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Khaled Hassan

The Longest Visitor's Ostracon Concerning the Temple of Deir el-Bahri. A Recombination of Two Pieces, Ostraca Cairo 430 and 432

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The Longest Visitor's Ostracon Concerning the Temple of Deir el-Bahri A Recombination of Two Pieces, Ostraca Cairo 430 and 432

KHALED HASSAN

INTRODUCTION

It seems that visiting ancient monuments of ancestors was a popular habit during the New Kingdom, particularly in the 18th Dynasty, and continued during Graeco-Roman times.[1] Ancient visitors were keen to record their visits on the walls of the monuments i.e. tombs and temples.[2] Visitors' inscriptions constitute an interesting epigraphy, where the authors were careful to integrate them among the original decoration of the monument, and complied with the rules of tombs' decorum.[3] A few texts of this kind were recorded on three ostraca in hieratic script, all of which were found in the vicinity of Deir el-Bahri and date back to the first half of the 18th Dynasty.[4] Each ostracon contains elements of the visitors' formula, i.e. the incipit of the text *ỉw.t pw ỉr n sš […] r mȝȝ*. These ostraca most probably did use this with a didactic aim, and they were probably considered as literary excerpts for students' exercises.[5]

In 2013 the first half of this ostracon (no. 432)[6] has been published with a full commentary to its content.[7] Dr. Chloé Ragazzoli drew my attention to its second half (no. 430), which was found like the first half in the basement of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo: after their recombination, the two texts form a large visitors' inscription. This ostracon is therefore exceptional, both for being one of the rare ostraca that contain this kind of text and for recording the longest version of it on ostracon.

1 Den Doncker 2012, p. 25.
2 Hassan 2013, p. 189.
3 Navrátilová 2010, p. 310; Ragazzoli 2013, p. 273; Hassan 2016, p. 51.
4 Hayes 1942, p. 25, no. 97, pl. XX; Hassan 2013, p. 188; Ragazzoli 2016; Hassan 2013, p. 184; Ragazzoli 2016, pp. 66–67. Another visitor's formula is partially mentioned on ostracon O. Campbell 22 in a hymn dedicated to Amon. Cf. McDowell 1993, pp. 29–30, pl. XXXI.
5 For more information about this hypothesis cf. Ragazzoli 2016, pp. 79–80.
6 This number represents the serial number that has been assigned by a team at the Cairo University, who was authorized to make a classification of the whole ostraca that are housed in the basements of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, and does not relate to the entry or the temporary numbers of the museums' registers.
7 Hassan 2013, pp. 183–191.

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DESCRIPTION

This new piece of limestone is about 16 cm high and 19 cm wide with nine incomplete hieratic lines. Now the whole ostracon, after recombination, consists of twelve lines in black ink. It is clear that the two pieces were written by the same hand and belong together. Some of the beginnings of the lines are broken and most of their endings are wiped off. The last two lines are broken, and thus most of their content is missing.

TRANSLITERATION

[1] *[…] ỉw.t pw ỉr.n sš Pɜ[…]*
[2] *[r mɜɜ tɜ ḥw.t-nṯr] Ḏsr-ḏsrw gm.n.f [s.t …]*
[3] *[mỉ p.t m ḫnw.s Rᶜ] ḥr wbn ỉm.s ᶜḥᶜ.n ḏd.n.f ḥwỉ […]*
[4] *[p.t m ᶜn.tyw wɜḏ] ḏfḏf.s m snṯr ḥr tp-ḥr.t n s.t wr.t nty NN]*
[5] *ỉm.s ᶜḥᶜ.n ḏd.n.f ỉr grḥ mɜɜ […]*
[6] *mỉ bỉ[ɜỉt] ḥr Ḥɜᶜ, ṯmt*
[7] *[ṯ]š[t]š, Mỉ bnr, ỉw.w ḥr […]*
[8] *ḥtp dỉ nsw Ỉmn Rᶜ nsw nṯrw dỉ.f prt-ḫrw […]*
[9] *Kɜ.w, ɜpd.w ḫt nb.t nfr.t wr(.t) wᶜb(.t) n […]*
[10] *[…] ỉmɜḫ? ḏd.n.f pɜ […] Ms n […]*
[11] *[…]tty […]*
[12] *[…] rm […]*

TRANSLATION

[1] *[…] then the scribe Pa[…] came (lit.: It is coming made by scribe Pa)*
[2] *[to visit the temple] Djeser-Djeseru, he found [it]*
[3] *[as if there were heaven in it. Ra] rising from it. Then he said: Let*
[4] *[heaven drip fresh myrrh], and pour incense on the top [of the great place in which the god NN]*
[5] *is staying, then he said, as for night, look […]*
[6] *like wonder […] for Khaa, Temt*
[7] *Teshtesh, Mebnerw, they have […]*
[8] *offerings given by the king and Amun-Re, king of the gods, that he may give invocation-of ferings consisting of*
[9] *oxen, fowl, and all the beautiful, great, and pure things for […]*
[10] *[…] excellent? Said to him (called) the […] son of […]*
[11] *[…]tety […]*
[12] *[…] weep […]*

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Fig. 1. Photograph of O. Cairo Museum no. 430.

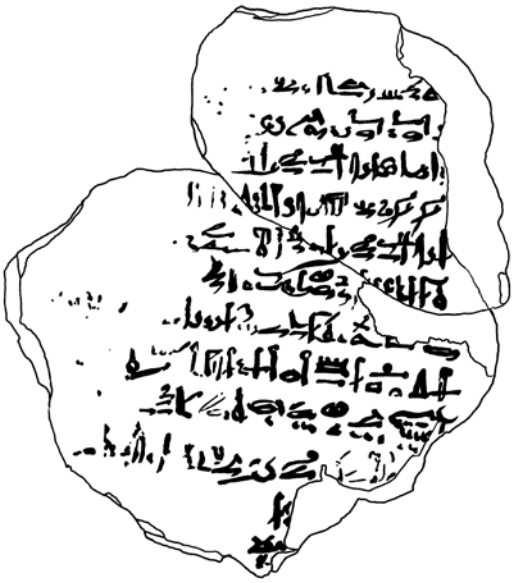
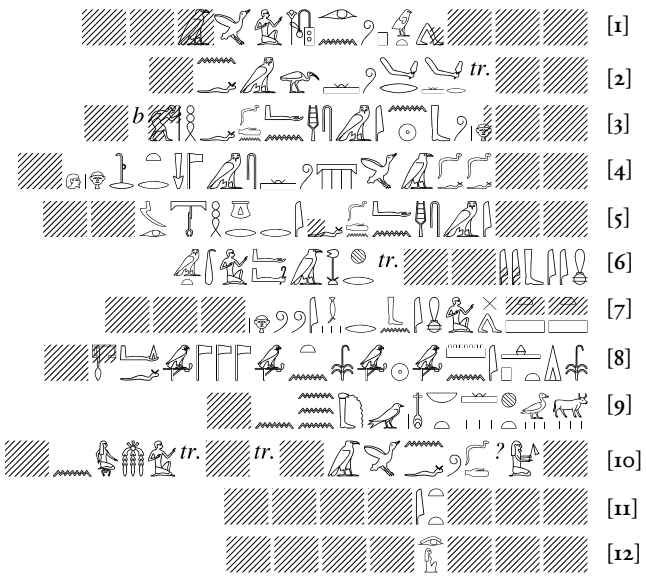


Fig. 2. Facsimile drawing by Kh. Hassan.

TRANSCRIPTION



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NOTES ON THE PALAEOGRAPHY

As previously stated, the hieratic is written by the same hand throughout the text in a regular, compact, experienced, and well-organized appearance. The text is displaying the characteristic features of the early and middle of 18th Dynasty hand.[8] The scribe was inclined to write each sign separately, thus the ligatures are relatively few; this attitude can be seen in the majority of the first half of the 18th Dynasty literary texts.[9] In certain sections of the text, some signs are closer to their hieroglyphic shape than hieratic and this is clear in the forms of , . This could be a kind of renovation in the script in the middle of the 18th Dynasty, especially the time of Tuthmosis III, where the scribes tended to use full forms of the signs bringing them closer to the hieroglyphic forms.[10]

1.  most probably stands for *mȝȝ*.
8.  both signs are identical to the forms in ostracon 140 r of Deir el-Bahri.[11]
10.  it is difficult to read the first sign, while the second sign could be read as  but this is still uncertain reading.

The name of the scribe in the middle of the line is too faint to recognize it.

: according to the context, most probably to be read as .

COMMENTARY

This ostracon displays a classical visitor's text, descriptive, followed by an offering formula, most probably dedicated to the scribe of the text. The significance of this ostracon is that it constitutes, as far as I know, the longest visitor's text written on ostraca.

1. *sš Pȝ […]*: most probably the name of the scribe, identical to the one named at the end of the text (l. 10), being both the author and the beneficiary followed by the name of his parents. This way of writing the name of the graffitist with his filiation is known in the graffiti of the scribe Men in the tomb of Iti-ib-iqr with his title and the name of his mother and brother.[12]
5. The meaning of this line after *ʿḥʿ.n ḏd.n.f* is a bit unclear, where the text is wiped away and the reading of the rest of it is uncertain. However, based on the reading of the word as *grḥ* and also the context, one could suppose that the text describes the monument at night: "As for the night, look […] it looks like wonder for the" and then mentions the four individuals of the text. As far as I am aware, similar text with the night or proper names in the middle of the formula is unknown.

8 Golenischeff 1913; Garis Davies, Gardiner 1920, pl. XXXV–XXXVII; Hayes 1942; Hayes 1960, pp. 29–52; Goedicke, Wente 1962; Megally 1971; Staatliche Museen 1911; Megally 1981a, pp. 293–312; Megally 1991, pp. 108–128; Römer 2008, pp. 613–625; Hagen 2013, pp. 73–79; Hassan 2014; Römer 2014, pp. 211–216; Hassan 2015b, pp. 33–43; Hassan 2015a, pp. 179–229; Hassan 2017.

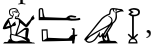
9 Megally 1981b, p. 235.

10 Megally 1981b, p. 235.

11 Hayes 1942, pl. XXV, 140 r. Based on palaeographical point of view, perhaps this ostracon is inscribed by the same scribe as the ostracon of Senmut tomb. cf. Hassan 2013, p. 190.

12 Verhoeven 2012, p. 52.

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6–7. The individuals of the text do not occur in any other published visitors' graffiti; however some of their names are attested in other texts such as , but it cannot be proved that they are the same individuals.[13] It is remarkable that two of the names are inscribed with the seated man as determinatives, while the others are inscribed without determinatives.

10. The name of the scribe is preceded by *ḏd.n.f*; a similar expression is mentioned in the graffiti of the scribe Toury in the tomb of Khnum-hotep II at Beni Hasan.[14]

OFFERING FORMULA IN THE VISITORS' INSCRIPTIONS

In her study Hana Navrátilová classified the visitors' graffiti into four categories i.e. antiquarian (or) descriptive, signature, piety-oriented, and the stroll-formula.[15] The antiquarian formula shows an interest for the visited monuments, mentioning their names, owners and/or architectural elements.[16] At the same time piety-oriented graffiti do not show any interest for the monuments themselves, the visitors having just written prayers and invocations to the deities of the site,[17] or to anybody else. These prayers and offerings could be considered as a kind of ritual act.[18] As for the offering formula, sometimes it was attached to the antiquarian texts as a combination between them,[19] or it was inscribed in a separate space as a single piety text with solely the signature of the scribe. Most probably the scribe of the text dedicated these offerings to the efficacious souls of the ancient owners of the monuments' or to the benefits of the visiting scribes themselves.[20] The offering formulae in these texts vary between brief texts to a long and detailed formula, maybe accompanied by some rituals. The position of these formulae also varied from one text to another as follows:

– at the end of the antiquarian formula (1, 3, 4 A–B, 5 E);

– in the middle of the text, sometimes embedded in the antiquarian formula (2 A). This latter kind is very rare;

– pure offering text with the signature of the scribe at the end, maybe this text constitutes a piety formula (2 B, 5 A, C–D);

– the incipit *ḥtp dỉ nsw* was regularly used as an introduction to the offering formula (2 B, 4 A, 5 A–E), however it could start with *pr.t ḫrw*, or with the offerings directly.

13 *PN* I, p. 97–17.
14 Hassan 2016, p. 49.
15 Navrátilová 2007, p. 132; Hassan 2013, p. 186.
16 Navrátilová 2007, p. 132; Navrátilová 2006, p. 6.
17 Navrátilová 2006, p. 6. Most of the graffiti found in tombs in the area of Deir el-Bahri relate to this type. Published by Marciniak 1974, and translated by Sadek 1983, pp. 67–91; Sadek 1984, pp. 65–86.
18 Ragazzoli 2013, p. 287.
19 Navrátilová 2006, p. 13; Navrátilová 2007, p. 76.
20 Navrátilová 2007, p. 53; Verhoeven 2012, p. 57; Ragazzoli 2013, p. 288.

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Funerary Temple of Sahure[21]

[1] *ḥ3.t sp 2, 3bd 3, 3ḫ.t, [sw] 7, ḫr ḥm [n] nswt bỉtj […] ʿ.w.s*
[2] *ỉw.t pw ỉr.n sš Ỉmn-m-[ḥ3.t s3 sš ʿn]tỉ-mntỉ*
[3] *r m33 t3 ḥw.t nṯr n.t ḥm n nswt bỉtj s3ḥw-rʿ mɜʿ-ḫrw*
[4] *gm.n.f sỉ nfr ḫr ỉb.f r ʿ3.t wr sj m ḥr.f*
[5] *mỉ t3 pt sšp ỉʿḥ ʿḥʿ.n ḏd.n.f nfr wỉ*
[6] *[t3 ḥw.t nṯr n.t k3] ḥm n nswt bỉtj s3ḥw-rʿ mɜʿ-ḫrw*
[7] ***[…] n3 n k3.w 3pd.w t.w […]***

[1] *Year 2, month 3 of akhet, day 7, under the Majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, […] l.p.h.*
[2] *There came the scribe Amenemhat, [son of scribe Anat]-menti*
[3] *to see the temple of the Majesty of the King of Lower and Upper Egypt, Sahure justified.*
[4] *He found it beautiful in his heart, in his eyes [it] was great.*
[5] *As heaven lit in white by moon, thus he said: this is beautiful*
[6] *[the temple of ka of the Majesty] of King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Sahure, justified*
[7] ***[…] of bulls, fowl, and bread loaves.***

North Chapel, Djoser Complex – Saqqara[22]

A

[1] *ỉw.t pw ỉr.n sš Ỉʿḥ(-ms) s3 Ỉptḥ r m33*
[2] *ḥw.t nṯr [n.t] Ḏsr gm.n.f sỉ mỉ p.t m ḫnw.s rʿ*
[3] *ḫr wbn ỉm.s ʿḥʿ* ***n ḏd.w.n.f ỉmm h3ỉ t.w […] K3.w***
[4] ***3pd.w ḫt.(w) nb.w(t) nfr.w(t) wʿb.w(t) n k3 n Ḏsr mɜʿ-ḫrw***
[5] *ḥwỉ pt m ʿntỉw […] w3ḏ […ḏf]ḏf.s m snṯr*
[6] *ỉn sš n ʿ.t[n.t]-sb3 stḫ-m-ḥ3b ỉn sš nḏs Ỉʿḥ(-ms)*

[1] *There came the scribe Ah(mose), son of Iptah to see*
[2] *the temple of Djoser. He found it as if [there were] heaven in it, Re*
[3] *rising in it.* ***Then he said let be caused that there come loaves of bread, […], bulls,***
[4] ***fowl, all good and pure things for the ka of Djoser, justified.***
[5] *May the heaven send down myrhh, and provide incense for it.*
[6] *(Written) by the scribe, schoolmaster Stethemheb, and the apprentice scribe Ahmose.*

21 Megally 1981b, pp. 227–229; Navrátilová 2007, p. 52; Navrátilová 2006, p. 8.

22 Navrátilová 2007, p. 75.

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B[23]

[1] *ḥtp dỉ nsw […] nb nṯr.w ỉm.yw*
[2] *ḥtp dỉ nsw Ỉmn-rˁ nb ns.wt tȝ.wy ḫn.t.y nṯrw ỉm.y[w]*
[3] *pr.t ḫrw t, ḥnḳ.t, kȝ, ȝpd […] ymˀ ḫ.(wt) nb.(w)t r […]*
[4] *[…] ỉw ḥr ḫȝw.tˀ n kȝ n wȝ mn […]ˀ ḥs […]*
[5] *? [ỉmȝḫ …] Ỉmn-m-ḥȝt mȝˁ-ḫrw.*

[1] *The offering that the king gives to […?] lord of gods that are in?*
[2] *The offering that the king gives so that Amun-Re, lord of the thrones of the Two Lands, foremost of gods in [?] may give*
[3] *Offering of bread, beer, bulls and fowl […] and all [good and pure] things*
[4] *which are on an offering-table […]? for the ka of the […]*
[5] *[excellent] Amenemhat, justified.*

The Tomb of Khnum-hotep II, Beni Hasan[24]

[1] *ỉw.t pw ỉry sš ỉḳr n ḏbˁ.w*
[2] *ṯw-ry r mȝȝ ḥw.t-nṯr nt (… s …) mȝˁ-ḫrw*
[3] *gm.n.f sy nfr sy ḥr ỉb.f r ḥw.t-nṯr nb.t*
[4] *ˁḥˁ <.n> ḏd.n.f […] šs kȝ.w ȝpd.w*
[5] *ḫt nb.t nfr[.t] […] wˁb[.t …] n kȝ (… ḥȝ.tˀ …) mȝˁ-ḫrw*
[6] *ỉn sš ỉḳr n ḏbˁ.w sš ḥsb ỉt*
[7] *ḏd[.n].f Tw-ry*

[1] *Then the scribe of excellent fingers Toury came*
[2] *to visit the temple of the god (… s …) justified.*
[3] *He found it more beautiful in his heart than any other temple.*
[4] *Then he said: […] alabaster, oxen, and fowl,*
[5] *and all good and pure things […] to the ka of (… Hatˀ …) justified*
[6] *by the scribe of excellent fingers, grain account scribe.*
[7] *Said to him: Toury.*

The Tomb of Iti-ib-iqr, Assiut

A[25]

[1] *ỉw pw ỉr.n sš Mn*
[2] *ỉỉ r mȝȝ ḥw.t-nṯr nfr.t n ḥw.t-*
[3] *ḥrw nb.t Mḏd (n) gm.n.f sy*
[4] *nfr.tỉ ḥr-ỉb.f[r]ḥw.t-nṯr nb.t nfr.t ˁḥˁ.n*

23 Navrátilová 2007, pp. 127–128.
24 Hassan 2016, p. 49, fig. 12.
25 Verhoeven 2012, p. 52.

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[5] ***ḏd.n.f ḥtp-dỉ-nsw Wsỉr nb ṯ3-ˁnḫ Ỉnpw nb***
[6] ***R3-ḳ[rr.t] ỉr.n sš ỉḳr wn m3ˁ gr***
[7] ***m3ˁ[ỉḳr] bỉt w3ḥ tp mrr rmṯ.w***
[8] ***n k3 sš Mn s3 wˁb n Wp-w3.wt Wp-w3.wt***
[9] ***ms[.n] nb.t pr Nw.t sn.f ḏw3w***

[1] *Then the scribe Men came,*
[2] *having come to see the beautiful temple of Hathor,*
[3] *lady of Medjeden. He found it*
[4] *more beautiful in his heart [than] any other beautiful temple.* ***Then***
[5] ***he said: May the king give an offering to Osiris, lord of Ta-ankh, and Anubis, lord of***
[6] ***Ra-qer[reret]. Made by the truly able scribe, the true***
[7] ***silent one, with [able] character, the humble one, beloved by the people.***
[8] ***For the ka of the scribe Men, son of the wab-priest of Wepwawet Wepwawet,***
[9] ***born by the lady of the house Nut. His brother (is) Duau.***

B[26]

[1] *ỉw.t pw ỉr.n sš Ḥˁ-m-w3s.t r m33 ḥw.t-nṯr nfr.t nt wp-w3-wt*
[2] *gm.n.f sy nfr.tỉ [ḥ rỉb.f] r ḥw.t-nṯr nb.t [nfr.]t ḥw.t-nṯr Ḏf3.ỉ Ḥˁpỉ*
[3] ***n k3 3ḫy ỉḳr Ỉt(ỉ)-ỉb(ỉ) pr.t-ḫrw t ḥnḳt k3.w 3pd.w prr.t nb.t ḥr […]***
[4] ***m (ỉ)ḫ.t nb.t wˁb.(t) n k3 n 3ḫy ỉḳr H_dỉ.***

[1] *There came the scribe Kha-em-wast to see the beautiful temple of Wepwawet.*
[2] *He found it more beautiful in his heart than any other temple and the temple of Djefai-Hapi.*
[3] ***For the ka of the excellent spirit Iti-ibi, offerings of bread, beer, bulls, fowl, and all of what comes out […]***
[4] ***and all good and pure things for the excellent spirit of Ghedi.***

The Tomb of Antefoker, Thebes

A[27]

[1] ***[ḥtp d(ỉ) nswt] Wsjr Ḫnt[y-Jmntyw …]***
[2] ***[ḫ3….3pd] ḫt nbt nfr(t) wˁb […]***
[3] ***prt [ḥr ḫ3wt] m Jpt-swt […]***
[4] ***m wpt m3ˁ […] m3ˁ-ḫrw […]***
[5] ***[…] m […]***
[6] ***[…]s***
[7] ***[sš Jmn-m]- ḥ3t jr [ḥtp] d(ỉ) nswt […]***

26 Kahl 2012, p. 186.

27 Ragazzoli 2013, p. 305, no. 14; Garis Davies, Gardiner 1920, p. 28, pl. XXXV–XXXVa, no. 14.

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[1] *[Offerings given by the king] and Osiris Khent[y-Imentyu …]*
[2] *[a thousand … and fowl] and all things good and pure […]*
[3] *that come out [on the offering-table] in Karnak […]*
[4] *on a just mission […] justified […]*
[5] *[…]*
[6] *[…]*
[7] *[the scribe Amenem]hat makes/making (?) "[Offerings] given by the king" […]*

B[28]

[1] *[ḥtp] d(ỉ) [nswt] Wsjr Ḫnty-Jmntyw (m) t ḥ(n)ḳt jḥ ꜣpd*
[2] *[prt]-ḫrw m ḫr(y)t-nṯr ssnt m ḏwꜣt s[wrj] ḥr bbt*
[3] *mꜣwt ḫt nbtw tp ṯꜣ-ḏsr n kꜣ ʿḳꜣ jb*
[4] *jḳr sḫrw šw m jsft rd(w) sꜣ.f r bw-ḏw jr(w) mꜣʿ.t*
[5] *r mty sš mꜣʿ m ḫt mwt.f sš Rʿ-ms-s(w)-nfr mꜣʿ-ḫrw ms […]*
[6] *m-ʿ(j)m(y)-r(ꜣ).f sš Ḏḥwty wḥm m ʿnḫ nb jmꜣḫ*

[1] *[Offerings] given by [the king] and Osiris Khenty-Imentyu (of) bread, beer, meat, fowl,*
[2] *votive offerings in the necropolis, breathing in the Duat, drinking from a fresh stream,*
[3] *all things useful in the sacred land for the ka of the precise-minded,*
[4] *excellent of counsels, devoid of evil, who has turned his back against the wrong, who accom plishes maât*
[5] *with exactitude, the true scribe from the womb of his mother, the scribe Ramosenefer, justified, born of […]*
[6] *With his overseer the scribe Djehuty who repeats life, master of veneration.*

C[29]

[1] *ḥtp d(i) nswt Wsjr nb […] n kꜣ n(y) sš […] Jʿḥ-ms*

[1] *An offering given by the king and Osiris, lord of […] to the ka of the scribe […] Iahmes*

D[30]

[1] *ḥtp d(ỉ) nswt Jmn-Rʿ nswt nṯrw*
[2] *Wsjr nb ḏꜣḏꜣt ʿꜣt Ptḥ ʿꜣ rsy jnb.f*
[3] *Jnpw ḫnty tꜣ ḥḏ wʿb-ḥr m st nbt*
[4] *wstn rd m st <štꜣt?>*
[5] *sš Snfr*

28 Ragazzoli 2013, pp. 305–306; Garis Davies, Gardiner 1920, p. 28, pl. XXXV–XXXVa, no. 15.

29 Garis Davies, Gardiner 1920, p. 306; p. 28, pl. XXXV–XXXVa, no. 7.

30 Ragazzoli 2013, p. 310; Garis Davies, Gardiner 1920, p. 28, pl. XXXVI–XXXVIa, no. 25.

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[1] ***Offerings given by the king and Amun-Re, king of the gods,***
[2] ***and Osiris, lord of the great hall, and Ptah, great at the south of his wall,***
[3] ***and Anubis, foremost of the white land, (for) the pure of face in all places,***
[4] ***free of leg in the <secret?> place,***
[5] ***the scribe Senefer.***

E[31]

[1] *jw(t) pw jr~n šš Jmn-m-ḥȝt sȝ smsw Ḏḥwty-ms ms~n[…]*
[2] *r mȝȝ j[s pn n(y) ṯȝty] Jnt.f-jḳr wn~jn.f nfr ḥr jb[.f?]*
[3] *[…] nw ḫpr ȝḫw n(y) ḏt wnn rn.f […]*
[4] ***[…] jm sḏd ḥtp d(î) nswt***
[5] ***Wsjr Ḫnt[y-Jmntyw … Jmn-]Rʿ nṯrw nbw ḫr(y)t-nṯr prt***
[6] ***ḫrw (m) t ḥ(n)ḳt [îḫ] ȝpdw šs snṯr mrḥt ḫt nbt nfr[t]***
[7] ***wʿb[.t] dd pt ḳmȝ tȝ jnnt [ḥ]ʿpy m ḥtpw.f n kȝ n(y) Jnt.f-jḳr mȝʿ-ḫrw***

[1] *This is a visit made by the scribe Amenemhat, son of the elder of the forecourt Djehutymose and whose mother is […]*
[2] *to see [this] tomb of Antefoker. And it was perfect in his opinion*
[3] *[…], useful for eternity. His name shall exist […]*
[4] ***[…] saying: "Offerings given by the king,***
[5] ***Osiris Khent[y-Imentyu … Amun]-Re and all the gods of the necropolis. A votive***
[6] ***offering (of) bread, beer, ox, fowl, alabaster, incense, oil and all the pure good things***
[7] ***that are given by the sky, fashioned by the earth, brought by the flood as his offering to the ka of Antefoker true-of-voice."***

31 Ragazzoli 2013, p. 313; Garis Davies, Gardiner 1920, p. 28, pl. XXXVI–XXXVIa, no. 33.

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