

## **Block Statue of *hpr-k3-R<sup>c</sup>* from Saqqara**

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This block statue of the overseer of the scribe of the royal documents *hpr-k3-R<sup>c</sup>* was discovered in Saqqara. by the French expedition beside the pyramid of king *dd k3 R<sup>c</sup> issi* in 1969. It dates back to the Middle Kingdom, probably from reign of king Senusert I.

The statue is made out of white limestone. The head is completely missing and the front top left corner is damaged while at the base, we can see the feet coming out of the rope with well -sculpted fingers and nails.

The block statue<sup>1</sup> is a type of memorial statue that first emerged in the Middle Kingdom,<sup>2</sup> the block statue grew in popularity in the New Kingdom and the Third Intermediate Period, and by the Late Period, this type of statue was the most common. These statues were used in temples typically as funerary monuments of non-royal yet important individuals.<sup>3</sup>

Block statues consist of a man squatting with his knees drawn up to his chest and his arms folded on top his knees. Often, these men are wearing a "wide cloak" that reduces the body of the figure to a simple block-like shape. Most of the detail is reserved for the head of the individual being depicted. In some instances the modeling of the limbs has been retained by the sculptor.<sup>4</sup> There are two basic types of block statues: ones with the feet completely covered by the cloak and ones with the feet uncovered<sup>5</sup>.

Very few examples depicting women appear in the Middle and New Kingdoms, they are more commonly part of statue groups<sup>6</sup> showing men and women together in the characteristic squatting posture. Only two examples show a female singly: the first depicted a woman with the wig of Hathor. The second known from a drawing made by R. Pococke during his travels to Egypt in 1737, he said that this statue for the goddess Isis<sup>7</sup>.





The scribe of the royal documents in the presence of (the king) in the Memphite nome and the temple of ptah, *hpr-k3-R<sup>c</sup>* the justified.

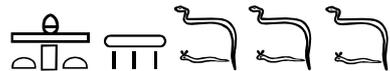
6<sup>th</sup> line-



----- *sm3 imy-r wpwt* ----- *mdw rhyt Imy-r wpwt sš<sup>c</sup>(w) n(w) nswt hpr-k3-R<sup>c</sup> m3<sup>c</sup> hrw*

*sm3* priest of -----, overseer of missions of -----, the herdsman of *rhyt*, the overseer of household, the scribe of the royal documents *hpr k3 R<sup>c</sup>* the justified.

**Between the feet-**



*h<sup>c</sup>tpw df3w*

Offerings and provisions

### Comments

From the titles of *hpr k3 R<sup>c</sup>* we can remark that most of the Middle Kingdom examples represented lower and middle ranking priests and officials. This changed in the New Kingdom and the Third Intermediate Period, when more high-ranking officials embraced the type, including viziers and high priests<sup>12</sup>



The name *hpr-k3-R<sup>c</sup>* is one of the familiar names in ancient Egypt. There are six recorded cases for persons carried this name from the Middle Kingdom in addition to another case from the New Kingdom.<sup>13</sup> The name of the statue's owner, for being a royal name, is written inside a cartouche followed by the sign *nh* (could be read *nh.ti*) which might

refer that king Senusert I *hpr-k3-R<sup>c</sup>* was still living when the statue was ordered to be made. This sign is not part of the statue owner name because it never occurs following his name in the rest of the inscriptions written on the statue.



This title means possessor of reverence<sup>14</sup> or possessor of veneration<sup>15</sup> It has been translated by Brugsch as "Herr der Würdigkeit".<sup>16</sup>

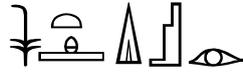


This title means "revered with Ptah-Soker"<sup>17</sup> or "the honored one before Ptah- Soker"<sup>18</sup> Some examples of the holders of this title from the Old Kingdom are, *wḥ3* from Giza<sup>19</sup>, and both of *Mry-R<sup>c</sup> nfr*<sup>20</sup> and *Isi* from Edfou<sup>21</sup>

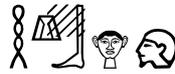


This is the main title of the owner of this block statue who was a high dignitary scribe in the royal court of king Senusert I of the Middle Kingdom. The title has been translated as "Overseer of the scribes of the king`s documents"<sup>22</sup> Overseer of the scribes of the royal decrees<sup>23</sup> "Chef des scribes des actes royaux"<sup>24</sup> or "Vorseher der Königlichen briefschreiber"<sup>25</sup> According to Strudwick<sup>26</sup> this title only attested from the reign of king Neferirkare of the 5<sup>th</sup> dynasty and it seems that its holder may have had overall responsibility for four main administrative departments .This title in the 5<sup>th</sup> dynasty sometimes read *imy-r sš<sup>c</sup> nswt*. In Murray index<sup>27</sup>, the holders of this title during the Old Kingdom were 22 people. Some examples of these people are: *h<sup>c</sup> mrrw Pth*<sup>28</sup> *Pth ḥtp*<sup>29</sup>, *m3 nfr*<sup>30</sup> *w3š Pth*<sup>31</sup> from Sakkara, *Pth ḥtp*<sup>32</sup> and *sndm ib*<sup>33</sup> from Giza and

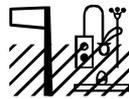
*dꜣw* from Koptos<sup>34</sup> It is remarkable to mention that this title is repeated four times (lines 2, 4, 5 and 6) but without the title *imy-r*.



The type of *Htp di nsw* formula written in the 2<sup>nd</sup> line is a typical Middle Kingdom but we have to notice that god Osiris is mentioned here without any of his regular titles that occur following his name in such formula.



This title has been translated "Chief lector priest"<sup>35</sup> "Chief lector"<sup>36</sup> "Lector priest in charge"<sup>37</sup> or "Grand chef des officiâtes (royaux)"<sup>38</sup> Murray<sup>39</sup> gives the names of 22 holders of this title in the Old Kingdom.



There is damage in the lower part of this title in the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> line but judging from the titles of ancient scribes who worked in this office it is most likely that the missing sign is the sign for *mdꜣt*. The title means "Scribe of the god`s book"<sup>40</sup> or "The scribe of the roll of the god"<sup>41</sup> Murray<sup>42</sup> counts 18 holders of this title during the old kingdom, some of them are, *Wꜣš Pth*<sup>43</sup>, *Pth ḥtp* from Sakkara<sup>44</sup>, *ꜣḥt-ḥtp* from Giza<sup>45</sup> and *ꜣbꜣ* from Deir El-gabrawi.<sup>46</sup>



According to Ward<sup>47</sup> this title reads *ḥrp nsw* and means "royal controller".



If the first sign of this title is the *shm* scepter? It could be read *hrp wdw nswt* "Director of the royal commands" but actually there is no such title in the index of both Ward and Jones. This sign could be a corruption for the sign *mdw*, if so the title could be read *wdi mdw nswt* "Giver of the royal commands" which occurs in Jones index<sup>48</sup> and in Murray index<sup>49</sup>



This top part of the 4<sup>th</sup> line is damaged but judging from biographies of the royal scribes, the title in this part might had something to do with "The seal" and "The two houses of documents"



This title is a combination of two titles, the first of them is *r p nb* and the second one is *r nhn*. There are three different reading for the first title. It could be read *r3 P nb* means "mouth of everyone from Buto"<sup>50</sup> or " *iri P nb* –governor of Pe"<sup>51</sup> spokesman of everyone from Buto.<sup>52</sup> This title could also means, "Keeper of the whole Pe"<sup>53</sup> and "mouth of every dweller in Pe"<sup>54</sup> The holders of this title in Murray index are 14 people<sup>55</sup>. The second title in this combination is *r3 Nhn* which means according to Jones<sup>56</sup>"mouth of *nhn*" or "*iry nhn*"-keeper of *nhn*" according to Ward<sup>57</sup>

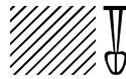


Jones translates this title "scribe of the royal records in the presence of or personal scribe of the royal records"<sup>58</sup>. Strudwick points out to the element *hft-hr* as a reference to the presence of the king<sup>59</sup>. The same title is translated by Ward<sup>60</sup> "scribe of the royal tablet of the court". In the Old Kingdom, this title was hold by some people such as, *h<sup>c</sup> mrrw Pth* from Sakkara,<sup>61</sup> *nn hft k3i* from Deshasheh<sup>62</sup> and *tw3w* from Naga-el-Deir.<sup>63</sup>

We can also add that the sign *nswt* was pronounced for two times = *sš ʕ(w) n(w) nswt hft hr nswt*



This part of the 5<sup>th</sup> line might be part of the previous title, consequently it could be translated as "scribe of royal records in the presence of (the king) in the Memphite nome (and) the temple of Ptah" or it could be a separate title read "*imy-r Inb-ḥd ḥwt k3 Pth*" which means "overseer of the Memphite nome and the temple of ka-ptah". The title "overseer of the Memphite nome" occurs in Jones index but without *ḥwt k3 Pth*<sup>64</sup>.



According to Ward *sm3* is a kind of priest, probably *sm3* priest of Nekhen and Buto<sup>65</sup>



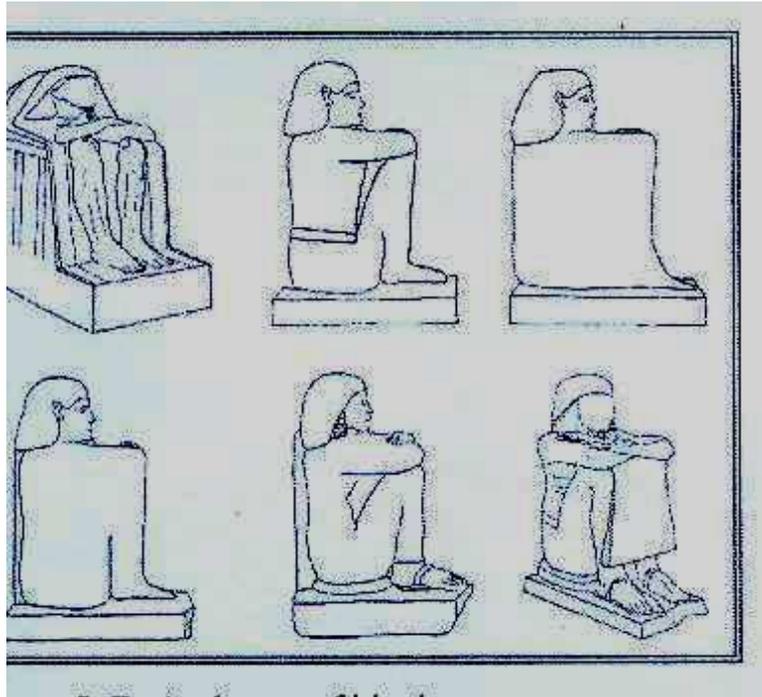
This title has been translated as "herdsman of *rhyt*"<sup>66</sup> or "staff of the commoners"<sup>67</sup> or "speaker of the people"<sup>68</sup> and it was hold by 34 people in the Old Kingdom according to Murray<sup>69</sup> such as *K3i-m-nfrt*<sup>70</sup> *M3-nfr* from Sakkara<sup>71</sup> and *ḥ wsr k3.f* from Abu-Sir.<sup>72</sup>



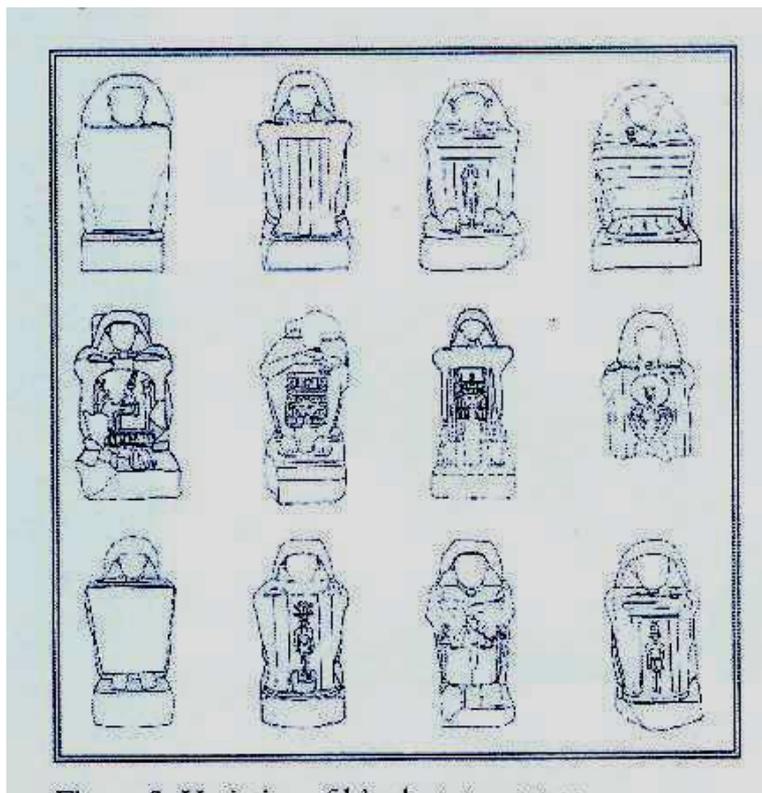
According to Ward this title means "overseer of household" with a question mark after household.<sup>73</sup>







Basic shapes of block statues types



Verities of block statue type

- <sup>1</sup> The term Block Statue is used in Egyptology to describe a statue type defined by its shape
- <sup>2</sup> B. V. Bothmer, *Egyptian Art: Selected Writings of Bernard V. Bothmer*. Edited by Madeleine E. Cody, with Paul Edmund Stanwick and Marsha Hill. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- <sup>3</sup> B. V. Bothmer, *Egyptian Sculpture of the Late Period, 700 B.C. to A.D. 100*. Edited by Elizabeth Riefstahl. New York: John B. Watkins Company, 1960.
- <sup>4</sup> I. Shaw. *The Dictionary of Ancient Egypt*. "Block Statue." New York: Harris N. Abrams, 1995.
- <sup>5</sup> B.V. Bothmer, *Egyptian Sculpture of the Late Period*, p.5.
- <sup>6</sup> R. Schulz, *Die Entwicklung und Bedeutung des Kuboiden Statuentypus: Eine Untersuchung zu den sogenannten "Würfelbockern"* Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge 33/34. Hildesheim, p.779-782
- <sup>7</sup> R. Pococke, *A Description of the East and some other countries I, Observations on Egypt*, London, 1743, p.211-212, pl. LX
- <sup>8</sup> For example G. Legrain discovered more than 350 block statues in the cache of Karnak,. G. Legrain, *les Temples de Karnak*, Paris, 1929.
- <sup>9</sup> Wb III, 157,1
- <sup>10</sup> J. Jean- Clère, " Deux statues "gardiennes de porte" de l'époque ramesside" *JEA* 54, pp.135-148.
- <sup>11</sup> M. El-Damaty, " Squatting statues in the Cairo Museum" *MDAIK* 46, p.1-13.
- <sup>12</sup> R. Schulz, *op.cit*, p.648ff.
- <sup>13</sup> H.Ranke, *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen, Band I*, Gluckstadt, 1935, p.269
- <sup>14</sup> D. Jones, *An index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, epithets and phrases of Old Kingdom*, vol. I, Oxford, 2000, p.478.
- <sup>15</sup> J. Pirenne, *Historie des Institutions et du Droit privé de l' Ancienne Egypte, Vol. I*, Brussels,1932, p.258.
- <sup>16</sup> H. Brugsch, *Dictionnaire hiéroglyphique et démotique*, Leipzig,1967, p.75
- <sup>17</sup> D. Jones, *op-cit*, p.24, no.114
- <sup>18</sup> S. Hasan, *Excavations at Giza, Vol. V*, 1944, p. 256
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.256
- <sup>20</sup> M.G. Daressy, "Inscriptions du mastaba de Pepi-Nefer à Edfou" *ASAE* 17,(1917) p.134
- <sup>21</sup> M. Alliot,"Un nouvel exemple de vizir divinise dans l'Égypte ancienne" *BIFAO* 37, (1937-8)P.154(12)
- <sup>22</sup> D. Jones, *op.cit*, vol I,p.209,no.780.
- <sup>23</sup> H. G. Fischer, *Dendera in the third millennium B.C*, New York,1913, p.123,no.535
- <sup>24</sup> P. Posener-Krieger, , *Les archives du temple funéraire de Neferirkare-kaki 2*, le Caire.1976, p.591
- <sup>25</sup> W-G. Helck, "Untersuchungen zu den Beamtentiteln des ägyptischen Alten Reiches" *ÄF* 18, Gluckstadt,1954 ,pp.75-6.
- <sup>26</sup> N. Strudwick , *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom*,London,1985 ,pp199ff
- <sup>27</sup> M. Murray, *Index of names and titles of the Old Kingdom*, London, 1908, pl. XXIII
- <sup>28</sup> A. Mariette, *Les mastabas de l' Ancien Empire*, Paris, 1889., p.120
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid*,p.125
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid*,p.266
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid*,p.271
- <sup>32</sup> S. Hasan, *op.cit* ,p.189
- <sup>33</sup> LD II,p.76

- <sup>34</sup> Urk I,p.280,15
- <sup>35</sup> D. Jones, op.cit, vol II,p.784,no.2860.
- <sup>36</sup> W. Ward, Index of Egyptian administrative and religious titles of the Middle Kingdom,p.126, no.1076
- <sup>37</sup> N. Strudwick, op.cit,p.75(30)
- <sup>38</sup> J. Pirenne, op.cit, 53, p.514(1)
- <sup>39</sup> M. Murray, op.cit , pl. XXXIV
- <sup>40</sup> D. Jones, op.cit, vol II,p.857,no.3132
- <sup>41</sup> N .D. Davies, The rock tombs of Deir Elgebrawi,2 vols,London,1902,p.8(22)
- <sup>42</sup> M. Murray ,op.cit, pl. XXXVIII
- <sup>43</sup> A. Mariette, op.cit ,p.270
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid, p.355.
- <sup>45</sup> S. Hasan , Giza I,p.73(3) fig,133.
- <sup>46</sup> N. D. Davies, op-cit, p.8
- <sup>47</sup> W. Ward,op-cit,p.134,no.1153
- <sup>48</sup> D. Jones, op.cit, no.1500, p. 407
- <sup>49</sup> M. Murray, op.cit, pl.XIX.
- <sup>50</sup> D, Jones, op.cit, vol I,p.490,no.1831
- <sup>51</sup> J. Pirenne, op.cit, p.516 (2)
- <sup>52</sup> W. Ward, op.cit, p.101, no.845
- <sup>53</sup> PM III2,p.310
- <sup>54</sup> A, Gardiner, Ancient Egyptian Onomastica II, Oxford, 1947, p.189
- <sup>55</sup> M. Murray, op.cit, pl. XXVI
- <sup>56</sup> D. Jones, op-cit, p.491,no.1833
- <sup>57</sup> W. Ward, op-cit,p.64,no.523
- <sup>58</sup> D. Jones, op-cit ,p.839,no.3063
- <sup>59</sup> N. Strudwick, op.cit ,p.211
- <sup>60</sup> W.Ward,op-cit,p.158,no.1361
- <sup>61</sup> A. Mariette, op.cit ,p.118
- <sup>62</sup> W.F. Petrie, Deshasheh, London,1898, pl.29
- <sup>63</sup> E.J. Brovorski, The Inscribed material of the First Intermediate Period from Naga-ed-Der,3vols,Chicago,1980 2,pp287(1),294(2)
- <sup>64</sup> D. Jones, op.cit, vol I,p.56, no.277
- <sup>65</sup> W. Ward, op.cit ,p.150,no.1288
- <sup>66</sup> D. Jones, op.cit, p.453,no.1698
- <sup>67</sup> W. Ward, op.cit, p.150,no.1288
- <sup>68</sup> A. Badawy, The tomb of nyhetep-ptah at Giza and the tomb of ankhmahor at Saqqara, Berkely,1928 ,p.50 no.273
- <sup>69</sup> M. Murray, op.cit, pl.XXV
- <sup>70</sup> A. Mariette, op.cit, p.248
- <sup>71</sup> Ibid, p.266
- <sup>72</sup> L. Borchardt, , Das Grabdunkmal des königs Ne-user-re, Leipzig,1907, p.113
- <sup>73</sup> W.Ward,op.cit,p.20, no.120