

**TWO BLOCKS FROM THE TOMB OF PTAHMOSE,  
Mayor of Memphis and High Steward in the Domain of Ptah**

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In 1981 the Liebieghaus Museum in Frankfurt published a new guidebook to its Egyptian collection, containing photographs and descriptions of more than fifty pieces<sup>1</sup>. Among these figure two blocks deriving from the New Kingdom necropolis at Saqqâra. The first of these is the well-known fragment, thought by some to have come from the Memphite tomb of Horemheb, which shows the deceased tomb-owner paddling a canoe in what appear to be the Fields of Iaru<sup>2</sup>. The other block bears the inventory no. IN 1643 and is illustrated in the guidebook under No. 23 with a description by Dietrich Wildung. Among the inscriptions on the block appear the name and title of the owner, the *imy-r pr wr n Pth, Pth-ms*. According to Wildung, a man with the same name and title is known from a statue in Leningrad, dated by the cartouches inscribed on its shoulders to the reign of Ramesses III<sup>3</sup>, a date which he thinks is corroborated by the iconography and style of the Liebieghaus block. The text on the back-pillar of the Leningrad statue gives the name and titles of the owner as *ss nsw šp3w n nb t3wy h3tv-r imy-r pr wr, Pth-ms*. Although both men are called Ptahmose and both of them bear the title of High Steward (*imy-r pr wr*), the Leningrad statue does not specify

<sup>1</sup> *Ägyptische Kunst im Liebieghaus, Museum für alter Plastik, Frankfurt am Main*, ed. Beatrix Gebler-Löhr (Frankfurt am Main, 1981).

<sup>2</sup> IN 270; No. 19 in the guidebook. See G. T. Martin, *Corpus of Reliefs of the New Kingdom from the Memphite Necropolis and Lower Egypt I* (London, 1987), No. 25, with full bibliography, and the discussion in id., *The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb, Commander-in-Chief of Tutankhamun I* (forthcoming).

<sup>3</sup> Inv. No. 743, see I. A. Lapis & M. E. Matthieu, *Ancient Egyptian Sculpture in the Collection of the State Ermitage* [in Russian] (Moscow, 1969), 85 and Pl. II (No. 80); *KRI* V, 391, 15-16.

the institution its owner was attached to, nor does the block in Frankfurt mention the Leningrad Ptahmose's first title, Royal Scribe of Memoranda of the Lord of the Two Lands (*ss nsw sḥjw n nb tʿwy*). The identification of these two men as one and the same Ptahmose must therefore be considered as dubious.

There is, however, a far better candidate, *viz* the High Steward in the Domain of Ptah and Mayor of Memphis Ptahmose. The monuments of this great official, which are now scattered through many different museums, include not only four statues<sup>4</sup>, but also several relief blocks and other architectural elements from his Memphite tomb-chapel<sup>5</sup>. The 'dossier' of this Ptahmose was published a few years ago by Jocelyne Berlandini<sup>6</sup> and although the Liebieghaus block is mentioned neither in her article nor in the second edition of PM III, there can be no doubt that it does derive from this man's tomb – in fact, it turns out that the Frankfurt block adjoins the block in Leiden<sup>7</sup> on the latter's left hand side (Fig. 1). The photographs of both blocks have been reproduced in their respective publications at different scales, but the actual measurements help to confirm the join. The height of the Leiden block is 108 cm<sup>8</sup>, that of the block in Frankfurt 103 cm, but the difference can be easily explained. In the top left hand corner of the Leiden block a woman is depicted standing with both her hands raised in adoration. Above her are the ends of

<sup>4</sup> In Cairo, Leiden, Baltimore and in a Japanese private collection; see PM III<sup>2</sup>/2, 713–715.

<sup>5</sup> In Cairo, East-Berlin, Leiden and Florence.

<sup>6</sup> J. Berlandini, "Varia Memphitica V. Monuments de la chapelle funéraire du gouverneur Ptahmés", *BIFAO* 82 (1982), 85–103 with Pl. vii–xiv. See also *KRI* III, 171–180

<sup>7</sup> Leiden Inv. No. AP 54; P. A. A. Boeser, *Beschreibung der Aegyptischen Sammlung des Niederländischen Reichsmuseums der Altertümer in Leiden – Die Denkmäler des Neuen Reiches, I. Abt.: Gräber* (Haag, 1911), 8, Pl. xxx.

<sup>8</sup> The height is given as 107 cm in C. Leemans, *Description raisonnée des monumens égyptiens du Musée d'Antiquités des Pays-Bas, à Leide* (Leide, 1840), 145, and as 108 cm in H. D. Schneider & M. J. Raven, *De Egyptische Oudheid* ('s-Gravenhage, 1981), 99, the measurements in Boeser, *l.c.*, are obviously inaccurate (h 128, w 100 cm), even if one acknowledges the fact that height and width have been exchanged

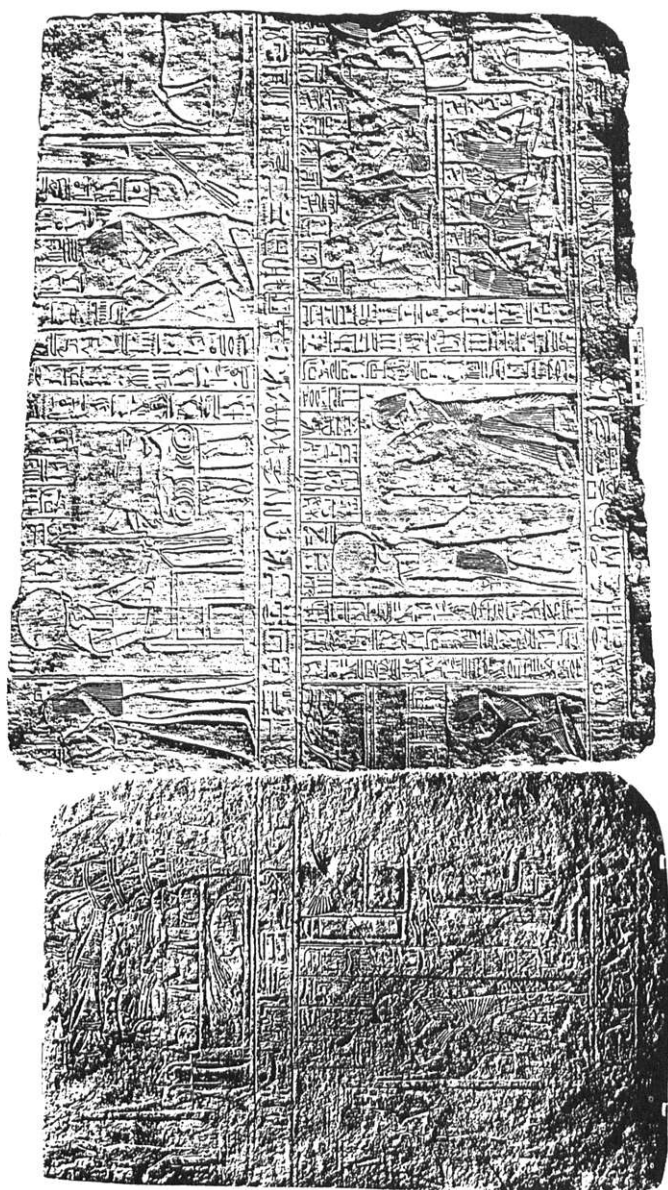


Fig. 1. Frankfurt Lieblegheus IN 1643 + Leiden RMD Inv. No. AP 54  
Xeroxes of the published photographs, reduced to the same scale

three columns of text mentioning the name of Ptahmose's wife Inehyt and, in the area above her hands, that of Ptahmose himself, proving that Inehyt was originally preceded by her husband. The latter is shown in the adjoining right hand corner of the Frankfurt block; he too is raising his hands in adoration, but his head and the texts inscribed above him are missing<sup>9</sup>. This accounts quite comfortably for the 5 cm difference in height between the two blocks. Both reliefs consist of two registers, probably the top and middle registers of the original wall, as can be seen from the traces of text in a further register on the bottom edge of the Leiden block. The technique used in both cases is the same: the representations have been carved in raised relief, whereas the texts are in sunk relief on a raised panel. The different registers are each separated by a horizontal band containing a single line of text. The upper one gives the second half of an offering-formula and ends with name and titles of Ptahmose. The Frankfurt and Leiden blocks together provide the well-known formula



"... all good and pure things on which a god lives, consisting of what heaven gives, the earth produces and the Inundation brings forth from its cavern". The title *Imy-r pr wr n Pth* on the Liebieghaus block occurs also on the relief in Leiden and indeed on several other monuments of Ptahmose. It is a shortened form of one of his chief titles, *Imy-r pr wr m pr Pth*, "High Steward in the Domain of Ptah", or even more precisely *Imy-r pr wr m t3 Hwt R<sup>c</sup>-ms-s(w)-Mry-Imn m pr Pth* "High Steward in the Temple of Ramesses-Mery-Amun in the Domain of Ptah"<sup>10</sup>.

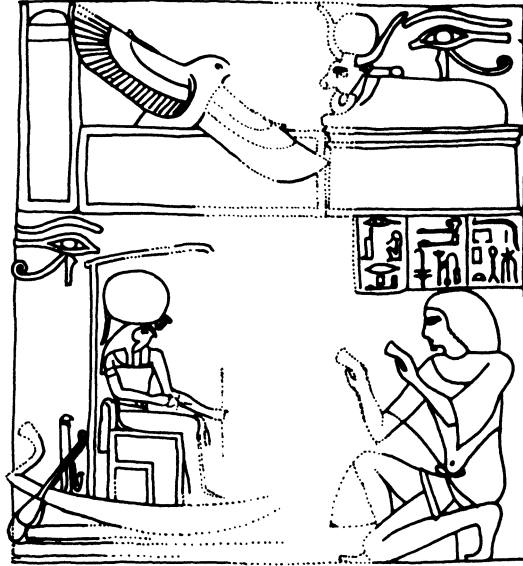
This is not the place to describe the scenes on both blocks in any detail, but a brief survey may serve to illustrate the connection between the two blocks. The upper register as we have it now consists of the remains of three

<sup>9</sup> The edges of the Frankfurt block are damaged and the missing head of Ptahmose is probably broken off; the text originally inscribed above him was probably on a further block joining it at the top

<sup>10</sup> See for these and other titles, which include those of Mayor of Memphis and Overseer of the Treasury and of the Army in the Domain of Ptah, the references quoted in n. 6 above.

scenes. The first of these is almost entirely preserved on the block in Frankfurt. It shows Ptahmose and his wife Inehyt adoring a god who is now

Fig. 2  
Sketch of BD 71 vignette



missing, but who, judging from the baldaquin under which he is seated and the goddess (Isis?) who stands before him, must have been Osiris; between the god and his worshippers is an exceptionally large pile of offerings. The second scene shows Ptahmose kneeling in front of a seated Rē. Only the beginning is visible of the third scene, it depicts the Hathor cow in a boat, presumably being adored by the tomb-owner(s). Four scenes compose the lower register. First we see Ptahmose adoring Osiris, who is this time standing (not seated) in a shrine. Of the second scene ca. two thirds are preserved on the Liebieghaus block, the remainder on the relief in Leiden, and for this reason it merits a slightly more detailed description (Fig. 2). The scene is divided in two halves. In the upper part we see from left to right a small shrine of the

Lower Egyptian type (with a vaulted roof between posts), a falcon with its wings spread which emerges from a square basin and the *Mht-wrt* cow on a shrine-shaped pedestal; above the back of the cow is a large Udjat-eye. The lower part of the scene shows Ptahmose kneeling, adoring Rē'-Harakhty, who is seated in a boat. The elements which compose this scene are usually found in the vignettes to BD 71, and although the text of this chapter is not found on the reliefs<sup>11</sup>, three columns concluding the scene on the right give a short hymn in which these elements recur: "Adoring Rē'-Harakhty when he comes forth as the Divine Falcon from the darkness beside Mehet-Weret, Great of Magic, the Eye of Rē' which illumines the Two Lands". The relationship between the text on the Leiden block and the vignette on the block in Frankfurt further demonstrates that the two blocks belong together. The remaining two scenes show Ptahmose adoring Rē', who is this time shown standing, and the deceased couple seated in the company of their children, doubtless to receive offerings.

Finally, a few words may be devoted to date and style of the reliefs. In Wildung's view a Dyn. XX date, suggested by the presumed connection with the Leningrad statue, is confirmed by "die fein plissierten knöchellangen Gewänder der beiden Beter (...), die überlängten Proportionen der Figuren und das Nebeneinander von Flachrelief und versenktem Relief". In my opinion these criteria point in a different direction. In the first place, the long finely pleated garment is a common dress of the whole of the second half of the New Kingdom; it is certainly not restricted to the XXth Dynasty. On the other hand, the short front-piece of the garment has its closest parallels in representations from the time between the end of the Amarna Period and the earlier part of the reign of Ramesses II. Secondly, the figures do not seem to

<sup>11</sup> This is also the case in the Theban tombs, where a similar vignette occurs which is never accompanied by the actual text of BD 71, see M. Saleh, *Das Totenbuch in den thebanischen Beamtengräbern des Neuen Reiches. Texte und Vignetten*, AVDAIK 46 (Mainz am Rhein, 1984), 37-38. BD 71 begins with an address to the "Falcon which rises from Nun, Lord of Mehet-Weret".

me to possess unduly elongated proportions; certainly these proportions do not point to a date specifically in the XXth Dynasty. In fact, the figures of Ptahmose do not differ significantly from, for example, those in the famous reliefs from the Memphite tomb of Maya (*temp.* Horemheb). Perhaps most significant of all, however, is the third point: the simultaneous occurrence of raised and sunk relief, and especially of inscriptions carved in sunk relief on a raised panel. Although this phenomenon can be seen occasionally in later periods, notably on stelae, its use in NK relief-blocks from Saqqâra is confined to good quality work of the period from the late XVIIIth Dynasty to the earlier decades of the reign of Ramesses II. Many examples could be quoted, but again a comparison with the reliefs of Maya<sup>12</sup> is instructive. Both the wall in Berlin and the blocks found re-used in the Monastery of Apa Jeremias, although they are of an even better quality, show a remarkable similarity in style and lay-out to the reliefs of Ptahmose. A date in the earlier part of the reign of Ramesses II is also suggested by the fact that this pharaoh's name is written in the earlier form *R'-ms-s(w)* on a relief photographed *in situ* in Ptahmose's tomb by Arthur Rhôné in 1885<sup>13</sup>, whereas it appears as *R'-ms-sw* on one of the relief pannels in Cairo<sup>14</sup>. Since this name change took place in the second decade of the reign of Ramesses II<sup>15</sup>, the construction of the tomb may have taken place precisely in this decade<sup>16</sup>. Since a column from Ptahmose's tomb-chapel was re-used


<sup>12</sup> See for the time being E. Græfe, "Das Grab des Schatzhausvorstehers und Bauleiters Maya in Saqqara", *MDAIK* 31 (1975), 187-220, with Pls. 57-62.

<sup>13</sup> Berlandini, *o. c.*, 86-91 with Pl. vii.

<sup>14</sup> Cairo JE 4874; Berlandini, *o. c.*, 95-96 with Pl. x.

<sup>15</sup> K. A. Kitchen, in: *Ägypten und Kusch* [Fs. F. Hintze] (Berlin, 1977), 220; A. J. Spalinger, *JEA* 66 (1980), 95-97.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Berlandini, *o. c.*, 102-103, who also dates the tomb to the first half of the reign of Ramesses II on stylistic grounds, although her additional argument that Ptahmose's attachment to a chapel of Seti I in the Domain of Ptah (pyramidion *LD Text* I, 15 = *KRI* III, 179) means that he was already in office under that King is less convincing: such a chapel is likely to have continued to function after the death of Seti I.

in the construction of the Monastery of Apa Jeremias, it is very probable that it is located in the NK necropolis south of the Unas Causeway, and it is to be hoped that the tomb will be re-discovered in the not to distant future. 

Groningen, 28 August 1989