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Contributions on archaeology, art, religion, and written sources

Volume II

Edited by

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Front cover: Model of a scribe from shaft 16L25/1C (2710/144) at Deir el-Bersheh, compare colour plate XIII

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The stela of the Thirteenth Dynasty treasurer Senebsumai, Turin Cat. S. 1303

Wolfram Grajetzki, Gianluca Miniaci

Abstract

This is the publication of stela Turin Cat. S. 1303. The stela belongs to the treasurer Senebsumai and is dedicated to him by the 'master of the house for the palace' Khentikhety-hotep, an official not yet known from other sources. The stela adds another monument to the high number of objects known from the most important Thirteenth Dynasty treasurer.

Object: Stela (Fig. 1)

Location: Egyptian Museum, Turin, inv. no. S. 1303 (previously quoted in literature as S. 1298). While the number 1298 is actually written on the stela itself (see Fig. 8), nonetheless today under the inventory number S. 1298 is recorded another object.

Material/measurements: limestone, h. 42 x w. 17 cm

Owner: Khentkhety-hotep

Main person: Senebsumai

Date: Thirteenth Dynasty, about Sobekhotep II to Neferhotep I

Provenance/acquisition: the stela was purchased by Schiaparelli in Egypt in 1900-1901.

Condition: The surface on the right side of the stela is very badly worn in many points; this makes part of the inscription on that side difficult to read. The erosion starts at the top and goes down to the bottom, while the worn area becomes broader to the bottom of the stela. Often only shapeless contours of figures and hieroglyphs remain.¹

Description

A round top stela with carved decoration and inscription, delimited by an incised border line.

The lunette is decorated with two *wedjat*-eyes and a *shen*-ring in the middle. To the left and right sides of the *wedjat*-eyes there are respectively the sign of the East (*ibbt*) and of the West (*imnt*) with a protruding arm making offerings to the eyes.

¹ We are indebted with the Egyptian Museum, Turin for the kind permission to publish this piece. We are grateful to Danijela Stefanović for help with some readings, especially with names, and to Simon Connor for providing us with further information on the stela.

The main field is divided into three registers. In the first register, Senebsumai is sitting on a chair with leonine legs, high drums, and short backrest. He wears a shoulder-length wig that leaves his ear uncovered, a collar, and a long kilt. The right hand is extended forward above his knees, the palm facing down. The left hand, held against the breast, clutches a piece of cloth, in the same way as all the other individuals of the lower registers are represented. In front of the seated figure is a table of offerings with nine elongated loaves depicted upright. On the top of the table is represented a tray with three sealed jars of unguent (two cylindrical *mrht*-type on the sides; one convex at the center). To the right of the table, other offerings are depicted on a tray (possibly some round loaves and, above, a bundle of onions). Below these offerings there are some tall items, not clearly visible, perhaps vessels on stands and/or lettuce.² On the right end of the first register, stands the owner of the stela, Khentkhety-hotep, facing left. He has short-cropped hair and wears a long kilt secured by a knot. His right arm is bent and raised forward, with the hand stretched out and the palm up. His left arm hangs down. Eleven vertical lines of inscription –divided by incised lines– are carved above the whole scene of the first register.

Below the first register there are two registers of roughly equal size, each one divided into three compartments, showing men (upper row) and women (lower row) in the same position: seated with one knee raised, the left arm bent and the hand held against the chest, clutching a piece of cloth, the right arm is stretched downward

² As in Vienna ÄS 110, HEIN, SATZINGER, *Stelen des Mittleren Reiches*, vol. I, 4, 26.



Fig. 1 – Stele of Senebsumai, Egyptian Museum Turin, S 1303. Photo G. Miniaci © Museo Egizio, Torino

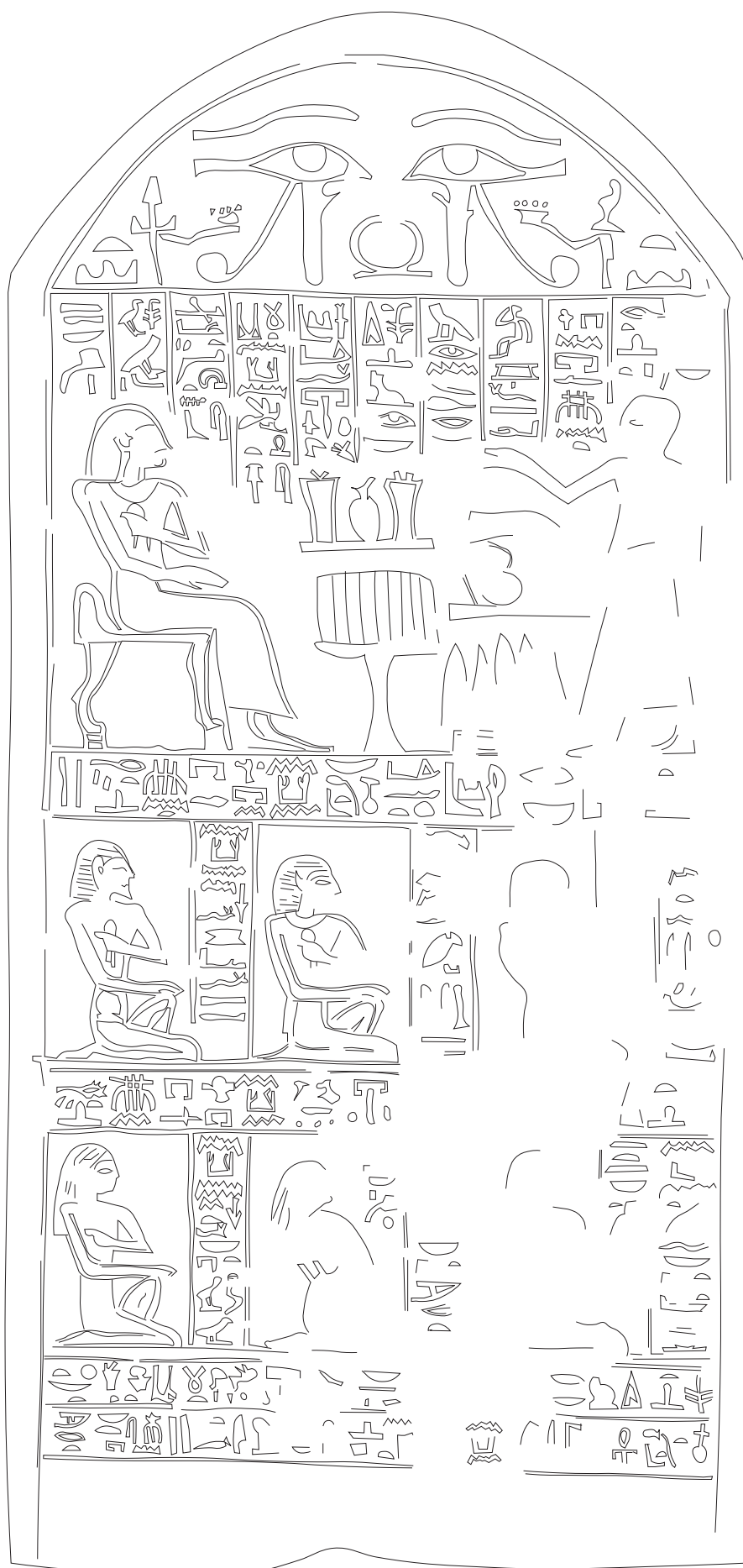


Fig. 2 – Stele of Senebsumai, Egyptian Museum Turin, S 1303. Drawing Wolfram Grajetzki

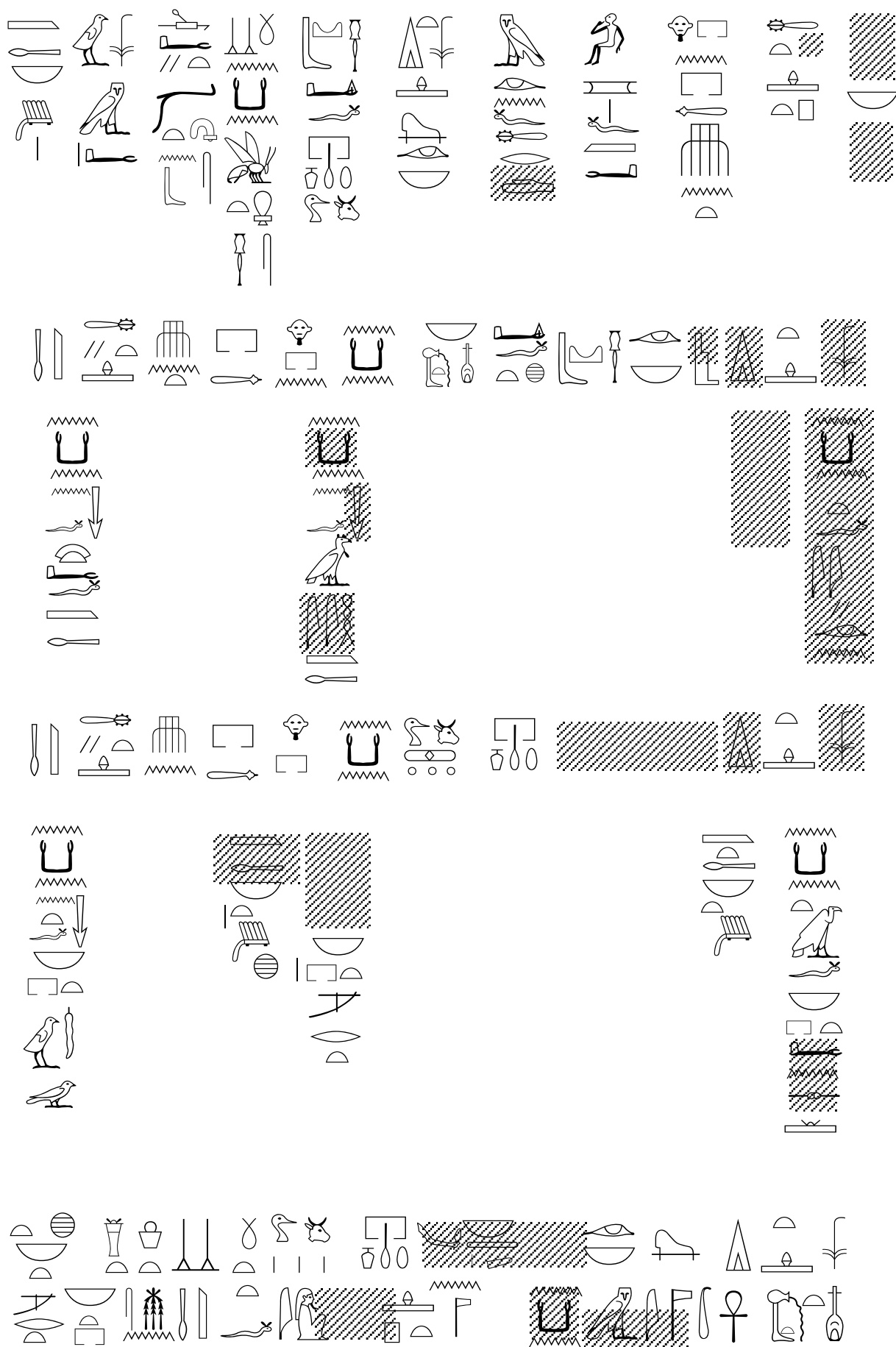


Fig. 3 – Stele of Senebsumai, Egyptian Museum Turin, S 1303. Hieroglyphic text by Wolfram Grajetzki

with the hand held just above the upright knee. Above the rows of men and women there is a horizontal line of hieroglyphs, bearing a *hṭp-di-nswt* formula. In front of each individual is a vertical line of inscription containing the name.

Two lines of hieroglyphs with a *hṭp-di-nswt* formula run below the base-line of the lower register.

Transliteration and translation:

First Register

hṭp di nswt Wsir nb 3bdw di=f prt-hrw t hnkt iḥw 3pdw šs mnḥt n k3 n ḥmty bity smr w^cty imy-r ḥtmt Snb-sw-m^c(.i) m3^c-hrw nb im3ḥ

A king's offering given to Osiris, lord of Abydos, may he give a voice offering consisting of beer, bread, cattle, goose, alabaster and garments, for the *ka* of the royal sealer, sole friend,^(a) treasurer, Senebsumai,^(b) true of voice, lord of provisions.

m ir n=f hrd mry=f m3^c hry-pr n pr-3 Hnti-ḥty-ḥtp [...]
nb im3ḥ

As made for him by his truly beloved child,^(c) the master of the house for the palace,^(d) Khentikhety-hetep^(e)

Second Register

Horizontal line:

[hṭp di nswt] Wsir nb 3bdw di=f ḥt nb<.t> nfr<.t> w^cb.t n k3 n hry-pr n pr-3 Hnti-ḥty-ḥtp m3^c-hrw

[A king's offering given to] Osiris, lord of Abydos, may he give all pure things for the *ka* of the master of the house for the palace, Khentikhety-hetep, true of voice

Vertical columns:

1. *n k3 n it=f ...ii (?) [... ir:n ? ...]*

1. [For the *ka* of] his father^(f) ... y (?),^(g) [... begotten of ?...] (Fig. 4)

2. *[n k3 n sn=f] Nhy (?)*

2. [For the *ka* of his brother] Nehy (?),^(h) true of voice (Fig. 5)

3. *n k3 n sn=f H^ci.f m3^c-hrw*

3. For the *ka* of his brother Khaef,⁽ⁱ⁾ true of voice

Third Register

Horizontal line:

hṭp di nswt [...] prt-hrw t hnkt iḥw 3pdw n k3 n ḥri-pr <n> pr-3 Hnti-ḥty-ḥtp

A king's offering for [...] consisting of a voice offering of bread, beer, cattle and goose, for the *ka* of the master <of> the house for the palace, Khentikhety-hetep

Vertical columns:

1. *n k3 n mw.t=f nb.t pr [...] n.s m3^c.t-hrw nb.t im3ḥ*

1. For the *ka* of his mother, the lady of the house [...]^(j), true of voice, lady of provisions (Fig. 6)

2. *[n k3 n ...] nb.t pr Mr.t m3^c.t-hrw nb im3ḥ*

2. [For the *ka* of] [...] the lady of the house, Meret,^(k) true of voice, lady of provisions (Fig. 7)

3. *n k3 n sn.t=f nb.t pr Ndm-šry ?*

3. For the *ka* of his sister, the lady of the house Nedjem-shrey (?)^(l)

Lower Horizontal Lines (Fig. 8):

hṭp di nswt Wsir nb [...] nb t3 dsr prt-hrw t hnkt iḥw 3pdw šs mnḥt snṯr mrḥt ḥt nb.t nfr.t w^cb.t nḥ[.t] nṯr im [...] nṯr ḥtp [...] Iti (?) m3^c hrw ms n nb.t pr Mr.t

A king's offering for Osiris, lord [...], lord of the sacred land, a voice offering consisting of bread, beer, cattle, fowl, cloth, incense, oil and all good and pure things on which a god lives [...] god's offering [...] Iti (?),^(m) true of voice, born of the lady of the house Meret^(k)

Textual notes:

(a) *smr w^cty*. The treasurer is the only official of the Thirteenth Dynasty bearing regularly the ranking title 'sole friend' (QUIRKE, *Administration*, 69, n. 23).

(b) *Šnbswm^ci*. RANKE, *PN I*, 312, 21. On this official, see GRAJETZKI, *Two treasurers*, 21-5.

(c) *ir n.f hrd.f mry.f*. Khentikhety-hotep labelled himself as child (*hrd.f*) of Senebsumai. The expression *ir n.f hrd.f mry.f* is attested in other two stela mentioning Senebsumai (stelae Roanne 163 and BM EA 215, see list below). However, such an expression, frequent in stelae of Thirteenth Dynasty, might refer to a position of subordination, see FRANKE, *Verwandtschaftsbezeichnungen*, 304 ff. БЕРЛЕВ, in Кацнельсон (ed.), *Древний Египет*, 11-14; БЕРЛЕВ, *Общественные отношения*, 49, 210, 317; SCHMITZ, *ZÄS* 108, 53-60; GRAJETZKI, *Two Treasures*, 74. Accordingly, Khentikhety-hotep could have been one of the officials employed under Senebsumai in the royal palace.

(d) *hry-pr n pr-3*. The title was reserved for staff of the royal palace, see QUIRKE, *Titles and bureaux*, 47; FRANKE, MARÉE (ed.), *Egyptian Stelae in the British Museum*, vol. I/1, 47 (5a, 9a, 18); GRAJETZKI, *Two treasurers*, 48; БЕРЛЕВ,

Общественные отношения, 129-34, 150-61; list of title holders on p. 133 (no *Hnti-hty-htp* among them).

(e) *Hnti-hty-htp*. RANKE, *PN* I, 273, 1.

(f) The signs of this column are hardly detectable. A 't', and a 'f' signs seem to be visible. Since in the lower register at the first position, 'his mother' is mentioned, by analogy, here it is possible to assume that the group belongs to the words 'his father'.

(g) ...*ii* (?). The reading 'his father' is more a guess. The name of the person ends with *ii*; there are two long signs (Gardiner M17?) and two strokes (Gardiner Z4).

(h) *Nhy* (?). The name starts with a bird and there are the remains of three long signs. This could be Nehy (RANKE, *PN*,

207, 19), a popular name in the Thirteenth Dynasty. The three long signs look like (from the right) a 'h' followed by two reeds.

(i) *Ht.f*. Not in RANKE, *PN*.

(j) The name of the mother is hard to read. There are three horizontal lines visible, perhaps to read 'n.s' (not in RANKE, *PN*, but compare RANKE, *PN*, 61, 7; 62, 13).

(k) *Mr.t*. RANKE, *PN* I, 158, 13.

(l) *ndm-šry*. Not in RANKE, *PN*, but compare RANKE, *PN*, 216, 4-6. The name is partly destroyed. The first sign is perhaps *ndm* (Gardiner M29), while the next sign is a bird, perhaps a 'w'. The last sign is again a bird.

(m) *Iti* (?). RANKE, *PN* I, 15, 13.



Fig. 4 – Detail of the first row of persons, first figure



Fig. 5 – Detail of the first row of persons, second figure

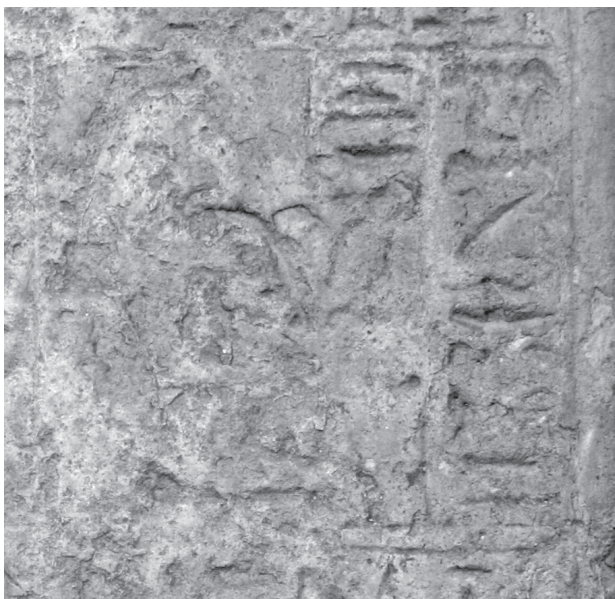


Fig. 6 – Detail of the second row of persons, first figure



Fig. 7 – Detail of the second row of persons, second figure



Fig. 8 – (below) Detail of the last two horizontal lines

Style

The stela belongs to a group with similar composition in the uppermost section, all showing two *wedjat*-eyes, a *shen*-ring in the middle, and the east and west sign making offerings to the eyes: CG 20147 (SIMPSON, *The Terrace of the Great God*, pl. 32, ANOC 22.2), CG 20614 (LANGE, SCHÄFER, *Grab- und Denkstein*, vol. II, 253-55), Leyden AP.42 (BOESER, *Beschreibung*, vol. II, 10 [35], pl. 25 [35]), Leyden AP.35 (BOESER, *Beschreibung*, II, 8 [24], pl. 23 [24]). The Turin stela is especially close in style to Chicago Field Museum of Natural History no. 31647 (ALLEN, *Egyptian Stelae in Field Museum of Natural History*, 24-5, pl. 8), Zagreb no. 4 (MONNET SALEH, *Les antiquités égyptiennes de Zagreb*, 15), and Roanne 163.³ These four stelae share a certain number of features, but the main point of contact is given by the west and east signs with offering arms in the roundel. At least three of them belong to people related to Senebsumai; stelae Roanne 1623 and Turin S. 1303 directly represent the figure of Senebsumai, while the stela in Chicago belongs to the ‘cupbearer’ Iauemnut, also most likely part of the staff of the treasurer.⁴ These three stela might even have been commissioned on the same occasion. The Zagreb stela is executed in a similar style, but there are no visible connections with the people on the other stelae.

Comment

The Turin stela belongs to a group of stelae showing on one side a higher official and in front of him a serving official. In these registers below the main scene six people are represented, most likely members of Khentikhety-hotep’s family. Many of these stelae seem to have been set up in pairs. On one stela the serving official appears in front of the official, while the other stela of

the pair shows the serving official as main person. Also several stelae that are decorated on both sides might be listed under such a type of stela. The front side is dedicated to a high official; the back side is mainly dedicated to the serving official.⁵

The stela was set up by Khentkhety-hotep, who was part of the entourage of the treasurer Senebsumai. Although he labelled himself as one of ‘his children’, the expression *ir n.f hrd.f mry.f* is regularly employed to indicate subordination in a working relation and transmits the ‘sacral’ relationship of father and son onto a master/servant dependence, as in the specific case of Senebsumai and Khentkhety-hotep. In this context the expression ‘his child’ seems to announce that Khentkhety-hotep was brought up in the house of Senebsumai, but clearly he was not one of his children.⁶ Khentkhety-hotep was clearly a palace official on a middle level, mainly working within the domestic parts of the royal palace.⁷ However, it seems that he grew up in the house of Senebsumai, a high official and was from there placed into the palace administration. This might show how much private households and palace administration were intermingled.

People on the stela:

The main owner of the monument is the ‘master of the house for the palace’ Khentikhety-hotep.⁸ Khentikhety-hotep was most likely part of the entourage of Senebsumai, but to our best knowledge he seems not to be known from any other monument. Khentikhety-hotep appears three times on the stela, mentioned and represented in the top of the stela, and in the two offering formulae that head the two registers below. Detlef Franke noted that several of the lower officials in front of a higher one played the role of a *sem*-priest, a role that was normally

³ For a more detailed stylistic comparison, see GRAJETZKI, *Two Treasurers*, 64-5.

⁴ GRAJETZKI, *Court Officials*, 128, fig. 50.

⁵ GRAJETZKI, *Two Treasurers*, 69-70.

⁶ FRANKE, *Verwandtschaftsbezeichnungen*, 304-8.

⁷ БЕРЛЕВ, *Общественные отношения*, 132-58, QUIRKE, *Titles and bureaux*, 46-7.

⁸ БЕРЛЕВ, *Общественные отношения*, 133 (list of title holders).

performed by a real son. He argues that their daily service at work was “transformed and displayed for eternity in a ritual role”.⁹ The officials in these scenes wear a leopard skin, best visible from the tail hanging down from the figure of the official and hold in his hand.¹⁰ However, the figure of Khentikhety-hotep on the Turin stela is too much destroyed to confirm whether he was also holding a tail. The question must remain open whether Khentikhety-hotep appears here as *sem*-priest.

Senebsumai¹¹ is one of the best attested officials of the Thirteenth Dynasty and he is the official with the highest numbers of Abydos stelae known. He started his career as ‘high steward’ and was later appointed ‘treasurer’. Two stelae and a statue attest him as ‘high steward’. The statue comes perhaps from Ballas. In the Petrie Notebooks of Ballas there is a copy of the inscription of the statue¹² (Fig. 9). Eight stelae from Abydos were dedicated to the ‘treasurer’ Senebsumai from his subordinates and two dedicated by high-ranking officials (see FRANKE, MARÉE (ed.), *Egyptian Stelae in the British Museum*, vol. I/1, 50). Other monuments of Senebsumai were found all around Egypt. They include a bronze statue¹³ –perhaps from Hawara– and an inscribed fragment from Dahshur, most likely from his tomb. He is mentioned in papyri found at Lahun,¹⁴ and he is known in more than forty seals and sealings.¹⁵

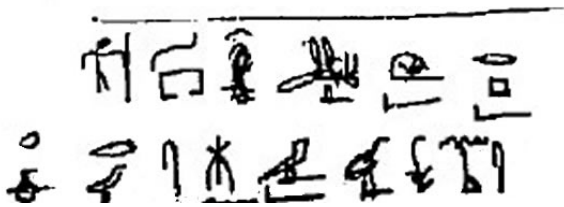


Fig. 9 – Copy of inscription in Petrie's Ballas notebook

Chronological and topographical settings:

Due to the presence of the well-known treasurer Senebsumai, the stela may be dated with certainty to the mid Thirteenth Dynasty. Although none of the documents known for Senebsumai are clearly linked with a king's reign, nonetheless he was contemporary of Ressen-

and Iymeru, the sons of the vizier Ankhu; therefore, Senebsumai should have been in office during the time of about Sobekhotep II to Neferhotep I.

The provenance of the stela is unknown, although in several occasions the stela has been related with Abydos, sometimes also mentioned as the probable find spot. This might have been occurred because other stelae quoting Senebsumai come from Abydos. However, it must be acknowledged that on 12 occurrences of Senebsumai on stelae, only for two of them the find place can be precisely assessed (CG 20334 and CG 20718, Abydos). The other stelae remain unprovenanced, as the Turin S. 1303. The new discoveries by Josef Wegner in Abydos South shed new light on the site under the kings of the Thirteenth Dynasty.¹⁶ There is now good evidence that Neferhotep I and Sobekhotep IV were buried here.¹⁷ Evidently, many officials must have been at Abydos for building work at the royal burial complex. It seems also likely that some of them were buried at Abydos, as for instance –with all probability– the ‘overseer of fields’ Dedtu. Blocks of a chapel were found in Abydos and most likely they belong to a tomb of that official at this place.¹⁸

In this context, Abydos appears as the most likely find spot for many of the stela belonging to Senebsumai, but not the only possible one. Senebsumai, in fact, was most likely buried at Dahshur, because an inscription with his titles and names were recorded there.¹⁹ As suggested by W. K. Simpson²⁰ and Detlef Franke, Senebsumai could have created at Abydos an offering chapel for his household, subordinates, and associates.²¹ Further excavations at the site may help solve this question and provide a clearer context for the Khentikhety-hotep stela now in Turin.

Appendix

Stelae where Senebsumai is attested:

as *imy-r pr wr*

- Cairo CG 20075 (LANGE, SCHÄFER, *Grab- und Denksteine*, vol. I, 89-92)
- Cairo CG 20459 (LANGE, SCHÄFER, *Grab- und Denksteine*, vol. II, 58-9)

⁹ FRANKE, in QUIRKE, *Discovering Egypt from the Neva*, 75.

¹⁰ *Art. cit.*, 65-7.

¹¹ List of objects: FRANKE, *Personendaten*, 391, Doss. 667; GRAJETZKI, *Two Treasurers*, 12-25.

¹² Statue, seen at Ballas (FRANKE, *OMRO* 68, 59-76; for Ballas as find spot: GRAJETZKI, *Court officials*, 191; Petrie Museum, Archives, notebook Ballas, p. 21).

¹³ PM VIII [1], 371 [801-426-801].

¹⁴ GRAJETZKI, *Two Treasurers*, 17-18, pls. 7-8; COLLIER, QUIRKE, *The UCL Lahun Papyri*, 162-3. (UC32100B), 170-1 (UC32104).

¹⁵ GRAJETZKI, *Two Treasurers*, 18-20.

¹⁶ WEGNER, in MINIACI, QUIRKE, BETRÒ (eds.), *Company of Images*.

¹⁷ WEGNER, CAHAIL, *JARCE* 51, 123-64.

¹⁸ CAHAIL, *JARCE* 51, 121.

¹⁹ MARIETTE, MASPERO, *Les mastabas de l'Ancien Empire*, 583.

²⁰ SIMPSON, *The Terrace of the Great God*, 18-9, pls. 26-7 (ANOC 17), 30 (ANOC 250).

²¹ FRANKE, MARÉE (ed.), *Egyptian Stelae in the British Museum*, vol. I/1, 50.

as *imy-r hmt*

- BM EA 215 (FRANKE, MARÉE (ed.), *Egyptian Stelae in the British Museum*, vol. I/1, 45-51)
- BM EA 252 (FRANKE, MARÉE (ed.), *Egyptian Stelae in the British Museum*, vol. I/1, 134-7)
- Cairo CG 20334, from *Abydos* (LANGE, SCHÄFER, *Grab- und Denksteine*, vol. I, 346-7)
- Cairo CG 20718, from *Abydos* (LANGE, SCHÄFER, *Grab- und Denksteine*, vol. II, 345-6)
- Leiden 14 (AP.2) (BOESER, *Beschreibung*, II, 6 [14], pl. 15 [14])
- Pittsburgh 2983-6701 (PATCH, *Reflections of greatness*, 32-3)
- Sinopoli collection (Rome) Egi06 (ROCCATI, in QUIRKE, *Discovering Egypt from the Neva*, 111-4, pl. 7)
- Roanne 163 (DE MEULENAERE, *CdE* 60, 75-84)
- St. Petersburg, Hermitage 1084 (BOLSHAKOV, QUIRKE, *The Middle Kingdom Stelae in the Hermitage*, 53-7, pl. 11)
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