

Original article

FRAGMENTS OF AN ASSUMED DREAM STELA OF THUTMOSIS IV FROM GIZA

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**Abstract**

The fragments that were found in different locations and of diverse sizes have been restored it returned once more similar to its original state of the "Dream Stela". The stela is of a rectangular form, but missing small segments on all sides, measuring about 175 cm width, 97 cm height and 14.5 cm thick. It seems that the stela was unfinished, due to the different levels and rough surface, as well as the different quality in finishing the scene of the two lions. There are some similarities with the reliefs and its accompanied inscriptions between this stela and the Sphinx dream stela. The stela is made out of fine and white limestone, found in the main magazine of Giza plateau, but came in many pieces. Two big pieces of the stela are found by Selim Hassan during his excavations in the temple of Amenhotep II nearby of the Sphinx.

**Keywords:** Stela, Fragments, Thutmosis, Giza plateau, Sun disk

**1. Introduction**

Selim Hassan worked on the Giza plateau nine seasons, starting 1930 until 1939 [1]. During his excavations at Giza two big fragments around the sphinx were discovered in the north and east of the sphinx close by Thutmosis IV wall, fig. (1-a). Selim Hassan states "After a few days, we came upon a part of the system of protective walls erected by Thuthmosis IV, thus proving the truth of the claims he made on the Granite Stelae", furthermore declares "But our finds for that day were by no means exhausted, for in front of the smaller stela were two limestone door-posts, this time bearing the Cartouche of Amenhotep II; while a little to the east, the sand yielded a limestone fragment stela. The upper part of this stela shows the Pharaoh Thuthmosis IV presenting

offerings to the Sphinx." Clearly these two fragments were laid in Amenhotep II's temple, where Hassan discovered a huge stela of Amenhotep II, as well, as other New Kingdom artifacts belonging to King Merenptah, Seti I and queen Ti within the same area [2]. The fragmentary stela was found clearly consisting of only two big fragments as shown in figure. 1. Perhaps more fragments were possibly found in other seasons. Because, south of Khafre's causeway, small four pieces permitted the Giza Inspectorate office to re-discover them in the rock-cut tombs that Selim Hassan used as a temporary magazine for his finds. Following the 25<sup>th</sup> of January revolution in 2011 a rapid rescue operation was necessary to move thousands of objects stored in

these magazines to a safe place. Infinite gratitude goes to the efforts of the Giza Inspectorate office; under the supervision of Mr. Ali El-Asfar thousands of historical finds in the main storehouse at Giza were rescued. Moreover, appreciation goes to the restoration and conservation

department of the Giza Inspectorate office under the supervision of Mrs. Safaa El-Araby and Mr. Khairy Abed El-Rahman who used a technique using steel bars, epoxy and linen to assemble the fragments filling the gaps after cleansing the stela, fig. (1-b)



Figure (1) Shows **a.** two big fragments of the limestone stela of Thotmosis IV, after *Selim Hassan, 1953*, **b.** during the works of restoration the stela

## 2. Description

Once the fragments that were found in different locations and of diverse sizes have been restored it returned once more similar to its original state, fig. (2-a,b). The stela is of a rectangular form, but missing small segments on all sides, measuring about 175 cm width, 97 cm height and 14.5 cm thick. It seems that the stela was unfinished, due to the different levels and rough surface, as well as the different quality in finishing the scene of the two lions. The upper part of the stela has a high relief double scene

carved in a rectangular frame. The sequence of scenes begins from the top of the stela. They include two identical mirror image scenes of God *Horakhte* in the form of a sphinx, dividing this stela in two, which is similar to the famous granite dream stela, fig. (2-c). The right side shows the king offering two *nw* jars to the god, however, the left side depiction of the king is absent, only the name of the god and another kind of offering still remains, the scenes include the following details:

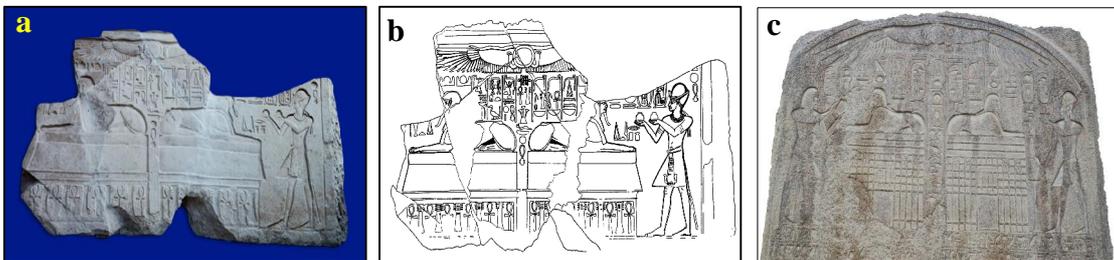


Figure (2) Shows **a.** the limestone stela of Thotmosis IV, **b.** facsimile of the limestone stela of Thotmosis IV, **c.** the famous dream stela of Sphinx

### 2.1. The winged sun disk

The winged sun disk overlooks the top of the whole scene; the lines of the wings are carefully carved without any details. The left wing has the end part missing, while the two cobras

surrounding the sun disk have their bodies finely carved with beautiful fine details especially the heads, figure (2-a,b).

## 2.2. The right side of the stela

On the right side the king stands wearing the blue *hprš* crown with the uraeus cobra on the forehead, and a short starched kilt with a wide belt holding it. The kilt was decorated with vertical lines, two cobras, and tiny little beads at the bottom. The king offers the two *nw* jars to god *Horakhte* represented in the form of a human-headed sphinx. The two jars are thought to have contained wine as the text reads:  $\Delta \text{ } \overline{\text{Q}} \text{ } \overline{\text{O}}$  *dit irp*: giving wine [3,4]. In front of the king's head there are remains of the two cartouches of the king. The following was written: *nb t3wy <..... hprw...> <..... dhwtym- ms.... h<sup>c</sup>w>*. Behind the head of the king there are only two words remaining reading: *mi R<sup>c</sup>*. Unfortunately, the figure

## 2.3. The left side

Sadly, this part of the stela is badly damaged more than the other side. The figure of the king is missing; part of the text accompanying the king and the offering read *dit kbh*. The face of the sphinx is broken but still with only the eyes, ear, *nms* headdress, and curved beard preserved. Most of the sphinx's body is missing except the paws and part of the back that appears to be carved in perfect

of the god is damaged, missing the upper part of the head and the middle part of lion's body but the face remains in a good condition showing the *nms* headdress and the curved beard. The text associated with the god is mostly missing but we still have part of one sign reading *3hty* on top of the sphinx and barely two signs of a word's determinative in front of the god's face. The face bears the artistic features of that period, the early Amarna art was clearly reflected as will be discussed further on. The sphinx is squatted on a trapezoidal shaped base placed on top of naos decorated with the *nh* and *dd* signs along with the Egyptian cornice above both signs, figure (2-a,b).

lines. Above the head of the sphinx there are two signs of *3ht* remaining, representing the last part of the name of the god *Horakhte*. The sphinx is squatted on a same trapezoidal shaped base parallel to the right side and placed on top of naos decorated with the *nh* and *dd* signs along with the Egyptian cornice above both signs, figure (2-a,b).

## 3. The texts

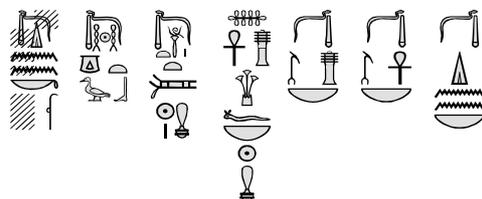
There are seven short columns of high relief of Hieroglyphic, directly below the winged sun disk. A middle column divides it into two. Additionally, there are three short damaged columns

accompanying the figure of the king. The name of the god is written above the figure of the head of the Sphinx, as in the following texts:

### 3.1. The main text

This text representing the main text of the stela is about the speech of the god to the king Thutmose IV,

written atop of the two figures of the Sphinx to be read from the both sides till the middle of the text, as follow:



#### 3.1.1. Left side

*dd mdw di.n(i) n.k rnp(w)t nhḥ nst Gb i3wt Tm mi R<sup>c</sup> s3 nh dd h3.f nb mi R<sup>c</sup>*

Words spoken: I gave you years, everlastingness, the throne of Geb and the Job of Atum like Ra.

(In the text repeated "*dd mdw*" just as a decoration in the beginning of the last 2 columns and not to read it because it doesn't make sense if we translate it).

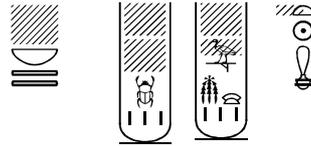
### 3.1.2. Right side

*dd mdw di.n(i) n.k ʿnh w3s nb dd w3s nb s3 ʿnh dd ḥ3.f nb mi Rʿ.*

Words spoken: I gave you all life and authority, all stability and authority. (May) protection, life and stability (be) behind him like Ra.

(In the text repeated "*dd mdw*" in the second and third columns for the same reason as in the text of the left side).

### 3.2. The king's names



*[nsw-bity] nb t3wy <[Mn]-ḥprw-[Rʿ]> <Dḥwty-ms-[ḥʿ]-ḥʿw> ... mi Rʿ.*

The king of upper and lower, the lord of the two lands, "Menkheperw-Re" "Thutmosis-kha-khaw" ... like Ra.

### 3.3. The name of the god

Here the name of the god is written above the sphinx's head. On both sides the sign representing god Horus is missing, the two *ḥt* signs on the left

side still remain but we have only one sign on the right side and the other is missing, figure (2-a,b).



*[Ḥr]-ḥty:* The god Horakhty.

Thutmosis IV's cult focused on the Great Sphinx originally carved by King Khafre in the 4<sup>th</sup> dynasty and regarded it as an image of Horemakhet by the early

New Kingdom. Noteworthy, Horm-akhet and Horakhty were appearances of the god Horus specifically at Giza [5].

## 4. Discussion

Selim Hassan found a large portion of the stela inside Amenhotep II's temple while other parts were found in later periods. As it appeared in this study, the stela is unfinished and might have been moved from its original place. The stela is relatively big in comparison to many royal stelae, found within the same area. Many other small stelae dedicated by the king and other kings to the god "Horakhty" and other deities were worshiped in the Giza area [2]. It is a rectangular form stele, made out of limestone. It is suggested that it might have been replaced with the famous granite dream stela because granite and quartzite were preferable stones for the sun cult and specifically the Aten cult because of their reddish

color. The Harbingers of the Amarna cult and art had started by the reign of Thutmosis IV as clearly shown in this stela. There is a big similarity between this stela and the famous granite dream stela in terms of the sequence of the sense and the symmetrical division of the reliefs and inscriptions (see figs. 6, 8), as both stelae have scenes of the winged sun disk on top and their relevant figures. There is a remarkable difference in the details, such as, the bases of the lions. In the stela of this research, the form of a naos is on top of the sarcophagus but in the famous dream stela the base is in the form of a typical palace façade *srh*. Besides, the dream stela has more details in the king's costume and also in the sphinx. The

appearance of the winged sun disk started firstly during the Middle Kingdom on the round top stela [6]. The wings of the solar disk originally appeared as a decoration on the Archaic period royal ivory plaques [6]. As for the inscriptions on both stelae, they are identical especially the alignment with just a few

differences in use of words and phrases, tab. (1). From the table above we have two popular names for the sphinx *Hr-3hty* and *Hr-m-3ht* [7]. Beside these two names especially by the New kingdom the sphinx gained some other names. Such as, *Hwr wn* and *R<sup>c</sup>-Hr-3khty* [8].

Element	Limestone stela	Granite stela
God's name	<i>Hr-3hty</i>	<i>Hr-m-3hty</i>
Offering & rites	<i>dit irp, dit kbh</i>	<i>irt sntr kbh, [ndt-hr nmst]</i> [9]
God's words	<i>dd mdw</i>	<i>dd mdw</i>
	↓	↓
	Expressions	Phrases

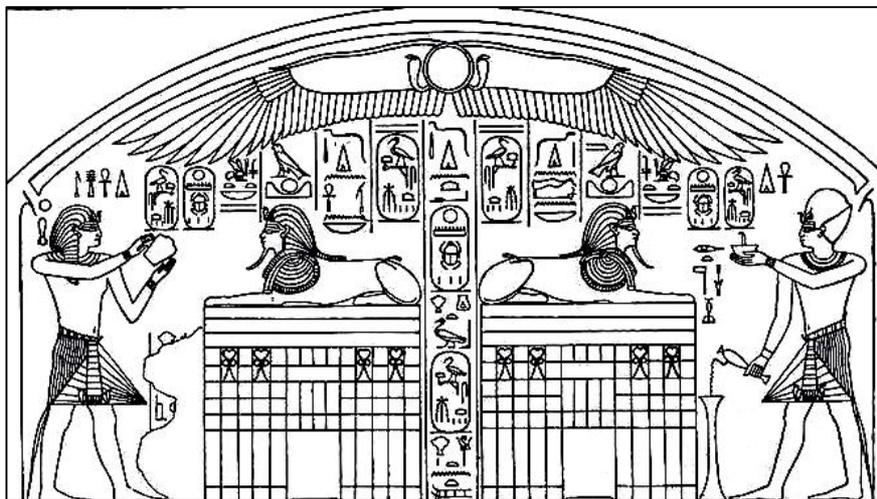


Figure (3) Shows the famous dream stela of Sphinx, <http://www.ossama-alsaadawi.com/Peoples/Sphinx-Stella.JPG> (11-10-2016)

### 5. Conclusion

The stela is considered one of the important royal stelae, found within the same area of Sphinx. This is the only stela which depicted the king Thutmose IV in front of two symbols of the god, where he is doing the rituals in the same manner of the dream stela of Giza. Some other small stelae dedicated by the king and other kings to the god "Horakhty" and other deities. It is a rectangular form stela, made out of fine and white limestone. There is a big similarity between this stela and the famous granite dream, as both stelae have scenes of the winged sun disk on top and their relevant figures. In the stela of this research, the form of a naos is on top of the sarcophagus. The stela might has been replaced with the famous granite dream stela because granite and quartzite were preferable stones for the sun cult and specifically the Aten cult because of their reddish color. The Harbingers of the Amarna cult and art had started by the reign of Thutmose IV as clearly shown in this stela.

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