

## SPOILIATION OF TOMBS.

XXTH DYNASTY.

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 TRANSLATED BY
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THE papyrus, of which a translation here follows, was purchased in the year 1857 from Dr. Abbott of Cairo, by the Trustees of the British Museum, and in 1860 a facsimile, preceded by an excellent preface from the pen of Dr. S. Birch, was published by them in the *Select Papyri in the Hieratic character*. This eminent Egyptologist had already in 1859 drawn the attention of the scientific public to this ancient document by giving an account of it in the *Revue Archéologique* (Tome XVI. p. 257), under the title of *Le Papyrus Abbott, par S. Birch, traduction de F. Chabas*. Since that time, and nearly simultaneously, two complete French translations have been published—one by M. F. Chabas, Chalon-sur-Saône, 1870, in his *Mélanges Égyptologiques* (troisième série, Tome I.); the other by M. G. Maspero, Paris, 1871,

entitled *Une enquête judiciaire à Thebes au temps de la XX. Dynastie*. Both translations are accompanied by an analysis, and the latter by a transcription of the hieratic text and an interlinear version.

The MS. consists of seven pages of clear and bold handwriting, regular at the commencement, but less carefully written as it approaches the end, until it becomes almost illegible on the endorsement which is not reproduced here, as it merely contains a list of names of no special importance for the present publication.

This valuable document throws considerable light upon the administration of justice in ancient Egypt, and shows the entire course of proceedings in a criminal case under the reign of Rameses IX. The style is clear and the action goes on in a connected and regular way. But what makes the sense of the translation somewhat ambiguous on a first reading is the difficulty of rendering it literally, and at the same time in good English, as the sentences are very long and frequently interrupted by explanatory phrases.



## SPOLIATION OF TOMBS.

## PAGE I.

- 1 (The 16th year,)<sup>1</sup> the 18th day of Athyr, in the reign of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the two countries, NEFER-KA-RA SOTEP-EN-RA, the son of the Sun, Lord of Diadems,
- 2 (RAMESSU KHA-EM-UAS) MERER-AMEN, Beloved of AMEN-RA, the King of the gods, and of HAR-EM-AKHU, who gives life eternally and for ever.
- 3 (On that day were sent) the Examiners of the august necropolis, the Scribe of the Nomarch and the Scribe of the Overseer of the King's treasury,
- 4 (to the monuments) and chapels of the royal ancestors, and to the sepulchres and resting-places of the chanters
- 5 (and mourners) which are in the West-quarter of the city, by the Nomarch KHA-EM-UAS  
the royal Controller, NES-SU-AMEN, Scribe of the King,
- 6 (the Major-domo) of the abode of the divine adorer of AMEN-RA, the King of the gods,  
the royal Controller NEFER-KA-RA-EM-PA-AMEN, Reporter of the King,
- 7 (in order to investigate) concerning what the thieves had done in the West-quarter of the city, on which subject the Commandant, Chief of the Police, PA-AU-AA, of the very august Necropolis
- 8 (of millions of years, of the) King, which is in the West of Thebes, had reported to the Nomarch, the Magistrates and the Examiners of the King.

<sup>1</sup> The words enclosed in brackets, thus, ( ) replace lacunæ.

- 9 (Functionaries) who went on that day with the Commandant, Chief of the Police, PA-AU-AA, of the necropolis :  
 10 the . . . . .<sup>1</sup> BEK-EN-UR-ENRU, of the palace,  
 11 . . . . .<sup>1</sup> of the necropolis,  
 12 . . . . .<sup>1</sup> of the palace,  
 13 . . . . .<sup>1</sup> of the palace,  
 10<sup>BIS</sup> the Chief of the Police, MENTU-KHOPESH-EF, of the palace,  
 11<sup>BIS</sup> the Scribe PA-A-EN-BAUK-HOR, of the Nomarch,  
 12<sup>BIS</sup> the great Scribe of the Store-house, PAI-NEFER, of the Overseer of the Treasury,  
 13<sup>BIS</sup> the Prophet PA-AN-KHAU, of the temple of AMEN-HOTEP,  
 14 the Prophet SAR-AMEN, of the temple of AMEN, of the cellars,  
 15 the Police-officers of the necropolis, who were with them.

## PAGE II.

- 1 Monuments, chapels and sepulchres examined on that day by the Examiners :  
 2 The eternal horizon<sup>2</sup> of King SAR-KA, son of the Sun, AMEN-HOTEP, which is 120 cubits  
 3 deep in its principal chamber,<sup>3</sup> the long corridor belonging to it being at the north of the temple of AMEN-HOTEP  
 4 of the vineyard, of which the Commandant PA-SAR, of the city, had made a report to the Nomarch KHA-EM-UAS,  
 5 the royal Controller NES-SU-AMEN, Scribe of the King,

<sup>1</sup> Lacunæ.<sup>2</sup> The tomb.<sup>3</sup> The one in which the mummy is deposited.

- the Major-domo of the abode of the divine adorer of AMEN-RA, the King of the gods,
- 6 and the royal Controller NEFER-KA-RA-EM-PA-AMEN, Reporter of the King, (all) high Magistrates, saying :
- 7 "The thieves have violated it." Examined on that day, it was found intact by the Examiners.
- 8 The monument of King SA-RA AN-AA, which is at the North of the temple of AMEN-HOTEP of the terrace.
- 9 This tomb is injured on the surface opposite the spot where the tablet is placed ;
- 10 on the tablet is the image of the King, in a standing position, having between his feet his greyhound
- 11 named BEHHUKA. Examined on that day, it was found in good condition.
- 12 The monument of King NUB-KHEPER-RA, son of the Sun, ANTUF, was found to have been
- 13 pierced by the hands of the thieves, who had made a hole of two cubits and a half in its surrounding wall, and (a hole of) one cubit
- 14 in the great outside-chamber of the sepulchre of the Chief of the transportation of the offerings, AURI, of Pa-Amen,
- 15 which (tomb) is in ruins. It was in good condition, the thieves not having been able to penetrate into it.
- 16 The monument of King RA-SEKHEM-EM-APU-MA, son of Sun, ANTUF-AA. It was found
- 17 to have been pierced by the hands of the thieves at the spot where the tablet of the monument is fixed.
- 18 Examined on that day, it was found entire, the thieves not having been able to penetrate into it.

## PAGE III.

- 1 The monument of King RA-SEKHEM-SESHET-TAUI, son of the Sun, SEBAK-EM-SAU-EF.
- 2 It was found that the thieves had violated it by undermining the chamber of the perfections<sup>1</sup> of the
- 3 monument, from the great exterior chamber of the sepulchre of the Overseer of the granaries, NEB-AMEN, of the King MEN-KHEPER-RA (THOTMES III.).
- 4 The place of sepulture of the King was found to be void of its occupant; so was the place of sepulture of the principal royal spouse,
- 5 NUB-KHA-S, his royal wife; the thieves had laid hands on them. The Nomarch,
- 6 the Magistrates and Controllers investigated (the matter) and found the thieves having laid hands on them, a fact,
- 7 as far as the King and his royal spouse were concerned.
- 8 The monument of King RA-SEKENEN, son of the Sun, TA-AA. Examined on that day
- 9 by the Examiners, it was found intact.
- 10 The monument of King RA-SEKENEN, son of the Sun, TA-AA-AA, being King TA-AA Second.
- 11 Examined on that day by the Examiners, it was found intact.
- 12 The monument of King UAT-KHEPER-RA, son of the Sun, KA-MES. Examined on that day, it was (found) uninjured.
- 13 The monument of King AHMES SA-PA-AR. Examined and found intact.
- 14 The monument of King NEB-KHER-RA, son of the Sun,

<sup>1</sup> One of the names of the principal chamber of a tomb.

MENTU-HOTEP, which is in the (region of) Sar;<sup>1</sup> it was intact.

- 15 Total of the monuments of the royal ancestors examined on that day by the Examiners ;  
 16 found intact, 9 monuments ; found violated, 1 ; total 10.  
 17 The sepulchres of the pallakides of the abode of the divine adorer of AMEN-RA, the King of the gods ; found intact, 2 ;  
 18 found violated by the thieves, 2 ; total, 4.

## PAGE IV.

- 1 Sepulchres and chapels in which repose the chanters and mourners, the women and men of the country,  
 2 in the West-quarter of the city. It was found that the thieves had violated them all, that they had torn their occupants  
 3 away from their coffins and cases, had thrown them into the dust and had stolen all the funeral objects which  
 4 had been given to them, as well as the gold and silver and the ornaments which were in their coffins.

- 
- 5 The Commandant, Chief of the Police, PA-AU-AA, of the very august necropolis, as well as the Chiefs of the Police and the Police-officers,  
 6 the Examiners of the necropolis, the Scribe of the Nomarch, the Scribe of the Overseer of the Treasury, who were with them, made a report about (these tombs)<sup>2</sup> to  
 7 the Nomarch KHA-EM-UAS, the royal Controller NES-SU-

<sup>1</sup> A particular quarter of the necropolis of Thebes.

- AMEN, Scribe of the King, the Major-domo of the abode of the divine adorer of
- 8 AMEN-RA, the King of the gods, and the royal Controller NEFER-KA-RA-EM-PA-AMEN, Reporter of the King, (all high Magistrates.
- 9 The Commandant of the West-quarter, Chief of the Police, PA-AU-AA, of the necropolis, placed the names of the thieves in writing
- 10 before the Nomarch. The Magistrates and Controllers arrested them and put them into prison; they cross-examined them and reported the state of things.
- 

- 11 The 16th year, the 19th day of Athyr. This was the day on which started, in order to examine the great places<sup>1</sup> of the royal children, the royal wives
- 12 and the royal mothers, which are in the abode of the perfected,<sup>2</sup> the Nomarch KHA-EM-UAS, the royal Controller NES-SU-AMEN, Scribe of the King,
- 13 after having received the declaration of the worker in metal,<sup>3</sup> PAI-KHARI, son of KHARUI, born of MAI-SHERAU, of the West-quarter of the city, a man belonging to the servants
- 14 of the temple of USER-MA-RA MERI-AMEN (RAMSES III.) in Pa-Amen, which (temple) is under the direction of the First Prophet of AMEN-RA, the King of the gods, AMEN-HOTEP. This man, who was found on the spot,
- 15 was arrested, he having been (one) of three temple servants who were near the sepulchres, at the time when the Nomarch RA-NEB-MA-NEKHT made

<sup>1</sup> The tombs.

<sup>2</sup> Tombs of the royal family.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, after having been spoken to by the worker in metal.



16 his investigation in the year xiv. ; he said : " I was in the  
tomb of the royal spouse ISIS of the King USER-MA-RA  
· MERI-AMEN (RAMSES III.) ; I took away some  
17 objects and I squandered them." When the Nomarch  
and the Controller had the worker in metal brought  
before them at the

## PAGE V.

1 sepulchres, he was blindfolded as a man to be carefully  
watched ; his sight was restored when he arrived at the  
spot, and the Magistrates  
2 said to him : " Walk before us to the tomb of which you  
said : I took away some objects from it." The worker in  
metal walked before the Magistrates  
3 to a reserve-tomb of the royal children of King USER-  
MA-RA SOTEP-EN-RA (RAMSES II.), the great god ; nobody  
had been interred therein and it had been left open,  
4 as well as the resting-place of the workman AMEN-EM-  
AN, son of HUI, of the necropolis, also situated there.  
And he said : " These are the tombs where I have been."  
5 The Magistrates submitted the worker in metal to a  
complete cross-examination in the interior of the Great  
Valley. It was  
6 found that he was unacquainted with any place there,  
excepting the two on which he had put his hand. He  
pronounced an oath by the sovereign Lord, striking his  
nose  
7 and his ears, and with both hands upon a rod said :  
" I do not know any place within the (funeral) abodes,  
with the exception of the tomb which is open and  
8 the resting-place on which your hand is placed." The

- Magistrates examined the tombs and the great places which are the abode of
- 9 the perfected, where repose the royal children, the royal wives, the royal ancestors, the good fathers and mothers of the King.
- 10 They were found in good condition. The high Magistrates despatched the Examiners, the overseers, the workmen of the necropolis, the Chiefs
- 11 of the Police, the Police-officers, and all the servants of the necropolis of the West-quarter of the city, with a grand verdict (of *Not Guilty?*) as far as the city.
- 

- 12 The 16th year, the 19th day of Athyr. On that day, at the time of evening, near the temple of PTAH, Lord of Thebes, arrived the royal Controller
- 13 NES-SU-AMEN, Scribe of the King and the Commandant PA-SAR, of the city. They met the Chief of the workmen, USER-KHOPESH, the Scribe AMEN-NEKHTU
- 14 and the workman AMEN-HOTEPU, of the necropolis. The Commandant of the city spoke to the men of the necropolis in the presence of the Controller of the King
- 15 as follows: "The statement which you have made this day is not an authentic statement. You will have to suffer for what
- 16 you have done." Thus he spoke to them. He pronounced an oath by the sovereign Lord, in presence of the Controller of the King, and said: "The Scribe HORA-SHERAU, son of AMEN-NEKHTU,
- 17 of the necropolis, from the interior of the Khena,<sup>1</sup> and the Scribe PAI-BESA, of the necropolis, have made me five

<sup>1</sup> The buildings pertaining to the residence of the King (according to M. Chabas).

revelations of sayings for which you are accountable, well worthy of death ;  
 18 now I shall place a report on this subject before the King, my master, that the King's men may be sent to destroy you all." So spoke he.

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19 The 16th year, the 20th day of Athyr. Copy of the writing which the Commandant of the West-quarter of the city, Chief of the Police, PA-AU-AA, of the necropolis, placed before the Nomarch,  
 20 relative to the words which the Commandant PA-SAR, of the city, spoke to the men of the necropolis, in presence of the Controller of the King and the Scribe PAI-NETEM, of the Overseer of the Treasury.  
 21 The Commandant, PA-AU-AA, of the West-quarter of the city, said: "The royal Controller, NES-SU-AMEN, Scribe of the King, found himself in company with the Commandant, PA-SAR,  
 22 of the city. He was discoursing with the men of the necropolis, near the temple of PTAH, Lord of Thebes. And the Commandant of the city said to the men

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1 of the necropolis: "Why were you mirthful on my account at the door of my house? I am the Commandant who makes the reports  
 2 to the Prince. Come! be mirthful in the place where you dwell. When it was examined, *you* found it in good condition, the violated (tomb) of

- 3 RA-SEKHEM-SESHET-TAUI, son of the Sun, SEBEK-EM-SAU-EF and NUB-KHA-S, his only royal spouse. By the great Prince!" And
- 4 he pronounced ten oaths by the worth of AMEN-RA, the King of the gods, the great god, whose statues were placed in his sanctuary this day.
- 5 Then, the workman USER-KHOPESH, who is under the authority of the chief workman, RETU-EM-MAUT, of the necropolis, spoke as follows: "All the kings and their
- 6 royal spouses, royal mothers and royal children, who repose in the august necropolis, as well as those who repose in the abode of the perfected, are in good condition;
- 7 they are protected and cared for through all eternity; the excellent administration of the King, their child, watches and inspects them
- 8 thoroughly." The Commandant of the city said to him: "You use marvellous language." But the words were not insignificant ones, those spoken by the
- 9 Commandant of the city. Again the Commandant of the city told the words for a second time, saying: "The Scribe HORA-SHERAU, son of AMEN-NEKHTU, of the necropolis, of the interior of
- 10 The Khena (came . . . . .) towards the place where I was, and made me three revelations of very important sayings,
- 11 which my Scribe and the Scribe of the two districts of the city wrote down. Now the Scribe PAI-BESA, of the necropolis, made me
- 12 two other revelations, total, five. They also wrote them down. Concerning them silence cannot be kept; Woe! They are crimes worthy of the hatchet,
- 13 (and that the criminals) be placed on the bed of torture

- and submitted to all sorts of chastisement on account of them. But I shall send a report on this subject before the King, my master,
- 14 that the King's men may be despatched to destroy you." Thus spoke to them the Commandant of the city, and he pronounced ten oaths, saying :
- 15 "Thus shall I do." I heard of the words which the Commandant of the city said to the men of the august necropolis of millions of years, of the
- 16 King, in the West of Thebes, and I make a report of them before my master, as it would be a crime for a man like me
- 17 to hear of words and conceal them. However, I have not been able to get at the highly important words of which *thus* said the Commandant of the
- 18 city : "The Scribes of the interior of the necropolis, who stayed amongst the men (of the necropolis) told them to me." Alas ! I
- 19 did not reach them.<sup>1</sup> I make a report before my master on the subject. Let my master bring forward those who got at the words of which
- 20 the Commandant of the city said : "The Scribes of the necropolis told them to me ; I will send a message on the subject before the King." Thus spoke he. It is a crime
- 21 for the two Scribes of the necropolis to have sought out the Commandant of the city, in order to make a report to him, when their fathers had not made him any,
- 22 but brought in their statement to the Nomarch, when he was in the South. But when he was in the North, the Police-officers, attendants of
- 23 his Majesty, of the necropolis, started for the place

<sup>1</sup> Literally, my feet did not reach them.

where the Nomarch was, with their memoranda. I have procured evidence in the 16th year, the 20th day of Athyr,

- 24 concerning the words which had been heard from (the mouth of) the Commandant of the city. I place them in writing before my master, that he may have brought forward those who reached them, immediately the next morning."

PAGE VII.

- 1 The 16th year, the 21st day of Athyr. On that day, at the great assembly of the city, near the two tablets of AMEN, at the entrance of the court of AMEN, at the door of the adoration
- 2 of the Rekhi ;<sup>1</sup> Magistrates who were sitting in the great assembly of the city on this day :
- 3 The Nomarch KHA-EM-UAS, the First Prophet of AMEN-RA, King of the gods, AMEN-HOTEP, the Prophet of AMEN-RA, King of the gods, the Scribe NAS-SU-AMEN, of the temple of millions of years,
- 4 Of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, NEFER-KA-AR SOTEP-EN-RA (RAMSES IX.), the royal Controller NAS-SU-AMEN, Scribe of the King, the Major-domo of the abode of the divine adorer of AMEN-RA, the King of the gods,
- 5 the royal Controller NEFER-KA-RA-EM-PA-AMEN, Reporter of the King, the Captain HORA, of (the cavalry), the Fan-bearer HORA,
- 6 of the Marine, the Commandant PA-SAR, of the city. Then the Nomarch KHA-EM-UAS had brought forward the worker in metal PAI-KHARI, son of KHARUI,

<sup>1</sup> The intellectual part of society.

- 7 the worker in metal TARI, SON OF KHA-EM-APT, the worker in metal PA-KAMEN, SON OF TARI, OF THE TEMPLE OF USER-MA-RA MERI-AMEN (RAMSES III.) WHICH IS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE FIRST PROPHET OF AMEN.
- 8 The Nomarch said to the high Magistrates of the grand assembly of the city: "The Commandant of the city said some words to the
- 9 Examiners and workmen of the necropolis, in the 16th year, the 19th day of Athyr, in presence of the royal Controller NES-SU-AMEN, Scribe of the King,
- 10 and slandered concerning the great places which are in the abode of the perfected. Now I, the Nomarch of the country, was there
- 11 with the royal Controller NES-SU-AMEN, Scribe of the King. We examined the places of which the Commandant of the city said: "They have been penetrated by the workers in metal
- 12 of the temple of RA-USER-MA MERI-AMEN." We found them intact, discovering everything he had said to be false. But behold!
- 13 the workers in metal are standing before you. Let them tell all that has happened." They deliberated. It was found that the men
- 14 did not know any place in the abode of the perfected, about which the Commandant of the city had spoken. It was he who had been false in this.
- 15 The high Magistrates accorded the breath of life to the workers in metal, of the temple of USER-MA-RA MERI-AMEN, in Pa-Amen, which (temple) is under the authority of the First Prophet of AMEN-RA, the King of the gods,
- 16 AMEN-HOTEP. On this day a paper was signed for them, and they went to the house of the Scribe of the Nomarch.

# END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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