HOW UNAPPROACHABLE IS A PHARAOH ?

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There has been a vast amount of study on the Egyptian concept of kingship.[1] The question of his divinity has been one of the principal problems. Earlier studies normally attribute a specific divinity to the Egyptian King.[2] Highly influential in bringing down such an approach was a study by George Posener who presented evidence which, in his eyes, spoke against an authentic divinity of the Pharaoh.[3] Nowadays, there is a strong tendency to ascribe a more differentiated approach to the Egyptians: they are supposed to have considered the office itself as divine, but not the individual king.[4] While such a picture might seem reasonable, it raises, at least with me, some uneasiness. Doesn't it smack too much like making the Ancient Egyptian civilisation palatable to a modern public by demolishing such a thing as the real divinity of a living human being which is so hard to swallow for modern minds? After all, the Egyptians themselves explicitly said about the king "he is not a man" (Edfou VI 301, 13)

The framework of this workshop does not allow more than a relatively short discussion, but that can be turned to an advantage by focussing on one specific aspect which has not been all that much in the focus of previous scholarship, instead of making a full-scale re-opening of the case on all fronts.

The guiding question for the following aspects will be the way the king can be approached and dealt with. Is he treated in a way so special that it suggests an ontological status different from human beings also as a person, not only as representing an office? To answer this, I will consider a number of cases where the Pharaoh as a person and how to behave towards him is at stake.

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1. Some of the principal ones are Goedicke 1960; Barta 1975; O'Connor – Silverman (eds.) 1995; Gundlach 1998; Windus-Staginsky 2006. More specifically focused on phraseology are e.g. Blumenthal 1970; Grimal 1986; Schade-Busch 1992. Recently, there has been a series of conferences, see Gundlach – Raedler (eds.) 1997; Gundlach – Seipel (eds.) 1999; Gundlach – Rößler-Köhler (eds.) 2003.
2. E.g. Frankfort 1948.
3. Posener 1960.
4. This seems to have originated with Goedicke 1960. Sceptic towards it: Posener 1960: 102–103. The wide recognition of this paradigm can be seen e.g. in the fact that it is taken over in non-egyptological literature like Ahn 1992: 32; Edelmann 2007: 22.

Pronouncing the name of Pharaoh

It is quite obvious that there were problems involved in simply pronouncing the actual name of the Pharaoh.[5] There are no less than three relevant admonitions in the *Instruction of a Man for his Son*, a wisdom text of the Middle Kingdom (ca. 1900 BCE),[6] showing the great importance of this topic. "The one who is free of his name will be an honoured one" (§ 6, 5), "sound of limbs is he who is free of his name" (§ 7, 1) and "there is no tomb for the one who pronounces his name" (§ 7, 7). We have to keep in mind that this instruction was more specifically written for an "average", certainly not high-scale official.[7] By contrast, in the *Loyalist Teaching*[8] coming from approximately the same time, but written for a high-level official, while it has much to say about the royal wrath against those who are not loyal, pronouncing the name of the king is not among the punishable vices. What we have there is rather a saying "fight for his name, be pure concerning his life" (§ 6, 1). This can be understood to mean an active participation against those who abuse the name of the king as well as engaging only in true oaths (which are sworn by the life of the king), but in my opinion does not suggest real avoidance of the name.

While these instructional texts operate more on a theoretical level, we can see the practical consequences of such rules of conduct in actual life. First to be considered are oath formulae. Already the first commentators of the *Instruction of a Man for his Son* drew a parallel between the avoidance of the name and oath formulae.[9] There are some types of oaths in Ancient Egypt which are typically sworn by the Pharaoh while in others the gods are invoked.[10] In those invoking the king, the normal case is that the actual name is not spoken by the accused one. There might be some evidence that the royal name was only invoked by persons with authority, and not allowed to be spoken by criminals and suspects.[11] The few cases were the actual name is given are the king swearing by himself (Urk. I, 180, 8), an official of the highest court rank (Hatnub 49),[12] another courtier of the highest rank who mentions the names of kings also otherwise in his inscription (Stela of Khusobek)[13] and a foreign prince (pHarris 500 vs. 1, 9; LES 82, 13). This evidence strongly suggests that pronouncing the actual name of the reigning Pharaoh in an oath was only appropriate for people of a well-defined high level of society. Invoking the name of a deity in an oath, however, was not a problem and is abundantly attested. Still, under some conditions, also naming the gods could be problematic.[14]

Equally, there is at least a distinct possibility of saying impersonally "one" instead of naming the king as the active perpetrator of an act.[15]

Going further, we should pose the question of who could and would name the actual Pharaoh in his tomb inscriptions. While some private autobiographies give the exact name(s) of the king(s) under whom the person served, in many more cases, we do not have such indications. This phenomenon has largely been seen, in Egyptology, as a dating problem — strategies had to be developed to find other

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5.   Schott 1953, esp. 278–280. See also Brunner-Traut 1975: 286, even though her actual examples are concerned with blasphemous use of the name, not with naming *per se*.

6.   Edition in Fischer-Elfert 1999. For the image of the king as a god in these texts see further Wilke 2006: 127–128.

7.   Quack 2000a: 536-538 against Fischer-Elfert 1999: 295-316.

8.   Edition in Posener 1976.

9.   Posener 1976: 30; Fischer-Elfert 1999: 88.

10.   Quack 2008: 146–148.

11.   Wilson 1948: 153. See also Menu 1998, who does not take up this question.

12.   Anthes 1928: 76–78.

13.   Studied e.g. by Baines 1987.

14.   von Lieven 2007a: 127 and 162–164.

15.   Shirun-Grumach 1984.

criteria for determining the exact date of a monument.[16] While such criteria are practically helpful, they tend to draw attention away from the really important question: was it the free choice of the tomb-owner not to mention the king, or would he have needed a special status or favour to be allowed even to mention him?

It is much less of a problem if what is spelled out is not really the king's name as such. We have, especially in the Old Kingdom, the frequent phenomenon of agricultural domains whose name is composed with the one of the king (as their founder).[17] In such cases, it is possible to write the king's name without naming him as such, so his presence poses no violation of decorum (and, as a matter of fact, it is one of the most common means of dating tombs to look at the names of kings attested in the domain names, supposing that the latest king among those attested by such names is likely to be not far away from the actual date of construction of the tomb).[18]

Another point concerns the naming of the Pharaoh in dates. While official contracts drawn by notaries tend to indicate the actual name of the reigning Pharaoh, private letters and other unofficial documents normally give only the year count without indicating the reigning Pharaoh.[19] I would propose to see this also as sign of taboo, where an official permission was required for using the king's name. An interesting indication of this can be found in the protocol of an investigation against tomb robbers (pLeopold II+pAmherst).[20] The dating formula at the beginning, written by the official scribe, makes full use of the name and the title of the reigning king (1, 1). But when it comes to the confession of a thief, he only says "but when the year 13 of Pharaoh, our lord, came about" (1, 17–18). For the question of the "buffers" used to avoid the actual name of the king, see below.

One very obvious point clearly connected with the restricted status of the name of the king is the writing of the two most commonly used parts of the royal titles — the praenomen and the nomen — in a so-called *cartouche*, an encircling device going back to a rope laid around the name so that nothing can touch it directly.[21] This habit started with the beginning of the 4th dynasty.

Using Pharaoh in a name

Especially for the throne names of reigning Pharaohs, there might have been some sort of taboo.[22] At least it is conspicuous how private persons could have names looking like incomplete versions of such names. E.g. we have a king Men-kheper-Re and a private individual Men-kheper. Especially this phenomenon — omitting the name of the sun-god who was an almost obligatory part of the throne-name of the king[23] — is generally frequent during the Middle and New Kingdom.[24]

16. E.g., Cherpion 1989.

17. Jacquet-Gordon 1962.

18. Cherpion 1989: 139 and *passim*; for an evaluation of the feasibility of this procedure see Seidlmayer 1997.

19. For the demotic documents, see the short remarks by Depauw 1997: 163.

20. Capart – Gardiner – van de Walle 1936.

21. von Beckerath 1984: 34–37.

22. For personal names, nothing of this sort seems to have existed for all periods, but at least during the Old Kingdom, there are no attestations that any private person had the same name as the king, see Windus-Staginsky 2006: 73.

23. von Beckerath 1984: 27–31.

24. Ranke undated: 95. During the Late Period, things seem to have changed according to Ranke (*ibid.*: 246), but it should be kept in mind that the names of older kings he adduces there and on p. 248 are better to be considered as names of deities since they concern only kings who had an ongoing cult (see von Lieven 2007b).

This should also be investigated further with regard to the complex of using the name of the king as part of a private name.[25] There is a type of so-called "court-names". Especially in the Ramesside period, we have cases of basilophoric names.[26] Often, their carriers were foreigners who rose through the favour of the king; they obviously received these names by royal decision (and in some cases can be documented also with their original Semitic names). How such an attribution of a new name can come about is briefly hinted at in the fragments of the indictment of a criminal preserved in pVarzy.[27] The preserved end of line reads "[…] the name which Pharaoh, his lord, said to him, while there was already the name of a slave, a common one, which he had" (l. 4; RAD 40, 4-5). From this, we can deduce that the attribution of such a name was an act of royal initiative and would not have been up to free private choice.[28]

By contrast, using a deity in a personal name was possible at all times without discernible limitation (except that the god Seth got definitely proscribed after the end of the New Kingdom). There are even, from the end of the Old Kingdom onwards, cases where names of deities are as such used as personal names.[29]

Depicting Pharaoh

During all of the Old Kingdom, there was not a single representation of the king in the tomb of a non-royal person. This extends even to tombs of wives or sons of kings. Things changed only in the Middle Kingdom, and even then it was quite rare.[30] In the New Kingdom it becomes more frequent but is still limited to high-ranking courtiers.[31] Late Period tombs sometimes depict the king although in a rather different context; no longer the tomb-owner presenting tribute or prisoners, or receiving rewards, but rather the king in interaction with the gods, with the tomb-owner standing at the side.[32]

This should be compared with the depiction of deities. In Old Kingdom private tombs, there is none.[33] On private stelae, it started during the Middle Kingdom, but then it was still rare (less than 10% of all), and often not the deities themselves but their statues were depicted.[34] Only in the New Kingdom did their depiction become widespread.

Getting access to the royal court and behaving correctly there

Unfortunately, we are very badly informed about the protocol of the royal court in Ancient Egypt.[35] We can reasonable suppose that there was a fairly strict one, but we do not have it in its written form.[36]

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25. The overview in Ranke undated: 216–227 is too short and mixes theophoric and basilophoric names too much to be of real help for my question. Barta 1990 is limited to grammatical questions and does not deal with the sociological points.

26. Helck 1958: 273–276; Schulman 1986; Schulman 1990.

27. RAD 59, 14-60, 5; Loffet – Matoïan 1996.

28. For the fact that a name is attributed by the king, there is also the evidence of *Gen.* 41, 45 where Joseph is given a new name by the Pharaoh, even though in that case it is not a basilophoric name.

29. Ranke undated: 234–235; 239; 246; 247.

30. Vasilievič 2005.

31. Radwan 1969; Hartwig 2004: 54-73.

32. Kuhlmann – Schenkel 1983: 137–138, pl. 160.

33. Herb 2006: 127–128.

34. Bolshakov 2003: 135.

35. While there are recent studies on the society of the royal court like Raedler 2004; Gundlach – Klug (eds.) 2006, they do not focus on the points of primary interest for my question. More relevant is Coulon 2002.

36. Some impression of how such rules of behaviour were set down can be gained from the so-called *Duties of the Vizier*, see van den Boorn 1988.

Texts like the 13th maxim of the *Teaching of Ptahhotep* inform us that, for the audience-chamber, be-
haviour exactly according to the allocated rank would be required.[37] So, we are reduced to assembling
individual points mainly from biographies, to some degree also from literary tales set at the court. The
biographies are the most informative evidence, since people in high positions stress how they could
get exclusive access to the king when others were kept outside.[38]

A key witness for the protocol at the royal court is also the hieroglyphic so-called "geographical"
papyrus from Tanis, a manual of fundamental knowledge.[39] This contains a section naming the princi-
pal courtly functions, indicating their position to the right or left of the king, and sometimes defining
their specific actions. In such a situation it is clear why in a literary description of a court session it is
said that one character leaves his position and comes in the middle before Pharaoh (pKrall 9, 5).[40]
How difficult it was to get the ear of the king is also well illustrated by the dealings of pRylands IX,
16, 15-16 where it is discussed who the actual favourite to whom the Pharaoh hears is.[41]

For deities, getting access was also far from evident. An Egyptian temple had an elaborate system
with levels of accessibility. Ordinary people were kept in the outer courts, and the innermost parts with
the chapel containing the cult-image of the deity were off limits for all except the highest priestly
ranks.[42] There was a possibility of getting a praying place at the rear of the temple where you could, in
some sense, be near to the deity while at the same time not threatening to defile it in any way.[43] There
is even a letter addressed to a god where the writer says how difficult it is for him to get access just to
ask the god to appear in a procession in order to render a verdict.[44]

Decision making
The question of court protocol and behaviour at the court brings us straight to the question of how
actual political decision-making took place. Among Egyptologists, there is the model of the "king's
novel" which has dominated since its inauguration for about 50 years but by now has come increas-
ingly into debate.[45] Normally, the texts claimed for this genre depict court sessions where a decision is
at stake. The ordinary process is that either the royal view of action is adopted straightaway (some-
times with special adulation by the court), or confirmed against eventual doubts by courtiers; in the
end it always turns out to be correct. In my opinion, the main problem with this group of texts is that it
is less a real genre category but rather a depiction of cultural conventions. Firstly, open debate with
controversial sides is not often tolerated by the harmony-guided principles of the Egyptian culture.
Secondly, it is not so much simple actual propaganda which is at stake here but more a fundamental
conviction that the royal insight *is* infallible. In any case, it should be stressed that mythological texts
situating a process of decision-making among gods operate on almost identical parameters, e.g. the so-
called "Book of the Heavenly Cow".[46]

37. See e.g. Vernus 1999: 146–147.
38. See e.g. Jansen-Winkeln 1985; Kloth 2002: 158–159.
39. Edited by Griffith – Petrie 1889; see further Yoyotte 1960.
40. See Hoffmann 1996: 212 with note 1090, who understands the formula differently.
41. Vittmann 1998: 170–173 and 526–527.
42. The best testimony for this is the *Book of the Temple*, see Quack 2000b; Quack 2004.
43. Guglielmi 1994; Quaegebeur 1997.
44. Papyrus Nevill, published in Barns 1949, recent translation in Wente 1990: 219.
45. Original proposal in Hermann 1938; for recent discussions see e.g. Loprieno 1996; Jansen-Winkeln
1998; Hofmann B. 2004; Beylage 2002: 553–618. See my short remarks in Quack 2003: 607.
46. Edited in Hornung 1982.

Telling of misfortune befalling the Pharaoh

There is a fairly well-attested phenomenon that it is not desirable to speak directly of misfortune befalling either the Pharaoh or the gods, sometimes also the land of Egypt as a whole. Instead, one possible option is to say that something evil befell "the enemies" of the king/the gods/the country.[47] Another one is to say that the king/god was "far from" a misfortune.[48] King and deities are treated on the same level in this regard. Such a way of formulation is otherwise sometimes attested for sacred animals or for the land of Egypt, but never for mortal men.

Pharaoh in tales

The role of the king in tales and belles-lettres was one of the principal cases adduced by Posener for showing that the Egyptians did not consider their rulers to be divine.[49] I would propose to re-open the case. One first point which should be stressed is the limited possibility of using the king in such tales. Firstly, we encounter again the question of naming the king. Sometimes, the king is completely anonymous, like in the story of the *Doomed Prince* or the *Tale of the Two Brothers*. In most cases, the king is given with his name only once, at the beginning of a story, and afterwards tends to be alluded to by locutions as "his majesty/Persona" (*ḥm=f* in Middle and Late Egyptian texts) or "Pharaoh" (*pr-ꜥꜣ* in Demotic stories).

This might be the right place to discuss these circumscriptions in general, especially since they are not restricted to literary texts. Rather, *ḥm=f* (when speaking of the king) or *ḥm=j* (when the king himself speaks) is a frequent term for designating the king in action in royal as well as private monumental inscriptions. For Goedicke, *ḥm* was the principal way of designating the king as a physical human person.[50] An absolutely contrary position was defended by Hofmann.[51] For him, this term originally designated the creative and authoritative aspect which was divine in origin but worked within the world. Personally, I favour yet another alternative. The term is etymologically identical with the expression *ḥm*, "serve, slave", but neither in the sense of an original meaning "body" (thus Spiegel[52] and Goedicke)[53] nor in the sense of somebody who is acting and bringing things into motion (thus Hofmann). The royal designation is literally "my/his servant", but not in the sense of a self-depreciating attitude, and also not as a simple stylistic device.[54] In reality, it functions as a sort of buffer protecting the acting king from any potentially dangerous involvement[55] (if there was an actually damaging involvement, even stronger buffers were possible, see above). This explains also why it can sometimes be used not only for the king himself but also for the palace.

The expression *pr-ꜥꜣ* (from which our "Pharaoh" is etymologically derived) is originally a designation "great house" serving to designate the royal palace. As a designation of the actual king, it is attested since the 18th dynasty.[56] Here too its usage shows a reluctance to directly use the individual name of a king.

47. Posener 1970; Vittmann 1998: 509–510, and lastly Quack 2005a: 173.

48. Quack 2003; wrongly disputed by Franke 1998 and Depuydt 1998.

49. Posener 1960: 89-103; Posener 1985: 23.

50. Goedicke 1960: 51–79. Contested already by Müller 1963: 196. Accepted by von Beckerath 1984: 39.

51. Hofmann Th. 2001.

52. Spiegel 1939.

53. This seems still to be the base of the translation "embodiment" for *ḥm* used e.g. in the publications of James P. Allen.

54. Understood as such by Windus-Staginsky 2006: 165–195.

55. Thus already Gardiner 1943; Posener 1970: 34.

56. Von Beckerath 1984: 39.

Furthermore, the ruling Pharaoh can never be shown as the protagonist and main actor of any tale. He might be of some importance, or he might only be a minor player, but he never has the leading role. The closest we get to in any Egyptian text known to me are probably some fragments on the heroic exploits of Sesostris,[57] but in the setting of the tale, he is still a prince while his father Amenemhet reigns.

Some of the points highlighted by Posener as showing the lack of divinity can be explained immediately by this simple fact. For example, in the prophecy of Neferti, the fact that the king does not foretell the future himself but gets a specialist to do it has nothing to do with his lack of omniscience but simply with not breaking the genre rules.

Furthermore, Posener has probably applied to this material an all too theoretical image of what a god should be. We should remember that Egyptian gods also had their weaknesses, adverse times and sometimes did downright immoral things.[58] As it is formulated in the demotic wisdom book preserved in papyrus Insinger:

> So it happened in the beginning when the gods were on earth. Re became weak before the impious ones; they in turn became weak before him. Horus was hidden in the marshes, and then he became king of the country. Isis got happiness in sorrow at the end of what she had done. (pInsinger 20, 16-19)[59]

Also, even gods needed protection against dangers, or, if going unprotected, were liable do get hurt.[60] So, it is not out of the ordinary if the king in the *Second Story of Setne Chaemwase* needs magical protection against the magic of the Nubians.[61]

Perhaps we can take up some cases already adduced by Posener. The so-called Inaros-Petubastis-Cycle shows a king Petubastis who has some problems with his authority. Still, if we take the papyrus Krall[62] and look closely, the image becomes slightly different. The king is the authority, and nobody openly disobeys him, even if not everything goes exactly as he wishes. To take an instructive example, at one situation one of the protagonists stresses that only the respect before the king holds him back from being very rude in court towards his opponent (pKrall 9, 8-9). In another situation, the orders of the king are invoked by one hero against the other as a reason for not killing an opponent (pKrall 23, 12-14).

Papyrus Spiegelberg[63] might show greater problems for the king, but in this case they do not result from the fact that kingship as such was less than a divine institution. As explicitly said, Petekhons would not obey Petubastis simply because he has not recognised him as a king (pSpiegelberg 13, 15); and we can suppose that he would be quite obedient towards any king whom he recognises as legitimate overlord. Besides, we should not forget that king Petubastis is a Pharaoh of the late Libyan period, when a quite different model of rule and kingship than the traditional Egyptian one was prevalent.[64]

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57. See Quack 2005b: 28.

58. A large collection of sometimes really repulsive behaviour (killing the father, violating the mother, incest with the daughter) can be gleaned from the papyrus published in Meeks 2006.

59. Translation in Hoffmann – Quack 2007: 260.

60. A case in point is the young Horus with his innumerable episodes of danger and wounds; his foolish going without amulet is found in pBoulaq 6, rt. 5, 8; see Koenig 1981: 57–63.

61. Adduced as argument against the divinity of the king by Posener 1960: 96.

62. Edited in Hoffmann 1996.

63. Edited by Spiegelberg 1910; recent translation in Hoffmann – Quack 2007: 88–107, 336–338.

64. Jansen-Winkeln 1999; Jansen-Winkeln 2000.

Here too it seems appropriate to compare this picture with the one attested for gods. There are quite a lot of tales involving deities. Most especially, the conflict of Horus and Seth is again and again elaborated as a tale. Especially for the Graeco-Roman period, also the heroic exploits of the living Osiris seem to be an important topic.[65] In such tales, there is obviously no hesitation at all to make the gods the main heroes. As compared to the standing of the king in tales, the gods do not seem to be any more infallible. The sun-god in the *Contendings of Horus and Seth*, although supposed to be the king of the gods and chairman of the court, has serious authority problems, and the decision he wishes is not the one which comes about.[66] While Horus is supposed to be the main good guy, his character has weaknesses (most of the important steps are not taken by himself but by his mother), and sometimes he behaves even downright awful as when he beheads his mother; he is actually punished for this behaviour (which a king never is in a tale). In the *Tale of the Heavenly Cow*, the sun-god wavers in his decisions and changes his mind, finally he more or less flees the field by ascending to heaven and leaving Thot in charge of the affairs of ruling on earth.[67] For the sun-god, there is a significant tradition how his rule is threatened by rebellions, sometimes driving him to temporary flight.[68] To sum this up: the way gods are presented in Egyptian narrative texts shows them, if anything, even weaker and morally more problematic than kings. Thus, the narrative texts about kings cannot be adduced to argue that they were understood in them as being non-divine.

Conclusion

Looking at the points brought up so far, we gain some material illustrative of how the king was removed from the sphere of the ordinary, and how deities were treated in similar situations. Either, they are treated alike, or the king has even more restrictions about him. The cases I have considered concern the actual persons being king, not the abstract office whose divinity is conceded generally. Still, they do not show clear evidence for the less-than-divine status of the individual royal person which is nowadays the *communis opinio* of Egyptology. In my opinion, it would be worthwhile to compare the Egyptian material with that of far-eastern monarchies, especially China and Japan, were we have good evidence for the divinity of living kings (the Japanese emperor gave up his claims of divinity only after the defeat against the USA in the Second World War).

Postscript

It seems appropriate to illustrate the status of the king vis-à-vis the gods through the quotation of a liturgical papyrus. The manuscript itself dates from the Late Ptolemaic period, even though it certainly goes back to earlier models.[69] The passage follows after a festival song to the god, and, like so often in Egyptian texts, it invokes the favour of the deity towards the king as a fitting end to a composition which in the previous part centres around the figure of the god.

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65. Overview of the attestations in Quack 2005b: 24–25.

66. Text in Gardiner 1931; recent English translation e.g. in Lichtheim 1976: 214–223.

67. Text in Hornung 1982.

68. Smith 2000.

69. The text is pStrasbourg 2, col. 4, 30-5, 18, published in a not always reliable way by Bucher 1928 and 1930; German translation in Assmann J. 1999: 351–361. My translation incorporates changes in the reading on the basis of the published photographs, as well as new digital images provided by the Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg, augmented by a collation of some points on the original. I would like to thank Gisela Bélot and Daniel Bornemann for the possibility to work with this papyrus. The more important philological points are indicated in the notes.

Oh come to the Pharaoh, in peace!
Re, may you make him endure while overthrowing your enemy!
He has driven back for you Apopis in his moment (of attack),
he has stabbed for you the one of evil character.[70]

Ptah, may you make Pharaoh endure[71] with your endurance,
May you let him be powerful[72] with your power,
He has given you life, his arms carrying truth.
May you cause him to be revered[73] with it!

Shu, may you provide[74] the nose of the Pharaoh with life, endurance and power!
Geb! He has equipped your food-offerings,
He has planted for you this land and what is in it.
The field produces for you everything which exists.[75]

Osiris! Enrich the limbs of the Pharaoh with everything which came forth from you!
You shall not hide anything evil of his followers!
His body is complete for life.
May you protect Pharaoh on your throne!

Horus! May you give him eternity as king of the two lands,
Everlastingness in guiding all countries!
May you glorify the happiness of the Pharaoh in that your name of Sobek,
May you render mysterious for him the products of this land
In that your name of He-of-Shedty!
You have united and copulated with the cows in that your name of Khnum.

Come to Pharaoh, oh Re in all his names!
He has offered to you everything which has come forth from the abyss,
Everything which came into being from your limbs.
He has provided for the sanctuary of your image,
He has found all your cult-orders in you,
He has united for you your children against the gods
As ... for their Kas together with your Ka.
He has given you a collar on your neck,
So that you may become high and develop into Khepri.
He has made for you your two feathers upon his[76] head,

70. Designation of a snake-shaped enemy of the gods.
71. To be read *ꜥ̣t=k*, with causative force for the simplex.
72. To be read *wsr=k*.
73. What is written is /*mnḫ=f*, but with the determinative ⛏, thus it probably is a writing for /*m#ḫ=f*.
74. *ḥnk* written for *ḥn=k*.
75. The word *wnn.t* has the determinative of the goddess.
76. So the manuscript according to my collation. We would rather expect "your head", but perhaps the actual formulation brings out the close interaction between god and king especially well.

So that you may become sound against his breast.
He has directed his arms with your offerings, he has made durable your bread,
Pure and clean [77] on your offering-table,
With what I have said on you. [78]

Oh Sobek-Re, lord of Sumenu.
May your heart be loving upon the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Pharaoh!
He has adored you with your beautiful hymns,
He has pacified you with all his (read: your) names,
He has given praise to your crown,
He has presented truth to you towards your nose.
He has pacified you with the divine words,
He has justified you against your rebel,
He has pierced for you your enemy.

May you let him endure as king of the two lands
While your enemies are fallen to your massacre!
May you let him rejuvenate in order to overthrow your enemy,
Kissing the ground (before him) as his chief.
May Pharaoh be like the one who does everything which you wish as Re day by day.
May he guide for me [79] the islands of the Hau-nebut [80]
As my offering-cattle towards his palace,
With all things for your Ka, due to the awe of your person.

Pharaoh, beloved of Sobek-Re, lord of Sumenu, he shall not perish in eternity.
May your beautiful face be benevolent towards Pharaoh!

Perhaps this passage — longer and more explicit than ordinary intercessory prayers at the end of liturgical hymns — can serve to illustrate the interdependence between gods and king. We tend to see mainly the prayers for the benefit of the king. However, we should not overlook to which degree also the gods are dependent on the provision and ritual activities of the king, including overthrowing the enemies of the gods.

77. To be read *wob twr*.
78. According to a collation, to be read *m @t.n=| |m=k.*
79. We would rather expect "for you", but the reading is certain on the original. Still, it might be a mistake in transmission, the two signs being fairly similar in this manuscript.
80. A designation of a foreign people, most probably in the Aegean region, see Quack 2007.

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