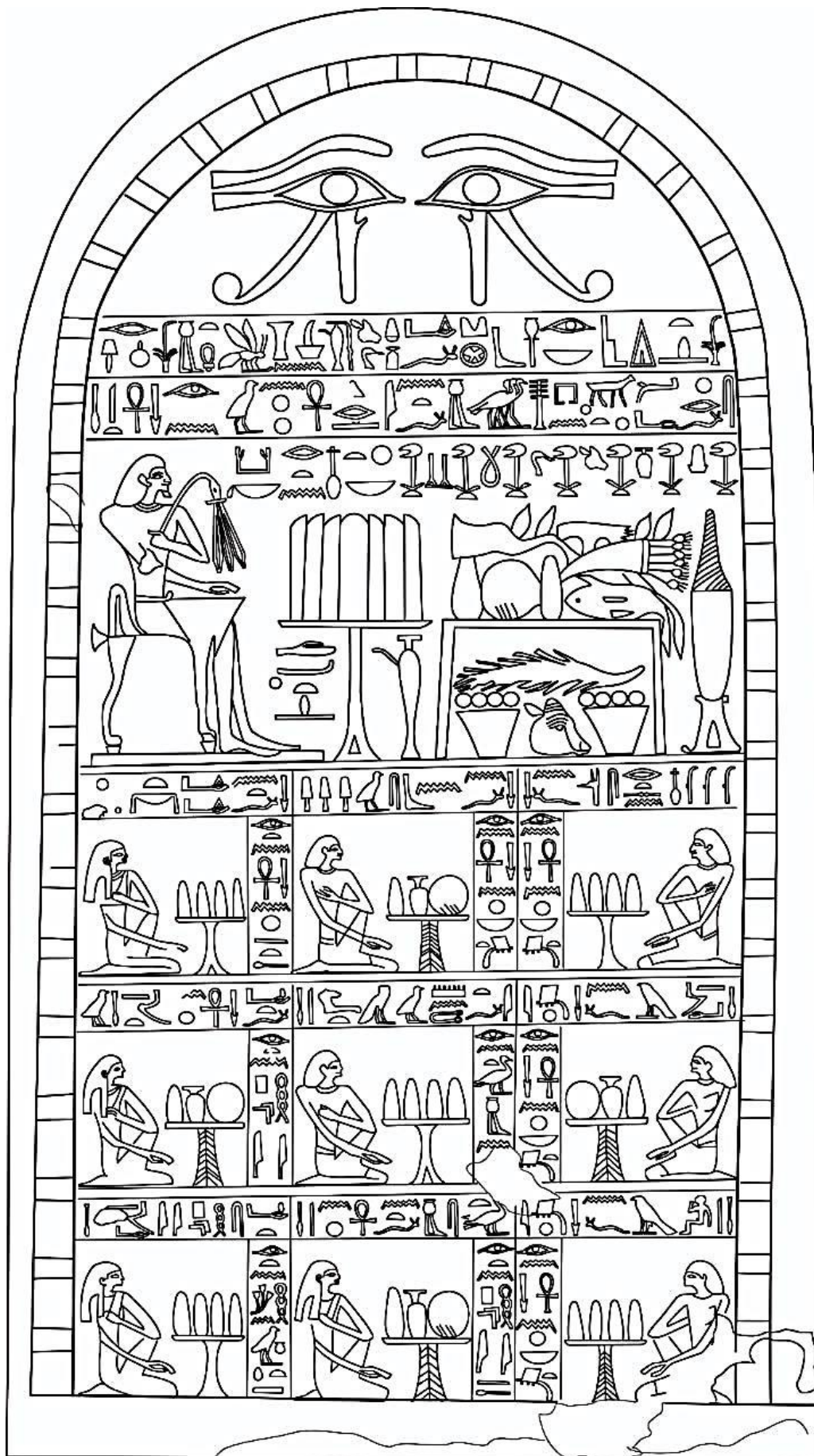
³ FRANKE 1984: N^o. 147; ILIN-TOMICHA 2011: vol.138, 22, 24;

⁴ CG 1902 : vol. 4, N^o.20055, 20059, 20105, 20233, 20334, 20718; GRAJETZKI 2001: 15-17.

⁵ PETRIE 1925: PL. XXVI- XXVIII.



[FIGURE 1]: Limestone funeral stela EA563© British Museum





[FIGURE 2]: Line drawings to the stela of *intf ikr ḥnhw* © Iman Elsaid

II. DESCRIPTION

This rectangular⁶ round-topped limestone stela belonged to *intf ikr 'nhw*. The writing is in sunk relief and is surrounded by a colored bamboo-shaped frame. In the upper part of the frame, there are the *wꜣꜣt* eyes, followed by three horizontal rows of hieroglyphic writing that include the *hꜣp di nsw* titles, and the name of the owner of the stela. Under that, there is a representation of the owner of the stela sitting on a low-back chair with legs in the shape of animals.

He wears a long formal shoulder-length wig, a trim beard and a necklace around his neck. He holds a flail (*nhh*) in his left hand, while his right hand is flat on his right thigh. He also wears a short triangular kilt. Moreover, his body is colored brown, and he is barefoot.

In front of him, there are two offering tables. The first is simple, with one high base in the middle. There are seven vertical loaves of bread on this offering table and a big bowl with a hieroglyphic sign  under it. On the other side,  *dbꜣt hꜣp* is written, which means altar or offering a meal. The other offering table is square with a goose, a thigh of an ox, and a banquet of onion and fruits or vegetables, an ox head between two flowerpots above them, and a palm frond under it. Next to the table is a vessel with a high conical cap.

Below the main offering table scene, there are nine square boxes. Each holds a representation of one of the owner's relatives sitting before an offering table. Every person sits on his right leg on the floor while raising his left knee toward his chest and leaning his left elbow on it, directing his left palm toward his chest. The right arm extends toward his left thigh. The offering tables are the same on the two sides of each row. The middle box is a different shape.

III. TEXT

The Two Lines Under the *wꜣꜣt* Eyes



hꜣp di nsw Wsir nb ꜣbdw di. f t-ꜣnꜣt kꜣw ꜣpdw ꜣph snꜣr mꜣsꜣ⁷ sdꜣwꜣty bꜣtyꜣ⁸ in nsw rh mnꜣ (mnꜣyꜣ⁹)

Offering given by the king (to) Osiris, the lord of *ꜣbdw*, he gives purified bread, beer, bulls, birds, and incense containers to the seal-bearer of the king of Lower Egypt¹⁰, who was appointed as trusty of the king. (Known and trusted by the king).

⁶ Dimensions: 77×47 cm.

⁷ FAULKNER 1982: 120.

⁸ WARD 1982: 170 [1472]

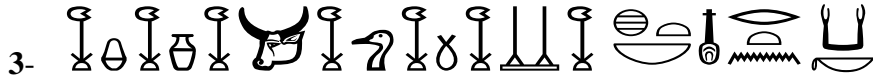
⁹ MEEKS 1977: 77, 2271, 79, 1673; FAULKNER 1982:109.

¹⁰ This title which was held by officials and nobles was honorary. The scenes and inscriptions accompanying the title indicate that the bearers of this title were very noble of the upper class. MOHAMED et Al. 2022: 146.



shr.f imy-r ʿhnw.ty n dd- b3w¹¹ intf-ikr ʿnhw ir n sni ʿnh m3ʿt hrw

He assumed as interior-overseer of the Inner Palace *djed Bʿu intf-ikr ʿnhw* son of *sni ʿnh*
true of voice



h3 t h3 hnkt h3 k3w h3 3bdw h3 šs h3 mnht h3 ht nb nfrt n k3. k

Thousands of bread, thousands of beer, thousands of bulls, thousands of birds,
thousands of alabaster(ropes), thousands of clothes, thousands of every good thing to
your soul.

The Line before the Deceased

The Family of *intf-ikr ʿnhw* from Right to Left



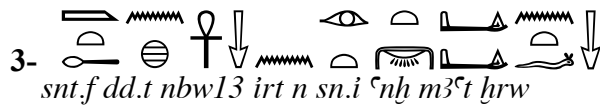
sn.f sn wsrt nfr rnpw ir n sn.i ʿnh nbt im3hw

His brother *snwsrt – nfr rnpw* son of *sn.i ʿnh* the honored lady.



sn.f nbsw 12 ir n sn.i ʿnh nbt im3hw

His brother *nbsw* son of *sn.i ʿnh* the honored lady



snt.f dd.t nbw13 irt n sn.i ʿnh m3ʿt hrw

His sister *dd.t nbw* daughter of *sn.i ʿnh* true of voice



im3hw sn.f hr .i 14ir n sn.i ʿnh nbt im3hw

The revered, his brother *Hory* true of voice, son of *sn.i ʿnh* the honored lady.

¹¹WARD 1982: 17, 93.

¹²PN 1935: vol. 1, 1, 193.

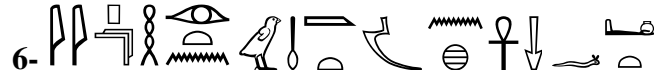
¹³PN 1935: vol. 1, 14, 403.

¹⁴PN 1935: vol. 1, 18, 245.



It.f mntw m h3t15 m3c hrw ir n s3t in // // // // //

His father *mnt.w m h3t* true of voice, son of (his mother) *s3t in // // // // //*



mwt16.f sn.i 3nh m3c hrw irt n hpy17

His mother *sn.i 3nh* true of voice, daughter of *hpy*



im3hw sn fhr.i 3ri18 m3c hrw ir n sn.i 3nh nbt im3hw

The revered, his brother Hory shery true of voice. Son of *sn.i 3nh* the honored lady.



s3t.s int.f 3nh m3c hrw irt n hpy m3c hrw

Her daughter (his aunt) *int.f- 3nh* true of voice daughter of *hpy* true of voice.



Mwt.s h3py m3c hrw irt n hnnwt19

Her mother *h3py* true of voice daughter of *hnnwt*

¹⁵PN 1935: vol. 1, 7, 154.

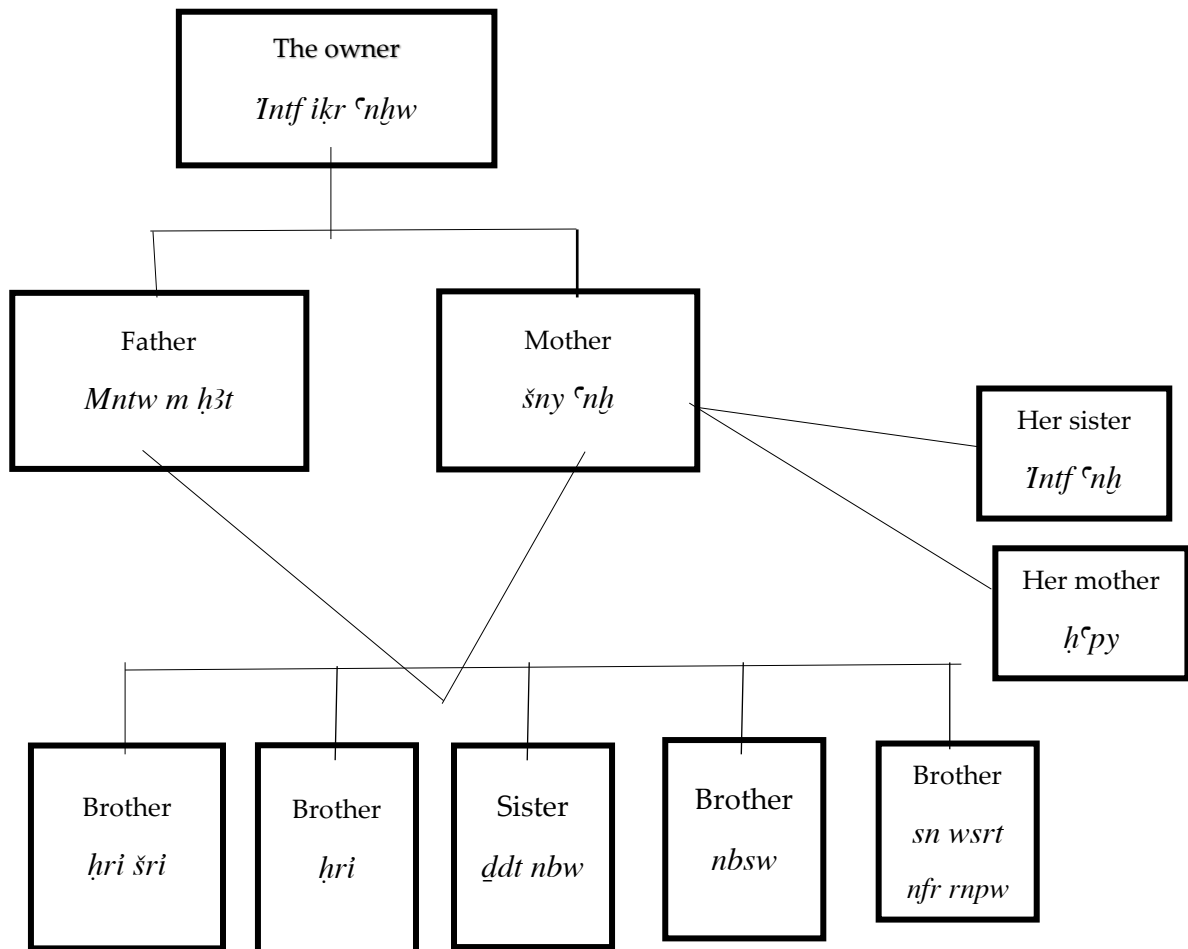
¹⁶WB 1982: vol. 2, 54.

¹⁷PN 1935: vol. 1, 237 [1].

¹⁸PN 1935: vol. 1, 20, 245.

¹⁹PN 1935: vol. 2, 17, 42.

IV. FAMILY GENEALOGY



[SHAPE 1]© Done By Researcher

V. GENERAL COMMENTARY




Stylistic Notes on the Persons and the Offering Table

- A. This stela is well executed. All the details of the stela, including human representations and decorative elements, details of the offering tables and the offerings on it or below it, and hieroglyphs, are precise. However, there is a small broken area at the end of *intf-ikr ʕnhw* father's name, so we do not know his mother's name.
- B. The two offering tables before *intf-ikr ʕnhw* are placed next to each other, which is unusual. The offerings were usually put on the table in layers. Otherwise, if there were two offering tables, they were represented one beside the other as if one were above the other. In this stela, the two tables are placed in succession, with a clarification of the details of each of them, and a more precise distribution of the offerings located above, below, and next to each of them.
- C. There are two types of offering tables in the nine boxes; on type one, there are four vertical loaves of bread; on the other, there is a vertical loaf of bread, a round loaf of bread, and between them, a pottery jar, arranged and depicted ichnographically. Thus, the two offering tables on the sides of each row are similar, and the one in the middle is different.

Religious Comments


D. *wḏ3t* were the eyes of Ra, which *then* became the healthy eyes of Horus that were repaired by the god Thoth. It was a symbol of protection and royal power from the god Horus or Ra. The false doors in the Middle Kingdom, i.e., the place of depicting these eyes, were linked with the conflict between Seth and Horus, in addition to collecting the eye parts until it became the healthy *Wḏ3t* eye, which was equivalent to the successor of Horus on the throne. Also, the eyes symbolized the opening the mouth ritual²⁰. Thus, the stelae symbolically carried the opening the mouth ritual so that the deceased could receive the offerings depicted on the stela. For example, since the third dynasty the false doors were considered the gate between the world of the living and the dead because the deceased crossed through them. They were used to receive offerings. Eventually, in the Middle Kingdom the stela became round topped in form and depicted funerary images²¹. The eyes of Osiris also help revitalize the scenes. The round top stelae emulated a tomb with a vaulted ceiling and simulated the eternal hill that emerged from the eternal ocean, where the sun shone for the first time. The eyes on the round top help the deceased person to see through them and the spirit to become united with the inscriptions. It also represented the sun, the moon, and the eyes of Horus, who was described as «When he opens his eyes, he fills the world with light, and when he closes them, darkness falls. So they protect the deceased from living in darkness, the place of evil»²².



Paleographical and Philological Comments

E. In line 1:  *swt*→*hṯp*→*rḏi*→God Name. This was the writing order for the formula at the end of the the12th dynasty. Also, the writing of  *k3w 3pdw* without the plural sign  was common at the same time²³.

F. Line 2: *imy-r ḥnw.ty n ḏd- b3w*: this title was common in Abydos in the Middle Kingdom²⁴.

G. *ir.n*: this expression was used in the Middle Kingdom instead of the son of or daughter of. It means born of and is followed by the mother's name.

H. In box N^o.5: The father's name is mostly broken. It was: *mnt.w m ḥṯt*  son of *s3t in[tf]*; (his mother).

I. In box N^o.6 & N^o.9, *mwt* was written by the sign  or , which appeared in the Middle Kingdom²⁵.

²⁰EL-TOUKHY 2013: vol. 3, 2, 131-137.

²¹SHAW & NICHOLSON 1995: 278.

²²The *Udjat* eye during the twelfth dynasty reign of Senusret III on a false door in Cairo Museum. GAYET 1886: PL.6; LANG 1902: PL.LII, N^o.20686, and for du Louvre Musée N^o.C7; RIVKA 2003: 7ff.

²³SATZINGER 1997: vol.5, 177-188.

²⁴PETRIE 1925: PL.XXVI; WOLFGANG 1958: 260.

²⁵WB 1982: vol. 2, 54.

- J. The person in box N^o.8: *s3t.s* refers to the sister of the deceased's mother (his aunt). This relationship is clear from both mothers' names²⁶.
- K. There are two important notes about this stela:
- 1- sons, which means either he was unmarried and did not have sons, or he had another stela with his wife and sons.
 - 2- Although the deceased represented his father on the stela, he acknowledged himself, his brothers, and his sister to his mother without mentioning his father's family. He also is attributed his father to his mother, which was common in the Middle Kingdom²⁷.

VI. CONCLUSION

Studying this rectangular funeral stela of *intf ikr ʿnhw*, which is linked with another granite inscription in Wadi El-Hudi bearing the names of *intf ikr ʿnhw* and his mother, illustrates that he was on the head of a troop to the amethyst mines in the 13th year Senusert III's reign. By comparing the *htp di nsw* formula and the stela's sculptural technique with another two stelae from Abydos and Assiut, and currently preserved in the Cairo Museum, it is most likely that this stela was from Abydos. Another important aspect regarding this stela is that the owner documented his mother, brothers, sister, aunt, and maternal grandmother but only referred to his father's name without surnames. Also, he did not mention his wife or sons.

²⁶WB 1982: vol. 4, 151 [I]; SKUMSNES 2019: 310.

²⁷FRANKE 2002: vol.1, 8-9.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- EL-TOUKHY, M.: «Protection Symbols on the Top of the Middle Kingdom Stelae in Cairo Museum», *EJARs* 3/2, 2013, 131-137.
- FAHEED, H.: «The Late Middle Kingdom Stela of the District Official PESESH», *EJARS* 1/2, 2011, 89-96.
- FAKHRY, A.: *The Inscriptions of the Amethyst Quarries at Wadi el Hudi*, Cairo (Government Press) N^o.16, 1952.
- FAULKNER, A.: *Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, London (Butler & Tanner) 1982.
- FRANKE, D.: *Personendaten aus dem mittleren Reich (20.-16. Jahrhundert v. Chr.): Dossiers 1–796*, Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 41, N^o.147, Wiesbaden (Harrassowitz) 1984.
- FRANKE, D.: «The Middle Kingdom Stelae Publication Project, Exemplified by stela BM EA 226», *BMSAES* 1, 2002, 8-9.
- GRAJETZKI, W. : *Two Treasurers of the Late Middle kingdom*, Oxford (Archaeopress) 2001.
- HELCK, W: *Zur Verwaltung Des Mittleren Und Neuen Reichs*, Leiden (E.J. Brill) 1958.
- LANG, H.O. & SCHEAFER, H.: *Catalogue General of Egyptian Antiquities in the Cairo Museum*, vol.4, Cairo (REICLLSDRUCKEREI) 1902.
- MEEKS, D.: *Année Lexicographique* 1, Paris (Librairie Cybèle) 1998.
- MOHAMED, R. M et Al.: «The Titles of Trustworthy Seal Bearer in Ancient Egypt until the End of the Middle Kingdom», *JAAUTH* 22/3, 2022, 120-149.
- SATZINGER, H.: «Eobachtungen zur Opferformel: Theorie und Praxis», *Lingua Aegyptia* 5, 1997, 177-188.
- ILIN-TOMICHA, A.: «Changes in the *hṯp-dj-nsw* Formula in the Late Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period», *ZÄS* 138, 2011, 20-32.
- PETRIE, F.: *Tombs of the Courtiers and Oxythynekhos*, London (Bernard Quaritch) 1925.
- PORTER & MOSS: *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*, vol.7, London (The Alden Pres Ltd.) 1995.
- RIVKA. B & KERN ULMER: «The Divine Eye in Ancient Egypt and in the Midrashic Interpretation of Formative Judaism», *Journal of Religion & Society* 5, 2003, 1-17.
- SHAW, I. & NICHOLSON, P.: *The British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt*, Cairo (AUC Press) 1995.
- SKUMSNES, R.: *The Change in Reference to 'his wife' from *hmt.f tq snt.f*, and the Feminine Element in New Kingdom Tombs*, Norway (University of Oslo) 2019, [The_Change_in_Reference_to_his_wife_from.pdf](#), Accessed on 10/10/2022.
- WARD, W.: *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom*, Beirut (AUB Press) 1982.