

2022

## THREE LATE PERIOD STELAE IN THE GRAND EGYPTIAN MUSEUM

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### Recommended Citation

Ewais, Marwa Ahmed and Rabia, Hanan Mohamed (2022) "THREE LATE PERIOD STELAE IN THE GRAND EGYPTIAN MUSEUM," *Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists*: Vol. 7: Iss. 1, Article 3. Available at: <https://digitalcommons.aaru.edu.jo/jguaa/vol7/iss1/3>

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# THREE LATE PERIOD STELAE IN THE GRAND EGYPTIAN MUSEUM

By

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## ABSTRACT

[AR] ثلاث لوحات من العصر المتأخر محفوظة بالمتحف المصرى الكبير  
تعرض هذه الورقة البحثية ثلاث لوحات مستديرة القمة من أبيدوس. تخص اللوحة الأولى سيدة المنزل *T3y-k3* وهي مخزنة في المتحف  
المصرى الكبير وتحمل الرقم (GEM 12918). والثانية عبارة عن لوحة غير مكتملة، تحمل رقم (GEM 12919) ؛ والثالثة هي لوحة *3b*  
*hnsu ir (t) b (int)* التي تحمل الرقم (GEM 12857). الغرض الأساسى من هذه الورقة هو دراسة ونشر اللوحات حيث تحتوى  
النقوش على بعض المميزات المثيرة للاهتمام في هجاء العلامات والصيغ والأخطاء الكتابية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإنه يبحث في تأريخ اللوحات على  
أساس السمات الأسلوبية والتهجئة حيث يمكن تأريخ اللوحات من خلال هذه الدراسة إلى أواخر الأسرة الخامسة والعشرين - أوائل الأسرة  
السادسة والعشرين.

[EN] This paper presents three rounded-topped stelae from Abydos in the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM). The first one belongs to a lady of the house *T3y-k3* (GEM 12918). The second is an unfinished stela (GEM 12919). The third stela is of *3b hnsu ir (t) b (int)* (GEM 12857). The primary purpose of this paper is to study and publish the stelae, providing dates and textual analysis.

**KEYWORDS:** Stela, Late Period, 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> dynasty, Abydos, *Ra-Horakhty*, Osiris, Soker-Oairis, *t3y-k3*, *3b hnsu ir (t) b(int)*?

## I. INTRODUCTION

These three limestone stelae from Abydos. They have been studied by Peter Munro in his examination of Late Egyptian funerary stelae and assigned to two different groups (group BIII and group F)<sup>1</sup>. All three are dedicated to Re-Harakhty.

## II. STELA OF ꜥꜣy-kꜣ [GEM 12918]

### 1. Description [FIGURES 1-2]

The stela was carved in limestone of good quality, with a rounded top. It measures 22.6 cm in length, 34 cm in max height, and 6 cm in max-width. The object came from Abydos and was kept in the Egyptian Museum at Cairo under the number TR. 26/10/24/9, and then moved to the Grand Egyptian Museum in 2014 under register number GEM 12918.

The stela shows a tripartite composition: under the block-band pattern separating the lunette from the figured scene. There are 11 inscribed columns; the lower part shows only five horizontal bands, the central one painted red. Based on stylistic similarities, this stela was assigned by Munro to group Abydos BIII, and dated to 650-630 BC<sup>2</sup>. The stela is framed by a thin band. The sides are blank.

### A. Lunette

Most of the paint has vanished; only the red survives in places. The winged sun-disc, flanked by suspended uraei, decorates the top of the lunette. It is a very popular motif on private stelae during the first millennium BC<sup>3</sup>. The wings have three layers without the feathers being delineated. The top layer is the smallest and is decorated with dots on the right-hand edge. The prevailing belief since the Middle Kingdom onward, concerning the representation of the winged solar disc, was that the king was reunited with the solar disc after his death. The private citizens / elite received the same distinction designation with the winged solar disc from the 21<sup>st</sup> dynasty onwards<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> MUNRO 1973: 273.

<sup>2</sup> MUNRO 1973: 273.

<sup>3</sup> HÖLZL 1992: 288; LEAHY 2009: 436.

<sup>4</sup> GOFF 1979: 251–253.



[FIGURE 1]: The stela of ꜥꜣ-kꜣ (GEM 12918) © The Grand Egyptian Museum

Underneath are two *wdꜣt*-eyes, a very common pattern for lunettes, commonly found on the false doors of the 6<sup>th</sup> dynasty and non-royal stelae of the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty<sup>5</sup>. These *wdꜣt*-eyes of Horus represent protection and perfection<sup>6</sup>.

Between the two *wdꜣt*-eyes is the *šn*-sign above the water-ripple *mw*-sign and the *iꜥb*-vase. This triple configuration represents the performance of the ritual act towards the god. As the same way that the *šn*-sign may be associated with the all-embracing circuit of the sun or the sun itself, it also may relate to protection and eternity<sup>7</sup>. The *mw*-sign represents the act of libation performed by the deceased, while the *iꜥb*-bowl<sup>8</sup> below indicates an offering of food or incense or its connection to water in the ritual purification of the deceased<sup>9</sup>.

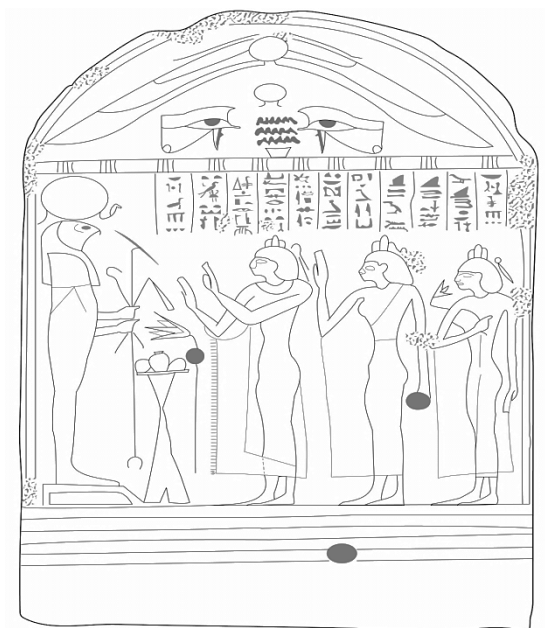
<sup>5</sup> EL-SAYED 2005; HALLMANN 2015: 140.

<sup>6</sup> D'AURIA 1988: 165-166.

<sup>7</sup> The *shen*-ring was also a symbol of life and regeneration. WILKINSON 1992: 193; HOLZL 1992: 287.

<sup>8</sup> The small *iꜥb*-vessels may have referred to funerary offerings that would provide the deceased with eternal sustenance. The water ripples most likely signified libations). HOLZL 1992: 287.

<sup>9</sup> ABDALLA 1992: 100.



[FIGURE 2]: Facsimile of The stela of ꜥꜣy-kꜣ (GEM 12918)

## B. Central part

The center field contains four figures. The left one depicts a standing mummiform image of a falcon-headed god *Ra-Horakhty*. He wears a red solar disk, encircled by a uraeus on his head and holds the *wꜣs*-scepter, the *ḥkꜣ*, and the *nḥḥꜣ* with his two hands. The solar disk and the god's body are painted red. He is standing on a *mꜣꜥt*-platform. *Ra-Horakhty* is the most popular deity in Late Period stela; for instance, in the Third Intermediate Period stela, the enthroned *Ra-Horakhty* appears on 85 stela<sup>10</sup>. The vast majority of the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty stela contain also his image, attesting to his importance in this period<sup>11</sup>.

In front of *Ra-Horakhty* there are three ladies facing left on the right-hand side of the stela, in an attitude of adoration<sup>12</sup>, next to an altar, which is topped with a *nmst*-vessel flanked by two pieces of bread and a large lotus flower<sup>13</sup>. The first woman, who is also a bit taller than the others (while the third woman is the shortest one), wears a broad collar around her neck. Each one wears a long tight-fitting tunic with an overlying light cloak<sup>14</sup>, with a fringed edge only for the first woman; the second figure is dressed likewise, but probably a shoulder strap is shown, or the hem of her light cloak on her chest. Surprisingly, the three female figures have short cut hair as helmet-like wig, which does not cover the ears but leaves them free, and a ribbon tied behind the heads, outlined with red color. On top of their heads are unguent cones of a type not

<sup>10</sup> SALEH 2007: 19.

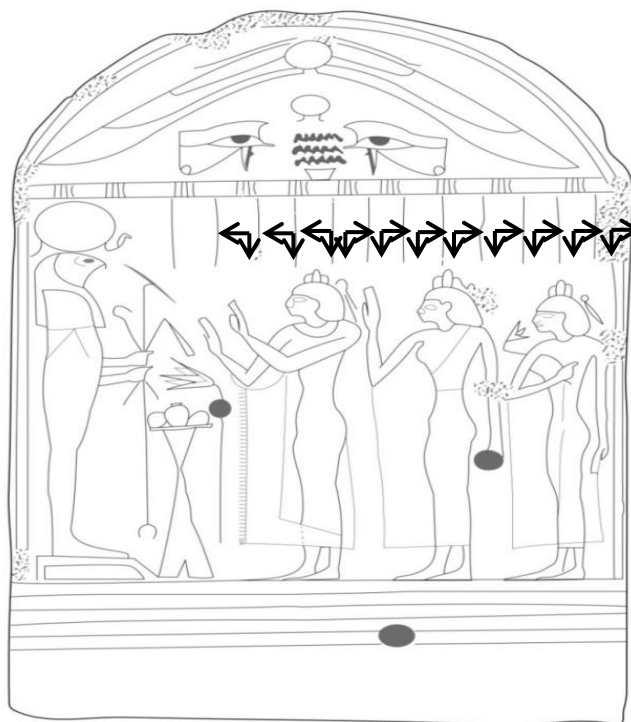
<sup>11</sup> The same representation of *Ra-Horakhty* on the stela appeared in 22<sup>nd</sup> dynasty. MUNRO 1973: 90; SWART 2004: 74-75.

<sup>12</sup> WILKINSON 1992: 29.

<sup>13</sup> For different compositions of offerings, see ROBINS 1998: 957-963.

<sup>14</sup> This type of dress was described by TAYLOR 2003: 101.

found before the 25<sup>th</sup> dynasty<sup>15</sup>. The first woman shows a more marked profile than the other two, notably a broad, flat nose and a strong chin. The last female figure is holding a flower in her right hand and is bringing it close to her nose, a gesture that is not common in contemporary material<sup>16</sup>. This stela has four holes, which suggest it was intended to be suspended and displayed.



Facsimile of the stela of ꜥꜣ-kꜣ (GEM 12918) without inscriptions © done by Samir Gaber

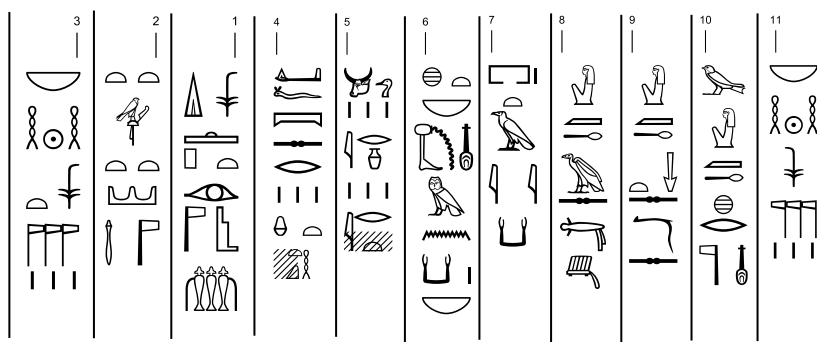
## 2. Inscriptions

Beneath the lunette and above the offering scene is a sequence of eleven columns of hieroglyphic inscriptions. A block-band separates the lunette and the figured field.

The three columns on the left, oriented rightwards, like the God's figure, are the beginning of the text that continues from the fourth column to the last one on the right but oriented leftwards. The position and orientation of some signs within the columns show some peculiarities.

<sup>15</sup> According to Taylor, this cone is type 3 and it develops from that of type 2. It is tall, narrow and flanked by smooth-sided, simplified versions of the vegetal matter of type 2. It is not found before the 25<sup>th</sup> dynasty. It supersedes type 2 and is the only type of cone depicted on Theban funerary monuments of the 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty. TAYLOR 2003: 101.

<sup>16</sup> MUNRO 1973: 273.



## Transliteration

(1) *ḥtp di nsw*<sup>(a)</sup> *Wsir*<sup>(b)</sup> *ḥnty* (2) *imntt*<sup>(c)</sup> *ntr* ʕ (3) *nb nhḥ nsw ntr.w* (4) *di.f prt-ḥrw*<sup>(d)</sup> *t h[nkt]*  
 (5) *k3w 3pdw irp ir [tt]* (6) *ḥt nb [t] nfr [t] wʕb [t] im n k3*<sup>(e)</sup> *nb (t)* (7) *pr*<sup>(f)</sup> *t3y-k3*<sup>(g)</sup> (8) *m3ʕ*  
*ḥrw mwt.s šd- im3ḥ* (9) *m3ʕ ḥrw snt.s ns-*(10) *wr m3ʕ ḥrw ḥr nfr ntr*<sup>(k)</sup> (11) *nb nhḥ nsw ntrw*

## Translation

(1) An offering which the King has given (to) Osiris, the Foremost (2) of the west, the great god, (3) The lord of eternity, The king of gods, (4) may be give an invocation of offerings consisting of bread, bear (5) oxen, fowl, wine, milk (6) and every beautiful and pure thing there. To the ka of the lady of (7) the house *T3y-k3* (8) justified; her mother, *šd-im3ḥ*, (9) justified, her sister, *Ns-wr*, (10) justified, before the great god, (11) lord of the eternity, king of the gods.

## 3. Commentary

<sup>(a)</sup> *ḥtp di nsw*: The offering formula  $\overline{\text{A}} \overline{\text{B}} \overline{\text{C}}$ , where the verb *di* almost is the second element in the formula, was very known and common with this arrangement since the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty as regards vertical inscriptions<sup>17</sup> and still during the Late Period. The orthography of *ḥtp* with the phonetic complements is common in the Late Period<sup>18</sup> with the form  $\overline{\text{A}} \overline{\text{B}}$ <sup>19</sup> and rare the form  $\overline{\text{B}} \overline{\text{A}}$ <sup>20</sup>. Sometimes it appears with abbreviate form as  $\overline{\text{A}}$ <sup>21</sup>.

<sup>(b)</sup> *Wsir*: The use of the divine pennant determinative  $\overline{\text{R8}}$  in the name of Osiris is one of the common features at the Late and the Ptolemaic Periods<sup>22</sup>. Leahy demonstrated

<sup>17</sup> ERMAN & GRAPOW (eds.), 1971, vol.3: 186, SMITHER 1939: 34; PETRIE & GRIFFITH 1902: PLS.2, 11, 32, 36; LECLANT 1961: PL.32; DAVIES 1953: PL.2; TAWFIK 1978: 134; ELEITHY 2013: 107-108.


<sup>18</sup> LEAHY 1977: 51.




<sup>19</sup> For example: Cairo JE 21970; BM 639; Cairo T.29/10/24/1; Cairo JE 20240; Cairo JE 18520; Cairo JE 12634.

<sup>20</sup> For example: Cairo C.G 22002; Cairo T.9/7/24/7; BM 1317; Cairo JE 21789.

<sup>21</sup> For example: Cairo JE 40783.

<sup>22</sup> LEAHY 1979: 142; TAYLOR 2003: 102; ASTON 1990: 149.



that the writing with  does not occur before the late eighth century BC. He suggested that it was introduced at Thebes in the early years of the Kushite rule<sup>23</sup>. The problem that arises here is that the god represented in the figured field is a hawk-headed Sun god, but the offering formula is for the god Osiris<sup>24</sup>. Munro remarked this apparent anomaly with a «sic». However, on Abydos Late Period stelae, Osiris was actually frequently invoked, regardless of the deity represented<sup>25</sup>.

(c) *hnty imntt*: the orthography of *hnty imntt* during the Late Period has different forms as  <sup>26</sup>,  <sup>27</sup>,  <sup>28</sup>. In the current stela, the word *hnt* has the shape that is considered to be derived from hieratic writing. In the Late Period stelae the use of *imntt* instead of *imntyw* is also common<sup>29</sup>.

(d) *pṛt-hrw*: this is the expected wording, although the signs do not match and probably the engraver misunderstood the model from which he copied. The sign looking like a «pt» might derive from an «open» *pr*-sign, which is acceptable. *-rw* is clear. The only strange thing that the sign looks like an «s», and it should be instead of a *hrw*-sign, which is usually vertical.

(e) *n k3*: The name of the deceased during the 25<sup>th</sup> dynasty is usually introduced by *n k3*. At the beginning of the 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty, it is replaced by *n k3 n im3h* and *n im3h*<sup>30</sup>.

(f) *nbt-pr* means married woman, which appeared from the Middle Kingdom to the Ptolemaic Period<sup>31</sup>.

(g) The sign after the personal name can be considered a determinative of sitting woman, which is very similar to the sign also read *hsy*<sup>32</sup>. On the contrary Munro suggested, a *k*-sign, probably for Isis with doubt. The determining  in female names at Late Period Stelae is most common than the usual  <sup>33</sup>.

(k) *ntr*: It is the usual form for *ntr* without determinative and it is most common in the

<sup>23</sup> LEAHY 1977: 61.

<sup>24</sup> In stela of the Calvet Museum Avignon dates back to the early six<sup>th</sup> century. The god Osiris is also called *Ra-Horakhty*: MORET 1913: 52-35, N<sup>o</sup>. XXVII, PL.VII/2.

<sup>25</sup> MUNRO 1973: 270, FIGS. 115, 141- 142; BRESCIANI 1985: Stela Bologna KS 1939, N<sup>o</sup>. 31, PL.44 -5; HALLMANN 2015: 131-152.

<sup>26</sup> MUNRO 1973: TAF.3, ABB.10.

<sup>27</sup> LOUVRE T V.4.

<sup>28</sup> Cairo JE. 18250.

<sup>29</sup> For example: MUNRO 1973: PL.58; FIG.200; PL.59; FIG.197; PL.61; FIG.207.

<sup>30</sup> LEAHY 1977: 68.


<sup>31</sup> PESTMAN 1961: 11, N<sup>o</sup>. 1.





<sup>32</sup> DAUMAS; AMER: 1988: 78 N<sup>o</sup>. 1379.



<sup>33</sup> LEAHY 1980: 175.



#### 4. Personal Names

*t3y-k3*: According to Munro, the name was initially read *T3y*<sup>34</sup> as attested in Ranke, PN I, 365 (9)<sup>35</sup>. Munro ignored the sign (D28 ) followed by a determinative of a personal name to represent *T3y-k3* which is very probably attested also in P. Louvre E 7851 verso, dated to the 25<sup>th</sup> dynasty<sup>36</sup>.

*Šd-im3h*: Munro<sup>37</sup> and Leahy<sup>38</sup> mention the name of her mother as *Ns*, but the authors consider the name is *Šd-im3h* where the sign  more clearly represents  [F30] in addition to the sign  which may represent  [F39].

*Ns-wr*: The name is registered in Ranke, PN I, 147.11<sup>39</sup>. This name is common in the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> dynasties, according to Peter Munro occurring on three stelae (kopt. Throrw 350, BM. 798, Cairo CG 22147)<sup>40</sup> with two different forms <sup>41</sup> and <sup>42</sup>.

### III. PRE-FABRICATED??? STELA [GEM 12919]

This stela was made of painted limestone with the following measures: length 32 cm, height 42.5 cm and width 5,2 cm. It was kept in the Egyptian Museum at Cairo under the number TR 29/10/24/3, and then it was moved to the Grand Egyptian Museum under number GEM 12919.

The stela shows the same layout as the previous one, although the result is different: almost square slab with round top, tripartite composition with lunette decorated by winged sun-disk, figured field with hawk-headed god on the left and two adoring men, lower part with six horizontal bands, painted yellow. It is framed by simple red lines. Munro attributed this stela, too, to group BIII and dated it to c. 680 BC<sup>43</sup>.

#### 1. Description [FIGURES 3-4]

What is noticeable about this stela is that it has not been completely finished. All its elements have been drawn, even the place designed for the inscriptions, but they

<sup>34</sup> MUNRO 1973: 273.

<sup>35</sup> RANKE 1935: 365 (9).

<sup>36</sup> DONKER VAN HEEL 1999: 143-144.

<sup>37</sup> MUNRO 1973: 273.

<sup>38</sup> LEAHY 1977: 139.

<sup>39</sup> RANKE 1935: 147.11.

<sup>40</sup> MUNRO 1973: 357, 372.

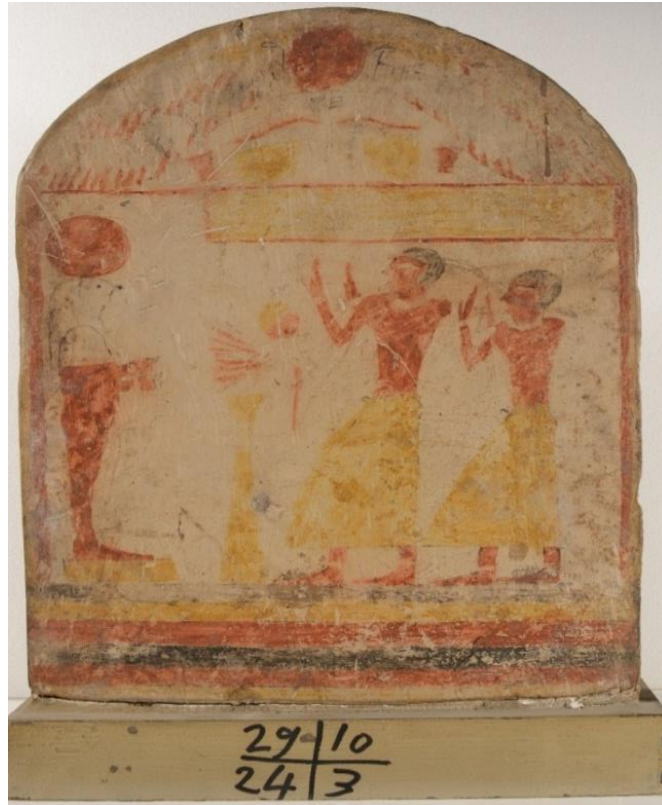
<sup>41</sup> Stela BM. 798.

<sup>42</sup> Stela Cairo CG 22147.

<sup>43</sup> MUNRO 1973: 274.

were not written. It likely seems that this illustrates different stages of production, with all the decorations of the stela painted first, and finally, the inscriptions were added in place. Alternatively it can be suggested that in the workshops in Abydos during this period, many models of «pre-fabricated» stelae were designed and produced in different quantities<sup>44</sup> and the place of the text was left without writing until it was time to use it<sup>45</sup>, as it is evident in this stela in question.

period 630-600 BC<sup>46</sup>.



[FIGURE 3]: Pre-fabricated Stela (GEM 12919) © The Grand Egyptian Museum

<sup>44</sup> MUNRO 1973: 82–3; HALLMANN 2015: 151–152.

<sup>45</sup> For example: Stela JE 34595, Cairo TR 29/10/24/1. All the registers of the stela were subsequently inscribed the fact that these stelae were prepared in advance. It is used when a buyer group is found that matches the drawing in terms of the number of people, then the texts were added later. This stela can be compared with Florens 2501, Abydos I, B IV. MUNRO 1972: FIG.122; MUNRO 1973: FIG.121. Both stelae are identical and the work of the same workshop.

<sup>46</sup> LEAHY 1980: 179.



[FIGURE 4]: Facsimile of Pre-fabricated Stela (GEM 12919)

### A. Lunette

The winged sun-disc decorates the top round lunette. Under the winged sun-disc, *wdt* eyes and vessels can be found, flanking a *nfr* sign. The *nfr* sign was most common on Abydos stelae in the Late Period<sup>47</sup>. Red, yellow, and black are used to indicate the sun disc, the feathers, part of *wdt* eyes and vessels.

### B. Central part

This stela depicts the hawk-headed sun-god, on the left, with two adorning men, as the main decorative scene. He stands on a platform and the symbols held by the god are not yet completed in the painting. Before him, there is a stand with a large lotus flower leaning on. Two men are raising their arms as adorning to god *Ra-Horakhty* (they are facing left; on the right-hand side of the stela). They have pointed noses and long, slit eyes extended by long cosmetic lines. The two men wear long and opaque kilts painted yellow and their torsos are naked, ornamented only by a simple collar. The second figure is relatively smaller. The two figures are shown with their natural hair, painted black<sup>48</sup> and have bracelets and anklets.

The figures are placed on a clearly defined baseline painted in black consisting of four painted bands of horizontal lines, with yellow, red, and black. Red was used to color the sun disc, the garments of *Ra-Horakhty* and a big lotus flower. Deceased figures were also represented in red. Yellow is applied to color the background of the text, the

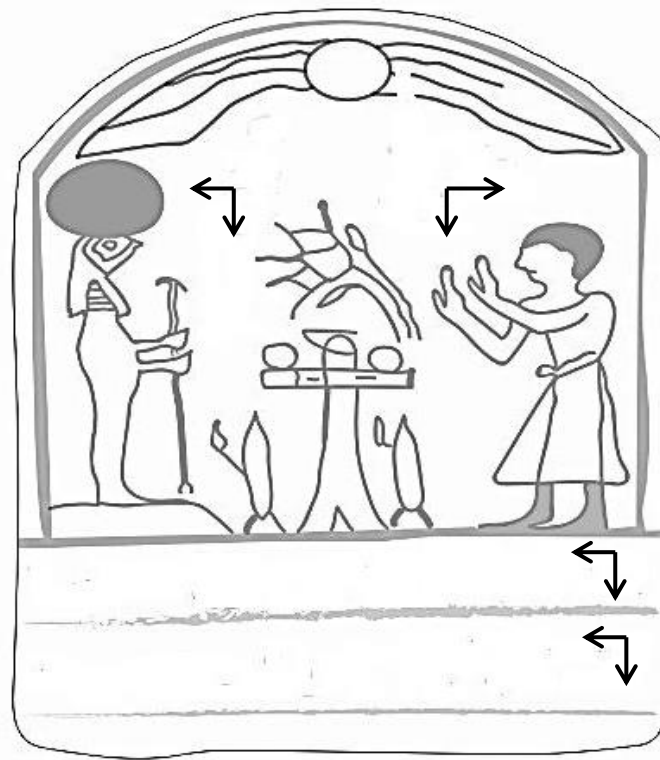
<sup>47</sup> HALLMANN 2015: 140.

<sup>48</sup> LEAHY comments on this representation of coiffeur when painted black. It is certainly natural hair. He added that on the Abydos stelae of the Late Period, men rarely wear wigs. LEAHY 1980: 171.

garments of the deceased, the *maat* platform, and the offering table. The outline of a lotus flower in front of the god's feet can be seen.


#### IV. STELA OF *3b ḥnsw ir (t) b (int)?* [GEM 12857]

The stela (Egyptian Museum in Cairo inv<sup>o</sup>. TR 28/10/24/1) was made of limestone and painted. The measures are 21 cm in length, 28 cm in max height, and 4, 4 cm in max-width. It is a bipartite composition consisting of the lunette and the central part with the offering scene, framed by a red line and below the inscription on two horizontal bands. It was dated by Munro back to the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Based on stylistic similarities, Munro distinguished Abydos II, group F, and remarked that, furthermore, the owners of the stelae of this group held no or only subordinate ranks.<sup>49</sup>



Facsimile of The stela of of *3b ḥnsw ir (t) b (int)?* (GEM 12857) without inscriptions  
© done by Samir Gaber

##### 1. The owner of the stela

Munro<sup>50</sup> and Leahy<sup>51</sup> suggest the name of the adoring man can be *ḥnḥ-nḥbt*? The authors suggest the name  is *3b ḥnsw ir (t) b (int)?*

<sup>49</sup> MUNRO 1973: 291.

<sup>50</sup> MUNRO 1973: 291.

<sup>51</sup> LEAHY 1977: 139.

The signs are similar to *nh* [S34] but also *3b* [U23] then there are *sw* [M23], *h* [Aa1] and *n* [N35]; in the right *ir* [D4] and *b* [D58], plus determinative [A1]. In the main inscription the sequence is, too: *nh/3b* (?) + *b*, *sw*+ *h*+ *n*+ *ir*+ *b*+ determinative. The sequence *sw*+ *h*+ *n*, although not correct, is reminiscent of Khonsu. The authors think that the name may be represented *3b hnsu ir (t) b (int)* to mean «God *hnsu* stops the evil eye». Maybe this name is related to *hdb-hnsu-ir (t)-bin (t)* which are common in the Saite Period<sup>52</sup>. Unfortunately, the suggested name is not listed in Ranke<sup>53</sup> or Lüddeckens<sup>54</sup>.

## 2. Description [FIGURES 5-6]

This stela, according to Munro, is classified in group F, where *Ra-Horakhty* is the only god depicted. The general descriptions of the stela of this group always show the two-field division, but are directly linked to group D and thus indirectly to the Kushite-early Saite forms: the text section is usually short with two or three lines; the figurative field with the depiction of the dead in front of just one god and a large offering table still dominates the surface. It is no coincidence that the quality of the craftsmanship is also below average<sup>55</sup>.



[FIGURE 5]: The stela of *3b hnsu ir (t) b (int)* (GEM 12857) © The Grand Egyptian Museum

<sup>52</sup> RANKE 1934: 278, 16-19.

<sup>53</sup> RANKE: I, 1934.

<sup>54</sup> LÜDDECKENS 1981.

<sup>55</sup> MUNRO 1973: 291.



[FIGURE 6]: Facsimile of the stela of 3b hnsu tr (t) b (int)? (GEM 12857)

### A. Lunette

It consists of a simple winged sun-disc decorating the top rounded-lunette.

### B. Central part

In the figurative field, that is not separated from the lunette, on the left is *Ra-Horakhty* in the customary mummiform aspect, holding the *w3s*-scepter. He carries a solar disk encircled by a *uraeus* on his head, and he is standing on a *m3't* platform.

In front of him, there is a big offering table, heaped up with three objects, with a big lotus flower at the top<sup>56</sup>. The offerings consist of *nmst* vessel and round loaves of bread. Under it, there are two wine jars on stands, partially surrounded by buds of lotus. The owner is depicted with both arms raised in the traditional adoration gesture facing left to god *Ra-Horakhty*. He has pointed noses and long and slit eyes that are extended by long cosmetic lines. He wears long white and opaque kilts, and his torso is naked. The figure is shown with his natural hair, painted black. His costumes style reproduces Ramesside Period designs and types are you sure?. The god and the deceased size appear smaller than the previous two stela.

<sup>56</sup> The same form of the louts' flower appeared by MUNRO 1973: Stela Cairo JE. 20262, Abydos II.F, PL.138; Stela Cairo JE.18520, Abydos II.F, PL.135; Cairo J.E. 12634, PL.140.

### 3. Inscriptions

Two hieroglyphic columns occupy the space in front of the god and deceased, painted red:

In front of the god, rightwards:



*dd mdw in skr-wsir ntr 3 nb pt*

-Recitation by Soker Osiris, the great god, Lord of the sky.

Declaration column in front of the owner:


$$3b \text{ } \underline{hns w} \text{ } ir(t) \text{ } b(int)$$

The main text:



(1) *dd mdw<sup>(a)</sup> in n<sup>sic</sup> skr Wsir<sup>(b)</sup> ntr ʕ nb ʒbdw<sup>(c)</sup> (2) di.f kɾst nfr<sup>(d)</sup> n imʒh.w<sup>(e)</sup> n Wsir ʒb hns w ir(t)*  
*b(int) mʒʕ hrw*

(1) Recitation by soker- Osiris, Great god, Lord of Abydos. (2) May he gives the good burial to honored Osiris *3b hns w ir (t) b (int)* justified.

## 4. Commentary

<sup>(a)</sup> **In the stela under study**, the formula *dd mdw* takes the place of the classical *hṭp di nsw* formula. It appears frequently at the beginning of the Late Period funerary stelae<sup>57</sup>.

<sup>(b)</sup> *skr Wsir*: Sokar became Sokar-Osiris during the Middle Kingdom and continued until the Greek-Roman period<sup>58</sup>. This determinative of the name of Osiris is a criterion for dating inscriptions to the 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty and post 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty period<sup>59</sup>??? How? This is very unclear.. This stela provides an interesting view on aspects of the religion of this period, especially on the identification of the forms of Ra Horakhty with Sokar-Osiris<sup>60</sup>.










<sup>57</sup> MUNRO 1973: PL.1; FIG.3, PL.2. FIG.5; PL.4; FIGS.13 & 16; PL.5; FIGS.17-18, 20.

<sup>58</sup> LGG 2002: vol.6, 667.

<sup>59</sup> MUNRO 1973.

<sup>60</sup> ZAYED 1968: 149-150.



- (c) *3bdw*: the most common spelling of *3bdw* during the Late Period is  <sup>61</sup>. During the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> dynasties, the sign  [N26] was replaced to  [N25]<sup>62</sup>.
- (d) *krst nfr(t)*: This is characteristic of the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> dynasties<sup>63</sup>, reviving older phrases. Sometimes the formula appears also in the form *krst nfr (t) m hrt ntr*<sup>64</sup>.
- (e) *im3h.w*: it appears regularly in the Egyptian Non-royal Epithets<sup>65</sup>. It appeared with different forms as , , , , ,  <sup>66</sup>. During the Late Period, it appeared with abbreviate form<sup>67</sup>.

## V. DATING OF THE STELA

Munro<sup>68</sup> and Leahy<sup>69</sup> dated these stelae to the seventh and sixth century BC<sup>70</sup>. According to prosopography, iconography, stylistic peculiarities, orthography, and the respective paleography, the three stelae are consistent with the features of the late 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> dynasties<sup>71</sup>.

As for the iconography, the presence of the single god *Ra-Horakhty*, his standing position and the position of the owners depicted on the right side raising both hands in adoration, and the offering table topped with a single flower between them, are popular features during the Third Intermediate Period<sup>72</sup> which became distinctive for the stelae during the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> dynasties<sup>73</sup>. The hairstyle as a helmet-like wig and the natural hair for men<sup>74</sup>, the human figures painted or incised on stelae, and their costumes type all continued through the late kushite specimens and then in the 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty.

<sup>61</sup> JE 20240, JE 46783, JE 12634, JE 18520, JE 2262.

<sup>62</sup> LEAHY 1977: 63.

<sup>63</sup> LEAHY 1977: 68.

<sup>64</sup> NIELSEN 2018: 241.

<sup>65</sup> ABDELRAHIEM 2011: 7.

<sup>66</sup> ERMAN & GRAPOW (EDS.) 1926: vol.1, 82.

<sup>67</sup> JE 3390, JE 21972, JE 20262, Brussel E 4338, JE 21971, BM 961.

<sup>68</sup> MUNRO 1973: 273.

<sup>69</sup> LEAHY 1977: 139.

<sup>70</sup> Painted stelae are rather more common than carved or incised ones in the second half of the seventh century. Louvre E 13073 & T. 26/10/24/4.

<sup>71</sup> MUNRO 1973: 266 FIG.110; 270 FIG.114; 271 FIG.116; 285 FIG.134.


















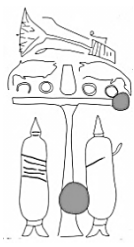











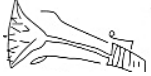
<sup>72</sup> SALEH 2007: 19; STEWART 1983: Part. 3: The Late Period, 6, N°. 10. Another limestone stela UC 14590, depicts adoration to god Ra-Horakhty under the winged sun-disc, and was suggested to be probably from Abydos. STEWART 2007: 6, N°. 11, PL.8.

<sup>73</sup> HALLMANN 2015: 146; MUNRO 1973: 90.

<sup>74</sup> LEAHY stated that on the Abydos stelae of the Late Period, men rarely wear wigs. LEAHY 1980: 171, note 8.



# THREE LATE PERIOD STELAE IN THE GRAND EGYPTIAN MUSEUM

GEM 12918	GEM 12919	GEM 12857	Stela Fitzwilliam E.SS.40 <sup>77</sup>	Stela BM EA638 <sup>76</sup>	Manchester Stela No. 6041 <sup>75</sup> .
Lunette					
					
The God					
					
Offering tables					
					
The Mourners					
					
Lotuses					
					

[TABLE 1]: Decoration comparison between the stela (GEM 12918) & another stelae dating to 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> dynasties















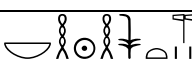








The lunettes occupy specific decoration, both stelae GEM 12918 and GEM 12919 are decorated with two *wd3t*-eyes around various symbols, the *nfr* symbol and the symbol of *šn*, *mw*, and *iʿb*. These and winged sun-disc appear more frequently in the

<sup>75</sup> NIELSEN 2018: 237–243.

<sup>76</sup> HALLMANN 2015: 134.

<sup>77</sup> HALLMANN 2015: 137.

forms connected to this period [TABLE 1-2]. According to the writing system it can be noticed that the orthography of *wsir*, *n k3*, *3bdw* and *krst nfr (t)* are usually characterized 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> dynasties.

GEM 12918	GEM 12919	GEM 12857	Stela Fitzwilliam E.SS.40	Stela BM EA638	Manchester Stela .Nº. 6041
	Unfinished stelea	-			
					
		-	-		
		-	-	-	
		-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	
		-	-	-	
-			-		
-					

[TABLE 2]: Inscriptions comparison between the stela (GEM 12918), stela (GEM 12857) & another stelae dating to 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> dynasties

## VI. STYLE AND WORKSHOP

























It is possible to consider a group of stelae as a product of the same workshop when they share some aspects in terms of composition, style, method of writing, and decoration coordination. But in spite of these common features, there are also differences, and in no case are all the distinguishing features found on all the stelae<sup>78</sup>.

Although the three stelae are not an exact match there are nevertheless strong similarities. Which are? In terms of parallels, the arrangement and decoration of the stela are highly similar to several Late Period stelae listed in the following table.

## VII. PALEOGRAPHICAL REMARKS

Although the stelae inscriptions are mainly written with hieroglyphic signs, some signs are cursive hieroglyphs, and hieratic. The next table shows unfamiliar writing of the signs which appeared on the stela of *T3y-k3* and the third stela of *3b hnsu ir (t) b (int)* [TABLE 3].

<sup>78</sup> FREED 1996: 298.


Sign	GEM 12918	GEM 12857	Notes
	-		
		-	Mariette considered this sign represent N29 ( $\Delta$ ) <sup>79</sup> , while Leahy considers it part of the name without explain it. The authors think that it is to be a determinative B1 ( $\Sigma$ ) after the personal name.
		-	
		-	
			
			The ripple of water appeared as a horizontal line with the same form of hieratic. <sup>80</sup>
		-	Lamp wick appeared as vertical line without any twists <sup>81</sup> . It is similar with the same form of hieratic. <sup>82</sup>
	-		The sign appeared with the hieratic form <sup>83</sup> . In the painted stelea during 25 <sup>th</sup> and 26 <sup>th</sup> dynasties this form is a common <sup>84</sup> .
	-		Plants have a simple form with a straight vertical line and two horizontal lines across it to represent the branches.
	-		Chisel appeared in unfamiliar form. The upper part is a dot and chisel tip is small horizontal line.
	-		This writing appears with the same form of hieratic where two horizontal line.

[TABLE 3]: Unfamiliar writing of the signs on the stelae of *T3y-k3* and *3b hnsu ir (t) b (int)?*

## VIII. ERROR AND MISTAKES

The general form of the inscription of the stelae is weak, as the scribe suffered from few eccentricities as follows:

## 1. Stela GEM 12918

**Col.4:** *prt-hrw*: It appears to be a spelling error of the word in this line, for no word in this form exists. We suggest that  must be *prt-hrw*.

**Col.4:** the scribe ignores the determinative of the word *hnkt*  [W22]

**Col.5:** The spelling of *jrt* for *j3rrt* in this column appears to be erroneous where it appears as the abbreviated spelling.

**Col.6:** The omission of the feminine endings of the adjectives such as *nb(t) nfr(t) w3b(t)*.

<sup>79</sup> MARIETTE 1880: 482.


<sup>80</sup> VERHOEVEN 2001: 31 N<sup>o</sup>. 331.

<sup>81</sup> HARING 2006: 71 § 106.

<sup>82</sup> MÖLLER 1909: N<sup>o</sup>. 525.

<sup>83</sup> MÖLLER 1909: 24.263.

<sup>84</sup> LEAHY 1977: 55.



**Col.8:** There is an error with the determinatives used with the personal names where the scribe used squat body. It should be  [B1] rather than this form.

**C.8:** the scribe has an error in the orientation of the sign  [F30].

**C.9:** the order of signs in the spelling of *snt* here is an error by the scribe.

## 2- Stela GEM 12857

**L.1:** the line should be read *dd mdw in* not *dd mdw in n*. The use of *n* must be an error by the scribe.

**L.2:** There is a writing error here as the scribe used the determinative  [A3] instead of  [A1]


**L.2:** the sequence *sw + h + n*   in the name of the owner.

## Conclusion?

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank **Gloria Rosati and Gema Menéndez** for reading the draft and their helpful comments. Many thanks are also to **Samir Gaber** for drawing the facsimile of the stela.

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