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Two Notes on Middle Kingdom Annals*

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Abstract

The first part of the paper deals with a fragment from Cairo published by Daressy in *Annales du Service des antiquités de l'Égypte* 4 (1903), 102. It is argued that this piece formed part of an annalistic monument. The comparison with the annals of Senwosret I and Amenemhat II as well as the Old Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period annals leads to a conclusion that the original text dates in the Middle Kingdom. As indicated by the orthography the preserved piece belonged to a late copy. A complete transliteration and translation of the piece are given.

The second part concerns the word *ḏhꜣt* occurring in the annals of Amenemhat II. H. Altenmüller and A. Moussa have translated it as a "six-spoked wheel". However, the archaeological data and the context make this rendering unlikely. It is suggested that the term could denote a cheekpiece of a bridle bit.

Two examples of Middle Kingdom annals are presently known: the annals of Senwosret I from Cairo and the Memphite annals of Amenemhat II.

The annals of Senwosret I were discovered in Cairo in 2004 and published by Lilian Postel and Isabelle Régen¹. They are preserved on a quartzite block, presumably from Heliopolis, reused in the Fatimid gateway Bâb al-Tawfiq in Cairo.

The Memphite annals of Amenemhat II are preserved on two granite pieces reused in Ramesside times. One was found by Flinders Petrie², and the other by Labib Habachi³.

I The Al-Azhar fragment: a further example of Middle Kingdom annals?

In 1991, Hans Goedicke noted⁴ that the text on a door jamb found in 1903 by Georges Daressy in Cairo⁵ has much in common with the annals of Amenemhat II. The publication of the Senwosret I annals from Bâb al-Tawfiq (discovered in 2004 some 600 meters away from the place where Daressy found the piece in question⁶) seems to

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1 Postel & Régen (2005).

2 Petrie (1909: pl. V). This piece is exhibited in the open-air museum at Mit Rahineh and can be consulted there.

3 Farag (1980); Altenmüller & Moussa (1991); Malck & Quirke (1992). A full edition of both fragments announced by Malek and Quirke has never appeared.

4 Goedicke (1991: 89, n. 6).

5 Daressy (1903: 101-103).

6 Postel & Régen (2005: 229).

provide further arguments to treat the Al-Azhar fragment as a piece of XII dynasty annals preserved in a late copy⁷.

The door jamb was found in a bookshop near Al-Azhar mosque in Cairo; hence Daressy assumed its Heliopolitan origin. The text was copied by Ahmed Kamal (his copy may be not very reliable as is often the case with inscriptions edited by him, see numerous misreadings in his *Tables d'offrandes*, which can be noted when comparing the hieroglyphic renderings with accompanying photos). The Al-Azhar jamb is made of quartzite⁸ and inscribed on two adjoining sides.

The text lists dedicatory and building activities by a certain king and gives an account of dispatching a statue of a king Senwosret. Early scholars of this text arbitrarily attributed it to Senwosret I⁹. Epigraphic features uncommon for the Middle Kingdom have led to a conclusion that it's a Late Period inscription or a late copy of an original Middle Kingdom text¹⁰. Labib Habachi has identified the king with Senwosret I arguing that a temple of Satet, Anuket and Khnum mentioned here is identical with the temple built by that king on Elephantine¹¹. Ramadan el-Sayed has argued that the inscription can't be earlier than the Saite period and suggested that it could belong to Nectanebo I¹². This identification is based on the fact that Nectanebo adopted the throne name of Senwosret I (*Hpr-kꜣ-Rꜥ*). However, the Al-Azhar jamb contains only the nomen Senwosret, not the prenomen Kheperkare, so el-Sayed's reconstruction seems highly hypothetical. Detlef Franke has supported the view of el-Sayed considering that the text could refer to a Senwosret I statue set up by Nectanebo I¹³. The other possibility derived by Franke from the comparison of the piece in question with the annals of Amenemhat II is that the monument could be a late copy of a XII dynasty inscription¹⁴.

Since Dynasty IV, most royal annals have one feature in common: each year begins with a *jr.n.f m mnw.f* formula¹⁵. This holds true for the records of the IV and V dynasty kings in Palermo stone (later: PS) and Cairo fragments 1, 3 and 4¹⁶, the VI dynasty annals from South Saqqara¹⁷, the Bâb al-Tawfiq annals of Senwosret I, the

7 Grallert (2001: 565) also considers the possibility that the text in question could be a part of annals, but she finds it unlikely.

8 According to PM IV 69.

9 Daressy (1903: 103); Breasted (1906: 241-242 [§500]).

10 Vandier (1955: 607); Redford (1983: 77, n. 76).

11 Habachi (1975: 37). This view is also favoured by Valbelle (1981: 11), and Hirsch (2004: 59).

12 El-Sayed (1982: 287, n. 1).

13 Franke (1994, 50).

14 Franke (1994: 50, Anm. 161). Grallert (2001: 564) considers both solutions proposed by Franke to be possible, but favours ascribing the monument to Nectanebo I.

15 On the use of *jr.n.f m mnw.f* in the Palermo stone, see Tawfiq (1985). The peculiarities of use of this formula in royal annals receive little attention in the recent studies concerning *jr.n.f m mnw.f*, see: Depuydt (2001), and literature cited there. One example from the Kawa temple annals of Taharqa was studied by Castle (1993: 102-103).

16 Wilkinson (2000).

17 Baud & Dobrev (1995).

<i>ḥd ḥst 1</i>	of silver: 1 <i>ḥst</i> -vase
<i>nbw ḥst 1</i>	of gold: 1 <i>ḥst</i> -vase
<i>ḥsmn ḥst 1</i>	of bronze: 1 <i>ḥst</i> -vase
<i>ḥmt ḥst 2</i>	of copper: 2 <i>ḥst</i> -vases
<i>ḥbnj ḥ-n-ḥt-nṯr²⁴ 1</i>	of ebony: 1 censer
<i>ḥd ḥ-n-ḥt-nṯr 1</i>	of silver: 1 censer
<i>Ḥntj-Imntjw nb 3bdw</i>	For Khentyamentiu, the lord of Abydos:
(x+3) [...] <i>ḥsmn ḥst 1</i>	[...] of bronze: 1 <i>ḥst</i> -vase
<i>ḥmt ḥst 2</i>	of copper: 2 <i>ḥst</i> -vases
<i>ḥbnj ḥ-n-ḥt-nṯr 1</i>	of ebony: 1 censer
<i>Jnhrt m Tnj</i>	For Onuris in Thinis ²⁵ :
<i>ḥd ḥst 1</i>	of silver: 1 <i>ḥst</i> -vase
<i>nbw ḥst 1</i>	of gold: 1 <i>ḥst</i> -vase
<i>ḥsmn ḥst 1</i>	of bronze: 1 <i>ḥst</i> -vase
<i>ḥmt ḥst 2</i>	of copper: 2 <i>ḥst</i> -vases
<i>ḥbnj ḥ-n-ḥt-nṯr 1</i>	of ebony: 1 censer
<i>ḥd ḥ-n-ḥt-nṯr 1</i>	of silver: 1 censer
<i>Jpw(j)</i>	For Ipuī (“the One of Akhmim”)
<i>ḥd ḥst 1</i>	of silver: 1 <i>ḥst</i> -vase
<i>nbw ḥst 1</i>	of gold: 1 <i>ḥst</i> -vase
<i>ḥsmn ḥst 1</i>	of bronze: 1 <i>ḥst</i> -vase
<i>ḥmt ḥst 2</i>	of copper: 2 <i>ḥst</i> -vases
<i>ḥbnj ḥ-n-ḥt-nṯr 1</i>	of ebony: 1 censer
<i>ḥd ḥst²⁶ (?) [...]</i>	of silver: <i>ḥst</i> -vase (censer ?) [...]
(x+4) [...] <i>m gr]gt</i>	[For ... in Ger]get ²⁷ :
<i>mnjt 1</i>	1 <i>mnjt</i> -necklace
<i>qd ḥwt-nṯr n Stt n ḥnkt Ḥnmw ḥntj</i>	Building a temple for Satet, for Anuket and
<i>qbḥw m jnr</i>	Khnum, who is in front of the cataract-region ²⁸ , of stone.
<i>sḥḥ ḥwt-nṯr n Ḥr t3-stj m wts-ḥr</i>	Erecting a temple for Horus of Ta-Seti in Utes-
[...]	Hor [...]

24 Spelling after annals of Amenemhet II, col. M 5, 9, 27, 29, 30.

25 For occurrences of *Jnhrt m Tnj* see Leitz (2002a: 148).

26 Read *ḥ-n-ḥt-nṯr*?

27 The restoration is supported by the fact that Gerget was located in the 9th Upper Egyptian nome to the north of Akhmim (it is listed next to Akhmim in three Middle Kingdom papyri, see Gomaā (1986: 1, 232) and in this list of donations the temples stand in geographical order, from south to north: Elephantine (?), Abydos, Thinis, Akhmim. Gerget is mentioned in two documents from the time of Senwosret I: papyrus Reisner II, vs5 and stela Lyon H 1374 (Gabolde [1988, 62]; can be dated palaeographically by the occurrence of the sign Y1 with a single lace).

Grallert (2001: 564-565) restores [*ḥm3*]gt (garnet) here; such restoration is unlikely because it doesn't fit the geographical determinative ☒.

28 Epithet of Khnum attested in the 11th dynasty Satet temple (Leitz 2002b: V, 867). A similar epithet *nb qbḥw* (the lord of cataract-region) was far more common in the Middle Kingdom and is attested on the monuments of Senwosret I (stela BM 963).

(year x+2)	
(x+5) [...] <i>jr.n.f m mnw.f n Jtm nb Jwnw</i>	[... he has made], as his monument for Atum, lord of Heliopolis:
<i>hḏ hnw(t)-2</i> [...]	of silver: 2 <i>hnw(t)</i> -vessels [...]
(right side)	
(x+1) [...] <i>nbw ddwt l hḏ</i> [...]	of gold: 1 <i>ddwt</i> -dish of silver: [...]
(x+2) [...] <i>twṯ r Sṯw mst wṯḏt nb(t) Dp P</i>	[...] the statue of king [...] ²⁹ to Sais. Creation (of a statue) of Uadjet, lady of Buto (and donation):
<i>hmt wsh l</i>	of copper: 1 <i>wsh</i> -cup
<i>šms twṯ S-n-wsrt {s} r P hnt Jpw(j), Nbw, Nbt-Hwt</i> [...]	Dispatching a statue of Senwosret to Buto in front of Ipui (“the One of Akhmim”), the Golden One (Hathor) and Nephthys [...]
(x+3) [...] <i>psḏt m hr-ḥḥ hmt wsh l</i>	[... (for)] the Ennead in Kher-aha: of copper: 1 <i>wsh</i> -cup
<i>msjt Hᶜp</i>	Creation (of a statue) of Hapi.
<i>nṯt m ḥsft r ḥbw r ḏjt wdḥw n nṯrw šmᶜw</i>	Sailing upstream to Elephantine to give offering-tables ³⁰ to the Upper Egyptian Gods ³¹ .
<i>Hwt-Hr nb(t) Jwnt</i>	For Hathor, the lady of Dendera:
<i>nbw (x+4) [...] hmṯgt l h</i> [...]	of gold: [...] 1 garnet necklace [...]
<i>Hwt-Hr nb(t) Kjs</i>	For Hathor, the lady of Cusae:
<i>hmṯgt l msnt l</i>	1 garnet necklace 1 <i>msnt</i> -necklace
[...]	[...]

The content of the preserved piece may be summarised as follows:

(recto) Year x+1: a list of donations in geographical order (south to north), a list of building activities in geographical order.

Year x+2: donations to Atum [...]

(verso) Year y: erection of royal statues, royal participation in festivals, a list of donations to temples.

From its content, the Al-Azhar inscription is close to the known Middle Kingdom annals.

Just like the Bâb al-Tawfiq text, it consists of non-verbal lists of donations to certain temples (possibly these are thought to be extensions of the *jr.n.f m mnw.f*

29 Only a bottom part of a cartouche-ring is preserved.

30 Donation of offering-tables is mentioned in the Tod inscription of Senwosret I.

31 Grallert (2001: 564-565) reads *nṯrw Šw* (gods of Syene). Other examples of *Šwnw* spelled as *Šw* $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ are unknown to me. *Nṯrw šmᶜw* (Upper Egyptian Gods) seems more likely here, since this expression is attested in other sources (Leitz [2002b: IV, 544] cites attestations in the Pyramid Texts, Coffin Texts and an Old Kingdom Tomb).

formula) and narrative phrases utilising infinitives to describe actions. The annals of Amenemhet II contain lengthier narrative passages, and it can be seen there that infinitive phrases serve only as headings of the passages and are followed by *sdm.n.f* forms (see cols. M 11, M 12, M 13, M 15, M 18³²: *jn.n.sn*).

The Al-Azhar text mentions donations of jewelry, liturgical utensils, and statues to the temples. In this respect the text resembles both the annals of Senwosret I and of Amenemhet II. In the Old Kingdom annals (the PS and related fragments) other types of donations prevail: land, ships, establishment of regular offerings. The annals of king Pemu³³ mention the establishment of regular offerings and donations of silver³⁴. The only late texts comparable to the Al-Azhar inscriptions are the Taharqa stelae from Kawa recording his annual donations to Amon-Re, lord of Gematon³⁵. The Kawa stelae contain the extensive lists of utensils donated to Amon-Re each year. However, there is a distinctive feature present on the Kawa stelae and in the annals of Pemu that is absent in the Middle Kingdom annals and in the Al-Azhar inscription. When speaking of an utensil of a precious metal the Kawa stelae specify the total amount of metal donated, like in Kawa stela III, col. 7: *hd nmst 1 jr n dbn 15* (“of silver: 1 jug made of 15 deben”). This phrase *jr n dbn x* is frequent on the Kawa stelae and also occurs in the Pemu annals (col. 20, context partially destroyed). Such weight evaluations are completely absent in the earlier annals and in the Al-Azhar inscription.

The Kawa stelae also mention types of donations uncommon in the Old and Middle Kingdom annals, such as personnel, clothes, musical instruments.

The actions mentioned in the Al-Azhar fragment are quite common for royal annals of the Old and Middle Kingdom: building (*qd*)³⁶, erection (*s^ch^c*)³⁷, creation (of statues) (*mst*)³⁸, and dispatching (statues) (*šms*)³⁹. The only action not mentioned in other annals is sailing (*n^cr*). The account of king’s sailing upstream in the Al-Azhar fragment can be vaguely compared with a description of a royal fowling and fishing holiday in Fayum from the annals of Amenemhet II (col. M 23-M 25). The Late Period annals (those of Pemu and Taharqa) do not use the verb *šms* in relation to statues (it seems that this use of *šms* is not attested after the New Kingdom).

The annals of Senwosret I and Amenemhet II provide close parallels to our inscription. The annals of Senwosret I are closer due to the use of *jr.n.f m mnw*

32 Cited after Altenmüller & Moussa (1991).

33 Bickel, Gabolde & Tallet (1998).

34 The Chronicle of Prince Osorkon also contains accounts of the establishment of regular offerings in a number of Egyptian temples.

35 Macadam (1949: pl. 5-6, 11-12); Ritner (2009: 527-534 & 545-552).

36 Building (*qd*) is not mentioned in the preserved Middle Kingdom annals, however, it is common in the Old Kingdom annals: PS r.V.2 (Khasekhemwy), PS r.VI.2 (Sneferu), PS v.II.2 (Userkaf).

37 Occurs in the Bâb al-Tawfiq annals of Senwosret I and the annals of Amenemhet II (and in the Old Kingdom annals as well).





38 Occurs in the Petrie fragment, col. 3 (*mst wpt-r^c Hwt-Hr*), and other Middle Kingdom sources: Genève D 50 (*mst Jst-Jrt* “creation (of a statue) of Osiris”), Berlin 1204 (*ms n^crw jmjw-ht.f*). Also often in the Old Kingdom annals.

39 Accounts of dispatching various statues can be found in the Bâb al-Tawfiq annals of Senwosret I (col. x+11, x+17) and the annals of Amenemhet II (M 5; Petrie fragment col. 9). In the Old Kingdom annals, the accounts of dispatching (*šms*) follow the accounts of creating statues (Palermo stone v.1.2: v.IV.3), and in the Middle Kingdom annals, *šms* occurs independently.

formulas and similar provenance (both fragments were found in Cairo and are likely to originate from Heliopolis). In the notes to the translation above, it is shown that sources from the time of Senwosret I witness the activity of this king in many areas mentioned in the Al-Azhar fragment. The occurrence of a god named *Jpw(j)* also favours setting the text in the time of Senwosret I. This god frequently occurs in theophoric names during the Middle and New Kingdoms, however, he is rarely mentioned in texts *per se*. And one of only three known mentions of this god in Egyptian texts⁴⁰ is provided by the White Chapel of Senwosret I. *Jpw* stands there both for the name of the capital of the 9th Upper Egyptian nome and for the name of its god⁴¹.

It is noteworthy that, unlike most other annals, the Al-Azhar fragment documents systematic donations to temples of a certain region, not only to the most important temples of Egypt. In the text we meet a following sequence: Khentyamentiu, lord of Abydos, Onuris in Thinis, Ipui (of Akhmim) and, possibly, a lord of Gerget. It correlates with four cultic centres of the 8th and 9th Upper Egyptian nomes listed in geographical order⁴². This list is close to the list of localities from the Ramesseum Onomasticon: Abydos, Thinis, *hwt-Wnjs*, Akhmim, Gerget⁴³. Such thoroughness correlates with an impression of the cultic policy of Senwosret I given by his monuments discovered in various temples throughout Egypt (in the words of Labib Habachi, he was 'active everywhere'⁴⁴).

Nothing in content or grammar of the Al-Azhar fragment contradicts its Middle Kingdom origin. The lack of lexical and grammatical features of the Late Period is probably the most weighty argument against the late date of the composition proposed by el-Sayed.

The only indication of the late date is provided by the orthography. Two spellings clearly show that the piece can't be dated to the Middle Kingdom. The writing of *Sjw*  (Sais) has already been used by Ramadan el-Sayed⁴⁵ and Detlef Franke⁴⁶ to date this piece. Spellings of *Sjw* with  are never met before the Saite Period⁴⁷. A further argument is provided by the spelling of *3bdw*  (Abydos) with ; such spellings only occur since the New Kingdom⁴⁸.

So the Al-Azhar block evidently preserves a piece of royal annals from the Middle Kingdom, most likely from the time of Senwosret I, preserved in a late copy. It can be related to the other late copies of documents from the time of Senwosret I such as the well-known Berlin leather roll (Dynasty XVIII), the Dramatic Ramesseum Papyrus

40 According to Leitz (2002b: I, 221).

41 Lacau & Chevrier (1969: pl. 3, 41).

42 This geographical sequence provides a strong argument against the retrograde reading proposed by Helck (1963: 256 [452]).

43 Gardiner (1947: pl. II, n. 212-216).

44 Habachi (1985: 354).

45 El-Sayed (1982: 287).

46 Franke (1994: 50).

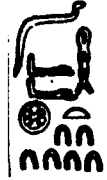
47 El-Sayed (1975: 140). Daressy (1935) was the first to note that such spellings date to the Late Period.

48 The only exception known to me is the stela Cairo JE 91243 from the reign of Amenemhat III. Simpson (1995: 36-39, pl. 6b-7). No other examples of *3bdw* spelled with the palm-sign prior to the New Kingdom could be found. see: Gomaà (1986: I, 198-199), the only Middle Kingdom example of such spelling cited by Gomaà is our inscription; DZA II.107.550-II.119.850.

(Dynasty XIII), and the copy of Senwosret I reliefs from Karnak executed by Thutmosis III⁴⁹.

II *ḏḥꜥꜥt* in the annals of Amenemhet II

ḏḥꜥꜥt is an obscure Egyptian word, only attested in the annals of Amenemhat II⁵⁰. It stands in the list of goods that were looted by Egyptian forces after ruining unidentified Asiatic fortresses *ḵwꜣj* and *ḵꜣsy*⁵¹. It is first mentioned in col. M 17: *ḏḥꜥꜥt* 60 among small copper objects and then in col. M 18: *ꜥ n ꜥs (?) ḏḥꜥꜥt* 8 among wooden objects.



Relying on the form of determinative (a circle divided into six segments), H. Altenmüller and A. M. Moussa suggested a possible translation “six-spoked wheel”⁵². This meaning is also supported by the proximity of *ḏḥꜥꜥt* to *mꜣḏdt* in col. M 18 (as supposed by the parallel with Akkadian *mašaddu* – shaft of a wagon, *mꜣḏdt* should represent some part of a carriage⁵³). The meaning given by Altenmüller and Moussa is accepted by all scholars who have translated the annals of Amenemhat II⁵⁴.

However, there is no evidence for the wide use of six-spoked wheels in the Ancient Near East in early second millennium BC (when Amenemhet II ruled). Spoked wheels only emerge in the Near East in the period from the twentieth to eighteenth centuries BC and the earliest known type was the four-spoked wheel, as evidenced by graphical representations from Anatolia and Mesopotamia. Wide use of six-spoked wheels begins only in the late fifteenth century BC⁵⁵.

Moreover, the *ḏḥꜥꜥt* are listed among copper objects (before *ḏḥꜥꜥt* we find harpoons or spears with 5 points, *mꜥḥj*-harpoons and balance pans; after it, copper crap and new copper), whereas the wheels have been mainly wooden.

This makes the translation proposed by Altenmüller and Moussa doubtful. I would like to suggest another possible meaning for this obscure word.

As stated above, the context suggests that *ḏḥꜥꜥt* should be associated with driving a carriage. There exists a piece of ancient driving equipment that closely resembles the six-spoked wheel. It is the cheekpiece of a bridle-bit commonly used in the Ancient

49 Habachi (1985).

50 Hannig (2006: 40320) lists another attestation of this word in pMoscow 314 (Hymnen an das Diadem), III.5. however, this reading is hardly reasonable. The rendering offered by Barucq & Daumas (1980: 59): *wꜣ.t wꜣ.t. m ḏḥꜥꜥt* (“You open your way among the *ḏḥꜥꜥt*-plants”) seems more plausible and is confirmed by a parallel on a New Kingdom statue Cairo CG 648 (*Urk.* IV, 480.5), noticed by Zecchi (2004: 69). So the second attestation should be dismissed.

51 An attempt to identify *ḵwꜣj* with Anatolian Ura and *ḵꜣsy* with Alasiya (Cyprus) by Helck (1989) is not quite convincing despite the additional arguments in favour of this view provided by Quack (1996). The text suggests that the two localities should be located closer to each other than Ura and Cyprus. And besides that no significant settlements are known to exist on Cyprus in the time of Amenemhet II, as noted by Warburton (2000: 79, n. 58).

52 Altenmüller & Moussa (1991: 13).

53 For etymology of *mꜣḏdt*, see now: Takács (2008: 642).

54 Obsomer (1995: 599); Dantong (1999: 53); Hirsch (2004: 303). Ezra Marcus also follows the translation of Altenmüller and Moussa (Marcus 2007: 140). The Spanish translation in Flammini (1996) is unavailable to me.

55 See Littauer & Crouwel (1979: 54); Littauer & Crouwel (1986).

Near East since the first half of the second millennium BC. Such bridle-bits consist of two wheel-shaped cheekpieces and a long mouthpiece. Known examples are made of bronze. The earliest known example comes from Tel Haror in Negev (fig. 1)⁵⁶. This bridle-bit was found in a donkey burial, and its two cheekpieces have four, and six or seven spokes, respectively. It dates to the seventeenth century BC. However, there is huge indirect evidence for the use of metal bridle-bits in Northern Syria and Mesopotamia since the late third millennium BC⁵⁷, and these earlier bridle-bits should also belong to this type. I suggest that despite non-constant number of spokes such cheekpieces could be represented in hieroglyphic writing by a determinative in the form of a six-segmented circle. Given that, *ḏh^{cc}t* could stand for a cheekpiece of a copper/bronze bridle-bit, rather than a wheel.

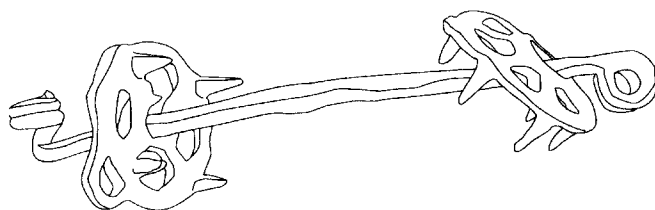


Figure 1: The bridle bit from Tel Haror with two cheekpieces.
Drawing after Oren (1997: 269).

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56 Oren (1997: 265, figure on page 269).

57 See Littauer & Crowel (2001).

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