Scribe of Justice
Egyptological Studies
in honour of
Shafik Allam

CAHIER N° 42

Cover Illustration:
The Biographical Text of Ka-pu-nesut Kai
in the Western Field at Giza.
(by Ahmed Ehab 'Photographer')
Prof. SHAFIK ALLAM

Scribe of Justice
Egyptological Studies in honour of Shafik Allam
SUPPLÉMENT AUX ANNALES DU SERVICE DES ANTIQUITÉS DE L’ÉGYPTE

Scribe of Justice

Egyptological Studies in honour of Shafik Allam

CAHIER N° 42

Edited by
Zahi A. Hawass,
Khaled A. Daoud
& Ramadan B. Hussein

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Yahia Elmasry
Zbigniew E. Szafranski
I would like to dedicate this article to Shafik Allam who devoted his career to Egyptology. He lived in Germany for most of his life, but always remembered his homeland. I thought it is important that the SCA honor him and, therefore, I am pleased to present both this festschrift and my article to him.

The Mastaba of Ka-pu-nesut Kai was found during the excavation of the SCA in the Western Field at Giza on January 25, 1992 (Fig. 1). The mastaba is rectangular in shape. Lengthwise, there are six courses of limestone blocks remaining. The tomb is divided into two sections. The northern section is the largest. It includes four burial shafts. Facing the northernmost burial shaft is a false door (Fig. 2). The southern section contains the offering chapel decorated with beautiful scenes.

Inscribed on the northern side of the tomb's facade is a very interesting biographical text (Fig. 3).

Transliteration of the biographical text
1 - [...] Kz
2 - [hm]-ntr b'f.r', Kz
3 - hm-ntr iry-ht nswt (?), Kz
4 - (Across the top of the niched panel) ir(w) n f (...) n f, Kz
5 - iry-wd.f(i) n f, Kz
6 - n rmi b v f n f, Kz
7 - hm-ntr h-wf, iry-ht nswt (?), Kz
8 - hm-ntr dd.f r', iry-ht nswt (?), Kz
9 - hm-ntr snfwr, Kz
10 - m ish.i m2 iry.n.(i) hr T nkt psn ink ir(w) nw m rd. wy.(i) m 'wy.(i) d's(i) sk wl 'nh.y, Kz
11 - m ish.i m2 iry.n.(i) hr T nkt psn ink ir(w) nw m rd. wy.(i) m 'wy.(i) d's(i) sk wl 'nh. y, Kz
Translation of the biographical text

1 - [...] Kai
2 - The [priest] of Khafre, Kai
3 - The priest and custodian of the king's property, Kai
4 - who does what is commanded to him, Kai
5 - The Overseer of Ka-priests, Kai, he says: as for any person who shall come to see this which I made in the western desert (i.e. necropolis) in order that I might be buried therein. The king shall love him who shall praise god for me therein. I made this by virtue of my honor with god and with my lord so that I might find...
6 - who does what his lord loves being everything which he commands
7 - The priest of Khufu and custodian of the king's property, Kai
8 - The priest of Djedefre and custodian of the king's property, Kai
9 - The priest of Sneferu, Kai.
10 - There is no man who my utterance drove from his place. There is no man against whom I did a (bad) thing. I made this tomb chamber which I made with my property, truly, which I made for bread, beer, and cakes. I made this (while I was) on my two feet (that is to say alive) with my own two arms, while I was alive, Kai.
11 - The cadet Kai (says): It was the tomb-makers, the stone mason, the craftsman, the outline draftsmen and the sculptor who made this in exchange for what was given to them. They said that they were satisfied with it and they gave (the oath) - 'May the god live' - because they were satisfied.
12 - Kai, Kai
13 - Kai, Kai
14 - Kai, Kai
15 - [K]ai, Kai

Transliteration of the column text

skd w'i šš 'prw nfr ily-ht (?) nswt k:i-pw-nswt rn f nistify m K:i

Translation of the column text

The oarsman of the boat, the scribe of the crews of cadet(s), and custodian of the king's property, Ka-pu-nesut is his name, who is called Kai.
THE BIOGRAPHICAL TEXT OF KA-PU-NESUT KAI

Transliteration of the text across the top
imy-rj sś(w) prw msw-nswt nswt

Translation of the text across the top
Overseeer of the scribes of the house of the king's children, and the king.

Endnotes
1 The story of the excavation began when I planned to publish the tomb of Nisutnefer. The tomb is located to the north of mastaba no. 1828 and to the west of mastabas no. 1830 & 1829 from our excavation. We began to remove the sand around the tomb and found over 60 tombs located under the excavation debris of both George Reisner and Hermann Junker. The first tomb that we found was the tomb of the dwarf pr-ny-"nhw; see Z. Hawass, 'The statue of the Dwarf pr-n(l)-"nhl(w) recently discovered at Giza', in Festschrift für Werner Kaiser, MDAIK 47 (1991), 57-82. I would like to thank the members of my Egyptian team: Mahmoud Afifi, who assisted me during this excavation, Jihan Abdou el-Rahiem, Eman Rashid, and Amani Omar, our drafts-ladies.

2 Many words in this text were difficult to understand. In 1993, after temporarily leaving my job at Giza, I spent six months at UCLA. During this time I discussed with colleagues the translation of two Old Kingdom texts. The first was from the tomb of Mehu and the second was this unique text from the tomb of Kau. By mail and by phone, I was in contact with the great man, Henry Fischer, and with my friend, Ed. Brovarski. They helped me a lot on the translation and the comments of this text. I offer them all my sincere thanks.

3 There is much debate as to whether this title should be read ‘irw, custodian of the king's property, or ‘rs nswt, king's acquaintance; see C. M. Firth and B. Gunn, Teti Pyramid Cemetery, I (Cairo, 1926), 157, no. 5. On this title, see W. Helck, 'Untersuchungen zu den Beamtentiteln des ägyptischen Alten Reiches', in ÄgFo 18 (1954), 26-28; H. Brunner, 'Der Bekannte des Königs', SAK 1 (1974), 55ff; O. D. Berlev, 'A Contemporary of King Sewah-en-re', JEA 60 (1974), 109; G. T. Martin, 'Private-Name Seals in the Ashmolean Museum Collection', MDAIK 35 (1979), 217, no. 20; M. Bärta, 'The Title 'Property Custodian of the King during the Old Kingdom', ZÄS 126 (1999), 79-89; H. G. Fischer, Egyptian Women of the Old Kingdom and of the Heracleopolitan Period (New York, 2000), 71, no. 176; E. Brovarski, 'Akhnem in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period', in Melanges Gamal Eddine Mokhtar, Bd2 (1997), 148, no. 129, where the suggestion is made that the reinterpretation of the title might somehow be connected with its all but complete disappearance as a title for provincial officials after Dynasty 5. Also see Fischer, Dendera in the Third Millennium B.C. down to the Theban Domination of Upper Egypt (New York, 1988), 11; 69-70.

4 The word `rs does double duty and is read twice in two different directions.

5 For nfr, 'recruit, cadet, conscript, young (soldier)', see the references gathered in D. Jones, An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom (Oxford, 2000), 1807.

6 For the ir-is, 'tomb maker', see Fischer, 'An Old Kingdom Monogram', ZÄS 93 (1966), 56-69.

7 The nswt is actually written at the top of line 14, where it intrudes between the name K.:l at the top of the column and the title nfr.

8 For nfr, see A. Erman and H. Grapow, Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache II (Leipzig and Berlin, 1926-1963), 204; Edel, Althägyptische Grammatik, § 681.
Fig. 1. The Mastaba of Ka-pu-nesut Kai in the Western Field at Giza.
Fig. 2. False door facing the northernmost burial shaft.
Fig. 3. Biographical text inscribed on the northern side of the tomb’s facade.