

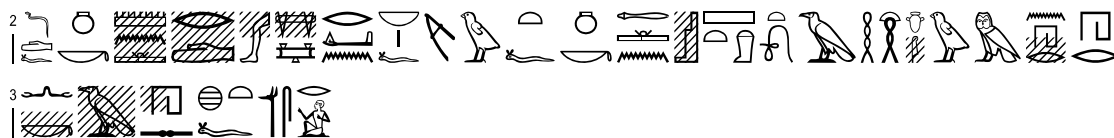
# The Stela of the Official Mentuhotep<sup>1</sup>

## (UC 14333 in London)



*ḥtp-di-(n)swt wsir nb ddw ntr ʿ3 nb 3bdw, di.f<sup>2</sup>pṛt-ḥrw t ḥnkt k3w 3pdw ḥ3 m šsr mnḥt*  
*ḥt nb(t) nfr(t) w<sup>c</sup>b(t) n im3ḥ(y), (i)r(i)-p<sup>c</sup>(t), ḥ3t(i)-<sup>c</sup>, (i)m(i)-r ḥmw-ntr, mntw-ḥtp, ir.n ḥpy, m3<sup>c</sup>t-*  
*ḥrw*

A royal offering of Osiris, lord of Busiris, the great god, lord of Abydos, giving an invocation offering of bread and beer, cattle and fowl, a thousand of linen and clothing, every good and pure thing for the worthy of attention/honored, member of the elite, high official, overseer of the priests, Mentuhotep, begotten of Hapy, justified.



*dd.f, ink mn, r(w)d,<sup>3</sup> mdd-w3t, rdi.n<sup>4</sup> nb.f mrwt.f, ink ʿ3 n st-š3t, w3ḥ-ib, šw m nhrhr,<sup>5</sup>*  
*n(i) k3hs<sup>6</sup> ḥft w3sr*

He says: I was enduring, prosperous and loyal (lit. one who adheres to the path), one to whom his lord gave his love, I was a senior of the privy-chamber (lit. place of secrets), well-disposed/patient, free of hostility, gentle facing (lit. standing opposite) a powerful man.



*mrwt m ḥt nt smrw, wrw ʿh, ḥ<sup>c</sup>w im, ʿk(i)<sup>7</sup> ḥr nb.f, wrw ḥr pḥ.f<sup>8</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> These notes are based on the article of H. Goedicke, JEA 48 (1962), pp. 25-35. The translation follows Goedicke's with some deviations that are discussed in detail.

<sup>2</sup> Circumstantial/imperfective *sdm.f*.

<sup>3</sup> [Sin. B186].

<sup>4</sup> Perfect relative form with suppressed coreferent *n.f*.

<sup>5</sup> This rare word also appears in line 7 of the stela of Amun-Woser; see the article of W. K. Simpson, JEA, 51 (1965), pp. 63-68. From the context, it should be an antonym of *w3ḥ-ib* "patient" (lit. lasting/set of heart).

<sup>6</sup> In his analysis of The Instructions Addressed to Kagemni (JEA, 32 (1946) 71-74), Gardiner argued that *ḥ3hs* is the exact opposite of *im3* "gentle."

<sup>7</sup> Circumstantial/imperfective *sdm.f* in adverb clause expressing concomitant action.

<sup>8</sup> Wörterbuch III, 388.

Love was among (lit. in the group of) the courtiers, the great ones of the palace, and the appearance-in-glory (the king) therein, when I entered before/into the presence his lord (and) the great ones around him (lit. under his end).



*iriw-sbht*<sup>9</sup> *h3m.y*<sup>10</sup> *r ph(.i)*<sup>11</sup> *bw nti*<sup>12</sup> *hm im*

The gatekeepers bowed down until I reached (lit. my reaching) the place where the majesty was.



*prr(.i) im*<sup>13</sup> *ib w3š(.w)*<sup>14</sup> *hzw m hr n bw-nb.*

When(ever) I went out form there (the Palace), my heart was honored, (and) blessing was in the face of everyone.



*ir.n hm.f nn n b3k.f n-3t-n*<sup>15</sup> *mdd-w3t(.i)*, *ir.n.f w(i) m mh-ib hm.f m iwn(i)*<sup>16</sup> *tpt sp3t.f*

His majesty did this for his servant inasmuch as/because of my loyalty. He made me his majesty's trusty/confidant in Iuni of his foremost nome.



*rh-hm hr mrt w(i) bw-nb hr dw3 ntr hr nht n w3h(.i) tp t3 n-3t-n hzz*<sup>17</sup> *w(i) hm.f r*<sup>18</sup> *k(i)w(i) hprw n nwt tn*

Inasmuch as his majesty was favoring me more than others who were in this town, wise and ignorant were loving me, everyone was praising/thanking god for me, (and) praying for my lasting on earth.

<sup>9</sup> Plural prepositional nisbe construction, lit. "ones pertaining to the gate."

<sup>10</sup> Subject-stative construction with 3PL ending *y*.

<sup>11</sup> Infinitive (governed by the preposition *r*) with suppressed suffixed pronominal subject.

<sup>12</sup> Indirect relative clause introduced by *nti* with suppressed coreferent.

<sup>13</sup> Emphatic construction with emphasized initial adverb clause, see Allen (15.1.2). *prr* is the imperfective active participle of *pri*.

<sup>14</sup> Subject + stative construction.

<sup>15</sup> Gardiner (§181).

<sup>16</sup> Iuni, the Greek Herrmonthis (present-day Armant) was the early capital of the Theban nome (replaced by Thebes during the 11<sup>th</sup> Dynasty).

<sup>17</sup> Emphatic construction signaled by the imperfective relative form *hzz*.

<sup>18</sup> Comparative, lit. "with respect to."



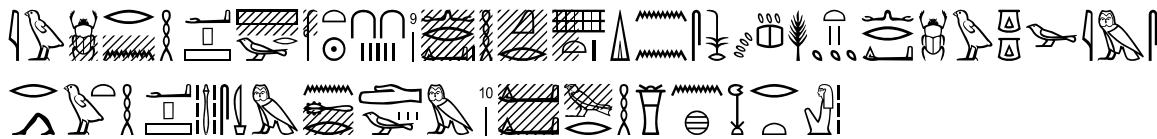
*ink šd<sup>19</sup> nḥn krs i3wy<sup>20</sup> m3ry nb, i(w)<sup>21</sup> rdi.n(.i) t n ḥkr ḥbsw n ḥ3(w)ty*

I was the one who educated the young and buried all the old and the wretched. I gave bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked.



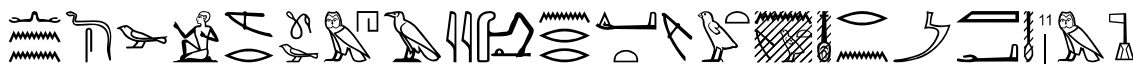
*ink z3 npr(i)<sup>22</sup> hi n t3yt<sup>23</sup> ḥpr.n<sup>24</sup> n.f šh3t-ḥrw iḥw nb špssw m ʿ3tt nb(t) mshnt ḥnmw ir r(m)t*

I am the son of Nepri, a husband of Tayet, one for whom the provider-of-cattle-wealth<sup>25</sup> brought about oxen, possessor of fine things of all valuable stones of the abode<sup>26</sup> of Khnum who created mankind.



*iw ḥpr.n ḥʿp(i) šr(i) rnpt 25 n(i) rdi<sup>27</sup> ḥkr spʿt(.i), di.n<sup>28</sup> n.s iti dbt, n(i) rdi ḥpr wgg im.s  
r iwt<sup>29</sup> ḥʿp(i)w ʿ3w, snm(.i) n ḥrdw m dd(.i), wrḥ(.i) n ḥ3rwt*

(When) the 25<sup>th</sup> year low inundation occurred I did not let my nome starve. I have given them Upper Egyptian barley and emmer, I did not let misery occur there until high inundations came. I supplied (necessities) for children with what I have given and I was anointing (lit. of) widows.



*nn nds m(3)r m ḥ3y(.i), ʿḥ3.n(.i) r rdit mr.tw(.i)<sup>30</sup> n mrwt nfr rn(.i),<sup>31</sup> mʿ3t-ḥrw m ḥrt-ntr*

<sup>19</sup> Participial statement.

<sup>20</sup> The *y* ending in MS/MPL imperfective active participles is typical; Allen (23.5).

<sup>21</sup> Gardiner (§468, 6).

<sup>22</sup> Nepri is the god of the grain; the filial relationship is metaphoric. The definite and indefinite articles are used to differentiate between direct and indirect genitives as suggested by Bakir, JEA, 52 (1966), pp. 34-38.

<sup>23</sup> The goddess of weaving.

<sup>24</sup> Perfect relative form.

<sup>25</sup> Wörterbuch IV, 235.

<sup>26</sup> Goedicke noted that Khnum was linked to the first cataract region from which the valuable stones may have come from. The reference to Khnum (and his potter's wheel) as a creator god is well-known.

<sup>27</sup> Negated perfective *sdm.f* followed by prospective/subjunctive *sdm.f*.

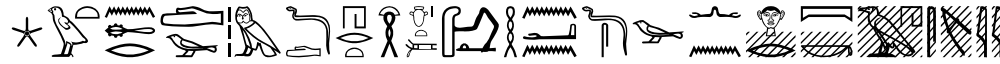
<sup>28</sup> Circumstantial/imperfective *sdm.f* emphasizing repeated action.

<sup>29</sup> *r sdm.t.f* "until he heard," Allen (22.14).

<sup>30</sup> Prospective/subjunctive *sdm.f* with the impersonal pronoun *tw*.

<sup>31</sup> This expression also occurs in the Stela of Merer (Cracow) in this web site.

There was no wretched commoner in my (life)time. I struggled to cause that I would be loved so (lit. in order) that my name would be good (and I would be declared) justified/true of voice in the necropolis.



*sb3wt(.i) n hrdw(.i) m dd, hrt w3h-ib, tm ḥ3<sup>32</sup> ḥnᶜ nds, nn ḥr(i) k3hs mry<sup>33</sup>*

My instructions to my children are as follows (lit. in saying): Contentment, patience /benevolence, (and) no strife (lit. no fighting) with a commoner. (There is) no harsh master (who) is beloved.



*hnn<sup>35</sup> ib r ddt.f m3rw.f r skt .f ḥrt nt ht.f, sdm mdw.f, dr m(3)r.f, rdi<sup>36</sup> z(i) r wn.f m3ᶜ, m ḥ3w<sup>37</sup> gr hrp.t(w)<sup>38</sup> ib, ḥ3m<sup>39</sup> rmn n bw-nb, tm ḥbs<sup>40</sup> ḥr r ḥkr*


Be well-disposed (lit. incline the heart) to him who tells his miseries and (he) who pours out his heart (lit. wipes/empties out the concerns of his belly). Listen to his speech, remove his misery, (since) a man is placed/ordained according to his true being. Moreover, be silent when desire is suppressed. Bow (lit. bend the arm) to everyone, not hiding the face from the hungry.



*drt pw im3t mrrt,<sup>41</sup> in-m(i)<sup>42</sup> pw wᶜ r(m)t*

<sup>32</sup> Negative infinitive.

<sup>33</sup> *nn* A negation of existence; *mry* is a perfective passive participle.

<sup>34</sup> The sign  was intended here.

<sup>35</sup> The translation here differs from Goedicke's. He points out that the use of the negative verb *tm* (in a previous clause and in the last clause here) indicates that the verb forms heading the clauses are infinitives. In addition, negated infinitive does appear in line 14 below. The context, however, may equally allow imperatives expressing 'advice for conduct.'

<sup>36</sup> Passive and not prospective/subjunctive of *rdi* as the latter uses the base stem *di*.

<sup>37</sup> Gardiner (§178).

<sup>38</sup> Passive form of the circumstantial/imperfective *sdm.f* in adverb clause expressing concomitant action.

<sup>39</sup> See also the Stela of Merer (Cracow), line 4, in this web site.

<sup>40</sup> Negative infinitive.

<sup>41</sup> A *pw* B nominal sentence with *pw* moved forward inside the noun + adjective combination *drt im3t* "gentle hand." *mrrt* is an imperfective passive participle.

<sup>42</sup> The spelling is influenced by *inm* "skin."



The good character of a man is more to him than thousands of giving (lit. what is given) in fact.

The testimony of people is this declaration of a senior and speech of an inferior:

‘The monument of a man is his goodness. The (one of) evil character is (the one who is) forgotten.’ If it happens (just) as it has been said, my name will (continually) be good and lasting in my town, my monument of eternity will not fall into ruin.

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<sup>54</sup> Perfective passive participle.

<sup>55</sup> Circumstantial/imperfective *sdm.f.*

<sup>56</sup> Negated emphatic prospective *sdmw.fl/prospective sdm.f.*