

## A Middle Kingdom Stela of Snfrw-Pth

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### Description

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The Stela, of limestone in Cairo Museum CG 20686, is well preserved, but there is no color left. It has an unusual shape, that it has the elements of the usual stela and also the elements of the false-doors.<sup>1</sup> It could be divided into three sections. The upper section represents the Egyptian cornice<sup>2</sup> which is surmounted by a horizontal hieroglyphic line. The names of the King Senusert III are the main subject of the top line besides to the epithet: beloved of Osiris. The middle part of the stela contains the protection symbols, the *sn*-sign between the two eyes<sup>3</sup>, which is usual to be found in the same period on the stelae. Under the symbols, the main inscription is divided into two

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<sup>1</sup>Schneider, Two Memphitic Stela false-door, OMRO, III (1971) pp. 79-93.

<sup>2</sup>The Cornice appears for the first time on the false-doors from the time of Neuserre.

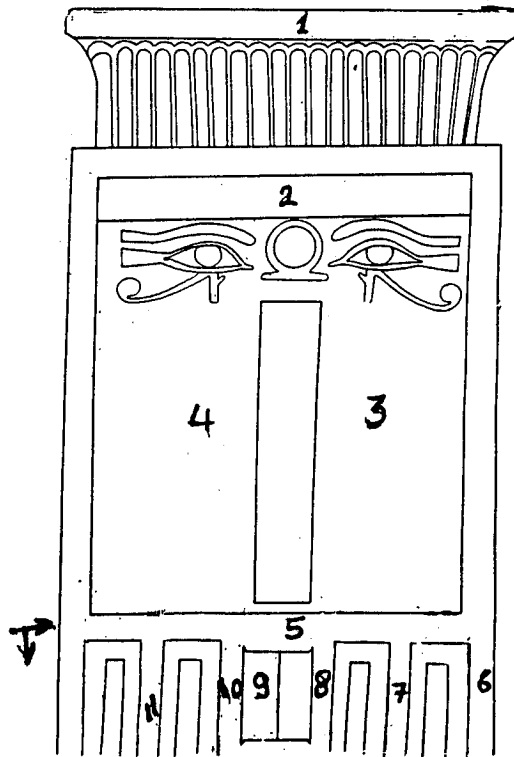
<sup>3</sup>See H. W. Muller, Die Totendenksteine des mittleren Reiches, ihre Genesis, ihre Darstellungen und ihre Komposition, in: MDIAK 4 (1933) pp. 196ff, W. C. Hayes, The Scepter of Egypt I, (1935) pp. 345f. and K. Pfluger, The private Funerary Stelae of the Middle Kingdom and their importance for the study of Ancient Egyptian History, in: JAOS 67 (1947) p. 134.

portions to the right and left of the opening of the false-door. Each portion contains three vertical lines. The lower section contains a representation of four small false-doors. Above these false-doors is a horizontal hieroglyphic line, the extension of which runs in two vertical lines downwards on the right corner of the stela. Vertically, five offering formulae texts in between the four false-doors representation contain the names of the gods: Ptah, Isis, Min, Neshmet and Wepwawt. In the middle is a text containing the name of the god Geb.

Texts:

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The texts on the stela could be divided into eleven sentences.



1) *Hr cnh Ntr-hprw Nhb1 W3dt ntrwt Wsir Wnn-nfr mry*  
 “ The living Horus, the form of the god, beloved of the goddesses Nekbt, Wajet and Osiris *Wnn-nfr*.

2) *h3t-sp 15 hr hm n ntr nfr nb t3wy nb irt ht nswt bit Hc-k3w-Rc*

“ Year 15, under the Majesty of the good god, lord of the two lands, lord of action, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Hc-K3w-Rc* (Senusert III).

3) *Nswt bit, Hc-k3w-Rc s3 Rc Sn-wsrt di cnh dd w3s mi Rc, im3h hr Gb iry-pct ntr ntrw wn.fwn hr n im3h Snfrw-Pth*

“ The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, *Hc-k3w-Rc*, the son of Re, Senwsert, may he given life, prosperity, and stability like Re, the venerated one to Geb heir of Gods,<sup>4</sup> who opens the sight of the honored one, *Snfrw-Pth*.

4) *Hr-Hprw-ntr Wsir hnty-imntyw mry di cnh hr Wb-w3wt hri-ib 3bdw prt-hrw n k3 n Snfrw-Pth*

“ The Horus, the form of the god, beloved of Osiris, lord of the deceased, may he given life, the venerated one under the god Wepwawt, who is in the midst of Abydos. May invocation-offering come forth for the ka of *Snfrw-Pth*.”

<sup>4</sup>*iry-pct ntrw* is an epithet for the god Geb, see Wb II, p. 416.

5) *im3h hr Wsir hnty-imntyw nb 3bdw prt-hrw k3 3pd šs mnht wcb n.k ir ntr Snfrw-Pth.*

“ The honored one under Osiris lord of deceased (namely) invocation-offering consisting of bread and beer, oxen and fowl, alabaster and cloth, pure for you, in which the god made, *Snfrw-Pth.*”

6) *htp di nswt Pth im3h Snfrw-Pth*

“ An offering which the king gives to Ptah<sup>5</sup>, the honored one *Snfrw-Pth.* “

7) *htp di nswt Pth Ist n Gb*

“ An offering which the king gives to Isis and Geb “

8) *htp di nswt Min n Snfrw-Pth*

“ An offering which the king gives to Min to *Snfrw-Pth* “

9) *im3h hr Gb Snfrw-Pth*

“ The honored one before the God Geb, *Snfrw-Pth.* “

10) *htp di nswt Nšmt n Snfrw-Pth*

“ An offering which the king gives to Nšmt<sup>v</sup> to *Snfrw-Pth.* “

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<sup>5</sup>Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhet*, pp. 79ff. Paul C. Smither, the writing of *htp di nsw* in the Middle and New Kingdom, *JEA* 25 (1939) pp. 34-7, C. J. C. Bennett, *Growth of the Formula in the Middle Kingdom*, *JEA* 27 (1941) pp. 77-82 and W. Barta, *Aufbau und Bedeutung der altägyptischen Opfer Formel*, 1968.

- 11) *htp di nswt Wp-w3wt n Snfrw-Pth*  
 “ An offering which the king gives to Wepwawt to *Snfrw-Pth*. “

### Commentary

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- 1- About the epithet of the god Osiris *Wnn-nfr*, the writing of *nfr* is remarkable; that the phonetic complement is unusual.
- 2- The names of the King are written without cartouches. The title *iry-pc.t ntr.w* is normal to be added to the name of the god Geb. It is not certain that the suffix pronoun of the third person in *wn.f* means the god Geb or the deceased (*im3h*).
- 4- The god Osiris has here the title “the lord of the deceased” (lit. who is in front of those who are in the western side.)
- 5- Osiris has the title, lord of Abydos. in addition the usual title which is mentioned in line four. We note that the extension of this line runs downward on the right end of the stela in two vertical lines from right to left; that due to the space on the stela. The phrase *n.k* ... is not common to be found in such sentences on the stelae or false-doors.
- 6- There are two signs after the name of the god Ptah, which have no translation; I suggest that they could be *n k3 n* “ to the ka of “.
- 10- The name of the owner of the stela has an unusual writing; the dropping of some signs may due to the space on the stela.

## Conclusion

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As it is mentioned before, the stela has the elements of a false-door<sup>6</sup>, like the opening and the jambs of a false-door, the cornice and the several lentils. In the same time it could not be as a false-door, because it has the main elements of the stela, such as the texts and the protection symbols and also the main elements of the false-door like the dram and the offering scene are dropped.

The main gods of the netherworld, Osiris and Wepwawt are mentioned on the stela. In addition, we find that the names of the gods: Geb, Isis, Ptah and Neshmet are mentioned. It is remarkable that the different names of the king Senusert III and the date of erecting the stela are mentioned.

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<sup>6</sup>See in Arabic:

بحسن المصري ، الأهرام الذهبية من أواخر الدولة القديمة إلى نهاية الدولة الوسطى ، سوهاج ،  
رسالة - كبرياء - غير منشورة .

