

## THE TITLE $w^c wrw \dot{s}pntjw$

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#### Abstract:

The title  $w^c wrw \dot{s}pntjw$  is well known from 4<sup>th</sup> dynasty wall decoration. At that time, the bearer was functioned mainly as “the unique of great of the  $\dot{s}pntjw$ ”. It has been an attested title since the old Kingdom. The  $w^c wrw \dot{s}pntjw$  is a person acting as a unique person from Wadi Natroun. Moreover, it was established that the importance of that person depends on the administration employing him and the hierarchical level occupied. In this study, the author establishes that this title can be employed according to a specific scheme in which the title refers to a person. Relying on all the reachable examples, the author proves the ambivalence of the  $\dot{s}pntjw$ , both substitute and leader, and proposes to translate the term by “Truchsesse” in the cases corresponding to that scheme. His hypotheses are confirmed by the study of several particular cases. The aim of this paper is to examine the social standing of the  $w^c wrw \dot{s}pntjw$  by concentrating on known tombs and objects of this title’s bearers (e. g. the tomb of  $R^c-htp$ ), specifically tombs that contain a complete list of titles.

### 1. Introduction

The title  $w^c wrw \dot{s}pntjw$  was only mentioned with few details about the title bearers by Jones [1], Margaret [2], and Helckv [3] who discussed different meanings of the title.

#### 1.1. The historical appearance of the title

The title was one of many that appeared during the old kingdom, and it lasted at least to the middle kingdom. Its earliest example is most probable to be found in the tomb of  $R^c-htp$  in the 4<sup>th</sup> dynasty.

##### 1.1.1. $R^c-htp$

$R^c-htp$ , during the 4<sup>th</sup> dynasty, held many titles, this title was recorded by both of Mariette [4] as , and Petrie fig. (1-a, b, c) [5] as , and , and  [6]. However, Weil [7] translated it as “grand du harpon (?) du bassin de la ville d’Horus”. He held other titles as [8]:  $s3 nswt n ht.fmr mš^c tm3 wr npt imp-r stt šmsw is w^c wr \dot{s}pntyw wr w33 iwnw w^c wr hb mdh 3ms$

King's son of his body, general of the army expedition, supervisor/overseer of the works, elder of the chamber, unique one of the Shepenty(?), great prophet (Priest) of Heliopolis, unique one of festival, craftsman of the Ames scepter.

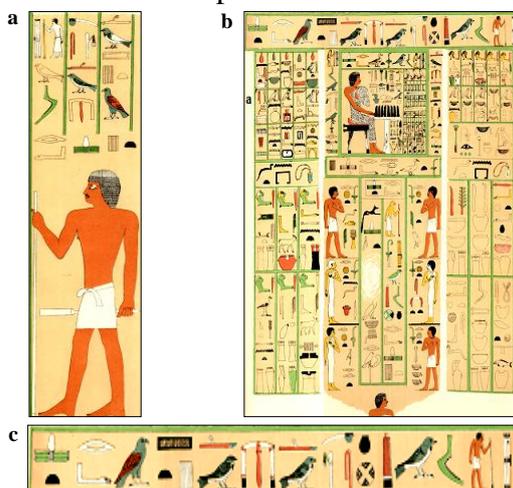


Figure (1) Shows **a**, N. side of recess, **b**, recess and lintel on it, **c**, details of the previous figure (After, Petrie, 1892)

### 1.1.2. Unknown person

This example most probably is from the same time of *R<sup>c</sup>-h<sub>tp</sub>*, in tomb no. 7 Medum, this title was recorded by Petrie as  [fig. (2) [5] and Weil, who added the sign  between two brackets as  [5,7], however, its owner is unknown, he held a few titles such as "big harpoon from the kiosk" and "big harpoon from the city of Horus".



Figure (2) Shows portion of lintel from mastaba no. 7 (After, Petrie, 1892)

### 1.1.3. *k3i-h<sub>tp</sub>/ t<sub>tj</sub>*

Most probably this example is from the same time of *R<sup>c</sup>-h<sub>tp</sub>*, in *k3i-h<sub>tp</sub>/ t<sub>tj</sub>* tomb's, pillar 4 east face, [fig. (3) [9] the title was recorded as . Although, Kanawaty read it as [w<sup>c</sup>] *w<sub>rr</sub>* [š]pntjw(?) referring to the readings of Helck [3] in the tomb of *h<sub>tp</sub>-hr-n-p<sub>th</sub>* [9], and translated it as "the unique among the great ones of the *špntjw*" [9] as it appears in the text only this part is clear, so he considered it to be as In  which he wrote w<sup>c</sup> between two brackets as [w<sup>c</sup>] [9]. However, Martinet translated it as "unique among the great (of) festive meals (?)" [10]. *t<sub>tj</sub>* held other titles as: The hereditary prince, the count, the overseer of upper Egypt, the sole-companion, the lector priest, the sem-priest, the director of every kilt, the keeper of the headdress, the director of black vase, the overseer of the two houses of silver, the overseer of the two granaries of the divine offerings, the greatest of seers, the greatest of the five, the privy to the secret of the god's treasure, the commanders of the chiefs of distribution.



Figure (3) Shows pillar 4 east face tomb of *K3i-h<sub>tp</sub>/ T<sub>tj</sub>* (After, Kanawaty, 1982)

### 1.1.4. *tp-m-<sup>c</sup>nh*

Under the reign of king Ne-User-Re, the tomb of *tp-m-<sup>c</sup>nh* [11,12] shows the title written as  and reads it as w<sup>c</sup>-wr (w)-*špntjw*, although the *p* sign is missing here in the text. In this example Kaplony [13] mentioned that this example is unquoted evidence of the title w<sup>c</sup>-wr(w)-*špntjw* in which *hb* must be part of the title.

### 1.1.5. *Thyns*

A lintel fragment of *Thyns* from most probably from the 6<sup>th</sup> dynasty, [fig. (4) [12,14] shows the title as .

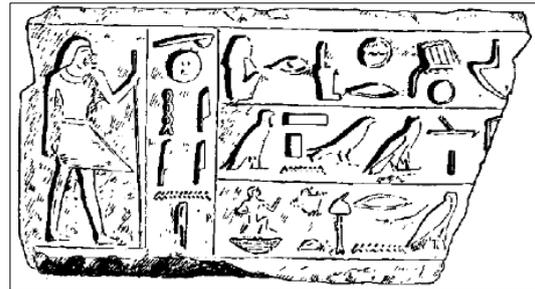
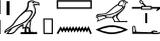


Figure (4) Shows a lintel fragment of *Thyns* (After, Lauer, 1937)

### 1.1.6. *h<sub>tp</sub>-hr-n-p<sub>th</sub>*

A door jamb of *h<sub>tp</sub>-hr-n-p<sub>th</sub>* in Cairo museum JE 15048 early/mid-6<sup>th</sup> dynasty or later, [3,15-18] shows the title as , and Strudwick read it as *w<sub>rr</sub> w<sup>c</sup> špt*. It is remarkable here that the title is written in a different order as shown above.

### 1.1.7. *h<sub>nty</sub>-h<sub>ty</sub>*

The statuette of *h<sub>nty</sub>-h<sub>ty</sub>* is dated back to the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty [19], it shows the title written on the right side as:  and read as w<sup>c</sup> *w<sub>rr</sub> šnptjw* [20].

### 1.1.8. *Mntw-h<sub>tp</sub>*

Middle kingdom during the reign of Sesostris I = the title appeared on the stela of Mentu-**H<sub>tp</sub>** (CG 20539) Bulaq 78, as Brugsch [21] as . The title here has two type of determinatives: 1-  2-  He held other titles as: "Master of the secrets of the house of life" [22].

## 2. Meaning and Duties of the Title

The title w<sup>c</sup> *w<sub>rr</sub> špntyw*, is divided into w<sup>c</sup> *w<sub>rr</sub>* and *špntyw*; w<sup>c</sup> *w<sub>rr</sub>*'s meaning is well cleared, however, *špntyw* could be problematic here in this title.





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