

Kay, Laudatory autobiography of

Nederhof - English

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Transliteration and translation for "The laudatory autobiography of Kay", following the transcription of De Buck (1948), pp. 73-74.

For an older transcription, see Anthes (1928), p. 54. A drawing of the original (Gr. 24) can be found in plate 24 thereof.

The transliteration throughout follows Hannig (1995).

For published translations, see Anthes (1928), pp. 55-56.

Bibliography

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- A. De Buck. *Egyptian Readingbook*. Ares Publishers, Chicago, Illinois, 1948.
- R.O. Faulkner. *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*. Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 1962.
- R. Hannig. *Grosses Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch: die Sprache der Pharaonen (2800-950 v.Chr.)*. Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1995.

¹
| ḥtmw-bjtj smr w^ctj jmj-r3 njwt t3ytj ḫtj s3b K3y ḏd

¹
| Royal seal-keeper and sole companion, leader of the city and grand vizier Kay says:

jnk s3 s nḥt s33 m3 n njwt=f n ḥntj
'I am a well-born man, strong and wise, who sees to his city for eternity,

rdj sj ḥr w3t nt grg rh dw3w [n] jwt=f
who brought it on the course of restoration, who knows the morning [before] it has come,

m3 n ²
| nḥḥ rh-nsw ḥn^c qnbt=f w^c ḥr ḥw
²
who sees to | eternity, acquaintance of the king and his cabinet, one of a kind,

jwtj snnw=f j.n n=f Šm^cw m ksw
without equal, to whom Upper Egypt came bowing.

jnk s3 s jwtj [ḥsf]=f nb snd^c šfyt nb ḥrt
I am a well-born man, beyond [reproach], inspiring fear, greatly respected, inspiring terror,

^c mrwt ³
| ḥḏ ḥr nfr bjt ph3 ḥt šw m snkt
³
greatly beloved, | bright of face, good of character, open-hearted, free of darkness,

ntj t3 pn ḥr mrwt=f
for whom this land has love,

ḥ^c.n rmt^c ntrw m ḥsfw ḥntjw=f
at the approach of whose statues the people and the gods were rejoicing,

hrw wd3=sⁿ r ḥwt-ntr ḥpn k3w ḏḏ3 jw3w
on the day they proceeded to the temple, with fat bulls and fat cows,

⁴
| nb r3w ^cš3 3pdw ^c ḥw w^cb stpt,
⁴
| possessor of geese, numerous in birds, great in braziers, pure of choice meat,

sndm=f st^c ḥwt-ntr s3 Ḍḥwtj n wn-m3^c
so that he makes the odour of the temple sweet, true son of Thoth,

mtwt K3-m3^ct
semen of the Bull of Truth,

dw³.n njwt=f r pr=f r dw³ k³=f

whose city went early in the morning to his house to praise his spirit,

r^c nb n-^{c3}t-n mr[wt=f]

every day because of the greatness of the love [of him]

[n] | nfr n jr^rt=f n=s

jw jr.n=j m³ct spd r wšm

and | the goodness of what he does for it. I did justice, sharper than a needle,

jw nḥm.n=j m³r m-^c wsr

jw snf.n=j ḥ³rt jwtt ḥ³j=s

I freed the oppressed from the powerful, I succoured the widow without a husband,

jw šd.n=j nmḥ jw^{tj} jt=f

⁶ | jw ts.n=j d³m=sn ḥrdw

I raised the orphan without a father. | I levied their troops of young men

n mrt ^{c3}ḥprw=s

so that the current ones were numerous,

jw grt d³m=s ^cq(.w) n ndsw

ḥms m prw=sn n ^cḥ³=sn

whereas its (old) troops have entered into citizenship, live in their houses, and didn't fight

m rk snḍ n | ⁷ pr-nsw jw nḥm.n=j njwt=j

in the time of fear of | the palace. I saved my city,

hrw ^cw³ m-^c ḥrt mrt nt

⁸ | pr-nsw

on the day of robbery, from the evil terror of | the palace.

jnk grt ḥnt=s hrw ^cḥ³=s

nh {}t=s m šdt š³

I was its foremost on the day of its battle, its stronghold in the swamp land,

s³ ḥq³ | ⁹ n Wnt ḥwd ^{c3} ḥr-qd

son of the ruler | of Unet, wealthy and great in every respect.

jw grt s^cnḥ.n=j njwt=j r-ḍr=s m ts^w nw

¹⁰ | t³ jw nn wn

I kept my whole town alive on the sandbanks of | the land, while there was nothing.

wrw mj šrrw=s n hr hn n Hmnw

The great were as its small. There was no discontented face in Hermopolis,

Wnw |¹¹ m-mjtt-jrj snš.n=j šnwt=j n bw nb jnk nb nfrt

and the same in Unu. I opened my barn to everyone. I am a possessor of beauty,

mry ¹²ntjw | smby n hrw nfr Nhrj K3y m^{3c}-hrw

loving myhrr, |¹² companion of the holiday.' Kay son of Nehri, justified,

¹²nh(.w) dt r nhh

may he live forever until eternity.
