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Dyn 1 Queens Titles

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EVIDENCE FOR THE TITULARY OF THE QUEEN FROM DYNASTY ONE

by Lisa K. Sabbahy

There is evidence of titles for the ancient Egyptian queen as early as the First Dynasty. Phrases which appear later as queen's titles are found on the stelae which surrounded the royal mastabas at Abydos.¹ These phrases are sometimes followed by a feminine name, strongly suggesting that they are being used as titles. In some cases, however, a particular phrase is simply followed by a seated woman determinative.

The inscription on Stela 129 found by the tomb of Den provides a good example of the evidence for queen's titles on these early stelae (See Figure 1, A). On the top of the stela is a bent leg (Gardiner D 56), or crude m3 sign (V 16), followed by a Horus bird. Below the bird is the Seth animal, and below this a forearm (D 36). A seated woman determinative is at the very bottom. The following readings have been suggested:

1. m33(t)_Hr_Sth "the one who sees Horus and Seth", followed by the forearm for the woman's name and determinative.²
2. rd(?)_Hr'_Sth "leg of Horus, arm of Seth", followed by the determinative.³
3. m33(t)_Hr_fmSth "the one who sees Horus, the one whom Seth carries", followed by the determinative.⁴
4. rd_Hr'_Sth "leg of Horus, litter chair of Seth", followed by the determinative.⁵

The hieroglyphic groups on Stela 96 found at the tomb of Djer (See Figure 1, B) may throw light on those on 129. At the bottom right of 96 is the name of the stela's owner, S̄m-k̄3. Across the top of the stela are the m̄3 sign or bent leg, the Horus bird, a vertical sign, and another bird sign. The vertical sign resembles 'b' (P 6). Below the second bird is the Seth animal, the forearm, and a seated woman determinative.

Based on the arrangement of signs on Stela 96, a personal name should have been on the right side of 129 and is broken away.⁶ The inscription on 96 also seems to indicate that the forearm is meant to be read with the Seth animal and they form an independent, but parallel title to the m̄33(t)-Hr title found above and to the right. These two groups cannot be the title m̄33(t)-Hr-Sth because the vertical sign and bird interrupt them in the middle.

Stela 96 must have three separate titles. The first title is connected to Horus and the third with Seth. Kaplony suggests that the second title should be read 'b'-(bn')-Hr, "die sich mit Horus aufhält",⁷ or perhaps as im̄3t-Hr, a possible reading of the vertical sign and bird on Stela 95 (See Figure 1, C).⁸ The vertical sign on 95 can also be read as hts, and this is perhaps more likely.

If the bird on Stela 96 is ur rather than Horus, this is the earliest example of the title urt-hts, a common element in queen's titulary by the time of the Fourth Dynasty. The meaning of hts in the title is uncertain. It has been

translated as "great of affection",⁹ or more recently, "great in respect to perfection".¹⁰

On Stela 126 (See Figure 1, D) is a fragmentary hieroglyph of a bird's tail followed by the hs sign. This title can be read urt-hts, "great of praise",¹¹ another title well known by the Fourth Dynasty. From that time until into the Second Intermediate Period urt-hts and urt-hts are almost always written together with urt-hts first.

Below the title urt-hts on Stela 95 is another bird sign, perhaps a crude Horus, followed by a forearm. These may form a title parallel to that of the Seth and forearm. If there is a Horus and forearm title, then perhaps the Seth and forearm group was an independent title and need not have been written only in conjunction with m̄33(t)-Hr. That m̄33(t)-Hr was used as an independent title is shown on a number of pieces from the Step Pyramid Complex where m̄33(t)-Hr is the only title held by Htp-hr-Nbty, wife of King Djoser.¹²

In the title m̄33(t)-Hr the Hr sign is not honorifically transposed. Early Dynastic inscriptions show that honorific transposition applied to the word nsw, "king" and ntr, "god", as well as proper names of gods and goddesses. On Stela 95 the group with the bird and forearm has the bird sign transposed. If the bird is Horus, then it is transposed in this title just like the Seth and forearm are transposed.¹³ It remains to be explained, however, why the Horus bird is not transposed in the m̄33(t)-Hr title.

Two stone vessels from Tomb 3506 at Sakkara are inscribed with a bird followed by the m̄3 sign.¹⁴ Kaplony reads the

following these signs as Ny-sy(?)-'nb, and accepts this woman as a queen because of the m33(t)-Hr title.¹⁵ If this is the m33(t)-Hr title, then the Horus bird has been honorifically transposed. It is possible that the bird is to be read as wr, however, and the title is m33-wr, "the one who sees the Great One". The name can also be read as a masculine one, Ny-sw-'nb. If this is the m33-wr title, these two stone vessels are inscribed with the only examples from the Early Dynastic period of the wr bird honorifically transposed. By the time of the Fourth Dynasty the wr bird in the m33-wr title is always honorifically transposed, interestingly enough, the same time that the correctly transposed writing of m33(t)-Hr-Stb appears.

It is presumed that until the time of the Third Dynasty the word wr in the title m33-wr referred to the king. After that it refers to the god Re, and the title is one held by the priests of Heliopolis.¹⁶ If wr in the early stage of the title m33-wr refers to the king, then it is parallel to Hr in the title m33-Hr. If both wr and Hr refer to the king, however, why are they not written honorifically transposed?

One other common Old Kingdom queen's title is found in an abbreviated form in the First Dynasty. Sm3wt-mry-Nbty, "the one who is joined to the one beloved of the Two Ladies", is written sm3(wt)-Nbty. Eleven examples of this early title are known from Abydos, and two from Sakkara.¹⁷ Since sm3wt-mry-Nbty is a well known queen's title in the Old Kingdom, it is reasonable to assume that its shortened form was a queen's title in the Early Dynastic Period.

First Dynasty material gives evidence for the early forms of four later queen's titles: m33(t)-Hr-Stb, sm3wt-mry-Nbty, wrt-bts and wrt-bst. M33(t)-Hr-Stb, "the one who see Horus and Seth", appears as m33(t)-Hr, "the one who sees Horus"; its full form does not appear until early in the Fourth Dynasty. Sm3wt-mry-Nbty, "the one who is joined to the one beloved of the Two Ladies", appears in the shortened form sm3(wt)-Nbty, "the one who is joined to the Two Ladies". The full form of this title also appears early in the Fourth Dynasty. wrt-bts, "great of affection(?)", and wrt-bst, "great of praise", occur separately in the First Dynasty; by the Old Kingdom they are almost always found written together with wrt-bts first. With the addition of the title hmt-nsw, "king's wife", first known in the Second Dynasty,¹⁸ these early titles form the standard titulary of the queen used throughout the Old Kingdom.¹⁹

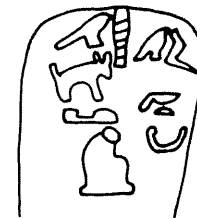
FOOTNOTES

1. Petrie, F., RIFD, v. II, London, 1901, pls. 27, 30, 30a.
2. This matches the later Old Kingdom title. Gardiner, A., AEQ, v. I, Oxford, 1968, 37*, accepts it as such but does not explain the forearm.
3. Weill, R., BIFAQ, 47, 1948, p. 59.
4. Kaplony, P., IAE, v. I, Wiesbaden, 1963, p. 373, n. 1839, based on one archaic example of the arm as imn, "tragen". W. Barta, Untersuchungen zur Göttlichkeit der regierende Königs, Munich, 1975, p. 41, suggests that the queen is the carrier. See also E. Blumenthal, QLZ, 73/6, 1978, pp. 537-8.
5. Grdseloff, B., ASAE, 42, 1943, pp. 115-6, suggests "litter chair" for l, although his examples are all of the phrase wr-l. See also PI §56, 811, 892.
6. Scharff, A., Die Altertümer der Vor-und-Frühzeit Ägyptens, I, Berlin, 1929, p. 19f., claimed to see an ib sign on the right of the seated woman in 126. This is not evident in Petrie's photograph, op. cit., pl. 30.
7. Kaplony, op. cit., p. 373, interpreted h' like later hmsy, "verheiratet sein", ibid., n. 1842.
8. Ibid., p. 373. Kaplony translates im3t-Hr as "die Angenehme der Horus". I know of no other example of this title.
9. WB, III, 202, 10.
10. Fischer, H., JEA, 60, p. 97, n. 11.
11. WB, III, 153, 10.
12. Firth, C., and J. Quibell, The Step Pyramid, I, Cairo, 1935, p. 119, and pl. 87; J. Lauer, Pyramide à Degres, I, Cairo, 1936, pp. 187-9.
13. Does the position of the Seth sign indicate it should be translated "Seth is the one who carries"?
14. Emery, W., GIFD, III, London, 1958, pl. 83, 13 and 14.
15. Kaplony, op. cit., I, 531.
16. Summary of the evidence is given by M. Moursi, Die Hohen-priester des Sonnengottes, MAS, 26, pp. 151-4. There is a similar pattern of reference in the title ht-wr/ht-wr, see L. Sabbahy, GM, 52, 1981, p. 39.
17. Kaplony, op. cit., I, pp. 612-13, who regards this phrase as a personal name. See J. Ogden, GM, 106, 1988, pp. 73-4. There is only one Old Kingdom example of the shortened form, D. Dunham, BMEFA, 34, 1936, p. 5. The presence or absence of my is "an admissable variation", Fischer, op. cit., p. 92.
18. Kaplony, op. cit., III, pl. 150, 866.
19. For a study of queen's titulary, see L. Sabbahy, The Development of the Titulary and Iconography of the Ancient Egyptian Queen from Dynasty One to Early Dynasty Eighteen, University of Toronto (unpublished dissertation), 1982.

FIGURE 1



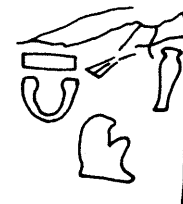
A. Stela 129



B. Stela 96



C. Stela 95



D. Stela 126

(Drawn after F. Petrie, Royal Tombs of the Earliest Dynasties, v. II, pl. 27.