

Then the foreign chiefs¹² of Irtjet, Wawat, Yam, and Medja cut the timber for them. I did it all in one year. Floated, they were loaded with very large granite blocks for the pyramid "Mernere-appears-in-splendor." Indeed I made a "saving" for the palace with all these five canals. As King Mernere who lives forever is august, exalted, and mighty more than any god, so everything came about in accordance with the ordinance commanded by his *ka*.

I was one beloved of his father, praised by his mother, (50/51) gracious to his brothers. The count, true governor of Upper Egypt, honored by Osiris, Weni.

NOTES

1. On this rather obscure title consult Junker, *Giza*, VI, 15-19, Helck, *Beamtentitel*, pp. 107-109, 115 f., and the additional evidence of the *Abusir Papyri*, where *hnty-š* and *hm-ntr* are paired.

2. Three ceremonial functions; the second is literally "making the king's way." On this ceremony see B. Grdseloff, *ASAE*, 51 (1951), 131.

3. The term "Two-Sides-of-the-House" refers to the Delta; Sedjer and Khen-sedjru are unknown.

4. The title *imi-r 'w* has been much discussed and variously rendered: "caravan-leader," (Faulkner, *Dict.*, p. 39); "overseer of dragomans," (Gardiner, *Egypt*, pp. 96, 99); "overseer of mercenaries," (H. Goedicke, *JEA*, 46 (1960), 62, and *idem*, *JEA*, 52 (1966), 173; "chief interpreter" (Fischer, *Inscriptions*, p. 29).

5. Three unknown geographical terms; it is not clear whether Weni is leading "from" or "to" these places. It is also not clear just where these campaigns against the "Asiatic Sand-dwellers" took place. In *Rivista degli studi orientali*, 38 (1963), 187-197, Goedicke has proposed to locate the campaigns in the eastern Delta rather than in Sinai and Palestine.

6. For this passage I have adopted the rendering of Edel, *Altäg. Gr.*, § 992. An alternate interpretation is that of Wilson in *ANET*, p. 228; see also G. Kadish, *JEA*, 52 (1966), 24 ff.

7. The location of "Gazelle's-head" is unknown. Weni's successful strategy consisted in ferrying half his army by boat and landing it in the enemy's rear, while the other half, traveling overland, made a frontal attack.

8. The office of Governor of Upper Egypt had been introduced in the Fifth Dynasty. Apparently Weni means that the office had never been held by a commoner.

9. "Countable" means "taxable." It is not clear what is meant by having counted everything twice; in *JEA*, 31 (1945), 15, Gardiner surmised that Weni "squeezed out of the unfortunate inhabitants of Upper Egypt twice as much in the way of taxes and work as his predecessors." But other and more charitable interpretations are possible, for instance that he was in office long enough to be responsible for tax-collecting on two successive occasions.

10. Each royal pyramid had its own name and could be referred to in personal terms as a divinity.

11. To "do" a distant place is an Egyptian idiom comparable with our "doing" a foreign country.

12. *Hk3w h3swt*, "rulers of foreign countries," the term from which the name *Hyksos*, used by Manetho to denote the Asiatic invaders of Egypt, was derived.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF HARKHUF

Assuan

Sixth Dynasty

This most famous of the autobiographies of Old Kingdom officials is carved in fifty-eight lines on the facade of the tomb. Cut in a soft, flaking stone, the inscription is now in very poor condition. Harkhuf served kings Mernere and Pepi II and, like Weni before him, he became governor of Upper Egypt. In this capacity he led four expeditions to Nubia. His account of these expeditions is the most important source for Egypt's relations with Nubia at this time. To the account of his expeditions Harkhuf added the text of a letter he received from the boy-king Neferkare Pepi II in which the latter vividly and touchingly expresses his eagerness to see the dancing pygmy whom Harkhuf was bringing back with him.

The narration of his career is preceded by the standardized elements of tomb-autobiography—the prayers for offerings and for a good burial, and the catalog of virtues.

Publication: E. Schiaparelli, *Una tomba egiziana inedita* (Memorie della Accademia dei Lincei, ser. 4, Vol. 10/1) (Rome, 1893). Sethe, *Urkunden*, I, 120-131.

Translation: *BAR* I, §§ 325-336, 350-354.

Study and partial translation: E. Edel in *Ägyptologische Studien*, pp. 51-

75.

Comments: J. Yoyotte, *BIFAO*, 52 (1953), 173-178; D. M. Dixon, *JEA*, 44 (1958), 40-55; E. Edel, *ZÄS*, 85 (1960), 18-23.

*Above the Entrance**(eight lines)*

(1) An offering which the king gives and Anubis, he who is upon his mountain, before the god's shrine, in the place of embalming, the lord of the necropolis: May he be buried in the necropolis in the western desert, in great old age as one honored by the great god. ----- The Count, Governor of Upper Egypt, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, Chief of scouts, honored by Ptah-Sokar, Harkhuf.

An offering which the king gives and Osiris, lord of Busiris: May he journey in peace on the holy ways of the West, journeying on them as one honored. May he ascend to the god, lord of heaven, as one honored by [the god, lord of heaven]. The Count, Chamberlain,

Warden of Nekhen, Mayor of Nekheb, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, honored by Osiris, Harkhuf.

An offering which the king gives, to provide for him in the necropolis; and may he be transfigured¹ by the lector-priest on every New Year's day, every Thoth feast, every First-of-the-Year feast, every *wag*-feast, every Sokar-feast, on every great feast, ----- The Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, Chief of scouts, Harkhuf.

I have come here from my city,
 I have descended from my nome;
 I have built a house, set up (its) doors,
 I have dug a pool, planted sycamores.
 The king praised me,
 My father made a will for me.
 I was one worthy ---
 One beloved of his father,
 Praised by his mother,
 Whom all his brothers loved.
 (5) I gave bread to the hungry,
 Clothing to the naked,
 I brought the boatless to land.
 O you who live upon earth,
 Who shall pass by this tomb
 Going north or going south,
 Who shall say: "a thousand loaves and beer jugs
 For the owner of this tomb,"
 I shall watch over them in the necropolis.
 I am an excellent equipped spirit (*akh*),
 A lector-priest who knows his speech.
 As for any man who enters this tomb unclean,
 I shall seize him by the neck like a bird,
 He will be judged for it by the great god!
 I was one who spoke fairly, who repeated what was liked,
 I never spoke evilly against any man to his superior,
 For I wished to stand well with the great god.
 Never did I judge between two [contenders]
 In a manner which deprived a son of his father's legacy.

An offering which the king gives and Anubis, who is upon his mountain and before the god's shrine, as provision for him in the

necropolis, for one honored by Anubis, he upon his mountain and before the god's shrine ----- The Count, Lector-priest ----- Sole Companion, Lector-priest, Chief of scouts, the honored Harkhuf.

Right side of entrance
 (Fourteen lines)

(1) The Count, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, Chamberlain, Warden of Nekhen, Mayor of Nekheb, Royal Seal-bearer, Chief of scouts, Privy-councillor of all affairs of Upper Egypt, favorite of his lord, Harkhuf.

The Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, Chief of scouts, who brings the produce of all foreign lands to his lord, who brings gifts to the Royal Ornament,² Governor of all mountain-lands belonging to the southern region, who casts the dread of Horus into the foreign lands, who does what his lord praises; the Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, Chief of scouts, honored by Sokar, Harkhuf, says:

The majesty of Mernere, my lord, sent me together with my father, the sole companion and lector-priest, Iri, to Yam, to open³ the way to that country. (5) I did it in seven months; I brought from it all kinds of beautiful and rare gifts, and was praised for it very greatly.

His majesty sent me a second time alone. I went up on the Yebu road and came down via Mekher, Terers, and Irtjetj (which are in) Irtjet in the space of eight months. I came down bringing gifts from that country in great quantity, the likes of which had never before been brought back to this land. I came down through the region of the house of the chief of Setju and Irtjet, I explored those foreign lands. I have not found it done by any companion and chief of scouts who went to Yam (10) previously.

Then his majesty sent me a third time to Yam. I went up from the nome of This upon the Oasis road. I found that the ruler of Yam had gone off to Tjemeh-land, to smite the Tjemeh to the western corner of heaven. I went up after him to Tjemeh-land and satisfied him, so that he praised all the gods for the sovereign.

Left side of entrance
 (Ten lines)

(1) [I dispatched the courtier X with a man from Yam]⁴ to the retinue of [Horus], to let the majesty of Mernere, my lord, know [that I had gone to Tjemeh-land] after the ruler of Yam. Now when I had satisfied this ruler of Yam, [I came down through] -----

south of Irtjet and north of Setju. I found the ruler of [the confederacy of] Irtjet, Setju, and Wawat. I came down with three hundred donkeys laden with incense, ebony, *hknw*-oil, *szt*, (5) panther skins, elephant's-tusks, throw sticks, and all sorts of good products. Now when the ruler of Irtjet, Setju, and Wawat saw how strong and numerous the troop from Yam was which came down with me to the residence together with the army that had been sent with me, this ruler escorted me, gave me cattle and goats, and led me on the mountain paths of Irtjet—because of the excellence of the vigilance I had employed beyond that of any companion and chief of scouts who had been sent to Yam before.

Now when this servant fared down to the residence, the sole companion and master of the cool-rooms, Khuni, was sent to meet me with ships laden with date wine, cake, bread, and beer. (10) The Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, God's Seal-bearer, Privy-councillor of ordinances, the honored Harkhuf.

*On the far right
(Twenty-six lines)*

(1) The King's own seal: Year 2, third month of the first season, day 15. The King's decree to the Sole companion, Lector-priest, Chief of scouts, Harkhuf. Notice has been taken of this dispatch of yours which you made for the King at the Palace, to let one know that you have come down in safety from Yam with the army that was with you. You have said in this dispatch of yours that you have brought (5) all kinds of great and beautiful gifts, which Hathor mistress of Imaau has given to the *ka* of King Neferkare, who lives forever. You have said in this dispatch of yours that you have brought a pygmy of the god's dances from the land of the horizon-dwellers,⁵ like the pygmy whom the god's seal-bearer Bawerded brought from Punt in the time of King Isesi. You have said to my majesty that his like has never been brought by anyone who did Yam previously.⁶

Truly you know (10) how to do what your lord loves and praises. Truly you spend day and night planning to do what your lord loves, praises, and commands. His majesty will provide your many worthy honors for the benefit of your son's son for all time, so that all people will say, when they hear what my majesty did for you: "Does anything equal what was done for the sole companion Harkhuf when he came down from Yam, on account of the vigilance he showed in doing what his lord loved, praised, and (15) commanded?"

Come north to the residence at once! Hurry and bring with you this pygmy whom you brought from the land of the horizon-dwellers live, hale, and healthy, for the dances of the god, to gladden the heart, to delight the heart of King Neferkare who lives forever! When he goes down with you into the ship, get worthy men to be around him on deck, lest he fall into the water! When he lies down at night, get worthy (20) men to lie around him in his tent. Inspect ten times at night! My majesty desires to see this pygmy more than the gifts of the mine-land⁷ and of Punt!⁸

When you arrive at the residence and this pygmy is with you live, hale, and healthy, my majesty will do great things for you, more than was done for the god's seal-bearer Bawerded in the time of King Isesi, in accordance with my majesty's wish to see this pygmy. (25) Orders have been brought to the chief of the new towns and the companion, overseer of priests to command that supplies be furnished from what is under the charge of each from every storage depot and every temple that has not been exempted.

NOTES

1. A reference to the ritual by which the deceased was made an *akh*, a term usually rendered "spirit," "transfigured spirit," or "effective spirit."
2. Apparently a reference to the queen, although the title is used more generally for honored ladies.
3. On the implications of Harkhuf's exploratory journeys and on the location of the land of Yam consult especially the studies by Edel cited above.
4. Restored in accordance with Edel in *Ägyptologische Studien*, pp. 54 ff.
5. The term "horizon-dwellers" was a loose and vague designation of foreign peoples to the east and southeast of Egypt. The term was studied by C. Kuentz in *BIFAO*, 17 (1920), 121-190.
6. I.e., a dancing dwarf had once been brought from Punt but none had ever been brought from Yam.
7. The "mine-land" was a name for Sinai.
8. The often discussed location of Punt has been studied anew by R. Herzog, *Punt*, *Abhandlungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo. Ägyptologische Reihe*, 6 (Cairo, 1968). His conclusions require the modifications outlined by K. Kitchen in his review in *Orientalia*, 40 (1971), 184-207: Punt extended from the shore of the Red Sea inland into the eastern Sudan.