

The king appeared in the plumed crown, with all the people following him. The chief lector-priest and scribe of the divine books stretched (15) the cord. The rope was released, laid in the ground, made to be this temple. His majesty ordered to proceed; the king turned round before the people. Joined together were Upper and Lower Egypt.

NOTES

1. De Buck connected "for the future" (*n m-ht*) with the preceding sentence; but the verse-point is before, not after, *n m-ht*; and with *n m-ht* at the beginning, the sentences have the right length and balance as well as a chiasmic order, with *n m-ht* balanced by *n Hr-jhty*. Admittedly, verse-points are often misplaced, and the word order here suggested is unusual.
2. Reading *s'r*, "present," "announce."
3. I do not emend *smn-n'i* to *smn-i*, as de Buck has done. The point is not that the king will establish offerings—these he will have established as a matter of course at the beginning of his reign—but that he will build a new temple.
4. The word has been read as *bmbnt*, "pyramidion." But the house determinative is not suitable. I read *mrt*, a word for "temple" (see *Wb.*, II, 108.9). This has the added advantage of rendering a wordplay: *m-i pw mrt*, *mnw-i pw mr*. The text has several such alliterating wordplays.
5. An illegible sign followed by *rw* and walking legs.
6. Literally, "he who has two arms."
7. I restore *wslh-s r* *lft* *hrw-k* and take *wsh* to be "latitude" in the sense of "means." But it is uncertain; and the next sentence is rendered obscure by the lacuna after *hr*.

BOUNDARY STELA OF SESOSTRIS III

Berlin Museum 1157

The stela is one of a pair of boundary stelae that Sesostriis III erected in the sixteenth year of his reign. It was found at Semna, while the duplicate copy was found on the island of Uronarti. Sesostriis III conducted several vigorous Nubian campaigns and increased the fortresses which his predecessors had strung along the river between Elephantine and the second cataract. Already in his eighth year he had designated Semna, called Heh, as the boundary by setting up a stela with a brief text which enjoined all Nubians to halt there (Berlin Museum 14753).¹

The fortress of Heh (Semna) marked the southern end of the second cataract region. Opposite Semna, on the east bank, stood the fortress of Kumma, and just north of Semna the newly erected fortress of Uronarti, the trio controlling all river and land traffic and making an effective boundary.

The stela is of red granite and has a rounded top which is filled by the representation of the winged sun disk. Below it is the text in twenty-one lines.

Publication: *Ägyptische Inschriften*, I, 257-258. Sethe, *Lesestücke*,

pp. 83-84. J. Janssen, *JNES*, 12 (1953), 51-55 (the duplicate Uronarti stela).

Translation: BAR I, §§ 653-660.

(1) The living Horus: Divine of Form; the Two Ladies: Divine of Birth; the King of Upper and Lower Egypt: *Khakaure*, given life; the living Gold-Horus: Being; the Son of Re's body, his beloved, the Lord of the Two Lands: *Sesostris*, given life-stability-health forever. (3) Year 16, third month of winter: the king made his southern boundary at Heh:

I have made my boundary further south than my fathers,
I have added (5) to what was bequeathed me.

I am a king who speaks and acts,

What my heart plans is done by my arm.

One who attacks to conquer, who is swift to (7) succeed,

In whose heart a plan does not slumber.

Considerate to clients, steady in mercy,

Merciless to the foe who attacks him.

One who attacks him who would attack,

Who stops when one stops,

(9) Who replies to a matter as befits it.

To stop when attacked is to make bold the foe's heart,

Attack is valor, retreat is cowardice,

A coward is he who is driven (11) from his border.

Since the Nubian listens to the word of mouth,²

To answer him is to make him retreat.

Attack him, he will turn his back,

Retreat, he will start attacking.

(13) They are not people one respects,

They are wretches, craven-hearted.

My majesty has seen it, it is not an untruth.

I have captured their women,

I have carried off (15) their dependents,

Gone to their wells, killed their cattle,

Cut down their grain, set fire to it.

As my father lives for me, I speak the truth!

It is no boast (17) that comes from my mouth.

As for any son of mine who shall maintain this border which my majesty has made, he is my son, born to my majesty. The true son is he who champions his father, (19) who guards the border of his

begetter. But he who abandons it, who fails to fight for it, he is not my son, he was not born to me.

Now my majesty has had an image made (21) of my majesty, at this border which my majesty has made, in order that you maintain it, in order that you fight for it.

NOTES

1. The identification of ancient Heh with modern Semna rests first on the fact that two of the three boundary stelae (all of which name Heh as the boundary), were found at Semna, and the third just north of Semna, at Uronarti. In *RdE*, 16 (1963), 179-191, J. Vercoutter has proposed to identify Iken, the trading post to which, according to the stela of year 8, Nubians were admitted, with the great fortress of Mirgissa, some thirty miles north of Semna, a suggestion that appears very plausible. But Vercoutter's proposal to dissociate Heh from Semna and to see in it a place north of Iken, is not convincing. He reasoned that if the Nubians were allowed to trade at Iken and yet forbidden to pass Heh, then Heh must have been to the north of Iken. This argument misses the point made by the Heh stela of year 8. Its text says that all Nubian traffic from the south must halt at Heh; that Nubians wishing to trade at Iken will be permitted to proceed by an overland route; but no river traffic north of Heh will be allowed. In fact, this general prohibition of movement beyond Heh, with the specific exception of overland trading travel to Iken, proves that Heh was south of Iken. Hence the text of the stela of year 8 reinforces the identification of Heh with Semna, as had previously been understood; see for example T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Ägypten und Nubien* (Lund, 1941), pp. 75 ff. It goes without saying that overland trading traffic was easy to control and presented no threat.

2. I follow Sethe, *Erl.*, 84, 5, in taking *hr n r* as "word of mouth." Janssen's alternate rendering, "since the Nubian hears to fall at a word" (*JNES*, 12 (1953), 54) agrees with Gardiner, *Grammar*, p. 361.