



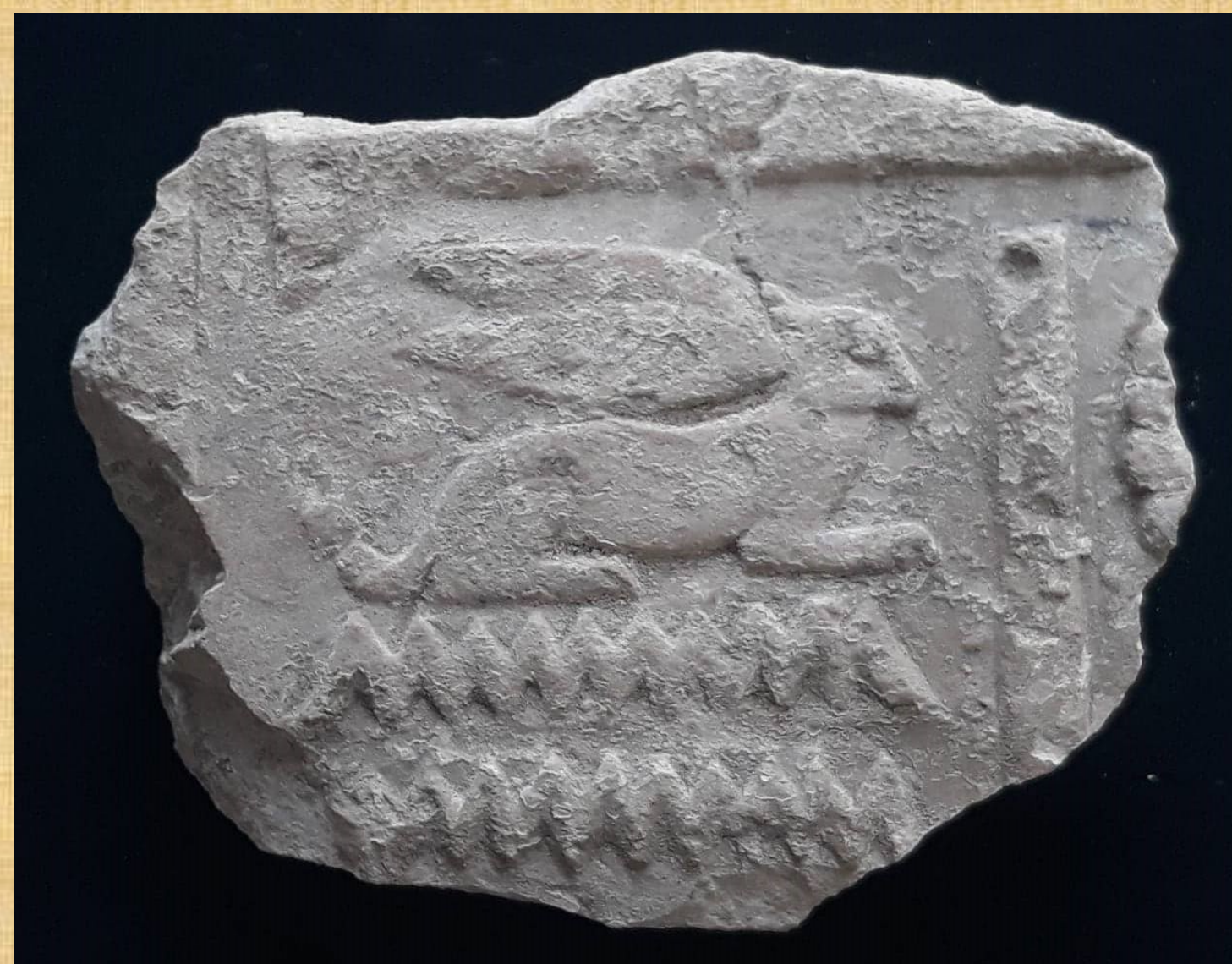
Inscribed Wall Relief

Georgie Whittock



What is the object?

- Part of a relief: the top left hand corner of it, last column of the inscription - it is probable that there was another inscription on the full relief.
- Made of limestone, and was possibly from a wall relief which was broken off using a chisel - there are two chisel marks on the back.
- Would have been read right to left because of the direction of the hare - the living figures (humans, animals, etc.) face the direction of the beginning of the inscription (Manley, 2012: 14).
- Signs are “wn”, “n”, and “n”, and form the word “wnn” - not “wnnn” because the first “n” sign would be complementary to the “n” in the “wn”.
- Surmounting the inscription would have been the “p.t” sign, representative of the sky, which has been used since the Twelfth Dynasty. The use of the sign in this way was to emphasise the cosmic ambiance, and was sometimes depicted with stars within it (Betrò, 1996: 150).
- Use of the “wnn” and the “p.t” in this combination is particularly common in the New Kingdom.



What could the “wnn” be?

- “Wnn” means “to exist”, “to be”, “to be present”, “to run”, or “to open” depending on the determinative sign as the end of the word
- Could be a word in itself or part of a word, some examples of these words are listed below:
 - “Wnn-nfr” - Wenennefer, (“who-exists-perfectly”) epithet of Osiris (Bussman, 2017: 269)
 - “Wnn-nfrw” - Onnophris, name of Osiris (Faulkner, 1981: 62)
 - “wnnt” - indeed, really (Faulkner, 1981: 62)
 - “iw wn-n3w hr” - ‘(property) which was (i.e. came into) [x]’s possession’ (Johnson, 1994: 128)
 - “Wnnt” - goddess Wenet/Wenenut (“The Swift One”) (van Ryneveld, 2016: 20)



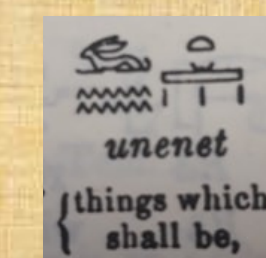
Top: The gods sit watching the scene of the weighing of the heart ceremony from the Book of the Dead of Hunefer (Wikipedia, 2017)

Above: section of a tomb relief from the Chief Physician Amenhotep and Family, 19th Dynasty. The red boxes show (to the right) the use of the “wn”, “n”, “n” signs followed by the “3”, “h”, “t” signs and the dual strokes possibly meaning “wn.n 3hti”, “existed of Ahti” (Hannig, 1997) and (to the left) the “wn”, “n”, “nfr” signs and god determinative (this is another way to depict “wnn-nfr” without a complementary “n”) (Cleveland Museum of Art, 1999: 250)

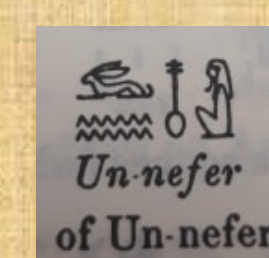
Left: Photograph of the inscribed wall relief (author’s own photograph, 2019)

Comparison with other objects

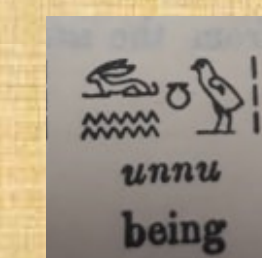
- Funeral Stela of Panehesi, 19th Dynasty
 - Has two occurrences of the “wn”, “n”, and “n” signs
 - First one has the “wn”, “n”, “n”, “t” signs plus a determinative and three plural strokes, which would demonstrate the transliteration as “wnnt” and the translation of “things which shall be” (Budge uses the older transliteration of “unenet”; Budge, 1966: 216)
 - Second one has the “wn”, “n”, “n”, “nfr” signs and the god determinative, indicating the transliteration of “wnn-nfr” and the translation of “Wenennefer” (Budge uses the transliteration and translation of “Un-nefer”; Budge, 1966: 222)
- Text from the 125th Chapter of the Book of the Dead, 18th Dynasty - the door and its posts
 - Has one occurrence of the “wn”, “n”, and “n” signs followed by the “in/nw” and “w” signs, and three plural strokes, expressing a transliteration of “wnnw” and translation of “being” (Budge uses the older transliteration of “unnu”; Budge, 1966: 245)
- Stela of the Steward Mentuwoser, ca. 1944 B.C., 12th Dynasty
 - Shows the “p.t” sign in use at the head of the stela and encompassing the inscription



Above left: Hieroglyphs, transliteration, and translation for the words “things which shall be” in the Stela of Panehesi (Budge, 1966:216)



Above middle: Use of the word “Un-nefer/Wenennefer” in the Stela of Panehesi (Budge, 1966: 222)



Above right: Use of the word “being” from the Book of the Dead (Budge, 1966: 245)

How is it related to the field of Egyptian funerary beliefs?

- In terms of funerary contexts, inscriptions were used to depict information upon the walls as reliefs in temples and tombs, as well as upon a number of funerary objects including shabtis and coffins.
- Information in these wall reliefs would include the offering formula (for the deceased to be provided with all the essentials for the afterlife), the titles of the deceased, and accounts of their life.
- However, it could be argued that this object is not related to funerary beliefs because it may not have come from a funerary context, as wall reliefs were used in many other contexts. One such example would be to express the victory of military campaigns.
- In the case of this object, it could have come from an inscription which was simply a dedication to the gods, and the “wnn” could part of the epithet to Osiris “wnn-nfr”.



Above: Head of the stela of Mentuwoser showing the “p.t” sign above the inscription (Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Below: Part of a facsimile painting from the Temple of Seti at Abydos, 19th Dynasty, showing the use of the coloured “p.t” sign (Robins, 2000: 175)



Bibliography

- Betrò, M.C. 1996. *Hieroglyphs: The Writings of Ancient Egypt*. New York: Abbeville Press.
- Budge, E.A. 1966. *Ancient Egyptian Language: Easy Lessons in Egyptian Hieroglyphics with Sign List*. Chicago: Ares Publishers Inc.
- Bussmann, R. 2017. *Complete Middle Egyptian: A New Method for Understanding Hieroglyphs*. Great Britain: John Murray Learning.
- Cleveland Museum of Art. 1999. *Catalogue of Egyptian art : the Cleveland Museum of Art*. New York: Cleveland Museum of Art.
- Faulkner, R.O. 1981. *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*. Oxford: Griffith Institute Ashmolean Museum.
- Hannig, R. 1997. *Die Sprache der Pharaonen: Großes Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch - Deutsch (2800-950 v. Chr.)*. Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern.

- Johnson, J. 1994. “Annuity Contracts” and Marriage’. In Silverman, D (ed.) *For His Ka: Essays Offered in Memory of Klaus Baer*. Chicago: The Oriental Institute.
- Manley, B. 2012. *Egyptian Hieroglyphs for Complete Beginners: The Revolutionary New Approach to Reading the Monuments*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Stela of the Steward Mentuwoser, ca. 1944 B.C.* Available at: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/544320>. [Accessed on: 03.04.2019].
- Oakes, L. & Gahlin, L. 2004. *Ancient Egypt: An Illustrated Reference to the Myths, Religions, Pyramids, and Temples of the Land of the Pharaohs*. London: Hermes House.
- Robins, 2000. *The Art of Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- van Ryneveld, M. 2016. ‘The Hare in Ancient Egypt’. *Ancient Egypt Magazine*, Vol. 16, pp.20-23.
- Wikipedia. 2017. *Hunefer*. Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hunefer>. [Accessed on: 02.04.2019].