

*The Stela of Ptah and Hathor
in Cairo Museum
J.E no 45539
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This un-published round-topped limestone stela is registered under the Journal d' Entree number of 45539 and its province is Aphroditopolis (Atfih).

It measures 46cm in length and 25 cm in width and can probably date to the late Ramesside period.

It has an interesting scene showing the god Ptah, the chief deity of Memphis in a mummified form exposing his head and hands, wearing his wide collar, with his characteristic cap and straight beard, holding with both his hands his composite sceptre which is consisting of the *cnh* and the *w3s* sign and standing in his shrine.

Inside the shrine there is a vertical text which reads '*pth nb m3ct nswt t3wy*'

"Ptah lord of justice, king of both lands¹".

¹ W.B. V, p. 217. '*nswt t3wy*'



Facing the god Ptah is the goddess Hathor in the form of a lady partially preserved with a bit of restoration in the body, wearing her wig crowned with her two horns of a cow and the two plums of Amon combined with the sun-disk, having the combination of the three gods Hathor, Amon and Re.

She is also standing in a shrine which is decorated by two Hathoric columns from the front and rear, her face is badly carved with wide eyes, thick lips and a fat nose, wearing a tight linen dress and holding a sceptre with the *w3d* sign.

In-front of her face is one vertical column reading '*nb² tp (i) ih*'

"The chief mistress of Aphroditopolis.³"

Closing the bottom of the stela is a horizontal hieroglyphic text which reads:

*'h₁tp di nswt n pth₁ n hwt hr nb tp (i) ih di sp - 3
c₁nh₁ wd₃ snb m p3y ndm'*

² '*nb*' it must be sic, because it was supposed to be the feminine '*nbt*'

³ W.B. I, p. 120; 3 and 4' *tp(i) ih*' als Beiname der Hathor and "state of Aphroditopolis of U.E.", Kopt 'TTH2' Arabic:

"An offering given to Ptah and to Hathor mistress chief of Aphroditopolis of Upper Egypt⁴. Given life, health and prosperity three times⁵ to P 3 y *nedjem*⁶"

Commentary:

- This round-topped stela is connected with the great city Aphroditopolis (Atfih) as previously mentioned, which is not unusual because this city was considered to be the centre of the goddess Hathor and was called there 'The chief of the cows' and that naming was referring to the ancient role which she had played due to her animal form.⁷

- The presence of Ptah in the same stela with the goddess Hathor is not unusual as well, because to the north of the centre of 'The lady of the Sycamore' (which is one of the most famous names of Hathor) there was a temple for the god Ptah in Memphis.⁸

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Op. Cit. F. D. p. 221 'sp 3'.

⁶ Die Ägyptischen Personennamen: Ranke. H. Band I. p. 128; 21.

⁷ Die Ägyptische Religion (The Arabic translation): A. Erman, p. 37.

⁸ Ibid p. 37.

- The fact of representing both the god Ptah and the goddess Hathor together on the same stelae is not unusual either because there is a sculpture at Leyden for the Hathor cow 'Mistress of the Sycamore' from the New Kingdom with the god Ptah.⁹

- The representation of the god Ptah with the epithet '*nb m3ct nswt t3wy*' appeared from the Middle Kingdom, because there was a fragment found at Memphis from the time of Amenemhat I which had that same epithet 'Lord of Maat, King of the two countries'.¹⁰

However, the fact that we did not find this epithet of Ptah until the Middle Kingdom is probably due to the lack of material, but it is possible that this epithet began to be used as early as the Old Kingdom, at the same time it was used about other gods and Kings.

From the New Kingdom, this epithet 'Lord of Maat' was used constantly about Ptah in all periods and at different places more than other gods, especially

⁹ The God Ptah, Sandmann, Lund, 1946; p. 191.

¹⁰ Ibid p. 75.



in his form with a smooth head and a close-fitting garb, and it occurs very often along with the epithets 'He who is south of his wall' and 'King of the two lands'.¹¹

¹¹ Ibid, p. 77.