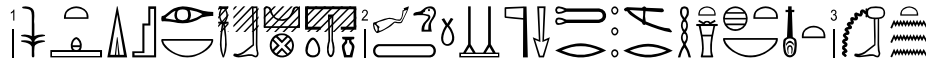


The Stela of Khu-Sobek¹ (Manchester Museum)

This limestone stela of the Manchester Museum (measured 16.5 cm wide and 28 cm high) was found in Abydos in 1901 by J. Garstang.² It is of poor quality but important since it records an early of war of Egypt with its northern enemies.



ḥtp-di-(n)swt wsir nb 3bdw (di.f) prt-ḥrw t ḥnkt ḥpš 3pdw šsr³ mnḥt sntr mrḥt ḥt nb(t) nfr(t) w^cb(t)

A royal offering of Osiris, lord of Abydos, (giving) an invocation offering of bread and beer, foreleg (of an ox) and fowl, linen and clothing, incense and oil, every good and pure thing



n k3 n (i)r(i)-p^c(t) ḥ3t(i)-^c dd nfrt, whm mrrt m ḥr(t)-ḥrw⁴ nt r^c nb, w^crtw⁵ 3 n nwt, ḥw-(wi)-sbkw⁶ rn.f nfr d33⁷

for the ka of the member of the elite, high official, who has said good things, repeated /proclaimed⁸ what was desired during the course of every day, great district official of the town, Khu-Sobek whose good name is Djaa,



ir.n it3⁹ w^crtw tfnwt,¹⁰ nbt im3ḥ,

¹ The principal references for these notes are T. Eric Peet, *The Stela of Sebek-khu*, Manchester Museum Handbooks 75 (1914), and J. Baines, *The Stela of Khusebek: Private and Royal Military Narrative and Values*, in *Form und Mass*, Beiträge zur Literatur, Sprache und Kunst des alten Ägypten, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, pp. 43-61.

² See J. Garstang, *El Arábah*, Quaritch, London, 1901, Pls. IV, V; P. Newberry, *ibid*, 32-33, W. H. Müller, *Orientalische Litteraturzeitung*, VI, 1903, 448-449, K. Sethe, *Lesestücke*, pp. 82-3 no. 22; ID., *Erläuterungen zu den ägyptischen Lesestücken*, Leipzig, 1927, pp. 133-6; J. A. Wilson, *ANET* 230; J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, Vol. I, pp. 302-306, and Baines, *loc. cit.*, with further references therein.

³ Alternatively, *šs* “alabaster, calcite.”

⁴ Lit. “what belongs to the day.”

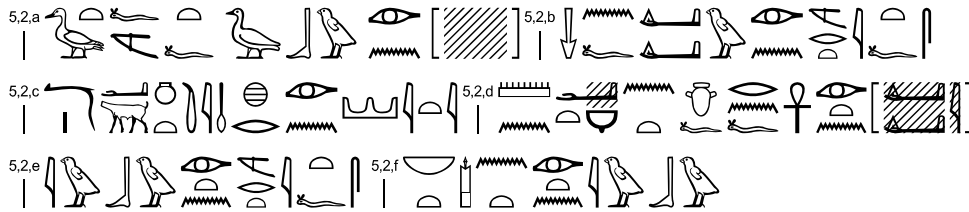
⁵ Baines reads this as *3tw*; for the justification see his article, *loc. cit.*

⁶ Lit. “Sobek protects me,” *ḥwi* “protect” is circumstantial/imperfective *sḏm.f*. The god’s name *sbkw* is in honorific transposition and the pronominal subject *wi* is suppressed because of the multiple *w*’s; see Ranke, *Personennamen*, I, p. 266, and footnote 1) therein. Compare also this with the 4th Dynasty pharaoh Khufu’s full name *ḥnmw ḥw.f wi* “Khnum protects me,” a subject + circumstantial/imperfective *sḏm.f* construction. Alternative, Sobek-khu may be a subject + stative construction *sbk ḥw(.w)* “Sobek protects.”

⁷ See *Wörterbuch* V, 520. As noted by Peet this name also appears in the Cairo Stela 20586, and in British Museum, *Hieroglyphic texts from Stelae*, II, 6.

⁸ See Baines, *loc. cit.*

begotten of Ita (mother) of the district of Tefnut, possessor of honor.



*z3t.f mrt.f gbw*¹¹ *ir.n* [...],¹² *sn.f ddw ir.n mrt-it(i).s*,¹³
*imi-r ḥnwtwy ḥrw*¹⁴ *ir.n ḥ3sty*,¹⁵ *mnḥt nt ib.f rn.f-ḥnḥ*¹⁶ *irt.n[ddi]*¹⁷
iwbw irt.n mrt-it(i).s nbt-iwnt irt.n iwbw

His daughter, his beloved, Sabu, begotten of ... His 'brother,' Dedu, begotten of Meret-iti-es.
 Overseer of the chamber, Kheru, begotten of Khaseti. The nurse of his heart, Renef-ankh,
 begotten of [Dedi]. Iubu, begotten of Meret-iti-es. Nebet-Iunet, begotten of Iubu.



*wd3*¹⁸ *ḥm.f m ḥd r shrt mntw-stt, spr ḥm.f r sp3t skmm*¹⁹ *rn.s*
 His majesty proceeded downstream to overthrow the Bedouins of Asia.²⁰ His majesty arrived at
 the district named Sekmem.



⁹ As noted by Peet, a rock inscription at Semna with precise date, the 9th regnal year of Ni-Maat-Re (throne name of Amenemhat III), also mentions Khu-Sobek as: Here after the name *it3* the feminine *m3ḥt ḥrw* "justified" proves that Ita is the name of a woman, therefore she is the mother of Khu-Sobek.

¹⁰ Peet notes that 'the words beneath the chair are a puzzle.' On the other hand, "The House of Tefnut"(Wörterbuch V, 299) was a district (*w^rrtw*) of *iwnt* Iunet, present-day Dendera. The connection with Iunet is also shown in the name of Iubu's daughter (sixth seated figure), *nbt-iwnt* "mistress of Iunet."

¹¹ Not *z3bw* Sabu," see Ranke, PN I, 350.

¹² Probably not Meret-iti-es (see next) as the name has been intentionally erased (noted by Peet), and Meter-iti-es was the mother of two children, at least one from Khu-Sobek.

¹³ Not Mert-itfes as *mrt-iti.s* means "beloved of her father."

¹⁴ Conjectural.

¹⁵ Typical graphic transposition with the phonetic complement; see also line 6. Baines reads this as *zmit*.

¹⁶ Lit. "his name is life."

¹⁷ Newberry's reading.

¹⁸ Narrative infinitive, see the Bull Hunt Scarab (line 6): *nḥt ḥm.f m ḥd*.

¹⁹ Usually identified with the biblical Shechem. In the spelling, the phonetic complement is in graphic transposition, see a variant writing (without transposition) in the next line.

²⁰ As noted by Breasted, this campaign belongs to the latter part of Khu-Sobek's career. The anachronism here is due to Khu-Sobek attaching importance to this event. Based on context, grammar, and style, Baines actually places the horizontal lines 6-10 to the very end of the stela.

*rdit*²¹ *hm.f tp nfr m wd3 n hnw n ʿnh(.w) (w)d3(.w) s(nb.w), ʿhʿ.n skmm hr.s*²² *hnʿ rtnw hzt*
 (It was just when) his majesty was making a good beginning to return to the royal residence (lit. of Iph), the Sekmem and the wretched Retjenu fell (descended?),²³



*iw.i hr ir(t)*²⁴ *ph mšʿ, ʿhʿ.n 3bh.n*²⁵ *ʿnhw nw mšʿ r ʿh3 hnʿ ʿ3mw*

(while) I was serving (at) the rear of the army. Then the (foot) soldiers of the army engaged to fight with the Asiatics.



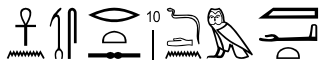
*ʿhʿ.n sh.n.i ʿ3m, ʿhʿ.n rdi.n.i it.tw hʿw.f in ʿnh 2 n mšʿ, nn tšt*²⁶ *hr ʿh3*

Then, I struck the²⁷ Asiatic, and I had his weapons to be taken by two soldiers of the army²⁸ without (me) stopping (lit. missing from) fighting,



*hr.i hz(.w),*²⁹ *n(i) rdi.i s3.i n*³⁰ *ʿ3m*

I was brave, I did not turn my back on (lit. to) the Asiatic.



*ʿnh n(i) z(i)-(n)-wsrt,*³¹ *dd.n(i) m m3ʿt*³²

As Senwosret lives for me, I spoke in truth!



²¹ Narrative infinitive.

²² Because of the introductory word *ʿhʿ.n* and the long topicalized subject (and the clauses that follow) one would expect here a circumstantial *sdm.n.f*/perfect instead of the rare indicative/perfective *sdm.f* (Gardiner (§480)).

²³ For the possible different interpretations, see the discussion in Baines, loc. cit.

²⁴ Typical unmarked adverb clause with pseudoverbal predicate. Note that *iri* can mean “serve” a god or a superior.

²⁵ For similar meaning, see Les. 83, 11.

²⁶ Negated infinitive. Baines cites a similar line from the biography of Amenemhab:



, see Urk. IV, 892, 8-9.

²⁷ The definite article is suggested by the context; it most probably refers to the chief, see Sethe, loc. cit., p. 134.

²⁸ As Baines notes: “This means that he did not yield the temptation to plunder...”

²⁹ Subject + stative construction, lit. “my sight is blessed,” an Egyptian idiom for “being brave;” see Wörterbuch, II, 59. Baines translates this as: “my face looked forward,” i.e. “confronting.”

³⁰ See GNS 34-5; negated indicative/perfective *sdm.f*

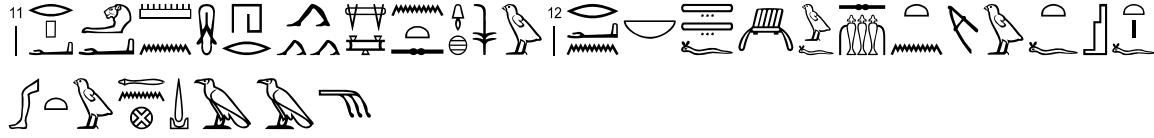
³¹ The goddess *Wosret* is in honorific transposition.

³² Typical emphatic construction using the nonattributive relative form of *dd* and with the prepositional phrase *m m3ʿt* emphasized; lit. “It is in truth that I spoke! See Allen (25.11.4). Note that the Semna stela has *dd.i* while the nearly identical Uronarti stela has *dd.n.i*.



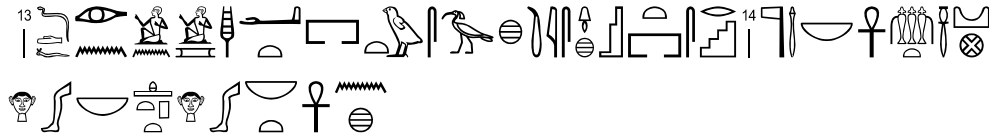
ḥꜥ.n di.n.f n.i ḥmꜥ3t/zꜥ3 ³³ m dꜥm r drt.i, mtpnt ³⁴ ḥnꜥ b3ksw b3k(.w) m dꜥm ḥnꜥ ḥfꜥ ³⁵

Then he gave me a throw-stick/staff of electrum, to my hand, a sheath and a dagger wrought (lit. worked) with electrum together with handle.



(i)r(i)-pꜥ(t), ḥ3t(i)-ꜥ, mn tbt, hr nmtt, ³⁶ mdd-w3t nt smnh sw, ³⁷ rdi.n nb t3wi f3w.f, ³⁸ shnt mrwt.f st.f, wꜥrt ꜥ3 n nwt, d33

Member of the elite, high official, steadfast (lit. firm of sandal), easy of bearing, loyal (lit. one who adheres to the path) to (lit. of) the one who makes him advance, one to whom the lord of the Two Lands gave his splendor, one whose position his love promoted, the great district official of the town, Djaa.



dd.f ir.n.i n.i miḥꜥt tw s3h.ti, ³⁹ smnh ⁴⁰ st.s r rwd ⁴¹ ntr ꜥ3, nb ꜥnh, ḥnt (i) 3bdw ḥr wꜥrt nb(t) ḥtpꜥ ⁴² ḥr nbt ꜥnh

³³ Peet, following Newberry and Golenischeff, renders this as stꜥs “staff.”

³⁴ According to Wörterbuch II, 170, this word is related to the obsolete *tp* “dagger” using the formative *m*.

³⁵ The 18th Dynasty pharaohs rewarded bravery by giving the weapons of the vanquished. Based on this Breasted conjectured the word in the lacuna to be ḥꜥww.f “his weapons.” As noted by Peet this does not fit into the outline and he believed that the missing word stands for a type of material complementing electrum. Baines gives the partial reading ḥfꜥ and conjectures this as “handle,” related to the verb and noun ḥfꜥ, “grasp.” The two signs at the end are probably birds.

³⁶ See H. Polotsky, *Zu den Inschriften der II. Dynastie*, 3-8, and J. M. A. Janssen, *De Traditioneele Egyptische Autobiografie vóór het Nieuwe Rijk*, I, Z and I, Ak.

³⁷ Janssen, loc.cit. II, Bc 10-25.

³⁸ Compare this with the passage in the stela of Mentuhotep (UC14333) in this web site: *rdi.n nb.f mrwt.f* “one to whom his lord gave his love,” where the coreferent *n.f* is also suppressed.

³⁹ Stative used as expression of state.

⁴⁰ Passive participle.

⁴¹ According to Peet’s this passage refers to the terraced hillside surrounding the burial site at Abydos. Gardiner, however, interprets *rwd* as the staircase leading to the tomb (replacing the earlier shaft construction), and renders the phrase *rwd ntr ꜥ3* as the “tomb of Osiris.”

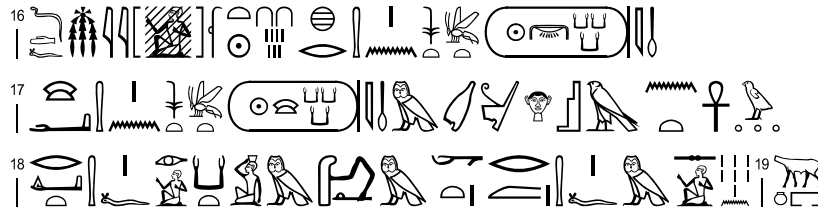
⁴² Usually written with the plural strokes as .

He says: I have made for myself this tomb, beautified, its position ennobled (lit. one ennobled its position) at the staircase of the Great God/the tomb of Osiris, Lord of Life, Foremost of Abydos in the district “Mistress of Offerings” and in the district “Mistress of Life,”



sn<n>(i)⁴³ sntr pr m hnt, ḥ[tm.n.]tw(i)⁴⁴ idt ntr, w^crtw 3, d33

(so that) I may smell the incense that came forth, (and) I may be provided with the divine censuring, the great district official, Djaa.



*dd.f msy[i]⁴⁵ rnpt 27 hr ḥm.f(n)swt-bit(i) NBW-K3W-R^c 46 m3^c hrw,
ḥ^{c47} ḥm.f(n)swt-bit(i) H^c-K^cW-R^{c48} m3^c hrw m shmti hr st hrw nt 5^cnhw,
rdit⁴⁹ ḥm.f ir.i⁵⁰ k3t m 5^ch3 m ht r gs ḥm.f m z(i) 6⁵¹ n hnw*

He says: I was born in year 27 during the incarnation of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt. Nebkaura, justified. So, when his majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt Khakaura, justified, wearing (lit. in) the double crown⁵² mounted on the Horus throne of the living, his majesty made me adopt the profession as a weapon trainer (lit. fighter of stick) beside his majesty along with six men of the Residence.



5^ch^c.n spd.n.i⁵³ r gs.f, rdit⁵⁴ ḥm.f di.t(w)⁵⁵ (w)i r šmsw n ḥk3, rdi(w)⁵⁶ n.i tp 60

⁴³ Sethe, loc. cit. p. 133.

⁴⁴ Peet restores this as *htm.tw.i*. Incense burning and smelling the incense, however, seem to be connected, and in an circumstantial clause of causality, the circumstantial *sdm.n.f*/perfect verb form is used. Alternatively, the scribe may omit the suffix *n* as it is present in the main clause.

⁴⁵ It is unlikely that the verb *msi* has here transitive meaning “give birth, bear” as it has pronominal subject; see Allen (21.9). As Peet noted (JEA, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Jul., 1914), p. 210), the only other possibility is that *msi* has intransitive meaning “to be born” and as such it has the peculiar ending *y*.

⁴⁶ Throne name of Amenemhat II.

⁴⁷ A perfect relative form as it is the predicate of an emphasized adverb clause; see Allen (25.11.2).

⁴⁸ Throne name of Senwosret III.

⁴⁹ Narrative infinitive.

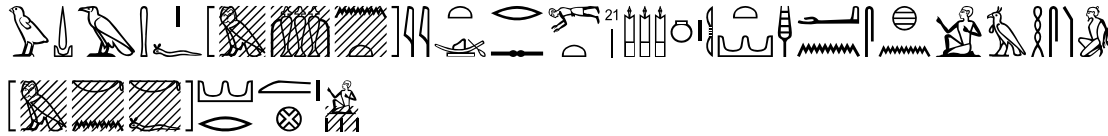
⁵⁰ *rdi* + prospective/subjunctive *sdm.f* construction.

⁵¹ Not seven as in line 22. One stroke is for the seated man.

⁵² We follow here Sethe’s rendering. Baines interprets the two crowns as synonym for *nswt-biti*.

⁵³ *spd* is an adjective-verb “sharp, skilful, effective.”

I have become effective at his side, and his majesty caused that I be appointed to be a “Follower of the Ruler.” Sixty men have been given to me.



wḏ3 ḥm.f m ḥntyt r shrt iwntiw nw pḏt, ḥꜥ.n sh.n.i nḥsi [m knkf]⁵⁷ r gs nwtiw

His majesty proceeded upstream to overthrow the desert Nubians (lit. tribesmen of the bow).

Then I smote a Nubian [at Kenekef] in the presence of the/my townsmen.



ḥꜥ.n.i ḥd.kw⁵⁸ ḥr šms m 6 n ḥnw

ḥꜥ.n rdi.n.f (wi) r shḏ šmsw, rdi(w) n.i tp 100 m kf3

Then I proceeded downstream in attendance (lit. following) with six men⁵⁹ of the Residence.

Then he appointed me to “Inspector of the Followers.” One hundred men have been given to me as a reward.

⁵⁴ Narrative infinitive.

⁵⁵ Prospective/subjunctive *sḏm.f*.

⁵⁶ Passive.

⁵⁷ Peet’s conjectural rendering. Baines notes that this geographical name is not attested but it is probably around the Second Cataract region.

⁵⁸ Subject-stative construction.

⁵⁹ Wilson’s rendering. Baines translates this passage as: “And then I went north, performing service, in a 6-ship of the Residence.” His “6-ship” is known from the Old Kingdom title “overseer of F6-ships;” and the so-called analogous “8-ships” are well attested, e. g. [Urk. IV, 1237, 1].