

Article

# A Votive Gift for the God Amun: The Stelophorous Statue of Neferhebef (Turin Cat. 3025)

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## Abstract

The Museo Egizio, Turin, holds a quartzite stelophorous statue (Cat. 3025) acquired in 1824 as part of the Drovetti collection. The statue is inscribed with the name of its dedicator, Neferhebef, who bears the title "guardian of the treasury" (*z3.wty-pr-hd*). This object is particularly interesting, because the text on the stela contains phrases that are different from those usually found on New Kingdom stelophorous statues. Specifically, instead of the canonical solar hymn there is an invocation to Amun alongside a zoomorphic representation of the god as a ram. The statue also presents a so far unique case, to the author's knowledge, of an inscription on the underside of the base.

## المخلص

نجد في المتحف المصري في تورينو تمثال من الكوارتزيت يحمل لوحاً (رقم كتالوج Cat. 3025) تم اقتناؤه عام 1824 و هو جزء من مجموعة دروفيتي نُقش على التمثال اسم مُهديه نفرهبيف الذي يحمل لقب حارس الخزانة (*z3.wty-pr-hd*). هذه القطعة مميزة ومهمة، لأن النص الموجود على اللوحة يحتوي على عبارات مختلفة عن تلك الموجودة عادةً على التماثيل التي تحمل الألواح والتي تعود إلى المملكة الحديثة. وعلى وجه التحديد، بدلاً من الترنيمة الخاصة للشمس، يوجد دعاء لآمون إلى جانب نقش للإله بخصائص وصفات حيوانية على هيئة كبش. يمثل هذا التمثال أيضاً حالة فريدة من نوعها إلى يومنا هذا، برأي المؤلف، ذلك بسبب وجود نقش على الجانب السفلي من القاعدة.

## 1. Introduction

In 2020, the stelophorous statue of Neferhebef, Turin Cat. 3025 (Fig. 1), was selected for the exhibition "Egypt of Glory: The Last Great Dynasties",<sup>1</sup> and thus caught the attention of the present author. The aim of the present contribution is to shed more light on the provenance, function, and destination of the statue, and discuss its date, its prosopographical data, and its place within the category of stelophorous statues, including some art-historical considerations. All its hieroglyphic inscriptions, including a newly discovered text on the bottom of the base, are analysed and discussed.

## 2. Description

The statue (Fig. 2) is made of red quartzite. It represents a man kneeling on a base, holding a stela, and leaning against a back-pillar. It is 37 cm high. The partly fragmentary human body is 30 cm tall without the rectangular base, which is also fragmented and measures 7 cm in height, 14 cm in width and 20 cm in depth. The man wears a long, smooth, and close-fitting kilt which covers the lower part of the body and the legs down to the ankles. The dress, which seems to be tied with a belt at the waist, widens at the calves with the fabric falling to the ground in the form of a triangle. A frontal patch runs down from the lower edge of the stela, covering the knees. The man is sitting on his heels, with his toes rest-



**Fig. 1:** Statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin.

ing on the base. He holds his open hands up in the gesture of adoration, supporting the stela from behind. A circular sticker with the handwritten number “56” followed by a dot is attached to the back of the upper left arm. The head, part of the arms, the left hand and the upper torso are no longer preserved. The front of the base is broken off below the knees. The surface of the upper breaks is smoother than that of the break on the base, which seems to indicate that the two breaks occurred at different times. The round-topped stela, which rests on the thighs of the dedicant and is somewhat inclined towards him, measures 21 cm in height and 12 cm in width. Its front is divided in two registers. The upper register is decorated with a representation of a ram facing right. The animal has a slender body and thin legs. Between its hind legs, its genitals are indicated. A thin horizontal line below the belly seems to indicate the voluminous wool. The ram stands in front of an offering stand, upon which a lotus flower rests with its stem falling to the right. The round top of the stela is chipped and the head of the animal is thus only

partially preserved. On the surface of the statue are several inscriptions which will be discussed further below, in section 4.

### 3. Archival records and exhibition history

The statue of Neferhebef has never been the focus of a dedicated study. It is only mentioned in some museum catalogues. The first mention of the statue is found in the 1852 catalogue by Pier-Camillo Orcurti,<sup>2</sup> who also provided a rough translation of the text on the stela. The statue is also mentioned in Ariodante Fabretti, Francesco Rossi and Ridolfo Vittorio Lanzone’s catalogue of the Turin collection.<sup>3</sup> The statue thus must certainly have been acquired before 1852. There is actually evidence that indicates that it belongs to the Drovetti collection, acquired in 1824: a sticker attached to it<sup>4</sup> and some sketches of the statue, including transcriptions of its inscriptions, by Jean-François Champollion, who was in Turin studying the Drovetti collection in 1824–1825. These sketches are held in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (Fig. 3).<sup>5</sup> While these sources clearly indicate that the statue must have been acquired in 1824 as part of the Drovetti collection, the present author was unable to identify the statue in the inventory of this collection given to Count Carlo Vidua before its purchase.<sup>6</sup>

The statue was later cited by Jacques Vandier<sup>7</sup> and is also mentioned in an unpublished University of Heidelberg MA-dissertation by Judith Schall.<sup>8</sup> More recently, the statue was mentioned in a contribution on stelophorous statues by Edith Bernhauer and Philipp Seyr.<sup>9</sup> The earliest photographic documentation known to the present author dates to 1893, when two photographs of the statue were taken by William Matthew Flinders Petrie. They are now in the Griffith Institute archive in Oxford (Fig. 4).<sup>10</sup>

In recent years, the statue was shown in several exhibitions and discussed in their catalogues (Tab. 1). The author of the present article himself curated an exhibition focusing on the statue as an instalment in a temporary exhibition cycle called *Nel laboratorio dello studioso* (“In the Researcher’s Workshop”) at the Museo Egizio, under the title “Baciare la terra per il signore degli dei: la statua stelofores di Neferhebef” (24 March 2023 – 28 May 2023).





a



b



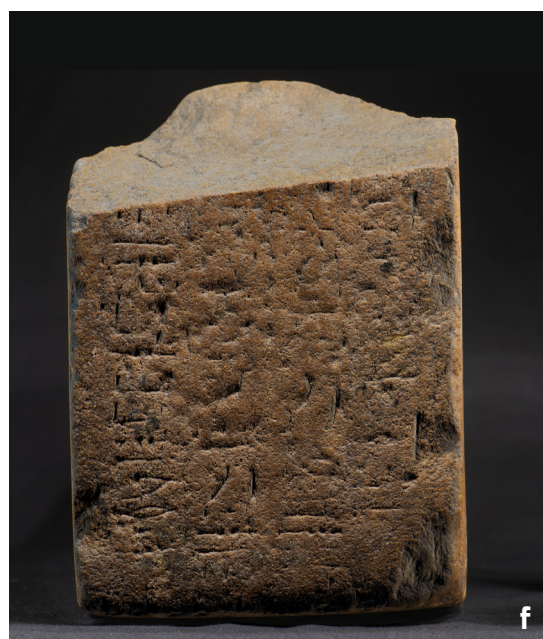
c



d



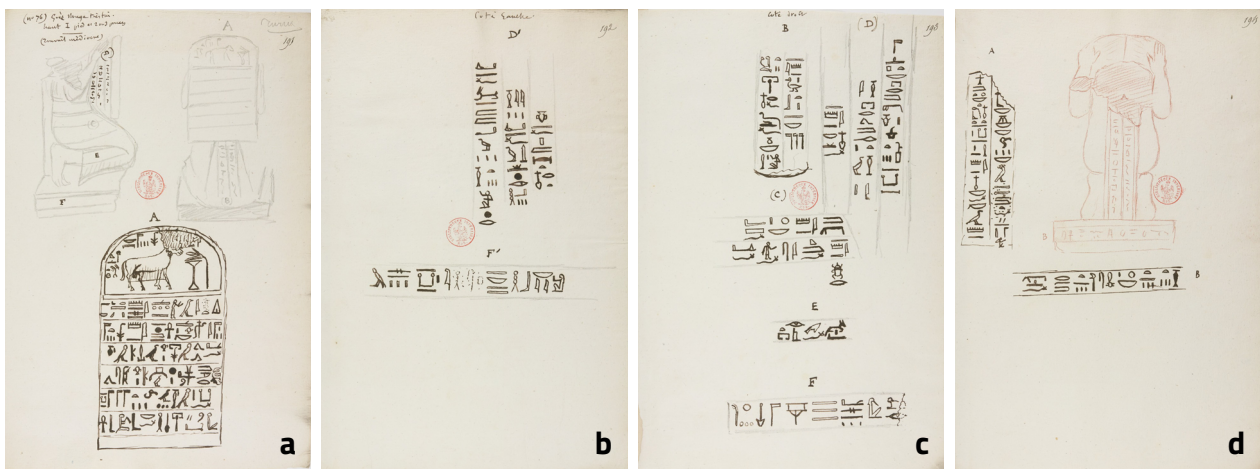
e



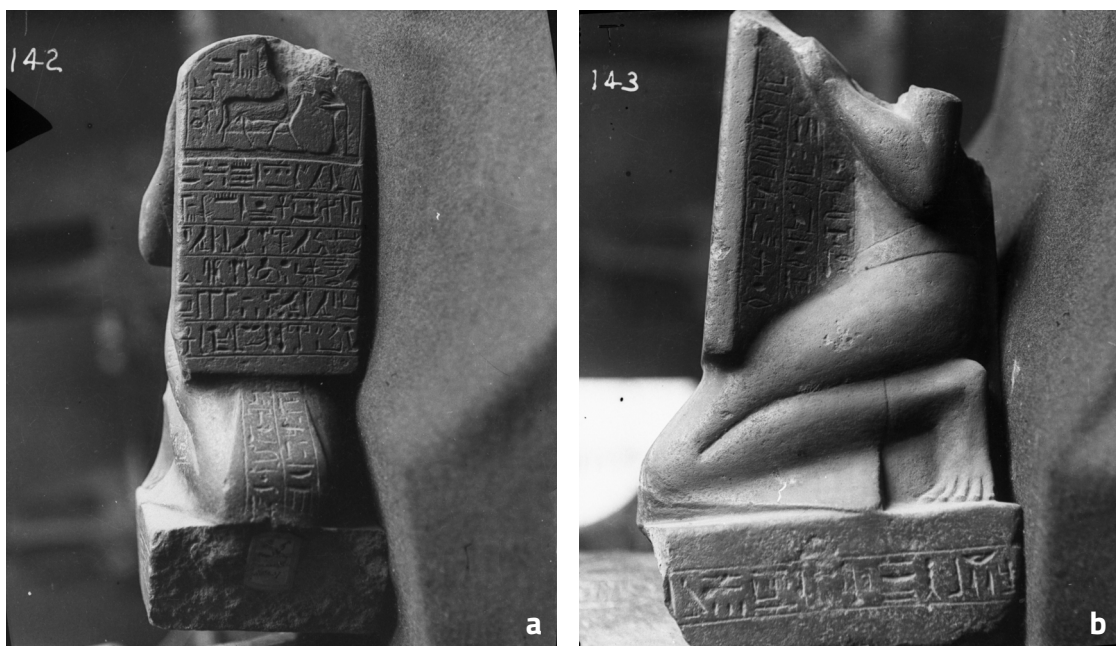
f

**Fig. 2:** Front, rear, left, right, top and bottom of the statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025. Photos: Museo Egizio, Turin.





**Fig. 3:** Drawings of statue Turin Cat. 3025 and transcriptions of its inscriptions by Jean-François Champollion. Scans: ©gallica. bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.



**Fig. 4:** Photographs of statue Turin Cat. 3025 taken by William Matthew Flinders Petrie in Turin in 1893. Photos: ©Griffith Institute, University of Oxford.



Title of Exhibition	Venues	Period
Ancient Egypt in Torino <sup>11</sup>	Metropolitan Art Museum, Tokyo; The Miyagi Museum of Art, Sendai; Fukuoka Art Museum, Fukuoka; Kobe City Museum, Kobe; Shizuoka Prefectural Museum of Art, Shizuoka	1 August 2009 – 31 August 2010
Ägyptens Schätze entdecken: Meisterwerke aus dem Ägyptischen Museum Turin <sup>12</sup>	Historisches Museum der Pfalz, Speyer	11 March 2012 – 14 October 2012
Egypt of Glory: The Last Great Dynasties	Amos Rex, Helsinki	8 October 2020 – 21 March 2021
L'aventure Champollion. Dans le secret des hiéroglyphes <sup>13</sup>	Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris	12 April 2022 – 24 July 2022

**Table 1:** Exhibition history of statue Turin Cat. 3025.

## 4. Inscriptions

In the following sections, the individual texts on the statue will be presented and discussed. As mentioned above, the stela is divided into two registers (Fig. 2a). The representation of the ram, placed in the first register, was captioned with the name of Amun and some of his epithets (A). In the lower register, there are six lines of hieroglyphic text (B).<sup>14</sup> Next to the stela are other hieroglyphic inscriptions: two columns on the thighs of the dedicant (C),<sup>15</sup> three columns on each side of the stela below the hands (D and E),<sup>16</sup> four lines on the right hip and leg (F),<sup>17</sup> two columns on the back-pillar (G)<sup>18</sup> and a line on the surviving sides of the base (H).<sup>19</sup> Another text (I), placed under the base and divided into four columns, was only discovered during the study of the statue and remains barely visible.

All the inscriptions carved on the statue, except for texts C and I, were transcribed and partly translated for the slip-card archive of the Berlin Wörterbuch (see below Fig. 6, 7b, 9b, 10). Based on his handwriting, the author of the slip cards, whose identity remains obscure, wrote at least another entry on a sculpture in the Museo Egizio's collection, the statue of Hel.<sup>20</sup>



**Fig. 5:** Statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025, detail. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin.

### 4.1 The stela: Texts A and B (Fig. 2a)

#### Text A



- 1) *J[mn] nsw.t-ntr.w nb-p.t*
- 2) *hꜥ-*
- 3) *Wꜥs.t*

- 1) A[mun ...],<sup>a</sup> king of the gods, lord of the sky, (2) ruler of (3) Thebes.

#### Comments:

<sup>a</sup> The first register is partially damaged and the name of Amun (written above the ram) is only partially preserved. There would be enough space to also write “Amun-Re”,<sup>21</sup> but this form is not recorded in other inscriptions on the statue. I therefore suggest the simple form “Amun”, although it is

rather rarely found combined with ram iconography (see discussion below). The lacuna presumably also includes the headdress of the animal (probably a *shuty-crown*).

#### Text B



- 1) *dl.t-ḫ.w n Jmn sn-b n nb-*
- 2) *ntr.w jnd-ḫr=k ḥnh-m-Mḥ.t Jmn nsw.t-ntr.w*
- 3) *dl=f ḥk prl(.t) m pr-nsw.t ḫr wḏ ḥnm*
- 4) *.w m mr ḥc.w 3w ḫr šms*
- 5) *k3=f m ḫzw.t rmt.w ntr.w n-k3-n*
- 6) *z3.wty-pr-ḫd Nfr-ḥ3b=f whm-ḥnh*

1) Giving praise to Amun, kissing the earth for the lord (2) of the gods.<sup>a</sup> Greetings to you who live on Maat<sup>b</sup>, Amun, king of the gods. (3) May he (=Amun)

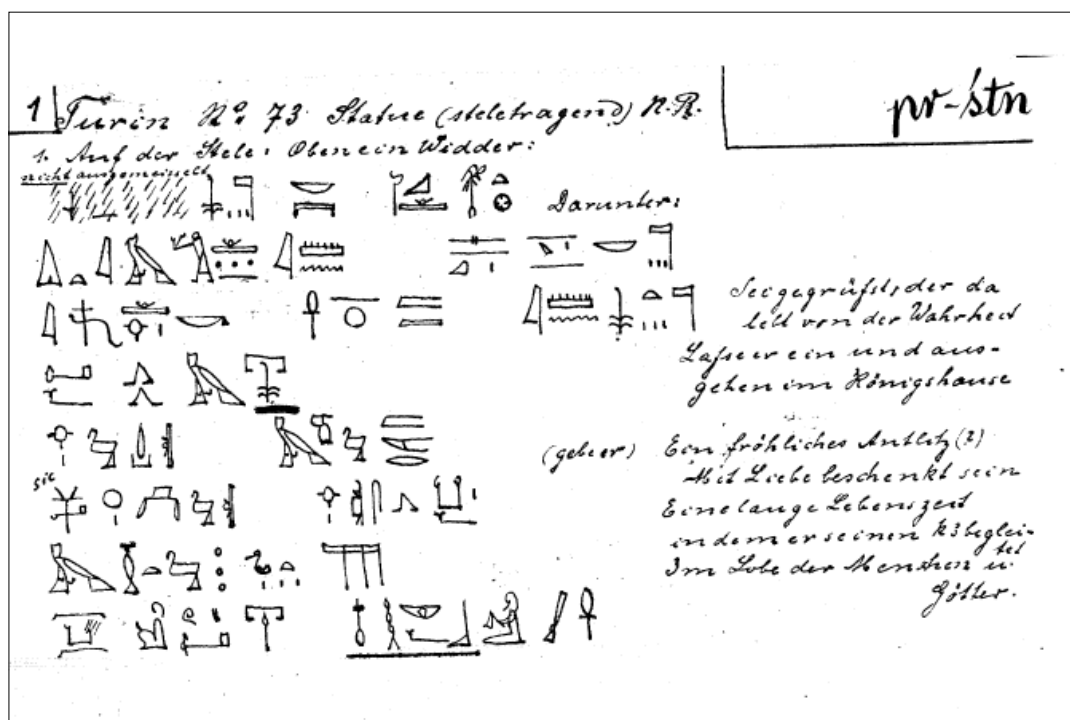
grant the entering into, and exiting from, the royal palace<sup>c</sup> being prosperous and endowed (4) with love and a long lifetime,<sup>d</sup> in following (5) his ka in the favour of men and gods, for the ka of (6) the guardian of the treasury Neferhebef, repeating life.

#### Comments:

<sup>a</sup> The text is a typical praise formula, voiced as a direct invocation from a person to a deity, asking for a number of favours. The introduction follows the traditional incipit (*r*)*dl.t-ḫ.w* and is followed by the phrase *sn-b*. The opening of the direct speech *jnd-ḫr=k*, which precedes the epithets and the name of Amun, is also traditional.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>b</sup> The epithet *ḥnh-m-Mḥ.t* is attested in the New Kingdom and associated with different gods, in most cases Amun-Re or Re-Harakhty.<sup>23</sup> It was also extensively used by Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten as a standard royal epithet.<sup>24</sup> It also occurs on two strophorous statues in the British Museum (EA29944 and EA480).<sup>25</sup> On the statue of Neferhebef, the epithet is associated with Amun. Other exact parallels are not known to the author.

<sup>c</sup> The expression *dl=f ḥk prl(.t) m pr-nsw.t* is part of the general topic of access to the king in the textual discourse of the New Kingdom elite.<sup>26</sup> Characterized



**Fig. 6:** Copy and partial translation of texts A and B on a Zettel of the Berlin Dictionary. Scan: ©Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (BBAW), Archiv Altägyptisches Wörterbuch, DZA-Nr. 23.245.100.



by the use of the verbs *ḥk* and *pr*, the expression focuses on presenting a close personal and functional relationship with the king and his palace. Two almost contemporaneous parallels come from the Amarna rock-cut tombs of Ahmose (Amarna Tomb 3)<sup>27</sup> and Parennefer (Amarna Tomb 7).<sup>28</sup>

<sup>a</sup> This expression on the statue of Neferhebef (*hnm.w m mr ḥḥ.w 3w*) has no direct parallels, but displays an interesting closeness to a textual construction found in the already mentioned tomb of Parennefer (Amarna Tomb 7): *ḥḥ.w hnm m ḥzw n dd=f*.<sup>29</sup> The two inscriptions also contain the common expression *šms k3=f*.<sup>30</sup> Another object that contains textual analogies is a statue from Balansourah.<sup>31</sup> The statue belongs to a Mutneferet and was discovered in 1917 together with the statue of her husband Yuny. Both date to the reign of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten. On the back of the statue, there is an offering formula to Thoth containing the topic of entering into, and exiting from, a temple (*dd=f ḥk pr.t ḥw.t-ntr*). The inscriptions show further textual analogies, such as the construction *hnm m ḥzw*.

## 4.2 Text C (on the front of the thighs)

### (Fig. 2a)

#### Text C



- 1) *z3.wty-pr-ḥd Nfr-ḥ3b=f dd=f jnk wḥm.w-*
- 2) *n-smn-Jmn wḥm.w-<tp.j>-n-nb-ntr.w*



1) The guardian<sup>a</sup> of the treasury Neferhebef<sup>b</sup>, he says: “I am the herald (2) of the goose of Amun<sup>c</sup>, first herald<sup>d</sup> of the lord of the gods”.

#### Comments:

<sup>a</sup> The present writing is listed by Abdul Rahman Al-Ayedi in connection with the title *jr.j-pr-ḥd*;<sup>32</sup> however, due to the presence of the phonetic com-

plement  $\bigtriangleup$  (Gardiner sign list X1) and for reasons of consistency with the previous reading, the transliteration *z3.wty-pr-ḥd* is proposed here.

<sup>b</sup> This inscription reveals the first graphic variant of the name Neferhebef, in a shortened form compared to the name as presented on the stela. Specifically, the two three-consonant signs *nfr* and *ḥ3b* forming the name lack their phonetic complements.

<sup>c</sup> In the translation here proposed, the sign  (G39) is interpreted as a logogram for the word *smn*. The goose was indeed one of the images of Amun and an intermediary of the god.<sup>33</sup> Its image is usually accompanied by the epithet *smn-nfr-n-Jmn*.<sup>34</sup> Another possibility is to consider the sign  (G39) as linking to the following title, with the value of *s3*. The two terms *s3* and *wḥm.w* could be linked by a relationship of possession, a direct genitive (“I am the herald of Amun, the son of the first herald of the Lord of the Gods”), or with a conjunction (“I am the servant of Amun, the son and the first herald of the lord of the gods”). The second option, which is grammatically acceptable, leads to an interpretation issue. It is, in fact, highly uncommon for a private person to define himself as a son of a god, but in favour of this reading theophorous names such as Sa-Amun (“The son of Amun”) are attested.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>d</sup> The combination of  $\mathfrak{J}$  (F25) with  $\bigtriangleup$  and  $\mathfrak{I}$  (X1 and Z1) creates some uncertainty in the reading. One of the possible readings, *wḥm.t* (“hoof”),<sup>36</sup> is discarded for reasons of coherence with the text. The statement “I am the hoof of the lord of the gods” would indeed make no sense. Given the presence of the title *wḥm.w-n-Jmn* associated to Neferhebef in the current text and also in text E,<sup>37</sup> probably a variant of the same title is written here. Other parallels for this writing of *wḥm.w* are presently unknown to the author. During the New Kingdom, among the variants of the title, many *wḥm.w-tp.jw* are attested.<sup>38</sup> The writing could possibly be explained as an error of the scribe, who used the sign  $\bigtriangleup$  (X1) instead of the sign  $\mathfrak{D}$  (D1).

### 4.3 Text D (on the left side of the stela)

#### (Fig. 7a)

##### Text D



- 1)  $d\bar{l}.n=f\ wn(=j)\ m-m\ wr.w\ hzw.t=j\ hr$
- 2)  $hz.yw\ d\bar{l}.n=f\ w\delta\ hr\ h^c.w(=j)$
- 3)  $hnm.n=f\ h^c(=j)\ m\ krs.t\ nfr.t$

1) He (=Amun) has caused (me) to be among the great ones, my favour to be among (2) the favoured ones.<sup>a</sup> He has caused soundness in (my) limbs.<sup>b</sup> (3) He has united (my) body<sup>c</sup> with a beautiful burial.

##### Comments:

This inscription is grammatically problematic. The main issue is the absence of pronouns. For the sen-

tences to make sense and be grammatically correct, we need to integrate them with first-person pronouns referring to the worshipper.

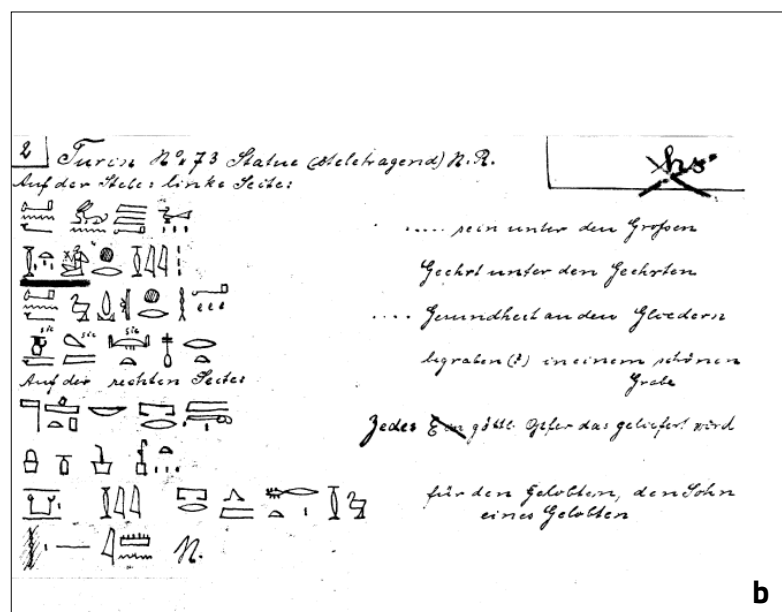
<sup>a</sup> The first sentence is introduced by  $d\bar{l}.n=f$ , followed by the subjunctive form of the verb  $wnn$ . The construction has causative meaning,<sup>39</sup> and the subject of the sentence must be the god who provides the worshipper with some favours. The subjunctive of  $wnn$  is here used without an expressed subject, which must be Neferhebef, and is followed by the adverbial predicate.<sup>40</sup> A second dependent clause with the adverbial predicate  $hr\ hz.yw$  follows. The sign (A1) after the subject of the dependent clause ( $hzw.t$ ) could be a determinative of the word or, as interpreted here by the present writer, the suffix pronoun. If we go for the latter option, the sentence can be read as direct speech uttered by the worshipper, who lists the favours granted by the god. It is on these grounds that the present writer assumes that two first-person singular pronouns are implied.

<sup>b</sup> The second sentence has the same grammatical structure as the former: a dependent clause with the adverbial predicate  $hr\ h^c.w$  introduced by  $d\bar{l}.n=f$ . The subject of the sentence, which retains its causative meaning, is still the god Amun.

<sup>c</sup> The value of  $h^c$  of the sign (F51) is noted by Joshua Aaron Roberson in his lexicon.<sup>41</sup>



a



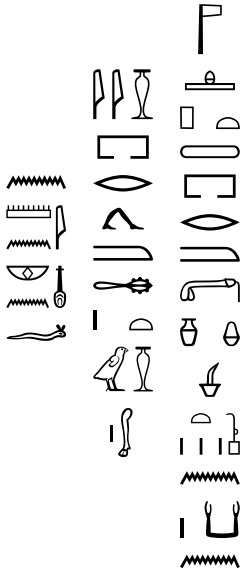
b

**Fig. 7:** a: Statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025, side view. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin; b: Copy and partial translation of texts D and E on a Zettel of the Berlin Dictionary. Scan: ©Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (BBAW), Archiv Ägyptisches Wörterbuch, DZA-Nr. 27.310.820.



#### 4.4 Text E (on the right side of the stela) (Fig. 8)

##### Text E



- 1) *ḥtp-nṯr prỉ m-biḥ t' ḥnḳ.t snṯr rnp.wt n-k3-n*
- 2) *ḥz.y prỉ m-ḥt ḥzy.w(t) wḥm.w-*
- 3) *-n-Jmn Nfr-ḥ3b=f*

1) A divine offering<sup>a</sup> that comes forth in front (of Amun)<sup>b</sup> (consisting) of bread and beer, incense and fresh plants for the ka of (2) the favoured one, who comes out of the womb of the revered ones, the herald<sup>c</sup> (3) of Amun, Neferhebef.<sup>d</sup>

##### Comments:

<sup>a</sup> The author of the slip card archive of the Wörterbuch (see Fig. 7b) offers an alternative reading of the shallow horizontal sign, actually a simplified X4, under *ḥtp-nṯr* as  $\cup$  (V30). In the slip card, this writing



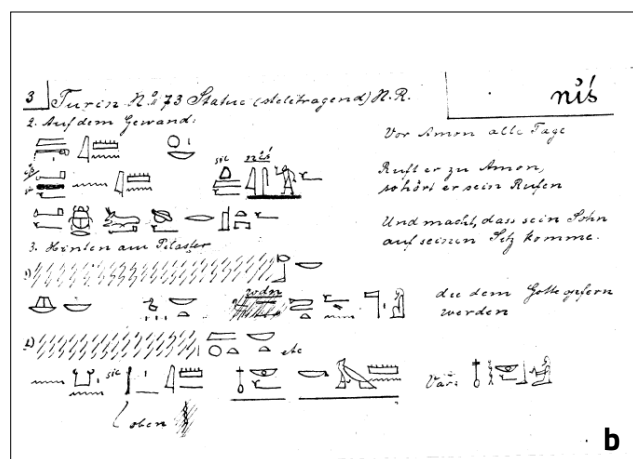
**Fig. 8:** Statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025, side view. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin.

is therefore translated as “jedes göttliche Opfer”.

<sup>b</sup> The construct *prỉ m-biḥ* is usually followed by the name of a god.<sup>42</sup> It is likely that in this case the supposed god is Amun, whose name is not written here.

<sup>c</sup> The sign  $\int$  (F25) does not follow the orientation of the inscription. A possible explanation of this irregularity is not evident to the author.

<sup>d</sup> The inscription gives yet another variant of the name of Neferhebef. Compared to the version written on the thighs, the phonetic sign  $\text{N35}$  is added here. This addition can only be explained as a misplaced phonetic complement.



**Fig. 9:** a: Statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025, side view. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin; b: Copy and partial translation of texts F and G on a Zettel of the Berlin Dictionary. Scan: ©Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (BBAW), Archiv Altägyptisches Wörterbuch, DZA-Nr. 20.441.600.

## 4.5 Text F (on the right hip and leg) (Fig. 9a)

### Text F



- 1) *m-b3h Jmn r<sup>c</sup>-nb ʕš=f*
- 2) *n Jmn sdm=f <n>js=f dī=f*
- 3) *hpr*
- 4) *jw<sup>c</sup>=f r s.t=f*

1) May (Neferhebef/this statue) be in front<sup>a</sup> of Amun every day. (If) he summons (2) for Amun, he (Amun) will listen to his summons and will (3) cause (4) his heir to arise on his place.<sup>b</sup>

### Comments:

<sup>a</sup> The position of the inscription could suggest that this text is the continuation of text E. This would explain the presence of the preposition *m-b3h* at the very beginning of the inscription, which is not used at the beginning of clauses.<sup>43</sup> Alternatively, the clause can be considered as an adverbial sentence, with Neferhebef (the last word of text E) as subject. The statue itself could act as subject of the adverbial sentence,<sup>44</sup> claiming therefore an intermediary status.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>b</sup> This is a conditional clause that is not introduced by any particle.<sup>46</sup> The protasis contains the subjunctive form of the verb ʕš. The apodosis is formed by the prospective form of the verb *sdm* and the construct *rdī* plus the subjunctive of the verb *hpr*.

## 4.6 Text G (on the back-pillar) (Fig. 2b)

### Text G



- 1) [...] 'w<sup>c</sup>b' nb hr.j-h3b.t nb rmt nb [wd]n.t(j)=fj n ntr=j
- 2) [...] 'h3' m jh.t nb.t nfr.t w<sup>c</sup>b.t n-k3-n whm.w-n Jmn Nfr-h3b=f K3mn

1) [...] every *wab*-priest, every lector priest, every man who will offer<sup>a</sup> to my god (2) [...] thousands of every good and pure thing for the ka of the herald<sup>b</sup> of Amun, Neferhebef Kamen.<sup>c</sup>

### Comments:

The surviving inscription is part of a so-called “Appeal to the Living”: the presence of *wab*- and lector-priests is indeed frequently attested in this kind of text.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The reading *wdn* (already hypothesized by the editor of the *Zettel*, see Fig. 9b) is uncertain due to the lacuna in the middle of the word. On the other hand, the determinative leaves no alternative reading, even though the two signs before it are not completely discernible and readable.



<sup>b</sup>The sign (F25) is not clearly distinguishable. In his sketch, Champollion presents an alternative reading as (U36) (see Fig. 3d). The reading proposed by the present writer coincides with that proposed by the editor of the *Zettel* (see Fig. 9b).

<sup>c</sup>This could be either a double name<sup>48</sup> or an epithet of Neferhebef (*k3mn* literally means “the blind”).<sup>49</sup>

The blindness of the worshipper is a topic attested in a group of votive stelae from Deir el-Medina, expressed with the phrase *m3 kkw* (literally “seeing darkness”). This “blindness” could indicate a real physical condition but, as many scholars have pointed out,<sup>50</sup> was more likely used as a metaphor in the context of personal piety to express the god’s power over the worshipper.

#### 4.7 Text H (around the base) (Fig. 2b–d)

##### Text H



- 1) [...]
- 2) [...] 'Wsjr' dī=sn mw ʔw sntr kḫh.w [...]
- 3) [jḫ.t nb.t nfr.t wʕb.t ʕnh.t ntr] jm=sn n-k3-n jr.j-mḫ3.t-n-nb-ʔ.wy Ḥby
- 4) ḫzw.t=tn rʕ.w-nb mj šḫ3=tn rn(=j) m-bḫ3=f

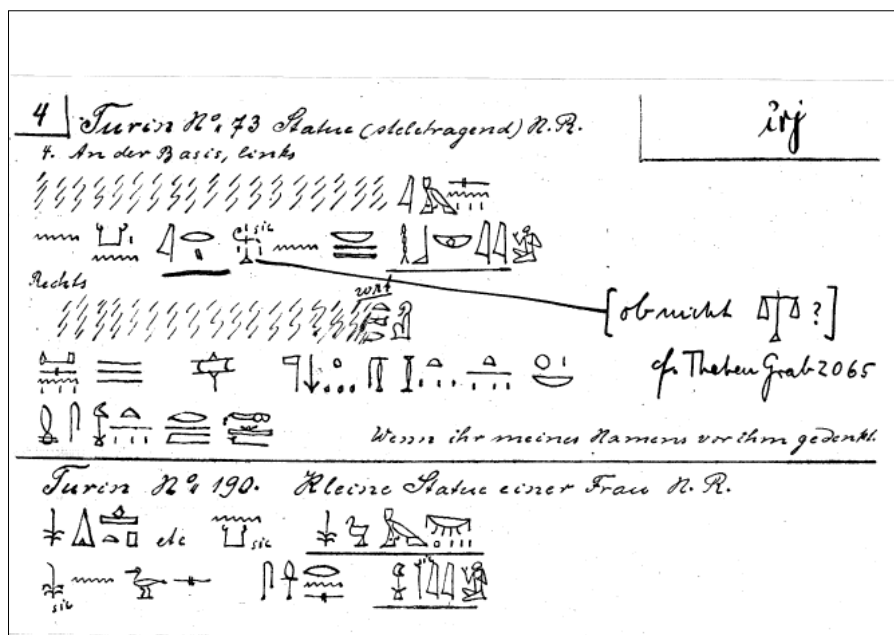
1) [...] (2) [...and Osiris(?)]<sup>a</sup> they shall give water, wind, incense, libation water [...] (3) [and every good and pure thing on which a god lives]<sup>b</sup> for the ka of the keeper of the scales of the lord of the Two Lands Heby.<sup>c</sup> (4) Your favour (of) every day is that you remember (my) name before him (=Amun).

##### Comments:

This inscription is fragmentary. The absence of the frontal part of the base entails the loss of the inscription on the front (line 1) and part of the inscriptions on the sides (lines 2–3). The surviving lines on the sides of the base are part of an offering-formula, which must have started on line 1. The formula continues in line 2, which must have named the deities. The list of offerings is then provided. Line 3 presents the end of the formula with the beneficiary’s title and name.

Line 4 on the back of the base does not seem to be part of the offering-formula. It contains a request to remember the name of the individual, which is a recurrent topic in Appeals to the Living.<sup>51</sup> It is therefore clear that this last line of text H must be connected with text G, right above it.

<sup>a</sup>The editor of the *Zettel* read (X1+G36+D21) and translated it as *wr.t*. These signs are, however, not discernible on the stone. The preserved traces rather appear to be the remaining traces of the group (Q2+D4). The following sign, (A40), corroborates



**Fig. 10:** Copy and partial translation of text H on a Zettel of the Berlin Dictionary. Scan: ©Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (BBAW), Archiv Altägyptisches Wörterbuch, DZA-Nr. 24.320.670.

this reading, which follows that given by Champollion (see Fig. 3c). The use of the suffix pronoun =sn after *dī* indicates that several deities were named in the lacuna of the formula.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>b</sup> The surviving inscription could have been part of an offering-formula ending with the standard expression *jḥ.t nb.t nfr.t w<sup>c</sup>b.t ḥnḥ.t ntr jm*.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>c</sup> The name Heby is most likely a hypocorism of the name Neferhebef.<sup>54</sup>

#### 4.8 Text I (at the bottom of the base) (Fig. 11)

##### Text I



1) [...] *jr.j-mh<sup>s</sup>.t*

2) [...] [*m-*]*ḥt jḥw.t ḥw nḏm* [...] *n=s*

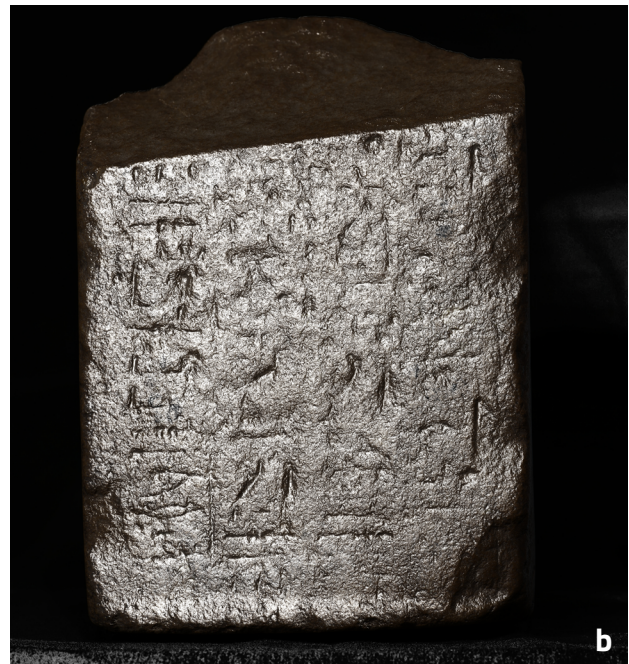
3) [...] *jm=sn*

4) [...] *.w n=s ḥb=s* [...] *n mr.t=s*

1) [...] the keeper of the scales (2) [...] after old age,<sup>a</sup> a sweet wind [...] for her (3) [...] in/with them (4) [...] for her, she desires [...] for her loved one.<sup>b</sup>

##### Comments:

This inscription, divided in four columns, was carved under the base. Other parallels for statues with the same feature are presently unknown to the author. The text is not well-preserved and is only barely visible. Most of the signs proposed are discernible thanks to the use of Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) (Fig. 11b). The upper part of the inscription, which encompasses the beginning of each column, is lost due to the breaking of the base. The arrangement of the text on the stone suggests that the inscription is either coeval with the statue or was added subsequently. Although the poor preservation of the inscription precludes a complete understanding of it, the discernible signs suggest a dedicatory formula. Although the first column records the title *jr.j-mh<sup>s</sup>.t*, associated with the name Heby in text H, the occurrences of the feminine pronoun =s suggests that the text does not refer to Neferhebef. Given the state of



**Fig. 11:** Statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025, bottom of base. Photos: Museo Egizio, Turin. Photo b rendered with the software RTIViewer.



preservation of the inscription, it is not possible to identify the identity of the feminine entity referred to.

<sup>a</sup> The construction *m-ht jw.t* is found in the phrase *df=k krs.t nfr.t m-ht jw.t*, also attested on the statue of Yuny from Balansura<sup>55</sup> and in the rock-cut tomb of Meryre at Amarna (Amarna Tomb 4).<sup>56</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Considering *mr.t* as an infinitive, an alternative reading would be: “of what she wants.” The upper lacuna makes it impossible to opt for either of these two options.

## 5. The owner of the statue: Names and titles

As the following discussion will show, the attempt to identify the owner of statue Turin Cat. 3025 with other known individuals by the same name was unfruitful. The present author is not aware of any other monuments traceable to our Neferhebef.

The name Neferhebef, mentioned in texts B, C, E and G, is well attested in the New Kingdom, particularly during the Eighteenth Dynasty (Table 2).

No.	Title(s)	Epigraphical document	Provenance	Date
1	<i>w<sup>c</sup>b hr.j-nb.yw-n-Jmn</i>	Dummy jar Musée de Grenoble MG 2018 <sup>57</sup>	Unknown	Dynasty 18
2	<i>sš-ḥm-ntr-tp.j-n-Jmn</i>	Funerary cone Davies & Macadam 216 <sup>58</sup>	Thebes (?)	Dynasty 18
3	<i>hr.j-mrw-n-Jmn</i>	Stelophorous statue Kröller-Müller Museum KM 122.608 <sup>59</sup>	Thebes (?)	Dynasty 18
4	<i>ks.tj-n-Jmn</i>	Shabti and coffin Met Museum 90.6.93a-c <sup>60</sup>	Unknown	Dynasty 18, Ahmose–Thutmose III
5	<i>w<sup>c</sup>b-n-Jmn-m-Ḥnḳ.t-ḥnḥ</i>	Fragment of a statuette <sup>61</sup>	Qurna	Dynasty 18, Thutmose III
6	/	Statuette Louvre A57 <sup>62</sup>	Thebes (?)	Dynasty 18, Thutmose III – Amenhotep II
7	<i>ḥm-ntr-sn.nw-n-ḥpr.w-R<sup>c</sup></i>	Statuette British Museum EA31 <sup>63</sup>	Thebes (?)	Dynasty 18, Amenhotep II – Thutmose IV
8	<i>jm.j-r'-ḥs.wt</i>	Cane Museo Egizio, Turin, S. 8625 <sup>64</sup>	Deir el-Medina, TT8	Dynasty 18, Amenhotep II – Amenhotep III
9	<i>jm.j-r'-k3.t-m-ḥr.t-nsw.t</i>	Double game board Museo Egizio, Turin, S. 8421/01 <sup>65</sup>	Deir el-Medina, TT8	Dynasty 18, Amenhotep II – Amenhotep III
10	<i>jm.j-r'-ḥs.wt-n-Jmn</i>	Stela Cairo CG 34099 <sup>66</sup>	Abydos	Dynasty 18, Amenhotep II – Amenhotep III
11	<i>jm.j-r'-ḥs.wt-n-Jmn</i>	Stela Cairo CG 34101 <sup>67</sup>	Abydos	Dynasty 18, Amenhotep II – Amenhotep III
12	<i>w<sup>c</sup>b sš-ḥtp.w-ntr zi-nswt-tp.j-n-Jmn hr.j-sšḫ-m-Jp.t-s.wt</i>	Funerary cone Davies & Macadam 78 <sup>68</sup>	Thebes (?)	Dynasty 18, Thutmose IV
13	<i>w<sup>c</sup>b-n-Jmn</i>	Tomb of Hapu, TT 66 <sup>69</sup>	Qurna	Dynasty 18, Thutmose IV
14	<i>sš-š<sup>c</sup>.t-n-ḥm-ntr-tp.j</i>	Funerary cone Davies & Macadam 218 <sup>70</sup>	Dra Abu el-Naga	Dynasty 18, Thutmose IV
15	<i>sš-ḥsb.w-jt (?)</i>	TT A22 <sup>71</sup>	Dra Abu el-Naga	Dynasty 18, Thutmose IV (?)
16	<i>ḥm-ntr-n-ḥpr.w-R<sup>c</sup></i>	Funerary cone Davies & Macadam 54 <sup>72</sup>	Thebes	Dynasty 18, Thutmose IV – Amenhotep III
17	<i>zib</i>	Statue Museo Civico Archeologico, Bologna, EG 1825 <sup>73</sup>	Memphis (?)	Dynasty 18, Amenhotep III
18	<i>hr.j-zwn.w-n-nb-ḫ.wj sš-nsw.t</i>	Alabaster vase Museo Egizio, Florence, N. 7017 <sup>74</sup>	Thebes (?)	Dynasty 18–20
19	<i>ḥm-ntr-tp.j-n-ḥpr-k3-R<sup>c</sup></i>	Tomb of Userhat TT 51 <sup>75</sup>	Qurna	Dynasty 19, Seti I

**Table 2:** Attestations of the name Neferhebef in the New Kingdom.

Statuette Louvre A57 (No. 6) represents a Neferhebef and his wife Tayunes seated side by side, with their son Benermerut at their feet. Given the names of his wife and son, it is more than likely that No. 6 is identical with the Neferhebef of Nos. 8 and 9. The later attestations of the name come from the intact burial equipment of Kha (Theban Tomb 8). The same Neferhebef and Tayun(es) were also depicted on a wall of the funerary chapel of Kha.<sup>76</sup> Likewise, the Neferhebef of the statuette British Museum EA31 (No. 7), represented as a child between his parents (Ityu and Henutweret), is the same as No. 16.<sup>77</sup> Hermann Kees suggested that Neferhebef No. 12 was the son of the owner of Theban Tomb 66, the vizier Hapu (No. 13).<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, the similar titles of No. 13 and No. 5 indicate another possible identification. In text G, the name Neferhebef is followed by

Kamen, which could be considered a double name or more likely an epithet.<sup>79</sup> Other individuals with the name Kamen, however, are not known to the present author.

In text H we read another name, Heby. Some selected occurrences of this name are listed in Table 3. Although the occurrence of two different names on the same monument could suggest that two different individuals are being referred to, it is more likely that the names refer to the same individual. The use of shortened names is indeed well attested in ancient Egypt.<sup>80</sup> That the name Heby was used as a hypocorism of Neferhebef is confirmed by another case – regarding a different homonymous individual – discussed by Federico Rocchi.<sup>81</sup> The absence of any kinship term connecting the two names on the Turin statue suggests that they refer to the

No.	Title(s)	Epigraphical document	Provenance	Date
1	<i>sdm-š-n-Jmn</i>	Funerary cones Davies & Macadam 180 <sup>82</sup>	El-Khokha?	New Kingdom
2	<i>jm.j-r'-jh.w-n-Jmn-m-sp³.wt-šm³.w-mhw</i>	Funerary cones Davies & Macadam 15 <sup>83</sup>	Dra Abu el-Naga?	Dynasty 18
3	<i>zib</i>	Pyramidion Rijksmuseum van Oudheden AM 6-b <sup>84</sup>	Saqqara	Dynasty 18, Amenhotep III
4	/	Shabti Liverpool World Museum M13890 <sup>85</sup>	Unknown	Dynasty 19
5	<i>šš-mš<sup>c</sup>-n-nb-š.wj</i>	Fragment of stela Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 11.1474 <sup>86</sup>	Unknown	Dynasty 19

**Table 3:** Selected attestations of the name Heby in the New Kingdom.

same individual.

In texts B and C, the name Neferhebef is associated to the title *zšw.ty-pr-ḥd*.<sup>87</sup> Further titles of Neferhebef on the Turin statue are *wḥm.w-n-smn-Jmn* and *wḥm.w-<tp.j>-n-nb-ntr.w* (text C); *wḥm.w-n-Jmn* (texts E and G). The title *zšw.ty-pr-ḥd* is attested during the Eighteenth Dynasty and beyond.<sup>88</sup> It appears for instance on stela EA324 in the British Museum, dedicated to the guardian of the treasury Ptahmay.<sup>89</sup> This stela, which shows evident features from the Amarna period, is dated to the reign of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten. The variant of the title *zšw.ty-pr-ḥd-n-nb-š.wy* is also attested in the Eighteenth Dynasty.<sup>90</sup> On the Turin statue, there is another title associated with the name Heby, that is *jr.j-mḥj.t-n-nb-š.wy*, in text H. This title is also carved on the bottom of the base, in text I, where no names are discernible.<sup>91</sup>


An attestation of this title comes, e.g., from Theban Tomb 181, of the Eighteenth Dynasty.<sup>92</sup>

As said above, the attempt to identify the Neferhebef/Heby of the Turin statue with any of the individuals listed in Table 2 and Table 3 was unfruitful. The Turin statue thus appears to be the only known monument of its dedicator.

## 6. New Kingdom stelophorous statues: Destination and original meaning

Stelophorous statues started to come into fashion during the New Kingdom in the Theban area and are recognized as one of the statue forms owing their spread to the growing popularity of the solar cult.<sup>93</sup> In most cases, the stela is inscribed with a solar hymn, the future Chapter 15 of the Book of the Dead. Harry Stewart undertook the first comprehensive

study on stelophorous statues in 1967, focusing on a corpus of statues and statuettes in the British Museum.<sup>94</sup> Although the examples analysed were only those bearing the solar hymn, his preliminary study is highly appreciated for its typological approach and its classification is still used today by most scholars. Until now, scholars have mainly focused on examples bearing the hymn to the sun god Re.<sup>95</sup> These studies have pointed out where these statues stood and what their function was.

An article by Christophe Barbotin retraces the evolution of stelophorous statues and identifies their original meaning.<sup>96</sup> According to Barbotin, the posture of the dedicator, crouched and raising his arms, is a three-dimensional recreation of the gesture of adoration portrayed by the hieroglyph of worship (Gardiner sign-list A4 ). In the early versions of these objects, the stela was not modelled and the inscriptions were carved in the space between the raised arms. This area was progressively shaped into a stela, thus offering more space for the text. The stelophorous statue soon became a much broader medium of expression, in which the stela gained growing importance, being recognised as an object in its own right. It therefore became common to decorate the lunette with apotropaic symbols (*wedjat*-eyes, *shen*-rings, water-signs, the *wesekh*-vessel, and sun disks), such as can also be seen on some funerary stelae from that period. In examples dated to the Nineteenth Dynasty, the lunette often carries even more elaborate decorations.<sup>97</sup>

A recent study by Edith Bernhauer and Philipp Seyr introduces a new typological classification and traces the stylistic and functional transformation of stelophorous statues from the New Kingdom onward.<sup>98</sup> This study also investigates the contexts of use of this statue type.

## 7. Art-historical considerations

Although the fragmentary condition of the Turin statue precludes complete analysis, some considerations about its artistic features can be made.

The papers of Jean-François Champollion contain a note on the Turin statue. Champollion appreciated the quality of the stone which he erroneously identified as red sandstone ("*grès rouge très fin*", Fig. 3a),<sup>99</sup> but he was rather critical of its workmanship, adding

a comment below in brackets: "*(travail médiocre)*".<sup>100</sup> Contrary to the judgement of Champollion, the workmanship of the statue deserves to be reappreciated. The stone was expertly worked. The figure of the man was sculpted in sinuous and gentle forms, enhanced by the accurately polished surface. Even tiny details were rendered with particular accuracy, for example the feet and toes (Fig. 12).

As with many other sculptures, the area between the chest of the worshipper and the stela was cut free, as the polished surface on top of the stela bears out.<sup>101</sup> The palms of the hands are concave, with the fingertips touching the upper edge of the stela. The stela itself is shaped with geometrical precision (Fig. 5). In the lunette, the ram and its physical traits are finely rendered (Fig. 13).

The inscriptions on the stela, possibly due to their position and the importance of the text, are carefully carved. The other inscriptions are less accurate in places. On the back of the base, text H, for instance, some signs were just incised and not carved in depth (Fig. 2b).

The position of the stela, which rests on the thighs of the dedicant, classifies the statue as type III in Stewart's classification and as S.I in Bernhauer and Seyr's. The rendering of the bare feet and the shape of the kilt falling down to the base are similar to those of most of the other New Kingdom examples. This feature is attested in several mid-Eighteenth Dynasty examples, and also in later ones (Fig. 14).

One peculiarity of the Turin statue is the choice of material, quartzite,<sup>102</sup> which is rather unusual for this type.<sup>103</sup> The only other red quartzite example known to the present author is in the British Museum (EA480).<sup>104</sup> The statue has been discussed by Nigel Strudwick and Ali Radwan.<sup>105</sup> Both authors argue that the style of the sculpture suggests a date to around the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty, but that the name and titles of the owner indicate a later date, during the reign of Ramesses II until Merenptah.

## 8. The decoration of the stela and the worship of Amun

One of the most exceptional features of the Turin statue of Neferhebef is the decoration of the stela. Firstly, the presence of a hymn to Amun instead of the canonical solar hymn is remarkable. A dedication





**Fig. 12:** Statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025, bottom of base. Photos: Museo Egizio, Turin. Photo b rendered with the software RTIVIEWER.



**Fig. 13:** Statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025, detail. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin.





**Fig. 14:** From left to right: a: Statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025 (h. 37 cm). Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin. b: Statue of Nunefu, Cat. 3039, Thutmose II – Amenhotep II (h. 27 cm). Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin ([https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/Cat\\_3039](https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/Cat_3039)); c: Statue of Amenemipet, Cat. 3038, Thutmose IV – Amenhotep III (h. 55 cm). Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin ([https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/Cat\\_3038](https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/Cat_3038)). d: Statue of Bay, MET 66.99.94, Seti I or later (h. 28 cm). Photo: ©The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/554769>).

to this god is, in fact, not totally uncommon. During the New Kingdom, the Theban god Amun was promoted to the level of a national deity in the syncretic form of Amun-Re, as witnessed by many solar hymns of this period.<sup>106</sup> On the other hand, the text on the stela of the Turin statue displays a less common feature, namely, the elimination of every solar reference to Amun. It shares this feature with only a few other known stelophorous statues.<sup>107</sup>

On the statue of Neferhebef, besides the hymn, even the decoration of the upper part of the stela only concerns the adoration of the god Amun, depicted as a ram, without any allusion to his solar nature. The iconography has a parallel in a stelophorous statue in the British Museum, EA1387 (Fig. 15).<sup>108</sup> The statue, which might come from Thebes, was dedicated by Kaemwaset, scribe of the temple of Thutmose IV, to Amun-Re. This is the only other stelophorous statue with the representation of the sacred ram known to the present author.

The cult of the sacred ram of Amun is well-attested in the Theban area, especially in the village of Deir el-Medina, with several votive stelae depicting one or two rams in the upper register.<sup>109</sup> On these artifacts, the animal hypostasis of Amun is frequently accompanied by the epithet *p<sup>3</sup>-rhny-nfr*.<sup>110</sup>

The cult was probably connected to the Theban criosphinxes and ram statues, which were believed to be intermediaries to Amun and, for this reason, received attention from a part of the population.<sup>111</sup>



**Fig. 15:** Stelophorous statue of Kaemwaset, EA1387, Theban area, second half of the Eighteenth Dynasty (h. 54.5 cm). Photo: ©The Trustees of the British Museum.

It is generally accepted that, when the animal is depicted on a plinth, it stands for a statue or a cult image.<sup>112</sup> These attestations of the sacred ram are often associated with Amun-Re (Fig. 16). On the statue of Neferhebef, the lacuna in the upper register of the



**Fig. 16:** From left to right: a: Statue of Neferhebef, Cat. 3025, detail. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin; b: Stela of Paenamun, Cat. 1552, Theban area, Twentieth Dynasty. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin; c: Stela of Baki, Cat. 1549, Deir el-Medina, Nineteenth Dynasty, Seti I – Ramses II. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin ([https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/Cat\\_1549](https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/Cat_1549)).

stela does not unveil the name of the god beside the ram. Given the non-solar feature of the hymn, the ram statue was probably captioned by the simple name of Amun instead of Amun-Re, even if very uncommonly associated with this iconography.

The compositional layout of the stela of the Turin statue of Neferhebef follows the decorative principles of New Kingdom votive stelae: a round-topped shape and the surface divided into one or more registers. The upper register is conventionally reserved to the worshipped deity.<sup>113</sup> The placement of the hymn to the god in the lower register of the stela is also highly common.<sup>114</sup> Depending on the social status of the dedicator as well as concepts of agency and decorum, private persons may be represented beside the god, or in the lower registers.<sup>115</sup> The stela of Neferhebef, however, does not show a two-dimensional representation of the dedicator. This could be explained by the fact that the three-dimensional representation of the worshipper behind the stela fulfils the same function as the two-dimensional one would have.

## 9. Date and provenance

As with most of the objects in the Drovetti collection, the statue of Neferhebef has no recorded provenance. This type of stelophorous statue originated in the Theban area during the New Kingdom. We can hence assume that our statue comes from this gen-

eral area and dates from this general time span. The above analysis of the text and the iconography of the stela confirm this hypothesis.

The statue is classifiable within Stewart's type III, which Stewart dates from the reign of Thutmose III to that of Thutmose IV. The general style of the Turin statue, compared with examples from the same period, seems to confirm this date. However, the analysis of the stela and the texts on the statue suggest a later date.<sup>116</sup> Notably, as pointed out in the above analysis of the inscriptions, several linguistic parallels suggest a date in the second half of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Moreover, the fact that the name and image of Amun are not chiselled away (as seen with other stelophorous statues) suggests a date after the Amarna period. The parallels offered by votive stelae with the representation of the sacred ram provide yet another dating indication. These are mainly dated to the Ramesside period and especially to the Nineteenth Dynasty, with a decrease in attestations after the reign of Ramses II.<sup>117</sup>

Regarding provenance, Bertha Porter and Rosalind Moss hypothesized Thebes as a probable find-spot.<sup>118</sup> The epithet of Amun "ruler of Thebes" in the first register of the stela fits nicely with this hypothesis. Thebes was indeed the main source for Bernardino Drovetti's collection. Although many attestations of the worship of Amun in his zoomorphic form come from Deir el-Medina, it is possible to exclude



the village as a find-spot, because the titles of Neferhebef do not associate him with this site. The sacred ram was also worshipped outside of the workmen's village. Outside of Deir el-Medina, however, we lack geographical information for most votive stelae with the image of the sacred ram.<sup>119</sup> In the end, given the information available, the statue can only be generally regarded as coming from the Theban area.

## 10. Destination and function

As pointed out by Bernhauer and Seyr, although the find spot of most stelophorous statues is unknown, their inscriptions can provide an indication of their context of use.<sup>120</sup>

The features of the stela of Neferhebef's statue, comparable to those of Theban votive stelae, differentiates the Turin statue from most of the stelophorous statues with solar hymns. Specifically, its text does not concern the funerary or solar cult, but the cult of Amun. It thus can be regarded as a proper votive stela. The other inscriptions on the statue besides the hymn contain common requests for benefits such

as health, prosperity, a long life, a good burial, etc. These requests are comparable to those found on votive objects, including temple statues.<sup>121</sup> With the integration of a votive stela, the statue acquires a new significance and takes on the functions of this object. The statue type, originally created for funerary use, was re-interpreted here for a different purpose.<sup>122</sup> This is a trend already attested for some specimens of the first half of the Eighteenth Dynasty.<sup>123</sup> It bears witness to an evolution in the function of this particular statue type during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties.

The gesture of presenting an emblem of the god is indeed very common in the private sculpture of the Ramesside period. Among the emblems presented, cultic objects related to Amun are the most common (Fig. 17). The statue could therefore be said to belong within this group of private statuary.

New Kingdom stelophorous statues bearing solar hymns had a well-defined funerary function in the Theban area. Given our statue's different character, however, its function must have been another one.



a



b

**Fig. 17:** From left to right: a: Statuette Cat. 3035, unknown provenance, Eighteenth Dynasty, reign of Amenhotep III. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin. b: Statue of Penshenabu, Cat. 3032, Deir el-Medina, Nineteenth Dynasty. Photo: Museo Egizio, Turin.

In line with New Kingdom votive practices, a temple complex is its more likely original destination, although tombs were also possibly used as a cult place suitable to collect votive offerings.<sup>124</sup> For instance, in the so-called Salakhana tomb at Asyut, two votive stelae were discovered with the depiction of the sacred ram of Amun.<sup>125</sup> However, it is uncertain if this tomb served as a sacred place or as a cachette of sorts for the temple of Wepwawet.<sup>126</sup>

A cultic function of the statue is expressed in text E, which indicates that ritual offerings were supposed to be given in the presence of the deity in favour of Neferhebef. As a temple statue, the object contributed to keep the memory of its dedicator alive, ensuring his or her material presence in the sacred space of the temple.<sup>127</sup> This is clearly testified by a wish expressed in text F: “May (Neferhebef/this statue) be in front of Amun every day.” The fact that the sentence lacks an explicit subject creates an ambiguity, which was possibly intentional. The same ambiguity continues further: “(If) he summons for Amun, he (=Amun) will listen to his summons and will cause his heir to arise in his place.” If the first sentence implies a passive action for the statue (i.e. its presence in the temple), the continuation of the text seems to suggest an active role in cult activity. As stated above, this evidence can be interpreted as showing that the statue served as an intermediary.<sup>128</sup>

Other texts on the statue stress the owner’s personal relationship with the deity. One of the most remarkable demonstrations of this is the expression “my god”, contained in text G, which somehow implies a special intimacy between the deity and the worshipper. In this regard, the statue as a whole can be understood as a statement of the dedicator’s devotion. In text D, for instance, a list of favours for Neferhebef are presented as a divine intervention. The religious attachment also serves as a social marker: religious titles are used to build Neferhebef’s identity, who in text C presents himself as follows: “I am the herald of the goose of Amun, first herald of the lord of the gods.” Text G adds another distinctive element of the owner’s identity: his nickname or epithet Kamen, which may be connected to the meaning of blindness in a personal piety context.

The statue was meant to interact not only with the gods, but also with people through its imagery and

inscriptions. This feature is demonstrated by the Appeal to the Living inscribed on it, in text G, which explicitly calls upon priests and passers-by to take an active role in the ritual offerings to Amun. The same call for interaction is found right below the Appeal to the Living, in text H: “Your favour (of) every day is that you remember (my) name before him (=Amun).” In this perspective, the adaptation of a funerary statue type for the temple area can be perhaps interpreted as a way to draw attention toward it and thus increase interaction with it. The location of these texts may also be a clue for the original placement of the statue, in particular in terms of its orientation. One can suppose that the back of the statue was more visible to passers-by compared to the front, which was possibly oriented directly toward the god.

Text I, on the other hand, was in a position that made it inaccessible to passers-by. Although its understanding is affected by its state of preservation, this fact indicates that it was not meant to be read, but rather had a performative function.

## 11. Conclusions

Recent research has focused mainly on stelophorous statues as a sculpture type used almost exclusively in the context of the solar cult. Examples with different kinds of texts and depictions show that this statue type could also be used in other settings already during the New Kingdom.<sup>129</sup>

Indeed, one of the outstanding features of the statue of Neferhebef is its function. The stela of the statue can be considered as a proper votive stela and as such was linked to an object that was not originally designed to be combined with it. With this integration, the entire stelophorous statue acquired a new significance. The statue can be considered as an object that immortalises the gesture of donating a votive stela to the god Amun. As a votive object, it has a double level of meaning: it shows religious access and activity by the owner, but at the same time displays his social status.

The dating of the statue is complicated by several factors. According to Stewart’s classification, the statue would date between the reigns of Thutmose III and Thutmose IV. This conclusion is, however, not satisfactory, as many of its features point to a later date. The same ambiguity seen in statue EA480 has been tentatively explained in two ways.<sup>130</sup> The stat-

ue could a) have been fashioned in an earlier period and was reinscribed at a later date or b) have been fashioned in the same period as the inscriptions with stylistic elements copied from earlier statues. Neither hypothesis, however, can be confirmed.

Given the situation presented above, an unequivocal date for the statue of Neferhebef cannot be provided. The most probable chronological range is late Eighteenth Dynasty to early Nineteenth Dynasty.

Although not supported by recorded archaeological data, the provenance of the statue is most likely the Theban area, which has yielded many specimens of both stelophorous statues and votive stelae with the depiction of the sacred ram. In the light of what has been said about the function of the statue, the most probable destination of the statue would have been a temple complex.

## 12. Acknowledgments

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> See Table 1.

<sup>2</sup> Orcurti, *Catalogo illustrato*, 1852, p. 68, no. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Fabretti, et al., *Regio Museo*, 1882, p. 411, no. 3025.

<sup>4</sup> See D'Amicone, in Roccati and Donatelli, *Alle origini dell'Egittologia*, pp. 124–27.

<sup>5</sup> Bibliothèque nationale de France, NAF 20333, *Papiers de J.-Fr. Champollion le jeune (1790-1832). XIXe siècle. 2e série. VIII-XI Monuments et inscriptions funéraires. Supplément 11. Monuments funéraires IV*, pp. 191–94. <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10465087s>.

<sup>6</sup> Anonymous, in *Documenti inediti*, III, 1880, pp. 206–93.

<sup>7</sup> Vandier, *Manuel*, III.1, 1958, p. 471, no. 3, p. 680.

<sup>8</sup> Schall, “Die thebanischen Stelophore”, 1989, p. 181.

<sup>9</sup> Bernhauer and Seyr, in Hannig et al. (eds.), *Dem Schreiber der Gottesworte*, 2023, p. 45 n. 99, Abb. 6.

<sup>10</sup> See the online catalogue of the Griffith Institute archive, Oxford: <https://archive.griffith.ox.ac.uk/index.php/petrie-3-1-142>; <https://archive.griffith.ox.ac.uk/index.php/petrie-3-1-143>.

<sup>11</sup> Kondo (ed.), *Ancient Egypt in Torino*, 2009–2010, pp. 100, 206. The statue is here dated to the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty.

<sup>12</sup> Heimann (ed.), *Ägyptens Schätze entdecken*, 2012. The catalogue does not include a discussion or images of the statue.

<sup>13</sup> Andreu-Lanoë et al. (eds.), *L'aventure Champollion*, 2022, pp. 179–81, figs. 83–84.

<sup>14</sup> The whole inscription on the stela is designated by Champollion as “A”. See Fig. 3a.

<sup>15</sup> Designated by Champollion as “B”. See Fig. 3a and Fig. 3c.

<sup>16</sup> Designated by Champollion respectively as “D’” and “D”. See Fig. 3a-c.

<sup>17</sup> Designated by Champollion respectively as “C” and “E”. See Fig. 3a and Fig. 3c.

<sup>18</sup> Designated by Champollion as “A”. See Fig. 3d.

<sup>19</sup> Designated by Champollion as “F’”, “F” and “B”. See Fig. 3.

<sup>20</sup> See Poole, *RiME* 3 (2019), p. 9, fig. 13, fn. 10, <https://doi.org/10.29353/rime.2019.2808>. See also <https://aaew.bbaw.de/archive/das-digitalisierte-zettelarchiv/album/handschrift-dza>.

<sup>21</sup> Orcurti, *Catalogo illustrato*, 1855, p. 68, no. 5, opts for the syncretic form (“Ammon-ra”).

<sup>22</sup> Moje, *Untersuchungen zur hieroglyphischen Paläographie*, 2007, pp. 38–39.

<sup>23</sup> LGG, II, p. 144; Radwan, in Hawass et al. (eds.), *Perspectives on Ancient Egypt*, 2010.

<sup>24</sup> Radwan, in Hawass et al. (eds.), *Perspectives on Ancient Egypt*, 2010, p. 399.

<sup>25</sup> See [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y\\_EA29944](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA29944); [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y\\_EA480](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA480).

<sup>26</sup> Auenmüller, “Territorialität”, 2015, pp. 220–22; Auenmüller, in Backes et al. (eds.), *Text: Wissen – Wirkung – Wahrnehmung*, 2015, pp. 83–85.

<sup>27</sup> Davies, *Rock Tombs*, III, p. 32, pl. 27. See <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/IBUBd0dGPf29NOX0vOGFNrIjR8>.

<sup>28</sup> Davies, *Rock Tombs*, VI, p. 25, pl. 3. See <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/IBUBd4X6ynXZyk68gJgp1zqQXUs>.

<sup>29</sup> See <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/IBUBd4X6ynXZyk68gJgp1zqQXUs>.

<sup>30</sup> See <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/>



- IBUBd7F1chQsDEe1oPsvDOGunng.
- <sup>31</sup> Daressy, ASAE 18 (1919); Murnane, *Texts from the Amarna Period*, 1995, pp. 47–49; Auenmüller, “Territorialität”, 2015, p. 889; Auenmüller, in Feder et al. (eds.), *Sortieren – Edieren – Kreieren*, 2022, p. 109.
- <sup>32</sup> Al-Ayedi, *Index*, 2006, p. 181, no. 557.
- <sup>33</sup> See Exell, *Soldiers, Sailors and Sandalmakers*, 2009, p. 34; Exell, “Social and Historical Interpretation”, 2006, pp. 69–71.
- <sup>34</sup> LGG, VI, p. 342.
- <sup>35</sup> PN, I, p. 280, no. 22.
- <sup>36</sup> See <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/lemma/48430>.
- <sup>37</sup> See further below.
- <sup>38</sup> Al-Ayedi, *Index*, 2006, pp. 277–79, nos. 895–97, 899–901; Taylor, *Index*, 2001, pp. 104–05, nos. 954–59.
- <sup>39</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, 2010<sup>2</sup>, pp. 258–59.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 262.
- <sup>41</sup> Roberson, *Enigmatic Writing*, II, 2020, p. 81.
- <sup>42</sup> See for example: <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/IBUBd4N2WyrVokBOs3Naq17vlpC>. The name of the god can also be expressed as *ntr-ꜥj* (see for example: <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/IBUBdz3pW5JpK0lNmnlShA3HSnY>). In the Amarna rock tombs, the construct is used with the name of Akhenaten, expressed by a suffix pronoun (see for example: <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/IBUBd6G4xRJa3EPpmbUP2gmEak>).
- <sup>43</sup> Other parallels for this construction are unknown to the present author.
- <sup>44</sup> Statue texts referring to the statue itself are well attested in the New Kingdom; see Frood, in Masson-Berghoff (ed.), *Statues in Context*, 2019.
- <sup>45</sup> See discussion in section 10.
- <sup>46</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, 2010<sup>2</sup>, p. 255.
- <sup>47</sup> Shubert, “Those Who (Still) Live on Earth”, 2007, pp. 320–21; Salvador, in van Pelt et al. (eds.), *Current Research in Egyptology 2013, 2014*, pp. 163–64.
- <sup>48</sup> PN, I, p. 342, no. 11.
- <sup>49</sup> See <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/lemma/163580>.
- <sup>50</sup> For an in-depth discussion of the topic and references to examples, see Galán, *CdE* 74 (1999); Exell, *Soldiers, Sailors and Sandalmakers*, 2009, p. 94; Exell, “Social and Historical Interpretation”, 2006, pp. 40–41.
- <sup>51</sup> Shubert, “Those Who (Still) Live on Earth”, 2007, pp. 364–67; Salvador, in van Pelt et al. (eds.), *Current Research in Egyptology 2013, 2014*.
- <sup>52</sup> See as a parallel <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/IBUBdx4Z6UuVw0uniZ9ZNXq8ns8>.
- <sup>53</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, 2010<sup>2</sup>, p. 367.
- <sup>54</sup> See discussion in the following section.
- <sup>55</sup> Daressy, ASAE 18 (1919); Murnane, *Texts from the Amarna Period*, 1995, pp. 47–49; Auenmüller, “Territorialität”, 2015, p. 889; Auenmüller, in Feder et al. (eds.), *Sortieren – Edieren – Kreieren*, 2022, p. 109. See <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/IBUBd3kmAP2AUUMOIG9cB8VRasA>, <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/IBUBd5jLjV7VZ02ujauZTR4SIt0>.
- <sup>56</sup> Davies, *Rock Tombs*, I, p. 52, pl. 39. See <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/>
- IBUBd4TlQkIemUmViuVRjxrDQFc.
- <sup>57</sup> See <https://www.museedegrenoble.fr/oeuvre/1531/1922-simulacre-de-vase-decore-inscrit-au-nom-de-neferhebef.htm>; <https://www.navigart.fr/grenoble/artwork/egypte-simulacre-de-vase-decore-inscrit-au-nom-de-neferhebef-60000000087327>.
- <sup>58</sup> See <https://sites.google.com/view/funerarycones/catalogue/216>.
- <sup>59</sup> See <https://krollermuller.nl/en/egypte-statue-of-neferhebef>.
- <sup>60</sup> See <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/554768>.
- <sup>61</sup> See <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/554768>.
- <sup>62</sup> See <https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010013297>.
- <sup>63</sup> See [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y\\_EA31](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA31); Rocchi, in Bennett and Eyma (eds.), *A Delta-Man in Yebu*, 2003, p. 42; Urk. IV, p. 1503.
- <sup>64</sup> See [https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/S\\_8625](https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/S_8625).
- <sup>65</sup> See [https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/S\\_8451\\_01](https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/S_8451_01).
- <sup>66</sup> Lacau, Stèles, 1909, pp. 153–55, pl. XLVIII; Khaled, *JFTH* 17 (2020).
- <sup>67</sup> Lacau, Stèles, 1909, pp. 157–58, pl. XLVIII; Khaled, *JFTH* 17 (2020).
- <sup>68</sup> See <https://sites.google.com/view/funerarycones/catalogue/78>.
- <sup>69</sup> PM I.1, pp. 132–33; Kees, ZÄS 85.1, 1960, p. 46; Davies, *Some Scenes from Theban Tombs*, p. 12.
- <sup>70</sup> See <https://sites.google.com/view/funerarycones/catalogue/218>.
- <sup>71</sup> PM I.1, pp. 453–54; Manniche, *Lost Tombs*, 1988, pp. 54–55.
- <sup>72</sup> See <https://sites.google.com/view/funerarycones/catalogue/54>.
- <sup>73</sup> PM VIII.2, p. 555; Rocchi, in Bennett and Eyma (eds.), *A Delta-Man in Yebu*, 2003, p. 42. Sergio Pernigotti proposed the different reading Nefernebef. See Pernigotti, *Statuaria egiziana*, Bologna 1980, pp. 55–56 and pls. XVI–XVII, LXXII–LXXIV.
- <sup>74</sup> Picchi (ed.), *Tutte le anime della mummia*, 2009, p. 43.
- <sup>75</sup> PM I.1, pp. 97–99; Davies, *Two Ramesside Tombs*, 1927, p. 21.
- <sup>76</sup> See <https://archiviofotografico.museoegizio.it/en/archive/theban-region/deir-el-medina/tt8-tomb-and-chapel-of-kha-and-merit/?ff=1&photo=C01841>.
- <sup>77</sup> Rocchi, in Bennett and Eyma (eds.), *A Delta-Man in Yebu*, 2003, p. 42.
- <sup>78</sup> Kees, ZÄS 85.1, 1960, p. 46.
- <sup>79</sup> See above, section 4.6.
- <sup>80</sup> PN, II, pp. 95–171.
- <sup>81</sup> Rocchi, in Bennett and Eyma (eds.), *A Delta-Man in Yebu*, 2003, p. 43.
- <sup>82</sup> See <https://sites.google.com/view/funerarycones/catalogue/180>.
- <sup>83</sup> See <https://sites.google.com/view/funerarycones/catalogue/15>.
- <sup>84</sup> See <https://www.rmo.nl/en/collection/search-collection/collection-piece/?object=21174> and above, note 80.

- <sup>85</sup> See <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/artifact/shabti-of-heby>.
- <sup>86</sup> See <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/139170/fragmentary-stele-of-hebi;jsessionid=44B55061557E9424D7C605BB6FE8C1EA?ctx=ec598c65-5f4d-4ee7-9f0c-74665ef292c1&idx=0>.
- <sup>87</sup> Taylor, *Index*, 2001, p. 191, no. 1870.
- <sup>88</sup> Awad, “Untersuchungen zum Schatzhaus”, 2002, pp. 149–50.
- <sup>89</sup> See [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y\\_EA324](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA324).
- <sup>90</sup> Taylor, *Index*, 2001, p. 192, no. 1871.
- <sup>91</sup> See above Section 4.8.
- <sup>92</sup> Al-Ayedi, *Index*, 2006, p. 182, no. 563; Davies, *Tomb of Two Sculptors*, 1925, pl. XVII.
- <sup>93</sup> For overviews, see Teeter, in Hartwig (ed.), *Companion to Ancient Egyptian Art*, 2015, pp. 333–34; Bernhauer, *Innovationen*, 2010, pp. 36–37.
- <sup>94</sup> Stewart, *JEA* 53 (1967).
- <sup>95</sup> Bagh, *CIPEG Journal* 5 (2021); Becher, *ZÄS* 88 (1962); Bernhauer, in Hoffmann et al. (eds.) *Up and Down the Nile*, 2021; Bommas, *GM* 258 (2019); Grassart-Blésès, *BSÉG* 30 (2014–2015); Maravelia, in Popielska-Grzybowska and Tomorad (eds.), *Egypt* 2015, 2017; Orsenigo, *EVO* 42 (2019); Sauneron, *ASAE* 52/1 (1952); Scrivens, *ZÄS* 143/2, (2016); Selim, in Davies (ed.), *Studies in Egyptian Antiquities*, 1999; Silverman, in Johnson and Wente (eds.), *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes*, 1976; Stewart, *JEA* 46 (1960); Wilbrink, in Goyon and Cardin (eds.), *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Egyptologists*, 2007; Winlock, *JEA* 6/1 (1920); de Wit, *CdE* 34 (1959); Zivie, *BIFAO* 75 (1975).
- <sup>96</sup> Barbotin, *Pallas* 93 (2013).
- <sup>97</sup> Stewart, *JEA* 53 (1967), pp. 34–35.
- <sup>98</sup> Bernhauer and Seyr, in Hannig et al. (eds.), *Dem Schreiber der Gottesworte*, 2023.
- <sup>99</sup> Andreu-Lanoë et al. (eds.), *L’aventure Champollion*, 2022, p. 179.
- <sup>100</sup> See previous note.
- <sup>101</sup> Compare Bagh, *CIPEG Journal* 5 (2021).
- <sup>102</sup> For an overview on quartzite, see Nicholson and Shaw, *Ancient Egyptian Materials*, 2000, pp. 53–54.
- <sup>103</sup> Most of the New Kingdom stelophorous statues were made of white limestone – 76 out of the 140 listed in Schall, “Die Thebanischen Stelophoren”, 1989. See also Bernhauer and Seyr, in Hannig et al. (eds.), *Dem Schreiber der Gottesworte*, 2023, p. 38.
- <sup>104</sup> See [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y\\_EA480](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA480).
- <sup>105</sup> Strudwick, *Masterpieces of Ancient Egypt*, 2006, p. 166; Radwan, in Hawass et al. (eds.), *Perspectives on Ancient Egypt*, 2010, pp. 395–96.
- <sup>106</sup> Assmann, *Egyptian Solar Religion*, 1995.
- <sup>107</sup> See, e.g., the statue of the scribe Amenhotep in the Chicago Field Museum, Inv. 88906 (Vandier, *Manuel*, III.2, 1958, pl. CLIX, 4), and the statue of Nebamun in the British Museum, BM EA29279. ([https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y\\_EA29279](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA29279)).
- <sup>108</sup> [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y\\_EA1387](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA1387). See also: Edwards, *HTBM* 8, pl. 10.
- <sup>109</sup> Exell, *Soldiers, Sailors and Sandalmakers*, 2009, pp. 33–34; Exell, “Social and Historical Interpretation”, 2006, pp. 72–74.
- <sup>110</sup> *LGG*, IV, p. 702.
- <sup>111</sup> Cabrol, *Voies processionnelles*, 2001, p. 722.
- <sup>112</sup> The same occurred with other deities; see Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 1993, pp. 94–95.
- <sup>113</sup> Robins, *JARCE* 31 (1994), p. 36.
- <sup>114</sup> See, for instance, the stela of Baki (Fig. 16c).
- <sup>115</sup> Karen Exell divides votive stelae into three categories, according to the position of the dedicator: Exell, *Soldiers, Sailors and Sandalmakers*, 2009, pp. 20–21.
- <sup>116</sup> The same dating problems are pointed out by Strudwick, *Masterpieces of Ancient Egypt*, 2006, p. 166 and Radwan, in Hawass et al. (eds.), *Perspectives on Ancient Egypt*, 2010, pp. 395–96 for the stelophorous statue of Amenwahsu (British Museum EA480).
- <sup>117</sup> Exell, *Soldiers, Sailors and Sandalmakers*, 2009, p. 60.
- <sup>118</sup> PM, I2, 1964, p. 794.
- <sup>119</sup> Only one such stela has a recorded provenance in the Theban region: CG 34153 (See Lacau, *Stèles*, 1909, p. 199, pl. LXI; PM, I<sup>2</sup>, 1964, p. 776).
- <sup>120</sup> Bernhauer and Seyr, in Hannig et al. (eds.), *Dem Schreiber der Gottesworte*, 2023, pp. 43–46.
- <sup>121</sup> Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 1993, pp. 99–100; Pinch and Waraksa, *UEE* 2009, p. 6.
- <sup>122</sup> Bernhauer and Seyr, in Hannig et al. (eds.), *Dem Schreiber der Gottesworte*, 2023, p. 48.
- <sup>123</sup> See Orsenigo, *EVO* 42 (2019).
- <sup>124</sup> Pinch and Waraksa, *UEE* 2009, p. 3.
- <sup>125</sup> DuQuesne, *Salakhana Trove*, 2009, pp. 309–10.
- <sup>126</sup> Wells, “Display and Devotion”, 2014, p. 81.
- <sup>127</sup> On temple statues, see Frood, in Picchi, Salvador and Giovetti (eds.), *Egitto. Splendore Millenario*, 2015; Frood, in Masson-Berghoff (ed.), *Statues in Context*, 2019; Kjølby, in Nyord, Kjølby (ed.), ‘Being in Ancient Egypt’, 2009; Raedler, in Beinlich (ed.), 12. *Ägyptologische Tempeltagung*, 2021.
- <sup>128</sup> See Frood, in Picchi, Salvador and Giovetti (eds.), *Egitto. Splendore Millenario*, 2015; Frood, in Masson-Berghoff (ed.), *Statues in Context*, 2019.
- <sup>129</sup> Bernhauer, in Hoffmann et al. (eds.), *Up and Down the Nile*, 2021; Bernhauer and Seyr, in Hannig et al. (eds.), *Dem Schreiber der Gottesworte*, 2023.
- <sup>130</sup> Strudwick, *Masterpieces of Ancient Egypt*, 2006, p. 166; Radwan, in Hawass et al. (eds.), *Perspectives on Ancient Egypt*, 2010, pp. 395–99.

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