EGYPTIAN PLACES AND PLACE NAMES IN A DIGITAL WORLD

A framework for modelling and analysing an ancient space

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EGYPTIAN PLACES AND PLACE NAMES IN A DIGITAL WORLD

OUTLINE

Some background

What do we have? What do we want? How should we proceed?

Ancient Egyptian texts and place names

What is an ancient Egyptian (hieroglyphic) place name?

--------------------------------------- personal name?

Data model

Illustration
SOME BACKGROUND

• Monographs on Tell el-Balamun (master thesis) and Tell Faraun (PhD thesis)

• Digitization of the Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Statues, Reliefs and Paintings, (aka ‘Porter & Moss’, one of the main project at the Griffith Institute, University of Oxford (2012-2015)

• Current work on Thot – Thesauri and Ontology for document ancient Egyptian resources

http://topbib.griffith.ox.ac.uk/

http://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/
WHAT DO WE HAVE?

1. Place names occurring in (ancient) texts, which...
   a) simply mention them
   b) or give more or less extended descriptions of the place in question;

2. Archaeological entities
   a) Spottable on a map, or not;
   b) Designated by name(s) used by locals, administration or archaeologists
   c) Which can be, furthermore, place of provenance of texts
WHAT DO WE WANT?

1. (Digital) repositories of
   A. Ancient Places
   B. Modern Places
   C. Ancient place names
   D. Actors and agents linked to these places

2. Links between these resources in order to model the ancient space
HOW SHOULD WE PROCEED?

1. Identifying names in texts
   A. Corpus analysis
      I. Corpus of ‘geographical texts’
      II. ‘General’ corpus
          • Use of the Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae (TLA)
   B. Name analysis
      I. Annotation
      II. Spottable on a map, or not
      III. Identifiable by one or multiple names
   C. Actors and agents who…
      • … populate places
      • … and create places.

2. Identifying sites
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PLACE NAMES & TEXT CORPUS

1. Corpus of geographical texts
   A. The “soubassement” procession’s texts from ancient Egyptian temples
OVERVIEW OF A PROCESSION
TYPES OF PROCESSIONS

1) Geographical processions
   - forty-two Nile-Gods, each representing one sepat (province)
   - the so-called ‘quadripartite processions’ in which each sepat is represented by 4 fecundity figures (hence 42 x 4 figures):
     ▪ Sepat itself;
     ▪ Canal-
        mr;
     ▪ Ou-territory;
     ▪ Pehu-territory

2) Hydrological processions
   ▪ give the various names of the Nile flood

3) Processions of couples made of floods & campaigns

4) Economic processions
   ▪ Presenting products from everywhere in Egypt
Text structure

Example of a published text
"Edfou IV, 37"

Text on standard
The Entity & what it brings
Assimilation gloss
Quadripartite Procession, External Corridor, Horus temple in Edfou.
19th sepat. Texts dealing with the sepat itself

\[ jn\text{-}f \ n\text{-}k \ Jm.t\text{-}p\text{ḥ} \ hr \ mhr.w\text{-}s \ m \ jrp \ n(y) \ T2\text{-}ntr \]
He brings to you Inet-peh with its products which are wine of Ta-netjer

\[ Ntk \ jm \ nfrj \ hnty \ wnm.t\text{-}f \ sd.tj \ wr \ hnty \ j2b.t\text{-}f \]
Because you are the divine inet-child who is in front of his right eye, the noble sedjeti-child in front of his left eye
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PLACE NAMES & TEXT CORPUS

1. Corpus of geographical texts
   A. The “soubassement” procession’s texts from ancient Egyptian temples
   B. Onomastica and topographically arranged texts
Onomasticon of Amenemope, 5, 9-13

Pa-mu-en-pa-Ra ‘The-Water-of-Ra’
Per-nebet-Imet ‘House-of-the-Lady-of-Imet’
Per-Ramessu-mery-Imen, Pi-Ramsse
Shedeheru
Anedjet Busiris
Pa-iou-en-Imen ‘The-Island-of-Amun’
Pa-Khasuu Xois
Per-Uadjet Bouto
Per-say-ta, Psito
DjaneT Tanis
Patjufy
Pa-khetem-en-Tjaru, ‘The-Fortress-of-Sile’
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PLACE NAMES & TEXT CORPUS

1. Corpus of geographical texts
   A. The “soubassement” procession’s texts from ancient Egyptian temples
   B. Onomastica and topographically sorted texts

2. General corpus of ancient Egyptian texts
The Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae is a publication platform made available on the Internet by the Project Structure and Transformation in the Vocabulary of the Egyptian Language (former Ancient Egyptian Dictionary Project) at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

First released for general use on the 31st of October 2004, with the aim to provide access to Ancient Egyptian texts in transliteration (ca. 1 400 000 occurrences; from Oeg to Dem. and Ptol.).

http://aaew.bbaw.de/tla/index.html
Lemmatization and morphological annotation of the text material allow for specific research from lexical, philological, linguistic, and historico-cultural points of view. All texts come with running translations.
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PLACE NAMES & TEXT CORPUS

1. Corpus of geographical texts
   A. The “soubassement” procession’s texts from ancient Egyptian temples
   B. Onomastica and topographically sorted texts

2. General corpus of ancient Egyptian texts

→ These corpora will be half-automatically processed in order to annotate bits of texts relating to space (place names, locative terms)

→ Corpus 1 will give a way to approach how ancient Egyptian place names were understood by ancient Egyptians

→ Corpus 2 will provide place names in context of use

→ This dichotomy will enable comparisons between ‘official’ (actually religious) toponymy and toponyms as experienced by ‘people’
WHAT IS AN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN (HIEROGLYPHIC) PLACE NAME?

Ancient Egyptian words are basically made of a phonemic skeleton + (generally) 1 or multiple semantic signs (classifiers/determinatives)

sesh “to write” “scribe” “piece of writing”

Some classifiers related to space

Waset, Thebes
Pa-iou-en-imen, Tell el-Balamun
WHAT IS AN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN (HIEROGLYPHIC) PERSONAL NAME?

Ancient Egyptian words are basically made of a phonemic skeleton + (generally) 1 or multiple semantic signs (classifiers/determinatives)

Main classifiers related to people:

- **Man**
- **Woman**
- **Kings**
- **Deity**
- **Imen**
- **Mesnu**
- **Ramsès II**
- **Amun**
WHAT DO WE WANT?

1. (Digital) repositories of
   A. Ancient Places
   B. Modern Places
   C. Ancient place names
   D. Actors and agents linked to these places

2. Links between these resources in order to model the ancient space
DATA MODEL

- Is required for fully capture place names and places in their context
- It helps putting metadata on our objects of research at the right place
- And thus making data more interoperable
- Is unavoidable to precisely represent the ancient space
THE THOT DATA MODEL (TDM) — MATERIAL PHILOLOGY

THE THOT DATA MODEL (TDM) — EXTENSION 2 — PLACE (PROVISIONAL!)
Stela British Museum EA 1054
(Ptolemy IV Philopator, 221-204 av. J.-C.)
‘MODERN’ PLACES

Present locations

Places of provenance

Archaeological sites and their content (fine granularity)

Available and almost available resources providing URIs

http://www.trismegistos.org/coll/

http://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/concept/thot-6197

http://www.trismegistos.org/geo/

http://topbib.griffith.ox.ac.uk/
San el-Hagar
[TopBib 401-260]

Site info
Published in PM IV, p. 13-26

Associated place name
Standardized form: San el-Hagar
Other forms: San el-Hagar (Tanis).

Ancient place
This site or group of sites is related to the ancient place Tanis (TopBib 901-119-004)

GREAT TEMPLE
[TopBib 401-260-010]

SUBSIDIARY BUILDINGS
[TopBib 401-260-020]

http://topbib.griffith.ox.ac.uk//dtb.html?topbib=401-260
Stela British Museum EA 1054
(Ptolemy IV Philopator, 221-204 av. J.-C.)
Stela British Museum EA 1054
(Ptolemy IV Philopator, 221–204 av. J.-C.)

Object BM 1054

Stela

Witness

Present location ('Modern' Place)

London
British Museum

Place of provenance ('Modern' Place)

San el-Hagar
Topbib-401-260

Ancient Place

Ancient Tanis
Topbib-901-119-004

Ancient Place

Ancient Imet
Topbib-901-119-001

Ancient Khasethaa, Necropolis of Imet
Topbib-xxx

'Modern' Place

Tell el-Faraun
Topbib-401-150

Place names

Imet

Khasethaa

Ancient Imet
topbib-901-119-001

Ancient Khasethaa, Necropolis of Imet
Topbib-xxx

Ancient Imet
topbib-901-119-001

Ancient Khasethaa, Necropolis of Imet
Topbib-xxx

Ancient Imet
topbib-901-119-001

Ancient Khasethaa, Necropolis of Imet
Topbib-xxx

Ancient Imet
topbib-901-119-001

Ancient Khasethaa, Necropolis of Imet
Topbib-xxx
‘ANCIENT’ PLACES

Available and almost available resources providing URIs

Trismegistos Places (GEO and GEOREF)
http://www.trismegistos.org/geo/

PLEIADES
https://pleiades.stoa.org/

THE DIGITAL TOPOGRAPHICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY
of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Statues, Reliefs, and Paintings
http://topbib.griffith.ox.ac.uk/
Map occurrences of place names

Compare to present day place names
WHAT DO WE WANT (MORE DETAILS)?

1. (Digital) repositories of
   A. Ancient Places
      I. definable as concrete
         • These places will enable to build bridges (or not) between ancient place names and archaeological entities;
         • And will provide settings for placing events in space.
      II. definable as fictitious
         • These places will enable to build bridges between place names and settings of fictional events
         • And might serve as a referent for concrete places
   B. Modern Places
      A. Spatial objects of any size (countries, regions, towns, parts of towns, buildings, part of building, etc.)
      B. Spottable on a map, or not
      C. Identifiable by one or multiple names
   C. Ancient place names
      A. To be linked to attestations in texts
      B. To be linked to ancient places
   D. Actors and agents who…
      • ... populate places
      • ... and create places.

2. Links between these resources in order to model the ancient space
NEED OF A SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK FOR ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MATERIAL

- Due to language complexity, place names in texts cannot be easily marked-up
- Study of place names in itself can say a lot about space
- Fact that texts can cover large monuments, there is a clear need of a fine granularity reference system
- Need of an ontology to characterize links between:
  - place names and places
  - between ‘modern’ and ‘ancient’ places
  - As well as between different ancient places

All this has to be thought in a pragmatical manner, but aim is to have high quality data (by the way, shouldn’t a 6th ★ be added to Tim Berners-Lee’s rules?)