



Old Kingdom Stone Block of *Sšm-nfr* from Saqqara: Study in his Family Prosopography

Ibrahim Abd El Sattar

Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University
Saudi Arabia.

iaismail@iau.edu.sa

ABSTRACT

This research paper aims to republish and study a stone block of a person named *Sšm-nfr* that was found in the excavations of Gisir el-Mudir cemetery (جبانة جسر المدير) at Saqqara in 2009. It is now preserved in the Old Kingdom store of the Grand Egyptian Museum under No. 6095. Perhaps, it was part of the facade of his tomb because it has the threat formula. The name and titles of *Sšm-nfr* and the name of his son called *hb* are inscribed on this block. Although the name *Sšm-nfr* was common in the Old Kingdom, the name of his son, *hb*, did not appear before among the names of individuals in the Old Kingdom. After examining all the persons who bore the name *Sšm-nfr* in the Old Kingdom, it can conclude that *Sšm-nfr*, the subject of this study, is a son of *R^c-wr I*, the owner of the tomb G 5270 in the western Giza cemetery. They belong to a great family that begins with the first grandfather, *Sšm-nfr I*, the owner of the tomb G 4940 (= LG 45) in the western Giza cemetery, a family whose members bore many of the highest titles related to writing the royal documents. His affiliation with this family can suggest that he started his life at the end of the Fifth Dynasty and began his career during the Sixth Dynasty. Also, some paleographical, orthographical, and pictorial features prove this dating.

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INTRODUCTION

The stone block under study is made of limestone, measuring 106 cm in height, 35. cm in width and 17.5 cm in thickness. This block is the largest three blocks that were discovered in 2009 by the excavations of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) in Gisir el-Mudir cemetery, west of Unas pyramid (جبانة جسر المدير) which was carried out under supervision of Saleh Soleiman. These blocks were found adjoining in the fill of shaft 1110. The block under study was preserved in museum storage no. 2 at Saqqara and bore the registration number 19562. Then it has been transported in Mai 2015 to the Grand Egyptian Museum under GEM's accession number 6095. The Texts of these stone blocks were previously published by Soleiman (Soleiman 2018, 241-259), who provided a detailed comparative study of the texts of the autobiography and threat formula that inscribed on the facade of the large stone block.

He also dated these blocks with extended dating from the Sixth Dynasty to the Eighth Dynasty. However, Soleiman did not publish and investigate the text of the thickness of the large stone block which contains the main titles of *Sšm-nfr*. So, the current study will revisit the texts of this stone block and deal with the titles inscribed on its thickness to try to identify the character of *Sšm-nfr* and his potential family tree. It will also provide a specific date for the period in which he lived, based on paleographical, orthographical, and pictorial features.

DESCRIPTION

This stone block is probably part of the doorway jamb of the facade of *Sšm-nfr* shaft-tomb because it has a threat-formula. It has three sunken columns of hieroglyphs engraved vertically above the depiction of the block owner, called *Sšm-nfr*. It has an irregular shape that has lost its upper part. So, the beginning of these hieroglyphic columns was lost. His titles were engraved horizontally on the face of the owner's figure. Beneath the figure of *Sšm-nfr*, there is a small depiction of his son facing him, performing the ritual of bending the goose's neck. On the block thickness is one vertical column of hieroglyph above the depiction of *Sšm-nfr*.

Sšm-nfr is depicted twice as a standing figure on this block and its thickness. He appears barefoot, wearing a short triangular tight kilt with a pointed end (Bonnet 1964, pl. V, fig. 32), tied at the waist and ending above the knees with a straight horizontal finish. He wears a long hair-wig that leaves the ears exposed and hangs down to the two shoulders (Cherpion 1989, 57-58, fig. 46.). The style of the wig consists of many grooved horizontal rows. *Sšm-nfr* holds the insignias of honor for high officials in his hands: the *mdw*-staff with a round decoration at its top is held in his left hand (Cherpion 1989, 65, fig. 58) and the *hrp*-scepter in his right hand.

Sšm-nfr wears a four row *wsh.t*-collar around his neck (Handoussa 1981, 143-150) (Brovarski 2008, 137-162) (Ouda 2022, 72-96). The precise depiction of the anatomical proportions of the human body and the detailed facial features is evidence of a high level of workmanship. In this regard, *Sšm-nfr* is well formed with a slim body, thin waist, and developed leg muscles. His facial features are idealistic and exquisite, with a small mouth and nose, painted eyes, and tiny lips, as well as a long drooping chin.

His son is depicted as a small standing figure who does not reach his father's knees. He also wears a short triangular tight kilt with a pointed front-piece tied at the waist and reaching above his knees. Likewise, he wears the same wig as his father's, but it covers the ears. Unlike his father's, his facial features are not clear, except for the eyes that appear protruding. He holds the goose's neck with his right hand and catches its wings with his left hand (Murray 1905, pls. XII, XXI) (Badawy 1976, fig. 7). It is worth noting that the figures of both *Sšm-nfr* and his son *hb* are sculpted in raised relief, while the hieroglyphic inscriptions are sunken.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATION

Text of the Façade

The façade of this stone block has three hieroglyphic columns. Although their beginnings were lost, they can be reconstructed by comparing them to similar texts from the Old Kingdom elites' autobiographies. They compose phrases from his ideal autobiography and a threat formula to protect the tomb from any evil thing that may be done by the people (Morschauser 1991, 152-

157). The sentence *ddf* proves that this formula is recited by the tongue of the tomb's owner. Its writing takes the same direction as the main inscription, the typical way of inscribed the texts from the second half of the Fifth Dynasty onwards (Kloth 2002, 52-54). Therefore, the whole text of the block facade should be read starting from the horizontal hieroglyphic line facing *Sšm-nfr*, which states:



hrjj hb(.t) Sšm-nfr ddf

The lector priest *Sšm-nfr*, he says:



jr.n(εj)^A hzz.t njsw.t snd.n(εj) jtεj jm3.n(εj) n mw.tεj^B

jr^C rmt(.w) nb(.w) jr.t(jj)εsn h.t nb(.t) dw(.t) r jz pn

jw (εj) r jr.t(εsn) (phw)^D hrεs m d3d3.t ntr ε3 nb m3ε.t

I have done what the king praises, I feared from (respected) my father, and I was pleasant to my mother. *As for* any people who will do any evil thing against this tomb. *I will put an end* to them concerning it in the court of the great god, lord of truth.

A- This Text begins with *jr.n(εj)* on one of the three blocks which published by Soleiman (Soleiman 2018). This can also be compared to *jw jr.nεj r hzz.t nbεj* (The tomb of *Pjppj-Nh.t*) (Sethe 1933, 133, 9; 134, 5) (Morschauser 1991, 26)

B- These Two expressions can be compared with *snd.n(εj) jtεj jm3.n(εj) n mw.tεj* (The tomb of *Nfr-sšm-Rε Iššj*), *snd.n(εj) jtεj jm3.n(εj) mw.tεj* (The tomb of *Idw*). (Sethe 1933, 199, 6) (Simpson 1976, 20, fig. 33.)

C- The part of this threat formula can be compared with *jr rmt nb(.w) εk.tjjεsn jr jz pw m εbεsn jr.tjjεsn h.t dw.t jr nw wnn wdε-mdw hnεεs hrεs jn ntr-ε3* (The tomb of *3h.t-htp*). *jr hm rmt nb(.w) jr.tjjεsn h.t dw.t r nw jr.tjjεsn h.t nb.t n bd.t r nw wnn wdε-mdw hnεεs hrεs jn ntr ε3 nb wdε-mdw* (The tomb of *Wntj*). (Mariette 1885, 342) (Sethe 1933, 50, 16-17; 51, 1) (Sethe 1933, 70, 15-16; 71, 1; 122, 14-16; 173, 14) (Morschauser 1991, 25) (Soleiman 2018, 249-252)

D- The missed part is too small to reconstruct with more than one word. The reconstruction by word *ph.w* is the ideal suggestion as Soleiman did (Soleiman 2018).

The text accompanying his son consists of two parts; the first part is located below the horizontal end of his father's kilt and describes him as "his beloved". The second part consists of the name of the son *hb*. It is located between his feet and his father's feet.

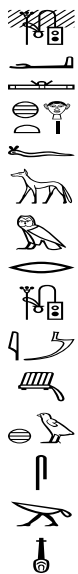


s3(=f) mrjj=f hb

His son, his beloved hb.

Text of the Thickness

The thickness contains one vertical hieroglyphic column that presents the civil titles of *Sšm-nfr* and his epithet as *jm3h.w*.











zš(w) (nw njzw.t) hft-hr z3b jmjj-r zš(.w) jm3h.w Sšm-nfr

The scribe of the royal records/documents in the presence, the juridical overseer of scribes, and the revered one Sšm-nfr.

Commentary





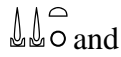


In the Old Kingdom, the divine entity *ntr* 𓄎 was written in five graphic variants (Bárta 2001, 53-54). The common form is written without a determinative 𓄎 (Mariette 1885, 116, 119, 125, 249, 412, 433, 434) (Murray 1905, pl. XXV, XXVIII) (Hassan 1950, 24, fig. 18; 26, fig. 20) (Simpson 1976, fig. 28) (Mousa 1977, 24-28, figs. 4, 11, 12, 20, 25, 26) (Simpson 1976, figs. 8, 10, 42.). However, the written form 𓄎 or 𓄎 with the determinative of a sitting god 𓄎 (A41) frequently occurred in the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties (Mariette 1885, 1885, 130, 174, 192, 197, 275, 278, 283, 284, 360, 375, 377, 396, 399, 407, 412, 425, 433) (Davies

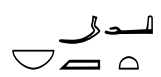
1902, pl. XXIII) (Sethe 1933, 173, 14; 174, 2; 188, 2, 11; 189, 3; 196, 1; 202, 9, 11; 251, 16; 252, 6 and 10; 306, 1) (Fischer 1968, 100, fig. 16) (Simpson 1976, figs. 20, 33.). Also, the sign-  (G7) is used as a logogram which is pronounced as *ntr*  (Mariette 1885, 149, 154, 230, 248, 249, 250, 265, 342) (Wild 1966, pl. 54)  (Hassan 1950, 48, fig. 36.)  (Simpson 1976, figs. 34-24.) and determinative of the word *ntr*  (Mousa 1977, 26, 28, fig. 4.)  (Mousa 1977, fig. 18.). On the other hand, there are two forms of writing that were used less frequently,  (Mousa 1977, fig. 19) and  (Junker 1943, 105, fig. 28.). The divine entity *ntr* ʕ first appeared in a Buhen rock inscription Hill B (1) that belongs to the beginning of the dynastic period and associates *ntr* ʕ with the god *Hrw bhd(tjj)* (Baines 1983, 24). Moreover, it frequently appeared in the offering grants *hṯp-dj-njsw.t* of the Fourth Dynasty (Smith 2017, 72) and continued to appear in the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties, followed by several sacred titles. These titles are *ntr* ʕ *nb krs.t* (*nfr.t- m hrj.t ntr*) (Mariette 1885, 130, 248, 250, 278, 377). *ntr* ʕ *nb hrj.t ntr* (Mariette 1885, 174, 425). *ntr* ʕ *nb ʔ dsr* (Mariette 1885, 360), *ntr* ʕ *nb p.t* (Davies 1902, pls. VI, IX, XI) (Simpson 1976, figs. 7, 41) (Sethe 1933, 984a; 988b; 1090e; 1199a-b.), and *ntr* ʕ *nb mʕ.t* (Mariette 1885, 130, 249, 375, 377.) as in our current tomb.

In the Pyramid Texts corpus of King Merenre, the divine entity *ntr* ʕ is described as "Lord of the sky" *nb p.t* and "Lord of Akhet" *nb ʒh.t* (Sethe 1933, 7b). Different deities bore these titles, so *ntr* ʕ was and is still a matter of discussion. Beginning with Anthes (Anthes 1959, 191f), who suggests the dual nature of the term *ntr*-ʕ as the king being the incarnation of Horus and then Osiris upon death. Kaplony assumes that *ntr* ʕ is the king's father (old god) (Kaplony 1976, 78), while Hornung (Hornung 1996, 186) argues that *ntr* ʕ is "the great god" in Egyptian religion. Baines (Baines 1983, 13–28) points out that *ntr* ʕ is explained by its multiple contexts in Egyptian textual sources. According to Baines, *ntr* ʕ has two essential usages as: the title of an unnamed deity and an epithet following a divine name. Furthermore, he opts for "the major god" as its translation. Although the occurrences of the epithet *ntr* ʕ antedate the first mention of Osiris in textual resources, Griffiths underscores that this epithet often refers to Osiris (Griffiths 1966, 184).

There are many suggestions for deities, including the dead king (Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexten*, 2 vols 1908-1910, 7b; 1616c; 272b), the deceased's father (Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reiches* 1933, 202, 9; 11), Ptah (Barta 1968, 17, 19), Anubis (H. G. Fischer 1992, 72), Osiris (Abd el Sattar 2018, 20, fig. 1) (Abd el Sattar, *Two identical Ptolemaic stelae of Wn-nfr and P3-nfr in the Egyptian Museum Cairo JE 5387–5388 (2020-2021)*, fig. 4), and the Sun god that identified with *ntr*-ʕ (Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexten*, 2 vols 1908-1910, 465c; 760c; 816d). (Gardiner 1928, 11-12) (Morschauser 1991, 136) (Theis 2014, 494-495) Also, *ntr* ʕ is invoked as no one knows his name *j ntr ʕ hmm rnʕf* (Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexten*, 2 vols 1908-1910, 276c). However, the epithet "Lord of Maat" in our current inscription makes *ntr* ʕ identical to the god Osiris.

 The word *jm3h* first appeared in the Second Dynasty (Khal 2002, 33). Its full orthography is typical of the Old Kingdom (Boraik 2016, 8). This designation is popular in the offering grant *htp-dj-njsw.t* and other text genres (Mariette 1885, 149) (Murray 1905, pls. XXV, XXVIII-XXXI) (Abd el Sattar and Boraik 2015, 323, fig. 1) (I. Abd el Sattar, A Fragmented Old Kingdom False Door from Saqqara: a link between *Mrjj-Izzj ʿnd Njj-k3.w-Izzj* 2020, 95-106). Allen has considered it a quality of the deceased with/of someone, usually the king or the great god (Allen 2006, 16). Nevertheless, it has become clear that this epithet is not related to the fact that his/her bearer is deceased. In that respect, Jansen-Winkeln argues that this epithet could be applied to both the dead and the living (Jansen-Winkeln 1996, 30-33) (Boraik 2016, 5-6). Also, Chauvet, in her analysis of that epithet, assumes that his/her bearer was being entailed income during his/her lifetime. He obtains his status as *im3h-* because of his achievement, moral qualities, and social prestige (Chauvet 2004, 137-160). Moret alludes to the economic aspect of the *jm3h*-status. Depending on the personal achievement of *jm3h.w*-person, he will be qualified for royal endowments in the form of food provisions and funerary equipment (Moret 1897, 57-95). Helck underscores that this epithet is usually understood as an association entailing provision for the funerary estate by the one with whom the deceased is *jm3h.w* (Helck 1956, 63-75). To sum up, the *jm3h*-status guarantees all royal endowments of food and funeral equipment after death. Also, it becomes a precondition for performing the glorification ritual for the deceased, i.e., the *s3h.w* process.

 *d3d3.t* (*d3d.t*) (Erman 1971c, 528-530) *ntr-ʿ3* is "the court or tribunal of the great god"; this occurs several times in the Pyramid Texts as a court of the god or the god Nun that the deceased king hates to enter it (Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexten*, 2 vols 1908-1910, 313f, 1174c). In Pyr. 1319a and 1713c, it is written with its full orthography  and described as *d3d3.t wr.t m Twnw*. Moreover, Pyr.1713c describes the deceased king as a magistrate of *d3d3.t* as the two deities Thoth and Anubis. *d3d3.t* takes the sign- (G7) as a determinative, which indicates its sanctity (Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexten*, 2 vols 1908-1910, 1776a). Further evidence of this sacredness occurs in the tombs of *Tj* and *K3-gm-n3j*, where the word *d3d3.t* takes the triple divine figures  as a determinative (Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reiches* 1933, 174, 3; 196, 1). Finally, this court is described in the tomb of *Hr-ʿnh-m-ʿ* (*Zzj*) as that of the deceased's father *ntr ʿ3* (Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reiches* 1933, 202, 9; 11).

 The king Snefru was the first to bear this epithet (Fakhry 1959, fig. 53.), while the first appearance of the word *m3c.t* was in the Second Dynasty from the reign of king Sekhemib (Khal 2002, 169-172). In our current inscription, *ntr ʿ3* is characterized as the lord of Maat. The epithet *nb m3c.t* identifies *ntr ʿ3* with the god Osiris, who bears this epithet on several written resources from the mid-Fifth and Sixth Dynasties' private tombs (H. G. Fischer 1992, 73) (Mariette 1885, 130, 249, 375, 377.). Also, Osiris exclusively bears it in the Pyramid Texts Corpus of King Pepi I (Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexten*, 2 vols 1908-1910, 1520a.). Griffiths alludes that Osiris wielded a judicial function (Griffiths 1966, 177). In that respect, Westendorf urges that this epithet describes his ascension to the throne with the legitimate judicial sanction of the council of the gods (Westendorf 1954, 174-179). Mark Smith (Smith 2017, 256-257)

links this epithet and the epithet *m3^c-hrw* that describes the righteous deceased. Smith argues that this link is evidence of belief in a general judgment of the dead in the Old Kingdom. Hence, the epithet of Osiris *nb m3^c.t* signifies that Osiris had supervision of this process. Smith alludes to the statement *m3^c hr jb n Wsjr* as further evidence to support his argument. It is a wish for the deceased to be righteous (*m3^c*) in the heart of Osiris that is preserved in an offering grant on a false door of *Nfr-sšm-R^c* of the Sixth Dynasty in his tomb at Saqqara (V. Chauvet 004, pl.11) (Barta 1968, 31).

Epithets and Titles of *Sšm-nfr*

jm3h.w

hrjj hb(.t)

z3b jmjj-r zš(.w)

zš^c(w) (nj njzw.t) hft-hr

The titles and epithets of *Sšm-nfr* can illustrate his social status and official rank. He bore titles and epithets indicating that he was close to the royal palace. His epithet *jm3h.w* was sufficient to ensure his funerary equipment and offerings. As for his religious rank, he has the priestly position *hrjj hb(.t)*, "the lector priest" (Erman 1971c. , 395, 4-10) (Jones 2000, 781 [2848]) (A. H. Gardiner 1947, 55*) (Ward 1982, 140) (Khal 2002, 372-73), which makes him responsible for the funerary rituals. In that respect, we have evidence that he performed the funeral rites for his potential father, *R^c-wr* (I). Most probably, he began his tenure track with this priestly rank. Strudwick concludes that most Old Kingdom holders of this title, particularly in the Sixth Dynasty, seem to have also held the honorific title *smr w^c.tjj* or a king's son (Strudwick 1985, 226,262,288). Further to this, two titles show the civil ranks held by *Sšm-nfr*; the first is *z3b jmjj-r zš(.w)*, while the second is *zš^c(w) (nw njzw.t) hft-hr* (Sethe, Urkunden des Alten Reiches 1933, 2, 11; 4, 15-16).

The translation of the title *z3b jmjj-r zš(.w)* is "juridical overseer of scribes or overseer of scribes of the judiciary" (Jones 2000, 811 [2933]). Its lower rank is the title *z3b sš*, "the juridical scribe" (Jones 2000, 836 [2964]) that first appeared in the text of *Mtn* in the Fourth Dynasty (Sethe, Urkunden des Alten Reiches 1933, 2,17) (Helck 1956, 82).

It can determine the hierarchy of judicial scribes as follows: The title *z3b jmjj-r zš(.w)* is the highest rank, while the titles *z3b sš* and *z3b shd zš(.w)* "inspector of juridical scribes" are lower ranks. The title *z3b jmjj-r zš(.w)* was common in the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties (Mariette 1885, 317; 326-27, 337) (Sethe, Urkunden des Alten Reiches 1933, 92, 4; 150, 2; 186, 17) (Hassan, Excavations at Giza 1933-1934, vol. V 1944, 182, fig. 30; 237, figs. 100-103) (Junker, Giza VIII2, Der Ostabschnitt des Westfriedhofs 1947, 111.2) (H. G. Fischer 1968, 10, fig.3) (Jones 2000, 811 [2933]). Strudwick urges that any official who attained a high administrative rank would have held tasks connected with scribal administration. He underscores that this might especially apply in a legal environment, assuming that verdicts, disputes, and so on were recorded either for archives or the benefit of the parties involved" (Strudwick 1985, 181). Moreover, *Sšm-nfr* held another important position directly related to writing the royal documents *zš^c(w) (nj njzw.t) hft-hr* "the scribe of the royal documents in the presence".

It seems that *Sšm-nfr* inherited the offices of writing from his probable father, *R^c-wr* (I). As mentioned before, the title *z3b jmjj-r zš(.w)* is held by *Sšm-nfr* in the tomb of *R^c-wr* (I), while

he probably inherited the position of writing the royal documents $z\check{s}^c(w) (nj njzw.t) \text{hft-hr}$ after the death of R^c-wr (I). The father of R^c-wr (I) is $S\check{s}m-nfr$ (I), the head of a large family whose primary activities were related to the craft of writing through the Fifth Dynasty and the beginning of the Sixth Dynasty (Piacentini 2002, 196-197).

$S\check{s}m-nfr$ (I) bore the title $jmjj-r z\check{s}(.w) njzw.t$ "the overseer of the royal scribes"; this family was then divided into two essential branches. The first branch began with $P\check{h}n-pt\check{h}$ and continued for three generations named with the same name $S\check{s}m-nfr$ (II-IV). They occupied the highest rank of the scribes of the royal documents as their overseers $jmjj-r z\check{s}^c(w) (nj njzw.t)$. The second branch began with R^c-wr (I) and ended with his son $S\check{s}m-nfr$ under study. They held the lower rank of the scribes of the royal documents $z\check{s}^c(w) (nj njzw.t) \text{hft-hr}$.

The Potential Family of $S\check{s}m-nfr$

From the inscriptions on this stone block, two names can be identified, $S\check{s}m-nfr$ and his son hb . The name of $S\check{s}m-nfr$ was common in the Old Kingdom (Murray 1905, pl. XIV) (Ranke 1935, 320 (17)), while the name of his son hb was unique and did not list among the personal names' indices of Murray (Murray 1905, pl. X), Ranke (Ranke 1935), and Scheele-Schweitzer (Scheele-Schweitzer 2014): The translation of the name of $S\check{s}m-nfr$ is "The guidance is good" (Scheele-Schweitzer 2014, 663), while the name of his son hb means "The plough" (Erman

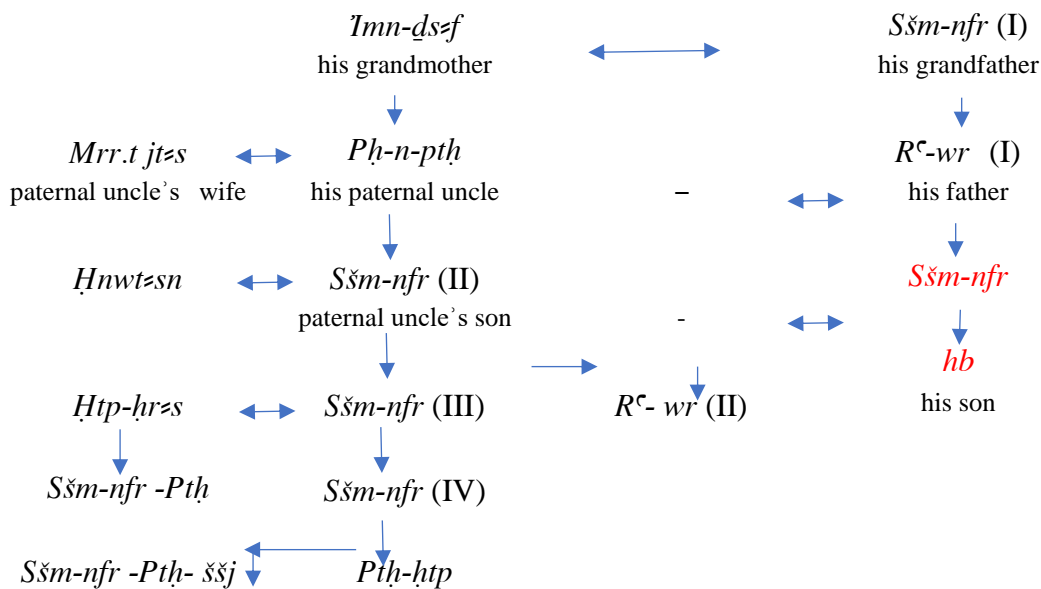
1971c. , 485, 10-11.). This name contains the two consonants \square - h and 𐀀 - b , followed by the biliteral sign 𐀀 as a determinative. The name $S\check{s}m-nfr$ was not widespread only in the Memphite Cemetery but also outside it. It was found in Giza (Junker, Gîza III, 1938, 9-15) (Brunner-Traut 1957, 18-32), Dahshour (Morgan 1903, fig. 3-4.), Abusir (Verner 1977, 160 (92)), Saqqara (Mariette 1885, 400) and Qasr el-Sayed (Scheele-Schweitzer 2014, 663-665 [3229]). It is also one of the names frequently used in the Old Kingdom as a theophoric name (e.g., $S\check{s}m-nfr$ - Pth).

After investigating all the persons who carried the name $S\check{s}m-nfr$ in the Old Kingdom and the titles inscribed on the stone block under study, it concludes that $S\check{s}m-nfr$ in question is most probably the son of R^c-wr (I), the owner of Mastaba G 5270 at the western cemetery of Giza (Junker, Gîza III, 1938, 217-223) (Piacentini 2002, 178-179). His grandfather is $S\check{s}m-nfr$ (I), the owner of mastaba G 4940 (= LG 45) at the western cemetery of Giza (Junker, Gîza III, 1938, 9-15) (Piacentini 2002, 195-197) (Kanawati 2001, 51-52), while their paternal uncles are $3b$, $S\check{s}m-nfr$ - $\check{s}rj$, $Hwfw-^c n\check{h}(.w)$, and $P\check{h}n-pt\check{h}$, the owner of mastaba G 5280 (Junker, Gîza III, 1938, 9-15, fig. 43) (Piacentini 2002, 166-167; 195-197.).

Although the two titles $z3b jmjj-r z\check{s}(.w)$ and $z\check{s}^c(w) (nw njzw.t) \text{hft-hr}$ of $S\check{s}m-nfr$ in question corresponds to those of another person called also $S\check{s}m-nfr$ who is depicted in the tomb of his father, the vizier $S\check{h}m-^c n\check{h}$ - Pth and the owner of mastaba G 7152 at Giza (Badway, 1976, fig. 20), he did not hold the title $hrjj-hb(.t)$. Also, there is no evidence that he practiced this office in his father's tomb. Therefore, it could not be asserted that they are the same person.

In contrast, a short text found in the tomb of R^c-wr (I) reveals two pieces of evidence that our current $S\check{s}m-nfr$ is the son of R^c-wr (I). It was probably the only text that mentions $S\check{s}m-nfr$ before the discovery of his stone block in Saqqara. This text mentions that $S\check{s}m-nfr$ performs the ritual of pouring water $tzw mw$ (Junker, Gîza III, 1938, 221, 223, fig. 43.) to his father R^c-wr (I). It is consistent with the fact that he was a lector priest. Also, this text entitled him as

z3b jmjj-r zš(.w), the same title inscribed on his block under study. Consequently, the family tree of *Sšm-nfr* can be traced through six generations from the beginning of the Fifth Dynasty to the Sixth Dynasty as follows (Junker, Gîza III, 1938, 14) (Piacentini 2002, 196-197):



If the assumption that *Sšm-nfr* belongs to this large family is correct, he lost his order in his family tree because of the late discovery of his shaft-tomb; he should have been *Sšm-nfr* II or III. The question of why *Sšm-nfr* abandoned the cemetery where his family was buried in Giza and moved to Saqqara cemetery remains to be answered. There is a similar case proposed by Piacentini, who identified between *Sšm-nfr*, the eldest son of *Shm-ꜣnh-Pth* (Badway, 1976, fig. 20.), and *Sšm-nfr*, the owner of mastaba No. 1 in Dahshur (Morgan, Fouilles a Dahchour en 1894-1895, II 1903, 3, fig. 3-4), the two persons bear the title *zš ꜣw nj njzw.t htp-ḥr* (Piacentini 2002, 681). According to Piacentini, his father was buried in Giza when he moved to Dahshur. Although the identification between these two people is possible, it remains hypothetical. On the other hand, Peter Jánosi and Hanna Vymazalová provide the probable reason for the burial at Saqqara instead of Giza at the beginning of the Sixth Dynasty. They underscore that the tombs in Giza stopped being well decorated, in addition to the fact that the Giza cemetery was no longer used as the main cemetery for high-ranking officials and priests from the end of the Fifth Dynasty and during the Six Dynasty (Jánosi 2018, 219).




DATING

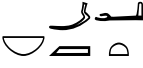
Junker dates the tomb of *Sšm-nfr* (I), the potential grandfather of *Sšm-nfr* in question, to the very beginning of the Fifth Dynasty (Junker, Gîza III, 1938, 9), a date followed by most Egyptologists who have tried to specify the reign(s) under which he lived. In this respect, Bear proposes the period of kings Sahure and Neferirkare (Baer 1960, 131 [476], 293 [476].). Also, Strudwick (Strudwick 1985, 138-139 [129], 219.) and Kanawati (Kanawati, *The Egyptian Administration in the Old Kingdom* 1977, 154 [307].) suggest that he lived at the end of Sahure's reign, while Harpur (Harpur 1987, 270) offers the period from Userkaf to Neferirkare [V.1-3].

As for *Rꜥ-wr* (I), Harpur puts him in the last third of the Fifth Dynasty [V.1-3] (Harpur 1987, 268), while Piacentini puts *Sšm-nfr* (I) and *Rꜥ-wr* (I) at the end of the Fifth Dynasty (Piacentini 2002, 179, 196-197.). It means that *Sšm-nfr*, the subject of this study, began his life at the end

of the Fifth Dynasty, continued through the Sixth Dynasty, most probably during the reign of Kings Pepi I and Pepi II.

The iconographical and epigraphical features that occur on the current stone block support this

dating. As mentioned above, the writing form  with the determinative of a sitting god  (A41) frequently occurred in the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties. Also, the writing form of the word *rmṯ*  is typical of the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties at Saqqara, not the Eighth Dynasty (I. Abd el Sattar, Remarks on the Orthography of Word *rmṯ* in the Old Kingdom 2021, 7). The

epithet  *nb m3^c.t* of the divine entity *ntr-3* alludes to the god Osiris, who, as mentioned before, bears this epithet in non-royal texts from the mid-Fifth Dynasty onwards (Smith 2017, 72). Moreover, the dating of the expression *jr.n(εj)* extends from the end of Fifth Dynasty to the reign of king Teti at the beginning of the Sixth Dynasty (Soleiman 2018, 247). Also, the two expressions *snḏ.n(εj)* *jtεj jm3.n(εj)* *n mw.tεj* were most popular in the reign of king Pepi I (Strudwick 1985, 69-70 (23), 101-2 (69, 112 (88), 125-26 (109)) (Cherpion 1989, 230, 233, 236) (Baer 1960, 288 (77), 293 (393)) (Harpur 1987, 275 (479) (Soleiman 2018, 247-48).

Pictorially, the short tight kilt with a pointed end tied at the waist and reaching above the knees is typical of the Fifth (Staehelein 1966, pl. XI, 17; pl. XXVII, fig. 26.) and Sixth Dynasties (H. G. Fischer 1968, 62, fig. 13; 63, fig. 14 c.). Moreover, the type of hair wig of *Sšm-nfr* was common in the Sixth Dynasty from the reign of King Pepi I (Cherpion 1989, 57-58, fig. 46). Finally, the facial features of *Sšm-nfr* as his smiling face, round cheeks, ears set high on the head, large and open eyes, the naso-labial fold, and fingers which are exaggerated in length are typical of the second Old Kingdom style which began in the reign of king Pepi I and continued during the Sixth Dynasty and First Intermediate Period (Russmann 1995, 269-279) (Brovarski 2008, 83-84). However, the high craftsmanship in engraving the facial features and the consistent of the body details makes us date this block to the beginning of the second style of the Old Kingdom, that is, from the reign of King Pepi I before this style deviates into its inconsistent characteristics.

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Pl. 1. The façade of the block of *Sšm-nfr* (Photograph: Sameh Abd el Mohsen)



Pl. 2. The thickness of the block of *Sšm-nfr* (Photograph: Sameh Abd el Mohsen)



Drawn By
Samir Gaber

Fig. 1. The façade of the block of *Sšm-nfr*

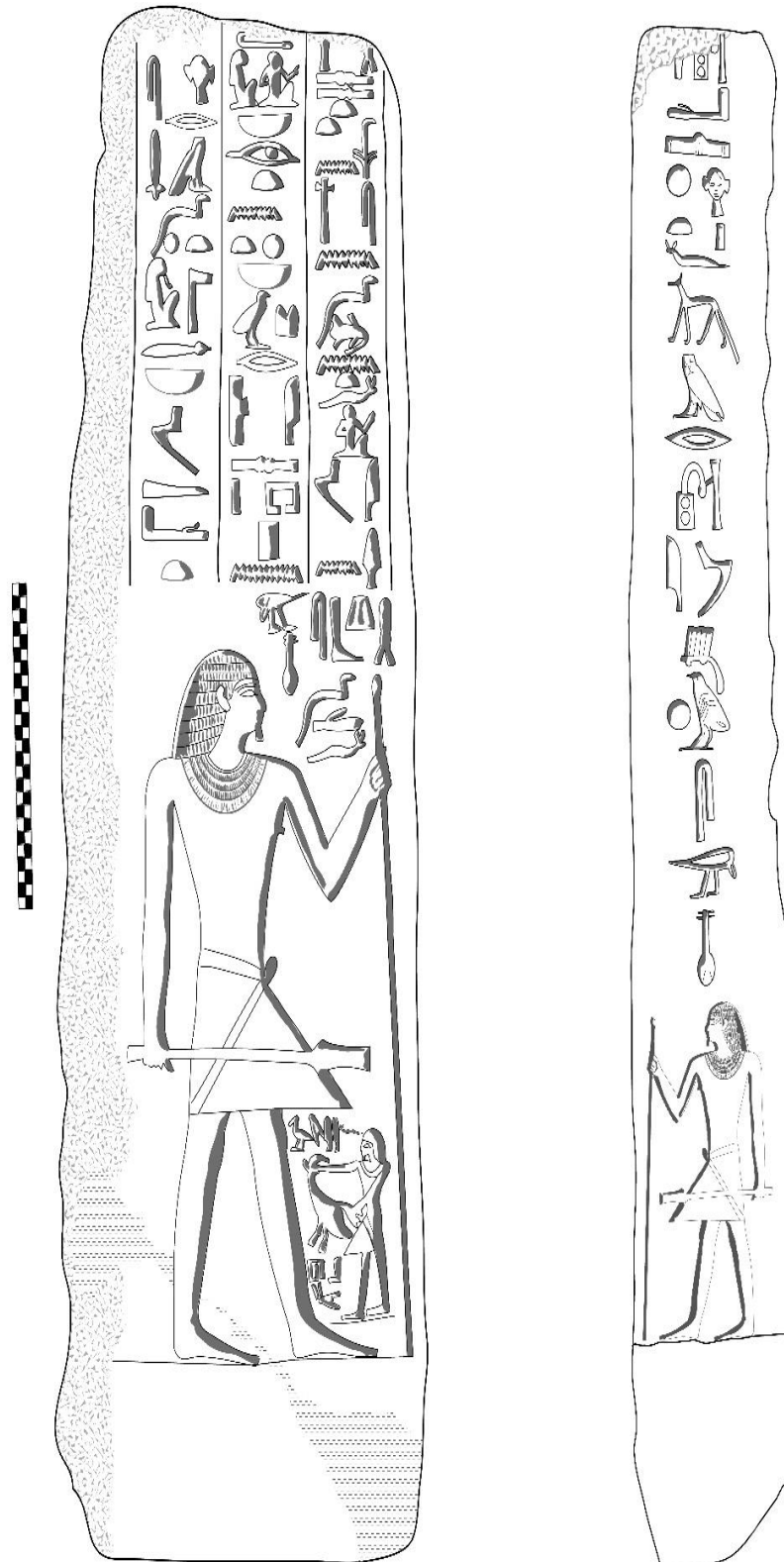


Fig. 2. The façade and the thickness of the block of *Sšm-nfr*

كتلة حجرية لسشم-نفر من الدولة القديمة من سقارة: دراسة في شجرة العائلة

المخلص

تهدف تلك الورقة البحثية إلى إعادة نشر ودراسة كتلة حجرية لشخص يدعى سشم-نفر عثر عليها في حفائر جسر المدير بسقارة في عام ٢٠٠٩، ومحفوظة الآن في مخزن الدولة القديمة في المتحف المصري الكبير تحت رقم ٦٠٩٥، ربما كانت جزء من واجهة مقبرته حيث نقش عليها صيغة التهديد. ذكر على تلك الكتلة اسم سشم-نفر وألقابه واسم ابنه المدعو (هب). وبالرغم من أن اسم سشم-نفر اسم شائع بين أسماء كبار رجال الدولة القديمة، إلا أن اسم ابنه المدعو (هب) لم يظهر من قبل ضمن أسماء الأفراد في الدولة القديمة. وبعد فحص جميع الأشخاص الذين حملوا اسم سشم-نفر في الدولة القديمة يمكن القول إن سشم-نفر موضوع الدراسة هو ابن رع-ور الأول صاحب المقبرة G 5270 في جبانة الجيزة الغربية وهما ينتميان إلى عائلة عريقة تبدأ بالجد الأول سشم-نفر الأول صاحب المقبرة (LG 45 = G 4940) في جبانة الجيزة الغربية، وهي عائلة حملت العديد من الألقاب العليا الخاصة بكتابة الوثائق الملكية. ومن خلال انتماء سشم-نفر محل الدراسة لتلك العائلة وأيضا من خلال بعض السمات الخطية والتصويرية وأشكال العلامات التي وجدت على الكتلة محل الدراسة يمكن القول إن سشم-نفر المعني قد عاش في نهاية الأسرة الخامسة وبدايات الأسرة السادسة.

إبراهيم عبدالستار
جامعة الإمام عبدالرحمن بن فيصل
المملكة العربية السعودية
iaismail@iau.edu.sa

بيانات المقال

تاريخ المقال

تم الاستلام في ١٢ فبراير ٢٠٢٣
تم استلام النسخة المنقحة في ٢٠ أكتوبر
٢٠٢٣

تم قبول البحث في ٢٨ أكتوبر ٢٠٢٣
متاح على الإنترنت في ١٠ يناير ٢٠٢٤

الكلمات الدالة

الدولة القديمة،
رع-ور،
سشم-نفر،
سقارة،
الكاهن المرتل،
المتحف المصري الكبير