

A New Reading to Ramesses III's *Great Double Stela*

The Placement of Fragment C

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ON THE eastern interior wall of the *cour de la cachette*,¹ the court that connects the seventh pylon to the main complex in the temple of Amun at Karnak, we find modest remains of what used to be an over ten-meter wide and approximately seven-meter high² double monumental inscription written in sunk relief: the *Great Double Stela* of Ramesses III.³ The two parts of the *Great Double Stela* are referred to as the Northern Stela, the left-hand text, and the Southern Stela, the right-hand text.

State of Preservation of Ramesses III's *Great Double Stela*

Since the central part of the eastern wall of the *cour de la cachette* was destroyed earlier in history,⁴ these remains are in fact secondary restitutions of the few blocks Georges Legrain could reassemble at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁵ The rest of the text is known mainly from Wolfgang Helck's publication,⁶ which formed the main source for Kenneth A. Kitchen's

¹ I am much obliged to Sébastien Biston-Moulin and Gabriella Dembitz for allowing me to consult the unpublished photographs of the CFEETK scientific archives on Ramesses III's *Great Double Stela*, and to Jean Winand and Stéphane Polis for facilitating my research by granting me full access to the *Ramsès* database. From Sébastien Biston-Moulin, I also received much valued inputs in the course of redaction. I sincerely thank my PhD supervisors, Susanne Bickel and Andréas Stauder for their continuous support and for their comments on earlier manuscripts of the present paper. I am also grateful to Daniel Bättig and W. Graham Claytor for improving my English and to Vincent Morel for proofreading the French résumé of my article. The research was conducted with the support of the Swiss National Science Foundation. Hieroglyphic transcripts were done by using JSesh (S. ROSMORDUC, *JSesh Documentation*, 2014, available at <<http://jseshdoc.qenherkhopeshef.org>>, last accessed 20.12.2016).

² W. Helck ("Ramessidische Inschriften II. Die Inschrift Ramses' III. vom Cachette-Hof in Karnak," *ZÄS* 83, 1958, p. 29, 34) measured a width of 355 cm for the northern part of the *Great Double Stela* and calculated somewhat shorter, 300 cm long lines for its southern part. The above numbers are estimates based on Helck's figures and Fr. Le Saout's ("Reconstitution des murs de la cour de la Cachette," *Karnak* 7, 1982, pl. 7) scaled photo montage of the entire double stela.

³ PM II 131; KIU 37 and 39 in the *Karnak* inventory project.

⁴ According to M. Azim ("La fouille de la cour du VIII pylône," *Karnak* 6, 1980, p. 124-126 and fig. 13), the damage to the eastern and western walls of the *cour de la cachette* was done by the Romans at the beginning of the fourth century when the so-called Lateran obelisk was removed from Karnak.

⁵ L.-A. CHRISTOPHE, "Quelques remarques," *ASAE* 52, 1952, p. 20-22.

⁶ W. HELCK, *op. cit.*, p. 27-38; pls. 2-3.

widely referenced later text edition.⁷ Helck visited the site in 1956 and managed to allocate most of the loose blocks and fragments which he then still found lying on the ground but which were transported to the area east of the Temple of Khons prior to his return in 1958.⁸

A scaled photo montage as well as a facsimile of the entire double stela was published by Françoise Le Saout in 1982.⁹ This facsimile text edition differs at various points from those of Helck and Kitchen. First, Le Saout reconsidered the length of both stelae, assigning 34 instead of 31 lines to the northern one and 31 instead of 34 lines to the southern one.¹⁰ In doing so, she overlooked the fact that several traces of signs belonging to line 32 of the Southern Stela are still visible today¹¹ but rightly divided the fragmentary groups of signs that had previously been presented as line 13 of the Northern Stela into lines 13 and 14 of the same text.¹² The main difference of Le Saout's montage compared to earlier text editions, however, lies in reinterpreting the position of a smaller block, which Helck and Kitchen believed to form part of lines 8 and 9 of the Northern Stela. In Le Saout's opinion, this fragment, the signs of which she revised based on old photographs because the object itself seems to be lost,¹³ should be shifted to lines 25 and 26 of the same text.¹⁴

Besides the scholarly disagreement over the number of lines of the two halves of the double stela and over the placement of the small fragment either belonging to lines 8-9 or to lines 25-26 of the Northern Stela, the uncertain position of Fragment C¹⁵ [fig. 1] has provided even bigger difficulties in reading the text. Fragment C is a larger loose block preserving parts of eight lines of Ramesses III's *cour de la cachette* inscription. Kitchen deliberately published it unplaced but suggested nevertheless that it could either form part of the Southern Stela, from line 27 onwards; or of the Northern Stela, from line 24 onwards. He presented the former possibility as "most unlikely" and the latter as "most probabl(e)."¹⁶ Ever since, Kitchen's judgement has not been challenged, and the fragment remained considered as an integral part of the lower third of the Northern Stela despite the presence of numerous indicators that speak against such a placement.¹⁷ Currently, the *Centre Franco-Égyptien d'Étude des Temples de Karnak* (CFEETK) is working on documenting and rebuilding the blocks of the monument

⁷ KRI V, 237-247.

⁸ W. HELCK, *op. cit.*, p. 27, n. 2. Photographs of most of the unmounted blocks were published by M. AZIM, G. REVEILLAC, *Karnak dans l'objectif de Georges Legrain. Catalogue raisonné des archives photographiques du premier directeur des travaux de Karnak de 1895 à 1917 I-II*, Paris, 2004, 4-7/132-144.

⁹ Fr. LE SAOUT, *op. cit.*, p. 238-243; 6c-d on pl. 7.

¹⁰ In Fr. Le Saout's interpretation (*op. cit.*, p. 237), an extra line should be inserted between lines 13 and 14 of the Northern Stela and further two after the original line 25, i.e., in Le Saout's numbering, line 26. Thus, Kitchen's line 14 (KRI V, 240, 9-11) becomes line 15 in Fr. Le Saout's facsimile (*op. cit.*, p. 239); and similarly, Kitchen's line 26 (KRI V, 242, 1) is numbered as line 29 in Fr. Le Saout's text edition (*op. cit.*, p. 240). As for the Southern Stela, Fr. Le Saout (*op. cit.*, p. 243) assumed the text ended in line 31 as opposed to Kitchen who considered line 34 to be the last one due to evidence of spacing in relation to the vertical text on the margin (KRI V, 246, 15, n. a-b).

¹¹ KRI V, 246, 15.

¹² Fr. LE SAOUT, *op. cit.*, p. 239, versus KRI V, 240, 8-9; cf. "The New Reading of Lines 7-14 of the Northern Stela" below.

¹³ The photographs Le Saout used were those of Henri Chevrier (CNRS-CFEETK nos. 94488 and 99429); the block has not been found since (Sébastien Biston-Moulin, e-mail message to author, September 25, 2016).

¹⁴ Fr. LE SAOUT, *op. cit.*, p. 237, 240, versus KRI V, 239, 15 - 240, 3.

¹⁵ KRI V, 247, 1-8.

¹⁶ KRI V, 247, 2-3.

¹⁷ Most recently, Fr. LE SAOUT, *op. cit.*, p. 240; pl. 7.

(KIU 37). With the help of the CNRS-CFEETK photographs of the *Great Double Stela*, the present paper offers a new solution to the problem.


The Placement of Fragment C

There is no doubt that Fragment C belongs to Ramesses III's *Great Double Stela*: the block was found in the *cour de la cachette*, it bears the name of Ramesses III, and it exhibits the same epigraphical characteristics as the rest of the inscription. Furthermore, even if the fragment did not contain the cartouche of the king, due to the existence of comparative evidence,¹⁸ the spelling of the word *npwt* "years" in line 6 of the fragment¹⁹ would – with great probability – still ascribe it to the reign of Ramesses III.
















































Fig. 1. Fragment C (© CNRS-CFEETK no. 14700).

Two major arguments exclude the possibility that Fragment C could have formed part of the Southern Stela:

First, line 5 of the block preserved the introductory words of Amun-Re to the king: *d[d] jn Jmn-R' nsw ntrw n s3=f...* "spo[ken] by Amun-Re, king of the gods, to his son..." The use of the ideogram of the king () as a first-person singular pronoun in the first line of the fragment makes it evident that what precedes the beginning of Amun-Re's address belonged to a direct

¹⁸ DZA (*Das Digitalisierte Zettelarchiv*, digitalized slip archive of the Wb., <<http://aaew.bbaw.de/tla/>>, last accessed 20.12.2016.) 25.967.760: "{ } { } { } nur R.III (selten)."

¹⁹ "{ } { } { }"; the word is spelled similarly also in line 2 of the inscription: "{ } { } { } { }".

speech spoken by the king. The referent disambiguation of first-person singular suffix pronouns happens at the graphical level and is fully consequent in the inscription: the signs  and  are used only for Amun-Re and the signs  and  (occasionally also ) are kept for the king. For instance, in line 11 of the Northern Stela, the two suffix pronouns in *s3=j mrjj=j* “my son, my beloved” (

8-9 of Helck and Kitchen to the lower third of the Northern Stela, Le Saout in fact cleared the way for further adjustments in the first half of the text.²⁶ Although the exact position of this small fragment needs further verification, Le Saout's facsimile drawing proves that, because of its size and proportions, it could not have stood where Helck had originally placed it.²⁷

A closer look at the beginning of lines 8-12 of the Northern Stela in previous publications reveals that Helck's block no. 5 cannot directly join the right edge of the Northern Stela. The mismatch is most apparent at the height of lines 9, 10, and 12. At the beginning of line 9, the traces of signs indicating the verb *prī* "to come forth" are still visible on the right edge of the stela (𓂏). Helck, however, tried to bend these traces into *hn'* "together with," to make them suit the first signs in line 3 of block no. 5.²⁸ Le Saout's facsimile text edition suggests she herself noticed that according to Helck's montage, there was simply not enough space to read *m [dd]* 'nh dt sp-2 "in [stability] and life forever and ever" at the head of line 10. At the beginning of line 12, Helck first believed he could recognize traces of signs corresponding to the particle *jw* (𓂏) and thus read *j[w rd.n]=j jw n=k wrw nw t3 nb...* "I [have caused] the chiefs of every land to come to you..."²⁹ He then corrected himself – still within the same publication – and decided for another reading that was later taken up by Kitchen.³⁰ The traces of signs, the first one of which clearly corresponds to an ideographic spelling of the verb *rdi* (𓂏); cf. also n. r on p. 126-127 below), were thus interpreted as the remains of 𓂏 indicating *wr* "chief."³¹

In other words, Helck's block no. 5 appears to be misplaced. The dimensions, the form, and the text preserved on Fragment C suggest that block no. 5 was assigned a position that originally must have belonged to Fragment C. The digital reconstruction of the upper part of the Northern Stela illustrates that shifting block no. 5 horizontally to the left without modifying its vertical position, and inserting Fragment C into the space thus freed is possible [fig. 2].

The proximity of Fragment C to what remains of the right edge of the stela is given by lines 9-11. The end of line 9 introduces the *nsw bjtj* title expanded by an epithet that continues at the beginning of line 10, that is, in line 4 of Fragment C, and is directly followed by the *prenomen* of the king. This passage speaks strongly for placing the fragment close to the right edge of the stela, but on its own, it is not enough to determine the exact position of the block, since it provides two solutions for restoring the lacuna between the right edge of the stela and Fragment C (cf. p. 126, n. n below). It is ultimately the beginning of line 11 that paces out Fragment C's exact distance from the rim. The phrase *d[d] jn Jmn-R'* "spo[ken] by Amun-Re" in line 5 of the fragment, pertaining to line 11 of the stela, was likely to be sentence-initial. Since the end of line 10 coincides with the end of the previous sentence, *dd*, traces of which are preserved on Fragment C, is expected to open up line 11. As a consequence, the width of the group 𓂏 determines the distance of the fragment from the right edge of the stela.

The position of block no. 5 and that of Fragment C to one another is given by the signs they

²⁶ Fr. LE SAOUT, *op. cit.*, p. 237 and 240, versus KRI V, 239, 15 - 240, 3.

²⁷ Fr. LE SAOUT, *op. cit.*, p. 240, versus W. HELCK, *op. cit.*, pl. 2.

²⁸ "Die Spuren von Zeichen auf dem Block mit der Vertikalinschrift scheinen hier zu dem nach den Resten auf dem ersten Block angenommenen 'hn' nicht ganz zu passen. Doch ist der Stein hier stark beschädigt." (W. HELCK, *op. cit.*, p. 30)

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pl. 2.

³⁰ KRI V, 240, 7.

³¹ "Der Oberteil des Zeichens 'wr' ist zerstört, aber es scheint sich um das Bild eines Syrers mit langem Gewand zu handeln." (W. HELCK, *op. cit.*, p. 32, n. 1)

preserve from line 10. The beginning of Ramesses III's *nomen* in the fourth line of Fragment C and the words 'nh dt "life forever" in the fourth line of block no. 5 make the distance between the two blocks exactly calculable. Thus, the rupture visible in the middle of Helck's block no. 5 in all likelihood continued upwards in the upper left edge of Fragment C [fig. 2].

The digital reconstruction of the upper part of Ramesses III's Northern Stela [fig. 2] demonstrates that Fragment C fits into the upper half of the northern text of the *Great Double Stela* and forms an integral part thereof. The new reading of lines 7-14 of the Northern Stela thus obtained [fig. 3] confirms that the repositioning of Fragment C and Helck's block no. 5 is not only possible but is by all means justified. The consistency in structure and language use as well as the coherence in the overall articulation of the double monument are thus maintained.³²

The New Reading of Lines 7-14 of the Northern Stela: Transliteration and Translation³³

The End of the King's Address to Amun-Re

pd.n=j šs
⁷l[...].n[...]
 [... ...]p(a)=j n=k
 w3w3[...] [³sh²] [... ...] [hwt-ntr]=k
 [gm]=tw [sj w3s]
 n[... ...] m jnr hđ nfr [n] r[wđ] sb3w m đ'm
 r[n(b)]=s wr m pr Wsr-m3't-R' Mr-Jmn / R'-ms-sw Hq3-Jwnw] shb W3st
 ms[.n]=j 'hmw ⁸lm [... ...] grht (/grh.t) r 'h'w=s
 [hwt]t-ntr=s[n m] đ'm
 m jr s3
 jb=f h'wjj m ntr 3h pr.n=f m h'w=f

"I have stretched the cord,

⁷l[...] have [...],

[...] I (i.e., the king) (c) [...] to you,

[...] forge[...] [³plans²] [... ...] your [temple],

which was [found ruined],

[... ...] (d) of sandstone, (e) and the doors of electrum,

[its great name being] [The-House-of-Usermaatre-Meriamun]-who-Makes-Thebes-

Festive / [The-House-of-Ramesses-Ruler-of-Heliopolis]-who-Makes-Thebes-

Festive. (f)

I have fashioned cult images ⁸lin [...] finished (g) to its stance,

th[eir] [tem]ple [being of] electrum,

as does a son

whose heart rejoices in the glorious god whose body he has come forth from."

³² A detailed analysis of Ramesses III's *Great Double Stela* is currently in preparation as part of my ongoing dissertation project that concerns the study of linguistic heterogeneity in the language of the Ramesside royal inscriptions.

³³ The portions of text pertaining to Fragment C are presented in grey shading in both transliteration and translation.

Introduction to Amun-Re's Address to the King

[... 4 groups lost ...]

[wḏ].n=f m-h[ḏ]t-ḥr n pr=f

wb[n.n=f m-hn]w=f

Jmn 9|pr[.n=f m ḥ'w]f

jn ntr j.jr (h) sw ḏs=f

šsp=f [...] psḏt{t}f

jsw m 'nh ḏḏ w3s ḥfnw m ḥbw-sḏ 'š3wt wrw ḥr[... 4 groups lost ...]

[... 4 groups lost ...]

He had [decreed] (i) in front of his temple

[and had] appear[ed inside] it:

Amun, 9|whose [body he has] come forth [from].

It was the god who made him (/ did it) (j) himself, (k)

taking [...] his Ennead,

[...] (l) reward in life, stability, and dominion; hundreds of thousands of jubilees, and a great multitude of [... 4 groups lost ...].

jt Jmn p3wtj tpjj ḥwjf[Ḥr] [...]

[nsw] bjtj jt t3wj 10|m [wsr]w=f Wsr-m3't-R' Mr-Jmn

s3 R' nb ḥ'w R'-ms[-sw Ḥq3-Jwnw dj] 'nh ḏt sp-2

sthn W3st nhh

nfrw=s mj 3ḥt nt pt

psḏt '3t jmw=s m ḥk[nw] [... 3 groups lost ...]

mj m33=sn mnw wrw n nsw bjtj Wsr-m3't-R' Mr-[Jmn s3 R'] R'-ms-sw Ḥq3-Jwnw dj 'nh

The father, (m) Amun, the primordial god, the first one, protects [Horus] [...],

[king of Upper and] Lower Egypt, who seizes the two lands 10|with his [streng]th, (n)

Usermaatre Meriamun;

son of Re, lord of diadems, Ramess[es, Ruler of Heliopolis – given] life forever and ever! –,

who makes Thebes glisten forever,

its beauty being like that of the horizon of the sky

when the Great Ennead in it is prai[sing] [... 3 groups lost ...],

as they see the great monuments of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt,

Usermaatre Meri[amun; son of Re], Ramesses, Ruler of Heliopolis – given life!

The Beginning of Amun-Re's Address to the King

¹¹|ḏ[d] jn Jmn-R' nsw ntrw n s3=f pr m ḥ'w=f

¹¹|Spo[ken] by Amun-Re, king of the gods, to his son who came forth from his body:

[Wsr-mʿt-Rʿ] Mr-Jmn
 sʒ Rʿ Rʿ-ms-sw Hqʒ-Jwnw
 sʒʒj mrjjʒj nsw nht
 mk jʒb n[... ca. 4 groups lost ...] šps mr.nʒtw [... ca. 4 groups lost ...] n[sw] nb nsw nb
¹²[dj[ʿ.n(ʒj) nʒkʿ] hbw-sd n Tʒ-tnn rnpwtʒk m ʒw[t]-jb mj [Jtm]
 [dj]ʒj jw nʒk wrw nw tʒ nb dmd hr jnwʒsn r bw [h]rʒk
 [... ca. 13 groups lost ...] hʿwʒsn nb ¹³[nw rʒ-ʿ]-ht hʒswt wnw bšdwt
 rnpwt sb[jj] [... ...] bʒw[...] n [... ca. 18 groups lost ...] hnt[j] ʒb(t)
¹⁴[dj[ʒj] Thnw [... large loss ...]r[... ca. 7 groups lost ...] [Wsr-mʿt-Rʿ Mr-Jmn / Rʿ-
 ms-sw Hqʒ-Jwnw] [... ca. 3 groups lost ...] ¹⁵hʿ [hr st ʿnh]w mj Hr sʒ ʒst

“[Usermaatre] Meriamun;
 son of Re, Ramesses, Ruler of Heliopolis;
 my son, my beloved, victorious king,
 look, the desire (o) of the [...] august [... ca. 4 groups lost ...] whom One (i.e., the god) (p)
 loved [... ca. 4 groups lost ...] any royal (q) [...] or any king.
¹²[ʿI herebyʿ] give [ʿyouʿ] (r) jubilees of Tatenen, your years in joy like (those of)
 [Atum]; (s)
 and I [cause] (t) the chiefs of every land to come to you all together, carrying their
 tribute to the place [wh]ere you are;
 [... ca. 13 groups lost ...] all their weapons ¹³[of comb]at (u) of all foreign lands
 that were rebellious,
 years have gone by [... ...] might [...] of [... ca. 18 groups lost ...] in front of
 the family;
¹⁴[and I] (v) place the Libyans [... large loss ...] ʿtoʿ [... ca. 7 groups lost ...]
 [Usermaatre Meriamun / Ramesses, Ruler of Heliopolis] (w) [... ca. 3 groups
 lost ...] ¹⁵[who appeared [on the throne of the living] like Horus, son of Isis.”

Notes to the Transliteration and Translation of Lines 7-14 of the Northern Stela

(a) The sign above the singular first-person pronoun is a determinative (D40) and not the ideogram for the verb *rdi* (D37) as it appears in Kitchen’s text edition (KRI V, 247, 4). The difference was already noted by Fr. Le Saout (cf. *op. cit.*, p. 240). The reading of the preceding sign is uncertain. If it is indeed *p*, the verb in question could possibly be *šsp* “to take, to receive;” *hṛp* “to present, to master;” or *drp* “to offer.”

(b) The Northern Stela consequently spells the word *rn* “name, identity” with the cartouche determinative (𓏏). It is expected that the spelling in line 7 would not differ from those in lines 4, 21, and 32, which in turn means that Kitchen’s and Helck’s transcripts (KRI V, 239, 14; W. Helck, *op. cit.*, pl. 2) should be complemented with sign V10.

(c) The sign used for the first-person singular pronoun leaves no doubt about the identity of the speaker: 𓎃 stands for the king.



(d) Two vertical signs follow a word starting with *n*, but the meaning of the group (𓎃𓎃𓎃) eludes me.

(e) The phrase *jnr hḏ nfr n rwd(t)* is translated here as “sandstone” after J.R. Harris (*Lexicographical*

Studies in Ancient Egyptian Minerals, Berlin, 1961, p. 71-72).






(f) Only the outlines of a cartouche remain without any traces of Ramesses III's *prenomen* or *nomen* in it. We find brief references in the Medinet Habu Calendar List to both institutions that could possibly be meant here: "The-House-of-Usermaatre-Meriamun-who-Makes-Thebes-Festive" (*KRI* V, 122, 6), also mentioned in pHarris 5.7 (P. Grandet, *Le Papyrus Harris I (BM 9999) II*, *BiEtud* 109, Cairo, 1994, p. 25, n. 111); or "The-House-of-Ramesses-Ruler-of-Heliopolis-who-Makes-Thebes-Festive" (*KRI* V, 122, 5). The fact that the king's epithet, *shb Wst* "who makes Thebes festive," recurs elsewhere in Thebes, namely, twice in Ramesses III's barque chapel in the first courtyard in the temple of Amun at Karnak (J.H. Breasted, Th.G. Allen (eds.), *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak I, Ramses III's Temple within the Great Inclosure of Amon I*, The Epigraphic Survey, *OIP* 25, Chicago, 1936, pl. 16, A, 10 and pl. 42, col. 17), suggests that both institutions were likely to be found in Thebes.

(g) The first sign in the second line of the fragment is most probably *g*, not *p* as Kitchen saw it (*KRI* V, 247, 4). The difference is visible on the photograph of the fragment (CNRS-CFEETK no. 14700, fig. 1). Thus, the partially preserved word is presumably the verb *grh* "to finish, to complete," which is written here with a slightly disfigured determinative (D41). Given the *-t* ending of *grh*, we must assume that it follows a feminine noun either as a passive participle or as a pseudoparticiple.


(h) Although the  sign is missing from the spelling of the prothetic *yod* of the Late Egyptian participle, interpreting the reed leaf in  as a phonetic complement to *jr* would not be a satisfactory solution, since the verb is never spelled like that in the *Great Double Stela*. For a later parallel to the omission of sign A2 from the spelling of the prothetic *yod*, see J.-M. Kruchten, *Le grand texte oraculaire de Djéhoutymose*, *MRE* 5, Brussels, 1986, D 13, p. 232 and 241; cited by J. Winand, *Études de néo-égyptien I. La morphologie verbale*, *AegLeod* 2, Liège, 1992, p. 280, n. 52.



(i) Kitchen's proposal (*KRI* V, 240, 1), namely, to read *wḏ* "to decree" in the lacuna, seems to fit the context better than reading *ntr* "to be divine," as W. Helck (*op. cit.*, p. 30) had previously suggested.

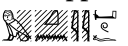

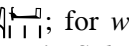
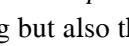
(j) The antecedent of *sw* is unclear. The pronoun either refers to the king or to another definite object in the lacuna of the previous line, or it stands for the neuter "it" (A.H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, §511.4).



(k) The uncertainty around the reading of the *yod* at the beginning of line 3 of the fragment makes another interpretation possible. If the stroke at the bottom of  is not a secondary crack in the stone but belongs to an , we shall read *jj.n ntr jr {r}<jr> sw ḏs=f* "the god has come to do it himself," that is, an emphatic construction, instead of *jn ntr j.jr sw ḏs=f* "it was the god who made him (/ did it) himself," a cleft sentence. The group  after , however, supports the first interpretation, in which it would be read as a Late Egyptian participle of *jr*. Reading the final phrase "to do" in the group  is based on two assumptions. First, that the slightly damaged first horizontal sign after the *yod* was an *r* and not the ideogram for *jr*; and, second, that the additional carving was forgotten from the second horizontal sign, clearly an *r*, which therefore mistakenly stands for *jr*. In the unlikely event of both assumptions being correct, finding *jr* instead of *r* at the head of a final clause would still be unexpected.


(l) The fragmentary nature of the passage does not allow a clear segmentation at this point. The predicate of this clause could possibly stand in the lacuna further down the line.



(m) The sign A40 at the end of group  is a god determinative and not a first-person suffix pronoun for the king, therefore the signs read *jt* "father" and not *jt=j* "my father." The graphical disambiguation of referents is fully consequent throughout the text and the first-person suffix pronouns are regularly spelled out. As a consequence, the present passage is either a third-person






narrative intervention between the king's speech and the god's, or, if it were to still belong to the king's address to Amun-Re, the first-person suffix pronoun, either  or , was forgotten.

(n) Only two solutions would be supported by the context and by the still visible traces of signs for the restoration of the lacuna:  *m qnjw=f* "with his valor" or  *m wsrw=f* "with his strength." The spellings here suggested would be confirmed by orthographical parallels in both cases: for *qnj* "valor," by the Coptos version of Ramesses II's *Second Hittite Marriage* (KRI II, 283, 7) and by Ramesses III's Medinet Habu inscriptions (KRI V, 49, 6 and 70, 15): ; for *wsr* "strength," by Amenhotep II's *Memphis Stela* (Urk. IV, 1301, 11) and by Thutmose IV's *Sphinx Stela* (Urk. IV, 1541, 7): . In Amenhotep II's *Memphis Stela*, not only the spelling but also the context is similar. The corresponding passage reads *jt m nht m wsr mj Mntw* "who seizes with victory and strength like Montu." The key to the decision between the two options is held by the beginning of line 11. Since Fragment C is the closest to the right edge of the stela at the height of line 11, the space between the beginning of line 10 and the joining line 4 of Fragment C is limited to not more than half a group of signs. This condition translates into a strong preference for a word with tighter spelling, that is, for *wsr* over *qnj*. The faint traces of the sign preceding the determinative (D40) of the partially missing word are also slightly more suggestive of *wsr* – more precisely, of a word ending in *s* rather than in *j* – and thus confirm the reading.

(o) Due to the lacunose context, it is impossible to tell with certainty if it is a *sdm.n=f*, a relative *sdm.n=f*, or an indirect genitive construction that follows the particle *mk*. If it is a *sdm.n=f* or a relative *sdm.n=f*, *j3b* features a late spelling for the verb *j3i* "to wish" (Wb. I, 6, 24 - 7, 7); if it is, however, an indirect genitive construction, *j3b* would be a defective spelling for the noun *j3bw/jbw* "wish, desire." The three options of translation are hence as follows: 1) *mk j3b.n* [...] "look, [...] has wished;" 2) *mk j3b.n* [...] "look, what [...] has wished;" and 3) *mk j3b n* [...] "look, the desire of [...]" The fact that the *n* after *j3b* is spelled with the sign S3 () might be an indicator for a genitive construction in this case, since the Northern Stela shows a strong preference for the sign N35 () when spelling the *-n* affix of the *sdm.n=f* or the relative *sdm.n=f*. The text has altogether 21 instances of *sdm.n=f*s or relative *sdm.n=f*s, and only two of them (*sd.n=s* in line 16 and *dj.n b3w=k* in line 19) spell the *-n* morpheme with the relatively younger *n* sign (A.H. Gardiner, *op. cit.*, §19 with n. 4).

(p) Although  is directly followed by a lacuna and therefore we are unable to tell if a god determinative was added to *tw* or not, it is fairly certain that the impersonal pronoun substitutes the deity at this point. In Ramesses III's *Gold Tablet Prayer*, the impersonal pronoun refers to Amun on two occasions and is supplemented by a god determinative both times in both copies of the text (KRI V, 221, 13-14).

(q) Due to the speech situation, the sign  in  cannot be read as a first-person suffix pronoun for the king, therefore it must be understood as a determinative of the preceding word, most probably *nsw* "king." The lemma is translated here as an adjective noun in relation to what stands in the lacuna.

(r) The first sign of the line is quite certainly D37. The context and the traces of signs visible on the edges of the corresponding two blocks seem to support the following restoration for the beginning of line 12: , that is, *dj.n(=j) n=k*... "I hereby give you..." What would speak against this reading is merely the absence of the first-person singular suffix pronoun in the phrase, a morpheme, which is otherwise consequently spelled out in the entire inscription. The exceptional omission of  or  could, on the other hand, be interpreted as an intended graphical reproduction of the performative *dj.n(=j) n=k* formula (P. Vernus, "Ritual' *sdm.n=f* and Some Values of the 'Accompli' in the Bible and in the Koran," in S. Israelit-Groll (ed.), *Pharaonic Egypt. The Bible and Christianity*, Jerusalem, 1985, p. 308-309) known from the ritual scenes of temple inscriptions and regularly written as  or . The structure of the passage would further support the restoration of the lacuna suggested here, provided that the missing signs at the beginning of line 14 and those between Fragment C and Helck's

block no. 5 at the height of line 13 were correctly supplied (cf. notes s, t, and v below). In that case, the *sdm.n=f* form of *rdi* at the beginning of line 12 would be followed by two dependent *sdm=f*s of the same verb in the subsequent lines: *dj[.n(=j) n=k] hbw-sd n T3-tnn.... [dj]=j jw n=k wrw nw t3 nb.... dj[=j] Thnw [...]* “I hereby give [you] jubilees of Tatenen.... and I cause the chiefs of every land to come to you.... and [I] place the Libyans [...].” The structural pattern of the passage – accomplished *sdm.n=f* continued by unaccomplished *sdm=f*s – would thus be parallel to that of lines 15-17: *rdj.n=j pdt 9 hr tbtj=k.... dj=j n=k phtj mjtt Mntw.... dj=j b3w=k m t3w nbw mj Hr...* “I hereby place the Nine Bows under your sandals.... and I give you strength like that of Montu.... and I put your might into every land like that of Horus...”

(s) The restoration of the first part of the lacuna is suggested by Ramesses III's Golden Horus name reading *Hr nbw [wsr rnpwt] mj Jtm jtjj mk Kmt w'[f] h3swt* “Golden Horus, [rich in years] like Atum, sovereign, protector of Egypt who cur[bs] the foreign lands” in line 2 of the Northern Stela.

(t) Assuming that the preposition *mj* was spelled without its phonetic complement in the preceding clause, there would be just enough space for a Δ in the lacuna in front of the first-person singular suffix pronoun referring to the god, and thus the passage would read *[dj]=j jw n=k wrw nw t3 nb...* “I [cause] the chiefs of every land to come to you...”

(u) Reading the preposition *m-ht* “through/throughout” at the beginning of line 13 ($\overline{\text{𓄿}} \overline{\text{𓂏}}$), as Kitchen's translation of Fragment C (*KRITA* V, 209) would imply, is not supported by the signs preserved on the corresponding part of Fragment C, nor by the size of the lacuna at the head of the line. The preposition *m-ht* is generally complemented by the sign D54, as it is the case also in line 15 of the Northern Stela: $\overline{\text{𓄿}} \overline{\text{𓂏}} \overline{\text{𓄿}} \overline{\text{𓂏}}$. On the other hand, the phrase *h'w=sn nb nw r3-ht* “all their weapons of combat” – written as $\overline{\text{𓄿}} \overline{\text{𓂏}} \overline{\text{𓄿}} \overline{\text{𓂏}} \overline{\text{𓄿}} \overline{\text{𓂏}}$ or perhaps as $\overline{\text{𓄿}} \overline{\text{𓂏}} \overline{\text{𓄿}} \overline{\text{𓂏}} \overline{\text{𓄿}} \overline{\text{𓂏}}$ – is supported by the remaining signs of the phrase, the space missing in front of line 13, and by phraseological parallels with the same sequence of morphemes in Thutmose III's *Annals* (*Urk.* IV, 699, 11) and in the *Gebel Barkal Stela* (*Urk.* IV, 1235, 11) of the same king.

(v) Interpreting what is left of the sign before the word Libyans in line 8 of Fragment C as the remains of a preposition *mj* after Kitchen (*KRI* V, 247, 8) seems to be unsatisfactory in the given context. If the traces formed part of a first-person singular suffix pronoun for the god, the passage would read *dj=j Thnw...* “I place the Libyans...”

(w) The name is not preserved in the cartouche.



Fig. 2. Digital reconstruction of the upper part of Ramesses III's Northern Stela (Fragment C highlighted). Photographs used: © CNRS-CFEETK nos. 14604, 14624-14626, 1438-1439, 14666-14667, 14670, 14691, 14699-14700, 14914-14915.



Fig. 3. Hieroglyphic transcript of lines 7-14 of Ramesses III's Northern Stela in the *cour de la cachette* (Fragment C highlighted).