Royal self-presentation in the self-presentation of payeftjauemawyneith on naophorous statue Louvre A93

Abstract

The building activities at Abydos by the Late Saite high official Payeftjauemawyneith narrated in his self-presentation on naophorous statue Louvre A 93,1 is similar to those of the kings in their texts. In her monograph on Middle Kingdom self-presentations, M. Lichtheim2 excludes royal texts because, in her opinion, they are not “autobiographical”. However, S. Quirke3–5 does not agree that such texts fall outside autobiography, pointing out that the “Königsnovelle” affords “an analogy with the human autobiography”. He does believe that “the royal ideal” in royal texts differs from “the ideal of officials”4; the royal “I” stresses “the ideal of kingship”, while the “I” of officials stresses “the ideal of human behavior in their society”. Royal texts can also be classified “self-presentation” in a sense. However, one should keep in mind the differences between the king as a special kind of human being, similar to a god acting on earth, and the officials who were representatives of the king in the administration, attempting to imitate him. Moreover, the textual formation, themes and concerns, iconography, placement of each self-presentation were different. Therefore, the relations and differences between “royal self-presentation”4 and “non-royal self-presentation” need further exploration.

Keywords: self presentation, payeftjauemawyneith, royal self presentation, naophorous statue, Louvre A 93

Introduction

The building activities at Abydos by the Late Saite high official Payeftjauemawyneith narrated in his self-presentation on naophorous statue Louvre A 93,1 is similar to those of the kings in their texts. In her monograph on Middle Kingdom self-presentations, M. Lichtheim2 excludes royal texts because, in her opinion, they are not “autobiographical”. However, S. Quirke3–5 does not agree that such texts fall outside autobiography, pointing out that the “Königsnovelle” affords “an analogy with the human autobiography”. He does believe that “the royal ideal” in royal texts differs from “the ideal of officials”4; the royal “I” stresses “the ideal of kingship”, while the “I” of officials stresses “the ideal of human behavior in their society”. Royal texts can also be classified “self-presentation” in a sense. However, one should keep in mind the differences between the king as a special kind of human being, similar to a god acting on earth, and the officials who were representatives of the king in the administration, attempting to imitate him. Moreover, the textual formation, themes and concerns, iconography, placement of each self-presentation were different. Therefore, the relations and differences between “royal self-presentation”4 and “non-royal self-presentation” need further exploration. Actually, the royal “I” versus the non-royal “I”4 was different in some inscriptions of the first millennium BC such as that of Payeftjauemawyneith on Louvre A 93, in which he states:

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{hwswj} \, n(=j) \, \text{hwt-nr} \, nt \, \text{Hnj-Mntt} \, m \, \text{kit} \, \text{mnh} \, nt \, \text{nby} \, m \, \text{w} \, \text{n} \, \text{hr} \, \text{hm}=f \, \text{m} \, \text{z}=f \, \text{rwd}(=j) \, \text{m} \, \text{jh} \, \text{Tj}-\text{wr} \.
\end{align*} \]

I built the temple of Khentymentt, as an excellent construction of eternity, at his majesty’s command, that he might see that I was busy (\(Wb.\), II, 412.6) in the affairs of Tawer.6–7 It is notable to see an official expressing himself in such a way. Although he further states that was done “at his majesty’s command”, he does not name the king, and the king’s presence is not that strong. This text reflects a sense of high self-esteem and a rise of individuality in the period. Payeftjauemawyneith’s self-presentation may draw on royal texts dealing with the same activity.

The use of the first person of the suffix pronoun is notable especially in Payeftjauemawyneith’s building activities. The Saite text of Paderpesu (?) on Berlin stela 8438, from Psamtik I’s reign, refers also to a building activity, see Chassinat, 1916-1917, 180-82. Paderpesu seems to refer to building a small potter’s studio in the temple of Hor-Merty, not a full temple. The text reads \( \text{jw k}d \, n(=j) \, \text{pr} \, n \, \text{jkd-n}d\text{s} \, \text{Hr-Mrtj-m-r-Mht} \, \text{Pr-drp-sw} \text{(=j)?} \) “(I) constructed a potter’s house for Hor-Merty-em-er-mehet, Paderpesu (?)”. The key term is \( \text{jqd-nDs} \), “potter” (lit. “small builder”). Although this was certainly something to take pride in, Paderpesu was hardly appropriating royal authority for the modest construction. A. Leahy (Personal Communication) does not think “there is anything specific here” with this non-royal Payeftjauemawyneith’s task of carrying on building activities. He, further, states that the first person of the suffix pronoun was common in nonroyal self-presentations since the Old Kingdom. Although the use of the first person of the suffix pronoun in the self-presentations since the Old Kingdom was common, it was only used to express the protagonist’s life and career concerning his own actions, not to express royal actions and prerogatives. Leahy is correct in pointing out that Egyptians, since the Old Kingdom, took credit for building major things, including temples: for example, Herakl, Ankhtify, Senenmut, Bakenchons. In all those cases, just as in the present text, they point out that they only accomplished these deeds “at his majesty’s command”. Even when Old Kingdom official describe building their mastabas and sarcophagi, they point out that the king allowed them to do so. For more on non-royal initiatives in Late Period temple building, see Spencer 2010, 441-490.

1 To the soul of H. De Meulenaere, one of our great pillars of Late Period Egyptian studies all over the world.

2 On the term Königsnovelle, see Hofmann 2004; Spalinger 2011. For more on ideology and propaganda, Leprohon 2015.

3 Blumenthal 1984, 88, refers to royal self-presentation in her study of the Teaching of King Amenemhat.

4 For more on signs of the “I” (the narrator) in narrating, see Prince 1982, 7-16.

5 Gardiner 1973, § 452.

6 “mn” is subjunctive of m3t, sf. Gardner 1973, § 452.

7 The use of the first person of the suffix pronoun is notable especially in Payeftjauemawyneith’s building activities.
from the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty, put great emphasis on the king’s role in creating monuments for the gods. The first building inscription of Taharqa’s reign in the Mut Temple at Gebel Barkal (ancient Napata) states:8,9,11

\[ \text{jrt}(j)n=f \text{ mnw}\#f=9,10 \text{ mnw}\#f=11,12 \text{ Mw}\text{t}\text{ Nh}(t)\text{ kdt}f=21,17,18 \text{ n}=f \text{ hw}\text{t-nr} \text{ n-m(t)} f \text{ mjr} “\text{nhd} f nrg\text{ (nr)} f \text{ rd} \text{jrt}(j) f \text{ gm} n hmn \text{ hw} \text{t-nr} \text{ tn} \text{ kd} m \text{jnr}\#f “(\text{gpt}\text{p-f} f \text{ m} knt nrdx(t)) \text{ wjnh hmn} “(f) \text{ rdt)(f) kdt \text{ tw-nr} \text{ tn} \text{ m} knt mhnt(f) n d’t}

It is his monuments that he made for his mother, Mut of Napata. He built for her a temple anew in beautiful, white, good sandstone.13 When he was his majesty this found temple built in stone by (the ancest) ors being as a modest construction, then his majesty caused that this temple from the second building inscription is another passage by the same king stating:14 \[ \text{jrt}(j)n=f \text{ mnw}\#f=9 \text{ mnw} f =f \text{ Mw}\text{t}\text{ Nh}(t) f \text{ pt Hwnw} \text{A} \text{A}\text{m-tj} \text{ qa}=f \text{ pr}(s) f \text{ sa}=f=9 \text{ Hwt-nTr=ts} \text{ m-mAwt} f \text{ m jnr HD} \text{ f nr}\text{ (nr)} f \text{ rd} \text{d}. \text{ It is his monuments that he made for his mother, Mut, mistress of heaven, and lady of Tasity. He built her temple, (and) he enlarged her temple anew in white (and) good sandstone.15 The main text of Taharqa’s year 6 stela (Kawa IV) states that when he passed by this temple, while he was not yet a king (line 10):16 \[ \text{gm} n=f \text{ Hwt-nTr} \text{ tn} \text{ qd.tw} f \text{ m DbA(w)t} \text{ ... He found this temple built with bricks ...}

In lines 13-14, Taharqa, now king, speaks to his friends:

\[ \text{mb} \text{ jh}=f \text{ } \text{r} \text{ kdt} \text{ hw}\text{t-nr} \text{ n jrt}=f \text{ Jm} \text{m-R'=t} \text{ gp-p}\text{Jm} \text{ hnt} \text{ tw-nr}=f \text{ s kdt}\text{ tw} f \text{ m } \text{db} \text{ b}(w) f t^{*} \text{ t w}=f \text{ m } \text{ jrt}t^{*}

Look, my wish is to build a temple for my father, Amun-Re of Gempaaten (Kawa), because it is built with bricks and is covered over with earth. This text also describes some of the items within this temple as follows (lines 24-25): \text{wd mnw}\#f=9 \text{ sA} \text{A} f \text{ m} \text{TA Sd Sw}=f: Its


2Taharqa’s Memphite foundation stela (Cairo Museum JE 36861) has a similar phraseology, which this king employed in the texts of his building activities; see Meeks 1979, pl. XXXVIII. The main verb usually for “to build” in Taharqa’s inscriptions is qa, which evokes the creative activities of Pht of Memphis, and who, in his Memphite theology, had a great impact on the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty kings. However, he used verb xwj in lines 2-3 of his year 10 stela from Kawa (Kawa VII): xwj tw m jnr m mnw n Db “being built of stone as a monument of eternity”, (referring to the temple of Amun of Gempaaten). The transcription does not have t as the end, but has the female determinative, “in beautiful, white, good stone of sandstone.”

3Although the Eide et al. 1994, 148, (3), translates “their altars”, it does not transliterate the suffix pronoun =sn which is here used as a possessive adjective; however =sn is written without the three plural strokes perhaps due to the limited space on the stela; see Macadam 1949, pl. 7-8.

4His year 6 stela (Kawa IV) states that when he passed by this temple, while he was not yet a king (line 10):16 \[ \text{gm} n=f \text{ Hwt-nTr} \text{ tn} \text{ qd.tw} f \text{ m DbA(w)t} \text{ ... He found this temple built with bricks ...}

5He filled (it)20 with many servants, and he assigned female servants to it from the wives of the chiefs of the Delta. Wine is pressed from the vineyards of this city; they are more numerous than (those of) the Bahariya-Oasis. He assigned gardeners to them from the good gardeners of the best of the nomads of Asia. Thus, the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty kings took credit for building temples, using the verbal

6He appointed gardeners to it from the best of the Bahariya-Oasis and the likeness was made from the people of the Delta.

From 17 through 18, the term王先生 refers to the collective meaning of “male and female servants,” and the second Hwnt(f) is connected to the wives of the chiefs of the Delta, and if we put in mind the hostile relationship between the rulers of the Delta and the Kushites since the invasion of Piye, this Hwnt(f) should be understood as female servants, not male servants, because the latter are already included in the word mrt(f) and need no repeating here.

7There is wordplay between Hmt “female servant” and Rmt “wife”.

8I.e., the city.
sDm=f form qa=f. These passages show how the involvement with such projects was a royal prerogative. Although Taharqa’s inscriptions use the singular third person of the suffix pronoun, not the first, they are done in the traditional way of this kind of royal inscription. Statements used by Payeftjauemawyneith are closer in phraseology to those of Taharqa. Payeftjauemawyneith’s self-presentation stresses that he was on mission on the king’s behalf, while Taharqa’s inscriptions reflect royal propaganda to legitimize his rule, the “King’s Novel”, and piety toward the deities. This nonroyal involvement in building activities in the period shows how royal prerogatives were probably seized by Saite officials such as Payeftjauemawyneith.10–26

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