Mahmoud Ebeid

Demotic Inscriptions from the Galleries of Tuna el-Gebel.

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In the course of the cleaning and excavations processes which were carried out by the archaeological mission of Munich University in the subterranean galleries of Tuna el-Gebel (Ibiotaphion) since 1979 to 1988, and by the joint archaeological mission of Cairo and Munich Universities from 1989 until now – in order to complete, record and re-estimate the previous excavations in the galleries which have been already carried out by S. Gabra in the name of Cairo University (1931-1952) and others, as well as making excavations in new spots – a lot of demotic inscriptions were found. The most interesting inscriptions were written on the exterior of the coffins of the sacred animals, made of limestone, wood, or pottery. They were brought from places all over Egypt to be buried in the subterranean galleries of Tuna el-Gebel (resting place of the Ibis, the Baboon, the Falcon and the gods who rest with them). A selected group from these demotic inscriptions is the subject of this article.

I am extremely grateful to my professors Dr M. A. A. Nur el-Din and Dr O. El-Aguizy for their great help and encouragement, Prof. D. Kessler, Dr V. Berteaux and Dr F. Steinmann for their support during the stay in Tuna, and to Prof. H. J. Thissen and Dr M. Chauveau who have read my manuscript and presented some useful suggestions and corrections that I have included in this article.

1. Wooden coffin TG 3303

Season 1992 from G- B- E- 23

Ḥȝ.t-sp 7.t ḫ.t sw 26 pȝ  ntr n b  Ksnnw pȝ rmt Hȝprws

Year 7, Choiak, day 26, the god of Ksnnw, the man (of) Hȝprws.

a. Concerning the meaning of pȝ ntr: Nur el-Din had suggested in 1987 that pȝ ntr denotes the Ibis god itself, and added that: “the meaning of pȝ ntr in this context is still problematic”, and in 1992, he had concluded that: “pȝ ntr is the pȝ hb, and the both represent the deceased or mummified Ibis.” I think that although the vast majority of the animals which were buried in the galleries of Tuna el-Gebel were ibises, the meaning of pȝ ntr in the galleries of Tuna el-Gebel refers not only to the ibis, but also to any other sacred animals buried in the galleries, such as the falcons, the baboons, different other birds, shrews, snakes and others (see D. Kessler, Abd el Halim Nur el-Din, op. cit., p. 152ff.).

b. The genitival adjective (n) is written between pȝ ntr and the personal name, in opposite to the majority of the texts (see Nur el-Din, in SAOC 51, 1992, p. 253-254; H.J. Thissen, op. cit., p. 111). The same feature occurs in TG 3274, TG 3349, TG 4051, TG 4468. I, 1.

c. The reading Hȝplws is also possible (cf. hprs, hplws, Demot. Nb. I/10, p. 736-737).

2. Wooden coffin TG 3307

Season 1992 from G- B- E- 23

Ḥȝ.t-sp 10.t ḫ.t (sw) 4 pȝ  ntr Gm-w-pȝ-tȝ-Mȝʿ.

Year 10, Thoth, (day) 4, the god (of) Gm-w-pȝ-tȝ-Mȝʿ.

Ḥȝ.t-sp 10.t ḫ.t (sw) 4 pȝ  ntr Gm-w-pȝ-tȝ-Mȝʿ.

Year 10, Thoth, (day) 4, the god (of) Gm-w-pȝ-tȝ-Mȝʿ.

4 M. A. A. Nur el-Din, op. cit., p. 251.
3. Wooden coffin TG 3270
Season 1992 from G- B- E- 23e

$Hȝ.t-sp\ 7.t\ tpy\ šmw\ sw\ 11\ pȝ\ ntr\ Tmtkry\ sȝ\ Phyts.$

Year 7, Pachons, day 11, the god (of) Tmtkry son of Phyts.

There is another line under the main text; unfortunately, most of the signs have been erased.

4. Wooden coffin TG 3284
Season 1992 from G- B- E- 23

$Hȝ.t-sp\ 10.t\ ỉb.t\ 2\ ȝḥ.t\ sw\ 24\ pȝ\ ntr\ Pwkrtns\ ñh\ Pa-ỉw\ (sȝ)\ Pa-hȝ.t.$

Year 10, Paophi, day 24, the god (of) Pwkrtns, written: Pa-ỉw (son of) Pa-hȝ.t.

d. For the name Pwkrtns, cf. gr. Πωκρτνς, see Fr. Preisigke, Namenbuch, p. 253.

5. Wooden coffin TG 3282
Season 1992 from G- B- E- 23

$Hȝ.t-sp\ 8.t\ ỉb.t\ 4\ ȝḥ.t\ sw\ 26\ pȝ\ ntr\ Pȝy-šr-ỉmn\ (sȝ)\ Pa-hrd\ pȝ\ldots\ldots.$

Year 8, Choiak, day 26, the god (of) Pȝy-šr-ỉmn (son of) Pa-hrd the……

f. The group $\gamma$ might be a profession.
6. Wooden coffin TG 3274

Season 1992 from G- B- E- 23

...\( Hr. t-sp \) 10.\( t ib.t \) 4 \( h.t sw \) 28 \( pȝ ntr n Hr-pȝ-\'ȝ \)...

...year 10, Choiak, day 28, the god of \( Hr-pȝ-\'ȝ \)...

g. The group \( \frac{\text{ḥȝ.t-sp}}{\text{ỉb.t}} \) is problematic.

The text is washed out after the name \( Hr-pȝ-\'ȝ \).

7. Wooden coffin TG 3311

Season 1992 from G- B- E- 23

\( Hr. t-sp \) 10.\( t ib.t \) 4 \( h.t sw \) 26 \( tȝ ʿfṱy.(t) \) (n) \( pȝ ntr Pnḳrts \) \( sȝ ȝtnwrȝs sẖ \) \( Ĥr \) sȝ \( Īr.t-\text{ḥmn?} \)

Year 10, Choiak, day 26, the chest (of) the god (of) Pnḳrts son of \( ȝtnwrȝs \), written: \( Ĥr \) son of \( Īr.t-\text{ḥmn?} \).

h. \( tȝ ʿfṱy.(t) \): the chest, \( Wb \) I, 183, 15-17; W. Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar*, Kopenhagen, 1954, p. 60; for further references concerning this word, see *Chicago Demotic Dictionary (CDD)*, \( (\text{o3.1}) \): p. 60-66. The word \( tȝ ʿfṱy.(t) \) means here the wooden coffin which was dedicated to bury the mummified sacred animal.

i. For the name \( Pnḳrts \), cf. gr. Πανκρατις, see \( NB \), p. 270.

j. As for vertical sign \( sẖ \) which could be read as \( sh \) and \( (n)-\text{tr.t} \), I incline to read it as \( sh \) in these texts, as Thissen suggested (see H.J. Thissen, *op. cit.*, p. 108, Nr. 5, Sarcophagus TG 731), especially that it is usually followed by the name of the scribe who receives the mummified sacred animals in Tuna el-Gebel necropolis from the person who brought the sacred animal from his town or village. The same sign occurs in TG 1291.2.

8. Wooden coffin TG 3349

Season 1992 from G- B- E- 23

\( pȝ ntr n Twtw (sȝ) Tȝ \) \( mnḥ(?) \) \( pȝ rt \) \( Ĥr-pȝ-\'ȝ \)...

The god of Twtw (son of) Tȝ mnh(?), the agent of ...\( Hr-pȝ-\'ȝ \).

The text is very faint as well as the remains of the turpentine oil which was used in the mummification process covered some signs.

9. Wooden coffin TG 3306

Season 1992 from G- B- E- 23

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Hȝ.t-sp 8.t ib.t 2 pr.t sw 23 pȝ ntr Pa-sy pȝ hm (sw) Ḏd-hr pȝ wn-pr ḫm (sw) Wsỉr.
```

Year 8, Mechir, day 23, the god (of) Pa-sy the younger (son of) Ḏd-hr, the pastophoros Osiris.


m. pȝ wn-pr (n pr-) Wsỉr: "the pastophoros of the house of Osiris" is a possible restoration.

10. Wooden coffin TG 3162

Season 1992 from G- B- E- 14f

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pȝ ntr Pa-usir sȝ Ḏḥwty-dy-ʿnh pȝ ḫm
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The god (of) Pa-usir son of Ḏḥwty-dy-'nh the craftsman.

n. Unfamiliar form of the word ntr by the sign without the determinative of the gods (ȝ, ḫ). The same form occurs in TG 1295, 1.

o. The sign Ṽ which followed the name Wsỉr and resembles the sign pȝ could be identified as the determinative of the name Pa-usir, while the sign Ṽ could be read as ȝ.

11. Pottery coffin TG 1291

Season 1989 from G- C- B- 7

1. Hȝ.t-sp 9 tpy ḫȝ.t sw 27(?) pȝ ntr Ḏḥwty-ỉw
2. Ḥȝ.t-sp 9 tpy ḫȝ.t sw 27(?) pȝ ntr Ḏḥwty-ỉw
3. Ḃȝ.t-sp 9 tpy ḫȝ.t sw 27(?) pȝ ntr Ḏḥwty-ỉw
4. Ḃȝ.t-sp 9 tpy ḫȝ.t sw 27(?) pȝ ntr Ḏḥwty-ỉw

1. Year 9, Thoth, day 27?, the god (of) Ḏḥwty-ỉw
2. daughter of Pa-s[ y] (which was brought from) Ḏḥwty-ỉw
3. son of Ḏḥwty-ỉw

q. tȝ st-ỉşk: it might be a village in the Hermopolite nome, cf. greek Σεσόγκα, see M. Drew-Bear, Le nome hermopolite. Toponymes et sites, ASP 21, 1979, p. 247.

12. Pottery coffin TG 1295

Season 1989 from G- C- B- 7

1. pȝ ntr Ḏḥwty-ỉw sȝ Ḏḥwty-ỉr-rḫ ₡s
2. Ḃȝ.t-sp 19 ḫȝ.t 4 pr.t sw 20
3. pȝ ntr-2 Ḏḥwty-ỉr-rḫ ₡s
4. Ḃȝ.t-sp 19 ḫȝ.t 4 pr.t sw 20
5. Ḃȝ.t-sp 19 ḫȝ.t 4 pr.t sw 20

13. Pottery coffin TG 2468

Season 1991 from G- C- B- 11

I

1. Ḥȝ.t-sp 4.t tpy ḥ.t (sw) 19 pȝ ntr Pa-sy
2. 饬 Ḥwty-ɪw pȝ rmt tmy Ḥpšt
3. r-ɪn=ubyte n pȝ r-ɪs=ubyte
4. (n) ḫy.(t) (n) pȝ sbt
5. n-tr.t Ḥr ṭw.ɪ ṭ=t=t- wty
6. pȝ wʻb n Ḥwty nb [ ]

II

1. Ḥȝ.t-sp 15 ib.t 3 byname (sw) 14 pȝ ntr Kȝ?-[ ]
2. …… r-ɪn=ubyte (n) ḫ t=…
3. ṭ=Tȝ-ɪr-ɪrȝ=ubyte

t. ʿẖyt (t): “the chapel, the sanctuary of the sacred Ibis, the chapel-with-aviary”, see J. Ray, *The Archive of Hor*, London, 1976, p. 188; P. Gallo, “A Proposito del termine demotico ’byt e dell’ eventuale corrispondenza greca [βτών]”, *EVO* 9, 1986, p. 45-48; A. Egberts, “A Divine Epithet in P. Dem. Cairo CG 50058 and 50059”, *Enchoria* 15, 1987, p. 25-31; K. Vandorpe, “Les villages des Ibis dans la toponymie tardive”, *Enchoria* 18, 1991, p. 115-122; *Chicago Demotic Dictionary* (CDD) *n* (03.1): p. 129. As for ʿẖyt (t) (n) ʾḥyt sbt: “the chapel (of) the wall”, we know nothing about it, but in P. Wien D 12026, which was found at Tuna el-Gebel (G. Vittmann, “Zwei demotische Briefe an den Gott Thot”, *Enchoria* 22, 1995, p. 169-181, Taf. 49-50), there is mentioned a toponym ʾḥyt-sbtj-n-pȝ-mr-mšʿ = “the wall of the General” (P. Wien D 12026, 1; G. Vittmann, *op. cit.*, p. 167-177) which tentatively was identified by D. Kessler to the site of el Kom el-Ahmar, 1.5 km to the east of the tomb of Petosiris, as well as the use of ʾḥyt “the wall” as part of some geographical places is common (G. Vittmann, *op. cit.*, p. 178).

u. The name Tȝ-ʿȝ is a familiar name in the galleries of Tuna; in addition to this coffin it occurred in: TG 801.2, TG 729.1; TG 4468. I, 2. II, 1; TG 2487. 4?, while Thissen read the name with hesitation (see H.J. Thissen, *op. cit.*, Nr.2: Sarkophag TG 801. 2; Nr.3: Sarkophag TG 729.1, p. 108.)

14. Pottery coffin TG 966

Season 1987 from G- C- B- 5

1. Ḥȝ.t-sp 25 ỉb.t 4 šmw pȝ ntr (sw) 26
2. ʾḥyt-hp-n-imw (ʾḥyt) Pȝ-šʿ-ḫpr
3. Pa-ḥȝ.t-…-pȝ rmt

v. The day was put in a wrong place; it replaced the personal name which usually follows pȝ ntr.

w. This name occurs in: TG 978. 2 (H.J. Thissen, *op. cit.*, p. 109), TG 999. 4 (*ibid.*, p. 110), TG 959. 3 (*ibid.*, p. 111), as well as this coffin.

In this text, I incline to consider Magdola as the town of Magdola in the Fayum, because the province of the Fayum is mentioned more often in the documents of Tuna el-Gebel (eg. Dem. Pap. Mallawi Inv. Nrs 480. 2; 482. 2; 483. 2 – 3; see el. O. Zaghloul, *Frühdemotische Urkunden aus Hermopolis*, *Bulletin of the Center of Papyrological Studies*, vol. II, Cairo, 1985, p. 23-24, 32-33, and 35-36), as well as TG 2468. I, 3.

In accordance with the formulae which were written on the pottery coffins, the right formula of this text might be run as follows:

1. Ḥȝ.t-sp 25 ib.t 4 śmw (sw) 26 pȝ ntr 1. Year 25, Mesore, (day) 26, the god (of)
2. Pa-ḥȝ.t-…-pȝ rmt 2. Pa-ḥȝ.t-…-the inhabitant (of)

15. Pottery coffin TG 4051

Season 1993  from G-B-E-6b

1. Ḥȝ.t-sp 34 ib.t 2 śmw (sw) 9 pȝ ntr n Mnṱ-m-ḥȝ.t sȝ Ḏd-ḥr pȝ ḏhb………
2. n tȝ int pȝ ḥȝt sȝ Ḏhḵȝ by the order of Pa-nȝ-ḫṱ.w the superior (of) Thoth.

y. The group Ḥȝ.t-sp could also be read as ḣ-r Ḥȝ.t sp(?), Ḏd-ḥr, but the first reading seems more likely according to the nature of these texts.


16. Limestone sarcophagus TG 096

Season 1980 from G-C-A bei A-11

\[\text{pȝ ntr Kȝ-Mn} \text{cc, Bȝ-tȝ h.t-ntr(?)}\]

The god (of) Kȝ-Mn son of Bȝ-tȝ h.t-ntr(?)


This sarcophagus was written in red ink and takes the rectangular form.

17. Limestone sarcophagus TG 4468

Season 2002 from G-B-E-6

On the lid

I

1. İb.t 2 šmw (sw) 5 pȝ ntr-2 n Lyḳs sȝ ȝnṱḳtys
2. (r-ỉn⸗w) n tȝ st-ššḳ sh Tȝ-ʿȝ sȝ Pȝ-šr-tȝ-ỉḥ.t
dd.

1. Payni, (day) 5. the two gods of Lyḳs son of ȝnṱḳtys
2. (which were brought) from tȝ st-ššḳ, written: Tȝ-ʿȝ son of Pȝ-šr-tȝ-ỉḥ.t

On the side

II

1. sh Tȝ-ʿȝ sȝ Pȝ-šr-tȝ-ỉḥ.t r-ỉn⸗w (n) tȝ st-
2. ššḳ
dd.

1. written: Tȝ-ʿȝ son of Pȝ-šr-tȝ-ỉḥ.t which were brought (from) tȝ st-
2. ššḳ

18. Limestone sarcophagus TG 2487

Season 1991 from G- B- A in the main passage B – A, in the niche to the left side of the beginning of B – A

Limestone sarcophagus TG 2487

1. ……… kwnn sȝ ȝnḳrtys
2. pȝ ntr Pȝ-Wynn? ee
3. sȝ Sṣḥt r-in-w (n) tȝ Thn ff
4. [ṣḥ Tȝ-ʿȝ sȝ Pȝ-šr-tȝ-ỉḥ.t?]


General Commentary

The wooden coffins were found in situ in the walls upon the pottery coffins, in the northern part of gallery B (B- E) which dated to the later Ptolemaic period (D. Kessler, Abd el Halim Nur el-Din, op. cit., p. 146-147). The pottery coffins Nos TG 1291, TG 1295, TG 2468, TG 966 were found in the gallery C-B, which dates to the early Ptolemaic period probably to Ptolemy I and Ptolemy II (D. Kessler, MDAIK 39, 1983, p. 111-112; D. Kessler, Abd el Halim Nur el-Din, op. cit., p. 146), while the pottery coffin No. TG 4051 was found in the gallery B-E which dates to the later Ptolemaic period (D. Kessler, Abd el Halim Nur el-Din, op. cit., p. 146-147). The limestone sarcophagus No. TG 096 was found in the gallery C- A, which dates to the early Ptolemaic period (Ptolemy I) (D. Kessler, MDAIK 39, 1983, p. 110-111). While No. TG 4468 was found in the gallery B- E, which dates to the later Ptolemaic period, No. TG 2487 was found in the gallery B- A which dated to the early Ptolemaic period (Ptolemy I).

Two shapes of the limestone sarcophagi can be observed:
1. Rectangular shape which might be dated to the time of the 30th dynasty (Nectanebo II?);
2. Oval shape from the Ptolemaic period.

Most of these sarcophagi are written in black, a few in red. The writing on the surface of the pottery coffins is much clearer than on the wooden coffins. The wood is crumbling and brittle, the black ink in which the texts were written is sometimes faint or soaked into the wood, as well as spots of the ink were scattered on the surface of the coffins.

There is often more than one sacred animal put inside one single pottery coffin, on account of two short inscriptions written on its surface, as well as the text itself on the pottery coffin (TG 1295) mentions that: “pȝ ntr-2: the two gods”. Kessler and Nur el-Din are considering the appearing of more than one inscription on the exterior of these coffins as a sign of

All the demotic inscriptions are free from the name of the reigning pharaoh in the dating. The name of the person who brought the sacred animal from his village or town to bury in the galleries is sometimes followed by his title and profession.

Forms of these demotic inscriptions run as follows:

1. Year × month × day × the god of NN;
2. Year × month × day × the god of NN son of NN;
3. Year × month × day × the god of NN written NN son of NN;
4. Year × month × day × the god of NN son of NN + profession;
5. Year × month × day × the god of NN son of NN written NN son of NN;
6. The god of NN son of NN + profession;
7. Year × month × day × the god of NN son of NN which was brought from + Toponym + written NN son of NN;
8. The god of NN son of NN. Year × month × day × the two gods of NN son of NN which were brought from + toponym;
9. Year × month × day × the god of NN son of NN which was brought from + toponym.

In addition to the previous forms, sometimes some words are added before and in the midst of the text such as: TG 3274 and TG 3311.

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