Universität Basel

Research Project

Dissertation Julianna Kitti Paksi: Linguistic Heterogeneity in the Ramesside Royal Inscriptions

Project funded by own resources

Project title Dissertation Julianna Kitti Paksi: Linguistic Heterogeneity in the Ramesside Royal Inscriptions

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Organisation / Research unit

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The project concerns the study of linguistic heterogeneity in the language of the Ramesside royal inscriptions (ca. 1300–1100 BC). The focus is on ten texts selected from a chronologically and thematically wide corpus of monumental hieroglyphic inscriptions. Each of these texts is subject to a detailed, descriptive and interpretative linguistic analysis, during which factors influencing their diverse linguistic selections are explored. The aim of the project is to arrive at a differentiated, yet systematic, description of the language of the inscriptions and to identify the aspects of cultural dynamics underlying these linguistic selections.

The history of the Egyptian language is at the same time a complex history of its written registers. By the early Nineteenth Dynasty (ca. 1275 BC), new linguistic norms (roughly: "Late Egyptian") started to spread and became the written language in certain domains of use, while older norms (roughly: "Middle Egyptian") continued to be used in other domains. However, the two linguistic norms were by no means discrete, let alone exclusive of one another. The diglossic situation thus observed involved a dynamic continuum of written linguistic registers between more innovative and more conservative ones. The interaction of the two linguistic norms is present in all genres and is therefore integral to the written production in Ramesside times. The phenomenon of linguistic heterogeneity resulted in profoundly diverse linguistic typologies that are often observed also within one and the same text. This linguistic heterogeneity is seen to take particularly rich and productive forms in the Ramesside royal inscriptions, to the study of which the present project is devoted.

This study will be the first systematic description of the language of the Ramesside royal inscriptions, and as such, will fill a gap in the history of the Egyptian language understood as a history of its written registers. In the current context of studies devoted to linguistic variation in other, comparatively lower written registers of the Ramesside period, the project investigates the higher written registers of the same time, which have received only modest scholarly attention so far.

Keywords royal inscriptions, linguistic heterogeneity, Ramesside period, linguistic registers, monumental inscriptions, égyptien de tradition

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Published results

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4018893, Paksi, Julianna Kitti, A New Reading to Ramesses III's Great Double Stela. The Placement of Fragment C, 2102-6629, Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne, Publication: JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

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