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A Third Intermediate Period Stone Stela from Dra Abu el-Naga

ALBA VILLAR GÓMEZ, DAVID GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ*

ABSTRACT

The courtyard of tomb SMDAN 1030—part of the concession of the Spanish archaeological mission *Proyecto Djehuty* at Dra Abu el-Naga—is an exceptional example of the reuse of funerary space. The materials found within it included a Third Intermediate Period stone stela, SMDAN 5247. This paper describes the secondary archaeological context in which it was found and presents a chronological, typological and prosopographical study of the piece.

Keywords: Djehuty's tomb (TT 11), Theban necropolis, funerary materials, Kushite Period.

RÉSUMÉ

La cour de la tombe SMDAN 1030 – qui fait partie de la concession de la mission archéologique espagnole *Proyecto Djehuty* à Dra Abu el-Naga – est un exemple exceptionnel de réutilisation d'un espace funéraire. Les objets qui s'y trouvent comprennent une stèle en pierre de la Troisième Période intermédiaire: la stèle SMDAN 5247. Cet article décrit le contexte archéologique secondaire où cet objet a été trouvé et présente une étude chronologique, typologique et prosopographique.

Mots-clés: tombe de Djehuty (TT 11), nécropole thébaine, matériel funéraire, période kouchite.

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THE SPANISH archaeological mission *Proyecto Djehuty* has been working in Dra Abu el-Naga since 2002.¹ During the winter of 2006–2007, when the modern village was entirely demolished and its inhabitants were relocated to the village of New Gurna, the concession was enlarged towards the southwest of the courtyard of Djehuty's tomb (TT 11). The new excavation area was labelled “Sector 10”, and a number of tombs dating from the 11th to the 19th Dynasties have been discovered there. Among them is a rock-cut tomb-chapel with an open courtyard identified by the number SMDAN 1030 (Fig. 1). Its courtyard and transverse hall were excavated in 2016 and 2017. Even though there is insufficient data to identify its owner, its morphology and the size of its mud-bricks suggest an 18th or early 19th Dynasty date. The courtyard presented clear evidence for the actions of robbers and of several phases of reuse for different purposes—not only funerary—from the Third Intermediate Period (henceforth TIP)² to the Roman Period. The courtyard of SMDAN 1030 offers an excellent opportunity to study the reuse of a funerary space, as well as to analyse traces of looting activities, due to the preservation of a less altered archaeological stratigraphy than in other areas of the necropolis.³ Furthermore, a rather exceptional piece was found in the courtyard: stela SMDAN 5247, one of the few examples of a TIP stone funerary stela from Thebes (see Fig. 11 below). Many stelae from this period cannot be ascribed to a secure archaeological context, but this one was thoroughly documented—albeit from a secondary context.

1. THE COURTYARD OF TOMB-CHAPEL SMDAN 1030

The courtyard was carved into a geological level of limestone and marlstone. It measures 9.5 m long and 6.7 m wide, and is oriented northwest to southeast (Fig. 2).

Its entrance was delimited by a mud-brick wall or pylon around 1 m wide, of which only a few mud-bricks remain in the southern corner (1063). The original height of the pylon is unknown due to its poor state of preservation. The rock-cut north-eastern side wall (1012) consisted of a mud-brick wall 0.9 m wide.⁴ The rock of the south-western side wall (1041) extends up to 5.2 m away from the façade. A 0.7 m wide mud-brick wall was later built to reach the pylon. The inner faces of the side walls were coated with plaster.

The floor of the courtyard near the façade was cut into the bedrock. From a distance of 6 m from the façade, and as far as the pylon, the area was filled and levelled with limestone

¹ This paper is part of the research project HAR2017-88671-R, within the Spanish National Program for Scientific Research, Technology and Innovation. We want to express our thanks to José Manuel Galán, Principal Investigator of the abovementioned project, for his valuable feedback and suggestions, as well as to Marc Loth and Camille de Visscher for their advice, though any errors remain the sole responsibility of the authors. Thanks too to R. Gareth Roberts for checking the English in this paper.

² As a clarification, TIP includes the 25th Dynasty.

³ GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ 2019.

⁴ The measurements of these mud-bricks are 34 × 15 × 8 cm.



FIG. 1a-e. Tomb-chapel SMDAN 1030 and its surroundings: a. Tomb-chapel SMDAN 1030; b. Tomb-chapel of Djehuty (TT 11); c. Tomb-chapel of Hery (TT 12); d. Middle Kingdom tomb (1078); e. Funerary garden.



FIG. 2. Courtyard and entrance of tomb SMDAN 1030.

chips and rubble, and then covered with sand. A mud-brick bench (1062) was attached to the façade and parallel to it. The bench is around 0.9 m wide and 0.3 m high, and it might have been intended for funerary offerings.

The presence of some fragments of coffins and potsherds within the earliest fill of the courtyard indicates that the tomb was used, plundered and reused during the New Kingdom and TIP (1047). In this level there were also fragments of sandstone reliefs, probably connected to a stone stela placed in the façade or inside the tomb.

The first reuse of the courtyard, which was not directly related to burial practices, dates to the New Kingdom and the TIP (1049). Limestone chips were accumulated in front of the entrance and the western corner of the courtyard (Fig. 3a). Some unfinished stone vessels were found among these chips (Fig. 3b and Fig. 3c). It is not certain whether these indicate the remains of a workshop that was located within the courtyard of the tomb or in a nearby area. The *chaîne opératoire* for the production of stone vessels consisted of a process by which stone fragments were first roughly shaped and smoothed with stone tools, probably flint chisels, punches and scrapers; flint drills or copper tubular drills were sometimes used in a second stage of stone vessel creation.⁵ Only the first procedure is discernible in this case (Fig. 3c). The potsherds related to this level date to the New Kingdom and TIP.

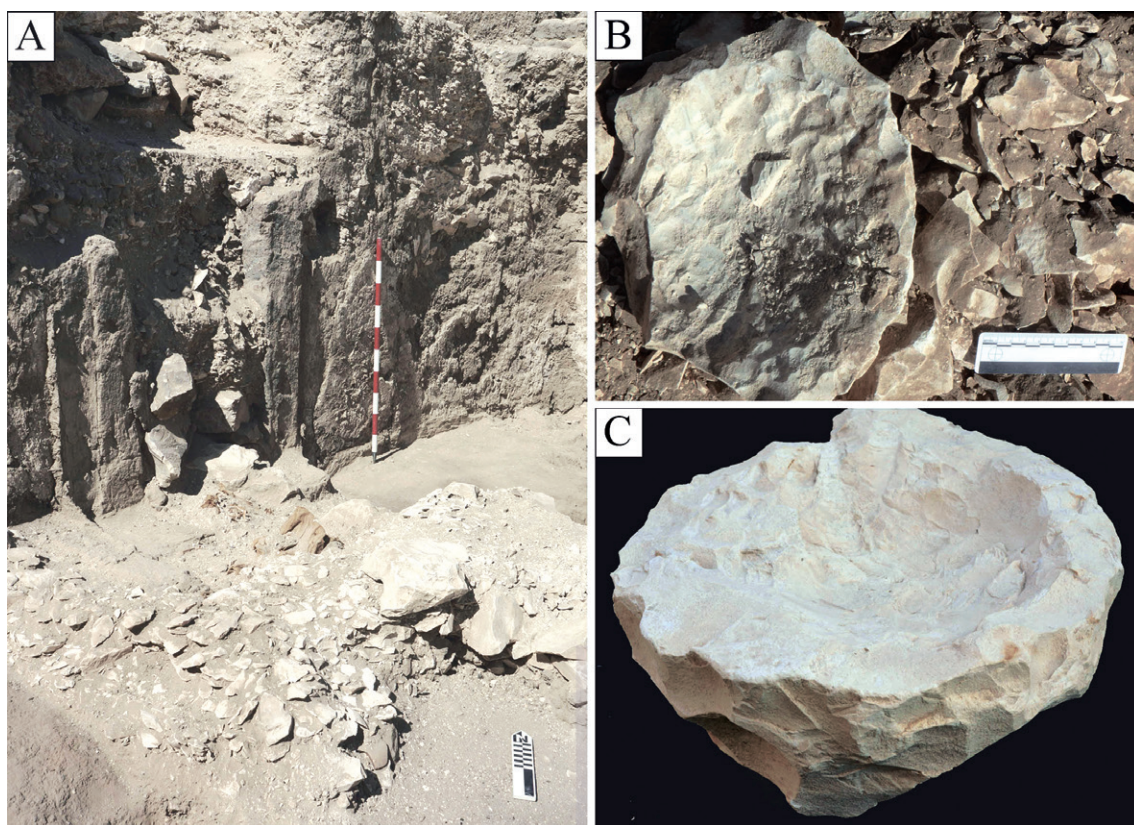


FIG. 3a-c. a. Limestone chips accumulated in front of the entrance of tomb SMDAN 1030;
b. Limestone chips;
c. Unfinished stone vessel.

⁵ SHAW 2012, p. 64.



FIG. 4. Accumulation of mud-bricks in the courtyard of tomb SMDAN 1030.

The following phase consisted of an accumulation of mud-bricks that partially occupied the courtyard (1039) (Fig. 4). Based on the arrangement of these mud-bricks, it seems that they were intentionally placed in that position, meaning that this accumulation was not related to the natural collapse of the pylon or the upper part of a side wall, and nor with the possible existence of a pyramid. Some of the mud-bricks lying on the floor were stamped with the name “Tutuia”.⁶ However, they are not associated with the walls or pylon of the courtyard, and therefore might have been related to another tomb close to the south-western wall. Above the layer of mud-bricks, there were several levels of mud pavements connected with the next phases of reuse, and the mud-bricks might thus have been used to create a levelled floor for these pavements. This second phase of reuse required a significant change in the architecture of the courtyard (see Fig. 5). A mud-brick wall, perpendicular to the façade, was built next to the entrance of the tomb-chapel and parallel to the north-eastern wall of the courtyard (1031A). On the other side of the entrance is another similar mud-brick wall, parallel to the former (1031B). These mud-brick walls were covered with plaster, and the façade of the tomb with mortar and plaster. The floor between the partition wall and the south-western side wall was paved. Here there were three levels of mud pavements in poor condition (1034, 1035 and 1036) (Fig. 6), with

⁶ Campaigns in the area have found stamped mud-bricks and a large number of *shabtis* bearing the name “Tutuia” in the area surrounding SMDAN 1030. The typology of the mud-bricks suggests that they date from the end of 18th Dynasty to the first half of the 19th Dynasty. The typology of the *shabtis* indicates that they can be dated from the end of the 18th Dynasty to the early Ramesside Period—Seti I and beginning of the reign of Ramesses II: see SERRANO forthcoming.

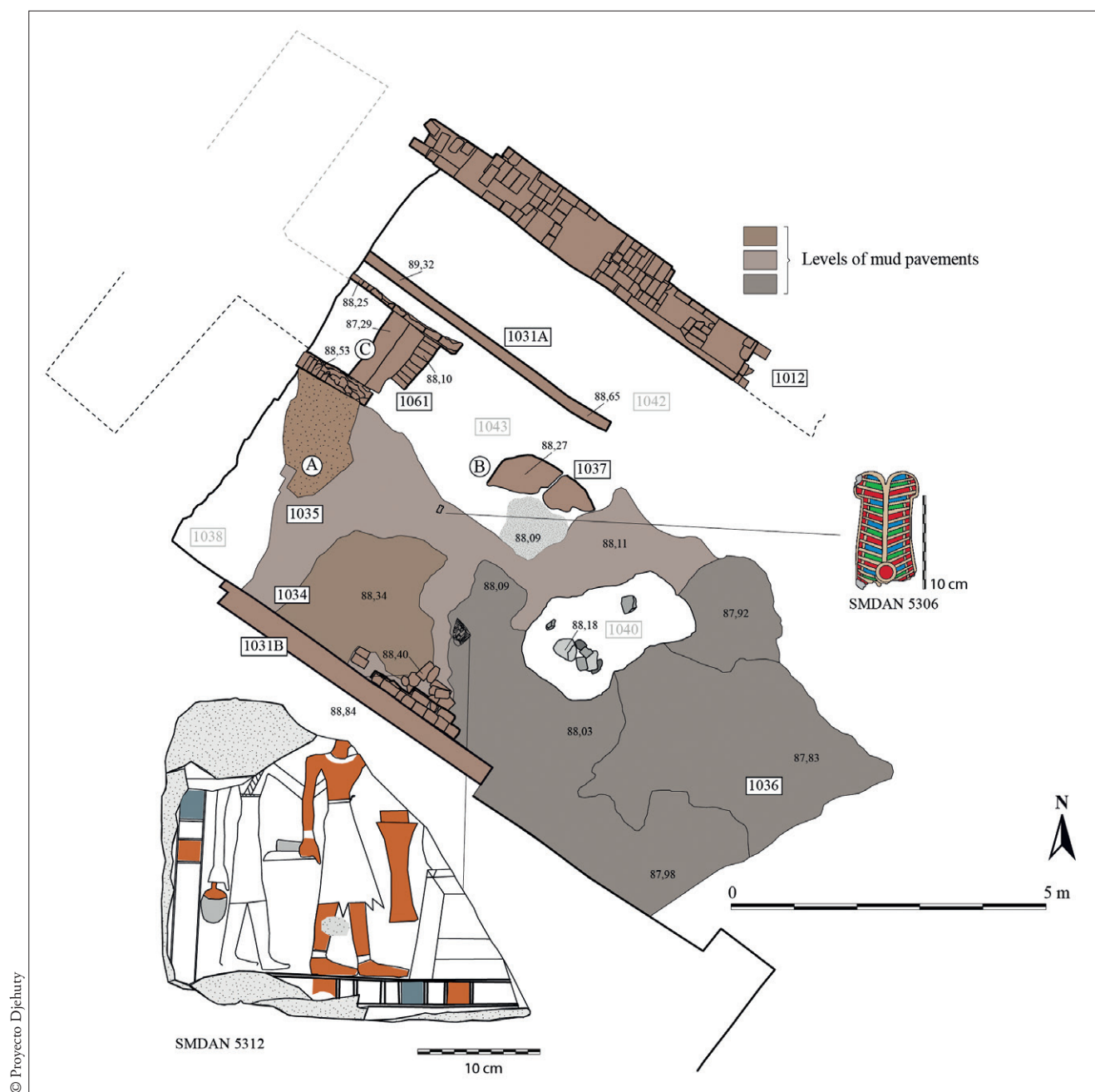


FIG. 5. Planimetry of the levels of pavements of tomb SMDAN 1030.



FIG. 6. View of the levels of pavements in the courtyard of tomb SMDAN 1030.

a pit caused by looting activities (1040); the archaeological finds associated with it date to the New Kingdom and the Late Period.

A great deal of dung and remains of garlands were found near the entrance of the tomb. The garlands—part of a burial phase of the tomb—were used to create a floor for cattle or, in this case, caprids (Figs. 5a, 6a and 7a). A mud oven was also built during this phase of occupation (1037). Remains of charcoal, ashes and potsherds associated to breadmaking were preserved next to the oven (Fig. 7b).

The width of the tomb entrance was reduced in this phase: a smaller doorway was built that had mud-brick doorjambs. Two walls consisting of a single course of mud-bricks—reinforced and covered with mortar—were built on either side of the doorjambs, together with a three-step descending staircase close to the entrance (1061) (Fig. 7c).⁷ The potsherds and other archaeological finds associated with this phase date to the New Kingdom, TIP and Late Period, but among them, a few centimetres above pavement 1036, was a fragment of a 17th Dynasty painted limestone stela (SMDAN 5312) showing a male and a female standing behind an offering table (Fig. 5). Other finds included several blue faience fragments of bowls with decorative motifs traced in black, the *atef*-crown of a Prah-Sokar-Osiris figure dated to the TIP or Late Period (SMDAN 5306) (Fig. 5), and some mud *shabtis*.

⁷ For a similar situation, see TT 400 (SCHREIBER, VASÁROS, ALMÁSY 2013, pp. 190–191).

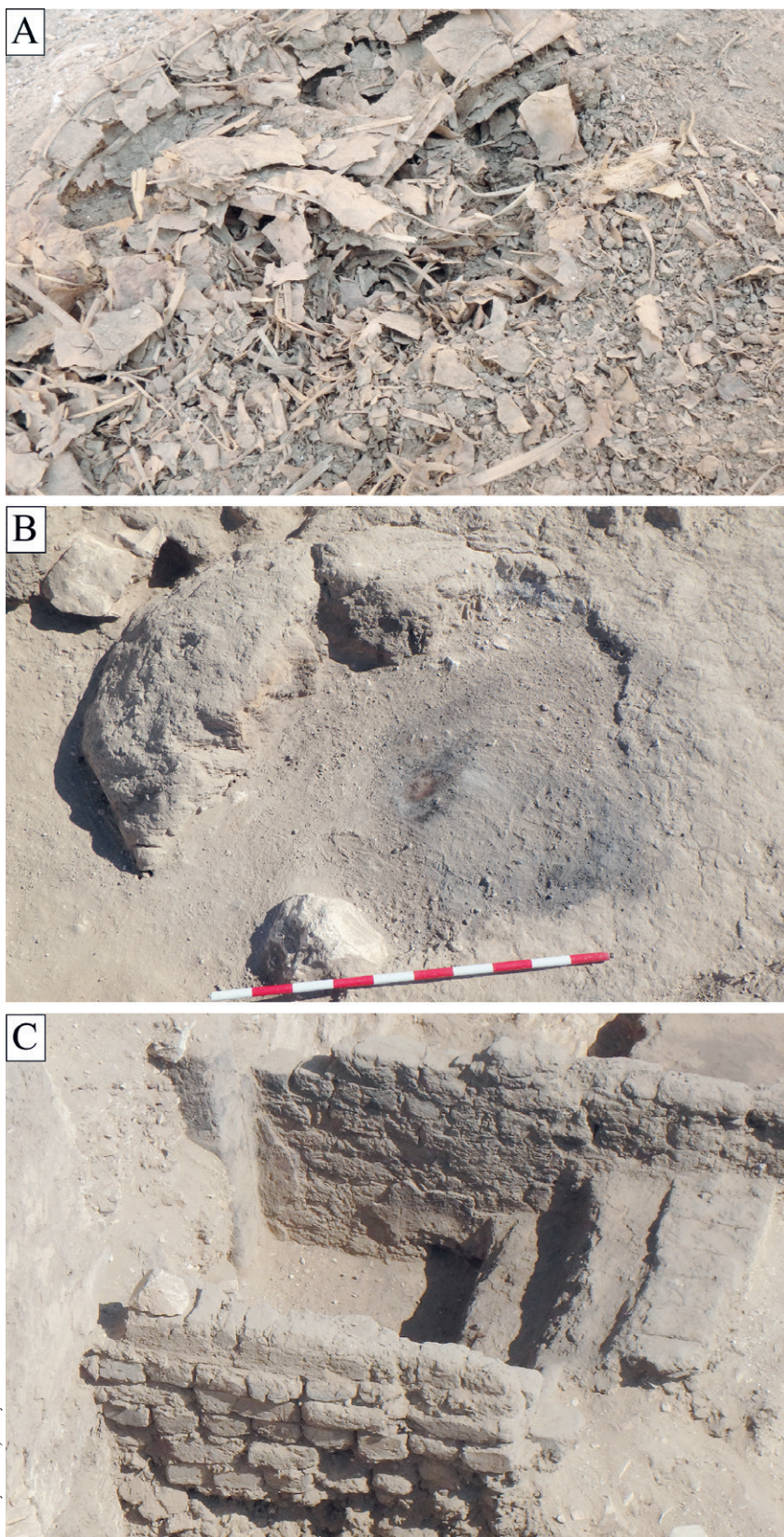


Fig. 7a-c. a. Dung and remains of garlands; b. Mud oven (1037); c. Doorway in the entrance of tomb SMDAN 1030 (1061).

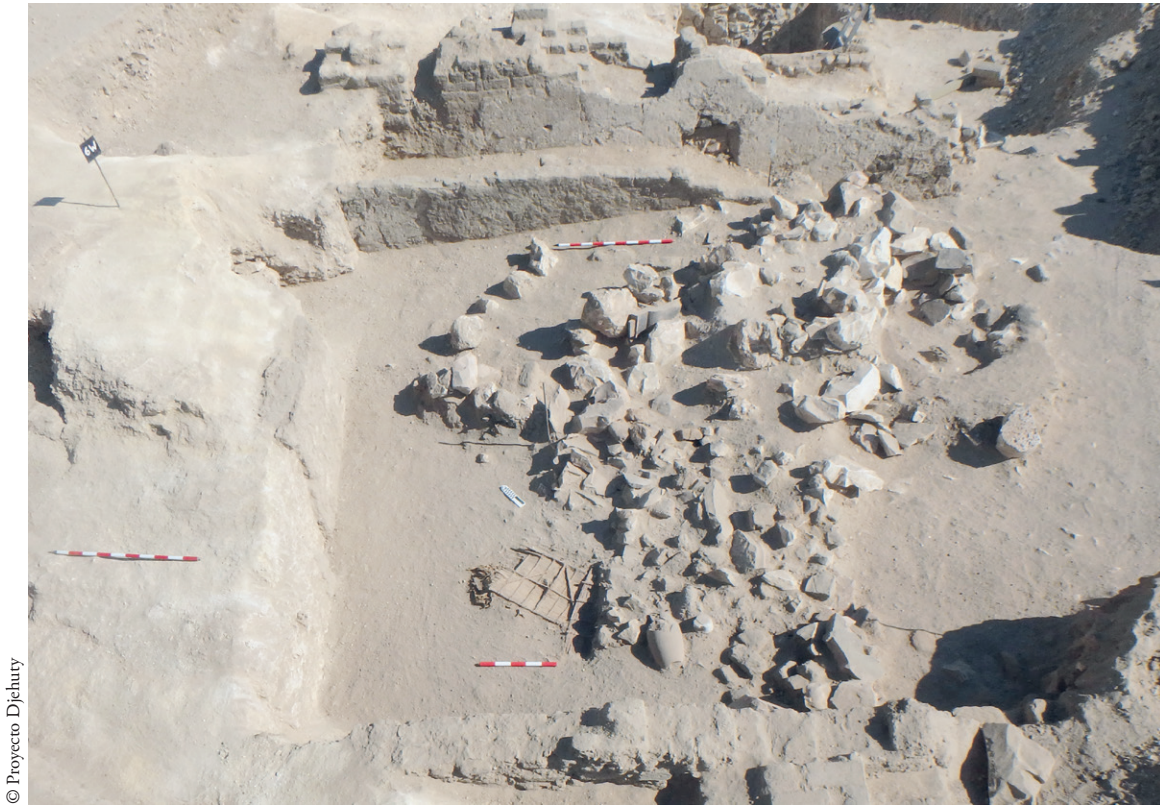


FIG. 8. View of level 1033 of the courtyard of tomb SMDAN 1030.

A large looting pit was located in the courtyard across from the door of the tomb. The archaeological finds associated with it date to the New Kingdom, TIP and Late Period, including two Mycenaean potsherds,⁸ and some sandstone relief fragments (1043) (Fig. 5).

A mixed fill of limestone blocks, stones and sand accumulated by looters' activities covered the courtyard's previous levels (1033) (Fig. 8). The stela studied below (SMDAN 5247) came from this stratigraphic level: it was found near the south-western side wall of the courtyard, next to a set of uninscribed mud *shabtis* (Fig. 9). It was among a large number of fragments of funerary equipment and potsherds retrieved from this level of the courtyard, which date from the New Kingdom to the Ptolemaic Period. A list of the most significant finds follows:

- Remains of a reed box (SMDAN 5246) (Fig. 10);
- Amulets with representations of the four sons of Horus, dated to the 18th Dynasty, the Ramesside Period and the TIP;
- Blue faience *shabtis*;
- Mud *shabtis* painted white, with a text written on a yellow background and framed by two vertical red lines, bearing the name "Tutuia, overseer of the granary of Amun" (*Twtwꜣꜥ jmy-rꜥ-jḥw n(y) Jmn*) and dated to the Ramesside Period (SMDAN 5241);

⁸ These fragments have preliminarily been dated to the Late Helladic IIB or Late Helladic IIIA—which correspond to the middle of the 18th Dynasty: Zulema Barahona Mendieta, personal communication. A study of these fragments and other pottery assemblages from Sector 10 is in preparation by Zulema Barahona Mendieta and María González Rodríguez.

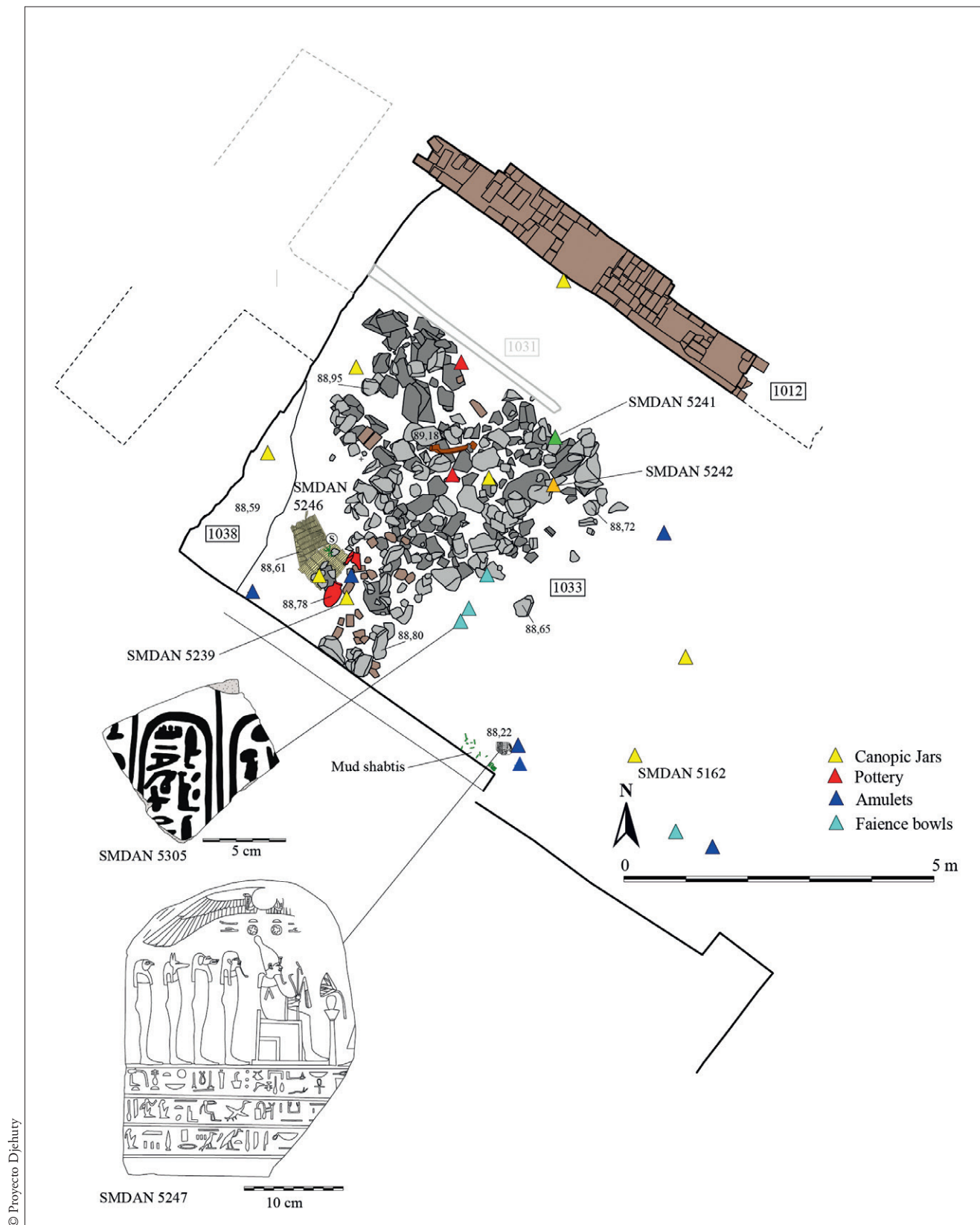


FIG. 9. Planimetry of the level of limestone blocks, stones and sand of tomb SMDAN 1030.



FIG. 10. Remains of a reed box SMDAN 5246.

- Fragments of a papyrus that belonged to a woman called Tanedjem, preserving chapters 110 and 149 of the *Book of Going Forth by Day*, and probably dating to the 22nd Dynasty (SMDAN 5242);
- The stone lid of a canopic jar with a representation of Qebehsenuef (SMDAN 5239), and a pottery lid representing Imsety (SMDAN 5162);
- Blue faience fragments of bowls with decorative motifs traced in black, one of them bearing the royal cartouche of King Osorkon III, dated to the TIP (SMDAN 5305) (Fig. 9).⁹

In the north-western corner was a looting pit filled with fragments of pottery dated to the New Kingdom, Ptolemaic, Roman, and Byzantine Periods (1038). Finally, the area of the courtyard was covered with a dark level of organic remains and rubbish associated with the modern village that stood here, which was inhabited until 2006 (1000 and 1001).

2. THE STONE STELA SMDAN 5247

Egyptian funerary stelae were originally erected as tombstones or inserted into the walls of tombs to mark offering places, with the aim of guaranteeing the funerary cult of the deceased. Characterised by distinctive local traditions, they were made of different materials and came in many shapes and sizes. They recorded the owner's name, titles, genealogy, and included a

⁹ For the titulary of King Osorkon see, for instance: DODSON 2020; LEPROHON 2013, p. 154; KITCHEN 2004, pp. 88–94 §§70–75; BONHÊME 1987, pp. 268–270.

figural representation.¹⁰ However, the sweeping changes in religious thought, burial practices and grave goods that took place during the 1st millennium BCE affected the function, production, structure and iconography of this type of object.

The widespread use of wood in the production of Theban stelae is one of the most substantial changes that occurred at the beginning of the TIP; this practice has traditionally been connected to the abandonment of above-ground tomb structures and a shift in funerary cult emphasis away from burials. This distinctively Theban practice continued during the Late Period.¹¹ During the Libyan Period, no wooden stelae seem to have been found outside Thebes, where stone objects are predominant.¹² There are only twelve monuments from Abydos that can be indisputably dated to this period, all of them are made of stone.¹³ Consequently, while the large number of private wooden stelae has permitted patterns of evolution to be discerned, it is quite difficult to compare the corpora of other types of TIP funerary stelae due to a shortage of examples.¹⁴

Furthermore, an essential factor to take into account when studying funerary stelae of the TIP is the significant disparity of evidence between Thebes and the rest of the country. Marc Loth documented more than 160 Libyan Period funerary stelae from Thebes—60 of which came from an archaeological context—but only 25 came from Abydos, and only a few examples came from other necropolises, such as Koptos, Memphis and Bubastis.¹⁵

The limited number of stone stelae found in Thebes has, to the time of writing, prevented a systematic typological study to be made.¹⁶ In the absence of many comparable stone funerary stelae, and bearing in mind that known examples of stone stelae seem to have similar iconographic features to those of wooden stelae of similar date, wooden examples offer a substantial corpus with which to compare stela SMDAN 5247. A comprehensive analysis of the object provides some internal dating criteria, which point to the Kushite Period and are described in detail in the following pages.

¹⁰ For an overview on this type of object, see HÖLZL 2001.

¹¹ MUNRO 1973, pp. 6–9. For a revision of the socio-economic indications for use of stone or wooden stelae and where they were meant to be placed—above and below ground—see LOTH 2009, p. 222, n. 24 and LOTH 2012.

¹² SALEH 2007, pp. 44–46. For the discussion of a possible wooden stela found in Abydos, see: LEAHY 2009, p. 418, n. 11 and 12.

¹³ LEAHY 2009. For some relevant observations comparing stelae traditions in Thebes and Abydos in the Ramesside and Third Intermediate Period, see HARING 2012, pp. 140–144.

¹⁴ For an analysis of funerary stelae dated to the 1st millennium BCE, P. Munro's essential typological study of Late Period stelae (MUNRO 1973) should be supplemented with more recent works, such as: SWART 2004; SALEH 2007; SWART 2007; LOTH 2008; LOTH 2009; ASTON 2009, pp. 348–356; ASTON 2011; DE VISSCHER 2011; LOTH 2012; LEBÉE 2014; and DE VISSCHER 2017.

¹⁵ LOTH 2006, p. 13; LOTH 2009, p. 220; LOTH 2012, p. 217.

¹⁶ The following works provide a quite comprehensive list of the known Theban funerary stone stelae from the TIP: MUNRO 1973; JANSEN-WINKELN 2007a; JANSEN-WINKELN 2007b; ASTON 2009, pp. 355–356; JANSEN-WINKELN 2009; LOTH 2009, p. 222, n. 18 and 24; MALEK 2012. In this regard, see: Luxor OA ¹⁷/2/IV/78-20 (AUFRÈRE 1982); Berlin ÄM 22461 (JANSEN-WINKELN 1995, no. 2); London BM EA 931 (JANSEN-WINKELN 2007b, p. 105, no. 32); London BM EA 645 (JANSEN-WINKELN 2005, no. 1); London BM EA 1224 (JANSEN-WINKELN 1990); Cambridge FM E.GA 3069.1934 (MARTIN 2005, p. 112, no. 77); New York MMA 25.3.210; Louvre N269-C118 (LEBÉE 2014; SHEIKHOESLAMI 2017a, no. 10); and the stela of Peftjauawybast (Luxor, no number; AUFRÈRE 1982).

2.1. Description and dating criteria

The round-topped limestone stela SMDAN 5247 measures 26 cm in height, 20.2 cm in width, and 6 cm in thickness. It is decorated on the *recto* (Fig. 11), while the *verso* presents chisel marks (Fig. 12). It was carefully executed, with incised hieroglyphs and sunk relief. No traces of colour remain.¹⁷ The stela is considerably damaged and weatherworn, with fractures and abrasions on its left side and throughout the edge of the lunette that affect both text and images.

The decorated face of the stela is divided in two separate registers: at the top, there is an offering scene to the god Osiris, which is crowned by a winged sun-disc; below, there are three lines of hieroglyphic text containing an invocation formula to Osiris Neb-ankh on behalf of the scribe *P3-šrj-n-3st*. The bipartite layout displays a division of figures and text. The semi-circular lunette is not separated from the main scene by a horizontal border.

According to Peter Munro's discussion of the development of wooden Theban funerary stelae, during the first half of the 1st millennium BCE the format of stelae was gradually transformed to include more text at the bottom, and to completely separate text from image: from the so-called Bubastite *Ganzbild* type to the *Bild-Schrift* stelae of the Late Period. This evolution resulted in a division of the compositional area into three parts around c. 650 BCE: protection symbols, main scene, and text (from top to bottom).¹⁸ P. Munro's Theben IB and IC groups, considered "transitional" types—and dated by him to the 25th Dynasty—are characterised by the presence of a couple of lines of text at the bottom of the stela that complete the columns of text above the main scene. There are also stelae with two registers, in which the winged sun-disc is not separated from the scene below. These objects correspond to a time immediately before the development of the complete Late Period Theban stela type; a phase that follows the integration of images and hieroglyphs into a single register that characterised the Libyan Period, but that does not yet record, for instance, a fixed tripartite structure or the presence of two figurative symmetrical representations in the main scene.¹⁹

We might consider that TIP stone stelae have a range of dates, as wooden funerary stelae do, and that for stelae of similar dates there would be similar iconography. Additionally, their design followed different patterns of decoration from those of the wooden stelae just described, with only a few exceptions. Even though they share stylistic and iconographic features—as stela SMDAN 5247 does—with those of the early 22nd Dynasty to the 8th century BCE, they usually display an offering scene before one or more deities, set above a larger inscription.²⁰ Consequently, in terms of general layout, similarity of form with certain types of wooden stelae cannot be considered as a definite dating criterion.

¹⁷ The stone stelae from the TIP were usually carved and painted; they were only painted—not carved—on rare occasions, such as in Cambridge FM E.GA 3069.1934 and Louvre N269-C118: LOTH 2009, p. 222, n. 18.

¹⁸ MUNRO 1973, pp. 10–14. This symmetrical composition was already present during the 25th Dynasty, when new types of object coexisted with stelae of the so-called *Ganzbild* type. See: LOTH 2009, p. 221, n. 14; LOTH 2012, p. 223.

¹⁹ See, for instance: MUNRO 1973, pp. 25–26, Abb. 6 (Cairo A 9449), Abb. 8 (Oxford Ashmolean 1895.153). P. Munro dates these transitional groups to between c. 700 and 660 BCE. D. Aston's types V and VI—which correspond to P. Munro's Theben IB and IC groups—date to c. 725/700–700/675 BCE and c. 700/675–675/650 BCE respectively: ASTON 2009, p. 354.

²⁰ LOTH 2009, p. 223, n. 35; LOTH 2012, p. 223. See, for instance: Luxor OA ³2/IV/78-20; Berlin ÄM 22461; London BM EA 931; London BM EA 645; London BM EA 1224; or Brussels MRAH E. 6823. See n. 17 for bibliographical references to these stelae.



FIG. II. Recto of stela SMDAN 5247.



FIG. 12. Verso of stela SMDAN 5247.

The lunette of SMDAN 5247 has a relatively flat curve, and traces of an elongated sky-sign—or maybe a single line—surmount the winged sun-disk with two pendent *uraei* and curves around the top of the arc (Fig. 13). Both elements, which are quite damaged, are recurrent on private stelae from the TIP onwards.²¹ There are no further framing symbols, such as hieroglyphs for the east and west, *wꜥs* sceptres, or doorframes. David Aston elaborated a chronology for Theban wooden stelae, paying special attention to such elements, and stated that the presence or absence of these protective framing motifs cannot easily be used to distinguish between chronological divisions, so the focus when building his typology lays in an analysis of the iconography of the offering scene: instead of the traditional pre-TIP stelae representation of the owner seated before a pile of offerings, the scenes on the stelae, as with those on coffin lids and cartonnages, show the justified deceased offering to a god—Re-Horakhty or Osiris, usually mummiform and standing,



FIG. 13. Detail of the lunette of stela SMDAN 5247.

the scenes on the stelae, as with those on coffin lids and cartonnages, show the justified deceased offering to a god—Re-Horakhty or Osiris, usually mummiform and standing,

²¹ HÖLZL 1992, p. 287; VAN WALSEM 1992, pp. 644–647; LEAHY 2009, p. 436.

and often accompanied by Isis and Nephthys and/or the sons of Horus.²² These stelae show the deceased not as a passive recipient of offerings, but as an actor with direct access to the gods.²³

In the figurative scene of stela SMDAN 5247, the deceased—who is almost completely worn away—stands on the right of the scene, facing to the left and adoring Osiris, who is in the middle and faces right. Between the god and the owner there is a stand that supports a spouted libation vessel, on top of which lies a large lotus flower (Fig. 14). The god, enthroned on a low-backed dais over a mat, wears a white crown with a *uraeus*, a divine beard and a short cloak, and holds a *nḥḥ* flail and *wš* and *ḥk* sceptres. The four mummified sons of Horus are shown standing behind him: they wear plain wrappings, are depicted on a smaller scale than Osiris, and share the same baseline with the deceased (Fig. 15).

Even though no fixed iconography or composition could be ascribed to a single type of wooden stela, it appears that the god depicted on them changed from Osiris, who was prominent during the 21st Dynasty but is rarely documented in the 22nd Dynasty,²⁴ to Re-Horakhty, who was predominant during Libyan rule. Additionally, a god in a standing position is more common in latter groups, and his regalia evolved from the *ḥk* sceptre and *nḥḥ* flail to the *wš* sceptre and 'nh sign over the course of the TIP.²⁵ However, Osiris gained relevance again during the 25th Dynasty, both at Thebes and Abydos,²⁶ and the gods depicted on later types of stelae multiplied in number.²⁷ Further, it seems that the sons of Horus did not appear on funerary stelae from the 21st and 22nd Dynasties, accompanying Osiris only from the end of the 25th Dynasty onwards.²⁸ Regarding the presence of the *ḥk* sceptre, the *nḥḥ* flail and the *wš* sceptre held together by Re-Horakhty or Osiris, it should be noted that this was not unusual during the Libyan Period;²⁹ this feature was also common from the 7th century BCE onwards.³⁰ All of these factors point to a late TIP date for the stela.

The design of the offering table, and the manner in which the body is represented and the figures are attired, are also valuable dating evidence. As already stated by P. Munro,³¹ the features of human figures and offering tables developed considerably during the transition between the late Libyan Period and the Kushite Dynasty: there was a tendency towards the

²² ASTON 2009, pp. 349–355.

²³ See MUNRO 1973, p. 5.

²⁴ Osiris also appears on the stone stelae Berlin ÄM 22461 and London BM EA 645. See n. 16 for bibliographical references.

²⁵ ASTON 2009, p. 353.

²⁶ SALEH 2007, p. 19; SWART 2007, pp. 520, 535; LEBÉE 2014, pp. 56–57.

²⁷ ASTON 2009, p. 353.

²⁸ M. Loth personal communication. Additionally, Thomas Lebée (LEBÉE 2014, p. 55) also refers to this matter, although one must not forget the limits of his analysis, which focuses exclusively on a study of stelae from the Louvre Museum dated from the TIP to the Ptolemaic Period. See also P. Munro's Theban type *Reihungsstelen* (MUNRO 1973, pp. 36–40), characterised by the appearance of Osiris and the sons of Horus in a row. In this regard, instead of enthroned—such as in stela SMDAN 5247—the god Osiris usually appears standing with the four sons of Horus; see London UC 14544 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 94) as a later example from Koptos in which Osiris appears with Sokar and three of the sons of Horus (4th century BCE).

²⁹ Among others: London BM EA 37899 (SALEH 2007, no. 8); Cairo JE 3390 (SALEH 2007, no. 51); Cambridge FM E. 28.1919 (SALEH 2007, no. 78); Bristol City Museum H4586 (SALEH 2007, no. 87); and Brooklyn Museum of Art 80.480.201 (SWART 2004, pl. 264). A standing Osiris is also depicted holding these three attributes on Theban stone stela Berlin ÄM 22461.

³⁰ Wooden stelae that evidence the aforementioned proliferation of deities and the depiction of the sons of Horus are: Oxford Ashmolean 1895.153 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 8); Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum 5070 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 11); Cairo A 9445 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 31); Durham Oriental Museum 1980 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 32); Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum 5069 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 43); and London BM EA 35467 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 44).

³¹ MUNRO 1973, pp. 11–13.



FIG. 14. Detail of the main scene: the god Osiris, an offering table and the deceased.



FIG. 15. Detail of stela SMDAN 5247: the four sons of Horus.

simplification of offerings—as stela SMDAN 5247 seems to show—and the human body became slimmer and the costumes simpler. Unfortunately, the image of the owner of this stela is almost completely lost, and we can only discern that he stands barefoot and wears what appears to be a long non-pleated kilt that ends below his knees. Even though a less complex outfit is one of the clothing styles that emerged toward the end of the 22nd Dynasty,³² it is impossible to exclude an earlier date for the stela based on the preserved traces of a kilt. It may also be suggested that the deceased was depicted with his arms in adoration, as this attitude was the most common gesture in Libyan Period wooden stelae.³³

³² See TAYLOR 2003, pp. 99–101, fig. 1, type 7. In addition to a study of the proportions of human figures and the iconography of costumes during the TIP, based on representations on coffins, papyri and stelae, John H. Taylor (TAYLOR 2003, pp. 101–102) analyses variations within the depictions of unguent cones. Unfortunately, the damage to stela SMDAN 5247 prevents us from considering this as a dating criterion. For further analysis of Libyan Period costumes and body proportions, of both males and females, based on their representations on Theban wooden stelae, see: SALEH 2007, pp. 21–25.

³³ According to Heidi Saleh (SALEH 2007, p. 20), this gesture occurs in 65 of 117 wooden stelae. See also M. Loth's typology of TIP stelae (LOTH 2009, pp. 224–230), where he describes the different actions performed by the deceased; for his *späte Gruppe*—mainly dated to the 8th century BCE—the deceased usually has his arms raised in adoration, sometimes bringing incense or a heart, or is led or taken care of by a god (LOTH 2009, p. 229).

The figures of the deities, which can still be discerned, are perhaps more reliable for the purposes of determining the date of the stela, as a new canon of proportions was introduced at the end of the TIP: from the New Kingdom style, with short upper bodies and long legs, to a revival of Old Kingdom models that had long upper bodies and short thighs.³⁴ It is however difficult to assess the proportions of the gods depicted on stela SMDAN 5247, as mummified figures are much the same in both of these styles.³⁵ Yet based on the style of the faces on Osiris and a human-headed son of Horus (presumably Imsety)—contracted, with prominent lips and the projection of the mouth beyond the profile of the forehead—the stela should probably be dated to the end of the 8th century BCE at the earliest, when these changes were introduced. Facial features generally seem more well-proportioned until that date.³⁶

2.2. Text

There is a caption below the winged sun-disk (see Fig. 13). Although signs Gardiner F18 (𐀓) and D46 (𐀓) on the right-hand side are almost entirely worn away, the text clearly reads *Bḥdt(y)* “the one from Edfu” twice, symmetrically opposed. This is the most common epithet for the winged sun-disk,³⁷ and the presence of labels with its name are frequent on funerary stelae from the TIP.³⁸

The inscription on stela SMDAN 5247, which is confined to the lower register, consists of three lines of text containing a written formula that guarantees the provision of supplies, as well as the name and title of the deceased and the names of his parents (Fig. 16).³⁹ The text reads as follows:

- 1 [*ḥtp dj nsw/dd mdw jn^a Ws*]*jr^b nb-^c nb^c djzf prt-ḥrw t ḥnkt jḥw 3pd sntr mrḥt šs mnḥt ḥt nb(t)*
nfrt w^c bt
- 2 [...]*sn^d n^e k3 n(y)^f sšg P3-šrj-n-3st^h m3^c-ḥrwⁱ*
- 3 [*s3 n(y)*]^j [...]*knj^k m3^c-ḥrw^l mwtzf N3w-pr-d3m3^c w^m*

³⁴ TAYLOR 2003, p. 99.

³⁵ SWART 2004, p. 63.

³⁶ See TAYLOR 2003, p. 99. Moreover, recent studies on the 25th Dynasty tombs of South Asasif—such as PISCHIKOVA 2014 and PISCHIKOVA 2018—shed some light on Kushite physiognomy and stylistic and iconographic preferences.

³⁷ HÖLZL 1992, p. 288.

³⁸ GOFF 1979, p. 249. For some examples, see: Boston MFA 04.1763 (SALEH 2007, no. 3); London BM EA 8447 (SALEH 2007, no. 20); Chicago OIM 1351 (SALEH 2007, no. 22); Athens National Archaeological Museum E187 (SALEH 2007, no. 32); Leiden Rijksmuseum van Oudheden EG-ZM 242 (SALEH 2007, no. 70); Oxford Ashmolean 1917.42 (SALEH 2007, no. 86); New York MMA 22.3.34 (SALEH 2007, no. 93); Museo Archeologico di Firenze 2477 (SALEH 2007, no. 110); Museo Archeologico di Firenze 2479 (SWART 2004, pl. 273); Cambridge FM E.GA.4540.1943 (MARTIN 2005, p. 120, no. 82); Cairo A 9422 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 5); Cairo A. 9449 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 6); Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum 5073 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 7); Durham Oriental Museum 1981 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 10); Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum 5070 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 11); and Louvre T V 4 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 12).

³⁹ As mentioned, before the full development of Late Period wooden stelae, “transitional” types of stelae had lines of supplementary text at the bottom, while the main funerary inscription appeared above the main register, generally in columns. See SALEH 2007, p. 18.

- ¹ [An offering given by the king to/Words spoken by Os]iris, Lord of life: May he give invocation offerings of bread, beer, oxen, fowl, incense, oils, alabaster, linen and everything good and pure
² [...] to the *k3* of the scribe *P3-šrj-n-3st*, justified,
³ [son of] [...] *knj*, justified, [his] mother, *N3w-pr-d3m3'w*.

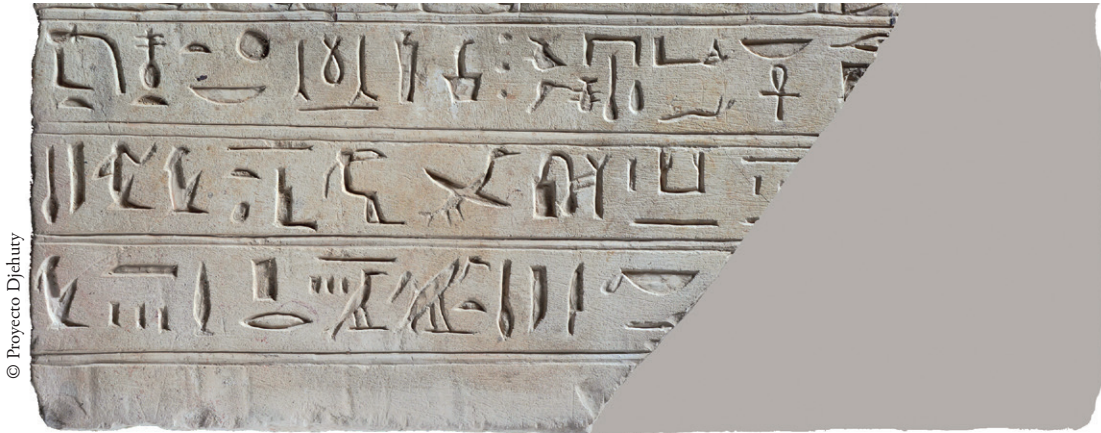


FIG. 16. Text of stela SMDAN 5247.

- a As already noted, a fracture on the stela destroyed the beginning of all three lines of text. Nevertheless, context, as well as the fact that *hṭp-dj-nsu* and *dd-mdw-jn* formulae were generally used on TIP funerary wooden stelae,⁴⁰ suggest the presence here of one of these two possibilities.
- b Besides iconographic criteria or stelae design, palaeography and orthography provide essential evidence for the dating of monuments. The main deity represented on the scene corresponds to the one invoked by the written formula. Even though the name of Osiris is incomplete, traces of a pennant (𓂏) support the reading of his name as 𓂏 (Wsjr). In this regard, a change in the rendering of the name of Osiris after the reigns of Takeloth III and Rudamun—proposed by Anthony Leahy—is considered the most valuable epigraphic dating criterion for this period: the use of the pennant determinative instead of the divine one (𓂏) became increasingly common from the 25th Dynasty onwards, so the form 𓂏 replaced 𓂏 as the most common writing of the name of Osiris during the 26th Dynasty.⁴¹ Consequently, it constitutes a firm *terminus post quem* for this stela, which therefore cannot be dated to before the late 8th century BCE. This criterion is consistent with the dating proposals resulting from the stylistic analysis.

In line with a shift in the gods represented on the main scene of wooden stelae towards the end of the TIP,⁴² the offering formulae invoking Osiris appear to have become more common from c. 700 BCE onwards. This is the case for stelae now in the Louvre Museum

⁴⁰ SWART 2004, p. 75.

⁴¹ LEAHY 1979. See also ASTON, TAYLOR 1990, p. 149; TAYLOR 2003, p. 102; SHEIKHOESLAMI 2017b, p. 332–333, n. 43. For additional remarks on the paleography of the 25th Dynasty: SHEIKHOESLAMI 2010.

⁴² See n. 26.

dated from the TIP to the Ptolemaic Period.⁴³ The presence of Osiris—textually and/or iconographically—can also be observed in P. Munro's Theben IB and IC groups.⁴⁴ Moreover, Re-Horakhty is predominant when considering Heidi Saleh's corpus: there are only ten stelae with depictions of the deceased venerating Osiris, mostly during the 21st Dynasty,⁴⁵ nine of which have an inscription also invoking Osiris;⁴⁶ three more monuments record Osiris formulae, even though the deity represented on them is Re-Horakhty,⁴⁷ two of which are dated from the 22nd/23rd Dynasties to the Kushite Period.⁴⁸ As a consequence, and although this matter would need further analysis, the increasing presence of Osiris within invocation texts could be seen as another argument in favour of a Kushite Period date for stela SMDAN 5247.

- c The increasing importance of the cult of Osiris is a major feature of religion in the 1st millennium BCE, which affected not only funerary practices but also the cultic sphere: the growth of his cult is evidenced by the construction of small Osirian chapels—up to 20 chapels dated from the 22nd Dynasty to the end of the 26th Dynasty—dedicated to a wide range of forms or aspects of this god at Karnak.⁴⁹

There existed several cult places of “Osiris Lord of life”, who is the deity invoked on this stela. In some of them, the god is characterised by epithets that the stela does not record: the chapel of “Osiris Lord of life/who rescues the unfortunate” (*Wsjr nb-‘nh/pj wšb j3d*) was located in the northern part of Amun's *temenos*, along the alley of Ptah, and was built at the time of the God's Wife Shepenwepet II during the reign of Taharqo (c. 678–670 BCE); and the chapels of “Osiris Lord of life” and “Osiris Lord of life who grants jubilees” (*Wsjr nb-‘nh dj hb sd*) were immediately southwest of the temple of Montu. They respectively date to the reigns of Shabaqo and Amenirdis I (c. 705–690 BCE) and of Psamtek I and Nitocris (c. 625–610 BCE). Additionally, there was a late Kushite building dedicated to “Osiris-Ptah Lord of life” (*Wsjr-Pth nb-‘nh*), which was probably built around the summer of 664 BCE and the spring of 663 BCE.⁵⁰

Accordingly, the presence of *Wsjr nb-‘nh* on stela SMDAN 5247 needs to be contextualised in this *milieu*: a sign of personal devotion to one of the manifestations of Osiris that flourished at this time. It also provides further evidence for a significant rise in Osirian beliefs

⁴³ LEBÉE 2014, pp. 59–60.

⁴⁴ Cairo A 9448 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 4); Cairo A 9422 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 5); Oxford Ashmolean 1895.153 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 8); London BM EA 8453 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 9); Durham Oriental Museum 1981 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 10); Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum 5070 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 11); and Louvre T V 4 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 12).

⁴⁵ SALEH 2007, p. 19, n. 69. See: London BM EA 8484 (SALEH 2007, no. 10); Cairo JE 29308 (SALEH 2007, no. 23); Cairo JE 29312 (SALEH 2007, no. 35); Cairo JE 29311 (SALEH 2007, no. 37); Cairo JE 29310 (SALEH 2007, no. 38); Cairo TR 20/12/24/13 (SALEH 2007, no. 40); Cairo JE 29309 (SALEH 2007, no. 41); Avignon Musée Calvet A.62 (SALEH 2007, no. 58); Petrie Museum UC 14226 (SALEH 2007, no. 84); and Worcester Art Museum 1947.35 (SALEH 2007, no. 95).

⁴⁶ Worcester Art Museum 1947.35 (SALEH 2007, no. 95) refers to Amun-Re.

⁴⁷ University of Pennsylvania Museum E 2044 (SALEH 2007, no. 46); Louvre N 3795 (SALEH 2007, no. 61); and Zagreb Archaeological Museum 2168 (SALEH 2007, no. 68).

⁴⁸ University of Pennsylvania Museum E 2044 (SALEH 2007, no. 46) and Zagreb Archaeological Museum 2168 (SALEH 2007, no. 68).

⁴⁹ COULON 2010a. For a study of these cult places at Karnak, including the results of recent epigraphic and archaeological surveys, see, for instance: JURMAN 2006; COULON 2016; COULON, HALLMANN, PAYRAUDEAU 2018.

⁵⁰ COULON, HALLMANN, PAYRAUDEAU 2018, pp. 271–283, figs 1, 6.

during the first half of the 1st millennium BCE. The Kushite Dynasty would once again be the most likely chronological period.

- d Based on the context, this gap in the text needs to be reconstructed with further descriptions of the offerings made for the *k3* of the deceased. Consequently, a reading such as ‘*nḥt nṯr jm=sn*’ (“on which a god lives”) may be possible. We are however not aware of any parallel structures on Libyan Period wooden stelae.
- e There is a consistent use of a flat line for the letter *n*.
- f The identification of the deceased—male or female—as an “Osiris” appears in 95 examples in H. Saleh’s corpus of stelae, and is considered one of the most common personal epithets of the Libyan Period.⁵¹ In stela SMDAN 5247, however, *P3-šrj-n-3st* is not characterised as such, and so no chronological pattern seems to apply in this regard.⁵²
- g *P3-šrj-n-3st* was a scribe, an administrative function that does not denote a high-ranking position. Furthermore, there is no recorded connection between him and any Theban cult or institution, so we do not know where he might have developed his scribal functions. However, it is necessary to point out that most members of the Theban elite during the TIP served at the temple of Karnak, mainly on behalf of the cult of Amun-Re,⁵³ but also of the remaining gods of the Theban triad or other cults located there. We could therefore hypothesise an affiliation to Amun’s domain, even though there is no direct evidence.
- h Although name patterns and the gods promoted within them varied over time, as a sign of personal devotion, the use of theophorous names was extremely common in all periods of Egyptian history. In this respect, the masculine form *P3-šrj-n* plus the name of the deity, translated as “the child of the god/goddess NN”—which is attested since the mid-21st Dynasty—was very common in the Late Period.⁵⁴ In line with the multiplication of cult places dedicated to Osiris mentioned above (see c), the name of the owner of the stela, which means “the son of Isis”,⁵⁵ is further evidence for the increasing popular devotion to both Osiris and Isis during the 1st millennium BCE. The greater frequency of personal names that incorporate the name of Osiris or of his closest companions, Isis and Horus, must therefore be highlighted.⁵⁶

That said, the gods of the Theban triad are the most prominent deities featured in names on Libyan Period wooden stelae, and while Osiris is surprisingly absent, Isis and Horus are the next most frequent: they appear on 15 and 12 stelae respectively, although no individuals named *P3-šrj-n-3st* seem to be attested.⁵⁷ An analysis of the corpus of stelae in the Louvre Museum indicates that theophorous names with Isis were quite common from

⁵¹ SALEH 2007, p. 190.

⁵² The stelae where this epithet is not mentioned range from the 21st Dynasty, such as London BM EA 35896 (SALEH 2007, no. 7), to c. 800–700 BCE, such as Copenhagen NM AA.d.6 (SALEH 2007, no. 109).

⁵³ For instance, of over 77 men and women with titles recorded on wooden stelae, 70 are linked to the cult of Amun at Thebes (SALEH 2007, pp. 64–65). Additionally, seven scribal titles are featured on the stelae from H. Saleh’s corpus, among which *ss* appears without further characterisation only on Cairo JE 29313, which has been dated to the 21st Dynasty (SALEH 2007, p. 67, no. 42).



⁵⁴ See: VITTMANN 2013, pp. 3–4; JANSEN-WINKELN 2016, pp. 192–194.



⁵⁵ *PNI*, p. 118, 7.

⁵⁶ COULON 2017.

⁵⁷ SALEH 2007, pp. 60–61, table 4.

the Kushite Period onwards.⁵⁸ This fact was most likely connected to the increasing prominence achieved by Isis in the cultic sphere, which cannot be divorced from a rise in the importance of the cult of Osiris. The development of the *naissance* doctrine by the end of the New Kingdom—which progressively increased the attention paid to child gods and the mother-child relationship—and the existence of a *mammisiac* cult of Isis since that time, might have contributed to the rise in popularity of the goddess; this popularity shows, for instance, in the use of theophorous names related to her—as in stela SMDAN 5247—as well as in the increased number of her servants or the proliferation of statues of the *Isis lactans* iconographic type.⁵⁹ One might argue that Kushite kings and God's Wives, who seem to have changed the focus of the divine mother-son pairing from Mut and Khonsu the Child to Isis and Harpokrates, especially promoted the cult of Isis as an essential way to legitimise their rights to the throne.⁶⁰

On a different note, according to A. Leahy, the presence of determinatives in personal names seems to have fallen into disuse by *c.* 1000 BCE, to be reintroduced around *c.* 800 BCE on stelae from both Abydos and Thebes.⁶¹ Therefore, the presence of  and  in the names of *P3-šrj-n-3st* and his mother respectively (see m) might also be considered a further factor for dating the stela. In this regard, we may also observe that the scribe did not clearly distinguish between the “seated goddess” and “seated woman” hieroglyphs: in the name of the owner of stela SMDAN 5247, the hieroglyph after *3st* should be the seated goddess determinative; however, the determinatives for the name of the mother and for the name of the goddess are almost identical.

Another aspect related to the use of determinatives needs to be considered in future studies. Based on a study of stelae from Abydos, A. Leahy proposed that by the middle of the 7th century it was the determinative  that usually appeared in female names, instead of the more usual Late Period form .⁶² While the female determinative with the lotus flower seems recurrent during the Saite Period at Thebes,⁶³ the aforementioned limited use of determinatives on TIP wooden stelae makes it difficult to assess in Theban examples, and consequently prevents us from suggesting any connections between Abydos and Thebes.

⁵⁸ LEBÉE 2014, pp. 69–70.

⁵⁹ See: DE MEULENAERE 1982; FORGEAU 1984.

⁶⁰ For the cult of Isis among the Kushite pharaohs, see: FORGEAU 1984, p. 172; FAZZINI 1988, pp. 9–11; LOHWASSER 2001, pp. 70–71; FORGEAU 2002; COULON 2010b, pp. 121–128; BALDI 2015, pp. 97–101.

⁶¹ LEAHY 2009, p. 436. Examples of P. Munro's transitional stela types, as well as of the Theben I/IIAS group—i.e. D. Aston's group VII, dated to *c.* 660/650–625/600 BCE—evidence the increasing presence of determinatives in personal names: Cairo A 9422 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 5); Cairo A 9449 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 6); Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum 5073 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 7); London BM EA 8453 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 9); Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum 5070 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 11); Louvre T V 4 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 12); Cairo A 9930 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 13); and Cairo 9420 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 14). However, determinatives for personal names were not absent before the end of the 8th century BCE: see, for instance, the wooden stela London BM EA 37899 (SALEH 2007, no. 8), as well as the stone stela London BM EA 931 (JANSEN-WINKELN 2007b, p. 105, no. 32).

⁶² LEAHY 1980, p. 175.

⁶³ See, for example: Cairo A 9930 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 13); Cairo A 9915 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 20); Louvre N 3787 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 26); Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum 5071 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 27); and Florence 2483 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 28).

- i;l As with the epithet “Osiris”, the epithet “justified” was almost systematically included on TIP funerary stelae—for both men and women—although here it was omitted after the name of the deceased’s mother, probably due to a lack of space (see m).⁶⁴
- j Almost half of the third line of text has disappeared, but this lacuna is well suited to the following reconstruction: “son (of)”, plus the name of the father of *P3-šrj-n-3st*, of which only the last signs and his designation as “justified” remain (see k). It is probable that the expression used to refer to the father of *P3-šrj-n-3st* was *s3* or *s3 n(y)*, either with the sign H8 (O) or G39 (𐎓) for “father”.⁶⁵ This filiation is the most common on Libyan Period wooden stelae, which usually record one generation of ancestors: the name of the father, and less frequently also the name of the mother, sometimes with their corresponding titles.⁶⁶ Damage to this stela means we cannot know whether any of his titles were recorded, as the length of his name is unknown. However, while the owner did not record a sequence of titles, it seems reasonable to posit that only a single office, at best, might have been mentioned for his father.
- k The only part remaining of the name of the owner’s father is the ending *-knj*. This raises the possibility that it was part of the rare variants *Wsrknj* and *Srknj*,⁶⁷ of the basilophorous name Osorkon, which was completely integrated into the ancient Egyptian onomastic by the Saite Period,⁶⁸ and would provide a *terminus a quo* for dating. It could however stand for other Libyan names such as *Knj*,⁶⁹ or *Wstrknj*.⁷⁰ The typically Nubian final sequence *-skn(y)* might provide yet another possibility. This has been documented for some of the members of the royal family and other members of the elite, such as the general *Rʿmrskny* or the owner of TT 391, *Krbsknj*, who was the mayor of Thebes and both the fourth *hṃ-ntr* priest of Amun and *hṃ-ntr* priest of Khonsu.⁷¹ In this regard, it is also worth mentioning the possibility that the sign M17 (𐎓) is not phonetic but a substitute for 𐎓 as a determinative. This is well attested at Thebes during the 25th Dynasty, and so might also be the case for this name.⁷²

Without further genealogical evidence, we can only speculate on possible readings of the name of the deceased’s father. However, we can suggest that he was not Egyptian. With respect to *P3-šrj-n-3st*’s filiation (see j above), lengthy genealogies are associated with literate societies that keep written records, rather than a non-literate societies such—such

⁶⁴ It appears on 87 Theban wooden stelae out of the 117 from H. Saleh’s Libyan Period corpus (SALEH 2007, p. 64).

⁶⁵ Both writings coexisted during the TIP, even on the same stela, such as on Oxford Ashmolean 1895.153 (MUNRO 1973, Abb. 8).

⁶⁶ SALEH 2007, pp. 62–63. The rarity of extensive genealogical relationships on stelae is a significant feature of Libyan Period material. On other types of monuments where there is more available space—such as coffins—extensive genealogies are attested.

⁶⁷ COLIN 1996, vol. II, pp. 20–36.

⁶⁸ *PNI*, p. 87, 2. See also COLIN 1996, vol. I, pp. 134–135.

⁶⁹ COLIN 1996, vol. II, pp. 90–92.

⁷⁰ COLIN 1996, vol. II, p. 37.

⁷¹ *PNI* I, 347, 5; COLIN 1996, vol. II, pp. 121–122; VITTMANN 2007, pp. 145, 149; JANSEN-WINKELN 2009, pp. 190 and 567 (48.121), 333–334 (51.126), 499 (52.267). For the reading of Karabaskeni’s name, resulting from the recent work of the *South Asasif Conservation Project*, see: MOLINERO POLO 2017, pp. 225–227. For other Nubian names, see also ZIBELIUS-CHEN 2011, pp. 162, 203–205, 201–211, 246–247.

⁷² See LECLANT 1961, p. 249–250.

as Libyans or Nubians—that depend on oral traditions.⁷³ The scant filiation here could indicate that he was a foreigner. As a consequence, and since foreigners in Egypt during the 1st millennium BCE did not always indicate their societal positions in their monuments, his title may not even have been recorded on the stela.⁷⁴

- m The name of his mother is introduced by the structure *mwt=f*, “his mother”, with no preceding titles—not even *nbt pr*, “Lady of the house”. Consequently, we know that the deceased was the son of a man whose name has been partially lost, and a woman named *N3w-pr-dm3w*, which is also likely to be a foreign name.⁷⁵

Stela SMDAN 5247 provides scant genealogical information. It is therefore not possible to identify *P3-šrj-n-3st* and his family, nor to determine the stela’s dating more precisely. However, the structure of the name of the deceased and the divinity mentioned on the stela point to the end of the TIP. Moreover, the ending of the name of his father could be linked to a Nubian origin or influence.

All the aspects analysed in this paper suggest that funerary stela SMDAN 5247 can be dated to the 25th Dynasty. The epigraphic evidence seems secure. The rendering of the name of Osiris in the offering formula means that it cannot be dated to earlier than the middle of the 8th century BCE. Its iconography, its style and the layout of the figures represented upon it, the divinity mentioned in the offering formula, and the anthroponyms documented there all support this chronology.

To conclude, besides its dating, the exceptional nature of this stela must be reinforced. In a context dominated by wooden stelae, this stone example lends a significant contribution to our understanding of the material culture of the Theban TIP. The possible use of a stone stela by a man of Nubian descent would raise some interesting possibilities, such as the implication that a man of Nubian origin became a scribe, and was Egyptianized enough to use Egyptian burial customs. We must therefore now hope that future archaeological works in tomb SMDAN 1030 will offer new data on this object and its owner, and perhaps new materials that will help us to understand the reasons why this magnificent stela ended up in the courtyard of the tomb—which is an excellent example of reuse of a funerary space—or provide us with evidence regarding the original place where this stela was erected.

⁷³ See PAYRAUDEAU 2014, pp. 108–112.

⁷⁴ VITTMANN 2007, pp. 147–148.

⁷⁵ This name is not attested in the *PN*, and no parallels have been recorded in ZIBELIUS-CHEN 2011. However, we need to consider that this might be a case in which a non-Egyptian name was vocalized using some Egyptian words (see VITTMANN 2007, pp. 151–153). It is also possible that the last part of the name—*dm3w*—is a writing of the toponym Djeme, where the tomb of Osiris was thought to be located on the West Bank.

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