A Middle Kingdom Stela
of Snfrw-Pth

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Description

The Stela, of limestone in Cairo Museum CG 20686, is well preserved, but there is no color left. It has an unusual shape, that it has the elements of the usual stela and also the elements of the false-doors.¹ It could be divided into three sections. The upper section represents the Egyptian cornice² which is surmounted by a horizontal hieroglyphic line. The names of the King Senusert III are the main subject of the top line besides to the epithet: beloved of Osiris. The middle part of the stela contains the protection symbols, the sn-sign between the two eyes³, which is usual to be found in the same period on the stelae. Under the symbols, the main inscription is divided into two

¹Schneider, Two Memphitic Stela false-door; OMRO, III (1971) pp. 79-93.
²The Cornice appears for the first time on the false-doors from the time of Neuserre.
portions to the right and left of the opening of the false-door. Each portion contains three vertical lines. The lower section contains a representation of four small false-doors. Above these false-doors is a horizontal hieroglyphic line, the extension of which runs in two vertical lines downwards on the right corner of the stela. Vertically, five offering formulae texts in between the four false-doors representation contain the names of the gods: Ptah, Isis, Min, Neshmet and Wepwawt. In the middle is a text containing the name of the god Geb.

Texts:

The texts on the stela could be divided into eleven sentences.
1) ḡr cnḥ ṉḥr-hprw ḡnḥt W3ḏt nṯrw ṣ Wṣr Wmn-nfr mṛy
   “The living Horus, the form of the god, beloved of the
   goddesses Nekbt, Wajet and Osiris Wmn-nfr.

2) h3t-sp 15 ḡr ḡm n ṅṯr nfr nb ḫwy nb ỉr ḡl nswt bit ḡc-
   k3w-Rc
   “Year 15, under the Majesty of the good god, lord of the
   two lands, lord of action, the King of Upper and Lower
   Egypt ḡc-K3w-Rc (Senusert III).

3) nswt bit, ḡc-k3w-Rc ṣ3 ḡc Sn-wsṛt ḡl cnḥ dd w3s mi
   ḡc, ḫm3ḥ ḡl Gb ỉry-pct nṯr nṯrw ṣ ṣ Wn ḡn ḡn ḫm3ḥ ṣnfrw-
   Pḥ
   “The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, ḡc-k3w-Rc, the
   son of Re, Senwsert, may he given life, prosperity, and
   stability like Re, the venerated one to Geb heir of Gods,4
   who opens the sight of the honored one, ṣnfrw-Pḥ.

4) ḡr-Ḥprw-ṅṯ ṣ Wṣr ḫnty-imnṯw mṛy ḡl cnḥ ḡl ḡb ḡb-w3w
   ḫr-iḥ 3ḏḏw pṛt-ḥwr ṣ k3 ḡ ṣnfrw-Pḥ
   “The Horus, the form of the god, beloved of Osiris, lord
   of the deceased, may he given life, the venerated one
   under the god Wepwawt, who is in the midst of Abydos.
   May invocation-offering come forth for the ḫa of ṣnfrw-
   Pḥ.”

4Ir-y-pct nṯrw is an epithet for the god Geb, see Wb II, p. 416.
5) im3ḥ ḫr Wsīr ḫnty-imntyw nb 3ḥgw prt-hrw k3 3pḏ ḫs mnḥt wcb n.k ir nṯr Snfrw-Pḥ.
   "The honored one under Osiris lord of deceased (namely) invocation-offering consisting of bread and beer, oxen and fowl, alabaster and cloth, pure for you, in which the god made, Snfrw-Pḥa." 

6) ḫtp ḫ nswt Pḥ ḫn3ḥ ḫn Snfrw-Pḥ
   "An offering which the king gives to Ptah, the honored one Snfrw-Pḥ." 

7) ḫtp ḫ nswt Pḥ ḫnst n Gb
   "An offering which the king gives to Isis and Geb." 

8) ḫtp ḫ nswt Min n Snfrw-Pḥ
   "An offering which the king gives to Min to Snfrw-Pḥ." 

9) im3ḥ ḫr Gb Snfrw-Pḥ
   "The honored one before the God Geb, Snfrw-Pḥ." 

10) ḫtp ḫ nswt Nṣmt n Snfrw-Pḥ
    "An offering which the king gives to Nṣmt to Snfrw-Pḥ." 

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11) ḫtp di nswt Wp-w3wt n Snfrw-Pth

"An offering which the king gives to Wepwawt to Snfrw-Pth."

Commentary

1- About the epithet of the god Osiris Ṭmn-nfr, the writing of nfr is remarkable; that the phonetic complement is unusual.

2- The names of the King are written without cartouches. The title ʾiry-pc.t nfr.w is normal to be added to the name of the god Geb. It is not certain that the suffix pronoun of the third person in wn.f means the god Geb or the deceased (ʾim3ḥ).

4- The god Osiris has here the title "the lord of the deceased" (lit. who is in front of those who are in the western side.)

5- Osiris has the title, lord of Abydos, in addition the usual title which is mentioned in line four. We note that the extension of this line runs downward on the right end of the stela in two vertical lines from right to left; that due to the space on the stela. The phrase n.k ... is not common to be found in such sentences on the stelae or false-doors.

6- There are two signs after the name of the god Ptah, which have no translation; I suggest that they could be n k3 n "to the ka of ".

10- The name of the owner of the stela has an unusual writing; the dropping of some signs may due to the space on the stela.
Conclusion

As it is mentioned before, the stela has the elements of a false-door, like the opening and the jambs of a false-door, the cornice and the several lentils. In the same time it could not be as a false-door, because it has the main elements of the stela, such as the texts and the protection symbols and also the main elements of the false-door like the dram and the offering scene are dropped.

The main gods of the netherworld, Osiris and Wepwawt are mentioned on the stela. In addition, we find that the names of the gods: Geb, Isis, Ptah and Neshmet are mentioned. It is remarkable that the different names of the king Senusert III and the date of erecting the stela are mentioned.

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6See in Arabic:

بعض المصريين، الأيوان الهبهى من أواني الدولة الحديثة إلى نهاية الدولة الوسطى، سوهاج، رسالة مكتوبة غير مطبوعة.