

# From Illahun to Djeme

Papers Presented in Honour of Ulrich Luft

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BAR International Series 2311

2011

Published by

Archaeopress  
Publishers of British Archaeological Reports  
Gordon House  
276 Banbury Road  
Oxford OX2 7ED  
England  
bar@archaeopress.com  
www.archaeopress.com

BAR S2311

*From Illahun to Djeme. Papers Presented in Honour of Ulrich Luft*

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ISBN 978 1 4073 0894 4

Printed in England by Infomation Press, Oxford

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Hadrian Books Ltd  
122 Banbury Road  
Oxford  
OX2 7BP  
England  
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# The domestic servant of the palace *rn-snb*

Helmut Satzinger and Danijela Stefanović

## Abstract

The aim of this article is publication of two late Middle Kingdom stelae: Lacock Abbey 50028 and Marseille, Musée d'Archéologie méditerranéenne 227, as well as an prosopographic analysis of the *hry-pr n pr* <sup>3</sup> *rn-snb* who is attested on both objects.

The *hry-pr n pr* <sup>3</sup> *rn-snb* is attested on two stelae: Lacock Abbey 50028<sup>1</sup> and Marseille, Musée d'Archéologie méditerranéenne 227.<sup>2</sup> As the monuments record his family and household members, they were probably part of an Abydene cenotaph (an 'ANOC'; Simpson 1974, 5): inscriptions of a real tomb do not mention any beneficiaries, apart from the tomb owner and his wife. Both objects are well-executed.

Lacock Abbey 50028 is a rectangular stela of limestone, of the Late Middle Kingdom, measuring 459 x 256 mm, with a **cavetto cornice** and **torus moulding** (PM VIII/3 803-034-350). Within the torus area there are five registers of incised representations and hieroglyphic inscriptions. Two double line bands separate the lower three registers. Traces of green colour are visible on figures and hieroglyphs.

The first register is covered by two lines of inscription, written from right to left, with an offering-formula on behalf of the *hry-pr n pr* <sup>3</sup> *rn-snb*, naming the figure seated on the left in the second register.

In the second register, at the left, the *hry-pr n pr* <sup>3</sup> *rn-snb* is shown seated on a lion-legged chair before a rich table of offerings. He has close-cropped hair and wears a plain collar; a long kilt with the belt marked, and holds in one hand a kerchief and in the other a fly whisk against the chest. The right part of the register displays the kneeling figure of a woman facing left, with one hand expanded over the leg, the other held to the chest. She wears a long tripartite wig, a close-fitting dress suspended by one shoulder strap, and a broad necklace. Two horizontal lines of incised inscription serve as captions for the women depicted.



*hṯp di nswt wsir nb 3bdw di.f prt-hrw t hnkt k3w 3pdw šs  
mnhṯ mrḥt ḥt nbt  
nfrt n hry-pr n pr 3 rn-snb ir.n s3(t)-hnmw m3c-hrw nb  
im3ḥ*

An offering which the king has given, and (Satzinger 1997, 177–188; Franke 2003, 45–50) Osiris, lord of Abydos, so that he may give a voice offering of bread, bear, ox, fowl, alabaster, linen, and oil, all good and pure things, to<sup>a</sup>

the domestic servant of the palace (Ward 1982, 983; Jones 2000, no. 2222) *rn-snb* (Ranke 1935, 222/26), whom has conceived *s3(t)-hnmw* (Ranke 1935, 292/24), justified, lord of reverence.

- a. Cf. Stela Berlin 1191, section C (*Aegyptische Inschriften* I, 1913, 184-185; ANOC 40.1); Leiden 36 (ANOC 40.2), CGC 20043. Franke 2003, 45, n. 29.



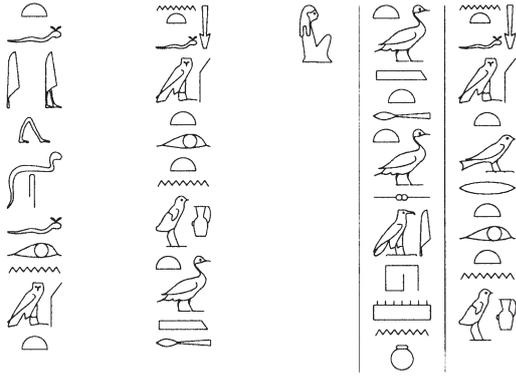
*mwt.f s3t-hnmw irt.n hṯp*

His mother, *s3t-hnmw*, whom has conceived *hṯp* (Ranke 1935, 257/22 including use for females).

The third register shows three squatting figures (two women and a man) in squares separated by the captions. The women wear long wigs, collars, and tight fitting long dresses with one chest strap, the man wears a collar, a simple kilt and a short bag wig which leaves the ear exposed.

<sup>1</sup> We thank Mr. Roger Watson, curator of the Fox Talbot Museum, Lacock, UK, and Mr. John Falconer from British Library for permission to publish the Lacock Abbey stela and for providing both the photographs and the technical data (courtesy of and © Fox Talbot Museum, Lacock & British Library, London).

<sup>2</sup> We are very grateful to Dr. Gisèle Pierini for permission to publish the stela and for providing the photograph (courtesy of and © Musée d'Archéologie méditerranéenne, Marseille / David Giancattarina).



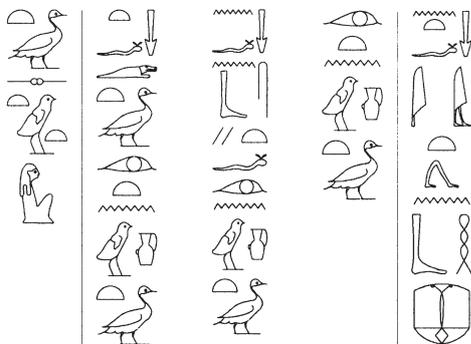
*snt.f* <sup>3</sup>*mt-wrt* *irt.n* *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw* *m*<sup>3</sup>*(t)-hrw* *s*<sup>3</sup>*t.s* *i*<sup>3</sup>*hnmw*  
 His sister <sup>3</sup>*mt-wrt*,<sup>b</sup> whom has conceived *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw*, justified, her daughter *i*<sup>3</sup>*hnmw*<sup>c</sup>

*snt.f* <sup>3</sup>*mt* *irt.n* *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw* *m*<sup>3</sup>*(t)-hrw*  
 His sister <sup>3</sup>*mt* (Ranke 1935, 59/3), whom has conceived *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw*, justified

*it.f* *ii-ds.f* *ir.n* <sup>3</sup>*mt*  
 His father *ii-ds.f* (Ranke 1935, 11/5 for which the only evidence is the Marseille stela), whom has conceived <sup>3</sup>*mt*

- b. Non attested in Ranke 1935-1952; ‘<sup>3</sup>*mt* the Elder.’ The name <sup>3</sup>*mt*, literally ‘the (female) Asiatic’, is found several times: with *rn-snb*’s grandmother (the mother of his father *ii-ds.f*), and two of his sisters (of whom one is distinguished as ‘the Elder’). But note that the use of this name does not by itself prove any foreign origin. It is perhaps more remarkable that *rn-snb*’s niece *i*<sup>3</sup>*hnmw* has a name that is obviously non-Egyptian.
- c. Non attested in Ranke 1935-1952; obviously a non-Egyptian name, as there is no root *i*<sup>3</sup>*h* or the like in Egyptian.

The appearance and arrangement of figures incised in the next register is almost identical with the previous one, with slight exceptions: the man is seated between the two women, and he has close-cropped hair.



*snt.f* *ii.t-n-hb* *irt.n* *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw*  
 His sister *ii.t-n-hb*<sup>d</sup> whom has conceived *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw*

*sn.f* *snb-tyfy* *irt.n* *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw*  
 His brother *snb-tyfy* (Ranke 1935, 314/23) whom has conceived *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw*

*snt.f* *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-sbk* *irt.n* *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw* *s*<sup>3</sup>*t.s* *ttw*  
 His sister *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-sbk* (Ranke 1935, 293/9) whom has conceived *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw*, her daughter *ttw*.<sup>e</sup>

- d. Ranke 1935, 11/13; also on stela NME 17 published by Peterson 1968, 22-23; and an statue from Elephantine (Habachi 1985, 92-93: no. 68).
- e. Ranke 1935, 379/15 records a name he reads *ttw*, which is, however mostly attested in the ptolemaic period, and spelt differently. The name at hand is rather to be read *ttw*, see  Ranke 1935, 385/27 and , etc. Ranke 1935, 386/1, both attested in the Middle Kingdom for females.

Two lines of hieroglyphs are incised in the lowest register.



*hsy* *pw* *n* *wsir* *nb* *3**bdw* *s*<sup>3</sup> *nb* *w*<sup>3</sup>*b* *nb* *dd.ty.f* *t*<sup>3</sup>*w* *ndm* *n* *nh*  
*n* *hry-pr* *n* *pr* <sup>3</sup> *rn-snb* *ir.n* *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw* *hn*<sup>c</sup> *nty* *nb* *rn.f* *hr* *w*<sup>d</sup>  
*pn*

A praised one of Osiris, the Lord of Abydos, is every scribe and every priest who say, Sweet breath of life for the servant of the palace *rn-snb*, whom has conceived *s*<sup>3</sup>*t-hnmw*, together with everyone else whose names are (written) on this stela.<sup>f</sup>

- f. Gardiner 1957, §199 (Leiden V 103; CGC 20057). Cf. Берлев 1962, 45-87.
- g. This is a highly original variant of the Appeal to the Living. In fact, it is not an appeal but rather a statement which should encourage scribes and priests to pray for the persons mentioned on the stela.

The stela Marseille, Musée d’Archéologie méditerranéenne 227, measuring 385 x 247 mm, is of the same shape and appearance. The lowest part of the object is missing. Traces of green color are visible. The text of the stela, was published without translation and image by G. Maspero (Maspero 1890, 116-117).

The upper part of the first register is covered by two lines of inscription with an offering-formula on behalf of *hry-pr n pr* <sup>3</sup> *rn-snb*. The left half of the register bears his figure, facing right, sitting on a chair with a low back rest and leonine feet on small ‘coasters’. *rn-snb* wears a short wig which leaves the ear exposed, a plain collar and a short kilt with belt and knot marked. He holds one hand on his lap and in the other a fly whisk against the chest. On the right, facing the *rn-snb*, is the standing figure of *mr st wr-n(.i)-sbk* who holds an incense burner.



*ḥtp di nsw wsir nb ʒbdw n ḥry-pr n pr ʕ<sup>3</sup> rn-snb ir.n sʒt-ḥnmw*

An offering which the king has given, and Osiris, lord of Abydos, for the domestic servant of the palace *rn-snb*, whom has conceived *sʒt-ḥnmw*.



*mr st wr-n(.i)-sbk*

The overseer of the storehouse (Ward 1982, 313) *wr-n.i-sbk* (Ranke 1935, 81/11; another person with the same name is attested on the scarab seal London, UC 11439: *iry-ʕt n pr-ḥd wr-n.i-sbk*, Martin 1971, 414).

- h. Maspero (1890, 116) read the title which is mistaken. This is also confirmed by the Lacock stela, in particular in the last lines of the inscription. Ward 1982, 993, and Schneider 2003, 58, follow Maspero in reading the title.

Underneath are seven columns of incised inscription recording names of *ḥry-pr n pr ʕ<sup>3</sup> rn-snb*'s family and household members.



*sn.f sʒ-sbk sn.f ii-m-ḥtp snt.f tʒ-m-ḥb [snt.f]<sup>i</sup>*

His brother *sʒ-sbk* (Ranke 1935, 284/11), his brother *ii-m-ḥtp* (Ranke 1935, 9/2), his sister *tʒ-m-ḥb* (Ranke 1935, 376/19; the evidence includes the Marseille stela), [his sister]

*ḥnt sn.f ii-ds.f snt.f ḥrdw//////////*

*ḥnt* (Ranke 1935, 393/11), his brother *ii-ds.f* (Ranke 1935, 11/5, the only evidence being the Marseille stela), his sister *ḥrdw[-n-mwt.sn ?]*,

*sn.f nfr-iw sn.f rn-snb ////////////tp-īm<sup>k</sup>*

his brother *nfr-iw* (Ranke 1935, 194/7), his brother *rn-snb*, his sister [w]pt.j-īm(i?)<sup>l</sup>

*šmsw<sup>m</sup> sʒ-ḥthr šms(w) ikn<sup>n</sup> ir.n ki-mr ʕ<sup>3</sup>m snfrw*

The follower *sʒ-ḥthr* (Ranke 1935, 283/20), the follower *ikn* (Ranke 1935, 48/16, the only evidence being the Marseille stela), whom has conceived *ki-mr*,<sup>o</sup> the Asiatic *snfrw* (Ranke 1935, 315/18).

*ʕ<sup>3</sup>mt s////////-rḥw<sup>p</sup> ʕ<sup>3</sup>m ntr-m-mr*

the Asiatic *s[nb]-rḥw* (Ranke 1935, 313/15), the Asiatic *ntr-m-mr* (Ranke 1935, 214/14; apart from the Marseille stela, the evidence is the stela Cairo CG 20614),

*ʕ<sup>3</sup>m rn-//////<sup>q</sup> ʕ<sup>3</sup>mt wr-n-ptḥ ʕ<sup>3</sup>mt sʒt-ḥnmw*

the Asiatic *rn-[snb]*, the Asiatic *wr-n-ptḥ* (Ranke 1935, 81/9; the evidence includes the Marseille stela), the (female) Asiatic *sʒt-ḥnmw*

*//////////snb<sup>r</sup> nfw rn-snb ir.n tfnt*

[whom has conceived *s[nb]-rḥw*, the sailor (for *nfw* see Ward 1982, no 826; Jones 1988, 77 (116)) *rn-snb* whom has conceived *tfnt* (Ranke 1935, 380/16, the only evidence being the Marseille stela).

- i. *ki-mr* (*kimr* ?) may be a variant of *mr-ky*, Ranke 1935, 163/11; also attested twice in Pap. Boulaq 18: Mariette 1872, pls. 16 and 45 (according to Borchardt 1890, 78 and 98). Ranke 1952, 291/27, compares the Old

Kingdom name *mr-ky* which he renders as "der Andere ist krank" o.ä. (?)'.  
 j. According to Maspero (1890, 116-117), the destroyed

end of the line is to be read .

- k. According to Maspero (1890, 116-117)



- l. Ranke 1935, 78/7; apart from the Marseille stela, the stela Berlin 7311, section I, is quoted (see *Ägyptische*

*Inschriften* I, 1913, 180), with a lady .

- m. For *šmsw* see Ward 1982, no 1517. In this case probably servant's designation. See Берлев 1978, 211-212; Stefanovic 2008, 233-248.

- n. According to Maspero (1890, 116-117)



- o. *ki-mr* (*kimr* ?) may be a variant of *mr-ky*, Ranke 1935, 163/11; also attested twice in Pap. Boulaq 18: Mariette 1872, pls. 16 and 45 (according to Borchardt 1890, 78 and 98). Ranke 1952, 291/27, compares the Old

Kingdom name *mr-ky* which he renders as "der Andere ist krank" o.ä. (?)'.  
 p. According to Maspero (1890, 116-117), .

- q. According to Maspero (1890, 116-117), .

- r. According to Maspero (1890, 116-117),



The main person on the both objects is the *ḥry-pr n pr ʕ<sup>3</sup>* named *rn-snb*. Numerous members of his family and his household are also mentioned. On the stela Lacock Abbey 50028 *rn-snb* is the only person wearing a title.



FIG. 1 LACOCK ABBEY 50028  
(COURTESY OF AND © FOX TALBOT MUSEUM, LACOCK &  
BRITISH LIBRARY, LONDON)

The ‘domestic servant’ carried out tasks within the living-quarters of the palace or house, and was responsible for the valuables of his master. The title is well attested since the Old Kingdom, though it became much more common in the Middle Kingdom, and also in many other connections besides the palace (Quirke 2004, 46-47; Берлев 1978, 133; Fischer 1996, 214, n. 277). The *hry-pr n pr* <sup>ᜥ</sup> was engaged in the residential part of the palace (Берлев 1978, 129-161; list of attestations of *hry-pr n pr* <sup>ᜥ</sup>, 133. Cf. Grajetzki 2001, 48).

On the stela Marseille 227 there is a second person who has a title, besides the *hry-pr n pr* <sup>ᜥ</sup> *rn-snb*, namely the *mr st wr-n.i-sbk*. The overseer of the storehouse seems to have been the senior official in the sector of the provisioning area, since *st* represents a storeroom for a particular commodity in the ‘wt of *sn*’ (Quirke 2004, 65-66; Grajetzki 2001, 52-54; Quirke 1990, 96). He may be in charge of the various chambers of the food production. Based on the XII Dynasty attestations it seems possible that some of the title-holders at the palace were directly responsible for the



FIG. 2 MARSEILLE, MUSÉE D’ARCHÉOLOGIE  
MÉDITERRANÉENNE 227  
(COURTESY OF AND © MUSÉE D’ARCHÉOLOGIE  
MÉDITERRANÉENNE, MARSEILLE / DAVID GIANCATARINA)

provision of food for the king. The title is well attested during the Middle Kingdom. During the XIII Dynasty, it is often found with an additional expression (Grajetzki 2001, 52-54; Берлев 1978, 325-327).

Since *rn-snb* and *wr-n.i-sbk* were engaged in different branches of the administration it is more probable that the overseer of the storehouse was the son of the domestic servant of the palace.

Apart from two followers and a sailor, the members of *rn-snb*’s household that are recorded on the stela Marseille 227 are labelled as Asiatics. A fundamental discussion of the attestation of foreigners on the Middle Kingdom monuments, often neglected, can be found in study of Берлев (1972, 74-95; see also Schneider 2003; Helck 1971). Берлев points out that the court official *rn-snb* was the owner of the extensive household mirrored in the group of people, many of them being <sup>ᜥ</sup>*mw*, like those recorded on the stela Marseille 227. According to Берлев, it is worth of notice that there are cases of a mother and a

daughter, both being labelled  $\text{ḫmw}$ . A ‘daughter of  $\text{ḫmw}$ ’ is named by *rn-snb*’s mother, meaning that she was born in his household (Берлев 1972, 83; cf. Schneider 2003, 58; Helck 1971, 77 Anm. 2).

The layout, the composition, the manner of fashioning the human figures, the style of the hieroglyphs in the offering-formula, the paleographic similarities, and very arrangement of its elements are almost identical. These two stelae have so much in common that they can be considered as products made by one and the same workshop and perhaps by the same hand.

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