

Kiss (the earth) the Earth (A92)

Niv ALLON

The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Function
 Classifier/repeater

Value
 [Kissing the earth]

sn 'to kiss' is most often classified with the abbreviated form of the face, showing the nose eye and cheek (𓂋; Gardiner D19). In contrast, a lintel from Nakht's tomb (TT C.8, see Manniche 1988, 58–59) does not merely echo the act of kissing but also takes its object—the ground—into account. It thereby depicts the prostrating gesture that the idiom *sn t'* describes. A similarly early classifier from the tomb of Amenemhab, called Mahu (TT 85), playfully places the prostrating man directly above the hieroglyph for earth (fig. 1, photograph by J.J. Shirley), recreating the scene in script. Such a classifier is used even when the image which the inscription accompanies shows the man in a different pose (see Baines 2023: 80–88, and especially p. 85 for this instance). Over time, the classifier appeared even more frequently and in Dendera and Edfu it often functioned as a logogram for *sn* in this idiom.



Fig. 1

References:

Stewart, H.M. 1976. *Egyptian Stelae, Reliefs and Paintings from the Petrie Collection, Part One: The New Kingdom*: 52, pl. 42.2. Warminster, Aris & Phillips.

Manniche, L. 1988. *Lost Tombs: A Study of Certain Eighteenth Dynasty Monuments in the Theban Necropolis*, Studies in Egyptology. London, Kegan Paul International.

Baines, J. 2023. "Ancient Egyptian Decorum: Demarcating and Presenting Social Action." In: *Ancient Egyptian Society: Challenging Assumptions, Exploring Approaches*, ed. by D. Candelora et al.: 74–89. London, New York, Routledge. DOI: 10.4324/9781003003403-10.


Document: Lintel of Nakht, the Overseer of Fowl-houses

Date: New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, pre-Amarna (ca. 1550–1353 BCE);
 see Manniche 1988

Provenance: Bought in the Theban area before 1896; most probably
 from Theban Tomb C.8

Current location: University College London, Petrie Museum of Egyptian
 Archaeology (UC14227)

Object type: Lintel fragment

Material: Sandstone


Hieroglyphic source

MdC:N35:D4:Q1*A40:O34:N35:A92!-N17:E34:N35:F35*A40

Transliteration: *(r[di].t [j][.w]) n Wsir sn t <n> wn-nfr*

Translation: ([Giv]ing [Prai]se) to Osiris, kissing the earth (for) Wennefer

Location: Column 2