

## **A New Light on the Ancient Egyptian story “Eloquent Peasant Papyrus”**

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### **Abstract**

The Eloquent Peasant is an Ancient Egyptian story that was composed around 1850 BCE during the time of the Middle Kingdom in Egypt. It is one of the longest Egyptian tales that has survived completely. The tale is about a peasant, Khun-Anup, who stumbles upon the property of the high steward, the noble Rensi son of Meru, guarded by its harsh overseer, Nemtynakht. It is set in the Ninth or Tenth Dynasty around Herakleopolis. This tale is described as an elaborate reflection on the connection—or disconnection—of ethical order and refined speech, as transliterated into refined writing.

The research examines A New Light on the Eloquent Peasant Papyrus, to correct some of the previously published story.

It deals with a text from the eyes of the ancient Egyptian literature "the eloquent villager", where it discusses the naming of the unjust employee of the endowment, whose readings varied between "NakhtiNakht" and "NematiNakht" according to the hieratic text, but these designations are inconsistent with the reading in the papyrus which - By re-reading it - it becomes clear that the name "AnatiNakht" is in accordance with the characteristics of this idol and its place of worship, which is the same residence of the eloquent villager.

**Key words:** The Eloquent Peasant, Ancient Egyptian story, Middle Kingdom in Egypt, Khun-Anup, Rensi, Meru, Nemtynakht, Herakleopolis.

### **Introduction**

The story<sup>1</sup> begins with a poor peasant, Khun-Anup, traveling to market with his donkeys heavily laden with goods to exchange for supplies for his family. While Khun-Anup was en route, Nemtynakht, a vassal of the high steward Rensi, notices the peasant approaching his lands and devises a scheme to steal Khun-Anup's donkeys and supplies. Nemtynakht tricks the peasant by placing a cloth on the narrow public path, where one side was bordered by the river and the other side were the private fields of Nemtynakht. His placing of the cloth on the path forces the peasant to either trample the cloth, step into the water, or take his donkeys over Nemtynakht's fields in order to continue his journey. As Khun-Anup is appealing to Nemtynakht's sense of reason in blocking his path with the cloth, one of Khun-Anup's donkeys eats a bite of barley, and Nemtynakht uses this as a justification to take Khun-Anup's donkeys and goods. When Khun-Anup complains this punishment is unfair, Nemtynakht beats him. Khun-Anup cries out for justice, and Nemtynakht threatens the peasant with death if he dares to complain. Khun-Anup does not accept this injustice and continues to appeal to Nemtynakht for ten days.

Failing to receive justice from Nemtynakht, Khun-Anup seeks out the high steward, the

<sup>1</sup>About the story, See: Gardiner, Alan (April 1923). "The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology". The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology. 9 (1/2): 7-8. Gardiner, Alan. 1961, Egypt of the Pharaohs. An introduction, Oxford University Press, p. 112. Parkinson, Richard (1991). The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant. Griffith Institute. Parkinson, R B (1999), The Tale of Sinuhe and other ancient Egyptian poems, 1940–1640 BC, New York,

noble Rensi son of Meru, and presents his case. Rensi brings the peasant's case to the magistrates, who dismiss the case as merely being a matter of a peasant at odds with a landowner, but Rensi does not relay this information to the peasant. Rensi brings the story of the wronged peasant before the pharaoh, Nebkaure (who is believed to be NebkaureKhetu, telling him how elegantly the peasant speaks. Intrigued by the report of a peasant who speaks so elegantly, the pharaoh instructs Rensi to not respond to the peasant's pleas, so that the peasant would continue to make his elegant speeches and they could be written down for the pharaoh. The pharaoh orders Rensi to feed the peasant and his family while the peasant continues to plead his case, further instructing Rensi not to let the peasant know he was providing the food.

For nine days Khun-Anup complimented the high steward Rensi and begged for justice. After nine days of speeches, Khun-Anup threatened suicide. After sensing that he was being ignored, Khun-Anup insulted Rensi and was punished with a beating. After one last speech, the discouraged peasant left, but Rensi sent for him and ordered him to return. But rather than being punished for his insolence, the peasant was given justice. Rensi, after reading Khun-Anup's last speech, was impressed and ordered the donkeys and the goods to be returned to Khun-Anup and the peasant to be compensated with all the property of Nemtynakht, making Nemtynakht as poor as Khun-Anup had been.

#### **A New Light on the ElequentPeasant Papyrus**

The name which had been mentioned in the ElequentPeasant Pap. was read by J. Lefebvre<sup>2</sup> as +*Hwtj-Nakht* who was on the head of (Mayor) Pr-ff estate, in twelve positions and so in the end of the Papyrus<sup>3</sup>.

While others read the same writing as *Nemty-Nakht*, god of travelling, who was in the same time – the guide of bark of Rea in the Book of the Dead<sup>4</sup>.

When we get light on the name, One can find that the determinative in +*Hwtj-Nakhte*quel – in Hieroglyphy as Falcon on a standard which Möller had mentioned in the fifth dynasty's Papyrus<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>2</sup>Lefebvre, J. 1949, *Romans et Contes Egyptiens, de l'époque pharaonique*, Paris pp. 41-49.

El-Sayed, Ramadan 2006, *New Insights into the History of Ancient Egypt*, 2, Cairo, pp. 314-346. Oxford Encyclopedia I, pp. 469-470. Pritchard, J., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, pp. 407-410.

<sup>3</sup> The numbers are listed in the lines 5, 7, 10, 13, 18, 21, 27, 35, 43, 49, 60, 64. G. Möller, *Hieratische Lesestücke*, Leipzig, 1927, pp. 12-16. L.D. VI, B1. 108-109. In the Berlin papyrus copy No. 3023, it is revised: Ranke, PNI, 408, 7. and on the name of JuhtiNakht: Meeks, Alex I (No. 77-5270). As for the name of the idol Jahawi overlapping with other names: Ranke, PNI, 334, -6.

<sup>4</sup>Parkinson, R., *The Tale of the ElequentPeasant*, Oxford 1991. LÄ, I, 638-51. Ranke, PNI, 204, 13-14. And on the receipt of the name of my name with other characteristics: G. Möller, *Hieratische, Paleographie*, p. 17 (n. 188B).

<sup>5</sup> G. Möller, *Hieratische, Paleographie*, p. 17 (n. 188B).

Hierogl.	Levres 2228	Levres	North	P. Rohlfs	Reines	Preines	Reines 17.	Reines 17. 18.	P. Rohlfs	Reines
188										

Hierogl.	Abjad	Epigraphie	Reines	Preines	Reines	Reines	Reines 18	Reines	Reines	Reines
188										

We can find the determinative in *Nemty-Nakht*<sup>6</sup> reading as Ibis on a standard.

Hierogl.	Abjad	Epigraphie	Reines	Preines	Reines	Reines	Reines 18	Reines	Reines	Reines
207										

Which had been mentioned in eleven dynasty papyrus<sup>7</sup>. But One can find that the Hieratic Origin for this reading not equal with the Hieroglyph in what had been mentioned. The falcon on standard so the Ibis found only as this shape in Kahun Papyrus even so, not equal with Hieratic Origin.

By studying the Dities represented the Falcon on a standard as Determinative one can find that anty which represented as a falcon in a bark<sup>8</sup> as found on the pyramid texts, in the Old Kingdom this diety was represented as a falcon in a bark on a standard which mean "The Mails" as saw on Edfou<sup>9</sup>, this means that the Hieratic Origin represented Horus on a standard in a boat, and so, it can be read as anty<sup>10</sup>.

This Diety can be seen as falcon in 17 positions, first on a statue from the Archaic Period, as a falcon on a boat on Narmer Palette and on Scorpion Mace<sup>11</sup>.

This diety has many Titles as: the Falcon on his bark, the great Falcon, the Cross one, the avenger of his Father, the Great diety, Lord of heaven and king of Dities.

<sup>6</sup>Nmi: Meeks, Alex I (No. 77-2105).

<sup>7</sup>G. Möller, o.c., p. 20 (nos. 207, 207B).

<sup>8</sup>G. Gardiner, Eg. Gr., p. 468 (D51, G.9). Compare the word about me: Wb I, 206, 5.

Ahmad Badawi and Hermann Kees, the Small Lexicon of the Egyptian Language Vocabulary, p. 37. Badawi, Ahmad & Kees, Hermann. The Small Lexicon of the Egyptian Language Vocabulary, p. 37.

<sup>9</sup>Abdel-Moneim, Sherif Mohamed, 2009, the idol Nemti and his role in the Egyptian religion until the end of the Greco-Roman era, Master Thesis, Faculty of Archeology - Cairo University, p. 250. And on the various written forms of the idol name Nemati as well as its body; see: Abd al-Muttalib, Hisham Hamt, 2020, Sailors in Ancient Egypt, Cairo, pp. 181-183.

<sup>10</sup>Ranke, PN I, 70, 1; PN II, 272, 8. Regarding the overlap of the name Antae with other characteristics: Ranke, PN I, 69, 16-20, 70, 2, 3. Id, PN II, 272, 9-12.

<sup>11</sup>Gardiner and Kurt Sete K-sethe are supported by my reading. Abdel-Moneim, Sherif Mohamed, the idol Nemti, p. 256. See also: Imre, Ancient Egypt in Egypt, translated by Rashid Muhammad Noir and Muhammad Ali Kamal al-Din, pp. 33-35, and forms No. 3, 4b.



As has been said, the different reading of the Papyrus – as General – the name called +Hwty-Nakht<sup>12</sup> as the Hieratic papyrus was written, or *Nemty-Nakht*<sup>13</sup>.

Anty was worshiped in 18 Upper Egyptian Nome<sup>14</sup>, which may be related with the Papyrus story where the Peasant stay (live) called the **salt field** near Ahnasya, the nome<sup>15</sup> capital represented as a falcon stretched on a standard<sup>16</sup>.

From middle Egyptian Coffins, the name can be noticed *Dwn-aAwy*, the stretched falcon, protector of 18<sup>th</sup> nome, identified with the God Sepa<sup>17</sup>.

The site *Dwn-aAwy* – recently gabal el Tier, north Tehna – south of 18<sup>th</sup> nome, may be “Alkom al Ahmar” in Minya Government<sup>18 (17)</sup>.

One can say that “Anty” was worshipped in Pr-anty in Assiut, his main cult center was called – another text<sup>19</sup> – Lord of “+w-ft” nome<sup>20</sup>.

He was related with the Goddess Matet, and has an important role in conflict between Horus and Set as the myth referred<sup>21</sup>.

One can notice that Dancers depicted with “Anty” in wAH-kA tomb from Qaw in Assiut, the 12<sup>th</sup> Upper Egyptian Nome<sup>22</sup>.

On spell no. 1098 from the Pyramid texts, *Dwn-aAwy* called as Lord of this nome, and has shared in Purification Ceremony of the king, As spell 1023 too the dead separated himself

<sup>12</sup>Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, Bruxelles 1932; ID, in: JEA 9, pp. 5ff. M. Lichthien, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, London 1962. Ramadan El-Sayed, *The Ancient Civilization of Egypt*, Part Two, pp. 558-569. Broasted, 1999, Dawn Al-Dameer, translated by Salim Hassan, Cairo.

<sup>13</sup>Simpson, *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, London 1972.

Saleh, Abdulaziz, 1980, *Ancient Near East Egypt and Iraq*, 1, Cairo. Fakhry, Ahmed (1960), *Pharaonic Egypt*, Cairo.

<sup>14</sup>The name is written dwn-anw, that is, a winged falcon, and in the later texts *dwnaAwy*: that is, who spreads his arms, in several forms, including a falcon in a boat on a stand (from the Temple of Sneferu and from the white cabin), then a falcon with a winged wing (from Abydos), then Falcon single-winged without a stand (from Edfu): Montet, P., 1957, *Geographie de l’Egypte Ancienne*, Paris Vol. I, pp. 172-173. And on the places of worship of the idol Nmati review: Abd al-Muttalib, Hisham Hamt, *Sailors in Ancient Egypt*, p. 181.

<sup>15</sup>Gardiner, *Onomastica II*, 68-70. The Anti district extends on the left bank of the Nile - from the seventeenth region in the south near Qais to the twenty region in the north, possibly at the city of “BPA”. LÄ II, 1124-27.

<sup>16</sup>Vandier, in: MDAIK 14 (1956), p. 208. Sepa and mix together according to the Jumihlac papyrus.

<sup>17</sup>The characteristics of this falcon were similar to the idol. W. Ramadan, 1989 *Lee Dieu Se pa*, PhD thesis, Faculty of Arts, Minia University, pp. 321-22.

<sup>18</sup>Vandier, *Le Pap. Jumihlac*, Paris 1956, p. 147 (n. 49). The wingless falcon was the idol “Shaw” when his spirit ascended to heaven in the presence of his son “Jeb” see: Id, in: MDAIK 15 (1957) (= *Melanges Junker*), pp. 168f.

<sup>19</sup>Montet, P., *Geographie de l’Egypte Ancienne*, p. 179. Gardiner, *Onomastica II*, 68. Gauthier, H., DG I, 41.

<sup>20</sup>Montet, P., *Geographie de l’Egypte Ancienne*, p. 129-130.

<sup>21</sup>Vandier, *Le Pap. Jumihlac*, pp. 26ff., 63ff. Anty: The reading confirms the boat on which the falcon stands in the dw-ft area of Joft where the goddess follows the deceased and this goddess of heaven is tied by my grace in Assiut. Nims, *Author geographical list from Medinet Habu*, JEA 38 (1952), p. 43 (nr. E 118) = KRI IV, 738, 11. Bar Antay is currently located in the village of Atawla, 6 km from Assiut on the eastern bank of the Nile.

See: Abd al-Muttalib, Hisham Hamt, *Sailors in Ancient Egypt*, p. 181.

<sup>22</sup>According to what was mentioned in the Egyptian literature in the story of the Better Home and in the papyrus of Jamiak, this idol has been punished for the penalty it received from bribery and from the cutting of the head of Hathor with the punishment of skinning of the foot, where it became bones of naked toes similar to the claw, which confirms the reading of the name for me: Refer :

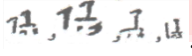
Abdel-Moneim, Sherif Mohamed, the idol Nemti, p. 251. And also: Meeks, Alex I, (no. 77-0650).

from anty, his brother<sup>23</sup>.

He had worshiped too, in “Tbw” capital of tenth Upper Egypt nome from Archic Period according to Abydos amulets<sup>24</sup>.

Recently, A temple ruins was discovered in Nagc-wise (3km north east Assiout) for w-anty the only in the tenth Nome<sup>25</sup>.

This deity associated with “antywy” on which he has a temple, his feastday celebrated on 8<sup>th</sup> day<sup>26</sup>, first month from inundation according to Cairo Calender Pap. He had mentioned in personal names such as king mernra I, II according to Abydos list<sup>27</sup>. And in 17 personal names – only – from Old Kingdom but in Middle Kingdom, on Abydos stelas<sup>28</sup>, from Qaw to a person called Ra Atumanty due to the Petolmic Period<sup>29</sup>.

As for Nemty, it has been red according to spell 473E coffin texts, and on stelas from Middle Kingdom<sup>30</sup>, later than our Pap. in Hieratic .

It may be noticed that Nemty and *Dwn-awy* with the same writing as falcon (or two falcons) in a bark upon standard<sup>31</sup>, it had been noticed in Abydos from the New Kingdom era<sup>32</sup>.

The name Nemty may be the Known because of its mention on Monuments more than anty<sup>33</sup>, they with the samewriting in Greco-Romain Period, Later than our era.

<sup>23</sup>Leitz, Lexikon der Agyptischengötter und götterbez-eichnung, Band I, Leuven, Pairs, Budly 2002, S. 131, Col. I. See also: Montet, Geographie de l’Egypteancienne, Vol. II, p. 182.

<sup>24</sup>It was also worshiped in the Tenth, Twelfth, and Eighteenth Territories in the South from the Middle Kingdom to the End of the Greco-Roman Period: Abdel-Moneim, Sherif Mohamed, the idol Nemti, pp. 253.

<sup>25</sup>In the excavations of the British School in 1927 AD, the remains of two temples on top of the other were dedicated to the worship of this idol, and the earliest of them are dated to the era of the Old Kingdom. Abdel-Moneim, Sherif Mohamed, the idol Nemti, pp. 256 and later. On his relationship with other deities and rituals in which the deity participates and his relationship with the deceased as well as his own priesthood: see: Abdel-Moneim, Sherif Mohamed, the idol Nemti, pp. 256-264. For more texts of the coffins in which the idol was mentioned, see: Abd al-Muttalib, HishamHamt, Sailors in Ancient Egypt, pp. 185-186.

<sup>26</sup>Gardiner, Onomastica II, 97, 124. Montet, P., Geographie de l’EgyptAncienne, pp. 172-174. Daressy, in: ASAE 4 (1905), pp. 120-121. It is worth noting that the name Anty is also called the eighteenth region and the capital of “Baraanti” which was mentioned in the Wilbur Papyrus. Montet, P., Geographie de l’EgyptAncienne, pp. 172-174.

<sup>27</sup>Hayes, The Scepter of Egypt I, London 1953, p. 134. Gardiner, Egypt of the Pharaohs, Oxford 1961, pp. 109, 437. LÄ I, 318-319. Ranke, PNI, 69, 23.

And on the name of Mornaa, he reviews: El-Sayed, Ramadan, History of Ancient Egypt, Part One, 2, p. 576. Gauthier, Livre des Rois I, 176-178 (n. 5).

<sup>28</sup>LÄ I, 318; LÄ VI, 457-59. Anti’s name was shown to a man on a plate in the Egyptian Museum with the number CGC 20247A as well as as a naming of a woman on a painting in the Egyptian Museum with the number CGC 20636. pp. 1-12.

<sup>29</sup>Barguet, ParalleleEgyptien a la Legended’Antee, RHR 165 (1964), (28)

<sup>30</sup>In the Great Gao region that the Greeks called Antipolis, the idol name “Antioi” was found on many monuments, where the “master of Thebo” was called the ancient name of the region. p. 78 (margin 3), p. 79. And the writing of the double hawks came from the middle state, perhaps in reference to the merging of both Horus and Set: Abdel-Moneim, Sherif Mohamed, the idol Nemti, pp. 249 and later.

<sup>31</sup>Leitz, Lexikon der Agyptischengötter, Band IV, S. 242. F. Gomaa, in: GM 173 (1999), pp. 86-87. Leitz, o.c., S. 244, col. II, III.

<sup>32</sup>Berlev, The Date of parakhor, GM 160 (1997), pp. 7-9.

<sup>33</sup>Leitz, o.c., Band IV, S. 244, col. I.

Fainally, so – we can – as had been sited<sup>34</sup> – called the official name as *anty-Nakht*.

### **Conclusion**

The unconfirmed readings of Al-Falah Al-Faleh’s cold pigeon cause multiple labels in the name of the unjust employee in papyrus.

But by re-reading the text, it becomes clear that the name mentioned in the research “AnatiNakht” is the closest to health.

Fainally, so – we can – as had been sited – called the official name as *anty-Nakht*.



<sup>34</sup>The events of this story took place in the tenth dynasty and its writing dates back to the thirteenth dynasty or a little earlier: Al-Sayed, Ramadan, the History of Ancient Egypt (The Era of the Families), Part One, Section Two, p. 628. Zayed, Abdel Hamid Eternal Egypt, pp. 308 ff. Daumas, F., La civilization de l’Egypte pharaonique, p. 396. The king, who was in his reign, mentioned the events of the story, and he is King Nab Kaura: Ramadan El-Sayed, New Insights into the History of Ancient Egypt, part 2, p. 306. Saleh, Abdulaziz The Civilization and Archeology of Egypt, Cairo, pp. 414 and beyond.