THE STELA OF ʿnhw IN SOHAG NATIONAL MUSEUM
INV. N°. 876

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to study a round-topped funerary stela of ʿnhw from Abydos, preserved now in Sohag National Museum Inv. N°. 876. The present study provides a discussion of the meaning of their names and title. Additionally, it aims to transcribe, transliterate, translate, and comment on the inscription. The artistic style together with the orthographic and paleographic features of the stela, could be dated to the late twelfth dynasty or early thirteenth dynasty.

KEYWORDS: ʿnhw, Abydos, genealogy, JE 91248, Osiris, twelfth dynasty, thirteenth dynasty.
I. INTRODUCTION

This article deals with the study of the stela of \( \text{ꜣꜣꜥ} \) \( \text{nhw} \) at Sohag National Museum Inv. N°876 and then moved from the Cairo Egyptian Museum in 2008. According to the Journal d’entrée 91248, it was discovered in Kom al-Sultan at Abydos by Yale University during an expedition in 1969 under the accession N°69.219 «1013» \[Figures 1-2\].

II. HISTORY OF THE PUBLICATION

W.K. Simpson was the first to mention the stela and draw a facsimile of it in 1995\(^2\). However, he only gave brief information about the stela, including its number C14, material, measurement, and transliteration of its texts\(^3\). D.M. Doxey recorded the number of the stela and the name of its owner before moving it to Sohag National Museum (SNM)\(^4\).

III. DESCRIPTION

It is a round-topped limestone stela that measures 29.5 cm in height, 21 cm in width and 6 cm in thickness. It is divided into four registers that relief scenes and texts in black ink, which is now unfortunately in a bad state of preservation.

IV. FIRST REGISTER

Main Inscription

The first register consists of four horizontal lines of hieroglyphs reading from right to left between two incised border lines. It contains an offering formula:

\[ \text{[1]} \text{ḥt p di nsw}^\text{(a)} \text{(n) Wšr}^\text{(b)} \]
\[ \text{[2]} \text{ḥn.t-y mnn.ty}^\text{(c)} \text{w nb 3bvw}^\text{,} \]
\[ \text{[3]} \text{ḥst}^\text{(d)} \text{pr.(t)-ḥrw t ḫnk.t}^\text{(e)} \text{ḥw}^\text{,} \text{3pd.w} \text{ḥ.w}^\text{5} \text{ṣḥ.f mnḥ.t snṭr mrḥ.t}^\text{(f)} \]
\[ \text{[4]} \text{n k}^\text{3} \text{n ḫnzw}^\text{(g)} \text{(nb) nhw}^\text{(h)} \text{ḥmḥ}^\text{(i)} \text{ḥw}, \text{Sṭ-ḥnwm}^\text{(k)} \text{, m3c(.t)-ḥrw.} \]

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\(^1\) Simpson 1995: 42.
\(^2\) Simpson 1995: 42-44.
\(^3\) Simpson 1995: 42.
\(^4\) Doxey 1998: 238.
\(^5\) About this reading, see: Illin-Tomich 2011: 24.
V. SECOND REGISTER

A. Scene

In the second register, nhw is depicted seated facing right in front of an offering table. He wears a short wig that leaves the ear uncovered, a beard, and possibly a short kilt with a belt. His right arm is extended towards the offering table, while his left arm is folded across his chest. nhw is seated on a low-back chair with lion legs that rest on cone-shaped trusses. The offerings table in front of nhw is probably flat with three long legs, and the offerings above it are not clear.

Facing nhw are three women of identical representation seated on the ground. Three women of equal representation are seated on the ground facing nhw. Their right hands are held against their chest, while the left hands are outstretched across the knee. They wear long plain tripartite wigs, but no dress line is detectable.

B. Inscription

There are captions above and in front of each woman, identifying them:

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<table>
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[1] sn.tef Dw  [1] his sister Dju,


[3] sn.tef Kdmy(t)(m)  [3] his sisterQedmy(t),


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VI. THIRD REGISTER

A. Scene

The scene depicts four sisters of the stela owner, seated facing right, as the female figures of the second register; these four figures are all identical.

B. Inscription

In front of each female figure, there is a caption with her name:

- [7] Bbw.(t)
- [8] sn.tsf Sdmy.(t)(t)
- [9] sn.(t)ef Hrj-n-s3(t)(t)
- [10] m3(t)-hrw

[7] Bebut
[8] his sister Sudjemy(t)
[9] his sister Hor-en-sa(t),
[10] Justified

VII. FOURTH REGISTER

A. Scene

The scene depicts three brothers and one sister of the stela owner seated facing right. The three brothers are identically represented and sit on the ground with their left hands are held against their chest while the right hands are outstretched across the knee. They wear a shoulder-length wig, but no dress line is detectable, and their sister is depicted seated on the ground also in the same gesture as the aforementioned female figures.

B. Inscription

In front of each figure, there is a caption with their names:

- [12] sn.tsf Hnw.(t)

[12] his sister Henut.
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11 [12] imy-r pr(s) S3-Ipi(l) [12] steward Sa-Ipi
[14] snf ‘Imny(v) [14] his brother Imeny

VIII. COMMENTARY

(a) The arrangement of the $\text{a}$ $\text{n}$ $\Delta$ formula on this stela was the usual form that was used starting from the eleventh dynasty to the thirteenth dynasty$^7$.

(b) The occurrence of Osiris’ name $\text{a}$ $\text{n}$ without a determinative $\text{a}$ $\text{n}$ $\text{h}$ $\text{n}$ [A41]$^8$ and the writing of the god’s name in this form $\text{a}$ $\text{n}$ $\text{h}$ indicates a late Middle Kingdom date, to be more precise the end of the twelfth dynasty and beginning of the thirteenth dynasty$^9$.

(c) The writing of the god’s epithet $\text{nhty}-\text{imntyw}$ without a determinative $\text{a}$ $\text{n}$ [A41] was usually found from the reign of king Amenemhat III and later$^{10}$.

(d) Bennett suggested that the phrase $\text{d}$. $\text{f}$ before $\text{pr}-\text{hrw}$ was used from the twelfth dynasty onwards$^{11}$. This position cannot be accepted since the above-mentioned phrase occurs on two false doors from the Old Kingdom: The sixth dynasty door of Nefer-sshem-re$^{12}$, and the eighth dynasty door of Nebet, the wife of the vizier Shemay$^{13}$.

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$^8$ For further discussion of this determinative, see: BENNETT 1941: 78, criterion N.2; BENNETT 1958: 78; LEPHROHN 1985: 4 [MFA 72.766 a & b], 149 [MFA 28-11-357].

$^9$ For similar examples, see: LANGE & SCHÄFER 1902: vol. 1, 42 [CGC. 2032], 87 [CGC. 2073], 149 [CGC. 2012], 204 [CGC. 2014], 220 [CGC. 2023], 254 [CGC. 2023], 287 [CGC. 2026], 297 [CGC. 2026], 28 [CGC. 2032], 339 [CGC. 2032], 356 [CGC. 2036], 362 [CGC. 2036], 363 [CGC. 2036], 371 [CGC. 2036], 378 [CGC. 2037]; LANGE & SCHÄFER 1908: vol. 1, 42 [CGC. 2044], 12 [CGC. 2044], 217 [CGC. 2057], 283 [CGC. 2064], 313 [CGC. 2064], 322 [CGC. 2065], 332 [CGC. 2070], 340 [CGC. 2071], 358 [CGC. 2072], 361 [CGC. 2073], 379 [CGC. 2074], 399 [CGC. 2076]; LORTON 1985: 113-126; LEAHY 1979: 141-153; MUCHIKI 1990: 191-194; MUCHIKI 1991: 197; LAPP 1993: 196, § 451, 242, § 579.

$^{10}$ For similar examples, see: LANGE & SCHÄFER 1902: vol. 1, 53 [CGC. 2003], 106 [CGC. 2088], 124 [CGC. 2010], 168 [CGC. 2014], 182 [CGC. 2015], 254 [CGC. 2023], 297 [CGC. 2028], 299 [CGC. 2028], 250 [CGC. 2039], 358 [CGC. 2036], 389 [CGC. 2039]; LANGE & SCHÄFER 1908: vol. 1, 104 [CGC. 2051], 168 [CGC. 2054], 236 [CGC. 2056], 286 [CGC. 2059], 308 [CGC. 2061], 353 [CGC. 2072], 399 [CGC. 2076]; HTBM III, PLS.24 [305], 47 [215], HTBM 1913: vol. 4, PLS.36 [255], 40 [331], 46 [447]; HTBM 1914: vol. 5, PL.14 [335]; BRIGHT 2005: 20; BENNETT 1941: 78, criterion N.1.

$^{11}$ BENNETT 1941: 79, criterion N.1.

$^{12}$ FRANK 2003: 46.

$^{13}$ HABACHI 1983: 211, Fig.3.
(e) The writing of the sigh-š[ W23] is attested from the twelfth dynasty\textsuperscript{14}.

(f) Simpson reads the sign  š [ V6] š\textsuperscript{15}, although I think the correct reading should be šš.

(g) The request for incense and oil were added to the offering formula towards the end of the twelfth dynasty\textsuperscript{10}.

(h) $ n \ k3 \ n \ im3h(y)$\textsuperscript{17}: The phrase $ n \ k3 \ n$ was rarely used in the Old Kingdom\textsuperscript{18}. The phrase occurs in the burial chamber of Mereruka from the Sixth Dynasty\textsuperscript{19}, while $ n \ k3 \ n + \ im3h(y) $ occurs on stelae starting from the Herakleopolitan period\textsuperscript{20} and the beginning of the eleventh dynasty\textsuperscript{21}.

The deceased was referred to as $ n \ im3hwp $ «honored one»\textsuperscript{22} starting from the reign of king Sesostris I\textsuperscript{23}. While the phrase $ n \ k3 \ n \ im3h (y) $ was first attested from the reign of Amenemhat II\textsuperscript{2}.

(i) $ n \ im3hwp $: «the living». The personal name $ n \ im3hwp $ appeared ten times in the Old Kingdom as masculine\textsuperscript{25} and continued to be in use during the Middle Kingdom\textsuperscript{26}. According to Franke, the name of the stela owner was commonly used from the end of the twelfth dynasty and beginning of the thirteenth dynasty\textsuperscript{27}.

(j) The earliest attested use of the phrase $ nb \ im3hwp $ was from the fourth dynasty in the tomb of Rahotep at Meidum\textsuperscript{28}, and it became commonly used during the end

\textsuperscript{14} For other examples dated to the twelfth dynasty, see: HEIN & SATZINGER 1989: vol.1, 17, 22, 29, 80, 96; HEIN & SATZINGER 1993: vol.2, 32, 66, 148; MAHFOUZ 2013: 163-164, 168-169, 184-185, 187-188; ABDEL-RAZIQ 2013: 276-277, Figs.1-2; ABDEL-RAZIQ 2014: 4, Fig.1-2, 8.

\textsuperscript{15} SIMPSON 1995: 42.

\textsuperscript{16} BENNETT 1941: 79, criterion N.7; BARTA 1968: 57; SPANEL 1996: 768-769; LEPROHON 1996: vol.2, 525, Fig.1 [A].

\textsuperscript{17} For similar examples see: CGC. 20049 (= LANGE & SCHÄFER 1902: vol.1, 58; CGC. 20119 (= LANGE & SCHÄFER 1902: vol.1, 141-142.


\textsuperscript{20} QUIBELL 1907: PL.XIX [3]; LOPEZ 1975: Figs.7, 10-11, 13; ABDALLA 1992: Fig.2 [b, d].


\textsuperscript{22} For the interpretation of $ im3hwp $, see: JANSEN-WINKELN 1996: 29-36.

\textsuperscript{23} For Similar examples, see: (M Lange & SCHÄFER 1902: vol.1, 58 [CGC. 20049], 141 [CGC. 20119]; LANGE & SCHÄFER 1908: vol.2, 208 [CGC. 20178], 259 [CGC. 20238]; BENNETT 1941: 79, criterion N.6; FRANKE 2003: 54, LANGE & SCHÄFER 1902: vol.1, 58 [CGC. 20049], 141 [CGC. 20119]; LANGE & SCHÄFER 1908: vol.2, 208 [CGC. 20178], 259 [CGC. 20238].

\textsuperscript{24} STEFANOVIC 2010: 211, note 26; ABDEL-RAZIQ 2014: 14 [C], 15 [III].

\textsuperscript{25} SCHEELE-SCHWEITZER 2014: 310-311 [775].

\textsuperscript{26} RANKE 1935: 68 [6].

\textsuperscript{27} FRANKE 1984: 135 (Dossier N. 171-172), 136-137 (Dossier N. 173-174), 138 (Dossier N. 175-176), 139 (Dossier N. 177-178), 140 (Dossier N. 179).

\textsuperscript{28} For similar examples, see: PETRIE 1892: PLs.12-13; FISCHER 1996: 194; JONES 2000: vol.2, 478, N.1778; HASSAN 1932: 83, Figs.143 [98], 168; SMITH 1933: PL.XXIII; FAKHRY 1935: 21, Fig.12; HASSAN 1936: 121, Fig.132; JUNKER 1941: Abb.48; SMITH 1942: 512, Fig.3; HASSAN 1944: 271, Fig.143; JUNKER 1950: Abb.36, 39, 104; HTBM 1911: vol.1, PL.11 [1282].
of the Middle Kingdom. It seems that the bearer of this title enjoyed a great status in society.

(k) S3t-hnww: «the daughter of god Chnum». The personal name S3t-hnww occurs only in the Middle Kingdom. While Simpson read it as S3t-hnww31.

(l) snt: the word «snt» means «sister» in the Middle Kingdom, while in the New Kingdom it refers to the «wife». This may be based on Osiris’s relationship with Isis, since she was his sister and wife at the same time32.

(m) Kdmyt: The personal name Kdmyt was used only from the Middle Kingdom33.

(n) lr: This proper name appeared in H. Ranke but with a different orthography ḫn w ḳ 6 W.K. Simpson suggests that it should be read as «lr35. PNM read it 36 “lr”36. The scholar agrees with the PNM reading of this name.

(o) Bbwt: which means «the wig ?». «Bbwt» is a feminine name that was attested only on the Middle Kingdom stelae (CGC. 20023, 20141)37.

(p) Sdmy (i) is a feminine name that was attested only from the Middle Kingdom38.

(q) There are very faint traces of a few signs that could probably be read «Hṛj-n-s3(?)».

(r) The personal name Hnw.t was used starting from the beginning of the Old Kingdom39 and continued to be used until the New Kingdom40.

(s) imy-r pr: «steward»41, «administrator»42. This title imy-r pr was first attested from the fourth dynasty43. Returning to the title of imy-r pr, Grajetzki mentions that its bearer in the tombs of the Old Kingdom was shown at the front of the row for lower officials under the tomb owner. They are usually depicted as scribes or bringing

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29 HTBM 1912: vol.2 II, Pls.3 [177], 4 [189], 7 [147], 9 [146], 13 [123], 21 [145], 26-27 [151], 35 [205], 41-43 [208], 49 [192], 50 [219]; HTBM 1912: vol.3, Pls.1 [228], 8 [320], 11 [237], 15 [243], 18 [311], 20 [313], 36 [242]; LEPHON 1985: vol.1, 153 [MFA 29.1130].

30 RANKE 1935: 292 [24].

31 SIMPSON 1995: 42.

32 WH 1971: vol.4, 151 [5-9].

33 RANKE 1935: 337 [19].

34 RANKE 1935: 49 [3].

35 SIMPSON 1995: 42.

36 PERSONS & NAMES OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM: https://pnm.unimainz.de/2/inscription/9880, Accessed on 07/03/2022 at 5:27 pm

37 RANKE 1935: 96 [8].

38 RANKE 1935: 323 [26].

39 SCHEELE-SCHWEITZER 2014: 545 [2445].

40 RANKE 1935: 242 [18].


42 WARD 1982: 21 [N°.132].

43 GRAJETZKI 2009: 69.
cattle. In addition, they were only known through the household of higher officials. Dawood added that the holders of this title were associated with the farms and administration of the estates. For example, a person from Dendera who bore the title imy-r pr was boasting of his competence in the administrative aspect, and good control over the estate of his father. It was his responsibility to draw up the final reports for the county account and submit them to the landowner.

(t) S3-ipl: This proper name was used only during the Middle Kingdom.

(u) The personal name Hd.t was used only during the Middle kingdom.

(v) The personal name 'Imny was used starting from the beginning of the Old Kingdom and continued to be used until the Middle Kingdom.

(w) Sktp-ib-Rc: means «May it please the heart of Ra». This personal name was used only during the Middle kingdom.

IX. PALEOGRAPHICAL REMARKS

a. It is worth noting that the sign appears in the second line of the main inscription in semi-cursive writing with three pots of water only. Gardiner suggested that the sign was written with three water pots during the Middle Kingdom and continued to be used in this shape until the New Kingdom; this assumption is incorrect since Leprohon discusses examples that date back to the end of the Old Kingdom and the first intermediate period.

b. It should be noted that the sign from the fourth line of the main inscription is written in semi-cursive hieroglyphs.

c. The scribe of the stela used the sign (Q3) for the name 'lt, though the correct sign probably is (X3) in the second register [line 5].

d. For the word mAat, the scribe used the sign instead of (Aa11) after the name 'lt in the second register [line 6].

47 Ranke 1935: 280 [19].
48 Ranke 1935: 261 [14].
49 Scheele-Schweitzer 2014: 238 [301].
50 Ranke 1935: 31 [Nº. 13].
51 Ranke 1935: 318 [6].
52 Fischer 1976: 44.
54 For similar examples in the first intermediate period and the end of the Old Kingdom, see: Fischer 1962: ILS II, Fig. 2 [III], 4; Brovarski 1973: 453-465; Leprohon 1985: vol. I, 124 [MFA 25.673], 99 [MFA 25.625], 105 [MFA 25.627], 108 [MFA 25.628], 130 [MFA 25.675].
55 Fischer 1976: 44.
56 PERSONS & NAMES OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM: https://pnm.unimainz.de/2/inscription/9880, Accessed on 01/03/2022
e. It is noted that there are few traces of the ink in the writing of the name Hrj-n-s3 (?) in the third register [line 3].

f. It is worth noting that the sign (P8) precedes the sign (Aa11) of the m3–hrw in the third register (line 4).

g. There are a few traces of the signs (X1) and (I9) of the word «snt» in the third register [lines 3, 5].

h. There are traces of writing for the title «imy-r pr» in the fourth register (line 1).

X. DATING

This paleographical and iconographical study dates the stela to the late twelfth dynasty, or early thirteenth dynasty based on the following facts:

a. According to Franke, the name of the owner stela is called «nhw», a name commonly used during the thirteenth dynasty57.

b. The orthographic of the epithet «foremost of the westerners» is the usual form that occurs during the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth dynasty58.

c. The orthography «oxen and fowl» was usually from the end of the Twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth dynasties59.

d. The phrase n k3 n im3hy was more common since the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth dynasty60.

e. The arrangement of instead of was regularly used during the end of the twelfth dynasty and the beginning of the thirteenth dynasty61.

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58 Heinz & Satzinger 1989: vol. 1, 16, 21, 46, 95, 116, 135, 141, 166; Azzam 2011: 100, Pl. 1; Lange & Schäfer 1902: vol. 1, 24 [CGC. 20023], 53 [CGC. 20043], 106 [CGC. 20088], 113 [CGC. 20093], 121 [CGC. 20100], 124 [CGC. 20102], 168 [CGC. 20143], 182 [CGC. 20155], 254 [CGC. 20233], 297 [CGC. 20282], 356 [CGC. 20346], 389 [CGC. 20393]; Lange & Schäfer 1989: vol. 1, 4 [CGC. 20402], 77 [CGC. 20482], 113 [CGC. 20518], 236 [CGC. 20596], 308 [CGC. 20681], 399 [CGC. 20768]; HTBM 1912: vol. 3, Pl. 24 [305]; HTBM 1913: vol. 4, Pl. 40 [331].

59 Lange & Schäfer 1902: vol. 1, 43 [CGC. 20034], 106 [CGC. 20088], 117 [CGC. 20098], 131 [CGC. 20108], 139 [CGC. 117], 144 [CGC. 20122], 148 [CGC. 20125], 155 [CGC. 20132], 166 [CGC. 20141], 192 [CGC. 20162], 197 [CGC. 20165], 205 [CGC. 20175], 216 [CGC. 20187], 220 [CGC. 20204], 232 [CGC. 20207], 236 [CGC. 20213], 245 [CGC. 20226], 261 [CGC. 20239], 268 [CGC. 20246], 279 [CGC. 20260], 281 [CGC. 20263], 306 [CGC. 20292], 309 [CGC. 20296], 313 [CGC. 20300], 327 [CGC. 20314], 351 [CGC. 20340], 359 [CGC. 20348], 365 [CGC. 20357], 367 [CGC. 20359], 373 [CGC. 20371], 380 [CGC. 20381]; Lange & Schäfer 1989: vol. 1, 47 [CGC. 20452], 52 [CGC. 20456], 62 [CGC. 20465], 135 [CGC. 20532], 141 [CGC. 20535], 190 [CGC. 20558], 202 [CGC. 20566], 243 [CGC. 20605], 244 [CGC. 20606], 246 [CGC. 20607], 258 [CGC. 20618], 299 [CGC. 20671], 334 [CGC. 20708], 340 [CGC. 20714], 343 [CGC. 20716], 349 [CGC. 20722], 353 [CGC. 20723]; HTBM 1912: vol. 2, Pls. 4 [177], 5 [150], 6 [156], 13 [123], 14 [209], 15 [129], 21 [145], 28 [224]; HTBM 1913: vol. 3, Pls. 297, 10 [234], 11 [237], 12 [249], 20 [313], 25 [246], 35 [319], 36 [242], 36 [242], 37 [222]; HTBM 1913: vol. 3, Pls. 5 [152], 7 [155], 12 [170], 34 [210]; Heinz & Satzinger 1989: vol. 1, 7, 179.

XI. Genealogy

The stela provides information for the genealogy of the family of ‘nhw up to two generations. So, the following matrix shows the relationship between the two generations.

The first generation ? + S3t-hnmw the mother of ‘nhw

The second generation ‘nhw and his brothers ’Imny, Shtp-ib-rε and his sisters Dw, Kdmy(t), ’It, Sdmy(t), Hrj-n-s3 (?), Hnw.t, Hd.t.

We do not know the relation of Bbw. (?) and S3-ipi to the owner of the stela, but one may presume that S3-ipi is probably the husband of lady Hdt.

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[FIGURE 1]: Stela in Sohag National Museum, Inv. Nᵒ.876/ JE. 91248 © Photo taken by the researcher.