

ORIENTALIA LOVANIENSIA

ANALECTA

— 304 —

## ÉGYPTE ANTÉRIEURE

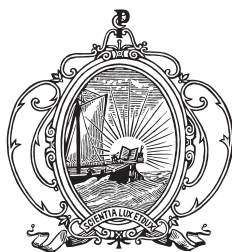
Mélanges de préhistoire et d'archéologie offerts  
à Béatrix Midant-Reynes par ses étudiants,  
collègues et amis

édités par

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avec la collaboration de

OLIVIER ROCHECOUSTE



PEETERS

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## MENES, TETI, ITI, ITA. AN UPDATE

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*En 2012, une équipe franco-égyptienne dirigée par Pierre Tallet a découvert un ensemble de reliefs et d'inscriptions rupestres dans le Ouadi Ameyra, situé dans une zone mal connue de l'ouest du Sinaï central. Ces gravures datent de la période Naqada III jusqu'au règne de Raneb, le deuxième roi de la II<sup>e</sup> dynastie, et elles sont organisées en cinq panneaux, chacun d'eux constitué par plusieurs documents rassemblés et exécutés par la même main, ainsi que de quelques documents isolés. Ce qui nous intéresse ici c'est le panneau V, datant du règne de Djer, le troisième roi de la I<sup>re</sup> dynastie. Ce panneau est délimité, à droite, par le serekh du roi massacrant un ennemi, et, à gauche, par une inscription que Tallet lit comme une proposition à prédicat nominale (« la toute première phrase transmettant un 'énoncé fini' à avoir été rédigée dans l'écriture hiéroglyphique »). Dans cet article, nous offrons une interprétation alternative de cette inscription et quelques conclusions historiques qui en découlent.*

*In 2012, a French-Egyptian team led by Pierre Tallet discovered a set of early pharaonic rock reliefs and inscriptions in the Wadi Ameyra, located in a little-known area of central west Sinai. These reliefs date from Naqada III up to the reign of Raneb, the second king of the 2nd Dynasty, and they are arranged in five panels, each of them including different documents joined together and made by the same hand, as well as some separate documents. We are here concerned with panel V, which dates from the reign of Djer, the third king of the 1st Dynasty. This panel is framed by the serekh of the king smiting an enemy, to the far right, and, to the far left, by an inscription which Tallet reads as a nominal sentence (“la toute première phrase transmettant un 'énoncé fini' à avoir été rédigée dans l'écriture hiéroglyphique”). In this paper, an alternative interpretation of this inscription is presented and some historical conclusions are drawn from it.*

As it is well known, the first four names of the king list in the temple of Sety I in Abydos are those of Menes, Teti, Iti and Ita, the first four kings of the 1st Dynasty. These are the only names in the whole list which correspond to a period when the royal titulary or protocol was limited to the Horus title and the dual title of *nswt-bit* did not yet exist. It appeared during the reign of Den, the fifth king of the 1st Dynasty. All the sources agree that this dynasty had eight kings, so the first four only had the Horus title and name, while the last four had also the *nswt-bit* title and name, being the latter their birth name. Now, the names recorded in the Ramessid and Classical (Manetho, Eratosthenes) lists of pharaohs are the birth (or personal) names of the kings, associated to the *nswt-bit* title, and not their Horus names. While for the last four kings of the 1st Dynasty (as well as the successive kings) the correspondence between the Horus names and the birth names is well attested in the Thinite sources, being the birth names 'marked'

by the *nswt-bit* title, and the identity between these birth names and the names recorded in the Ramessid and Classical lists is also clear (with some eventual and explainable mistakes of copy or transmission), this correspondence and this identity, and even the existence of the ‘second name’ of the kings, are less evident for the first four kings of the dynasty (Cervelló Autuori 2005; Heagy 2014: 61-62). This is why, strictly speaking, a ‘problem of Menes’ does not exist, but a ‘problem of Menes-Teti-Iti-Ita’ does (Cervelló Autuori 2005: 40-41).

In the last few years, however, new pieces of data have appeared which shed new light to this problem and allow us to reach already very reliable conclusions. The historicity of Menes, Teti, Iti and Ita could be considered as essentially established today.

Je suis heureux d’offrir les réflexions qui suivent à mon amie et collègue Béatrix Midant-Reynes, l’une des chercheuses qui ont renouvelé les études sur la préhistoire et les origines de l’Égypte au cours des dernières décennies. Je me souviendrai toujours de la première fois que je l’ai vue : c’était dans un café près du Collège de France (place Marcelin Berthelot) et elle nous a montré, à des collègues et à moi, son livre *Préhistoire de l’Égypte*, qui venait d’être publié. C’était en 1992 et j’étais à Paris pour un séjour de recherche, car j’avais commencé à travailler sur ma thèse de doctorat consacrée aux origines de la civilisation égyptienne dans son contexte africain. Pendant ces années, des données très révélatrices commençaient à arriver de sites emblématiques tels que Merimdé, Hiérakonpolis ou Abydos. Mais le paradigme général des études restait celui qui avait été conçu pendant la première moitié du *xx<sup>e</sup>* siècle, avant la construction du deuxième barrage d’Assouan et le sauvetage des monuments de Nubie. Le livre de Béatrix a marqué le début du dépassement de cet ancien paradigme et de la construction de l’actuel. Il est arrivé « *como agua de mayo* » – comme on dit en espagnol – pour tous les chercheurs s’intéressant aux origines de l’Égypte. Dans les années suivantes elle n’a pas cessé de travailler dans ce sens... C’est un vrai plaisir, chère Béatrix, de t’offrir ces pages dans le cadre de ce beau et mérité volume d’hommage collectif.

In 2012, a team from the *Université de la Sorbonne (Paris-IV)* and the *Institut français d’archéologie orientale*, led by Pierre Tallet and guided by local bedouins, discovered a set of early pharaonic rock reliefs and inscriptions in the Wadi Ameyra, located in a little known area of central west Sinai (Tallet & Laisney 2012; Tallet 2013b, 2014, 2015). These reliefs are engraved on a succession of floor sandstone slabs, on a surface of approximately 25 × 5 m (N-S × E-W axes), and they date from Naqada III up to the reign of Raneb, the second king of the 2nd Dynasty. According to the discoverers, an anonymous *serekh* of Naqada IIIA, and the *serekhs* of kings Iry-Hor, Ka (?), Narmer, Djer and Raneb are attested. If the readings of the names of Ka and Narmer are debatable, those of the names

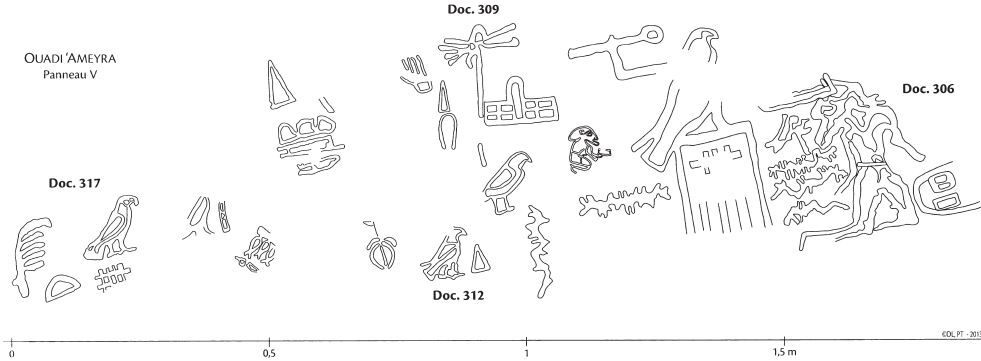


Fig. 1. Wadi Ameyra reliefs and inscriptions, panel V (Tallet 2015: 68, fig. 47).

of Iry-Hor,<sup>1</sup> Djer and Raneb are well established. Since no traces of mining exploitation have been discovered in the surroundings, these reliefs should be rather seen as a mark to the entrance to the mining region (Tallet 2015: 2-3) They prove that the Egyptian presence in Sinai is older than previously thought and starts in conjunction with the formation of the pharaonic state, since the oldest pharaonic reliefs known in this region before the discoveries in Wadi Ameyra were those in Wadi el-Humur (reign of Den, fifth king of the 1st Dynasty, discovered in 2000; Rezk Ibrahim & Tallet 2009; Tallet 2013a: 15-21, docs. 1-3) and Wadi Maghara (inscriptions from the reign of Netjerkhet, first king of the 3rd Dynasty; Gardiner, Peet & Černý 1952-55). The engravings in Wadi Ameyra are arranged in five panels, each of them including different documents joined together and made by the same hand, as well as some separate documents.

We are here concerned with panel V (Fig. 1), which dates from the reign of Djer, the third king of the 1st Dynasty (Tallet 2013b; 2015: 23-32, fig. 47, pls. 32-40). This panel is more complex than the others and writing is present in it in a more systematic way (Tallet 2015: 23). What is interesting is that the composition is framed by four sequences that clearly are, or seem to be, proper names. To the far right is the *serekh* of king Djer smiting an enemy, in a similar way as the *serekhs* or the names of kings Narmer, Aha and Djet in different well known labels or cylinders (Tallet 2015: 23-27, doc. 306, figs. 47, 51, 53-55, pls. 32-36) (Fig. 1, doc. 306): the right 'hand' of the falcon grasps a mace, and the left one seizes the kneeling enemy by the hair. We can state that the whole composition is presided by this motive, which occupies almost half of the entire panel (almost 1 m of 2 m in length). In the upper central part of the panel is

<sup>1</sup> The historicity of king Iry-Hor is widely accepted today and the presence of his name in Wadi Ameyra seems to confirm it definitively (Tallet 2015: 13-14 and references). See also Tallet & Laisney 2012; Tallet 2014.



Fig. 2. Wadi Ameyra reliefs and inscriptions, panel V, document 317: photograph (Tallet 2015: 152, pl. 40).

the name of queen Neithhotep, written with the same ‘spelling’ as in all her other documents (Kaplony 1963: I, 588-592; III, pls. 28.75, 54.201; Spencer 1980: 65, pls. 50.462, 54.462; Regulski 2010: 234, 750; Tallet 2015: 28-29, doc. 309, figs. 47, 59, pl. 37) (Fig. 1, doc. 309); she was probably the wife of Narmer, the mother of Aha and the grandmother of Djer, without doubt a powerful and influential woman in the early Thinite court. In the lower central part of the panel is what is more likely another proper name: Sopedhor or Dihor, which might have corresponded to an official or a prince (Tallet 2015: 30, doc. 312, fig. 47, pl. 38) (Fig. 1, doc. 312).

But the sequence which interests us most is the one in the far left of the panel, which again has to do with proper names (Tallet 2015: 32, doc. 317, figs. 47, 62-64, pl. 40). It is formed by four hieroglyphic signs oriented right to left and arranged in two columns of two signs each (Fig. 1, doc. 317; Fig. 2). Tallet recognizes the signs of the falcon (G5), the stool (Q3, in its early square shape, with crossed lines which extend beyond the outline border of the sign and probably represent a mat covering the stool or a mat rather than a stool; Regulski 2010: 170-171), the flowering reed (M17) and the bread (X1). Given this, he reads the sequence: *Hr p<w> Jt<jw>*, and considers it the first nominal sentence attested in the history of the Egyptian language: ‘It is Horus, It(iu)’ (in French: ‘C’est Horus, It(iou)’). According to Tallet, this “confirmerait bien que le nom de naissance de Djer était Itiou” (Tallet 2015: 32). I completely agree with this second statement, but I disagree with Tallet’s reading of the sequence. The identification of the first, the third and the fourth signs is quite clear. But I am not sure that the second sign is a stool (Q3) and I believe that this inscription



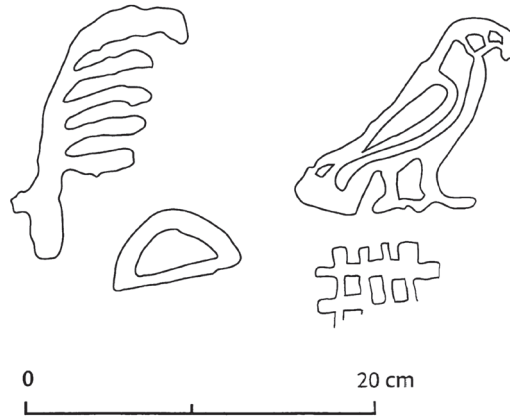


Fig. 3. Wadi Ameyra reliefs and inscriptions, panel V, document 317: drawing according to Tallet's interpretation of the inscription (Tallet 2015: 152, pl. 40).

allows an alternative interpretation which gives more sense and fits better in the epigraphic and linguistic context of the time. This leads me to the following considerations.

a) First of all, I must say that I have not seen the original inscription and that my interpretation is based on the published photographs (Tallet 2015: 152, pl. 40) (Fig. 2). However, these photographs are of high quality and clear enough to base this alternative proposal of reading on them.


b) The sign under discussion is the lower one of the first column of the text, and it is situated immediately above a section of the sandstone rock where the surface is peeling. The patina of the original surface and that of the peeled one are completely different, the former being of a dark grey colour and the latter of a light ochre colour. The surface of the section with the inscription is peeling off in some other little areas where a dark ochre patina emerges too, together with a whiter patina. The patina of the inscribed signs goes from light grey to dark ochre and white, and it is clear that the surface under the first column of the text has peeled off in relatively recent times.

c) The nature of the breakage gives our sign a deceptive appearance. As said above, Tallet interprets it as a square sign, formed by cross-linked horizontal and vertical strokes which extend beyond the outline border of the square (six at least, two horizontal and four vertical), a shape which would imitate a mat. This is the earliest layout of the stool-sign Q3 and this leads him to read the sign/word as  $p < w >$ . The precise interpretation of the sign by Tallet and his team is shown in the drawing of the inscription, where it is reconstructed in its upper-right two-thirds (Tallet 2015: 68, fig. 47, 152, pl. 40) (Fig. 3). The shape of the sign here looks quite irregular, with some strokes wider than others and some squares between the strokes larger than others.

d) Now then, the only reason that leads Tallet to interpret our sign as the Q3 sign is the presence, in its bottom-left angle, of what he sees as the last end of an alleged inferior horizontal stroke of the sign, whose central and right parts would be lost owing to the peeling. It is true that this hypothesized stroke-end has a very regular and straight shape, but it is also clear to me that this is not the end of a stroke, but the capricious form that the peeling of the surface of the rock takes in this precise point. Two kinds of peeling can be distinguished in this point: the more recent one, which runs immediately under the sign and does not affect it directly, and the older and less deep one, which can be seen – as has been said – in some precise points of the surface of the whole inscription and is dark ochre and white in colour. This last peeling, and its random regularity, is responsible for the illusion of an inferior horizontal stroke. In fact, if we carefully examine the space immediately to the right of the supposed stroke-end, we clearly see that it does not continue, as Tallet himself had already seen and reflected in the aforementioned drawing.

e) If this is so, which is the sign under discussion and how must the inscription be interpreted? According to my view, our sign is formed by five strokes only: one horizontal stroke and four vertical strokes engraved above the first at regular intervals and leaving its ends free. The former is less deeply cut into the rock than the latter. Interpreted in that way, the sign reveals a symmetrical and regular layout in accordance with the rest of the inscription, which is already quite ‘formal’. It is then a ‘horizontal’ sign rather than a square sign. It is clear to me that we are facing the sign M37 in its earlier layout, which represents a bundle of flax stems or a primitive fence of upright reeds and has the value *dr*. Therefore, we have here the Horus name of the king responsible for the panel, *Dr*, following the falcon (G5), which is a more expected combination. According to Regulski, “most of the representations [of the sign M37 in early dynastic inscriptions] could be found in the reign of Djer. When used as his royal name, the sign displays a considerable amount of variation. An original impression (...) in Brussels illustrates that the cord to bundle the stems could be less deeply cut into the cylinder than the stems and the latter go over the former” (Regulski 2015: 142; 503 for palaeography). As we have pointed out, this is the same that can be observed in our sign.

f) If this interpretation is correct, the name of Djer is written twice in the panel: inside the *serekh*, at the right end, and in this inscription, at the left end. Therefore, the panel ‘starts’ and ‘ends’ with the name of the king who commissioned it (the orientation from right to left is clear and occurs in all the documents of the panel). In fact, the layout of the sign in the *serekh* is exactly the same than that in the left inscription – if we agree with the regularity in shape of the latter –, with the only difference that the first one seems to have three vertical strokes while the second one clearly has four.

g) If the discussed sign is M37-*dr*, then the inscription is (Fig. 4):  *Hr Dr* *It(i)*, and has to be translated: ‘Horus Djer, It(i)’. We are not facing “la toute



première phrase transmettant un ‘énoncé fini’ à avoir été rédigée dans l’écriture hiéroglyphique” (Tallet 2015: 32, doc. 317; see also Tallet 2013b), but *the complete titulary of king Djer*, at a time when the royal titulary was still emerging and developing. As previously stated, this fits better in the epigraphic and linguistic (phraseological) context of that period, when writing is restricted to names and headlines and full predication is not yet recorded.<sup>2</sup>

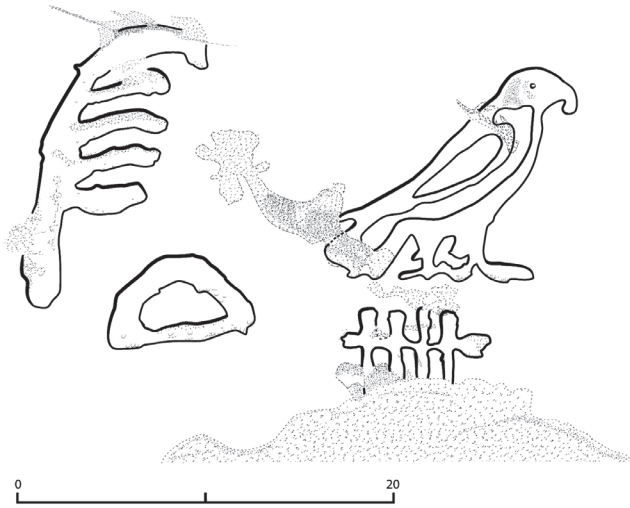


Fig. 4. Wadi Ameyra reliefs and inscriptions, panel V, document 317: drawing according to the interpretation of the inscription given in this article (drawing by Raquel Agrás Flores, IEPOA-UAB, from a photograph courtesy of Pierre Tallet).

h) As I have written, this initial titulary consisted of the Horus title and name and a ‘second name’, which was probably the birth name of the king (Cervelló Autuori 2005: 40-46). The existence of the latter makes total sense, because it is clear that the Horus name is a ‘programmatic’ one and that also these early kings had to have a birth name... It is not till Den, the fifth king of the 1st Dynasty, that the *nswt-bit* title is created and this ‘second name’ is linked to it and thus clearly marked as a royal name. The difficulty for the first four kings of the dynasty is that the dual title does not yet exist, and therefore the ‘second royal name’, even if it is in use, does not yet have a mark clearly identifying it as such. On the other hand, the documents where these names could be recorded are

<sup>2</sup> Tallet agrees with this general statement but considers his interpretation of the inscription to be a forerunner. As it is well known, the first sure examples of true sentences and full predication are not attested until the end of the 2nd Dynasty and the beginning of the 3rd (Vernus 1993: 94-97; Allen 2013: 2).

minimal. The document in Wadi Ameyra, however, is a definitive proof of the existence of the ‘second name’ of king Djer and the fact that this name is  $\dot{I}t(i)$ .<sup>3</sup> It can be paralleled with two other well-known documents of this king (Fig. 5): a seal impression from Abydos (Petrie 1901: 30-31, pl. xv.109; Kaplony 1963, II: 1115, III: pl. 47.175; Cervelló Autuori 2005: 42, fig. 7) and the section of the Old Kingdom royal annals devoted to him (Cairo Stone, recto, second register; Wilkinson 2000: 186-193, fig. 5). The first of these documents (Fig. 5a) has exactly the same sequence as in the Wadi Ameyra inscription, the only difference being that here the Horus name of the king is placed inside the *serekh*; this sequence is repeated twice in the epigraphic context, with the alternating order of the elements. These two inscriptions complement and validate each other: the same epigraphic context proves that the sign which follows the falcon records the Horus name of the king, whether or not there is a palace façade; and the close relationship between this Horus name and the sequence  $\dot{I}t(i)$  proves that the latter is a king’s name, and not, for example, the name of a prince, as some scholars have suggested (Kaplony 1963: I, 435-437, 533; von Beckerath 1997: 169; Heagy 2014: 77-78). All these scholars agree that this sequence is a proper name: the only reason why they did not attribute this name to the king is because of the mentioned lack of a tangible proof (a royal title) in the epigraphic context, due to the fact – as we have seen – that the royal titulary was in the process of being formed at that time. As for the royal annals, in the second register of the recto of the Cairo Stone king Djer is mentioned as ‘Horus Djer, King of Upper and Lower Egypt of Gold  $\dot{I}t(i)/\dot{I}t(t)$ ’, being this last name written with the flowering reed-sign (M17), the bread-sign (X1) and the pestle-sign U33 (Wilkinson 2000: 186-187, fig. 5; Cervelló Autuori, 2005: 41-42) (Fig. 5b). As I have written, the name  $\dot{I}t(i)/\dot{I}t(t)$  “appears enclosed within a cartouche, an anachronistic solution for the 1st Dynasty, but normal for the writer and ‘adapter’ of the late Old Kingdom. [This means that] the annalist of the late Old Kingdom (...) attributed a second name to king Horus-Djer and considered it his nswt-bit [or birth] name” (Cervelló Autuori 2005: 41). It is worth noting that this name is exactly the same than the one given to the third king of the 1st Dynasty on the Ramessid Abydos king list, where it also has the same spelling: it is clear that the same name has been correctly transmitted from the early 1st Dynasty to the late Old Kingdom to the Ramessid Age (and probably to Eratosthenes as well, if the name of the second Athothis, the third king of the 1st Dynasty according to him, derives from  $\dot{I}t(t)$ ; Waddell 1980: 214-215). I will expand on this a little later. A fourth piece of data could be added to those described up until now. In fact, a re-examination of the Gebel Sheikh Suleimam relief, now in the Khartoum Museum, carried out by Claire Somaglino and Pierre Tallet himself (Somaglino & Tallet 2015) (Fig. 5c),

<sup>3</sup> Tallet’s interpretation of the inscription leads him to the same conclusion, as we have seen.

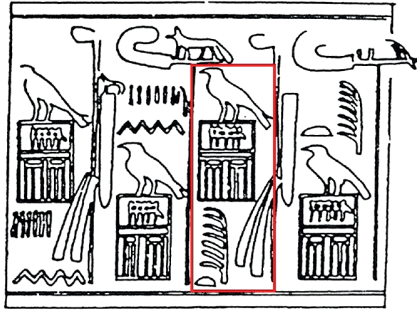


Fig. 5a. Seal impression of Djer from Abydos (Petrie 1901: pl. xv.109).

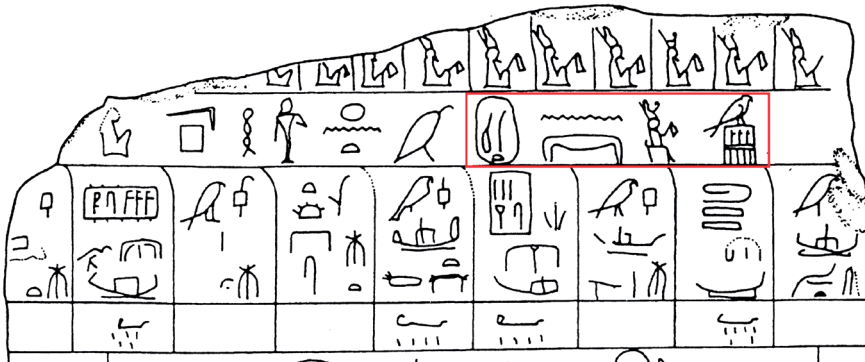


Fig. 5b. Cairo Stone annals, recto, second register (Wilkinson 2000: fig. 5).

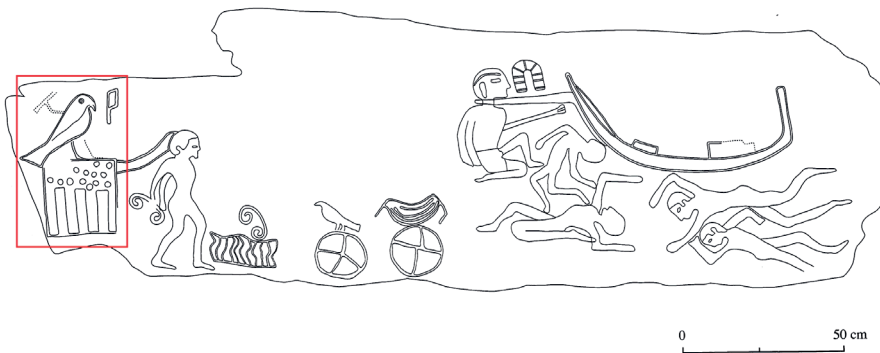


Fig. 5c. The Gebel Sheikh Suleiman original relief according to Somaglino and Tallet (Somaglino & Tallet 2015: 125).

has confirmed that the main scene could be dated to the reign of Djer and has suggested that the ‘plain dotted *serekh*’ smiting a prisoner (the same scene as in Wadi Ameyra) and a flowering reed-sign (M17) deeply incised immediately on the right of the head of the falcon on the top of the *serekh* could be contemporary (so far, it has been considered as part of the later epigraphy of the panel): “this may be the first sign of king Djer’s birth name, *jt*, (...) the sign *t* being perhaps erased just below” (Somaglino & Tallet 2015: 130).<sup>4</sup> If this is so, this would be the fourth document joining together the Horus name and the birth name of king Djer-Iti.

i) Turning to Wadi Ameyra’s left inscription, probably the reason why Tallet has not considered the possibility that the sign following the falcon is a Horus name is the lack of the palace façade. But we have to bear in mind, as has been said, that the royal titulary is still in formation at this moment and that the layout of the Horus title and name is not yet the canonical one. Different combinations are possible (up to the reign of Djet): the complete *serekh* (the most common); the palace façade with the Horus name inside but without the falcon (as in the Narmer palette); the Horus name alone (as in the Narmer palette again); the Horus name – alone or inside the palace façade topped by the falcon – smiting enemies (as in Djer’s reliefs in Wadi Ameyra and Gebel Sheikh Suleiman or other documents: Tallet 2015: 69-71; figs. 50-51, 53-55); and the falcon followed by the Horus name but without the palace façade. This last combination is the only one for king Iry-Hor (Kaplony 1963; III, pl. 7.13; Spencer 1980: 53, pl. 26.358; Kaiser & Dreyer 1982: 232-235, fig. 10; Regulski 2010: 228, 744; Tallet 2015: 13-15, doc. 285, fig. 40, pls. 13-15) and it is the pattern for the Horus names of all the kings of the 1st Dynasty in the two Abydos ‘list’ seal impressions (Dreyer 1986; Dreyer et al. 1996: 72-73, fig. 26, pl. 14.b-c; Cervelló Autuori 2005: 31-33; 2008: 887-888); since this pattern is not recorded after the reign of Djer outside these seal impressions, its retention on them until the end of the 1st Dynasty answers, undoubtedly, to a matter of tradition and continuity in a precise epigraphic context. Be that as it may, the pattern ‘falcon-sign + Horus name of the king’, without the palace façade, is well attested as a writing of the Horus title and name of the kings in the inscriptions of the 1st Dynasty. And this is what we have in Wadi Ameyra.

<sup>4</sup> It must be said, nevertheless, that this interpretation presents a difficulty: the paleography of the flowering reed-sign. In fact, its layout, as a contour without the internal strias, has no parallel in the paleography of the 1st Dynasty, when these strias are always indicated, usually without the definition of the contour of the sign, as in the inscription from Wadi Ameyra or the discussed seal impression from Abydos. We have to wait until the reigns of Khasekhemuy and Netjerikhet to find the first examples of the sign reduced to a contour (Regulski 2010: 490-493). Somaglino and Tallet state that “the general form of the sign could find some parallels in the corpus of the private stele from Abydos”, but the examples they give (Martin 2011: 93, # 114, 115) also have the strias and they do not seem to corroborate the assertion. Thus, the possibility of a later (even perhaps Middle Kingdom) addition cannot be excluded.

j) All the documents discussed in section h) show a pattern ‘Horus name + second proper name’. In the case of Djer’s seal impression from Abydos, this pattern is accompanied by other elements which define the epigraphic context: the fetish *imy-wt* and the Wepwawet standard. Now, some seal impressions of king Den, coming from Abydos, Saqqara and Abu Rawash, show exactly this same epigraphic program, again with the two names repeated in alternating order (Petrie 1901; Montet 1946: 205-213; pl. xix.151; Emery 1958: 68-69, pl. 79.18; Kaplony 1963: II, 1117-1118; III, pl. 52.195, 53.196; Cervelló Autuori 2005: 42-44, figs. 8, 11); however, in this case, the ‘second proper name’ is clearly that of king Den itself: Khasty or Semty (written with two sandy hill-signs N25 followed or not by the bread-sign X1), as we know it by his inscriptions and it was transmitted to the Ramessid lists (with some explainable mistakes of reading; Cervelló Autuori 2005: 39 & references). In these seals, this name can or cannot be preceded by the *nswt-bit* title, which, as we have seen, was created at precisely this time. Since it is clear that this is the second/birth name of king Den, and since the epigraphic context is exactly the same as in Djer’s seal impression (especially when the *nswt-bit* title is not present), then we can conclude that the ‘second proper name’ in the latter is the second/birth name of king Djer. If we now take into account that two seal impressions of Djet, Djer’s successor, and one well known and largely discussed seal impression of Narmer, all of them coming from Abydos (Petrie 1900: pl. xviii.2-3; 1901: 51-52, pl. xiii.93; Kaplony 1963: III, pl. 29.81; Cervelló Autuori 2005: 43, figs. 9-10; Heagy 2014: 77-78, fig. 16), present the same alternating pattern ‘*serekh* with the Horus name + second proper name’, and that these ‘second proper names’ are *It(i)* (again) and *Mn*, and therefore they coincide well with the *It* and *Mni* of the Ramessid lists, we can establish the correspondences ‘Horus names + second/birth names’: Narmer-Menes, Djer-Iti and Djet-Ita for three of the first four kings of the 1st Dynasty.<sup>5</sup> Until now, we don’t have similar conclusive documentation for king Aha, the Teti of the Ramessid lists. All this means that the names of the first four kings of the 1st Dynasty recorded in the Ramessid and Classical royal lists (or, at least, of three of them) are the true ‘second/birth names’ of these kings, and not names of princes or inventions of the annalistic tradition (see, for the former idea, Helck 1953; Kaplony 1963: I, 435-437, 486; Beckerath 1997: 168-169; Heagy 2014: 77-78; and for the latter, Derchain 1966; Vercoutter

<sup>5</sup> Heagy (2014: 77-78) disagrees with my interpretation of the proper names in these seals as the second names of the kings. “The Djer and Djet seals – he writes – may show the personal names of those kings, but given the similarity in names we cannot rule out the possibility that one or both actually show the name(s) of a prince”. However, the ‘similarity in names’ cannot be an argument, since the names corresponding to these kings in the Ramessid lists are similar too: Iti and Ita. On the other hand, the spelling of the names in the seals is similar, but not identical. The Wadi Ameyra inscription confirms that *It(i)* was the actual ‘personal name’ of king Djer. Nothing prevents the other seals from recording royal ‘second names’ as well, and the almost identity between them and those recorded in the Ramessid lists cannot be underestimated.

1990; Kuhn 2010; Heagy 2014: 60-61); and, ultimately, this means that the Menes in the lists must be identified with Narmer-Men.<sup>6</sup>

In conclusion, the discussed inscription from Wadi Ameyra, and perhaps also that from Gebel Sheikh Suleiman, provide a new and final proof of the existence of a 'second/birth name' for king Djer and, by extension, for the first four kings of the 1st Dynasty; and they also provide a proof of the historicity of the names of these kings in the Ramessid and Classical king lists: Meni, Teti, Iti and Ita, according to the Abydos king list.

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<sup>6</sup> In the past few years, more and more scholars have agreed with this identification: Kahl 2006: 94; Quirke 2010: 65; Tallet 2013b: 122; 2015: 22, n. 70; Hendrickx 2014: 271; Heagy 2014. However, some scholars disagree and continue to identify Menes with Aha. For an update regarding this issue and a list of supporters and opponents of the identification Menes-Narmer in the last years, see Heagy 2014: especially 83-84 ("It is quite striking that most German language authors advocate Aha, and most English language authors conclude for Narmer"). In the list of those who advocate Aha, the authors of the last two handbooks of the Egyptian royal titles and names must be added: von Beckerath (1999: 36-39) and Leprohon (2013: 22-25), who clearly force the sources.



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