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A Lunette Stela of Pasenedjemibnash in Cairo Museum CG 22151

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A Lunette Stela of Pasenedjemibnash in Cairo Museum CG 22151

A. Abdelhalim Ali

This research is an analytical study of a round-topped limestone stela, currently stored in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (CG 22151). The stela was made for Pasenedjemibnash and dates to the first half of the 2nd c. BC. It was discovered by Urbain Bouriant in the cemetery “Al-Hawawish” at Akhmim in Upper Egypt during the excavations by the French Mission under the supervision of Gaston Maspero in 1884-1885.

1 Ain-Shams University. I am grateful to my colleagues in the Egyptian Museum for permission to publish this stela.


Description

The stela is in a good state of preservation. It has fine relief scenes and hieroglyphic inscriptions, both of which are executed in sunken relief. It is divided into three parts: lunette, horizontal register and vertical rectangle. Both the register and the rectangle are framed by one vertical incised line on each side as well as horizontal lines between each line of hieroglyphic text. Its height is 0.60 m and its width is 0.38 m.

Upper Section (Lunette)

As noted above, the stela is round-topped. The upper section is decorated with the winged sun-disk with a cobra hanging from each side. The cobra on the left wears the crown of Upper Egypt (Nekhbet), while the other wears the crown of Lower Egypt (Uto). Between the two cobras, the following phrase is inscribed: Bḥdt nṯr ʿȝ nb, “Behdite, the great God, Lord of (sky)”. It is notable that the sky-sign, which is usually a part of the last phrase, is elongated to cover the register. Nineteen stars decorate this sky-sign.

Register

On the register is a scene of the stela’s owner facing six deities. All of the figures are standing and each is captioned with a short text indicating their name and titles. Pasendjemibnash is standing with his Ba-soul perched on his head. Both are posed in the attitude of adoration. In front of him a tall, slender offering table with long leg. On it sit flowers, loaves of bread, and a water vessel. The owner is dressed in a long garment. His titles, followed by his name, are written in two vertical columns in front of the ba-soul:

\[ Smȝty imy-is Pȝ-stndm-ib-nʿš  \]

Stolist, councillor, Pasendjemibnash

5 Instead, U. Bouriant copied Bḥdt nṯr ʿȝ nb, “the perfect god”.
7 The same table with its contents is depicted on other stelae in Cairo Museum, e.g. CGC 22015; CGC 22017; CGC 22128; CGC 22136; CGC 22152. A nw-jar instead of the vessel in CGC 22053 and CGC 22035, while nw-jar with the flowers and without the loaves on CGC 22122.
8 The p-sign is between the ġs- and ġms-signs. The latter two signs are transposed.
9 Note the forearm with the hand holding a stick (Gardiner, Sign List D 40) instead of the usual forearm for the phonogram ‘.
The deities facing Pasenedjemibnash, arranged from right to left, are Min-Re, Aperet-Isis, Osiris, Isis, Horus and Nephthys.

- *Min-Re* is shown in his typical mumiform style, standing on the *Maat*-base, with an erected phallus. His torso is covered with criss-crossing bandages. He raises his right arm, holding the *nhb*-symbol. He wears the divine beard and the tall double-plumed crown with the sun-disk between the plumes. This crown is so tall that it extends slightly into the vault of sky above the figures. Behind him stands a pole and a sanctuary topped with three heads of lettuce.\(^{12}\) Min-Re is accompanied by the following phrase:

\[\text{Ḏd-mdw in Mn-Rʿ nb ḫpw ntr ḫ nb pt}\]

*Words to be said by Min-Re, lord of Akhmim, great god, lord of the sky*

- *Aperet-Isis\(^{13}\)* is depicted as a standing lady wearing a narrow garment clinging her body. She wears Hathor’s headdress, the cow’s horns supporting the sun disk. She holds the ‘*nb*-sign in her right hand, while her left arm is bent upwards with the palm facing forwards. Her name is written in front of her headdress:

\[\text{ʿpr(t)-Ỉst Apere(t)-Isis}\]

- *Osiris* is shown as a mumiform figure standing on the *Maat*-base. Grasping the ‘*nb-wḥs-dd* composite sceptre in his hands, he wears the tripartite crown and the divine beard. His name and title are written in front of his crown:

\[\text{Wsỉr hnty-imnnt Osiris, foremost of the westerners}\]

- *Isis*, crowned with a throne, stands behind Osiris. In her right hand, she holds the ‘*nb*-sign. In her left hand, she holds up the *ṯȝw*-sign. She is dressed with a slender garment like Aperet-Isis. She is described as follows:

\[\text{Powered by TCPDF (www.tcpdf.org)}\]
For the relationship between Isis and Min, as well as that of Osiris and Harsiese, who is depicted behind her in the register of the stela, see M. Münster, *Untersuchungen zur Göttin Isis vom Alten Reich bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches*, MÄS 11, 1968, p. 129-134, 162-163 (for Akhmim as cult center of Isis). For “god’s mother”, see *LGG* III, p. 261-263.

• *Horus* stands behind his mother (i.e. Isis). He is depicted as a falcon headed deity wearing the double crown and Uraeus. He wears a short kilt with an oxtail hanging down in the back. Horus holds the ‘nh’-sign in his hands and he is accompanied by the inscription:

\[ Hr s-Įst nḏty-it⸗f \]

\textit{Horus, son of Isis, the protector of his father}

• *Nephthys*, vested by a narrow garment, is depicted with the ‘nh’-sign in her right hand, while she holds up the same sign in her left hand. The inscription beside Nephthys is:

\[ Nab-Ht snt-nṯr \]

\textit{Nephthys, sister of the god}

**Main Text** [FIG. 2]

The lower part of the stela contains a text in 20 horizontal lines running from right to left.

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\[ \text{sic} \]
**Transliteration**

1. Wsỉr smȝty ỉmy-ỉs Pȝ-snḏm-ỉb-nʿš mȝʿ-ḫrw sȝ mỉ-nn ỉs-mḏt-nṯr n Mnw Ḥr-ʿnḫ mȝʿ-ḫrw ỉry n nb(t)-pr ỉḥy(t) n Mnw Tȝ-gr-hb mȝʿ(t)-ḫrw

2. ḏd-fỉ wʿbw nbw ṭḥt nb Hmw-nṯr ỉt-nṯr ẖryw-ḥb(t) nt Mnw mi-qd-sn ṭnw ḥwt-nṯr r-ﺯw-sn ṭṣyw

**Translation**

Osiris, stolist, councillor, Pasnedjemibnash, true of voice, son of the like-titled, scribe of the god’s book of Min, Hor-Ankh true of voice, born of the lady of the house, the musician of Min Tagelibus true of voice.

He says: O all wab-priests, you all wise-men, you all priests and god-fathers, all lector-priests of Min, all wnw-priests of the temple (o) all the crew.
of Akhmim, all living\(^{(12)}\) on earth, all people who exist and enter to the necropolis\(^{(13)}\) of Akhmim and the mound of the revered ones\(^{(14)}\), as well as who see nfr-ḥtp\(^{(15)}\), who see that stela. Life should be to you\(^{(16)}\). The sole lord\(^{(17)}\), overseer of the place of millions (of years)\(^{(18)}\) will let you endure eternally. May your son endure\(^{(19)}\) after you as you say. The offering which the king\(^{(20)}\) may give (together with) Min-

Re the lord of Akhmim, the living ba-soul\(^{(21)}\) in the temple of the Moon\(^{(22)}\) and Apere(t)-Isis, the great, mistress of Akhmim\(^{(23)}\) and Sokar-Osiris, the lord of Akhmim, Isis, the great, the mother of the god, mistress of Akhmim, Horus, the eldest\(^{(24)}\) in Akhmim, Protector-

of his father, one who delights the heart of his mother\(^{(25)}\), Nephthys, sister of the god\(^{(26)}\), all the gods and goddesses in Akhmim and the ennead who is in snwt (Akhmim)\(^{(27)}\), the beneficent ba-souls\(^{(28)}\) in the temple of his mother\(^{(29)}\) and the forms in the necropolis. They may give

an invocation offering, bread and beer, oxen and fowls and everything good, pure and sweet, which the sky gives, the earth creates, the inundation brings from its cavern, from which the god lives\(^{(32)}\), which comes forth in front of them every day and every feast of the sky

and every feast of the earth, being glorious in the sky near Re, strong on earth near Geb and (having) good remembrance\(^{(33)}\) in the netherworld near Osiris, making the transformation into a living ba-soul\(^{(34)}\)

coming forth or in to anywhere, it would like\(^{(36)}\). It will not be prevented from (any) place as it desires, being one of the followers of Osiris, joining the crew of Re, and (having) the cool water in

its time, the fresh water in its time and the cake without being ceased\(^{(40)}\) every day. The north winds of Tatenen and the good wind of Atum\(^{(41)}\), they will join

to the nose of the Ka of Osiris\(^{(42)}\), stolist, councillor, Pasnedjemibnash, true of voice, son of Hor-Ankh true of voice, born of the lady of the house, Tagelibus true of voice.
May your mouth not be weary from speaking. May your food not be reduced. There would be no trouble in excellence. There would be no load against you. May the wind of ṛḥ-s(w) be useful because those who are there are living. Then their names shall be pronounced. It shall be useful for you (for) future. Joyful is the one toward whom the god is kindly disposed. It shall be done for me what has been done for him (as) I am

one who acts for the one who acts for him and an excellent spirit, whose belongings are equipped. I am one, who is praised by his father, who is glorified by his mother, who is beloved by his brothers, who is confidant to his friends

and a citizen (in) his town (as) I gave bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty and clothes to the naked man. May you give me water in every moment,

when you see this stela, because I am still young without crime. O you this noble god, Min-Re the lord of Akhmim, king of gods: may you allow my son last in my house without stopping forever. One after the other will follow your majesty. May you let me be among the excellent forms, which follow the god.

May my body endure in its tomb. May my soul go forth and into it (= tomb) without being decayed forever. As for anyone who sees this stela and strikes it, while his face is towards it and damages its inscriptions, he will be given to the place of execution of Hathor in the mound of pain. He will not go forth from it. His son will not be in his position.

As for anyone who sees (= pl.) this stela, who adores (= pl.) every god, and protects (= pl.) its writings, he (= sing.) will be among the praised ones for his god, and his son will endure in his house.
Notes


4. PN I, 246, 12.


11. The sign ₫ could have been mistaken for a similar one ₩, which makes more sense. But other possibilities could be given here, namely rnpyw “young people” or also ỉmyw “dwellers”: Wb I, 72, 13-15. In all cases the inhabitants of Akhmim are meant.


14. The sign could be a misleading for $im\ddot{y}h$. I am thankful to the referee for this remark. See also $Wb$ I, 82. 1-12.


16. Cf. BM EA 893: W. Budge, *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, etc. in the British Museum*, IV, $HTBM$ 4, 1912, pl. 49.


18. The word for millions is placed inadvertently between the $st$-sign and the $t$-sign as well as the determinative.


23. Aperet-Isis has the same title in CGC 22139, 4 but also $bnw$-Ỉpw in CGC 22124, 2. H. Gauthier, *Dictionnaire des noms géographiques contenus dans les textes hiéroglyphiques IV*, Le Caire, 1927, p. 47.

24. The same procession of gods is depicted on the lunette. For Horus the eldest in Akhmim, see *LGG* V, p. 247.

25. I.e. Horus, see *LGG* VI, p. 406-407. Some examples from Akhmim: CGC 22007, 2; CGC 22074, 2; CGC 22077, 2.

26. Cf. the same in CGC 22116, 2; CGC 22152, 3.

27. K. Kuhlmann, *loc. cit.*; CGC 22069, 14; CGC 22070, 6; CGC 22095, 2; CGC 22171, 2; 22174, 2; CGC 22209, 3-4; CGC 22098, 1-2. A priest for $\text{snw}$ with the following title “great ($wr$) of $\text{snw}$”, in CGC 22077, 6; CGC 22087, 5.

28. $\text{ţi}$ in U. Bouriant, op. cit., p. 375.

29. “Temple of the mother”, in *Valeurs phonétiques* 3, p. 483, 486; *Esna* 16, 2; *Esna* 63, 3. Beside the temple of the mother, Esna also has “temple of the father” (*Valeurs phonétiques* 3, p. 492); *Esna* 225, 26. In addition, the word $\text{mwt}$ can be related to the titles of Min-Re, which are “Bull of his mother” and “One who embraces his mother” referring to fertility: H. Gauthier, *Les fêtes du dieu Min*, $RAPH$ 2, 1930, p. 135-138, 140-141. The oldest goddess in relation with...
Min at Coptos and Akhmim is not Isis, but “the Mother of Min”: *LGG* III, p. 256b-c; H. Gauthier, *op. cit.*, p. 71-72.

30. Note the conversion of the bread-sign and the beer-sign in the original.


32. W. Barta, *op. cit.*, p. 212 (Bitte 2a). For this usual formula cf. CGC 22001, 5-6; CGC 22007, 4-5; CGC 22014, 3; CGC 22015, 4-5; CGC 22017, 4; CGC 22016, 5; CGC 22025, 4; CGC 22034, 4-5; 22171, 2-6 and others.

33. Cf. CGC 22035, 7 and 9; CGC 22069, 4-5. “A good remembrance on earth” is found in W. Barta, *op. cit.*, p. 218 (Bitte 183a).


39. Note the conversion of writing the signs: strock before *t*-sign.

40. *Wb* I, 6, 2-8. This phrase could be interpreted through another stela CGC 22114, which reads: “I do not cease from your offerings (means those of the god) in any day”.


45. in U. Bouriant, *op. cit.*, p. 376. The standing mummy should be a determinative for the word *ḥḥ*, despite it does not exist in *Worterbuch*. A good parallel could be found in the next line (14) of the stela. Also, in Coffin Texts, the word *ḥḥ* takes the determinative of a man of rank seated on a chair (Gardiner A50), which refers to veneration, see G. Englund, *Akh – une notion religieuse dans l’Égypte pharaonique,* Borreas 11, 1978, p. 67-71. The word *ḥḥ*
occurs together with ḫḫw in Edfu III, 121, 16; M-Th. Derchain-Urteil, op. cit., p. 66, who identifies the ḫḫw as “magical words”. For the meaning of ḫḫw as magical words (of Thoth) see also P. Boylan, Thoth the Hermes of Egypt, London, 1922, p. 128-10; R.K. Ritner, Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practices, SAOC 54, 1993, p. 30-35.

46. I.e. the deceased in the necropolis (Wb I, 72, 5); E. Otto, op. cit., p. 62.
48. in U. Bouriant, op. cit., p. 376, while the head-sign א in A. Kamal, Stèles I, p. 139.
49. Note the q before ʿ.
51. Instead, ink imḥ n it ḥsy n mwt in CGC 22114, 6-7.
52. Also in CGC 22173, 3.
54. in U. Bouriant, op. cit., p. 376.
55. Instead of ḫqr, the owner of CGC 22114, 6 has ṣw-w-f, “who has no mouth”.
59. In CGC 22114, 10-11, we read the wish that the son of his son endures in the house of the god.
60. The meaning of this is “generation after generation” (Wb I, 274, 10). For details about this title since the 18th Dynasty, see K. Jansen-Winkeln, “Der Ausdruck ḫḥ̀ ṣt ṣ urlString”, GM 123, 1991, p. 53-56; E. Otto, op. cit., p. 30.
61. in U. Bouriant, op. cit., p. 376.
62. in A. Kamal, Stèles I, p. 140. For this verb, see Wb III, 466, 13-467, 13.
63. Wb III, 213, 4-5; CGC 22069, 14-15.
64. in both A. Kamal, Stèles I, p. 140 and U. Bouriant, op. cit., p. 376. In Original, the sign before א is not א but a δ-vase, which has the valueḥbbt in Valeurs phonétiques 4, p. 773; Dend. I, 72, 6; Wb III, 252, 9-14; S. Morschauser, Threat-Formulae in Ancient Egypt, Baltimore, 1991, p. 80-81; E. Otto, op. cit., p. 55. Instead of mrt, U. Bouriant (op. cit., p. 376) has אאאא. Lt mrt could be a variation of Lt nmt (U. Bouriant, op. cit., p. 376).
65. in U. Bouriant, op. cit., p. 376.
The stela bears an unique depiction of the ba-soul perched on the owner’s head. As far as I know, this scene has no parallel. There are some Theban stelae, which depict the deceased together with his ba-soul, adoring the sun-barge. The ba-soul on those stelae is standing in front of the deceased.\textsuperscript{15} On the stela of Hor-Min in the Berlin Museum, the deceased holds his ba-soul on his left arm.\textsuperscript{16}

Another distinctive characteristic of this stela concerns with the sky between the lunette and the register. This sky serves a double function: it represents the sky over the scene, in addition it stands for the word pt, which comes in the bhdt- nṯr-ʿȝ-nb-pt formula.

Although its meaning is somewhat obscure, the main text on the lower part of the stela could be divided several items:

1. The introduction (line 1), including information about the owner: his name, titles, and parents (genealogy). It is repeated in line 11. It is remarkable, that the scribe does not use the same expressions, such as mỉ-nn and the title of Tagelibus (ihyt n Mnw). He uses the egg, instead of reusing the goose for “son”.
2. An appeal to the gods, priests (six categories: wʿb, rḫw-ỉḫt, ḥm-nṯr, ỉt-nṯr, wnw, ḫryw-ḥbt) and inhabitants of Akhmim (lines 2-4), to guard the stela and protect it.
3. An appeal for offerings using the offering formula (lines 4-12).
4. A self-portrayal (lines 13-16), in which social and ethical aspects, as well as the owner’s piety, are put forth.
5. Wishes for the afterlife (lines 4-14, 17-18).
6. Wishes for his successors (lines 17).
7. A threat (lines 18-19).\textsuperscript{17}
8. A promise for security (lines 20).

The deities are mentioned either directly or alluded to. The gods and goddesses on the register are mentioned again in the text (lines 4-6). They are described as gods and goddesses or as the pantheon of Akhmim and its necropolis. Each deity has his or her proper epithet connected to Akhmim: Min-Re is “Lord of Akhmim”. Moreover, the god Min-Re is described

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{15} Examples in P. Munro, \textit{op. cit.}, pl. 18, fig. 62, 63, 64, 65.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Inv. Nr. 7274, after L. Zabkar, \textit{A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts}, SAOC 34, 1968, pl. IV.
\item \textsuperscript{17} For threat-formulae in Ancient Egypt generally, see S. Morschauser, \textit{Threat-Formulae in Ancient Egypt}, Baltimore, 1991, esp. p. 46 and 60; H. Sortas, \textit{La préservation de la propriété funéraire dans l’Ancienne Égypte avec le recueil des formules d’imprécation}, BEPHE 205, 1913.
\end{itemize}
as a “noble god” and “king of the gods” (lines 16-17). The god has a special temple in the text, the “house of the moon” as well. This house could refer to the connection between Min-Re to Thoth, the lunar-god. The “temple of his mother” refers to the temple of Min-Re at Akhmim.

Other gods in the register (Aperet-Isis, Sokar-Osiris and Isis) have the title “ḥry”, “in the middle of” and refers to visiting deities. On the other side, Nephthys has no title with respect to Akhmim in the main text, while Horus has the particular title “great in Akhmim”. Horus and Min-Re are strongly connected. Both are children of Isis and Osiris.

In addition to the main gods of Akhmim, some funeral aspects of the cosmic gods are to be considered: Re is lord of the sky, Geb is lord of the earth, Osiris is lord of the netherworld (lines 8-9). The winds are connected to Tatenen and Atum (line 10), while the place of punishment is related to Hathor as goddess of the necropolis.

Also, there are some allusions to some deities, whose titles are mentioned in the main text, such as Thoth (ṛḥ-sw, line 12). Thoth had an importance in Akhmim, especially in his connection to the family of Pasenedjemibnash, whose mother’s name is Tagerheb. Heb is a part of the latter’s name and developed into the Greek word (ibis), the sacred bird of Thoth. In the necropolis of Al-Hawawish, many Ibis mummies were found. In addition to his connection to the mother of Pasenedjemibnash, the house of the moon is accented.

Furthermore, the main text contains some philological, paleographical and epigraphical characteristics. To express the meaning of “all or whole”, the following structures are used: nb (lines 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 18, 20), mỉ-ḥḏ+ suffice. (line 2), ṟ-Ḥw+ suffice. (line 2), mỉ-Ḥw+ suffice. (line 3), nbw tp tḥ (line 3). This variety of suffixes enriches the context and avoids redundancy. In addition, the text contains a kind of pun by using the similar sounding words. This pun is a technique known from rhetoric. Such cases are: wnw wn⸗sn (line 3), pẖr sḥt⾦n ḥr sẖt Petty (line 4), irr(w) […] ir(y)t […] irw […] ir(w) […] irw (lines 13-14). Some words and signs are written in several forms:

1. The verb  h and the word ḥ are fully written in line 4, and then abbreviated (  and ḫ) in lines 16, 18 and 20.
2. The word ṣ (man) is written normally in line 18, but in an unusual way  in line 20.
3. The determinative of ḫ occurs in two forms:  in line 1, and  in line 11.
4. The definition particle ḫ is written in two different ways:  in line 1, and  in line 11.

Some hieratic signs are used in the main text, surely because the scribe copied the text from a papyrus scroll.

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18 M. Münster, op. cit., p. 129-134.
20 For a detailed epigraphic study for stelae from Greco-roman period:
M.Th. Derchain-Urtel, Epigraphische Untersuchungen zur griechisch-römischen Zeit in Ägypten, AAT 43, 1999, p. 11-29;
1. The sign $n$ is written as $\equiv$ in almost every line except for line 15, where $\ll$ for $mw$ (water) and $ibw$ (thirsty) is found.

2. The small circle $\odot$ is used for the signs $\Theta$ (line 6); $\Theta$ (lines 3, 5, 6, 15, 16); $\Theta$ (lines 4, 7, 10, 16); $\Omega$ (line 9); and $\Theta$ (lines 2, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19). \(^{22}\)

3. The $\equiv$ sign (line 3) is similar to the $mn$-sign (line 20).

4. The negative $\swarrow$ is $\equiv$ in lines 9, 10, 16, and 19, but $\swarrow$ in lines 11, 12, 17, and 18, $\swarrow$ in line 12, $\swarrow$ in line 12. It is similar to the word $\swarrow y \swarrow$.

5. The word for clothes ($mn$) is written $\equiv$ (line 15).

6. $\equiv$ stands for the trilateral-sign $\equiv$ (lines 4 and 16). It seems to be a $shm$-sign. \(^{24}\)

7. $\equiv$ for the vocative (lines 2 and 16).

8. $\equiv$ is used as a determinative for $hmns$ (line 15).

Confusion between signs is also attested in the main text, such as:

1. The sign $\equiv$ for $\equiv$ lines 2 and 9.

2. The $\equiv$ $nds$-bird as a determinative for words for “bad” (lines 12, 16, 17, 18, 19) is replaced by the $\equiv$ $wr$-bird. The latter is correctly used only in lines 5 and 11.

3. The word “million” (line 4) is placed between the $st$- and the $t$-sign.

4. The scribe added the suffix $\equiv f$ after $mwt$ (line 6), apparently as a correction.

5. For the word $hbt$, the scribe put $\equiv$ and $\equiv$ upon the $\equiv$ (line 3).

As shown in the previous pages, our stela presents a unique example of both depiction and text from Ahkmim. Therefore, this study could be a beginning for a wider project on the stelae of Akhmim from Greco-Roman period. This project will provide Egyptology with rich information on titles, society and funeral aspects at that time.
Fig. 1. Stela Cairo CGC 22151.
Fig. 2. Stela Cairo CGC 22151, line drawing.