



Funerary Stela of the Scribe Hat-iy at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo CG 34138¹

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Abstract:

This Funerary stela under discussion belongs to the scribe Hat-iy. It is located in room number 12 on the ground floor at the museum. It bears JE 31059. It was found at Qurnah, on the west bank of Thebes². This stela was briefly described by Lacau.³ Plate I (a & b)

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² Brugusch, H., Dictionnaire Geographique de l'Ancienne Egypte. (Iiepzizq, 1879) 187.

³ Lacau, M. P., Steles du Nouvel Empire, (1926), 188-89.



General Description

This limestone stela is rectangular in shape, with a rounded top, is carved in sunken relief and is in a good state of preservation, retaining some of the original colours. It is broken into two pieces. It measures 62cm in height and 42cm in width and it is divided into two registers.

The Upper Register:

It is decorated in the center with the two wꜣt eyes and the šnw sign in between, crowning the whole scene.

To the left, Osiris is represented seated on his throne, in a mummified form, with his false beard, holding the dd⁴ and wꜣs scepters⁵ and crowned with his traditional tef crown. He is wearing a white robe tied with a knot at the top of his chest directly below the end of the wide collar; at its back there is a counterweight to keep the heavy collar in place. His face still retains some traces of the original green colour.

The throne is decorated with traditional floral decorations⁶. Behind the throne of Osiris is a large bouquet of flowers, it extends from the register line till it reaches the level of the back of the crown of Osiris.

In front of Osiris there is a rich offering table piled with various types of offerings, such as vegetables, fruits, cakes, bread⁷, lettuces and bunch of flowers mainly lotus⁸. The table has metal stand. Under the table, two wine jars are placed to the right and the left of the table's stand. Both are decorated with lotus buds⁹ the stem of which is wound around the jar in each case.

To the right, the deceased is depicted worshipping Osiris, with a large incense burner in his right hand and the left hand raised in front of his face in adoration gesture. He is wearing a short wig,¹⁰ which reaches his shoulders, as well as

⁴ Van Dyk, J., "The Symbolism of the Memphite Pillar", OMRO 66. (1986), 7-20, cf., Belandin, J., "Contribution a L'Etude de pilier Djed Memphite" in A.P. Zivie ed. Memphis et ses Necropolis au Nouvel Empire. (Paris, 1988) 22-33.

⁵ Wilkinson, R., Reading Egyptian Art (London, 1992) 166, cf., Osiris In Medinet Habou, PM, II, 511.

⁶ Geoffrey, K., Ancient Egyptian Furniture. (Watminster, 1994) 30.

⁷ Ford, A., "The Staples of Life, Bread and Beer", Egyptian Art Principles and Art in wall scenes, ed. Donovan, L. and K. McCorquodale, (2000)146-7. Cf. also, Peters-Desteract, M., Pain, Biere et toutes bonnes choses, L'Alimentation dans L'Egypte Ancienne, (De Roche, 2005).

⁸ Nunn, A., "The So-called Plant of Upper Egypt", DE 19 (1991), 53-68. Ossian, C., "The Most Beautiful Flowers: Water Lilies and Lotuses in Ancient Egypt" KMT 10, (1), (1999), 48-59.

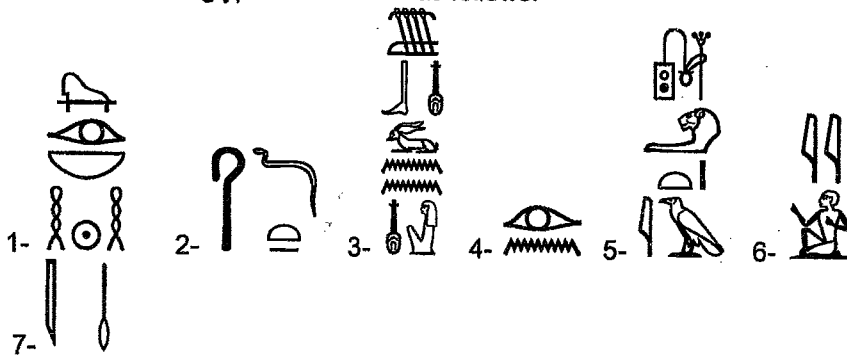
⁹ La Covara, "Vessels" in D. Redford (ed.), The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, (Cairo & New York, 2001), 483

¹⁰ Brown, S., Hairstyles and Hair Ornaments, Egyptian Art, Principles and Art in Wall Scenes, ed. Donovan, L. and K. McCorquodale, (Cairo, 2000): 187.



elaborately pleated garment,¹¹ consisting of two layers, one layer is longer than the other. The lower section of the dress and the sleeves are pleated. The deceased has sharp features, almond shaped eyes, his body is coloured dark brown.

In front of Osiris's face and above the head of the deceased, there are six short columns of hieroglyphics that read as follows:



Usir nb nḥḥ¹² ḥk3 dt šsp bw nfr wnn nfr(w) ir n sš ḥt by m3^c ḥrw

Osiris, lord of eternity, ruler of everlasting, receiving good things wnn nfrw¹³, made by the scribe ḥt by, true of voice.

The Lower Register:

Three ladies are depicted, the first and the last with their hands raised in adoration position, while the lady in the middle has only the left hand raised, and holds a water vase in her right hand.

The three ladies are depicted with wide long loose, white dresses with wide necklaces around their necks. They are wearing long wigs that are braided at the ends and crowned with headbands on the foreheads. Their bodies are coloured in light brown¹⁴.

The lady at the front has her name and titles written above her head and running down in front of her figure, reading as follows:

¹¹ Green, L., "Clothing and Personal Adornment" in D. Redford (ed.) *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, (Cairo & New York, 2001), 275ff

¹² Faulkner, ., *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, (Oxford, 1976), 176.

¹³ For the name of Osiris, cf. Urk. IV, 1520, 13. Cf. also, Faulkner, O., *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, (Oxford, 1976), 62. Griffith, G., "Osiris" in D. Redford (ed.) *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, (Cairo & New York, 2001), 61.

¹⁴ Malaise, M., "La Position de la Femme sur les Steles du Moyen Empire" *SAK* 5, (1977) 185-188



snt nbt pr mwt m wib

The sister, the house wife (lady of the house) Mutemwya

To the left, there are three columns of Hieroglyphics inscribed from left to right,
reading as follows:



mwt.m.w3: Goddess Mut in the sacred boat¹⁹

Dating of the Stela

One cannot specify the precise date of the stela as the deceased did not have a remarkable career to follow. However, some remarks can be noted:

- Most of the personal names on the stela were commonly used during the New Kingdom.
- The absence of the *htp di nsw* formula
- The spelling mistakes found in the lower register.
- The motif of the two *w3t* eyes and the *šnw* in between that are found at the top of the stela is frequently seen on the New Kingdom monuments.
- The place of the discovery at Qurnah at the west bank of Thebes
- The sharp features and the almond shaped eyes
- The way the figures were carved, the fashion of their costumes, collars and Hair styles.

These Remarks favour a Late New Kingdom date.

¹⁹ Faulkner, R. O., Op-cit., 56, Ranke, PN, I, 147,17



Comments

1-The two *wꜥ.t* eyes in front of the Osiris crown with *šnw* sign of eternity were frequently used on the funerary stelae of the New Kingdom found in Abydos, they first appeared towards the end of the 12th dynasty and since then became common and popular during the 13th dynasty²⁰. For similar examples: CG 20606 and CG 20781²¹ from the Middle kingdom and CG 34044, 34053, 34092 and CG 34058 from the New Kingdom

2-*šnw* sign, its fully written, more commonly written *šn* or *šnn*²²

3-There are parallels of the adoration position of the deceased in the upper register in the New Kingdom tombs of the west bank of Thebes and Saqqara.²³

4-The names and the titles of the ladies are squeezed into the limited space between the figures.

5-*n kꜣ kꜣ* is used to appear as *n kꜣ n* followed by *imꜣhw*, then by the reign of Amenemhat II and Amenemhat III it was followed directly by the name or the title of the deceased and was used since then, respectively²⁴. Later on by the late new kingdom, it appeared followed by *wnn nfr* one of the titles of Osiris.²⁵

6-*wnn nfr*, or *wnn nfrw* is one of the names of Osiris, Onnophris²⁶

7-The titles of the lady at the front *nbt pr sꜣt.s* the suffix pronoun is written wrongly, since it should have been *sꜣt.f* instead. However, It is quite notable that within the titles of the two other ladies the writer didn't add any pronouns to their titles, as in *sꜣt*, for the lady in the middle and *sꜣt* for the lady at the back.

8-The title *nbt pr*²⁷ a title that is given normally to the wife or the sister or the lady who is in charge of the house, it is quite questionable, since it is given to the three ladies as the housewife.

²⁰ Bennett, J., "Motifs and Phrases on Funerary stelae of the later Middle Kingdom" JEA 44, (1958), 120-1. cf., Pfluger, K., "The Private Funerary Stelae of the Middle Kingdom and their importance for the Study of the Ancient Egyptian History" JAOS 67, (1947) 129.

²¹ El-Enany, K., "Une stèle Privée de la fin du Moyen Empire découverte à Karnak", BIFAO 108, (2008) 108.

²² Gardiner, A., Egyptian Grammar. (Oxford, 1973), 521, 595. cf. Faulkner, Op-cit., 268.

²³ Gohary, S., the Twin Tomb of Nebnefer and his son Mahu at Saqqara. (Cairo, 2009), 26, 29, Pl. 36d, 38b

²⁴ Franke, D., "The Middle Kingdom Offering Formulas- A Challenge", JEA 89, 2003, 54. Bright, D., Dating Funerary Stelae of the Twelfth Dynasty: A Statistical Study, (Sydney, 2005), 9, Bennett, Op-cit., 79.

²⁵ Faulkner, Op-cit., 62

²⁶ Urk. IV, 1520, 13 cf., Faulkner, Op-cit., 62. Gardiner, Op-cit., 307, 561, Wb, I, 311

²⁷ Davis, N., A. Gardiner, the Tomb of Amenemhat, (London, 1926), 9. cf. Faulkner, Op-cit., 129



9-The persons are all represented wearing white dresses, which was the colour of mourning in ancient Egypt.²⁸

10- It is very interesting to find the verb *rdit* replacing the *h̄tp di nsw* formula. It raises the question of whether the god Osiris became quite dominant to the extent there is no reference to the king as in the *Htp di nsw* formula. It is rare not to find the *h̄tp di nsw* formula, on New kingdom stela. On some monuments the formula is repeated more than once, as in the stela of Ken-men, CG 34053.²⁹

Conclusion

This stela is an example of the funerary stelae of the new Kingdom era. It is rectangular with a rounded top. It was found at Qurnah, most probably a late new kingdom stela.

The element and scenes of the stela are all repeated on other new kingdom stelae such as the two *wḡst* eyes and *šnw* sign at the top of the stela, also the offerings presentation and incense burning by the deceased to Osiris. However, it is quite remarkable that such a well decorated stela with such a luxurious presentations and offerings that is presented by the deceased though he has no remarkable career or titles, just the job of a scribe is mentioned for his title, no other important titles have been added. It may be found in other monuments that carry other titles.

The stela shows the traditional representation of the ties of family members. It is quite notable that the family members depicted are all ladies, his sister and daughters or his wife since sometimes the wife held the title of the sister, which shows the Egyptians' respect to their women, unlike some other cultures.

²⁸ Davies, N., *The Tomb of Ramose*, (London, 1941)

²⁹ El-Khodary, R., "The Funerary Stela of Ken Men, CG34053" in JAAUTH, 2012



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Plate I, a
Stela of Hat-iy
Egyptian Museum in Cairo
CG 34138- JE 31059



Plate I. b



لوحة جنازية للكاتب حاتى ياي

تحمل اللوحة رقم CG 34138 و JE ٣١٠٥٩ بالمتحف المصري وهي من الحجر الجيري وجدت في منطقة القرنة ويرجع تاريخها إلى عصر الدولة الحديثة وتنقسم اللوحة إلى منظرين:
المنظر الأول: حيث نجد المتوفى يتعبد ويقدم القرابين للإله أوزوريس في حين المنظر الثاني: يوجد ثلاث سيدات واقفات في هيئة التعبد ممثلات في ملابس بيضاء احدى رموز الحداد لدى قدماء المصريين، و هن من أسرة المتوفى.