

The Sebayt Of Ptahhotep

Ptahhotep, Sem Essesi, others...

Foreward by <someone>

August 21, 2024



For my father Ptah, who is South of His wall...

... and for Mut the mother of all of my mothers.

May Seshat and Thoth be satisfied.

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Foreword

Someone else needs to write this explaining...

- their relationship with the authors
- how it is useful to people
- how they contributed to the work
- signing their name at the end

Preface

Introduction

Ptahhotep addresses his king, Djedkare Isesi and describes his plight, which is the suffering that comes with old age.

This is relevant to why he would want to pass down his wisdom as part of his legacy, and helps serve as an introduction to the rest of the text.

1 - the title *imi rA* is usually translated as "overseer" but is a pun around the *r* glyph having the shape of the mouth and being used for terms related to words and speech, and may mean something like "commander of words" or "commander through words".

2 - the *niwt* sign can also determine a place, a town or other settlement and the choice of the word city is to convey a modern equivalent to this title.

3 - the title of *TAti* translated as "vizier" is a somewhat modern projection here, it could perhaps also be translated as "prime minister", or as a "second in command" to the king.

4 - *Xprw* is closely related to the god Khepri, who symbolises the making of progress of the sun when it rises.


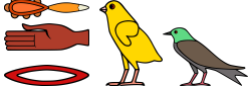


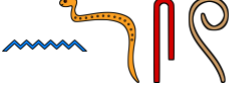


5 - *wr* as a determinative seems often to be used with concepts associated with *isfet*, as well as being a word on its own which is usually translated to mean "great" or "old". e.g. *Hrw wr* for "Horus the Elder" and *mHt wrt* for "the Great Flood"

6 - *iw* is a particle with no direct translation in English.

m r niwt t · TA t · p t H Htp t p A50 D d f			
<i>imi rA¹ niwt² TA t³ ptHHtp Dd.f</i>			
Overseer ¹ of the city ² vizier ³ Ptahhotep (he) says:			
it it nb G7 A1 t n i A19 xpr r			
<i>ity nb.i tni xprw⁴</i>			
sovereign, my lord, infirmity develops ⁴			
i A w A19 h A w D54 w g g wr⁵ D54			
<i>iAw hAw wgg</i>			
old age befalls, feebleness			
w i i H w wr⁵ Hr · mA A w Y1A			
<i>iw⁶.w iHw Hr mA w</i>			
comes, weakness is renewed			

Ptahhotep continues to lament his old age, describing and analogising his difficulties.

7 - literally "all suns", *rA* meaning "sun" and *nb* used as a suffix meaning "all".

															
s Dr r n f A55				X d r wr				r A rA nb							
<i>sDr.n f</i>				<i>Xrd.w</i>				<i>rA nb</i>							
one sleeps				like a child				every day ⁷							
															
ir ir				n D s W wr				Anx Anx sDm sDm				i mr w sDm			
<i>irti</i>				<i>nDs.w</i>				<i>Anxwi</i>				<i>imr.w</i>			
eyes				blind,				ears				deaf			

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