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TWO INSCRIPTIONS CONCERNING PRIVATE DONATIONS TO TEMPLES

BY

ERIK IVERSEN



KØBENHAVN

I KOMMISSION HOS EJNAR MUNKSGAARD

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Kairo 45327 $\left(\frac{27}{21} \middle| \frac{1}{2}\right)$.

The present inscription from a limestone stela in the Museum of Cairo was first published by DARESSY in the "Annales"¹, where he states that it had been found at Tell el Minieh and el Sherafa in the province of Ghizeh.

The stela entered the Journal d'entrée of the Museum as number 45327; in 1936, however, when I tried to get a photograph or a squeeze, I was told that it had disappeared and was recorded as missing in the books of the Museum.

During a stay at Cairo in the winter of 1937—38, I stumbled upon the stela, which had got a new temporary number $\frac{27}{21} \middle| \frac{1}{2}$ and, thanks to the valuable assistance of Mr. ENGELBACH who procured special spot-light arrangements and of Mr. LUCAS who brought about acetone to moisten the very damaged surface of the stone, some new readings—not without significance for the understanding of the inscription—could be ascertained.

These new readings together with a translation and a commentary to the first and rather important part of the inscription, which had been left unconsidered by DARESSY whose main interest was the oracle, might justify this new edition.


The stela (see pl. D)² carries the cartouches of Osorkon II


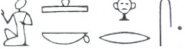
¹ Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte 1915 XV 141.

² The plate has been photographed by Miss HORNEMANN to whom I am indebted for the kind permission to reproduce it in the present paper.

and is in style and technique as well as in orthography, sign-forms, and craftsmanship a typical example from the time near the XXI and the XXII dynasties, which in these respects form a fairly homogeneous unity.¹

The inscription runs in 9 badly damaged lines, above which in basrelief three persons are to be seen: the king Osorkon II, the high priest of Herschef Nimrod, and the donator, the scribe *Dd-Ptah-efēnh* adoring the Memphitic triad Ptah, Sakhmis and Nefertem.






















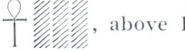

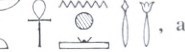






The three persons are accompanied by the usual epitheta and almost obliterated legendae.² The king is presenting 

to the god with the words 


The surface of the stela, however, is not quite filled up by the relief and the inscription, a broad space being left blank at the base which is only roughly cut; this is a condition most uncommon among ordinary stelae but not in-

¹ Comp. f. inst. the great inscription of Pinedjem from Karnak (publ. Naville, *Inscription historique de Pinedjem III*, Paris 1883) which offers striking parallels in technique as well as in sign-forms and orthography.

² The rests of the legends are as follows:

above the king  , above the
high priest in three lines: **1**      **2**      **3**      ---
 , above the donator  
, above Ptah  --- , above Sakhmis
sic  *sic*    . The inscription accompany-
ing the picture of Nefertem has completely disappeared. Only  is left.

frequently found among those belonging to this special group.¹

The inscription runs as follows:



In the year 16 under his Majesty the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, the lord of the two lands *Wsr-.mꜛ-Reꜥ Štp-n-Amûn*, son of Re, lord of the diadems *Mr-Amûn Sz-Bꜣs.t* Osorkon - - - - granted life like Re eternally, at the festivals of Ptah, his good Lord, at his beautiful feast **1** - - - -.

This was the day on which was given a field of - - - - araura's in the outskirts **2** of the town **3** - - - - - - - - total - - - - - - - - total 15, in all total 42 *rmn*, the southern boundary of which is the stable **4** of *Dd-Amûn-e.f-ꜥnh*, son of *ir-šw-ît.f.*, **5** [its northern **6** - - - -] its eastern is the field of the Schardana, **7** under the administration **8** of the priest Hori, its western is the field of the house of Ptah, **9** the lord of which **10** is the divine father, **11** priest of Herschef from the house of Ptah, scribe of the temple, cattle counting scribe of the house of Ptah, *Dd-Ptah-e.f-ꜥnh*, son of the priest *Ns-Mjn.* by **12** the highpriest of Herschef—king of the two lands **13**—great prince of *Šhm-hꜣpr*, **14** general, prince Nimrod, **15** son of the lord of the two lands Osorkon, his mother being *Dd-Mw.t-e.s-ꜥnh*, in proceeding before Ptah, the great god, saying: “My good Lord, wilt **16** thou receive this field-foundation, **17** which the divine father etc. *Dd-Ptah e.f-ꜥnh* has given unto thee, as a beautiful gift from my hand, and wilt thou give its **18** reward to me consisting in life, **19** luck and health, a big lifetime and a long old age, and let him keep it **20** eternally?” The great god consented passionately. He spoke again: “My good lord, wilt thou kill every man of any position in the entire

¹ See f. inst. Kairo 65834 $\left(\frac{5}{35} \left| \frac{12}{1} \right.\right)$, publ. Gauthier A. S. A. XXXVI 49.



land, who will ever contest it from him, and wilt thou delete their names in the entire land, so that Sakhmis will be after his wives and Nefertum after his children?" The great god consented passionately.



1 Maybe  or  is to be read, see Wörterbuch der aegyptischen Sprache II 142—43.


2 How the group  is to be read and understood seems to be doubtful. The Wörterbuch gives *šwṣ.w* (IV 62) but this does not account for the , which is to be found in many cases e. g.:

 Kairo 36861 1. 17.
 Anii 6.3 and ibidem.


A more probable—though by no means certain—suggestion would be *šbn.w*, but the reading as well as the exact translation remain doubtful.

3 The town name to be inserted is  as in line 5, a locality maybe identical with  at Fayaum, mentioned in the Piankhi-Stela. See Daressy A. S. A. XV 141, and Gauthier Dictionnaire Géographique V 47.

4 In an unpublished text from the Carlsberg papyrus collections, we find  explained as 

5 The name is doubtful, but  seems to be the probable reconstruction. Compare the different names with *irj* as formative elements in Ranke's Namenwörterbuch.

To give a plausible idea of the significance of our inscription, some further remarks on the group to which it belongs seem to be indispensable¹ here.

The inscription belongs to a small group of stelae dealing with certain private donations of landed properties given to different temples of Egypt in return of certain—as it seems chiefly mortuary—services.

They are found in a period from the XIXth² to the XXVIth dynasty where they suddenly seem to disappear. Since it is necessary in the following to quote a great deal of special examples to support the commentary, a list of the principal pieces will be given³. Those are:

- 1 Kairo $\frac{11}{21} \frac{9}{14}$ ed. Daressy, *Annales du Service des Antiquités* XXI 138.
- 2 Kairo $\frac{11}{25} \frac{1}{13}$ unpublished.
- 3 Kairo $\frac{8}{25} \frac{3}{11}$ ed. Max Müller, *Egyptian Researches* I pl. 88. Maspero, *Rec. de Travaux* XV 84.
- 4 Kairo $\frac{5}{35} \frac{12}{1}$ ed. Gauthier, *A. S. A.* XXXVI 49.
- 5 Kairo $\frac{9}{24} \frac{6}{1}$ ed. Legrain *A. S. A.* IV 183.
- 6 Kairo $\frac{2}{21} \frac{2}{13}$ unpublished.
- 7 Kairo 455 ed. Chassinat *Rec. de Trav.* XXV 58.

¹ I am told that a publication (with translation and commentary) of all these inscriptions is under preparation by Professor Černý and Dr. Posener. Only those facts necessary for our commentary will therefore be mentioned here.

² The stela from Strasburg (1378) ed. Spiegelberg *Ä.Z.* LVI 55 dates from the year 1 under Ramses I and the two identical stelae from Nubia, published by Gauthier (in the above list no. 4 and no. 15), from the time of Ramses II.

³ The list does not pretend to be complete, since it is mainly the result of literary investigations; I hope, however, that no essential specimen is missing.

- 8 Kairo 31653 ed. Daressy A. S. A. XVIII 52—53.
- 9 Kairo 34024 unpublished.
- 10 Kairo 37888 Legrain A. S. A. VII 226.
- 11 Kairo 41670 ed. Daressy A. S. A. XI 7.
- 12 Kairo 45327 ed. Daressy A. S. A. XV 141.
- 13 Kairo 45779 ed. Daressy A. S. A. XV 144.
- 14 Kairo 45948 ed. Daressy A. S. A. XVII 43.
- 15 Kairo 65834 ed. Gauthier A. S. A. XXXVI 49.
- 16 Kairo without number Daressy A. S. A. XV 146.
- 17 Kairo without number Daressy A. S. A. XVI 61.
- 18 Kairo without number Maspero *Ä. Z.* 1885, 11.
- 19 Kairo without number Spiegelberg *Ä. Z.* LVI 59 mentioned Daressy *Rec. de Trav.* XVIII 51.
- 20 Stela from private Egyptian collection, Brugsch *Ä. Z.* XXXIV 83.
- 21 Stela from the collection of Danino Pascha, Maspero, *Rec. de Trav.* XV 86.
- 22 Stela formerly belonging to Mr. Fahrman, Maspero, *Ä. Z.* 1881, 117.
- 23 Nationalmuseet Copenhagen 332, Mogensen, *Inscriptions* 37 pl. XVII fig. 27.
- 24 Nationalmuseet Copenhagen 7097, Mogensen, *Inscriptions* 38—39 pl. XVII.
- 25 Stela ed. Spiegelberg *Ä. Z.* LVI 58.
- 26 Stela Strassburger Aegypt. Institut 1588, Spiegelberg, *Ä. Z.* LVI 57.
- 27 Stela Strassburger Aegypt. Institut 1378, Spiegelberg, *Ä. Z.* LVI 55.
- 28 Berlin 8434 ed. Piehl, *Ä. Z.* XXXI 84—86 Reveillout, *Revue Égyptologique* I 33, Brugsch *Thesaurus* IV 797.
- 29 Berlin 7344 ed. Spiegelberg, *Rec. de Trav.* XXXV 44, mentioned Stern *Ä. Z.* XXI 19.

- 30 Stela from Athens. Spiegelberg *Rec. de Trav.* XXV 190.
 31 Stela ed. Loat Gurob pl. XVIII—XIX (Egyptian Research Account 1904).
 32 Stela from Musée Guimet, Moret Catalogue du Musée Guimet pl. XLIII p. 99.
 33 Stela from Musée Guimet, Moret Catalogue du Musée Guimet pl. XLIV ed. Spiegelberg *Rec. de Trav.* XXXV 41.
 34 Stela from Florence (Sciaparelli 1806) Daressy *Rec. de Trav.* XV 175.
 35 Stela from Koptos ed. Bouriant *Rec. de Trav.* IX 100.

Also the inscription of Amenofis, son of Hapu, published by Georg Möller¹ and papyrus No. II in the Rylands collection² should be mentioned³ here.

It is characteristic for most of these inscriptions that they are transmitted in very poor and miserable state.

Not only that the materials used have been of inferior value—very often they were just roughly cut and of irregular sand- or limestone—and therefore have suffered badly during the ages, but the whole work, the decorations as well as the inscriptions, is often so barbaric that we have to compare one inscription with all its related inscriptions in order to find any sense. The hieroglyphs are badly cut and often very cursive in their form; pure hieratic inscriptions, which were evidently cut by village craftsmen, who were not able to transcribe the hieratic draft into hieroglyphs, are not uncommon.⁴

¹ Georg Möller, *Das Dekret des Amenophis, des Sohnes des Hapu.* *Sitzungsberichte der Königl. Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 1910 2 p. 932.

² Griffith, *The Ryland Papyri* pl. IX pap. no. II.

³ Comp. also the lists from Georg Möller's *Amenophisdekret* op. cit. p. 942 and Sottas, op. cit. p. 145.

⁴ F. inst. no. 26 and no. 5 of the above list.

The inscription itself is often contracted and full of orthographic and grammatical mistakes, sometimes even as to sheer senselessness.


Our present inscription is especially interesting by the fact, however, that all the technical phrases concerning this special form of donations are fuller and better redacted and the whole proceeding is made clearer than in any other document of similar kind.

A comparison of our inscription with the collected material from related documents proves that the informations obtained about the whole procedure and its practical and theoretical background are the following:

a. The gift.

The donations themselves consist in smaller landed properties, the extension of which varies in general between 5¹ and 50² arouras, i. e. from ca. 0.0136 km² to ca. 0.137 km². They are offered to various local temples by local officials or smaller residents in reward of certain funerary services.

The records of the act of donation are found in various redactions:

 ----- ○ --- follows the name of the temple.³

 ----- ○ --- follows the name of the temple.⁴

 follows the name of the temple or  N. N. .⁵




¹ F. inst. Strasburg 1588 (no. 26 in the above list).

² F. inst. Kairo 45948 (no. 14).

³ Strasburg 1378 (no. 27).

⁴ Berlin 7344 (no. 29).

⁵ Strasburg 1588 (no. 26). Kairo $\frac{8}{25} \frac{3}{11}$ (no. 3), and Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen 7079 (no. 24).

 -- donator? ----  ©¹ ---
 the officiating priest --² or ³


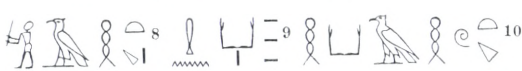

b. The stela.

After these introductory phrases, the inscriptions generally give an enumeration of the limits of the field, indicated after the four quarters of the sky.

This has caused some discussion on the true application of the stelae, viz. whether they should be regarded as land marks⁴ or as votive stelae.⁵

Although it seems at present impossible to settle the question definitely, and though the fact that the stelae from Abu Simbel⁶ are found in two identical copies, seems indeed to support the land-mark theory, Sottas' assumption⁷ that they should be regarded as "pièces d'archives" holds good for by far the greatest part.

c. The donation.

The donation itself as an institution is called  ©
⁹ or simply ¹¹

¹ It seems not quite certain that the person introduced by the relative form of *irj* should always be understood as the officiating priest as in our text. Sometimes the actual donator may be described by this form.

² Kairo 31653 (no. 24).

³ Loat, Gurob (no. 31) see p. 5, note 12.

⁴ Maspero, Sur deux Stèles récemment découvertes. Recueil de Trav. XV p. 84.

⁵ Sottas, La préservation etc. p. 145.



⁶ Kairo $\frac{5}{35} \frac{12}{1}$ (No. 4) & Kairo 65834 (no. 15).

⁷ op. et. loc. cit.

⁸ Strasburg 1588 (no. 26).

⁹ Stela from Koptos (no. 35) l. 6.



¹⁰ Stela from Athens (no. 30).

¹¹ *Ibidem* l. 10 with  for , probably due to an assimilation of *m* before *k*, as before *t* in *rm**t*.




so as to exclude any doubt as to the funerary character of the inscriptions, though it is clear that the act of donation took place while the donator was still alive and that it was also supposed to serve the donator's worldly welfare.¹

d. Its application.

It is explicitly told in several inscriptions, that the gift should enter the *h̄tp-ntr*—the “Opfervermögen”—of the god² and, although we know very little about the administration and the exact significance of this sub-division of the temple fortune, and its relation to the economy of the temples, it seems clear that the daily temple-offerings were produced as a kind of revenue therefrom.

In our inscriptions it is now and then expressly said that the gift is presented  “that they shall carry offerings therefrom to Horus”, or  “to satisfy her Majesty (Bast) therewith”, and it is clear from the little inscription from the Nationalmuseum, that the donation should guarantee the deceased donator a share in the daily offerings.

e. The *h̄m-kꜣ* priest.

To complete the picture, the person who receives the property on behalf of the temple as its administrator—the person introduced by ,⁵ or  or .

¹ See p. 9 note 19.

²  Stela Guimet (no. 33) l. 3, and 

 Strasburg 1378 (no. 27) l. 5.

³ Posnostele (no. 28) l. 6.

⁴ Kairo 457779 (no. 13) l. 4.

⁵ F. inst. Tefnekjetstela (no. 30) l. 5. Kairo $\frac{8}{25} \frac{3}{11}$ l. 4.

⁶ Stela from Musée Guimet (no. 33) l. 6 where the translation is

in the inscriptions—is pretty often directly endowed with the *hm-ka* title.¹

It is therefore obvious that the inscriptions must be regarded as links in a chain of evolution which began with the “Stiftungsurkunden” from the old Kingdom² and continued in the Siut contracts from the middle Kingdom.³

All these inscriptions are dealing with a problem, fundamental in the religious life of the Egyptians: how to secure the necessary provisions for the deceased in the hereafter. In an effort to guarantee the observance of somewhat dubious testamentary stipulations for this purpose, it has so to say become practice to transmit the property itself as a fortune to the temples, who as a reward or interest took upon themselves the mortuary service for the deceased.

It is not the place here to give an exposé either of the problems concerning the evolution and practice of these institutions or their economical and religious consequences, especially because our inscriptions in reality do not offer any material for the solution of these problems and because the few remarks which could be made about the question already have been collected and accounted for elsewhere.⁴ However, it may be said without relying on vague assumptions or hypotheses that our private donation inscriptions do not differ essentially from the two groups mentioned above.

The aim, the method and the practice are the same, the proceeding being only reduced to serve the modest claims doubtful, however, because the person introduced by *mdj* might be the donator. (*mdj* = *in*).

¹ Kairo $\frac{5}{35} \frac{12}{1}$ (no. 4) and Kairo 65834 (no. 5).

² Sethe, Urkunden I.

³ Griffith, The Inscriptions from Siut and Der el Rifeh.

⁴ Sottas, op. cit. p. 3, note 1.

of those small-means-people being now the bearers of the old usage.

It is near at hand that the evolution and reduction in the size of the gifts naturally involved certain moderations in the claims as well as in the grants.

Such small gifts could not expect to be regarded as special institutions with particular rules and separate practices in the administration of the temples. Although we have seen that the old practice with a special *hm-ka* priest for every property was still theoretically maintained, it seems clear that these gifts can by no means be considered to be such special and well defined conclaves in the temple fortunes as their predecessors from the Old- and Middle kingdom.

The landed properties entered the temple domain as such, and since specifications of the duties of the temples are never found, their donators seem all to have received the same services.

Most of them were given to small, local temples, temples to which the local donator felt attached, and although we know too little about the economical conditions of these temples and their resources, it seems highly probable that these donations, accumulating year by year from gifts from members of the different local communities, played a significant rôle especially in the economical structure of the smaller temples.

As to the various representations found as decorations on the different stelae, it has already been mentioned that our inscription also in this respect may serve as a kind of key to the others.

Three persons are represented before the gods: the king, the high-priest and the donator, and the reasons for their presence have already been mentioned: The king,

because he is the theoretical possessor of all land in Egypt and thus, the theoretical donator whenever landed properties are transferred;—the high-priest as the natural and official medium between the god and the lay-donator performing the ceremonies and accepting the gift on behalf of the god and the temple,—and, at last, the actual donator as the modest but indispensable originator, the whole thus forming a base for the explanation and understanding of the various representations on the different stelae.

Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek E. 78.

The inscription is found on the ordinary “Würfelhoeker” of black granite belonging to the collections of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek at Copenhagen, where it bears the number E. 78.¹

The text without translation was published by O. Koefoed-Petersen in his issue of the inscriptions of the Museum, but not satisfactory.²


The statue carries the cartouches of Psammetic I on the right and the left shoulders³ and the whole piece is—in style as well as in orthography—a remarkable example of the archaistic tendencies of the twenty-sixth dynasty.

A vertical inscription is found on the pillar of the rear

¹ Number E. 198 in the catalogue from 1908.

² O. Koefoed-Petersen; *Recueil des Inscriptions Hiéroglyphiques de la Glyptothèque Ny Carlsberg*. Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca VI, Bruxelles 1936 p. 13.




of the statue  and sporadic sign-rests from a similar but completely obliterated inscription are to be found at its base.

The text is rather difficult to read since the signs are very superficially cut and the surface is pretty worn.

Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek E. 78.



¹  is doubtful. Maybe only due to a lapsus in my collation, which cannot be verified, the statue having been temporarily removed.

² Comp. f. inst. pap. Insinger 35.15, where Osiris is explicitly called *nb Bb.t*, obviously due to a misinterpretation of his old epithet *nb 3bdw*.

Another statue bearing the name and the parentage of the same person is found in the British Museum.¹

It shows some orthographic variants in the spelling of the names,² and the titles are not the same; the identity of the two persons is nevertheless certain and is proved by the fact that the two inscriptions even seem to be cut by the same artisan or at least in the same workshop.³


The inscription runs as follows:


“The overseer of the treasurers Harbes,⁴ son of Peftau-mashu,⁵ born of Shebetese, he says: Oh! priests, divine fathers and Uab-priests, who enter the temple of Osiris, the lord of Busiris, to please Osiris with what he likes, to give offerings to the gods and meals to the spirits, do not let my share be missing of what has been presented, out of those 60 Arouras field which I have given unto ye.



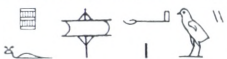
Bend your hands for me when celebrating, mention my name to the great god. It is good for you to celebrate for me.”

¹ Guide to the Egyptian Galleries 868 p. 238, and Sharpe, Egyptian Inscriptions II 44.

² 

³ Comp. f. inst. the curious form of *wcb*. In both inscriptions, thus 










⁴ The name is not uncommon in later periods, it is found in pap. Rylands and pap. Krall as  see Ranke's Namenwörterbuch 253²⁷.

⁵ For this name which is written  in the inscription from the British Museum, compare the following names of similar construction from Ranke's Namenwörterbuch  127, 23  127, 24 etc.

The inscription—ordinary and rather insignificant in every other respect—is interesting since it is one of the very few examples—if not the only—where a private landed donation is mentioned in other texts than the ordinary donation inscriptions.¹

¹ Compare the curious little inscription from the XXI dynasti ed.: G. Möller, *Das Dekret des Amenophis, des Sohnes des Hapu*. Sitzungsberichte der Königl. Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Jahrgang 1910. Zweiter Halbband p. 947 no. 14, and Sottas, *La Préservation de la Propriété Funéraire dans l'ancienne Égypte*, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, fasc. 205 p. 146.

Kairo 45327.

- I  Line I contains hieroglyphs with several annotations: 'sic' above the 10th and 11th signs, and '1' above the 12th and 13th signs.
- II  Line II contains hieroglyphs with '2' annotations above the 7th, 8th, and 11th signs.
- III  Line III contains hieroglyphs with '2' annotations above the 7th, 8th, 10th, 11th, and 12th signs.
- IV  Line IV contains hieroglyphs with 'sic' annotations above the 5th and 10th signs.
- V  Line V contains hieroglyphs with 'sic' annotations above the 10th and 11th signs.
- VI  Line VI contains hieroglyphs with a 'sic' annotation above the 12th sign.
- VII  Line VII contains hieroglyphs with a 'sic' annotation above the 5th sign.
- VIII  Line VIII contains hieroglyphs with 'sic' annotations above the 5th and 10th signs.
- IX  Line IX contains hieroglyphs with 'sic' annotations above the 10th and 11th signs.



