

## The Stela of lady *T3-rp(yt)* in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo

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[This article studies the stela of Ta-repit, which is now kept in the basement of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo. It provides a brief description of the scene on the upper part of the stela, and then deals with the transliteration and translation of the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the lower part. In conclusion, there are some philological comments, including a revised reading of the name of the owner's mother.]

**Keywords:** Akhmim, female musicians, Isis, Osiris, stela, Ta-repit.

**Inventory no:** CG 22040, JE 27115

**Material:** limestone

**Period:** Ptolemaic period

**Provenance:** Akhmim

**Measurements:** length: 48 cm, width 36 cm<sup>2</sup>

**Preservation:** very good condition

**Description:** The stela under study belongs to a lady called “Ta-repit”. It was found in 1886 at Akhmim and is now stored in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, with the inventory number JE 27115. The surface of the round topped stela is divided into three parts: a lunette, a scene and a text of five lines.

The rounded top of the stela is occupied with the winged solar disk surrounded by two cobras.

Below the winged solar disk there is a jackal  lying down, depicting the deity Anubis .

The main scene of the stela depicts four figures. The figures from right to left are the lady *T3-rp(yt)*, the owner of the stela, who is standing facing the left, raising her two hands, worshipping the god Osiris. In front of her there is an altar, and placed on it are a piece of bread and some flowers. In the opposite direction, three figures are facing her: the first figure is the god Osiris, who is represented standing on a pedestal, in a long robe, wearing on his head the atef-crown and holding  and  with his two hands. His name is written as *Wsir*  in front of his face.

The second figure is the goddess Isis, who stands behind Osiris, grasping the *w3d*-sceptre and a piece of cloth. Isis is crowned with her symbol  above her head, while her name, *3st*  is written in front of her face. Behind Isis stands Nephthys, grasping the *w3d*-sceptre and the *nh*-sign

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2. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines* II (Leipzig 1904-1905) pl. XIII.

wearing a headdress with the sign  on her head. In front of her face her name, *Nbt-hwt*  , is written.

**Text:**

Below the scene of the stela there is a text, consisting on five horizontal hieroglyphic lines running from right to left as follows:



*hṭp-dī-nsw (n) Wsir hnty imntt nṯr ʕ nb ʕbdw skr-Wsir  
nṯr ʕ hry-ib krs ʕst wrt mwt-nṯr hryt-ib Ipw Nbt-hwt snt-nṯr Inpw nb  
tʕ-dsrt Imsti Hpy Dwʕ-mwt= f Kbḥ-snw= f  
iri-sʕ Wsir ihyt n Mnw Tʕ-rpt sʕt n smʕty Irt-hr-ir.w mʕ<sup>c</sup>-hrw dt  
ms (n nbt) pr Mhṯt mʕ<sup>c</sup>-hrw*

**Translation:**

An offering which the king gives (to) Osiris who is in front of the west, the great god, the lord of Abydos, to Sokar-Osiris the great god, who is in the necropolis (burial place), to Isis the great, the mother of god, who is in Akhmim<sup>(a)</sup>, to Nephthys the sister of god, to Anubis lord of the necropolis, to Imesty, to Hapy, to Dwa-mut-ef and to Qebeh-senw-ef. May (they) protect Osiris the female musician<sup>(b)</sup> of Min Ta-repit<sup>(c)</sup>, the daughter of the stolist<sup>(d)</sup> Irt-her-irw (= Inaros)<sup>(e)</sup> the justified forever, who was born of the [mistress of] the house Meheyt, the justified.

**Notes:**

- a. *Ipw*: the term refers to modern Akhmim, which is located on the east bank of the Nile, about 450 km south of Cairo and about 200 km north of Luxor.<sup>3</sup> *Ipw* is the former capital of the 9th Upper Egyptian nome.<sup>4</sup>

3 H. Gauthier, “Notes géographiques sur le Nome Panopolite”, *BIFAO* 4 (1905) 39-101 (39, 44-45); Y. El-Masry, “Evidence of building activities of certain monarchs from inscribed material in Akhmim”, *MDAIK* 64 (2008) 207-237 (207, n. 1).

4. G. Abdel Nasser, S. Baumann and Ch. Leitz, “A newly discovered edifice of Atum in Akhmim, Part of the necropolis of the primeval gods” *ENiM* 8, 187-221 (18); K. Kuhlmann, *Materialien zur Archäologie und Geschichte des Raumes von Akhmim* (SDAIK 11; Mainz 1983) 9. R. Brech, *Spätägyptische Särge aus Achmim. Eine typologische und chronologische Studie* (Gladbeck 2013) 15-16.

- b. *ihyt n Mnw*: this title, probably attested from the XXII dynasty and continued until the Graeco-Roman period, was held by many women at Akhmim<sup>5</sup>. Holders of this title were serving as the priestesses of Min.<sup>6</sup> The title denotes a “musician  of Min”,<sup>7</sup> a “female musician of Min”<sup>8</sup> or a “sistrum player of Min”.<sup>9</sup> A large number of stelae excavated at Akhmim belonged to females; most of them bearing this title.<sup>10</sup> The title *ihyt*, “female musician” was also found on stelae from the El-Hassia necropolis.<sup>11</sup> The title was borne by female priestesses as well as the musicians of several deities in the Late and Ptolemaic periods.<sup>12</sup>
- c. *T3-rpyt*: a female name that appeared in the New Kingdom, and continued through the Late and the Graeco-Roman period.<sup>13</sup> It is the same name as the goddess Taphis (Repyt) at Akhmim, the female member of the triad of Panopolis. Two other women from Akhmim had this name. The first was mentioned on stela no. 22045 of  while the second is attested on stela no. 22052 of . It is assumed that one of these two men is the son of *T3-rpyt*.
- d. *sm3ty*: this is a priestly title which means “the priest of clothes”,<sup>16</sup> or “stolist”;<sup>17</sup> it is attested from the Old Kingdom for the clergy of the god Min and continued until the Graeco-Roman period. Gauthier has studied and collected the various ways of writing this title.<sup>18</sup>

5. M. Rashid, “The Block Statue of Djedhor son of Tjanefer (Cairo JE 37200)”, *JARCE* 55 (2019) 117-136 (124 (t), n. 60).

6. H. Gauthier, *Le personnel du dieu Min* (Cairo 1931) 115-116.

7. Y. El-Masry, “The Ptolemaic cemetery of Akhmim”, *OLA* 194 (2010) 177. fig. 6c.

8. P. Wilson, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon, a lexicographical study of the texts in the temple of Edfou* (OLA 78; Leuven 1997) 104.

9. Y. El-Masry, “The Ptolemaic cemetery of Akhmim”, *OLA* 194 (2010) 183.

10. For more stelae on which the women bear the title *ihyt n Mnw* see A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines I*, CG nos: 22001, 22015, 22025, 22030, 22032, 22039, 22045, 22053, 22057, 22059, 22067, 22069, 22070, 22077, 22133, 22139, 22141, 22142, 22142, 22145, 22146, 22174, 22209. The same title appeared in another form as *ihyt nfrt n Mnw*; see A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines I*, CG nos: 22007, 22017, 22034.

11. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines I*, CG nos: 22013, 22024, 22048.

12. K. Jansen-Winkeln, “Drei Statueninschriften einer Familie aus Frühptolemäischer Zeit”, *SÄK* 36 (2007) 59, 61.

R. El-Sayed, “Deux statues de la cachette de Karnak”, *BIFAO* 87 (1987) 173.

13. H. Ranke, *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen I* (Glückstadt 1935) 364.

14. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines I*, CG no: 22025, pp. 41-42.

15. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines I*, CG no: 22052, p. 48.

16. R. Hannig, *Großes Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch* (Mainz 1995) 703b.

17. A. MacFarlane, “Titles *sm3* + God and *ht* + God”, *GM* 121 (1991) 77-78. D. Klotz, “A good burial in the west: Four Late Period Theban Statues in American Collections”, in: L. Coloun (ed.) *La Cachette de Karnak. Nouvelles perspectives sur les découvertes de Georges Legrain*, *BdE* 161 (2016) 433-464 (449, no: a).

18. H. Gauthier, *Le personnel du dieu Min* (Cairo 1931) 39-51. For more on *sm3ty*, see: Y. El-Masry, “The Ptolemaic cemetery of Akhmim”, *OLA* 194 (2010) 176; W. A. Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom* (Beirut 1982) 150; P. Vernus, *Athribis. Textes et documents relatifs à la géographie*,

e. *Irt-Hr-ir.w*: a personal name meaning “the eye of Horus is against them”.<sup>19</sup> It first appeared in the Late Period and continued through the Graeco-Roman period.<sup>20</sup> The name was attested with several #orthogypies ,<sup>21</sup> <sup>22</sup> and <sup>23</sup>. The name *Irt-Hr-ir.w*, the father of *T3-rpyt*, is attested on many stelae from Akhmim. Thus, it is difficult to prove which one is her father due to the lack of corresponding evidence. The same name *Irt-Hr-ir.w* appeared outside of Akhmim on a woman’s stela from Aswan.<sup>24</sup> This proves that the name was quite common.

## Conclusion

The mother of *T3-rpyt*: Kamal copied the name as  but it is clear that in copying the name he confused the signs  with the sign group . Therefore, I suggest that the two first signs  are an incorrect writing for the well-known title *nbt pr*, “mistress of the house” and that the last two signs together with the female determinative  are the name of the mother of *T3-rpyt*. The name *Mhyt*<sup>25</sup> (attested since the New Kingdom) is a common element in proper names at Akhmim; for example, it occurs as the first part of the name of the lady *Mhyt-wsh*,<sup>26</sup> and as the second part of the name of the lady *Hnt-mhyt*.<sup>27</sup> This name also occurs as female name on a stela from Aswan <sup>28</sup> and as a part of male names like <sup>29</sup> and <sup>30</sup>.

This stela contains a *hṭp-di-nsw* formula invoking several gods such as Osiris, Sokar-Osiris, Isis, Nephtys, Anubis and the four sons of Horus to provide the owner with protection. The main title of the lady is  “the sistrum player of Min”<sup>31</sup> at Akhmim, in the Graeco-Roman period. There were more women from Akhmim working in the same position (see note b above).

The owner was one of the female clergy of the god Min at Akhmim. Her father *Irt-Hr-ir.w* worked as a stolist (“the priest of clothes”) for the same god.

*aux cultes et à l'histoire d'une ville du Delta égyptien à l'époque pharaonique* (BdE 74; Cairo 1978) 68 n. f.; B. Gerdsef, “Le signe  et le titre du stolist”, *ASAE* 43 (1943) 357-366; G. Vitmann, *Priester und Beamte in Theben der Spätzeit* (Beiträge zur Ägyptologie 1; Vienna 1978) 69, 97 and D. Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom* (Oxford 2000) no: 3252.

19. W. Spiegelberg, “Demotische Miscellen“, *Rec. Trav.* 28 (1906) 200-201.

20. H. Ranke, *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen* I (Glückstadt 1935) 42.

21. H. Schäfer, “Äthiopische Fürstinnen“, *ZÄS* 42 (1906) 48-50 (48).

22. A. Moret, *Sarcophages de l'époque Bubastite à l'époque Saïte*, Tome II (Cairo 1913), CG no: 41016, pp. 168, 172-174, no: 41017, pp. 175, 178, 180, 183.

23. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines* I, CG no: 22025.

24. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines* I, CG no: 22097.

25. H. Ranke, *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen* I (Glückstadt 1935) 164.

26. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines* I, CG no: 22025, 26-27.

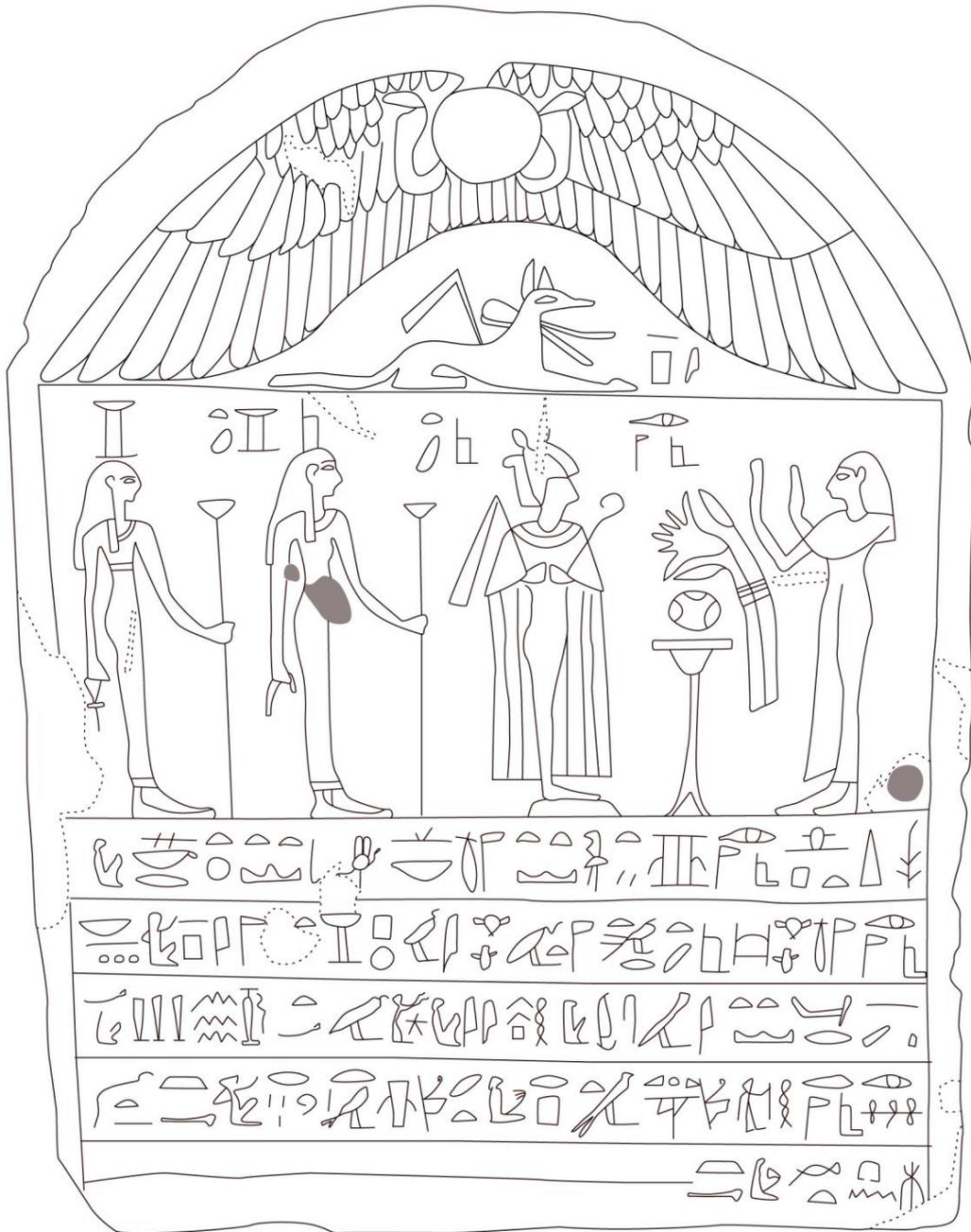
27. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines* I, CG no: 22038, 36.

28. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines* I, CG no: 22086, 78.

29. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines* I, CG no: 22072, 67-68.

30. A. Kamal, *Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines* I, CG no: 22095, 84-85.

31. Y. El-Masry, “The Ptolemaic cemetery of Akhmim”, *OLA* 194 (2010) 183.



Line-drawing of the stela of lady *T3-rp(yt)* in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo



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