What’s in a Title? Military and Civil Officials in the Egyptian 18th Dynasty Military Sphere

JJ Shirley

Abstract
This paper suggests a more nuanced role for many officials involved with the Egyptian 18th Dynasty military sphere. In addition to an increase in military officials whose primary function was related to the battlefield, there existed civil officials who found themselves performing their civilian duties in a new setting – that of the military. Although this latter category of officials often refers to their participation on campaigns, they should not be considered as military men per se, nor as officials who shifted from a civil career into a military one and back again. The prominent appearance of military activities in their monuments can instead be regarded as a reflection of the socio-political circumstances in which they found themselves, and not necessarily as an indication of a formal military career. As such, they are not part of a “new class” of military men turned administrators, but rather are civil officials whose positions within Egypt mirror those they conducted under the auspices of the military, whether at home or abroad.

Introduction
Scholars of the LBA in the ancient Near East and New Kingdom Egypt are well aware of the wide-ranging impact that Egypt’s 18th Dynasty activities in Syria-Palestine had on the composition of Egypt’s government and the extent of its control or influence beyond its traditional borders. Recent publications, such as Gnirs work on the New Kingdom military,2 Redford’s re-examination of Thutmose III’s Near Eastern wars,3 and Morris’ comprehensive analysis of Egypt’s New Kingdom presence in Syria-Palestine,4 have all brought this dynamic period into sharp relief. Notwithstanding these new perspectives, Helck’s work on the administration and military in the New Kingdom, as presented in Verwaltung des Mittleren und Neuen Reichs and Der Einfluss der Militärführer, is still essentially the authority on the administrative and military changes that occurred during the 18th Dynasty. Certainly modifications have been

1 I would like to thank Dan’el Kahn for the invitation to present this paper at the Haifa conference; the current version is revised and expanded from that given at the conference, an earlier (and much shorter) version of which was presented at the 57th annual ARCE meeting, see Shirley, “A review.” While preparing this article, Betsy Bryan and Vivian Davies provided valuable insights and engaged in lengthy discussions with me about the topic, for which I am very grateful. And finally, my thanks to Raphael Cunniff for reading and commenting on earlier drafts.

2 Gnirs, Militär und Gesellschaft.
3 Redford, Wars in Syria-Palestine.
4 Morris, Architecture of Imperialism.
made, but, overall, Helck’s conclusions regarding the transition of military men into civil careers and the administrative elite are still followed.  

5 E.g. Bryan, “The Eighteenth Dynasty” and “Administration”; der Manuelian, Studies in the reign of Amenophis II; Gnirs, Militär und Gesellschaft.

6 Helck, Einfluss, esp. 33 ff., 41 ff., 71 ff. and Verwaltung, 537 f. This is not to suggest that Helck’s conclusions are entirely inaccurate, but they are certainly in need of re-examination. Indeed, it is likely that especially early in the 18th Dynasty, when military and administrative needs began to burgeon significantly, there was movement from the military to the civil administration among the elite, as Helck has suggested. Such men might include, for example, Ahmose-Pennekhbet who appears to have been a soldier first (at least through Thutmose I’s reign) and administrator only after his military exploits concluded. Interestingly, his military-related “titles” (he refers to himself as a warrior 

\[ \text{kr} \] and at least once as a brave one of the king 

\[ \text{kny n nswt} \]) occur – on his statues and in the tomb narratives – only in the context of describing his activities while on campaign (for his rewards for this service, see Binder, Gold of Honour, 148-49, Text no. 2). They do not seem to form part of his primary titulary, which is civil in nature (as overseer of the seal [\( \text{imy-r htm} \) and (first royal) herald [\( \text{wHmw} (\text{tpy nswt}) \)]) and appears following the offering formulae on his statues and the tomb’s façade. Here I must thank Vivian Davies for his thoughts and engaging discussion about this official, his monuments and inscriptions, and his role in the military and civil spheres. It should also be mentioned that Vivian Davies’ work on Ahmose Pennekheb’s tomb, presented at the Theban Symposium in Granada (May 2010), has demonstrated that in its present form the tomb belongs to Pennkheb’s “brother,” Amenhotep-Hapu, probably his great grand-nephew, and is very likely datable to the reign of Amenhotep III. It thus serves as a type of family tomb, though whether Amenhotep-Hapu took over and enlarged Pennekheb’s tomb or built a new tomb (including within it inscriptions relating to Pennekheb that were based both on his statues and his original tomb at Elkab), is uncertain. In either case, it could be assumed that Pennekheb’s original tomb inscriptions were likely more informative than what survives today. For a preliminary report on the work, see Davies, forthcoming, in British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan [online journal]. From the mid-18th Dynasty the viceroy Usersatet may have had a similar career path, though it must be said that the viceroys themselves perhaps present a special case (see Shirley, “Viceroys, Viziers & the Amun Precinct,” esp. 89, n. 65). Usersatet was a chariot-warrior, royal herald, steward of Meidum and finally viceroy. As chariot-warrior he seems to have been involved with Amenhotep II’s early campaigns, and perhaps the late ones of Thutmose III as well (cf. the Semna stele = Boston MFA 25.632; Urk. IV, 1343-4, see, e.g. der Manuelian, Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II, 154-58, fig. 37 and Leprohon, Corpus Antiquitatum Aegyptiacarum 3.II, 160-63). Usersatet’s Amara West stele (Louvre E.17341; Urk. IV, 1484-86, see, e.g., Barbotin, La voix des hieroglyphs, 156-57, no. 85) indicates that as royal herald he was involved with a variety of activities on behalf of Amenhotep II, including 

\[ \text{smnh} \] the king’s monuments and undertaking journeys (similar to Sennefri, Iamunedjeh, and Minmose, see below). See also Davies, “The British Museum epigraphic survey at Tombos” and “Kurgus 2002.”

To return to the original point, care must be taken not to class officials as part of a group of military-turned civil adminis-