

## Reflections on A Boundary Stela of Sety I \*

This paper makes available a boundary stela of Sety I, discovered in the desert near the kurkur Oasis<sup>(1)</sup> which is located 23° 54' N, 32° 19' E, about 55 km west of the Nile, south west of Aswan. It is now kept in the inspectorate magazine on Elephantine. It was carved from in a slab of sandstone that was perfectly intact. It displays workmanship of the highest quality in sunk relief. pl. 1., Fig. 1

### Description (Pls. 1,2,3)

The stela is 80 cm. in height, 45 cm. in width; it is round-topped and divided into two main registers. The upper register is occupied by a scene showing the king bowing before the God Khnum<sup>(2)</sup> and presenting two nw-vases to him.

Sety I is wearing the bag-wig which is called Khat-headress, a broad collar, and bracelets. The king also wears the royal kilt with a triangular flap over a second one with a sloping hemline, with the bull's tail attached to its back belt.(pl.2)

A vertical line of inscription runs behind the king's head and may read as follows:

(1)



sA anx HA.f nb

(1) "Every protection of life behind him."

Before the king there is an offering stand with a nmst-jar and a large lotus blossom upon it.

Two lines of inscription run on the upper right of the stela as follows :



Nfr-nTr Mn-mAat- Ra sA-Ra sty mry.n-ptH di anx

(2) The good god, Menmaetre, (3) son of Rē, Sety beloved of ptah (4) given life.

To the left side of the upper register the God Khnum with the *Atf-crown* stands on a plinth holding the *wAs* scepter in his left hand and *anx-* sign in his outstretched right hand to present them both to the king. On the left two lines of inscriptions run as follows:



nb- imntt mry-Hnmw

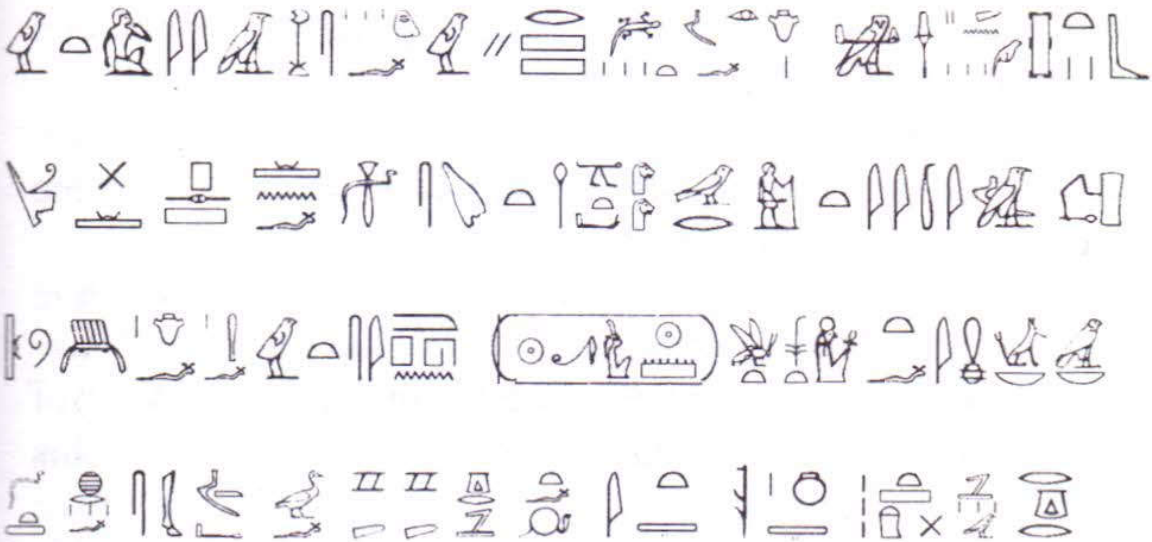
(5) Beloved of Khnum, (6) lord of west.

On the lower register seven lines of inscription are arranged horizontally and read from right to left as follows: pl. 3.

**Text:**







**Transliteration:**

HA-sp 4 Abd 3 prt sw 20 xr n Hm Hr kA nxt xa m  
wAst sanx tAwy nbty wHm mswt sxm.

XpS dr pDt-psDt 9 Hr-nbw wHm xaw wsr pDwt m tAw  
nbw nsw-bit nb-tAwy.

Mn-mAat-Ra tit-Ra sA-Ra nb xaw Mr-n.ptH sty di anx mi  
Ra Dt.

anx nfr-nTr ikm n HHw sbty n Hfnw sxm-ib mAA.f  
aSAwt rSw.f sxAy tw.

aHA ity wr pHy iTi HdT swAD.n.f psS n.

nbwy mi it-f Ra nsw-bit Mn-MAat-Ra tit-Ra m h pn ist  
Hm.f ib.f Aw.

r grg tASw nw tA-sti it.f Ra grg idbwy sA.f mAa wHm  
srxw.f Dt.

**Translation :**

Year 4, 3<sup>rd</sup> month of peret, day 20 under the majesty of Horus  
Falcon, strong bull; appearing in Thebes, Bringing life to both  
lands, Nebty-ruler, renewing birth. powerful.

Of arm, subduing the nine bows, Golden Horus, repeating  
epiphanies, rich in forces in all lands. The king of U.L. Egypt,  
lord of the two lands.

Menmaetre, image of Rē, son of Rē; lord of appearance, beloved of Ptah, Sety, gives life like Rē for ever.

(Long) life the good god who shields millions, a rampart for hundreds of thousands, (who has) a strong heart when he sees the multitude. He rejoices when one remembers

Battle of the sovereign, great of strength, assuming the white crown. He has flourished, portion.

For the two lords (Horus and Sety) like his father Rē, the king of U.L. Egypt Menmaetre, image of Rē, in this day, now his majesty, his heart is joyful.

While establishing the borders of Ta-Sety (the land of Nubia) his father Rē puts in order the two banks while his true son repeats his plans eternally.

### **Comments:**

I 1. Its being found isolated without buildings around, may refer to its transfer from the original area to the present provenance.

I 2. As for the depiction of the bowing position of the king, the present writer would propose that this stela seems to be the first example, which adopts the king's posture amongst all his stelae carved around his fourth year of his reign. This idea is based on the comparison available in his stelae before year 4<sup>(2)</sup>. (i.e.) Beth shan stela of Y.1, Karnak alabaster stela, Karnak Ptah temple stela, larger Buhen stela and smaller Buhen stela of Y.2.

I 3. According to the idea mentioned above, one would say that this posture has become predominant in his late years of his reign not only in his stelae as such, two Aswan stelae of Y. 9 and Gebel Barkal fragmentary stela in the year 11,<sup>(3)</sup> but also in the decoration of Sety's temple at Abydos<sup>(4)</sup> and in his reliefs carved in the great Hypostyle hall at Karnak, and his speos at kanais. At Gurnah, it is found in rooms where the decoration is done in the name of Sety 1 alone<sup>(5)</sup> in comparison with its rarity in the middle of his reign<sup>(6)</sup>.



I 4. From the artistic point of view, we may observe that the depiction of the bowing position did not allow the artist to follow the canon of shoulder proportion, as it is obvious that the right shoulder is longer than the left one.

Moreover, the vertical line which should meet deliberately the intersection of the interior lines of the legs at the groin, has been deviated to fit with the canon of the bowing posture<sup>(7)</sup>.

I 5. It is also notable that the heel of the king, left foot is slightly raised above the level of the right one, to fit also with the bowing posture of the king.

That seems- as far as it is known an unique position in the king's depiction amongst all his reliefs.

I 6. The king is depiction on the stela may represent symbolically the *Htp-di-nsw* form as follows:

The two vases represent the *Htp* (offering), while the hands refer to the word *di* (giving). The king himself represents the *nsw*<sup>(8)</sup>.

I 7. The style of the king's portrait in this stela is notably different from the conventional Ramesside style: as the angle between the straight forehead and the nose is slightly convex. Thus the nose appears in aquiline shape rather than the normal one. As for the lips, they look typically Nubian, since they are much thicker and they form as bulge in the middle of the mouth<sup>(9)</sup>.

II 1. The writing of the cartouches of Sety I on the stela is conventional, since the sign of the god seth is kept amongst the king's name. Thus is compared with that in Abydos whereas the sign of seth has been replaced by a figure of Osiris and tit sign, apparently for political reasons<sup>(10)</sup>.


II 2. In some respect, one would observe that some epithets were added to the king's prenomen, which were adopted from those of his predecessors T III and Amenhotep III such as tit Rē or iw Rē<sup>(11)</sup>.

Moreover, the present writer would refer to the combination of the king's prenomen Mn-Maat- Rē, which combined between the

T III name "Mn-pHt- Rē and that of Amenhotep III Nb-Maat-Rē.


II 3. The stela includes also the king's titles which were added to the Horus title from the first time in N.K. besides the traditional one; Nekht Ka. Those are *xam wAst* and *sanx tAwy*<sup>(12)</sup>.

II 4. These titles would coincide with the orientation of adopting the *wHm mswt*; the repeating of Birth as a title after the Nebty name (as appears in this stela) rather than a description of the whole reign when it comes after the sign of a year<sup>(13)</sup>.

II 5. In the word rSw in line 4 of the main text, the sign  S is repeated twice<sup>(14)</sup>, which seems a unique kind of writing that may refer to the enduring joyce besides the calligraphy reason.

II 6. The writing of the word aHA in line 5 is very odd since it is in hieratic style than the hieroglyphic one<sup>(15)</sup>.

II7. The reference of the two lords in line 6 emphasises the acceptance of Sety's cult as mention supra, as the sign of seth is written deliberately rather than the double Horus<sup>(16)</sup>.

II 8. The calligraphy reason also controlled the writing of m hrw pn (in this day), since the word hrw is abbreviated in one sign <sup>(17)</sup>.



### Notes

LÄ, III p. 884; Butzer, K., and Hansen, C., Desert and Reiver in Nubia, Madison (1968) p. 334, fig., 2-5; Baines, I., and Malek, J., Atlas of Ancient Egypt, Oxford, (1980) p. 179, PM, VII<sup>2</sup>, pl. 3.

PM, II<sup>2</sup>, p. 135, 198, PM, VII<sup>2</sup>, p. 129, 380.

Habachi, L., The Two Rock stelae of Sethos I in the Cataract Area speaking of Huge statues and obelisks. BIFAO 73 (1973) pp. 118-124, fig., 2, pl.2.

PM, VII<sup>2</sup>, p. 220.

Brand, P., The Monuments of Seti I, Berlin (2000) p. 13 figs., 14, 79, 116, 117.

As the varuins length of Sety's reign; see:

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KRI, I., 4.7.1, Lesko, L., A Dictionary of Late Egyptian, II, California (1984) pp. 71-2.

Wb, I, p. 216.

Kees, H., Horus und Seth als Götterpaar, MVAG 28 (1923) p. 67; 29 (1924) pp. 29-32; Černy, J., Ancient Egyptian Religion, London, (1952) p. 87; KRI, I, 31.1, 39.5; Frankfort, H., Kingship and the Gods, London, (1954) p. 22.

Cf. other word *hrw* in sety's texts: KRI, I 65.15, 103.1; Habachi, L., op.cit., 121, fig. 2.



## ملاحظات (أفكار) عن لوحة حدود للملك سيتي الأول:

تتناول الباحثة في هذا البحث نشر لوحة حدود للملك سيتي الأول لم يسبق نشرها وقد عثر عليها بواحة كركر التي تقع على بعد ٥٥ كم غرب النيل في الجهة الجنوبية الغربية من أسوان وهي الآن موجودة في مخازن هيئة الآثار في الفنتين. وتتراوح أطوال اللوحة ما بين ٨٠ سم ارتفاع ، ٤٥ سم عرض ولها قمة دائرية ومقسمة إلى مستويين أساسيين الأول يمثل منظر للملك سيتي الأول مقدماً إناءين كقرايئين للإله خنوم إله منطقة الفنتين الذي يظهر واقفاً في الجهة اليسرى من المنظر مرتدياً تاج أتف وممسكاً بصولجان الواس وعلامة الحياة عنخ ليقدماهما للملك.

وفي المستوى الثاني يظهر نص هيروغليفي مكوناً من سبعة أسطر أفقية تقرأ من اليمين إلى اليسار ويتحدث النص في البداية عن العام الذي كتبت فيه اللوحة ثم الألقاب التقليدية للملك سيتي الأول في تلك الفترة كما يعبر النص عن السعادة التي يشعر بها الملك عندما يقوم بتأمين الحدود الجنوبية لمصر.

وفي الختام تقوم الباحثة بتسجيل بعض التعليقات التاريخية والفنية واللغوية

لللغة.







