

Self-Presentation in the Autobiography of Ankhtifi of Moalla between Tradition and Innovation

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Abstract

This paper studies the combination of the traditions and innovations in the autobiographical self-presentation of Ankhtifi of Moalla, nomarch of Edfu and Hierakonpolis during the Ninth Dynasty. The significance of the Autobiography of Ankhtifi results from the historical context, specifically his occupational role and provenance, and the way he presented himself. The study analyses the themes and phraseology of his autobiography and compares them with relevant parallels. This raises the question of how innovative his autobiography is and what its traditional characteristics are. The study proves that the Autobiography of Ankhtifi is mostly innovative. Ankhtifi employed the traditional themes of efficient provincial administrator and local patronage and social leadership so typical of the Sixth Dynasty. He also introduced innovations in themes, like famine and military conflicts among nomes, which became characteristic topics in First Intermediate Period texts. He employed new phraseology to express his prominence by claiming achievements superior to his predecessors and even to his successors and to show his independence and power as nomarch, with no reference to the ruling king in his autobiography, in contrast to the Old Kingdom officials who stressed their relation to the king, competence in office or receipt of special royal favour.

Keywords: Ankhtifi's autobiographical self-presentation; ideal autobiography; tradition and innovation in Ankhtifi's autobiography; Ankhtifi's themes and phraseology

Introduction

Self-presentations in ancient Egypt appeared in art and text. Textual self-presentation is a genre in which an individual's personality and role are presented through inscription to a contemporary audience and to a posterity based on specific actions which served as evidence.¹ Textual self-presentations are found on tomb walls, stelae, statues, and coffins.² Self-presentations of non-royal individuals are

¹ C. J. Eyre, "Egyptian Self-Presentation: Dynamics and Strategies," in *Living Forever: Self-Presentation in Ancient Egypt*, ed. H. Bassir (Cairo; New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2019), 10–11, 18.

² H. Bassir, "Traditions of Egyptian Self-Presentation," in *Living Forever: Self-Presentation in Ancient Egypt*, ed. H. Bassir (Cairo; New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2019), 247–48.

first attested in the Old Kingdom and continued until the Greco-Roman Period.³ The majority of non-royal self-presentations from the Old Kingdom belong to high officials in the residence and in the provinces who could afford to erect tombs in which they presented themselves.⁴ In contrast, the Middle Kingdom non-royal self-presentations are known for provincial rulers as well as high and middle-ranking officials.⁵ The majority of self-presentations dating to the Eleventh Dynasty appears on commemorative stelae, mostly from Thebes,⁶ while the Twelfth Dynasty self-presentations are found in tombs of local governors, on stelae, mostly from Abydos, and in inscriptions of the quarries and mines.⁷ The self-presentation was primarily created to make a good image of an individual for eternity, both in the afterlife and in the thoughts of future generations. The owners of private self-presentations wished that people would remember them and perform their mortuary cult after death which they justified by their claims to personal merit.⁸

The present study particularly focuses on the self-presentation of the nomarch Ankhtifi ($\overline{\text{Ankht}} \cdot f(y)$) in his autobiography inscribed on seven pillars in his tomb at Moalla ($\overline{\text{Hft}}$),⁹ presumably dating to the Herakleopolitan Ninth Dynasty.¹⁰ Ankhtifi was primarily nomarch of the third nome of Upper Egypt, the nome of Hierakonpolis (Nhn), and eventually controlled the second nome of Upper Egypt, the nome of Edfu ($Wts-Hr$), and became nomarch of the second nome as well.¹¹ Ankhtifi's hometown Moalla (Hft) is located in the third Upper Egyptian nome, opposite Gebelein, on the southern border of the fourth Upper Egyptian

³ H. Bassir, “Non-royal Self-Presentation,” *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (2021): 1–12.

⁴ M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom: A Study and an Anthology* (Freiburg, Schweiz: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), 1, 6.

⁵ R. Leprohon, “Self-presentation in the Twelfth Dynasty,” in *Living Forever: Self-Presentation in Ancient Egypt*, ed. H. Bassir (Cairo; New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2019), 105.

⁶ R. Landgráfová, *It is My Good Name that You Should Remember: Egyptian Biographical Texts on Middle Kingdom Stelae* (Prague: Charles University, Czech Institute of Egyptology, 2011), xviii; idem, “Self-presentation in the Eleventh Dynasty,” in *Living Forever: Self-Presentation in Ancient Egypt*, ed. H. Bassir (Cairo; New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2019), 90–91.

⁷ Landgráfová, *My Good Name*, xviii; Leprohon, "Self-presentation in the Twelfth Dynasty," 105.

⁸ C. J. Eyre, "The Semna Stela: Quotation, Genre, and Functions of Literature," in *Studies in Egyptology Presented to Miriam Lichtheim*, ed. S. Israelit-Groll (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1990), 164–65; idem, *The Use of Documents in Pharaonic Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 130; Landgráfová, "Self-presentation in the Eleventh Dynasty," 91–92; Bassir, "Traditions of Egyptian Self-Presentation," 262.

⁹ J. Vandier, *Mo'alla: La tombe d'Ankhtifi et la tombe de Sebekhotep* (Le Caire: Imp. de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1950), pl. 1; E. Doret, "Ankhtifi and the Description of His Tomb at Mo'alla," in *For His Ka: Essays Offered in Memory of Klaus Baer*, ed. D. P. Silverman (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1994), 79.

¹⁰ For the dating of Ankhtifi to the Ninth Dynasty, see D. Spänel, "The Date of Ankhtifi of Mo'allā," *GM* 78 (1984): 87–94; N. Strudwick, "Review of N. Kanawati, *Governmental Reforms in Old Kingdom Egypt*," *JEA* 71 (Review Supplement) (1985): 30; G. Godenho, "Manifestations of Elite Culture in Egypt's First Intermediate Period" (PhD thesis, University of Liverpool, 2007).

¹¹ Vandier, *Mo'alla*, 20, 166; H. G. Fischer, "Further Remarks on the Gebelein Stelae," *Kush* 10 (1962): 333; M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature. A Book of Readings*, vol. I: *The Old and Middle Kingdoms* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1973), 85–86.

nome of Thebes.¹² The most interesting aspect in the Autobiography of Ankhtifi of Moalla is the historical context and how he presented himself.

There is no reference to any king in Ankhtifi's autobiography, but there is one mention of King Neferkare under the fishing and fowling scene to the right of the doorway of the pillared hall in his tomb. The cartouche including the king's name is fragment, nevertheless it is clear that it shows the name Neferkare.¹³ Ankhtifi's self-praise was founded on his accomplishments and manifested by his success in being an efficient provincial governor. While the Old Kingdom officials used phraseology showing their dependence on, relation and service to the king and competence in office, Ankhtifi employed phraseology which shows his independence.¹⁴

The article discusses Ankhtifi's autobiographical self-presentation in terms of tradition and innovation; how he innovated themes and phraseology in his autobiography, in addition to the traditional ones, to create a new composition to show his self-presentation. The study also provides a comparison with other relevant parallels. It intends to explore how his autobiography is traditional and how it is innovative, highlighting the themes and phraseology transmitted from earlier inscriptions, and the innovations which later became typical of the autobiographies of the provincial officials of the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom.

Analysis of the Autobiography of Ankhtifi

Ankhtifi listed the following titles and offices on Pillars I, II, and VII:

1) 

r-p^ct h3ty-^c htmty-bity smr-w^cty hr(y)-hb(t) imy-r mš^c imy-r i3w imy-r h3swt hry-tp 3 Wts-Hr Nhn

“Hereditary Prince, Governor, Seal-bearer of the King of Lower Egypt, Sole Companion, Lector Priest, Overseer of the Army, Overseer of Foreign Mercenaries, Overseer of Foreign Lands, Great Chief of the Nomes of Edfu and Hierakonpolis.”¹⁵

2) 

¹² H. G. Fischer, *Inscriptions from the Coptite Nome. Dynasties VI-XI* (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1964), 42.

¹³ Spanel, “The Date of Ankhtifi,” 89; S. Snape, “Ankhtifi: A Time of Change,” in *Ancient Egyptian Tombs: The Culture of Life and Death*, ed. S. Snape (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 110–11.

¹⁴ J. P. Allen, “Foreword,” in *Living Forever: Self-Presentation in Ancient Egypt*, ed. H. Bassir (Cairo; New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2019), xxv–xxvi.

¹⁵ Pillar IA: 1 = Vandier, *Moalla*, 162 [Inscr. n° 1].

r-p^ct h3ty-^c htmty-bity smr-w^cty imy-r hm(w)-ntr imy-r h3swt imy-r i3w hry-tp 3 n Wts-Hr Nhn

“Hereditary Prince, Governor, Seal-bearer of the King of Lower Egypt, Sole Companion, Overseer of Priests, Overseer of Foreign Lands, Overseer of Foreign Mercenaries, Great Chief of the Nomes of Edfu and Hierakonpolis.”¹⁶

3)



r-p^ct h3ty-^c htmty-bity smr-w^cty hr(y)-hb(t) imy-r hm(w)-ntr imy-r m^{sc} imy-r h3swt imy-r i3w hry-tp 3 n Wts-Hr Nhn

“Hereditary Prince, Governor, Seal-bearer of the King of Lower Egypt, Sole Companion, Lector Priest, Overseer of Priests, Overseer of the Army, Overseer of Foreign Lands, Overseer of Foreign Mercenaries, Great Chief of the Nomes of Edfu and Hierakonpolis.”¹⁷

The display of titles and offices of an official was significant in his self-presentation and commemoration of his name.¹⁸ Ankhtifi's titles express his prominence in southern Upper Egypt. He held the highest ranking titles of *r-p^ct* and *h3ty-^c*. The sequence of *r-p^ct h3ty-^c htmty-bity smr w^cty hry-hb(t)* shows the traditional stages of the career of a high provincial official in reverse order. He also held the office of *hry-tp 3* of the second and third Upper Egyptian nomes, Edfu and Hierakonpolis respectively, and the office of *imy-r hm(w)-ntr* (“Overseer of Priests”), thus combining the highest administrative and temple offices in these nomes. Additionally, he had the titles of *imy-r i3w* (“Overseer of Foreign Mercenaries”) and *imy-r h3swt* (“Overseer of Foreign Lands”) which were held by the Sixth Dynasty high officials of Aswan (UE 1) who were involved in Nubian trade and expeditions on behalf of the state.¹⁹ As is clear then, his duties were more encompassing than those of other contemporary nomarchs and reached further than his own nome.

Ankhtifi claims in his autobiography:

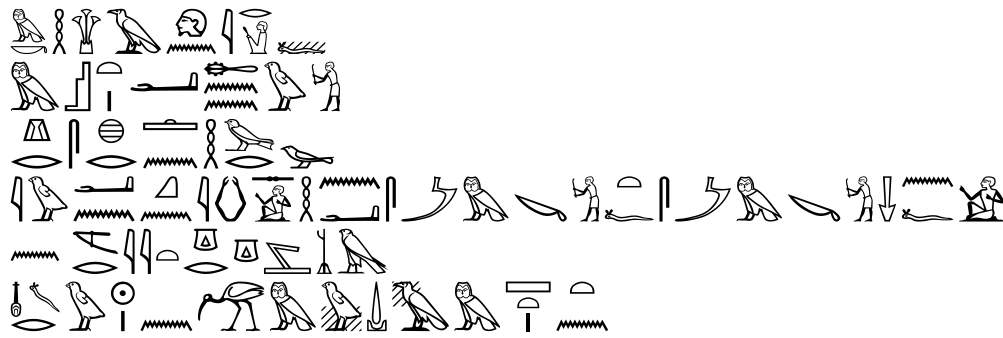


¹⁶ Pillar IIA: 1 = Vandier, *Mo^calla*, 185 [Inscr. n° 5].

¹⁷ Pillar VII: 1–2 = Vandier, *Mo^calla*, 256 [Inscr. n° 15].

¹⁸ K. A. Kóthay, “Categorisation, Classification, and Social Reality: Administrative Control and Interaction with the Population,” in *Ancient Egyptian Administration*, ed. J. C. Moreno García (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 516.

¹⁹ D. Vischak, “Identity in/of Elephantine: Old Kingdom Tombs at Qubbet el Hawa,” in *The Archaeology and Art of Ancient Egypt: Essays in Honor of David B. O'Connor*, vol. II, eds. Z. A. Hawass and J. Richards (Cairo: Conseil suprême des Antiquités de l'Égypte, 2007), 452–53.



iw in.n [w](i) Hr r Wts-Hr n 'nh wd3 snb r grg.s ir.n(.i)

.....

gm.n(.i) Pr-Hww

ttf mi grgt

mkh3 (i)n ir(y).f

m st-^c hnnw

hr shr n hwr

iw di.n(.i) kni s hn^c sm3 it.f sm3 sn.f

n-mryt grg Wts-Hr

nfr.w(y) hrw n gm wd3 m sp3t tn

“Horus brought me to the nome of Edfu for life, prosperity, health, to reestablish it, and I did (it)..... I found the House of Khuu inundated like a marsh, abandoned by him who belonged to it, in the grip of a rebel, under the control of a wretch. I made a man embrace the slayer of his father, the slayer of his brother, so as to reestablish the nome of Edfu. How happy was the day on which I found well-being in this nome!”²⁰

Ankhtifi, a First Intermediate Period nomarch of the third Upper Egyptian nome of Hierakonpolis (*Nhn*), claims that the god Horus brought him to re-establish the second Upper Egyptian nome of Edfu (*Wts-Hr*). He describes how he brought order to the House of Khuu (*Pr-Hww*), a name for the second Upper Egyptian nome of Edfu. He then became nomarch of the nome of Edfu, in addition to the nome of Hierakonpolis, as he claims in his titles to be nomarch of both nomes.²¹ Ankhtifi presented new themes and phrases in his autobiography. He used here a royal motif to legitimize his rule over the nome of Edfu by claiming that he was chosen by the god Horus to restore order in this nome.²² This claim is never found in the private autobiographies of the Old Kingdom. Ankhtifi presented himself in the role that kings would play in the Old Kingdom, as the active benefactor and in contact with the divine world, and also expanding his realm as was a king's duty.

Contact with the divine world is not actually a theme that developed in Old Kingdom private self-presentations, and it was extremely rare to represent a private person in direct connection with a deity until the New Kingdom. In the Old

²⁰ Pillar 1A: 2–1B: 1 = Vandier, *Mo^calla*, 163 [Inscr. n° 2]; translation: Lichtheim, *Literature* I, 85–86.

²¹ Vandier, *Mo^calla*, 20, 166; Fischer, “Gebelein Stelae,” 333; Lichtheim, *Literature* I, 85–86.

²² Godenho, “Manifestations,” 253–55.

Kingdom autobiographies, the king is the major initial agent and is appointing the official and the official is executing a royal order. Or instead, the official would stress an episode interacting with the king. This is found, for instance, in the early Fifth Dynasty Autobiography of Niankhsekhmet on his false door stela (CG 1482) from his tomb at Saqqara, which begins with his address to the king, requesting a false door for his tomb, and then the king grants him two false doors in response to his request. This is followed by a praise of the king.²³ The theme of the king as mediator with the gods is a key element of royal ideology since the Old Kingdom at least. The king is the one depicted interacting with the gods directly, in relief, sculpture and texts, such as the Pyramid Texts. Therefore, when Ankhtifi states that the god brought him, he is not following traditional standards of private self-presentation as developed in the Old Kingdom. He is presented as if he was a king. It is interesting that the god is Horus who represents kingship.

It does not mean that private people were not religious, but it is most probably not considered part of the decorum to represent deities and interactions with them in life in one's monument. To my knowledge the only theme where a deity appears is in the justification before the great god and the judgment. For instance, in the tomb of the late Fifth and early Sixth Dynasty official Hezi at Saqqara, he threatens any person who violates his tomb with litigation in the afterlife: *iw(.i) <r> wd^c hn^c.f m d3d3t ntr 3* "I will have judgement with him in the council of the great god."²⁴

In the Middle Kingdom provincial rulers stress the role of the king as restorer of order in the provinces to assert royal authority.²⁵ This is explicit in the Twelfth Dynasty Autobiography of Khnumhotep II of Beni Hasan (Tomb No. 3) who claims that King Amenemhat II fixed the boundaries of his nome: *m iit hm.f dr.f isft h^cw m Tm ds.f smnh.f gmt.n.f wst ittt niwt m snt.s di.f rh niwt t3.s r niwt*, "when His Person came, that he might suppress disorder, appearing as Atum himself, that he might (re-)establish what he found ruined, what (one) town had seized from another, that he might cause town to know its boundary from town."²⁶ It is notable that the king is identified here with Atum. The self-presentations of the Middle Kingdom high officials stress their loyalty to the king: for instance, the self-presentation of the Overseer of the Treasury Ikhnofret on his stela from Abydos (Berlin 1204, reign of Senusret III).²⁷

²³ J. Baines, "Prehistories of Literature: Performance, Fiction, Myth," in *Definitely: Egyptian Literature: Proceedings of the Symposium "Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms," Los Angeles, March 24–26, 1995*, ed. G. Moers (Göttingen: Seminar für Ägyptologie und Koptologie, 1999), 22–24; N. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 46, 302–3, 318.

²⁴ D. P. Silverman, "The Threat-Formula and Biographical Text in the Tomb of Hezi at Saqqara," *JARCE* 37 (2000): 10–11, figs. 4a, 4b (line 2); translation: Eyre, *Use of Documents*, 130.

²⁵ Eyre, *Use of Documents*, 137.

²⁶ P. E. Newberry, *Beni Hasan I* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1893), pl. 25 (lines 36–41); translation: Eyre, *Use of Documents*, 287.

²⁷ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies*, 98–100; Bassir, "Traditions of Egyptian Self-Presentation," 250.

Ankhtifi repeatedly describes himself in his autobiography as follows:



ink pw t3y iwt(y) wn ky

“I am a man without equal.”²⁸

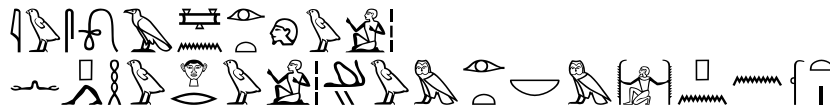
Ankhtifi’s key idea he wants to transmit is that he is a man without equal. This sentence frames his self-presentation and is the leitmotif: a key idea that recurs in a text.²⁹ This motif of being without an equal is one of the innovations in Ankhtifi’s autobiography. He does not see anyone, only himself. He speaks in the first person, stating:



ink h3ty rmt phwy rmt dr-ntt nn hpr mit(.i) nn sw r hpr n ms(.w) mit(.i) n ms[.tw.f]

“I am the front of people and the back of people because (my) like will not exist; he will not exist. (My) like could not have been born; he was not born.”³⁰

Ankhtifi introduced the new phrase “I am the front of people and the back of people.” He gives himself prominence even in the future by assuring that no one even in the future would equal him. He also asserts that his like was not born. The self-presentation was mainly addressed to a future audience; thus he wants to persuade the future generations of his prominence and personal merit to justify his ongoing mortuary cult.³¹ This is again expressed in his autobiography as follows:

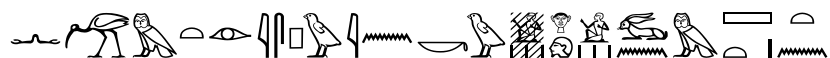


iw sw3.n(.i) irt tpw(.i)

n ph w(i) hrw-phw(.i) m irt(.i) nb m hh pn n rnpt

“I have surpassed what my ancestors did,
and my successors could not equal me in all I have done in a million years.”³²

Ankhtifi also claims:



n gmt(.i) ir is pw in kw hryw-tpw wn m sp3t tn

“This is something that I have not found done by other chiefs who were in this nome.”³³

Ankhtifi’s statement that he surpassed his ancestors through his achievements and that even his successors could not equal him is one of the innovations in his

²⁸ Pillars IB: 3, 5; IIC: 2–3; IIF: 2; IIH: 2–3; VC: 1; VIC: 12–13 = Vandier, *Mo^ealla*, 171, 179, 186, 198, 203, 239, 252.

²⁹ C. Baldick, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 138–39.

³⁰ Pillar IIA: 2 = Vandier, *Mo^ealla*, 185 [Inscr. n° 5].

³¹ Eyre, *Use of Documents*, 130.

³² Pillar IIB: 1 = Vandier, *Mo^ealla*, 185 [Inscr. n° 5].

³³ Pillar IID: 2–3 = Vandier, *Mo^ealla*, 186 [Inscr. n° 5]; Godenho, “Manifestations,” 241.

autobiography. He also claims repeatedly that he has not “found” something to have been achieved by other predecessors before (see further below).³⁴ This claim is attested twice in the Old Kingdom, in the Autobiography of Qar of Edfu (*n gmt.n(.i) is pw m-^c hry-tp wn m sp3t tn tp-^cw(y)*), “This is something that I have not found in the hand of a chief who was in this nome before”)³⁵ and the Autobiography of Harkhuf of Aswan (*n sp gmy(.i) ir (i)n smr imy-r i^c3w nb pr r T3m tp-^cw(y)*), “I have never found this done by any Companion and Overseer of Foreign Mercenaries who went to Iam before”) dating to the Sixth Dynasty.³⁶ The formula is employed in these texts in slightly varied form. It should be noted, however, that the king is absent from Ankhtifi’s autobiography, while the Sixth Dynasty high provincial officials stressed their service to the king and competence in office.

In contrast, the Sixth Dynasty official Weni the Elder boasts in his autobiography, encompassing different stages in his career starting in the reign of Teti and culminating in his promotion to the office of Overseer of Upper Egypt under Merenre, that “the like had never been done for any servant” (*n sp p3.t(w) irt mitt n b3k nb*), when referring to the receipt of royal favour—being provided with tomb equipment by Pepy I.³⁷ This traditional phrase was employed by late Old Kingdom high officials to stress that they received a special favour from the king which was unique and had never before been granted to other officials.³⁸ For instance, the late Fifth Dynasty vizier Senedjemib/Inti from the reign of King Djedkare Isesi stresses in his tomb at Giza (G 2370) that “the like had never been done in the presence of the king for any man” (*[n] sp [irt] mi[t]t r-gs nswt n s nb*), when referring to the king’s special favour of granting him a necklace.³⁹ The high priest of Ptah Sabu/Ibebi from Saqqara, dating to late Fifth-early Sixth Dynasty, claims that “the like had never been done for any servant or equal by any sovereign” (*n sp irt mitt n b3k nb mit(y) in ity nb*).⁴⁰ The Sixth Dynasty nomarch Djau of Deir el-Gebrawi claims that he received burial equipment from the king for his similarly named father, stressing that this special royal favour “had never been done for another like him” (*n sp irt n ky mit(y).f*).⁴¹ A variant of this common phrase is found in the Autobiography of Hezi from his tomb in the Teti Pyramid cemetery at Saqqara (*ny*

³⁴ Eyre, *Use of Documents*, 287.

³⁵ *Urk.* I, 254: 10; J. C. Moreno García, “De l’Ancien Empire à la Première Période Intermédiaire: L’autobiographie de Q3r d’Edfou, entre tradition et innovation,” *RdE* 49 (1998): 154.

³⁶ *Urk.* I, 125: 10–11; J. Stauder-Porchet, “Harkhuf’s Autobiographical Inscriptions. A Study in Old Kingdom Monumental Rhetoric: Part I. Texts, Genres, Forms,” *ZÄS* 147, no. 1 (2020), 85.

³⁷ *Urk.* I, 100: 1; C. J. Eyre, “Work and Organization of Work in the Old Kingdom,” in *Labor in the Ancient Near East*, ed. M. A. Powell (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1987), 22; J. Richards, “Text and Context in Late Old Kingdom Egypt: The Archaeology and Historiography of Weni the Elder,” *JARCE* 39 (2002): 78. See also Lichtheim, *Literature* I, 19.

³⁸ Cf. Eyre, “Work and Organization of Work,” 21–24; idem, *Use of Documents*, 287.

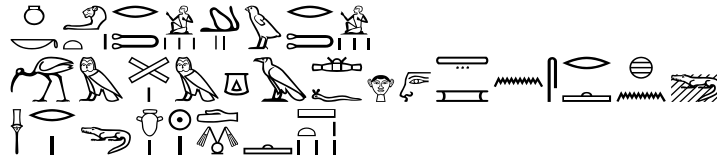
³⁹ *Urk.* I, 60: 6; Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 311–12. For Senedjemib/Inti, see N. Strudwick, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom: The Highest Titles and their Holders* (London: KPI, 1985), 132–33.

⁴⁰ CG 1565, *Urk.* I, 83: 17; Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 308.

⁴¹ *Urk.* I, 146: 15; Eyre, “Work and Organization of Work,” 23–24; idem, *Use of Documents*, 287. See also Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 365.

wnt iryt mitt n mit(y.i) nb, “the like was not done for any equal of mine).⁴² While Ankhtifi focuses on his own acts and what he accomplished, earlier autobiographies stress a specific favour given by the king.

Ankhtifi stresses again his role as an efficient local administrator as follows:



ink h3ty rmt phwy rmt

gm ts m g3w.f hry-hnt t3 n shr [hn]

shm r s3k ib hrw n dmd sp3t 3

“I am the front of people and the back of people.

One who found council when it was needed and who led the land through [active] conduct.

One strong of speech and collected of thought (on) the day the three nomes were joined.”⁴³

Ankhtifi again stresses: “I am the front of people and the back of people.” Ankhtifi’s description of himself as being “strong of speech and collected of thought” (*shm r s3k ib*) shows the connection of speech and thought. The ability of speech as a basic requirement to rule is illustrated by the *Teaching for King Merikare* dating to the Middle Kingdom: *hmw m mdwt nht.k hpš pw n nswt nst.f kn mdwt r h3 nb*, “Be skilful with words, so that you may be strong; The might of the king is his tongue; The words are stronger than any fight.”⁴⁴ The “three nomes” refer to Upper Egyptian nomes 1–3 (Elephantine, Edfu, Hierakonpolis). Ankhtifi refers here to his alliance with the first Upper Egyptian nome of Elephantine.⁴⁵

Ankhtifi claims on Pillar IV:



iw di.n(i) t n hkr hbsw n h3y

iw wrh.n(i) hs3

⁴² Silverman, “The Threat-Formula,” 8, figs. 3a, 3b (line 4); J. Stauder-Porchet, “Hezi’s Autobiographical Inscription: Philological Study and Interpretation,” *ZAS* 142, no. 2 (2015): 196–97.

⁴³ Pillar 1B: 2–3 = Vandier, *Mo’alla*, 171 [Inscr. n° 3]; translation: Godenho, “Manifestations,” 238.

⁴⁴ Merikare E 32: J. F. Quack, *Studien zur Lehre für Merikare* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992), 24–25.

⁴⁵ Lichtheim, *Literature I*, 86.

iw t̄b.n(.i) dg[3]
iw [di].n(.i) h̄mt n iwty h̄mt
iw [s̄]nh.n(.i) H̄f̄3t Hr-Mr t̄[nw.....]
“I gave bread to the hungry and clothes to the naked.
I anointed the unanointed.
I shod the one who had no shoes.
I gave a wife to the one who had no wife.
I made Moalla and Homer live every [.....]”⁴⁶

Ankhtifi stresses his role as patron of his nome and his entire social environment. He claims that he fed Moalla and Horner which were localities in the third Upper Egyptian nome.⁴⁷ The theme of local patronage, stressing the moral personality and the social role of local patron, is a traditional theme first attested in the early Sixth Dynasty. It consists of a sequence of phrases usually beginning with the clichéd claim to have given food to the hungry and clothes to the naked. This theme of the elite as provider for their subordinates imitates the theme of royal patronage stressing the role of the king as provider for his officials. It soon became the main theme of the “ideal biography,”⁴⁸ which comprised several fixed phrases that appeared in the Old Kingdom and continued in use until the Late Period.⁴⁹

The theme of local patronage first appears in the evidence in the reign of King Teti in the tomb of the vizier Neferseshemre/Sheshi at Saqqara on his false door:⁵⁰
rdi.n(.i) t n h̄kr h̄bsw sm̄3(.n.i) t̄3 m iwi krs.n(.i) iwty s̄3.f ir.n(.i) m̄h̄nt n iwty m̄h̄nt.f
“I gave bread to the hungry, clothes (to the naked), I ferried over him who had no boat, I buried him who had no son; I made a boat for him who did not have a boat.”⁵¹

Other attestations come from the elite cemetery of Qubbet el-Hawa at Aswan (UE 1). For instance, Harkhuf (QH34n), dated to Merenre–early Pepy II, stresses in his autobiography his moral behaviour towards people as follows: *iw rdi.n(.i) t n h̄kr h̄bsw n h̄zyw sm̄3.n(.i) t̄3 m iwty m̄h̄nt.f* “I gave bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked, and I brought to land him who had no boat.”⁵² The autobiography of the late Sixth Dynasty Pepynakht Heqaib (QH35) includes the following statement: *iw rdi.n(.i) t n h̄kr h̄bs n h̄zy n sp wd̄(.i) sn n snwy m sp s̄s̄wy s̄3 m h̄rt it.f* “I gave bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked; and I never judged between two parties in a

⁴⁶ Pillar IV: 4–8 = Vandier, *Moalla*, 220 [Inscr. n° 10]; Godenho, “Manifestations,” 245.

⁴⁷ On Moalla and Horner, cf. Vandier, *Moalla*, 15–16, 30.

⁴⁸ D. Franke, “Arme und Geringe im Alten Reich Altägyptens: ‘Ich gab Speise dem Hungernden, Kleider dem Nackten...’,” *ZÄS* 133 (2006): 104–20; Eyre, “Egyptian Self-Presentation,” 12.

⁴⁹ Landgráfová, *My Good Name*, xvi.

⁵⁰ N. Kloth, *Die (auto-)biographischen Inschriften des ägyptischen Alten Reiches: Untersuchungen zu Phraseologie und Entwicklung* (Hamburg: Buske, 2002), 77.

⁵¹ *Urk.* I, 199: 3–5; translation: Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 301–2. See also Lichtheim, *Literature* I, 17; idem, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies*, 6; Franke, “Arme und Geringe,” 105.

⁵² *Urk.* I, 122: 6–8; E. Edel, *Die Felsgräbernekropole der Qubbet el-Hawa bei Assuan*, vol. I (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2008), 622–23; translation: Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 329. See also Stauder-Porchet, “Harkhuf’s Autobiographical Inscriptions,” 58–60.

manner to deprive a son of his father's property."⁵³ His son Sabni II (QH35e), dated to Pepy II, ends his autobiography with: *iw rdi.n(.i) t n hkr hbs n h3y iw d3i.n(.i) wn iww m h^cw(.i) n sp itī (i)ht n rmt nb n sp s3r(.i) s nb hr išt.f* "I gave bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked. I ferried those who had no boat in (my) boats. I never stole the property of another; I never deprived any man of his belongings."⁵⁴ The fact that this theme is recurrent in late Old Kingdom private autobiographical inscriptions and later texts indicates transmission.⁵⁵ However, it should be noted that the circumstances here are different because Ankhtifi relates it to famine.

Ankhtifi used the traditional cliché theme of local patronage to introduce the Famine Inscription on Pillar IV. He employed this common theme in a new context in relation to a real event (i.e. the famine):



*iw šm^cw r-dr.f m(w)t n hkr
s nb hr wnm hrdw.f
n sp di(.i) hpr m(w)t n hk<r> m sp3t tn
iw di.n(.i) t3bt n šm^c [šm^c]
di.n(.i) mht*

"All of Upper Egypt died because of hunger,
every man eating his (own) children;
but I never let death happen because of hunger in this nome.
I gave a loan of Upper Egyptian barley to Upper Egypt,
and I gave to the north."⁵⁶

The theme of famine started to show up in the Autobiography of Qar, nomarch of Edfu during the Sixth Dynasty. Qar started his career in the residence under Pepy I as "Sole Companion" and "Overseer of the *hnty(w)-š* of the Great House," before his appointment by Merenre as "Great Chief of the Nome," that of Edfu, "Overseer

⁵³ *Urk.* I, 133: 2–4; E. Edel, *Die Felsgräbernekropole der Qubbet el-Hawa bei Assuan*, vol. II (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2008), 683, 685; translation: Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies*, 16.

⁵⁴ Edel, *Qubbet el-Hawa* II, 817–18, 859, Abb. 10; translation: Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 340. See also Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies*, 17.

⁵⁵ J. C. Moreno García, "The Social Context of Biographies (Old and Middle Kingdom)," in *Ancient Egyptian Biographies: Contexts, Forms, Functions*, eds. J. Stauder-Porchet, E. Frood, and A. Stauder (Atlanta: Lockwood Press, 2020), 251.

⁵⁶ Pillar IV: 15–19 = Vandier, *Mo^calla*, 220 [Inscr. n° 10]; translation: Godenho, "Manifestations," 246.

of Grain of Upper Egypt,” and “Overseer of Priests.”⁵⁷ He was later promoted to the higher rank of “Governor” (*h3ty-ꜥ*) and the office of “Overseer of Upper Egypt,”⁵⁸ probably in the early reign of Pepy II.⁵⁹ Qar stresses his social role as patron of his nome of Edfu: *iw rdi.n(.i) t n hkr hbs n h3y n gm.n(.i) m sp3t tn iw rdi.n(.i) mhrw m irtt iw h3.n(.i) it-šmꜥw m pr-dt(.i) n hkr gm.n(.i) (m) sp3t tn*, “I gave bread to the hungry and clothes to the naked whom I found in this nome. I gave milk-jars, and I measured out Upper Egyptian grain from my *pr-dt* for the hungry man whom I found in this nome.”⁶⁰ This passage of Qar’s autobiography starts with the clichéd claim to have given bread to the hungry and clothes to the naked. He then claims that he supplied the hungry in his nome with milk-jars and grain from his *pr-dt*. The text has a general reference to famine and emphasizes his leading role in his nome. However, Ankhtifi describes in some detail how Upper Egypt suffered from famine, in contrast to the situation in his own nome.

The fact that some themes and formulas in the Autobiography of Ankhtifi, nomarch of Edfu and Hierakonpolis in the First Intermediate Period, were used in the Sixth Dynasty Autobiography of Qar of Edfu is indicative of transmission and the existence of a local tradition in this province.⁶¹ It should be noted that the phrase *iw di.n(.i) t3bt n šmꜥ [šmꜥ] di.n(.i) mht* is used in identical form in the Eleventh Dynasty Autobiography of Heqaib (Stela BM 1671).⁶²

Ankhtifi then repeats his claim that no predecessor had succeeded in accomplishing the same achievements:⁶³



n gmt(.i) [ir] is pw in h3w tp-ꜥwy

n sp iri imy-r mšꜥ nb n sp3t tn mitt iry

“This is something that I have not found [done] by rulers before.

⁵⁷ Qar’s large architrave in his tomb at Edfu, M. G. Daressy, “Inscriptions du mastaba de Pepi-Nefer à Edfou,” *ASAE* 17 (1917): 136; *Urk.* I, 254: 2–4; N. Kanawati, *Governmental Reforms in Old Kingdom Egypt* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1980), 30; M. El-Khadragy, “The Edfu Offering Niche of Qar in the Cairo Museum,” *SAK* 30 (2002): figs. 2–3, pls. 4–6; Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 343; N. Kanawati, “The Memphite Tomb of Qar of Edfu,” in *Times, Signs and Pyramids: Studies in Honour of Miroslav Verner on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, eds. V. G. Callender et al. (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2011), 217; N. Kanawati and J. Swinton, *Egypt in the Sixth Dynasty: Challenges and Responses* (Wallasey: Abercromby Press, 2018), 99–100, 127–28, fig. 32.

⁵⁸ Qar’s false door at Edfu, El-Khadragy, “Niche of Qar,” 218–27, fig. 7, pl. 9; Kanawati and Swinton, *Sixth Dynasty*, 127.

⁵⁹ Kanawati, *Governmental Reforms*, 64; E. Brovarski, “Overseers of Upper Egypt in the Old to Middle Kingdoms, Part 1,” *ZÄS* 140 (2013): 94.

⁶⁰ *Urk.* I, 254: 13–16; Moreno García, “L’autobiographie de Q3r d’Edfou,” 154–55.

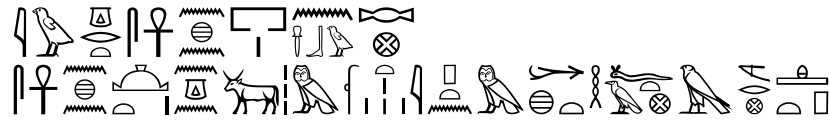
⁶¹ Moreno García, “L’autobiographie de Q3r d’Edfou,” 153–54.

⁶² Cf. H. J. Polotsky, “The Stela of Heḳa-yeḳ,” *JEA* 16, no. 3/4 (1930): 194, pl. 29 (line 6); J. Vandier, *La famine dans l’Égypte ancienne* (Le Caire: Imp. de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 1936), 107–8; idem, *Moꜥalla*, 228, note r.

⁶³ Eyre, *Use of Documents*, 287.

Never would any Overseer of the Army have done the like for this nome.”⁶⁴

Ankhtifi then stresses:



iw grt s'nh.n(.i) pr n 3bw s'nh.n(.i) T3t-Ngn m rnpwt iptn m-ht Hf3t Hr-Mr htp
 “Now, I made the estate of Elephantine live and I made Iat-Negen live in those years after Moalla and Horner were satisfied.”⁶⁵

Ankhtifi stresses that he fed Elephantine and Iat-Negen in the first and second Upper Egyptian nomes respectively,⁶⁶ after satisfying Moalla and Horner in the third Upper Egyptian nome. The formula *s'nh.n.i* “I made ... live” (in the sense of “fed”) is recurrent in the First Intermediate Period texts referring to famine. The closest parallel is found on the stela of the contemporary Iti of Imyotru (Cairo JE 20001), a town in the Theban nome near Gebelein, who claims his support of his town Imyotru during famine: *iw s'nh.n(.i) Imitrw (m) rnpwt ksnt* “I made Imyotru live in the painful years.”⁶⁷ He also provided for Armant (*Twini*) and Moalla (*Hf3t*) after supplying his town: *iw di.n(.i) it-Šm n Twini n Hf3t m-ht Imitrw s'nh* “I gave Upper Egyptian barley to Iuni, to Hefat, after Imyotru had been supplied.”⁶⁸

The contemporary Merer of Edfu (stela Cracow MNK-XI-999), the “Butler and Overseer of Slaughterers of the Entire House of Khuu*,” also claims: *s'nh.n(.i) nt(y) 'nh m hnit(.i) nbt im m ts(w) pn hpr* “I made him who was alive live everywhere I visited during this *ts(w)*-famine which occurred.”⁶⁹

Khety I of Asyut tomb V of the Herakleopolitan period claims: [*iw s'nh.n(.i) niwt* “(I) made the town live.”⁷⁰ He also emphasizes his control of grain and his leading role in providing for people in his town in periods of famine, in contrast to the remaining land: *ink 3 it-mh iw t3 m ts(w) s'nh niwt m h3 md3t* “I was one rich in

⁶⁴ Pillar IV: 19–22 = Vandier, *Mo'alla*, 220 [Inscr. n° 10]; Godenho, *Manifestations*, 246.

⁶⁵ Pillar IV: 22–25 = Vandier, *Mo'alla*, 221 [Inscr. n° 10]; Godenho, *Manifestations*, 246–47.

⁶⁶ On Iat-Negen, cf. Vandier, *Mo'alla*, 25.

⁶⁷ J. Vandier, “La stèle 20.001 du Musée du Caire,” *Mélanges Maspero* I (1935): 138 (lines 3–4).

⁶⁸ Vandier, “La stèle 20.001 du Musée du Caire,” 138 (line 7); translation: Lichtheim, *Literature* I, 89.

* *Pr-Hww* is a name for the second province of Upper Egypt, the nome of Edfu, Vandier, *Mo'alla*, 166.

⁶⁹ J. Černý, “The Stela of Merer in Cracow,” *JEA* 47 (1961): pl. 1 (line 9); W. Schenkel, *Memphis-Herakleopolis-Theben. Die epigraphischen Zeugnisse der 7.-11. Dynastie Ägyptens* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965), 63; Lichtheim, *Literature* I, 87.

⁷⁰ F. Ll. Griffith, *The Inscriptions of Siût and Dêr Rîfeh* (London: Trübner, 1889), pl. 15 (line 5); H. Brunner, *Die Texte aus den Gräbern der Herakleopolitenzeit von Siut* (Glückstadt: Augustin, 1937), 64.

Lower Egyptian barley while the land was in *ts(w)*-famine; one who made the town live by the *md3t* measure.”⁷¹

Ankhtifi claims again achievements superior to his fathers:



n gmt(.i) ir is pw in it(.i) tp-ꜥwy

“This is something that I have not found done by (my) fathers before.”⁷²

The theme of famine also figures in the documents of Heqanakht,⁷³ a *k3*-priest (*hm-k3*) and farmer during the Middle Kingdom.⁷⁴ Heqanakht refers to famine in Letter II as follows:

mk tn t3 r-dr:f m(w)t n hkr.[tn]

“Look, the whole land is dead and [you] have not hungered.”⁷⁵

mk tn dd.tw hkr r hkr mk tn š3ꜥw wnm rmt ꜥ3

“Look, one should say hunger (only) about (real) hunger. Look, they’ve started to eat people here.”⁷⁶

Heqanakht boasts of his ability to feed his family while the rest of the country suffers from famine. One might argue that the theme of human cannibalism appearing in the texts of Ankhtifi and Heqanakht is evidence of such terrible famine in their times, so terrible that people were forced to eat their own children. Nevertheless, both Ankhtifi and Heqanakht might be expressing in a rhetorical way how serious the famine events were in their times. The rhetorical device would be hyperbole, an overstatement to impress the audience (contemporaries and posterity) or the addressee.⁷⁷

⁷¹ Griffith, *Inscriptions of Siût*, pl. 15 (line 9); Brunner, *Gräbern der Herakleopolitenzeit*, 65; Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies*, 28.

⁷² Pillar IV: 25–26 = Vandier, *Moꜥalla*, 221 [Inscr. n° 10]; Godenho, *Manifestations*, 247.

⁷³ Published by T. G. H. James, *The Hekanakhte Papers and other Early Middle Kingdom Documents* (New York: Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art 19, 1962), 1.

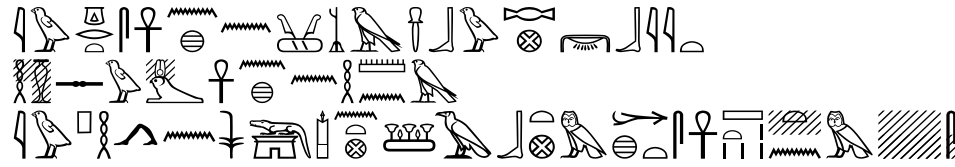
⁷⁴ The papyri of Heqanakht do not name any king. However, two regnal years are mentioned only in Account V, “Year 5” (line 1) and “Year 8” (lines 34, 37), J. P. Allen, *The Heqanakht Papyri* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002), 18, 19, pl. 40. Winlock, followed by James, assigned the documents to the reign of Seankhkare Montuhotep III, H. E. Winlock, *Excavations at Deir el-Bahri, 1911-1931* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1942), 58–61; James, *Hekanakhte Papers*, 2–3. Subsequent studies, however, have argued for a date twenty to forty years later, during the Twelfth Dynasty, in the reign of Amenemhat I or that of Senusret I, H. Goedicke, *Studies in the Hekanakhte Papers* (Baltimore: Halgo, 1984), 8–10; D. Arnold, “Amenemhat I and the Early Twelfth Dynasty at Thebes,” *MMJ* 26 (1991): 35–38; A. J. Spalinger, “Calendrical Evidence and Hekanakhte,” *ZÄS* 123, no. 1 (1996): 85–96; Allen, *Heqanakht Papyri*, 128.

⁷⁵ Allen, *Heqanakht Papyri*, 16, pl. 30 (line 3).

⁷⁶ Allen, *Heqanakht Papyri*, 17, pl. 30 (lines 27–28).

⁷⁷ Baldick, *Oxford Dictionary*, 119. Cannibalism was not an acceptable cultural practice in ancient Egypt, C. J. Eyre, *The Cannibal Hymn: A Cultural and Literary Study* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2002), 158–59.

Reference to famine appears again in the Autobiography of Ankhtifi on Pillar V:



iw grt s^cnh.n(.i) Nhn Wts-Hr 3bw Nbyt

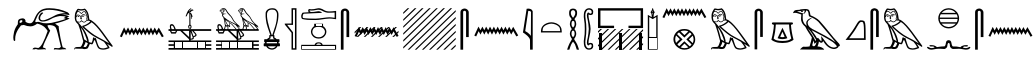
hsi w(i) Hr Nhn ^cnh n(.i) Hmn

iw ph.n it-šm^c(.i) Twnt š3bt m-ht s^cnh sp3t tn ms

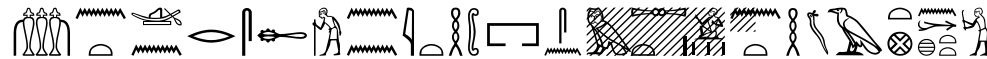
“Now, I made Hierakonpolis, Edfu, Elephantine and Kom Ombo live so that Horus of Hierakonpolis would favour me and Hemen would live for me. My Upper Egyptian barley reached Dendera and š3bt after making this nome live with⁷⁸

Ankhtifi stresses that he fed the third and second Upper Egyptian nomes of Hierakonpolis and Edfu and the towns of Elephantine and Kom Ombo in the first Upper Egyptian nome for the sake of his local gods, Horus and Hemen.⁷⁹ He also stresses that he fed the towns of Dendera and š3bt in the sixth Upper Egyptian nome after supplying his own nome.⁸⁰

It is unclear whether Ankhtifi was loyal to the Herakleopolitan king, or not, but the text makes it clear that his main opponents were the nomes of Thebes and Coptos, the fourth and fifth nomes of Upper Egypt.⁸¹ The account of his military conflict with Thebes and Coptos is found on Pillar II. Ankhtifi claims that the general of Armant (*imy-r mš^c n Twn(y)*, “Overseer of the Army of Armant”) asked for his help against the attack of Thebes and Coptos. Then he describes the Theban-Coptite attack on Armant and his successful resistance to the coalition of Thebes and Coptos:



.....



gm.n(.i) W3st Gbtyw mi-kd.sn [it].sn ith Twn(y) m Sg3 Smhsn

.....

hnt.n(.i) rs hnn ith.sn [m t3t] nt Hf3t nh3t

“I found all of Thebes and Coptos seizing the fortifications of Armant in Segasemekhsen.

.....

⁷⁸ Pillar VB: 1–2 = Vandier, *Mo^calla*, 239 [Inscr. n° 12]; Godenho, *Manifestations*, 248.

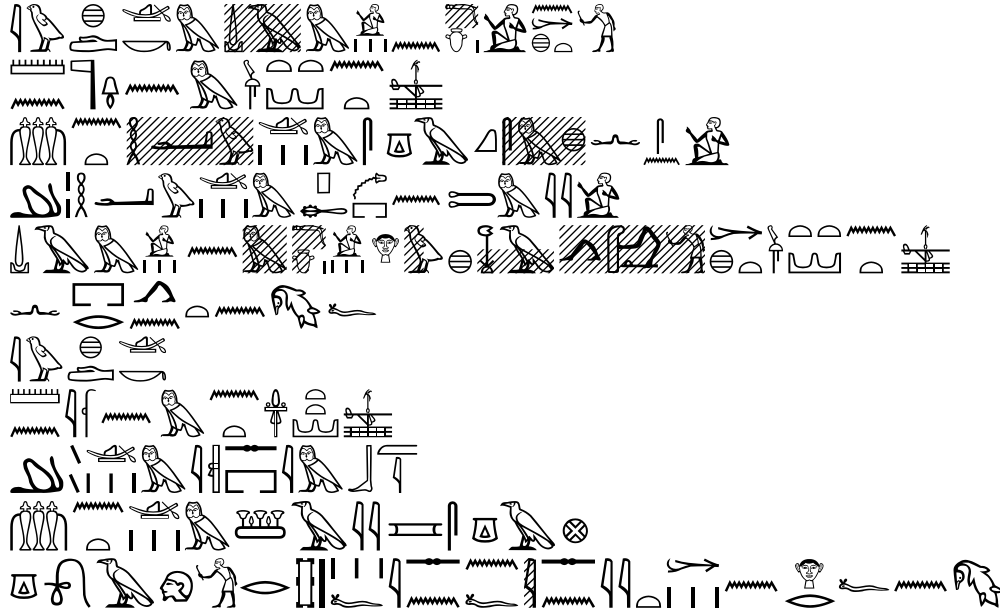
⁷⁹ For Hemen, the local god of Hefat (Moalla), see V. Vikentiev, *La haute crue du Nil et l'averse de l'an 6 du roi Taharqa: Le dieu “Hemen” et son chef-lieu “Hefat”* (Le Caire, Imp. de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1930); Vandier, *Mo^calla*, 7–13.

⁸⁰ On these localities, cf. Vandier, *Mo^calla*, 25–33.

⁸¹ Snape, “Ankhtifi,” 109.

I travelled south when their fortifications had been destroyed by the strong troops of Hefat.”⁸²

Ankhtifi then recounts his attack on Thebes as follows:



iw(.i) ḥd.k(w) m [d]3mw n mh-ib.i nḥt

mni.n(.i) m imntt nt W3st

ḥnt ḥꜥw m Sg3 [Smḥ]sn

pḥwy ḥꜥw m ph n Tmy

d3mw n [mh]-ib.i ḥr [w]ḥ3 [ḥ3] ḥt imntt nt W3st

n pr.n.t(w) n snd.f

iw(.i) ḥd.k(w)

mni.n(.i) m i3btt nt W3st

pḥwy ḥꜥw m is Imbi

ḥnt ḥꜥw m Š3y Sg3

gw3 r inbw.f isn.n.f [i]snyt n ḥr.f n snd

“I travelled north with my trusted strong troops and moored in the west of Thebes; the front of the fleet was in Sega-Semekhsen, and the back of the fleet was in the domain of Tjemy, with my trusted troops looking for a fight throughout the west of Thebes (but) nobody came out because of his fear. I travelled (further) north and moored in the east of Thebes, the back of the fleet was at the tomb of Imbi, and the front of the fleet was at Shay-Sega which was pulled tight to its walls having closed the door bolts of its face because of fear.”⁸³

The strong reference to military conflict in the Autobiography of Ankhtifi is reminiscent of other autobiographies dating to the First Intermediate Period. It shows the trend of the time when conflict among nomarchs was probably rampant. Thus, the theme of military conflict in the private autobiographical self-

⁸² Pillar IIE: 2–IIF: 1 = Vandier, *Moꜥalla*, 198 [Inscr. n° 6]; Godenho, *Manifestations*, 241–42.

⁸³ Pillar IIF: 2–IIG: 3 = Vandier, *Moꜥalla*, 202–3 [Inscr. n° 7]; Godenho, *Manifestations*, 242–43.

presentations of the First Intermediate Period reflects the social and political situation of the country.

For instance, the contemporary rock inscription of the Coptite nomarch Tjauti from Gebel Tjauti in the Theban Western Desert has a general allusion to conflict: [i]r.n(.i) nn n-mrwt d3t h[3st] tn htmt hk3 n kt sp3t [... r] 'h3 hn^c sp3t(.i) hn.i(?) [...] “(I) [have] made this for crossing this *gebel*, which the ruler of another nome had closed, [...] to] fight with (my) nome when I descended(?) [...]”⁸⁴

Tjauti's reference to the closing of the mountain by the ruler of another nome (*hk3 n kt sp3t*) and the fighting apparently with the nome of Coptos may refer to an initial control of the mountain to the west of the nome of Coptos by the Thebans and their expansion to the north. Tjauti's construction of a new desert road– the 'Alamat Tal Road– may have followed Ankhtifi's victory over Thebes. However, the Thebans under Intef I appear to have later captured Tjauti's new desert road. Tjauti's inscription implies that the Herakleopolitan dynasty lost control of the southern Upper Egyptian nomes.⁸⁵

The theme of military conflict is also found in the late First Intermediate Period autobiographies of the nomarchs of Asyut (capital of UE 13, known as the Lycopolite nome) who were loyal to the Herakleopolitans against the Thebans. The autobiography of the Overseer of Priests of Wepwawat Iti-ibi of Asyut tomb III records his repulsion of an attack on Asyut by the “southern nomes” (the Theban kingdom).⁸⁶ The autobiography of his son Khety II of Asyut tomb IV, nomarch of Asyut and Overseer of Priests of Wepwawat under the Herakleopolitan king Merikare of the 10th Dynasty, records his reinstallation at Asyut with the support of King Merikare who sent a fleet to the nome of Asyut.⁸⁷

The theme of “warrior” as identified by Landgráfová⁸⁸ is recurrent in the early Eleventh Dynasty texts of men who participated in the efforts of the reunification of Egypt under the Thebans. On his Cairo stela from his tomb at Dra Abu el-Naga,⁸⁹ the Overseer of Scouts Djari refers to his participation in a battle of the Theban king Wahankh Intef II against the “house of Khety” (the Herakleopolitan kingdom) to the west of Thinis (the capital of UE 8):⁹⁰



⁸⁴ J. C. Darnell and D. Darnell, “New Inscriptions of the Late First Intermediate Period from the Theban Western Desert and the Beginnings of the Northern Expansion of the Eleventh Dynasty,” *JNES* 56, no. 4 (1997): 244, fig. 3.

⁸⁵ See Darnell and Darnell, “New Inscriptions of the Late First Intermediate Period,” 241–58.

⁸⁶ W. Schenkel, *Memphis-Herakleopolis-Theben. Die epigraphischen Zeugnisse der 7.-11. Dynastie Ägyptens* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1965), 79; D. B. Spänel, “The Herakleopolitan Tombs of Khety I, Jt(j)jb(j), and Khety II at Asyut,” *Orientalia* 58, no. 3 (1989): 306.

⁸⁷ Spänel, “The Herakleopolitan Tombs,” 306–7.

⁸⁸ Landgráfová, *My Good Name*, xviii.

⁸⁹ Cairo JE 41437; J. J. Clère and J. Vandier, *Textes de la Première Période Intermédiaire et de la XI^{ème} Dynastie* (Brussels, 1948), 14.

⁹⁰ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies*, 40.

Discussion and Conclusions

This work shows how a detailed analysis of a well-known inscription can provide new insights into the text. The Autobiography of Ankhtifi of Moalla, nomarch of Edfu and Hierakonpolis during the Ninth Dynasty, shows a major innovation. Ankhtifi, while employing existing traditions, introduced innovations by including new themes and phraseology in his autobiography to present himself. The Old Kingdom high officials stressed their relation to the king which was the key theme in their self-presentations.⁹⁹ They boasted in their autobiographies that the king “appointed/promoted me” (e.g. Weni the Elder of Abydos¹⁰⁰ and Ibi of Deir el-Gebrawi¹⁰¹), the king “gave to me,”¹⁰² in contrast to Ankhtifi who presented himself as an independent and powerful man. His independence and power as nomarch is very visible in his self-presentation. No occurrence of a king is found in Ankhtifi’s autobiography although there is one attestation of a king Neferkare in his tomb. Ankhtifi chose not to present himself related to the ruling king. His titles and offices indicate that his duties were more encompassing than those of other contemporary nomarchs and reached further than his own nome.

Ankhtifi employed the traditional theme of efficient provincial administrator that is so typical of the Sixth Dynasty. In addition, he continued the trend which is featured in autobiographies since the late Old Kingdom of stressing the moral personality, the social role of local patron and social leadership. He did this by portraying himself as protector of his nome and by providing assistance to his people. The recurrent claim that he has not “found” something to have been achieved by other predecessors before is attested twice in the Old Kingdom (the Sixth Dynasty autobiographies of Qar from Edfu and Harkhuf from Aswan), which is indicative of transmission.

Ankhtifi also used new phrases to promote his image as a nomarch who supported his people: for example, the use of the phrases “I am a man without equal” and “I am the front of people and the back of people” throughout his autobiography. The core message he wanted to communicate is that he is a peerless man. He presented himself as a man better than others by claiming achievements superior to his predecessors and even to his successors. For instance, he states: “I have surpassed

⁹⁹ Cf. Stauder-Porchet, “Hezi’s Autobiographical Inscription,” 191–204, for Hezi’s autobiography and her note on Weni’s inscription.

¹⁰⁰ *Urk.* I, 99: 3; 100: 7; and 105: 12–13: [*rdi w(i) ḥm.*] *f m z3b r3 Nḥn*, “His [majesty appointed me] as judge and mouth of Nekhen”; *rdi w(i) ḥm.f m smr wʿty imy-r ḥnty(w)-š pr-ʿ3*, “His majesty appointed me as Sole Companion and Overseer of the *ḥnty(w)-š* of the Great House”; *rdi w(i) [nswt bity Mrrrʿ nb(i) ḥḥ ḏt] m ḥ3ty-ʿ imy-r šmʿw*, “[the king of Upper and Lower Egypt Merenre, my lord, may he live forever], appointed me as Governor and Overseer of Upper Egypt.”

¹⁰¹ N. de G. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of Deir el Gebrāwi*, vol. I: *Tomb of Aba and Smaller Tombs of the Southern Group* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1902), pl. 23; *Urk.* I, 142: 9–12: [*di.n w(i) ḥm n*] *nb(i) nswt bity Mrrrʿ ḥḥ [ḏt] m ḥ3ty-ʿ smr-wʿty ḥr(y)-tp ʿ3 Dw.f di.n w(i) ḥm n nb(i) nswt bity [Nfrk3rʿ ḥḥ ḏt m] imy-r [šmʿw]*, “[the majesty of] (my) lord, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt Merenre, may he live [forever], [appointed me] as Governor, Sole Companion, and Great Chief of the Twelfth nome of Upper Egypt. Then the majesty of (my) lord, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt [Neferkare, may he live forever] appointed me [as] Overseer of [Upper Egypt].”

¹⁰² For instance, Ibi of Deir el-Gebrawi (Tomb No. 8) refers to a field of 203 arouras “[which] the majesty of (my) lord gave to (me) to enrich (me).” *Urk.* I, 145: 1–3.

what my ancestors did, and my successors could not equal me in all I have done in a million years.”

Ankhtifi expressed himself in a royal matter by using royal motifs throughout his autobiography: for instance, his appointment by the god Horus to re-establish the second Upper Egyptian nome of Edfu. Interaction with gods is not a common theme in Old Kingdom private self-presentations, but is a key element of royal ideology since the Old Kingdom at least and is a main theme in royal self-presentations.

The First Intermediate Period Autobiography of Ankhtifi focuses on specific events in his life. The text emphasizes Ankhtifi’s leading role in southern Upper Egypt in periods of famine. Ankhtifi reports of measures he took to ensure that all people in his nome have enough food to survive famine. He describes how he helped other southern Upper Egyptian nomes suffering from famine. He also reports of his support to Armant which was under the attack of Thebes and Coptos, the fourth and fifth nomes of Upper Egypt, and his subsequent victory over the Theban Coptite coalition. The themes of famine and military conflicts among nomes became characteristic topics in First Intermediate Period texts.

Overall, Ankhtifi was not different from the founder of the Middle Kingdom, Nephpetre Montuhotep II. He was competing to reunify Egypt, but he was not lucky enough to achieve the reunification.

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تقديم الذات فى السيرة الذاتية لعنخ تيفى بالمعلا بين التقليد والتجديد

دعاء الكاشف

ملخص

تقدم هذه الورقة البحثية دراسة عن الجمع بين التقليد والتجديد فى تقديم الذات فى السيرة الذاتية الخاصة بعنخ تيفى بالمعلا، حاكم الاقليم الثانى والثالث من مصر العليا (إدفو وهيرakonopolis) فى عصر الأسرة التاسعة. ترجع أهمية السيرة الذاتية الخاصة بعنخ تيفى إلى السياق التاريخى والطريقة التى قدم بها ذاته. تركز الدراسة على تحليل الموضوعات والعبارات فى سيرته الذاتية ومقارنتها مع مثيلاتها ذات الصلة. وتثير الدراسة التساؤل إلى أى مدى تتميز هذه السيرة الذاتية بالتجديد وما هو تقليدى فيها. وتثبت الدراسة أن السيرة الذاتية لعنخ تيفى مبتكرة فى معظمها. لقد استخدم عنخ تيفى الموضوعات التقليدية مثل المسؤول الاقليمى الناجح والرعاية والقيادة الاجتماعية التى كانت سائدة فى الأسرة السادسة. كما قدم موضوعات جديدة مثل المجاعة والصراعات العسكرية بين الأقاليم، والتى أصبحت موضوعات مميزة فى نصوص عصر الانتقال الأول. واستخدم عبارات مبتكرة يبرز فيها تفرد مدعى إنجازات لم يسبقه فيها أحد ولن يفعلها أحد مستقبلاً ولاظهار استقلاله وقوته كحاكم اقليم، دون الإشارة إلى أى ملك فى سيرته الذاتية، على عكس موظفى الدولة القديمة الذين أكدوا على علاقتهم بالملك، أو الكفاءة فى المنصب، أو تلقى منح ملكية خاصة.

الكلمات الدالة: تقديم الذات فى السيرة الذاتية لعنخ تيفى؛ السيرة الذاتية المثالية؛ التقليد والتجديد فى السيرة الذاتية لعنخ تيفى؛ موضوعات وعبارات عنخ تيفى