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DECODING SIGNS OF IDENTITY

EGYPTIAN WORKMEN'S MARKS IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL,
HISTORICAL, COMPARATIVE AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Proceedings of a Conference in Leiden, 13-15 December 2013

edited by

B.J.J. Haring, K.V.J. van der Moazel and D.M. Soliman



NEDERLANDS INSTITUUT VOOR HET NABIJE OOSTEN
LEIDEN

PEETERS
LEUVEN

2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Ben HARING	

PART I

NON-TEXTUAL MARKS, PERSONAL AND CULTURAL

‘Writing and Reading Ourselves Out of Trouble’: Evolutionary Insights on Non-linguistic Marking Systems.....	9
Joám EVANS PIM	

Les signes lapidaires emblématiques ou monogrammatiques : un choix, deux logiques (Belgique, Espagne, France, XII ^e -XVIII ^e)	33
J.-L. VAN BELLE	

Signs Seen from Above	55
Dirk J. DE VRIES	

Numbers Do Not Count: Bias, Consistency and Specificity of ‘Numbered Signs’	67
Alex DE VOOGT	

PART II

MARKS AND GRAFFITI IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Products of the Physical Engagement with Sacred Space: the New Kingdom Non-textual Tomb-Graffiti at Saqqara.....	79
Nico STARING	

Quarry Marks in Gebel el Silsila: Signifiers of Men and Gods Alike?	113
Maria NILSSON	

PART III

MARKS, FAMILY AND ORGANISATION AT DEIR EL-MEDINA

Integrating Hieratic and Marks Data for the Prosopography of Deir el-Medina Workmen in the Early to Mid 20 th Dynasty.....	137
Mark COLLIER	

Duty Rosters and Delivery Records Composed with Marks and their Relation to the Written Administration of Deir el-Medina.....	155
Daniel M. SOLIMAN	
Methods of Identification among the Deir el-Medina Workmen and their Service Personnel. The Use of Names, Titles, Patronyms and Identity Marks in Administrative Texts.....	191
Kathrin GABLER	

PRODUCTS OF THE PHYSICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH SACRED SPACE: THE NEW KINGDOM NON-TEXTUAL TOMB-GRAFFITI AT SAQQARA

Nico STARING*

1. INTRODUCTION

Examples of ancient graffiti provide a graphic testimony to peoples' attitudes towards earlier monuments.¹ They have been described as one of the key groups of sources for the study of Egyptian uses of the past,² and are considered as one of the richest sources of evidence available of the personal experience of religion in Ancient Egypt.³ The past decade saw an increasing scholarly interest in ancient graffiti.⁴ While studies traditionally focussed almost exclusively on the textual component,⁵ more recent research has gradually included non-textual or figural graffiti as well.⁶

* Macquarie University (Sydney, Australia). I should like to thank Assoc. Prof. Boyo Ockinga for valuable feedback on an earlier draft of this paper; Dr. Iain Clark for critical remarks on the structure of this article and checking the English spelling; Dr. Trevor Evans for the opportunity to present some aspects of this paper at the Macquarie Ancient History Research Seminar on 22.08.2014 at Macquarie University; and the attendants of that seminar for critical questions and remarks. I am also greatly indebted to Dr. Paul van Pelt: this article expands on work that was carried out in close collaboration with him, and many of the ideas floated here were first raised in a joint paper published in *BMSAES* 24 (in press). Note that references to publications covering Egyptian graffiti are not all up to date: this paper was submitted in 2014.

¹ J. Málek, 'A Meeting of the Old and New: Saqqâra during the New Kingdom', in A.B. Lloyd (ed.), *Studies in Pharaonic Religion and Society in Honour of J. Gwyn Griffiths* (London, 1992), 67; N. Staring, 'Interpreting Figural Graffiti: Case Studies from a Funerary Context', in M. Horn, J. Kramer, D. Soliman, N. Staring, C. van den Hoven and L. Weiss (eds), *Current Research in Egyptology 2010: Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Symposium which took place at Leiden University, the Netherlands January 2010* (Oxford, 2011), 145.

² H. Navrátilová, 'The Visitors' Graffiti Database', in J.-C. Goyon and C. Cardin (eds), *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Egyptologists 2004* (OLA 150; Leuven, 2007), 1371.

³ J.H.F. Dijkstra, *Syene I: The Figural and Textual Graffiti from the Temple of Isis at Aswan* (BÄBA 18; Mainz am Rhein, 2012), 7.

⁴ J.A. Baird and C. Taylor (eds), *Ancient Graffiti in Context* (New York, 2011); P. Keegan, *Graffiti in Antiquity* (London, 2017).

⁵ For example D. Wildung, 'Besucherschriften', in W. Helck and E. Otto (eds), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 1 (Wiesbaden, 1975), cols 766–767; H.-J. Thissen, 'Graffiti', in W. Helck and W. Westendorf (eds), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 2 (Wiesbaden, 1976), cols 880–882; J.C. Darnell, 'Graffiti and Rock Inscriptions', in J. Allen and I. Shaw (eds), *Oxford Handbook of Egyptology* (Oxford, in press), 10–13.

⁶ M.J. Raven, 'The Temple of Taffeh, II: The Graffiti', *OMRO* 79 (1999), 81–102; E. Cruz-Uribe, *Hibis Temple Project Vol. 3: The Graffiti From the Temple Precinct* (San Antonio, 2008); Dijkstra, *Syene I*; J.C. Darnell, *Theban Desert Road Survey II: The Rock Shrine of Paḥu, Gebel Akhenaton, and Other Rock Inscriptions from the Western Hinterland of Qamūla* (YEP 1; New Haven, 2013); W.P. van Pelt and N.T.B. Staring,

The New Kingdom (ca. 1539–1077 BC) necropolis at Saqqara – the foremost (elite) cemetery for the city of Memphis – provides the spatial and cultural context for the data discussed in this paper.⁷ The graffiti were recorded in the sub- and superstructures of the tombs, and on dismantled blocks now kept in museum collections around the world.

The tomb in Egypt was considered sacred space.⁸ Therefore, it is useful to emphasize the materiality of graffiti and their physical engagement with those spaces. The figural and textual graffiti were carved into the sacred context of the tomb, thus becoming one with it.⁹ In the words of Dorman and Bryan, ‘sacred space may be said to presuppose the actualization of ritual within it and inherently provides a setting that both frames religious ceremony and can even elicit a performative response on the part of the officiant’.¹⁰

One particular group of figural tomb-graffiti are the subject of this paper: the representations of human figures. How should these figures be interpreted, and what do they tell us about the use and users of the tombs?

2. GRAFFITI: TERMINOLOGY

What exactly is understood by the term graffiti? This seemingly straightforward term appears to be rather difficult to define. This has to a large degree to do with the modern-day connotations of the word, where graffiti (from *graffiare*, ‘to scratch’) often represent certain momentary ideas or inspirations, and are considered as defacements and acts of vandalism.¹¹ The contents of Ancient Egyptian graffiti imply that they should not be interpreted along the same line.¹² A Nineteenth Dynasty (1292–1191 BC) graffito left on a wall in the Old Kingdom mastaba of the vizier Ptahshepses at Abusir (near the sanctuary

‘Interpreting Graffiti in the Saqqara New Kingdom Necropolis as Recorded Expressions of Popular Customs and Beliefs’, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

⁷ The unusually large number of figural graffiti documented in the tomb of the late Eighteenth Dynasty (ca. 1353–1335 BC) Royal Butler Ptahemwia prompted this research. For the tomb, see: M.J. Raven, R. van Walsem, B.G. Aston, L. Horáčková and N. Warner, ‘Preliminary Report on the Leiden Excavations at Saqqara, Season 2007: The Tomb of Ptahemwia’, *JEOL* 40 (2006–7), 19–39; M.J. Raven, H.M. Hays, C. Lacher, K. Duistermaat, I. Regulski, B.G. Aston, L. Horáčková and N. Warner, ‘Preliminary Report on the Leiden Excavations at Saqqara, Season 2008: The Tomb of Ptahemwia’, *JEOL* 41 (2008–9), 5–30; M.J. Raven (ed.), *The Tombs of Ptahemwia and Sethmakht at Saqqara* (forthcoming). The New Kingdom spans the time period between ca. 1539–1077 BC, but the tombs excavated at this necropolis date predominantly to its second half. For the dates used throughout this study, see: E. Hornung, R. Krauss, and D.A. Warburton (eds), *Ancient Egyptian Chronology* (HdO 83; Leiden, 2006), 492–493.

⁸ J. Assmann, ‘The Ramesside Tomb and the Construction of Sacred Space’, in N. Strudwick and J.H. Taylor (eds), *The Theban Necropolis: Past, Present and Future* (London, 2003), 51–52; B.G. Ockinga, ‘Use, Reuse, and Abuse of “Sacred Space”: Observations from Dra Abu al-Naga’, in P.F. Dorman and B.M. Bryan (eds), *Sacred Space and Sacred Function in Ancient Thebes* (SAOC 61; Chicago, 2007), 139.

⁹ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

¹⁰ P.F. Dorman and B.M. Bryan, ‘Preface’, in Dorman and Bryan (eds), *Sacred Space*, xv.

¹¹ Cf. Dijkstra, *Syene* I, 19–22; T.M. Kristensen, ‘Pilgrimage, Devotional Practices and the Consumption of Sacred Places in Ancient Egypt and Contemporary Syria’, *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20 (2014), 1–15.

¹² Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

of Sekhmet-of-Sahure) aptly illustrates this: ‘... *We are (here) before our Mistress, and we are again [leaving?] an inscription to seek a reward from you (...)*’.¹³ This statement reveals something about the custom (being a routine exercise), rationale (communication), and conditions (dependence and reciprocity) surrounding the creation of graffiti.

Recent studies of Egyptian graffiti focus largely on defining what is meant by the term, and the state of the debate may still be considered as inconclusive.¹⁴ Varying definitions have been proposed, even though most scholars appear to agree on *what* constitutes graffiti. On the whole, these definitions tend to be inherently inductive, whereas graffiti are often site-specific, or perhaps even period-specific.¹⁵ As a result, definitions based on the data from one specific context usually apply only partly to wider contexts.¹⁶ Common ground should therefore be pursued not in defining what constitutes graffiti, but in how to interpret certain graffiti in certain contexts. The carriers of the graffiti and the places in which they occur are essential to their interpretation.¹⁷

Definitions usually emphasize the informal character of graffiti – ‘invariably free of social restraints’¹⁸ or ‘constrained by fewer rules of public behaviour’¹⁹ –, and the fact that they were applied onto surfaces that were not originally intended to receive them.²⁰ While this may reflect the nature of certain groups of graffiti in places with restricted public access (such as temples), the same cannot be maintained for tombs. In tombs, graffiti appear to be an integral part of the so-called *Besucherkult* (visitors’ cult), being the results of behaviour both expected by visitors and desired by tomb owners.²¹ Viewed with that perspective,

¹³ PM III/2, 342; KRI III, 437; G. Daressy, ‘Inscription hiératique d’un mastaba d’Abousir’, *BIE* 5 (1894), 107–113; A.J. Peden, *The Graffiti of Pharaonic Egypt: Scope and Roles of Informal Writings (c. 3100–332 BC)* (PdÄ 17; Leiden, 2001), 95–96; H. Navrátilová, *The Visitors’ Graffiti of Dynasties XVIII and XIX in Abusir and Northern Saqqara* (Prague, 2007), 58–61. Inscribed (hieratic; black ink) by the Scribe Ptahemwia who visited the ‘shadow of the pyramids’ and the cult of Sekhmet-of-Sahure with his father, the Scribe Yupa and with the Scribe named Na[shuy] in Year 50 of undoubtedly Ramesses II.

¹⁴ H. Navrátilová, ‘Graffiti Spaces’, in L. Bareš, F. Coppens, and K. Smoláriková (eds), *Egypt in Transition: Social and Religious Development of Egypt in the First Millennium BCE* (Prague, 2010), 306.

¹⁵ Cruz-Uribe, *Hibis Temple Project 3*, 201 (No. 2); Navrátilová, in Bareš et al. (eds), *Egypt in Transition*, 312.

¹⁶ Cf. Cruz-Uribe, *Hibis Temple Project 3*, 187–230: a definition composed of a list of sixteen features. The list has been critically reviewed by Navrátilová, in Bareš et al. (eds), *Egypt in Transition*, 309–312.

¹⁷ Cf. F. Kammerzell, ‘Defining Non-Textual Marking Systems, Writing, and Other Systems of Graphic Information Processing’, in P. Andrassy, J. Budka, and F. Kammerzell (eds), *Non Textual Marking Systems, Writing, and Pseudo Script from Prehistory to Modern Times* (LingAeg Studia Monographica 8; Göttingen, 2009), 303.

¹⁸ Peden, *The Graffiti of Pharaonic Egypt*, xxi.

¹⁹ R. Mairs, ‘Egyptian ‘Inscriptions’ and Greek ‘Graffiti’ at El Kanais in the Egyptian Desert’, in Baird and Taylor (eds), *Ancient Graffiti in Context*, 157.

²⁰ Cruz-Uribe, *Hibis Temple Project 3*, 205–206 (No. 5); Dijkstra, *Syene* I, 22 n. 107; E. Frood, ‘Egyptian Temple Graffiti and the Gods: Appropriation and Ritualization in Karnak and Luxor’, in D. Ragavan (ed.), *Heaven on Earth: Temples, Ritual, and Cosmic Symbolism in the Ancient World* (OIS 9; Chicago, 2013), 286–287.

²¹ See the oft-quoted Saite graffito in the tomb of Ibi (TT 36): K.P. Kuhlmann, ‘Eine Beschreibung der Grabdekoration mit der Aufforderung zu kopieren und zum Hinterlassen von Besucherinschriften aus saitischer Zeit’, *MDAIK* 29 (1973), 205–210; W. Schenkel, ‘Zur Frage der Vorlagen spätzeitlicher ‘Kopien’’, in J. Assmann, E. Feucht, and R. Grieshammer (eds), *Fragen an die altägyptische Literatur: Studien zum Gedenken*

such graffiti are indeed secondary inscriptions in the sense that they do not belong to the primary state of the place where they were applied.²² This does not exclude them from belonging to the primary *function* of that place (*in casu*: a tomb).²³ The simple fact that the custom of leaving graffiti was so widespread in Ancient Egypt supports the hypothesis that they did belong to that primary function – if only as an expected and anticipated reaction to it.

For the reasons outlined above, the term graffiti in the context of the present paper is perceived in deliberately loose, generic terms, to include writings and drawings that are incised, scratched or painted²⁴ onto extant architectural features²⁵ and non-portable objects.²⁶

3. NEW KINGDOM TOMB-GRAFFITI AT SAQQARA: PRESENTATION OF DATA

The groups of graffiti to be analysed in this paper were recorded in the New Kingdom necropolis at Saqqara. This necropolis was embedded within an ancient mortuary landscape.²⁷ It is located ca. 20 km south of present-day Cairo, on the edge of the desert plateau to the west of the river Nile and the ancient capital Memphis. The tombs analysed in relation to this study belong to members of the highest echelons of society dating to the late Eighteenth Dynasty to the Nineteenth Dynasty, reign of Ramesses II (ca. 1353–1213 BC).²⁸

A previous study of these groups of graffiti resulted in the formation of a framework for the interpretation of textual and figural tomb-graffiti.²⁹ It has been shown that the motifs of the graffiti in general have apotropaic associations, or are linked to ideas of regeneration and rebirth. In this paper the group of figural graffiti pertaining to human figures will be analysed in further depth. Due to their ability to convey identity, human

an Eberhard Otto (Wiesbaden, 1977), 417–444; K.P. Kuhlmann and W. Schenkel, *Das Grab des Ibi, Obergutsverwalters der Gottesgemahlin des Amun: Thebanisches Grab Nr. 36, 1: Beschreibung der unterirdischen Kult- und Bestattungsanlage* (AVDAIK 15; Mainz am Rhein, 1983), 71–73, pl. 23; Darnell, *Theban Desert Road Survey II*, 80; Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES 24* (in press).

²² C.C.D. Ragazzoli, 'The Social Creation of a Scribal Place: The Visitors' Inscriptions in the Tomb Attributed to Antefiqer (TT 60) (With Newly Recorded Graffiti)', *SAK* 42 (2013), 293.

²³ Cf. Assmann, in Strudwick and Taylor (eds), *The Theban Necropolis*, 46 ('memory function' or function of 'biographical representation'); M.K. Hartwig, *Tomb Painting and Identity in Ancient Thebes, 1419-1372 BCE* (MonAeg 10; Turnhout, 2004), 5–15.

²⁴ *Stricto sensu*, painted 'graffiti' should be termed *dipinti*.

²⁵ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES 24* (in press). Darnell, in Allen and Shaw (eds), *Oxford Handbook*, 1–35, considers rock inscriptions (carved on natural desert surfaces) and 'graffiti proper' (carved on existing monuments) as two categories of graffiti. I consider the distinction between natural surfaces ('desert landscape (...) barren of points of socialized topography', Darnell, *Theban Desert Road Survey II*, 80) and man-made architectural surfaces (certainly of functioning buildings) as a meaningful one.

²⁶ Non-portable objects (such as statues and stelae) formed an integral part of the tomb. Portable objects (such as votive stelae and ostraca) could be introduced in the sacred space at any time. As will be outlined below, there is a degree of overlap in the pictorial and textual content of graffiti and portable objects. Graffiti, however, had a permanent character.

²⁷ The earliest tombs recorded date to the First Dynasty, ca. 2900–2730 BC.

²⁸ Late Eighteenth Dynasty, reigns of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten to Horemheb: 1353–1292 BC; Nineteenth Dynasty, reigns of Ramesses I to Ramesses II: 1292–1213 BC.

²⁹ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES 24* (in press).

figures are a particularly interesting group when trying to answer such questions as who visited tombs and for what purposes. The main aim of this paper, therefore, is to propose an interpretation for the figural graffiti recorded in these tombs – specifically those depicting human figures.³⁰

Let us start with the presentation of the data. A total of 243 graffiti have been recorded on the stone surfaces of the New Kingdom private funerary monuments at Saqqara. The two main groups are identified as figural (n=202; 83.1%) and textual (n=41; 16.9%). These numbers indicate that the practice of leaving figural graffiti was much more common than leaving texts.³¹

The textual graffiti can be divided according to script: hieroglyphic (n=19; 46.3%) and hieratic (n=22; 53.7%). The figural graffiti can be divided in eight groups: human figures (n=95; 47%), human feet (n=9; 4.5%), animals (n=32; 15.8%), flowers (n=9; 4.5%), boats (n=18; 9%), geometric forms (n=18; 9%), furniture (n=3; 1.5%), and miscellaneous (n=18; 9%).³²

The human figures (n=95; 39% of total) represent the largest group of graffiti at Saqqara, and they can be divided in four groups: human figures (n=48; 50.5%), human heads (n=42; 44.2%), human eyes (n=3; 3.1%), and anthropomorphic deities (n=2; 2.1%). A number of human figures depict the king in profile, either the complete profile (n=3; 3.1%) or the head (n=15; 15.8%).

Where were the graffiti left and is it possible to discern any patterns? The spatial distribution of human figures in the tombs (fig. 1) does not deviate substantially from the overall distribution of figural graffiti as a whole.³³ The entrance doorway was favoured, receiving 37.9% (n=36) of the figures. This is followed by the courtyards with 32.6% (n=31) and the chapels located in the west with 15.8% (n=15). This pattern may indicate a correlation between the increasing sacredness towards the inner spaces of the tomb (towards the west) and public accessibility, which is strikingly similar to the distribution of graffiti as observed in contemporaneous temples.³⁴ For common people,³⁵ the outer spaces represented thresholds between the sacred and the profane.³⁶ Entrance doorways in general were considered as liminal zones, certainly in tombs.³⁷ The deceased dwelt in their

³⁰ The interpretation of graffiti depicting human figures expands on ideas first developed in Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

³¹ Compare to graffiti at Karnak (n=1428): 82.9% figures; 17.1% texts. C. Traunecker, 'Manifestations de piété personnelle à Karnak', *BSFE* 85 (1979), 23.

³² Cf. the categorisation of figured graffiti applied by Dijkstra, *Syene* I.

³³ Compare to Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press), fig. 39.

³⁴ Traunecker, *BSFE* 85, 24; M.M. Luiselli, *Die Suche nach Gottesnähe: Untersuchungen zur Persönlichen Frömmigkeit in Ägypten von der Ersten Zwischenzeit bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches* (ÄAT 73; Wiesbaden, 2011), 58–59.

³⁵ The 'common people' are those people who do not belong to the temple's priesthood.

³⁶ Luiselli, *Die Suche nach Gottesnähe*, 59; Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

³⁷ L. Meskell, 'The Egyptian Ways of Death', in M.S. Chesson (ed.), *Social Memory, Identity and Death: Anthropological Perspectives on Mortuary Rituals* (Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association 10/1; 2001), 30; N. Harrington, *Living with the Dead: Ancestor Worship and Mortuary Ritual in Ancient Egypt* (Oxford, 2013), 86, 94.

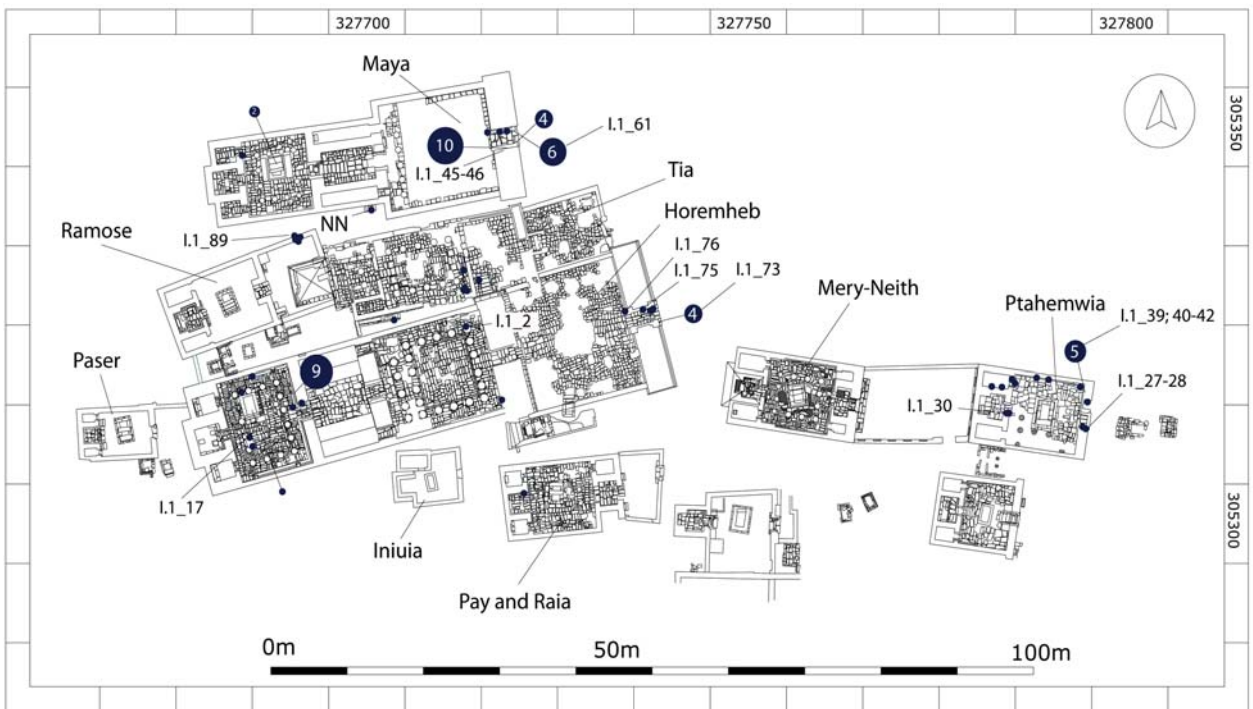


Fig. 1. General plan of the Leiden concession area of the New Kingdom necropolis at Saqqara showing the distribution of graffiti depicting human figures and the location of graffiti depicting the king (with Nos in accordance with Fig. 7).

houses of eternity (*ḥw.t n.t nḥḥ*), where they could be approached by, and interact with the living. The tombs' courtyard(s) accommodated statues of the deceased (inscribed with offering formulae and/or Appeals to the Living) and it was the place where mortuary cults and services for the deceased were staged.

The human figures do not generally interact with the extant tomb decoration: 83 figures (87.4%) were left on undecorated walls and on the undecorated dado of otherwise decorated walls. This indicates that their presence within the sacred space of the tomb was considered more important than their possible interaction with the extant wall decoration (which is attested by tomb-graffiti at Thebes).³⁸

The figures do not form any coherent compositions when they are clustered together (fig. 2a–b). This indicates that each graffito represents the action of one individual unrelated to the actions that resulted in the production of the circumjacent graffiti. The clustering merely shows that a particular spot presented a popular, convenient and/or meaningful place to leave a graffito.

³⁸ A. Den Doncker, 'Theban Tomb Graffiti during the New Kingdom: Research on the Reception of Ancient Egyptian Images by Ancient Egyptians', in K.A. Kóthay (ed.), *Art and Society: Ancient and Modern Contexts of Egyptian Art. Proceedings of the International Conference held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 13-15 May 2010* (Budapest, 2012), 25; Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

Table 1. Textual graffiti recorded at New Kingdom tombs at Saqqara that mention the name and/or title(s) of the graffitist. Asterisk indicates a visitors' graffiti formula.

No.	Tomb	Name	Title	Script	Technique
II.1_2	Horemheb	<i>Pȳiȳy</i>	–	Hieroglyphic	Boldly incised
II.1_3	Horemheb	<i>Pȳ-n-dwȳ</i>	<i>tȳy mdȳ.t</i>	Hieroglyphic	Boldly incised
II.1_4	Horemheb	<i>[Pȳ]-R^c-m-hb</i>	<i>tȳy mdȳ.t</i>	Hieroglyphic	Boldly incised
II.1_7	Horemheb	<i>ȳh-p.t</i>	<i>sȳ pr-hd</i>	Hieroglyphic	Incised
II.1_8	Pay/Raia	<i>Nby-w^c.w</i>	<i>hry tȳy</i>	Hieroglyphic	Incised
II.1_9	Pay/Raia	<i>ȳI///</i>	<i>w^cb</i>	Hieroglyphic	Incised
II.1_10	Pay/Raia	<i>ȳh-ms</i>	<i>w^cb hr(y)-hb hw.t Pth</i>	Hieroglyphic	Incised
II.1_11	Pay/Raia	<i>///</i>	<i>///wr</i>	Hieroglyphic	Incised
II.1_17	Khay	<i>H^cy</i>	–	Hieroglyphic	Incised
II.2_1	Paser	<i>Nht-ȳImn</i>	<i>i^cw</i>	Hieratic	Black ink
II.2_2	Horemheb	<i>Pȳy-sȳw.ty</i>	–	Hieratic	Incised
II.2_3*	Horemheb	<i>ȳImn-m-hb</i>	<i>sȳ</i>	Hieratic	Scratched
II.2_4	Horemheb	<i>///</i>	<i>sȳ</i>	Hieratic	Scratched
II.2_7	Horemheb	<i>ȳImn-m[-hb]</i>	<i>sȳ</i>	Hieratic	Scratched
II.2_8*	Horemheb	<i>Pȳ-n-tȳ-wr.t</i>	<i>sȳ</i>	Hieratic	Incised
II.2_9	Tia	<i>Pȳ-ȳri-n-i^ch</i>	<i>sȳ</i>	Hieratic	Scratched
II.2_10	Pay/Raia	<i>Ms</i>	<i>sȳ</i>	Hieratic	Scratched
II.2_11	NN	<i>Hwy</i>	<i>sȳ</i>	Hieratic	Incised
II.2_15	Maya	<i>Smn///</i>	–	Hieratic	Black ink
II.2_16	Maya	<i>H^cy</i>	–	Hieratic	Black ink
II.2_17	Maya	<i>Wsr///</i>	–	Hieratic	Black ink
II.2_18	Maya	<i>Dd-Pth-ȳw=f^cnh</i>	<i>sȳ</i>	Hieratic	Scratched
II.2_19	Maya	<i>///</i>	<i>sȳ nsw ȳm.y-r///</i>	Hieratic	Scratched
II.2_21	Horemheb	<i>Pȳy-ndm</i>	<i>sȳ</i>	Hieratic	Scratched
II.2_22*	Mery-Neith	<i>///</i>	<i>sȳ pr-hd</i>	Hieratic	Incised

The techniques employed can reveal something about the backgrounds of the visitors who produced graffiti. Only a small proportion of the population would have had access to writing/painting equipment. Scratching a figure on the wall, on the other hand, could be done by anyone with any sharp tool (such as flint) at hand. In the New Kingdom necropolis at Saqqara, fourteen human figures (14.7%) were painted and 80 (84.2%) were incised. This distribution seems to indicate that not many graffitists will have been scribes carrying their writing equipment. The overview of techniques used to produce textual graffiti (see table 1, above) indicates that only few scribes used their scribe's outfit. Thus, the technique employed to produce a graffito (incised *vs.* painted) does not necessarily hint at the degree of literacy of the graffitist. It could also reveal something about intention (a scribe who had intended to leave a graffito while visiting the necropolis would have

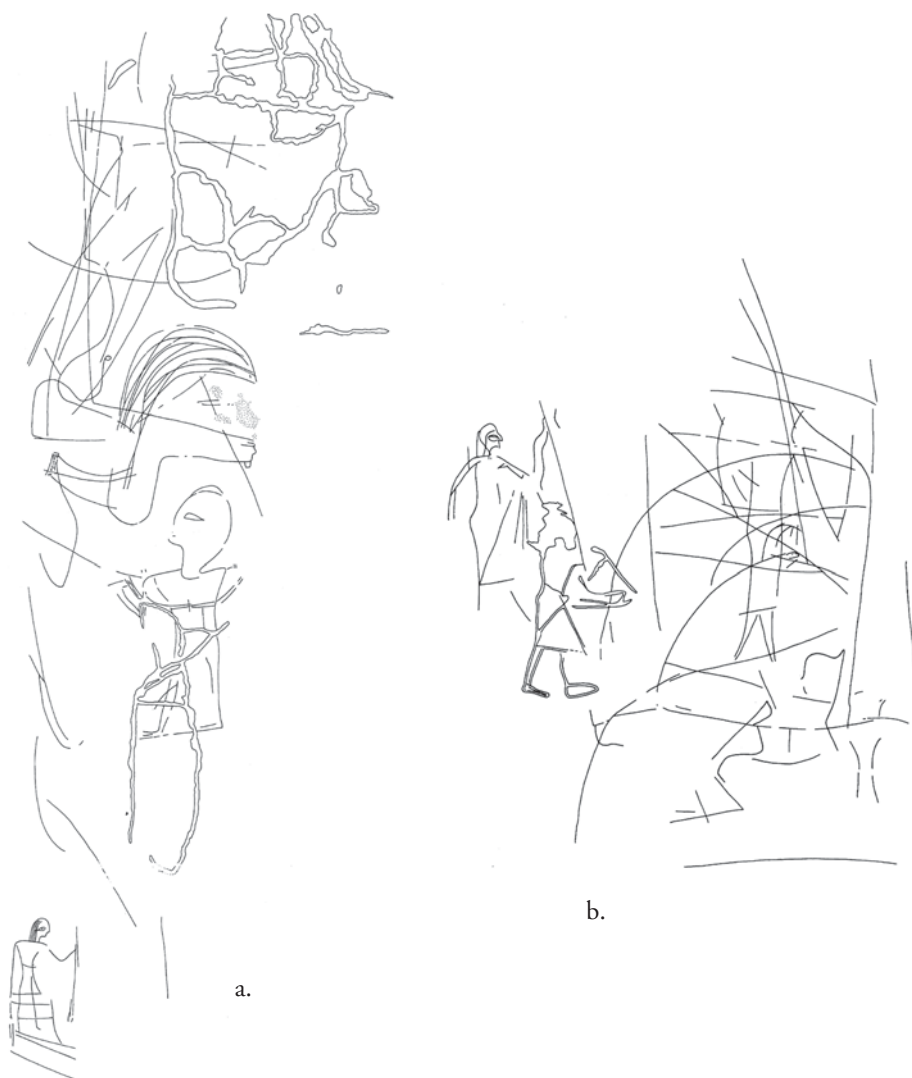


Fig. 2. Clusters of graffiti depicting human figures in the late Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Maya, Overseer of the Treasury (Martin, *Maya* I, pl. 61.18–19).

Image courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.

taken his writing equipment with him) or durability (an incised graffito naturally endures longer than does a graffito produced in ink).

The figures were on the whole rather unassuming in size: 36 (37.9%) measure less than 10 cm in height; 31 (32.6%) measure between 10 and 20 cm in height, and 14 figures are larger (13.7%).³⁹

³⁹ Ten specimens measure between 20 and 40 cm; three between 40 and 47 cm; and one measures 77.6 cm. The measurements of fourteen figures (14.7%) are unknown.

4. THE SPATIAL CONTEXT OF THE GRAFFITI: THE MEMPHITE TEMPLE-TOMBS

As has been signalled in the introduction, it is useful to emphasize the materiality of graffiti and their physical engagement with the spaces in which they were introduced. The nature of the architectural setting can be instructive when analysing the nature of the graffiti.⁴⁰ Let us therefore turn to the architectural setting for the graffiti discussed in relation to this paper: the Memphite New Kingdom temple-tombs.

A special feature of the tombs at Saqqara is that they held architectonic and decorative similarities to contemporary (mortuary) temples.⁴¹ While the incorporation of the temple-function, which required a courtyard,⁴² was not an exclusively Memphite development,⁴³ the tombs at Saqqara have the distinguishing feature that they are completely freestanding structures.

The so-called sacralisation of a private tomb gave it the character of a private temple which provided the deceased with a place on earth where he/she could worship the gods for eternity and be close to them.⁴⁴ Moreover, the Memphite necropolis, commonly referred to as *r-stꜣw*, was considered to be the domain of the god (Ptah-)Sokar(-Osiris). Each tomb-shaft could be similarly designated as Rosetau.

The deceased provided the facilities for contact with the living by means of architecture, iconography, statues, and inscriptions. Visitors could seek interaction as well, for example by dedicating a votive stela. Stelae in general functioned as an interface; a mode of contact between the living and the dead. The subject matter and composition of scenes (arranged vertically) represented an idealised view of activities that were meant to take place within the confines of the tomb. This system (ideally) relied on dependence and reciprocity. The dead needed the living for securing a continuity of provisions, food and drink, and, perhaps most importantly, securing the memory of one's name among the living.⁴⁵ The living, in turn, needed the dead as mediators for contact with the gods.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ This approach has also been argued for in Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

⁴¹ J. van Dijk, *The New Kingdom Necropolis of Memphis: Historical and Iconographical Studies* (PhD thesis, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen; Groningen, 1993), 200–202.

⁴² Assmann, in Strudwick and Taylor (eds), *The Theban Necropolis*, 51.

⁴³ The same development can be observed in Theban tombs, see: B. Ockinga, 'Macquarie Theban Tombs Project TT 148 the Tomb of Amenemope: Report on the 1994/1995 and 1995/1996 Seasons', *BACE* 7 (1996), 67–69, fig. 1.

⁴⁴ Assmann, in Strudwick and Taylor (eds), *The Theban Necropolis*, 49–51 ('temple function'); Ockinga, in Dorman and Bryan (eds), *Sacred Space*, 139.

⁴⁵ Cf. the phrase *s'nh m=f*, 'who causes his name to live', which identifies the dedicator (usually the (eldest) son) of a stela to a deceased relative. See: M. Nelson-Hurst, "'... who causes his name to live", The Vivification Formula Through the Second Intermediate Period', in Z. Hawass and J. Houser Wegner (eds), *Millions of Jubilees: Studies in Honor of David P. Silverman* (ASAE Supp 39; Cairo, 2010), 13–31.

⁴⁶ As can be read in the Letters to the Dead, the living also sought help from the dead against perceived enemies amongst the dead (sometimes their deceased relatives), who were believed to have caused misfortunes suffered by the living (E.F. Wente, 'Correspondence', in D.B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford, 2001), I, 313–314; Harrington, *Living with the Dead*, 34–37.

5. TEXTUAL GRAFFITI COMMEMORATING TOMB-VISITS

Who were the people producing the graffiti? A major problem in the study of figural graffiti is the absence of any direct (i.e. written) clues (such as names, titles, or an explanation or motivation) about or by the graffitist. Results of research on textual graffiti, however, can be instructive when trying to interpret the rationale behind their figural equivalents, certainly as they are presumably the result of similar practices.⁴⁷ For that reason, I will start with the textual graffiti in working towards an interpretation of the human figures.

A tomb presented an ideal place for the self-representation of its owner⁴⁸ (communicative character) and enabled him to make his name endure among the living (memory function).⁴⁹ The tomb owner availed himself of several visual (visual rhetoric)⁵⁰ and textual (Appeals to the Living)⁵¹ strategies to attract prospective visitors. Visitors' graffiti can be considered positive reactions to these visual and textual expressions,⁵² and therefore they may represent a type of communication with the world of the dead.⁵³ In some cases they could be interpreted as parallels to the Letters to the Dead⁵⁴ or as responses to the Appeals to the Living.⁵⁵ This interpretation has recently been further explored by Ragazzoli who notes similarities in lexical choices between the corpora of visitors' graffiti and the Appeals.⁵⁶

The graffitists invariably identified themselves as scribes.⁵⁷ It has been demonstrated that this title should be understood not in the narrow sense to connote a title of office, but rather in the broader meaning as a literate person, conveying values of a certain scribal

⁴⁷ Cf. E. Cruz-Urbe, 'Graffiti (Figural)', in W. Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Los Angeles, 2008), 1 <<http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz000s7j4s>> accessed 25.11.2014; Navrátilová, in Bareš et al. (eds), *Egypt in Transition*, 307; Frood, in Ragavan (ed.), *Heaven on Earth*, 286. See also the rock shrine of the *wab* priest Pahu (Eighteenth Dynasty, early second half), who left rock carvings comprising texts, figures and combinations of both (Darnell, *Theban Desert Road Survey II*, 7–82).

⁴⁸ J. Assmann, 'Sepulkrale Selbstthematisierung im alten Ägypten', in A. Hahn and V. Knapp (eds), *Selbstthematisierung und Selbstzeugnis: Bekenntnis und Geständnis* (Frankfurt am Main, 1987), 208–232; B. Engelmann-von Carnap, 'Soziale Stellung und Grabablage: zur Struktur des Friedhofs der ersten Hälfte der 18. Dynastie in Scheich Abd el-Qurna und Chocha', in J. Assmann (ed.), *Thebanische Beamtennekropolen: Neue Perspektiven archäologischer Forschung, Internationales Symposium Heidelberg 9.-13.6.1993* (SAGA 12; Heidelberg, 1995), 107–128.

⁴⁹ J. Assmann, *Death and Salvation in Ancient Egypt* (Ithaca, 2005), 41–56 ('Gedächtniskultur').

⁵⁰ M.K. Hartwig, 'Style and Visual Rhetoric in Theban Tomb Painting', in Z. Hawass and L. Pinch Brock (eds), *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists, Cairo 2000*, Vol. 2 (Cairo, 2003), 298–307; Den Doncker, in Kóthay (ed.), *Art and Society*, 23.

⁵¹ C. Müller, 'Anruf an Lebende', in W. Helck and E. Otto (eds), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 1 (Wiesbaden, 1975), cols. 293–299; C. Salvador, 'From the Realm of the Dead to the House of the God: The New Kingdom Appeals to the Living in Context at Thebes', in K. Accetta, R. Fellingner, P. Lourenço Gonçalves, S. Musselwhite, and P. van Pelt (eds), *Current research in Egyptology 2013: Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Symposium: University of Cambridge, United Kingdom March 19-22, 2013* (Oxford, 2014), 153–167.

⁵² Den Doncker, in Kóthay (ed.), *Art and Society*, 23–34.

⁵³ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

⁵⁴ Navrátilová, *Visitors' Graffiti*, 144.

⁵⁵ Navrátilová, in Bareš et al. (eds), *Egypt in Transition*, 308.

⁵⁶ Ragazzoli, *SAK* 42, 282–286.

⁵⁷ Outside the tomb-context, e.g. in the Theban mountains, a wide spectrum of titles of office are associated with the graffiti (Navrátilová, in Bareš et al. (eds), *Egypt in Transition*, 315–316), which probably reflects a different rationale.

milieu.⁵⁸ Their fixed form may have communicated the graffitist's degree of literacy and scribal knowledge to future visitors.⁵⁹ As the graffiti texts are inscribed in anticipation of being read, they can be argued to have set in motion a 'cycle of benefits'.⁶⁰ The visitor (graffitist) is attracted by the Appeals, reads the iconography and texts, and responds to it according to what is customarily expected – reciting texts, making adorations and presenting offerings – and perpetuates that act by leaving a graffito.⁶¹ As this memento will eventually be read by future visitors, the graffitist secures his own space in the tomb to benefit from its magical efficacy.⁶²

The question arises whether (and if so, to what extent) the same applies to the graffiti recorded in the New Kingdom necropolis at Saqqara. Their form and content are presented in Table 1.

In relation to the observations made in the discussion above, the set of data in Table 1 highlights four points of interest:

1. The variety of script.
Both hieratic (n=16; 64%) and hieroglyphic (n=9; 36%) are employed. Whereas the scribes' script of choice was hieratic, more than one-third of tomb-graffiti at Saqqara were executed in hieroglyphic.
2. The distribution of graffiti formulae.
A minimum of twenty-three texts (92%) are so-called signatures and two (8%) are of a descriptive type.⁶³ The latter contain the typical visitors' graffiti formulae. These normally start with *iw.t pw ir N*, '[The scribe *N*] came ...' and *iy.t ir.n N*, 'there came [the scribe *M*] ...'. The majority of texts recorded at Saqqara are signatures. These probably commemorated the visit of the graffitist to a particular site and might be considered as an abbreviation of more elaborate (although unspecified) formulae.
3. The variety of titles.
The title 'scribe' (n=9; 36%) is attested most often and a minimum of ten graffitists held other, or more specific scribal titles.
4. The correlation between titles and script.
Those who wrote in hieratic almost exclusively identified themselves as scribes. The hieroglyphic graffiti were left exclusively by people bearing different titles.

⁵⁸ Den Doncker, in Kóthay (ed.), *Art and Society*, 26; C. Ragazzoli, 'Weak Hands and Soft Mouths. Elements of a Scribal Identity in the New Kingdom', *ZÄS* 137 (2010), 158–159; Ragazzoli, *SAK* 42, 270, 276.

⁵⁹ Den Doncker, in Kóthay (ed.), *Art and Society*, 28.

⁶⁰ Ragazzoli, *SAK* 42, 288–289.

⁶¹ Due to the magical power of written texts to bring into existence that which is written, acts that were not performed in reality might be perpetuated by leaving a graffito: K.R. Ritner, 'Magic in the Afterlife', in D.B. Redford (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford, 2001), II, 333–336; Hartwig, *Tomb Painting and Identity*, 8; E. Meyer-Dietrich, 'Recitation, Speech Acts, and Declamation', in W. Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Los Angeles, 2010), 3 <<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1gh1q0md>> accessed 10.11.2014; Ragazzoli, *SAK* 42, 288.

⁶² Den Doncker, in Kóthay (ed.), *Art and Society*, 24–25; Ragazzoli *SAK* 42, 288–289; Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

⁶³ For the different formulae, see: Navrátilová, *Visitors' Graffiti*, 132–133.

These observations deviate from the trends observed both at Thebes and in the greater Memphite necropolis.⁶⁴

Furthermore, the observations are not in line with the argument that graffitists preferably identified themselves as scribes in compliance with a certain scribal culture.⁶⁵ How should these deviating patterns best be explained?

The critical difference between the varying graffiti spaces is their relative age at the time of applying the graffiti. At Thebes and in the greater Memphite necropolis, the tombs represented monuments from the distant past. The people who visited those tombs may have been motivated by a sense of historic awareness. The graffiti that are the subject of this paper, on the other hand, were inscribed in contemporaneous structures. These were still functioning with an actively maintained mortuary cult and/or received (additional) burials. Visitors to these tombs may have had a closer personal relationship to the dead. The graffiti could have been left during visits connected to the funerary rituals performed during⁶⁶ and mortuary practices after burial. This hypothesis is best illustrated by the (originally) anonymous offering bearers in the pylon doorways of the tombs of Maya and Tia.⁶⁷ At some stage (possibly related to the burial of the tomb owner), short texts were inscribed in front of, or above these figures. The texts contained a title and name ('signatures') and were written (incised) in hieroglyphs. As a result, these generic offering bearers were transformed into very specific individuals.⁶⁸ By so doing, these people secured their permanent presence in the following of the tomb owner and, more importantly, benefited from the magical efficacy offered by the tomb's decoration programme.⁶⁹ The titles associated with these figures indicate that they were not random visitors, but rather subordinates to the tomb owner: officials of middle to lower rank. The hieroglyphic graffiti incised by people who identified themselves other than 'scribes' should undoubtedly be interpreted along the same line. Those graffiti were inscribed by people involved in the burial(s) (not necessarily of the main tomb owner) and/or the subsequent mortuary cult (such as (*wab*-) priests). The use of hieroglyphic script was a conscious choice: it is the monumental script used in funerary contexts and it was aimed at securing eternity.⁷⁰

⁶⁴ These are New Kingdom visitors' graffiti left in Old Kingdom monuments at Abusir, Saqqara, and Dahshur. See: Navrátilová, *Visitors' Graffiti*, passim.

⁶⁵ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

⁶⁶ For the funerary rituals (ideally) performed at an (elite) tomb, see: C. Theis, *Deine Seele zum Himmel, dein Leichnam zur Erde: Zur idealtypischen Rekonstruktion eines altägyptischen Bestattungsritual* (BSAK 12; Hamburg, 2011), 139–173.

⁶⁷ Maya: G.T. Martin, *The Tomb of Maya and Meryt I: The Reliefs, Inscriptions, and Commentary* (EES EM 99; London, 2012), pls 9, 11–13, 16; Tia: G.T. Martin, *The tomb of Tia and Tia: A royal monument of the Ramesside Period in the Memphite necropolis* (EES EM 58; London, 1997), pls 37, 39.

⁶⁸ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

⁶⁹ The example of Iuruf, who was buried in the forecourt of his superior Tia, illustrates that the wish for the permanent presence in the following of the tomb owner can be understood very literally. See M.J. Raven, *The Tomb of Iuruf: A Memphite Official in the Reign of Ramesses II* (EES EM 57; Leiden and London, 1991). For Theban tombs, Den Doncker, in Kóthay (ed.), *Art and Society*, 24–25, observed that 'signatures' preserved the integrity of images and in doing so 'magically reused' them by taking into account the symbolic value of the image.

⁷⁰ J. Assmann, 'Gebrauch und Gedächtnis: Die zwei Kulturen des pharaonischen Ägypten', in D. Harth and A. Assmann (eds), *Kultur als Lebenswelt und Monument* (Frankfurt, 1991), 142–144.

6. GROUPS OF FIGURAL GRAFFITI COMMEMORATING TOMB-VISITS

In addition to written graffiti, certain groups of figural graffiti also commemorated peoples' visits to monuments. The best examples include the incised footprints (*vestigia; plantae pedis*) and depictions of boats. Footprints reflect the Ancient Egyptian custom to mark one's worshipful presence before a deity,⁷¹ which can be considered as a type of votive practice.⁷² By inscribing their name, title and footprints on the Khonsu-temple roof at Karnak, lower-clergy priests would remain forever in the presence of 'their' god.⁷³ These wishes were made explicitly clear by the texts that often accompanied them, and they were similarly used later in the Demotic *rn=f mn*-formula ('his name endures'). Depictions of boats served a similar goal, as they graphically represented one's safe arrival at a sacred site and simultaneously ensured that person's perpetual presence at that place.⁷⁴ As such, these types of graffiti can be regarded as metonyms representing both identity and journey.⁷⁵

It is possible that representations of human figures in the Saqqara necropolis should similarly be interpreted as testimonies of devotional interaction, perhaps left by an illiterate (or less literate) section of the Egyptian population.⁷⁶ The depiction of a human figure certainly represents a more explicit, personal expression of identity. It may explain the large quantity of human figures in the corpus of non-textual tomb-graffiti. In a temple-context, the footprints can be regarded as a cheaper alternative to the statues that were placed in courtyards by higher-ranking officials.

This hypothesis is corroborated by graffiti left on a block that originally formed part of the (now lost) tomb of Pahemneter, the Memphite High Priest of Ptah (*sm wr-hrp-hmw.w*), at Saqqara (Stockholm, Medelhavsmuseet NME 053; fig. 3).⁷⁷ On account of the block's

⁷¹ Dijkstra, *Syene I*, 43–47, 153.

⁷² G. Pinch and E.A. Waraksa, 'Votive Practices', in J. Dieleman and W. Wendrich (eds), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Los Angeles, 2009), 4 <<http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nfbgg>> accessed 11.11.2014.

⁷³ H. Jacquet-Gordon, *The temple of Khonsu, Volume 3: The Graffiti on the Temple Roof at Karnak: A Manifestation of Personal Piety* (OIP 123; Chicago, 2003), 5.

⁷⁴ Dijkstra, *Syene I*, 73.

⁷⁵ This practice was not only used in Ancient Egypt and the wider Mediterranean, but also far beyond, as has been demonstrated for the San rock-engravings in South Africa: S. Ouzman, 'Seeing is Deceiving: Rock Art and the Non-visual', *World Archaeology* 33/2 (2001), 237–256.

⁷⁶ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

⁷⁷ Previously NME 32014; probably ex-coll. d'Anastasi, 1826. See: PM III/2, 709; B.J. Peterson, 'Some Reliefs from the Memphite Necropolis', *Medelhavsmuseet Bulletin* 5 (1969), 8–10, figs 4–5; G.T. Martin, *Corpus of reliefs of the New Kingdom from the Memphite Necropolis and Lower Egypt* (London, 1987), 42–43, No. 112, pl. 41. For the tomb of Pahemneter, see: PM III/2, 708–9 (possibly located near the Jeremias Monastery). Pahemneter officiated during the reigns of Seti I (1290–1279 BC) and Ramesses II (early): C. Raedler, 'Prestige, Role and Performance: Ramesside High Priests of Memphis', in R. Gundlach and K. Spence (eds), *5. Symposium zur altägyptischen Königsideologie/5th Symposium on Egyptian Royal Ideology: Palace and Temple. Architecture – Decoration – Ritual. Cambridge, July 16th-17th, 2007* (KSG 4.2; Wiesbaden, 2011), 137 and table 1. This official is possibly depicted on the so-called '*fragment Daressy*' alongside other 'famous men from the past': PM III/2, 571–572 (left fragment); B. Mathieu, 'Réflexions sur le "Fragment Daressy" et ses hommes illustres', in C. Zivie-Coche and I. Guerneur (eds), *"Parcourir l'éternité": hommages à Jean Yoyotte 2* (BEHE SHP 156; Turnhout, 2012), 819–852 (esp. pp. 834–835). I wish to thank Carolin Johansson and Ove Kaneberg of the Medelhavsmuseet for advice and permission to publish the block.

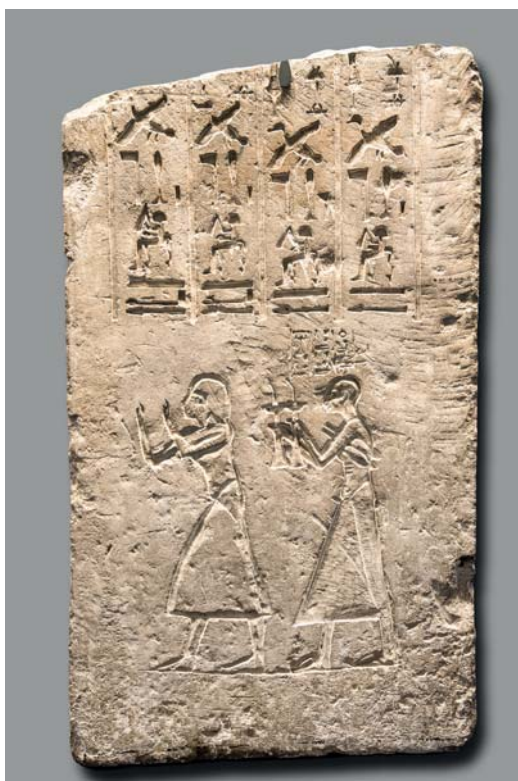


Fig. 3. Limestone doorjamb fragment (77 × 46 × 15.5 cm) from the tomb of Pahemeter, High Priest of Ptah, at Saqqara. Stockholm, Medelhavsmuseet NME 053. © Medelhavsmuseet. Photograph by Ove Kaneberg.

dimensions (width: 46 cm), the four text columns,⁷⁸ and the orientation of the signs, it will have formed part of a doorjamb on the right-hand side to the central axis of the tomb's accessible superstructure.⁷⁹ At some point after the original tomb decoration had been applied, two male figures were roughly carved on the block's undecorated dado. The figure on the left is depicted in a striding pose and he raises his hands in adoration;⁸⁰ the second man, with shaven head, follows as he brings two censers and several jars clutched under his arms. Censers were used to initiate contact with the dead and the divine, and the jars will have contained liquids for offering purposes.⁸¹ A short, incised hieroglyphic inscription

⁷⁸ Each column undoubtedly started with a *hṯp dī nsw* offering formula, and concluded with the owner's title(s) and name.

⁷⁹ Cf. N. Staring, 'The Tomb of Ptahmose, Mayor of Memphis: Analysis of an Early 19th Dynasty Funerary Monument at Saqqara', *BIFAO* 114 (2014), 455–518.

⁸⁰ For adoration-graffiti, see Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press), fig. 7.

⁸¹ Both were often mentioned in offering formulae, e.g. *hṯp dī nsw m snṯr kbḥ*, 'an offering which the King gives comprising of incense and libation' (stela of Ptah-Sety, Boston MFA 25.635; D. Dunham, 'Four New Kingdom Monuments in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston', *JEA* 21 (1935), 148–149, No. 2, pl. 17.2).

in three framed columns identifies the second man as the *hry h3w.t n(.yt) Pth Pth-m-hb*, Chief of the Altar of Ptah, Ptahemheb.⁸² Some signs are curiously arranged and orientated. The text should read from left to right, but the signs that make the words *Pth* and *hb* are arranged as if set in retrograde and the *m* sign (Gardiner Sign-List Aa15) is reversed. This could be explained as the scribe being uncomfortable in writing from left to right; perhaps being not fully proficient in writing monumental hieroglyphs.⁸³ The scribe had to configure the orientation of his text with that already extant on the same wall, and with the orientation of his graffito.

Graffiti of striding figures in adoring pose that were identified by a short text consisting of a name and title were observed also in the tomb ascribed to Antefiqer at Thebes (TT 60).⁸⁴ Ragazzoli connects this practice with the wishes expressed by the tomb owners of leaving votive offerings (*hṯp di nsw*). By inscribing graffiti, which were sometimes accompanied by additional ritual acts such as ‘making many adorations’, the graffitist complied with these wishes. The magical power of writing ensured that these acts of offering and giving adoration were perpetuated. In that sense, these graffiti texts can be seen as (part of) a votive act. The same can be observed on the block from the tomb of Pahemnter, where a Priest of the Altar and his colleague (perhaps on a professional assignment) bring offerings and make adorations. Their positioning at a doorway was certainly not coincidental, as they can be observed entering the tomb in perpetuity. It is conceivable that the offerings presented and adorations made by the priests were meant to eventually serve their own cult by means of magically taking part in the diversion of offerings.⁸⁵ Such a wish could be materially substantiated e.g. by presenting a basin for libation.⁸⁶

Similarly, a faience plaque inscribed with a hieroglyphic text starting with the *hṯp di nsw* formula for the Royal Butler and Chief Physician of the Lord of the Two Lands Nebmerutef was placed as an *ex voto* in the tomb (inner courtyard) of Horemheb. Its dedicator would thereby be able to (continue to) participate in the cult of this deified king.⁸⁷

⁸² For the title, see e.g. N. de G. Davies, *Seven Private Tombs at Kurnah* (London; 1948), 31–41, pl. 22: TT 341, Nakht-Amun, Chief of the Altar in the Ramesseum, Twentieth Dynasty.

⁸³ Hieratic was always written from right to left.

⁸⁴ Ragazzoli, *SAK* 42, 287–288, fig. 12; 307, G. Amongst the walking figures at the entrance to TT 60 was also a human head, which may suggest that the head served as an abbreviation for a human figure (in adoring pose) identified by a name and title. Compare also to the *orantes*, depictions of men in praying gesture, common in the Christian period in Egypt and Late Antiquity throughout the Mediterranean: Dijkstra, *Syene* I, 64.

⁸⁵ Cf. the stela of Yamen, the Lector Priest (*hr.y-hb*) who served in the offering cult for Maya and Meryt: M.J. Raven, ‘A Stela Relocated’, in A. Niwiński, S. Rzepka, and Z.E. Szafranski (eds), *Essays in Honour of Prof. Dr. Jadwiga Lipińska* (Warsaw Egyptological Studies 1; Warsaw, 1997), 146.

⁸⁶ Cf. the basin of Huy in the sanctuary of Sekhmet-of-Sahure: ‘[An offering which the King gives to Sekhmet] may she grant entering and leaving her temple with *///* [to receive offerings that are brought forth] on the offering table of the Lady of the Two Lands to the *ka* of (Huy)’ (L. Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs S’ahure*, 1: *Der Bau* (Leipzig, 1910), 120–121, fig. 164).

⁸⁷ H.D. Schneider, *The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb, Commander-in-Chief of Tut’anckhamūn II: A Catalogue of the Finds* (EES EM 61; Leiden and London, 1996), 17, Cat. 59, pls 8, 55. For a similar faience plaque, see: PM III/2, 559 (Huynefer; Cairo JE 39171); J.E. Quibell, *Saqqara (1906-1907)* (Cairo, 1908), 5, 79, pl. 35.4; from tomb shaft No. 332, Teti pyramid cemetery.

The prospective aspect of graffiti is also apparent in the hieroglyphic text of Djehutyher-hesef, Scribe of the King in the Temple of Ramesses II in the House of Amun (i.e. the Ramesseum), carved in four framed columns in the sanctuary of Sekhmet-of-Sahure.⁸⁸ The scribe, who was of course alive when he carved the text, identifies himself as a *m3^c-hrrw*, ‘one true of voice’, to indicate his deceased status. The graffiti was therefore carved in anticipation of the scribe’s perpetual presence after death.

7. FIGURAL GRAFFITI = ILLITERATE GRAFFITISTS? ON LITERACY AND ORALITY, AND SENSUAL ASPECTS

An Appeal to the Living inscribed on a niche-statue (Cairo JE 89046)⁸⁹ originally placed in the accessible superstructure of the tomb of Pahemner, the High Priest of Ptah already mentioned above, is explicit about the oral dimensions of the text. The *hṭp di nsw* formula needs to be pronounced:

‘... according as you say: “An offering which the King gives to...”’, and it continues with “... may you pronounce my name, while doing for me what is done for [the spirit of ... Pahemner, etc.]”. (emphasis: NS)

Baines argues that reading out texts such as the Appeals and offering formulae served to activate the contents of those texts.⁹⁰ The emphasis on reading out indicates that visiting a tomb constituted acts that have not left any tangible, material traces; they belong to the less tangible arena of communication, which included words and gestures.⁹¹

An Appeal to the Living inscribed in the tomb chapel of Mose, a Scribe of the Treasury of Ptah, at Saqqara pursues the same effect:

‘May [Ptah-Sokar-Osiris] grant a good remembrance before the sun disc enduring in the mouth of the living; and provisions and food offerings daily before my statue, [my] name abiding eternally, engraved forever’.⁹² (emphasis: NS)

⁸⁸ Borchardt, *Grabdenkmal*, 124, fig. 170.

⁸⁹ G.A. Gaballa, ‘Two Dignitaries of the XIXth Dynasty’, *MDAIK* 30 (1974), 21–24, pl. 2b–c; *KRITA*, III, 411–412. The standing statue was found in the Jeremias Monastery (1950) alongside additional inscribed material from the tomb. It measures 160 × 72 cm and is carved half in the round and it is set in a shallow niche with which it forms a single piece.

⁹⁰ J. Baines, ‘Orality and Literacy’, in J. Baines, *Visual and Written Culture in Ancient Egypt* (Oxford, 2007), 147–148, 154. See also Meyer-Dietrich, *UEE* 2010, 1. Cf. also administrative texts: B. Haring, ‘From Oral Practice to Written Record in Ramesside Deir el-Medina’, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 46/3 (2003), 249–272.

⁹¹ G. Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor* (Oxford, 1993), 339–342; S. Quirke, *Egyptian Literature 1800 BC: Questions and Readings* (GHP Egyptology 2; London, 2004), 45; Luiselli, *Die Suche nach Gottesnähe*, 239–241. Cf. also S. Kus, ‘Toward an Archaeology of Body and Soul’, in J.C. Gardin and C. Peebles (eds), *Representations in Archaeology* (Bloomington, 1992), 168–177 (the emotions, sights, smells, sounds, and experiential aspects of mortuary rites).

⁹² *KRI* III, 422.5–8, *KRITA* III, 305; Harrington, *Living with the Dead*, 40–42.

This text indicates that inscribing a name ensures that it will last forever, but that the remembrance of an individual endures by means of pronouncing one's name by the living.

From the textual character of offering formulae and Appeals, it follows that one needs to be literate in order to read them. Literacy levels in New Kingdom Egypt, however, were low, with around 1% of the population being able to read and/or write.⁹³ The question arises whether figural graffiti were just as socially exclusive as their textual equivalents.⁹⁴ Or could they be understood as a strategy employed by the non-literate to adapt to areas of life (and death) dominated by the literate?⁹⁵ Visiting elite tombs was not considered an exclusively scribal affair. The Appeal texts, for example, addressed 'the living who exist upon earth, and everyone who comes (here) [after] years'.⁹⁶ Obviously, the dead did not bury themselves,⁹⁷ and a wide spectrum of people from different layers of society would have been involved in the different stages of constructing and maintaining the tomb, although we can only read the mementos of the literate. Moreover, burying the dead was not an exclusively elite affair. As the lower classes formed part of the same cultural system, one may assume that similar or adapted mortuary practices were performed by/for them. Materially, these were expressed differently. Thus, one cannot exclude the possibility that certain popular customs were introduced in the elite tombs as well, certainly when those tombs were 'reused' for simple burials in the late Nineteenth Dynasty.

Votive offerings similarly represent the surviving, material aspects of more substantial ritual acts of words and gestures.⁹⁸ Considering the low literacy rates in Egypt, many uninscribed objects may also have been dedicated with verbalised petitions to the deceased, thus serving the same purpose as those carrying texts.⁹⁹ The saying or reading out of spells

⁹³ See e.g. J.J. Janssen, 'Literacy and Letters at Deir el-Medīna', in R.J. Demarée and A. Egberts (eds), *Village Voices: Proceedings of the Symposium "Texts from Deir el-Medīna and Their Interpretation," Leiden, May 31 - June 1, 1991* (CNWS 13; Leiden, 1992), 81–94; P. Der Manuelian, 'Semi-Literacy in Egypt: Some Erasures from the Amarna Period', in E. Teeter and J.A. Larson (eds), *Gold of Praise: Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente* (Chicago, 1999), 285–298; J. Baines and C. Eyre, 'Four Notes on Literacy', in Baines, *Visual and Written Culture*, 63–94.

⁹⁴ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

⁹⁵ Cf. Quirke, *Egyptian Literature 1800 BC*, 37–38.

⁹⁶ In the tomb of Nefersekeru at Zawyet Sultan scribes are prompted to read out the texts also to the illiterate: J. Osing, *Das Grab des Nefersecheru in Zawyet Sultan* (AVDAIK 88; Berlin, 1992), 43–52.

⁹⁷ Cf. M. Parker Pearson, 'The Powerful Dead: Archaeological Relationships Between the Living and the Dead', *CAJ* 3.2 (1993), 203.

⁹⁸ Or non-representational culturally manufactured marks: cf. Ouzman, *World Archaeology* 33/2, 239.

⁹⁹ Cf. the term *pr.t-hrw*, 'invocation offering': Harrington, *Living with the Dead*, 35 (referring to S. Donnat, *La peur du mort: Nature et structures des relations entre les vivants et les morts dans l'Égypte pharaonique* (PhD thesis, Université Paul Valéry – Montpellier III; Montpellier, 2003), 151). See also: G. Pinch, 'Redefining funerary objects', in Hawass and Pinch Brock (eds), *Egyptology at the dawn of the twenty-first century* 2, 443. Cf. also L. Weiss, *Religious Practice at Deir el-Medīna* (EU 29; Leiden and Leuven, 2015), 159–161 ('pictorial act').

could serve to identify the object with that which it represented.¹⁰⁰ The same can be suggested for the graffiti of human figures without texts to identify them.¹⁰¹

Finally, one should also consider the visual value of graffiti: while texts could be conceived only by a minority, figures could be perceived by all.¹⁰² One should also add that certain symbols, such as the apotropaic *wedjat* eye, will have been effective only as a figure and not as a text. Literacy certainly has been an important factor in the choice between textual and figural graffiti, but it was not the only or deciding factor. The purpose of the graffito (i.e. what was the graffitist's intention or what did the graffitist hope to achieve?) will have been just as important, and it could have made literate individuals produce a figural graffito.

8. GRAFFITI, FORMAL GRAFFITI AND VOTIVE STELAE

Above, an attempt was made to define the term graffito. The fact that this is necessary implies that there are other media closely resembling or overlapping with what have been considered graffiti in relation to this study. This should not be considered a problem, but an opportunity to broaden the scope for analysis.

The lengthy hieroglyphic texts and images of priests and gods at Karnak, which Frood considers 'formal graffiti', qualitatively approximate the extant temple decoration.¹⁰³ The same is true for the graffiti in figure 3. The men were roughly carved in proper sunk relief, and only a comparison with the overall tomb decoration enables one to make a distinction between the original iconography and that added later. In the temples of Luxor and Karnak, Brand distinguishes between simple *ex voto* (e.g. images of the god), formal graffiti (e.g. officials adoring a god), and graffiti in the form of reliefs carved by trained artists and commissioned by the clergy.¹⁰⁴

It has already been observed above that certain graffiti can be regarded as a votive act. The varying degrees of 'formality' enable one to also compare the graffiti to other media.

¹⁰⁰ Pinch and Waraksa, *UEE* 2009, 6. For the magical potency of the spoken word (in societies that are primarily oral), see also E. Brunner-Traut, 'Wechselbeziehungen zwischen schriftlicher und mündlicher Überlieferung im Alten Ägypten', *Fabula* 20/1 (1979), 35; W.J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the World* (London, 1982), 32; Haring, *JESHO* 46/3, 256.

¹⁰¹ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

¹⁰² Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

¹⁰³ E. Frood, 'Horkhebi's decree and the development of priestly inscriptional practices in Karnak', in L. Bareš, F. Coppens, and K. Smoláriková (eds), *Egypt in Transition: Social and Religious Development of Egypt in the First Millennium BCE. Proceedings of an International Conference, Prague, September 1–4, 2009* (Prague, 2010), 116–122, figs 4–7; Frood, in Ragavan (ed.), *Heaven on Earth*, 289, figs 13.4–5.

¹⁰⁴ P. Brand, 'Veils, Votives, and Marginalia: The Use of Sacred Space at Karnak and Luxor', in Dorman and Bryan (eds), *Sacred Space*, 64. Cf. also the remarks on the distinction between 'graffiti' and 'inscriptions' by S.P. Vleeming, 'A White Wall is a Fool's Paper', in A.M. Dodson, J.J. Johnston, and W. Monkhouse (eds), *A Good Scribe and an Exceedingly Wise Man: Studies in Honour of W.J. Tait* (GHP Egyptology 21; London, 2014), 323–324.

One characteristic of votive objects is that they were not intrinsically valuable. The symbolic value was of prime importance, and the objects were made by people of all ranks.¹⁰⁵ Many of the ‘crude’ stelae, figured ostraca and figural graffiti found at Saqqara do not convey the impression that they were produced by artistically skilled individuals.¹⁰⁶ What does this qualification reveal about their makers? With regards to the small, so-called informal stelae found at Amarna, Stevens notes that quality can distinguish domestic from workshop production, but that despite their low artistic quality, the images are recognisable.¹⁰⁷ She argues that the painter had to work free-hand and that the differences in quality could be the result of differences in natural aptitude. The same qualifications apply to graffiti: despite their low artistic quality, the images are generally recognisable. Thus, graffiti of apparent low artistic merit need not necessarily be the products of individuals lacking artistic skills. Similarly, one may question the ability of someone who lacked any artistic experience to convey an image (recognisable even to the present-day observer) to a vertical stone surface with a random (i.e. not purpose-made) tool.

Formal Graffiti as Votive Stelae

‘Formal graffiti’ have been found in the New Kingdom sanctuary of Sekhmet-of-Sahure at Abusir.¹⁰⁸ Recesses for the placement of small votive stelae were cut in the surviving remains of the Old Kingdom walls. Such stelae could also be carved directly onto the walls (‘formal graffiti’).¹⁰⁹ The upper register of one such round-topped ‘stela’ contains three representations of the standing goddess Sekhmet with a lioness head. The dedicator of the stela – May, who was Priest of Sekhmet and Scribe of the Treasury of the Temple (*pr.w*) of Tutankamun – is represented in the lower register, kneeling and with his hands raised in adoration. The text inscribed in front of him starts with *rdi(.t) i3w n S3m.t*, ‘Giving adoration to Sekhmet’.

A similar practice is attested on a block found in the second courtyard of the tomb of Horemheb.¹¹⁰ This limestone block in sunk relief was taken for reuse from another tomb chapel. The lower part of the undecorated reverse was used to carve a round-topped stela in sunk relief (fig. 4).

¹⁰⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 354–355; Pinch and Waraksa, *UEE* 2009, 5.

¹⁰⁶ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

¹⁰⁷ A. Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna: The Material Evidence* (BAR IS 1587; Oxford, 2006), 262. Note that even workshop-produced votive stelae could be made rather quickly, as has been demonstrated on O.DeM 246: *m p3 hrww*, ‘on this day’ (J. Moje, ‘O.DeM 246: Ein Auftragsbeleg aus einer altägyptischen Werkstatt’, *BIFAO* 106 (2006), 183–192).

¹⁰⁸ Located a little north of the New Kingdom necropolis at Saqqara: Borchardt, *Grabdenkmal*, 120–135; A.I. Sadek, *Popular Religion in Egypt during the New Kingdom* (HÄB 27; Hildesheim, 1987), 29–36.

¹⁰⁹ Borchardt, *Grabdenkmal*, 121–122, fig. 165: late Eighteenth Dynasty, temp. Tutankhamun. The same practices can be observed at the nearby sphinx-cult in Giza (PM III/1, 39–47; S. Hassan, *Excavations at Giza VIII: The Great Sphinx and Its Secrets* (Cairo, 1953), 56–57, figs 44–45 (tomb No. 4); Sadek, *Popular Religion*, 23–29.

¹¹⁰ Nineteenth Dynasty; 143 × 58.2 × 24 cm: Schneider, *Horemheb* II, 91, NK 1, pl. 99 (‘undoubtedly a trial piece of a sculptor’).



Fig. 4. Reused limestone block (143 × 58.2 × 24 cm) with the representation of a round-topped stela carved on the reverse. Found in the second courtyard of the tomb of Generalissimo Horemheb (Schneider, *Horemheb* II, pl. 99, NK 1). Image courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.

Votive Ostraca

Limestone ostraca could similarly be used to serve as small votive stelae. A number of such crude stelae have been found in the Leiden concession area.¹¹¹ One limestone ostrakon contained on both the obverse and reverse the red-painted outlines of a round-topped stela.¹¹² Another limestone ostrakon from the second courtyard of the tomb of Tia was

¹¹¹ Schneider, *Horemheb* II, 19, Cat. 66, pl. 56 (6.8 × 5.3 × 2.1 cm); Martin, *Tia and Tia*, 68, Cat. 16, pl. 104 (15.5 × 11 × 4 cm).

¹¹² Martin, *Tia and Tia*, 68, Cat. 20, pl. 171: 23 × 17.5 × 6.5 cm.

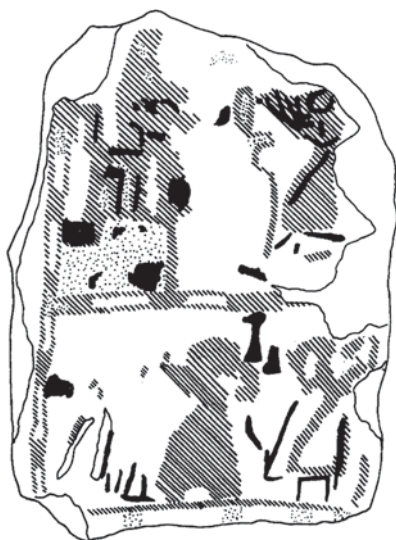


Fig. 5. A limestone ostrakon (15.5 × 11 × 4 cm) roughly shaped as a round-topped stela, with depictions in red, black and yellow paint. Found in the second courtyard of the tomb of Tia, Overseer of the Treasury. (Martin, *Tia*, pl. 104.16). Image courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.

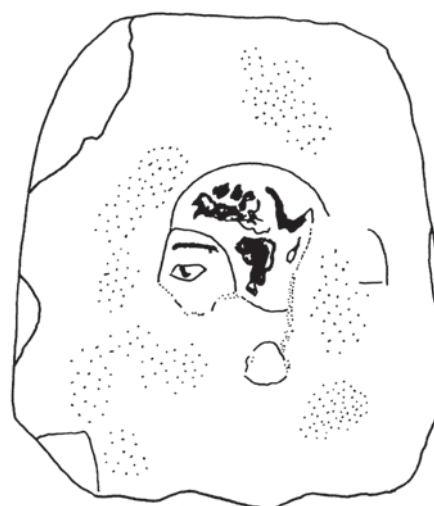


Fig. 6. Limestone ostrakon (10.2 × 9 × 4 cm) shaped as a small round-topped stela. Found in the outer courtyard of the tomb of Maya. Depictions are executed in sunken relief and painted in red and black (Raven, *Maya II*, pl. 31.37). Image courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.

roughly shaped to represent a round-topped stela (fig. 5).¹¹³ The design on the obverse, drawn in black, red, and yellow paint, presents scenes in two registers. The upper register depicts a man standing with his hands raised in adoration in front of an enthroned deity. The lower register depicts two individuals standing with their hands raised. Another ostrakon, found in the outer courtyard of the tomb of Maya, was shaped as a small round-topped stela bearing the representation of a human head, executed in sunk relief and painted in red and black (fig. 6).¹¹⁴

Ninety-three figured ostraca found in the Leiden concession area at Saqqara have been published. Potsherds represent the material most often used (n=62; 67%), followed by limestone (n=30; 32%), and one calcite fragment (1%). The depictions were painted (n=76; 81.7%), scratched/incised (n=10; 10.7%), or carved (n=5; 5.4%).

Most ostraca depict human figures (n=61; 66%), although predominantly only the heads (n=42; 45.1%). Nearly all human figures are males (n=51; 83.6%); females are depicted on 4.9% (n=3) of the corpus. Animals occur on 10.8% (n=10) of the ostraca. Other motifs are extremely rare.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Raven, in Martin, *Tia and Tia*, 68 [Cat. 16], pl. 104.

¹¹⁴ 10.2 × 9 × 4 cm; M.J. Raven, *The Tomb of Maya and Meryt II: Objects and Skeletal Remains* (EES EM 65; Leiden, 2001), 25, pl. 31.37.

¹¹⁵ These are: basket/jar (n=1); blue crown (n=1); censer (n=1); five-pointed star (n=1); gaming board (n=2); lotus (n=1); *wedjat* eye (n=1); circles (n=1); text (in combination with a figure; n=3); indistinct (n=9).

Most ostraca were found without a secure stratigraphic context, which makes it difficult to make any well-founded assertions regarding their original use and dating. In the area between the south wall of Horemheb's second courtyard and the north wall of Iniua's tomb a number of figured ostraca were found. In this well-defined area, a dump of pottery originally placed in the cult chapel(s) of Horemheb's tomb (presumably after the burial of his wife/wives) has been identified.¹¹⁶ The same area also contained several figured ostraca.¹¹⁷

A pit dug in the forecourt of the neighbouring tomb of the Overseer of Builders, Paser, contained a cache of broken pottery, including some figured ostraca bearing the representations of human heads.¹¹⁸ The ceramics included types used in funerary rituals and services in honour of the deceased.¹¹⁹

Another dump was found in the area between the south wall of Tia's inner courtyard and the north wall of Horemheb's second courtyard. Besides pottery, it also included a range of objects such as a female (fertility) figurine¹²⁰ and figured ostraca, including the ostrakon with the painted outlines of a round-topped stela mentioned above. Finally, a deposit of used pottery under the staircase located in the same area contained a large number of figured ostraca (both pottery and limestone).¹²¹

Other types of votive objects found in the accessible tomb superstructures included an ear-stela (tomb of Horemheb),¹²² and a limestone ostrakon bearing the representation of two ears in sunk relief (tomb of Maya).¹²³

That certain figured ostraca, instead of being mere trial pieces,¹²⁴ could also have been used as rudimentary cult images – intended as foci for worship or as votive offerings – has

¹¹⁶ M.J. Raven, *The Tomb of Pay and Raia at Saqqara* (EES EM 74; Leiden, 2005), 70; B. Aston, 'The Pottery', in M.J. Raven, V. Verschoor, M. Vugts, R. van Walsem, B.G. Aston, L. Horácková, W.F.M. Beex, D. Schultz and P.J. Bomhof, *The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb, Commander in Chief of Tutankhamun, V: The Forecourt and the Area South of the Tomb with Some Notes on the Tomb of Tia* (PALMA 6; Turnhout, 2011), 238.

¹¹⁷ Aston, in Raven et al., *Horemheb V*, 238, Cat. 178–179, fig. VI.20. For the ostraca, see: Raven, *Pay and Raia*, Cat. 17–18, 75–80, 82, pls 98, 103 (interpreted as a workmen's deposit). The same area was later appropriated for two surface burials of Nineteenth Dynasty date: *ibid.*, 70, burial 96/2, pl. 13.3, and burial 96/3, pl. 139.3.

¹¹⁸ M.J. Raven, 'Catalogue of Objects', in G.T. Martin, *The Tomb-Chapels of Paser and Ra'ia at Saqqâra* (EES EM 52; London, 1985), 20, 24, Cat. 32–3, pl. 33 (described as artists' studies).

¹¹⁹ Martin, *Paser and Ra'ia*, 3.

¹²⁰ Martin, *Tia and Tia*, 66, Cat. 6, pl. 70. See also the tomb of Maya: Raven, *Maya II*, 20, Cat. 9–10, pl. 14 (two figurines on beds).

¹²¹ Martin, *Tia and Tia*, 68, 74, 75 [18, 75–76, 78, 80–81, 83, 85–93], pls 104, 105.

¹²² Schneider, *Horemheb II*, 18, Cat. 63, pls 8, 55. For ear-stelae in general, see: Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 248–253.

¹²³ Raven, *Maya II*, 24–25, Cat. 35, pl. 31 (interpreted as a trial piece). Pinch (*Votive Offerings*, 250–253) argues that the ears encouraged the deity to hear a prayer. In a tomb-context, they may have served the same purpose towards the dead. Note that one form of Ptah at Memphis was *Pth sdm nbt*, 'Ptah-who-hears-prayers' (Sadek, *Popular Religion*, 16–29).

¹²⁴ That a number of the ostraca indeed represented artists' sketches is beyond doubt. Their very nature (as crudely produced images) make them difficult to distinguish from depictions made by people lacking artistic skills. However, even trial pieces or sketches could be later used as votive objects, even though they were not produced with that intention (cf. A.R. Schulman, 'Ex-votos for the Poor', *JARCE* 6 (1967), 153).

been argued for material found at other sites in Egypt.¹²⁵ Additionally, an offering table found at Amarna contained a human head incised in profile and well centred on the reverse.¹²⁶ While it is not clear whether the image is contemporaneous with the carving of the offering table, it is tempting to see them as belonging together. Perhaps the head should be interpreted as the representation of the object's dedicator, where it served a similar purpose as the texts usually inscribed on such objects.

9. GRAFFITI OF HUMAN FIGURES AT DAHSHUR AND SAQQARA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH DYNASTY

Dahshur, the necropolis south of Saqqara, presents a remarkable parallel for the graffiti depicting human figures. The walls of the *serdab* located in the subterranean apartments of the pyramid of the Twelfth Dynasty King Sesostris III (1837–1819 BC) are covered with nearly fifty human heads drawn in black ink.¹²⁷ Most are just under life-size and a few are even larger. The presence of the graffito depicting a falcon has led to the suggestion that the graffiti have some connection with Sokar.¹²⁸

Dieter Arnold initially connected the graffiti with the systematic robbery of pyramids during the later Second Intermediate Period (ca. 1759–1539 BC), arguing that they represented 'portraits' of the foreign robbers.¹²⁹ Later, he suggested that the graffitists were the people (foreigners and/or natives) who entered the monument in connection with its dismantling in the late Ramesside Period (1190–1077 BC).¹³⁰ Due to the absence of texts, he proposed that these people were illiterate; recording their identities with 'self-portraits'.¹³¹

Recently, Dorothea Arnold explored the possibility that the drawings were produced by a 'group of easterners' who left 'various images that convey their self-understanding almost entirely unencumbered by the confines of Egyptian artistic convention'.¹³² This identification is based primarily on their 'wild and wiry' hairdo with a distinctive tuft. She argued that a SIP date is provided by the 'Middle Kingdom-style image' of a male figure, and that a Ramesside date should be rejected by this image alone.

A comparison with some graffiti at Saqqara, however, suggests that an early Ramesside date cannot be excluded. The kilt of the so-called Middle Kingdom figure is the same as the pointed kilt worn by deified Old Kingdom rulers depicted on Memphite reliefs and

¹²⁵ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press).

¹²⁶ Stevens, *Private Religion*, 196–197, fig. II.9.2.

¹²⁷ J. de Morgan, *Fouilles à Dahchour en 1894-1895* (Vienna, 1903), 93–96, figs 137–140; Di. Arnold, *The Pyramid Complex of Senwosret III at Dahshur: Architectural Studies* (New York, 2002), 42–43, pls 21c, 23a,b–d, 24–26, 27a; Do. Arnold, 'Image and Identity: Egypt's Eastern Neighbours, East Delta People and the Hyksos', in M. Marée (ed.), *The Second Intermediate Period (Thirteenth-Seventeenth Dynasties): Current Research, Future Prospects* (OLA 192; Leuven, 2010), 200–206, figs 3–5.

¹²⁸ Di. Arnold, *Senwosret III at Dahshur*, pl. 25.

¹²⁹ Di. Arnold, 'Zur Zerstörungsgeschichte der Pyramiden', *MDAIK* 47 (1991), 23.

¹³⁰ Di. Arnold, *Senwosret III at Dahshur*, 42–43; T. Schneider, *Ausländer in Ägypten während des Mittleren Reiches und der Hyksoszeit, Teil 2: die ausländische Bevölkerung* (ÄAT 42; Wiesbaden, 2003), 191–192.

¹³¹ Di. Arnold, *Senwosret III at Dahshur*, 42–43.

¹³² The acculturated *Aamu*: Do. Arnold, in Marée (ed.), *Second Intermediate Period*, 200, 204.

stelae.¹³³ A graffito scratched in the pylon entrance of Maya's tomb has the same profile (see fig. 2b). Most heads at Dahshur do not have the distinctive 'Eastern' hairdo, and the tuft is visible also in a graffito scratched in the tomb of Maya (fig. 2a). The depiction of the heads in profile with the eyes in a frontal view is according to Egyptian artistic conventions. Finally, the peculiar way in which the mouths are drawn is similar to the beaklike mouths of the three kings' heads in the late Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of the Royal Butler Prahemwia at Saqqara (fig. 7: Nos I.1_40-42).

New Kingdom visitors' graffiti are concentrated in the greater Memphite necropolis around royal complexes.¹³⁴ During the mid-Eighteenth Dynasty (temp. Thutmose III, 1479–1425 BC), Sesostris III enjoyed renewed private and royal interest,¹³⁵ and the visitors' graffiti texts demonstrate a sense of historic awareness.¹³⁶ The same monuments continued to be visited during the Nineteenth Dynasty; at least partly for different reasons. The Ramesside graffiti at Dahshur can be connected with the dismantling of the complex. The inscriptions include both visitors' graffiti and control notes probably containing the names (in abbreviated form) of temples of Ramesses II.¹³⁷ Navrátilová interprets the temples mentioned in the control notes as the delivery addresses for the re-use of the blocks on which they were written.¹³⁸ Interestingly, a block found reused near the tomb of Mery-Neith contained part of the cartouche with the name of Sesostris III (*H^c-k3.w-R^c.w*).¹³⁹

¹³³ For example Menkauhor (Fifth Dynasty, ca. 2373–2366 BC) on a relief in the late Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Amenemone, Chief Goldsmith (Louvre B 48: B.G. Ockinga, *Amenemone, the Chief Goldsmith: A New Kingdom Tomb in the Teti Cemetery at Saqqara* (ACE Reports 22; Oxford, 2004), scene 13, pls 21, 68); Teti (Sixth Dynasty, ca. 2305–2279 BC) on the late Eighteenth Dynasty Apis stela of May (Louvre IM 5305: M. Malinine, G. Posener, and J. Vercoutter, *Catalogue des stèles du Sérapéum de Memphis* (Paris, 1968), Cat. No. 1, pl. 1); Teti on the late Eighteenth/early Nineteenth Dynasty stela of Ptah-Sety, Outline Draughtsman (Boston, MFA 25.635: Dunham, *JEA* 21, 148–149, pl. 17.2; Málek, in Lloyd (ed.), *Studies J. Gwyn Griffiths*, 68 [S6], fig. 3, pl. 7).

¹³⁴ Navrátilová, *Visitors' Graffiti*, 27.

¹³⁵ PM III/2, 885; J. de Morgan, *Fouilles à Dahchour, mars-juin 1894* (Vienna, 1895), 3, 77–80, figs 1, 183–186, 190–195; Peden, *The Graffiti of Pharaonic Egypt*, 63–64; Navrátilová, *Visitors' Graffiti*, 134, 143, Table 1d–g; A. Oppenheim, 'The Early Life of Pharaoh: Divine Birth and Adolescence Scenes in the Causeway of Senwosret III at Dahshur', in M. Bárta, F. Coppens, and J. Krejčí (eds.), *Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2010*, I (Prague, 2011), 171–188; H. Navrátilová, 'Graffiti from Dahshur', *Kmt* 24/3 (2013), 41–47; H. Navrátilová, 'New Kingdom Graffiti in Dahshur, Pyramid Complex of Senwosret III: Preliminary Report. Graffiti Uncovered in Seasons 1992-2010', *JARCE* 49 (2013), 113–142. For Abusir, see: L. Bareš, 'The Destruction of the Monuments at the Necropolis of Abusir', in M. Bartá and J. Krejčí (eds.), *Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2000* (ArOr Supp 9; Prague, 2000), 7; J. Baines, 'The Destruction of the Pyramid Temple of Saḥure', *GM* 4 (1973), 12–13.

¹³⁶ Cf. Navrátilová, *Kmt* 24/3, 44.

¹³⁷ Navrátilová, *JARCE* 49, 118. The Ramesside temple of Ptah at Memphis was constructed at least partly with blocks taken from Old Kingdom monuments located in the Memphite necropolis: L.L. Giddy, 'Memphis 1989: The Ptah Temple Complex', *BACE* 1 (1990), 38–41; L.L. Giddy, D.G. Jeffreys, and J. Málek, 'Memphis, 1989', *JEA* 76 (1990), 1–15; Málek, in Lloyd (ed.), *Studies J. Gwyn Griffiths*, 73.

¹³⁸ Navrátilová, *Kmt* 24/3, 46; Navrátilová, *JARCE* 49, 118.

¹³⁹ M.J. Raven and R. van Walsem, *The Tomb of Meryneith at Saqqara* (PALMA 10; Turnhout, 2014), 158–159, No. 92 (SAK 2003-R75). The inscription is in sunk relief and, since the inscriptions in the pyramid complex of Sesostris III are in raised relief, it probably derived from a private mastaba tomb.

The dismantling of ancient monuments in the Memphite necropolis during the reign of Ramesses II (1279–1213 BC) is well attested. Prince Khaemwaset, the High Priest of Ptah at Memphis and fourth son of Ramesses II, played a prominent part in the process.¹⁴⁰ His hill-top monument at Saqqara-north, constructed sometime after Year 30 of Ramesses II, contained building material taken from Old Kingdom monuments at nearby Abusir.¹⁴¹ He simultaneously embellished the monuments he exploited as stone quarries, including the pyramid of Sesostris III.¹⁴²

10. GRAFFITI DEPICTING THE KING

A final group of graffiti from the Leiden concession area at Saqqara depicts the king (fig. 7).¹⁴³ These graffiti probably were left in connection with the cult of Horemheb.¹⁴⁴ During the early Ramesside period his former private tomb was transformed into a royal memorial temple.¹⁴⁵ Most graffiti depicting the king, however, were recorded not in his tomb, but in those surrounding that monument.

Data

Eighteen graffiti depicting the king were recorded in the Leiden concession area (fig. 7), representing 8.9% of figural graffiti at the site. The king was depicted either standing (n=3; 16.7%) or represented only by his head (n=15; 83.3%). The figures are identified on account of their crown (n=16; 88.9%) or the uraeus attached to the forehead (n=2; 11.1%). Three types of crown are recorded: the *nemes* (n=1), the ‘white’ crown¹⁴⁶ (n=2) and the so-called ‘blue’ crown or *khepresh* (n=11).

In a study on the iconography of the king wearing the *khepresh* crown, Hardwick concludes that it represented the mortal aspects of the king’s personality, i.e. the living King.¹⁴⁷ He is frequently shown offering to, and receiving benefits from deities. The aspect of

¹⁴⁰ F. Gomaà, *Chaemwese: Sohn Ramses’ II. und Hoherpriester von Memphis* (ÄA 27; Wiesbaden, 1973), 34–38.

¹⁴¹ I.H. Takamiya, H. Kashiwagi, and S. Yoshimura, ‘Khaemwaset and His Monuments at North Saqqara: A Record of Multiple Aspects of “the First Egyptologist”’, in V.G. Callender, L. Bareš, M. Bárta, J. Janak, J. Krejčí, and M. Verner (eds), *Times, Signs and Pyramids: Studies in Honour of Miroslav Verner on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* (Prague, 2011), 412–417.

¹⁴² Málek, in Lloyd (ed.), *Studies J. Gwyn Griffiths*, 65; A. Oppenheim and J.P. Allen, ‘The Inscription of Prince Khaemwaset’, in Di. Arnold, *Senwosret III at Dahshur*, 29–30, fig. on p. 30.

¹⁴³ These graffiti were drawn and/or redrawn from the original by the author. The drawing may therefore differ slightly from those published earlier (see bibliographic references).

¹⁴⁴ Martin, *Horemheb I*, 70–73; Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES 24* (in press).

¹⁴⁵ The royal tomb of Horemheb is located in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes, KV 57 (T.M. Davis, *The Tombs of Harmhabi and Touatânkhamanou* (London, 1912)). His Memphite memorial temple was called *t3 hw.t Dsr-hpr(.w)-R'.w-Stp.n-R'.w iw-Pth-mr.y-b'ḥ* (relief Cairo TN 31.5.25.11).

¹⁴⁶ Note that Osiris and Atum wear also this crown. The uraeus indicates that the crown is royal.

¹⁴⁷ T. Hardwick, ‘The Iconography of the Blue Crown in the New Kingdom’, *JEA* 89 (2003), 119–123. See also W.V. Davies, ‘The Origin of the Blue Crown’, *JEA* 68 (1982), 69–76; K. Goebis, ‘Crowns’, in D.B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford, 2001), I, 324.

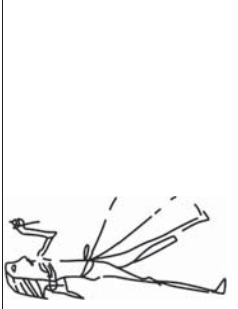
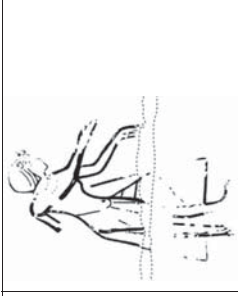
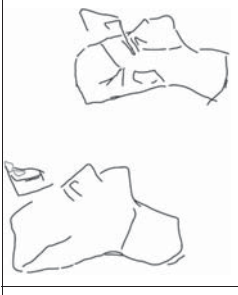


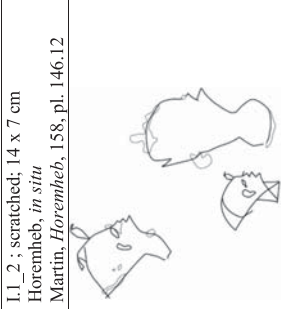
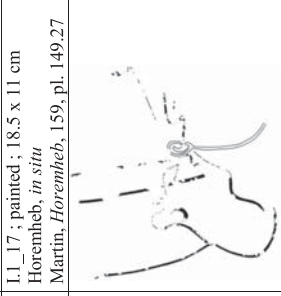
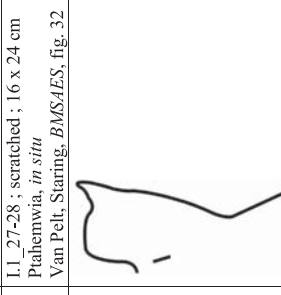
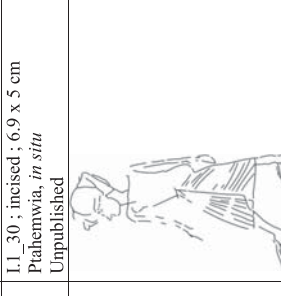
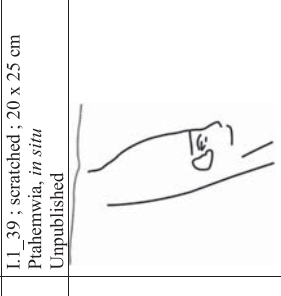
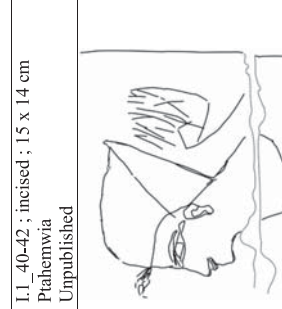
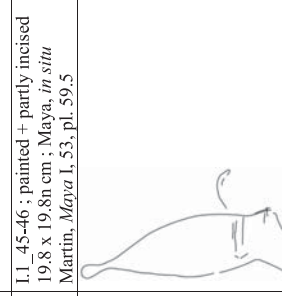
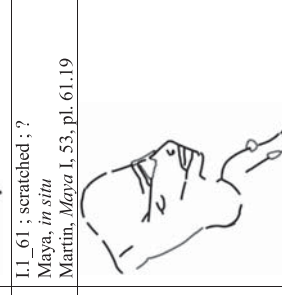
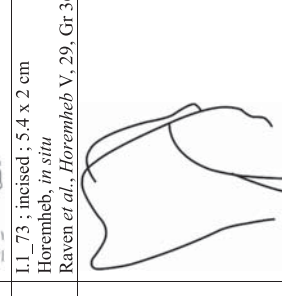
	I.1_2 ; scratched; 14 x 7 cm Horemheb, <i>in situ</i> Martin, <i>Horemheb</i> , 158, pl. 146.12		I.1_17 ; painted; 18.5 x 11 cm Horemheb, <i>in situ</i> Martin, <i>Horemheb</i> , 159, pl. 149.27		I.1_27-28; scratched; 16 x 24 cm Prahemwia, <i>in situ</i> Van Pelt, Staring, <i>BMSAES</i> , fig. 32		I.1_30 ; incised; 6.9 x 5 cm Prahemwia, <i>in situ</i> Unpublished		I.1_39 ; scratched; 20 x 25 cm Prahemwia, <i>in situ</i> Unpublished
	I.1_40-42 ; incised ; 15 x 14 cm Prahemwia Unpublished		I.1_45-46 ; painted + partly incised 19.8 x 19.8 cm ; Maya, <i>in situ</i> Martin, <i>Maya</i> I, 53, pl. 59.5		I.1_61 ; scratched ; ? Maya, <i>in situ</i> Martin, <i>Maya</i> I, 53, pl. 61.19		I.1_73 ; incised ; 5.4 x 2 cm Horemheb, <i>in situ</i> Raven et al., <i>Horemheb</i> V, 29, Gr 36		I.1_75 ; incised ; 6 x 3.4 cm Horemheb, <i>in situ</i> Raven et al., <i>Horemheb</i> V, 29, Gr 43
	I.1_76 ; incised ; 24 x 20 cm Horemheb, <i>in situ</i> Raven et al., <i>Horemheb</i> V, 29, Gr 44		I.1_80 ; scratched ; 19.6 x 8.9 cm Prahmose, Leiden AP 51d.4 Boeser, <i>Beschrijving</i> IV, 8, pl. 29		I.1_81 ; scratched ; 7.2 x 5.4 cm Mery-mery, Leiden AP 6a Boeser, <i>Beschrijving</i> IV, 5-6, pl. 18		I.1_89 ; incised ; 8 x 6 cm Ramose, <i>in situ</i> Martin, <i>Three Memphite Officials</i> , 2		

Fig. 7. Graffiti at Saqqara depicting the king.

mortality is further emphasized by what Hardwick defines as the ‘naturalizing eye’.¹⁴⁸ These characteristics are present in a relief of Memphite origin depicting Ramesses II. Together with his mother Tuya he is engaged in a ritual act before Osiris.¹⁴⁹ Another block presumably from Saqqara shows a dyad of Ramesses II and the goddess Anat-of-Ramesses. The king wears the high, nearly vertical blue crown in combination with the formal eye.¹⁵⁰

Most graffiti depicting the king wearing the *khepresh* indicate the naturalizing eye, if the eyes are indicated at all. Only one graffiti indicates the formal eye (fig. 7: No. I.1_76).

Horemheb in the Ramesside Period

At Saqqara, the king is seldom included in the relief decoration of New Kingdom tombs.¹⁵¹ The few representations show him wearing a wig,¹⁵² the *nemes*-headdress,¹⁵³ and the *khepresh* crown.¹⁵⁴ Depictions of the king in graffiti, on ostraca¹⁵⁵ and stelae show him predominantly wearing the *khepresh*.

In the private tombs at Thebes, and on monuments from Deir el-Medina, Horemheb was recognised as the founder of the Nineteenth Dynasty.¹⁵⁶ That dynasty was founded on politically shaky ground, and its success was far from certain.¹⁵⁷ To reinforce their own

¹⁴⁸ The naturalising eye is gradually replaced in the reign of Ramesses II in favour of the formal eye, emphasizing divinity.

¹⁴⁹ Relief Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum 5091: A. Radwan, ‘Ramses II. und seine Mutter vor Osiris’, *SAK* 6 (1978), fig. on p. 158; Martin, *Tia and Tia*, 46 n. 5, pl. 46.

¹⁵⁰ J.D. Cooney, *Five Years of Collecting Egyptian Art 1951-1956: Catalogue of an Exhibition Held at The Brooklyn Museum 11 December, 1956 to 17 March, 1957* (Brooklyn, 1956), 27–28, pls 51–52 (as provenance Tanis); E. Hofmann, *Bilder im Wandel: Die Kunst der Ramessidischen Privatgräber* (Theben 17; Mainz am Rhein, 2004), 139, fig. 163. Three more reliefs probably deriving from the same structure were discovered in the ruins of the Jeremias Monastery at Saqqara: L. Habachi, ‘Jubilees of Ramesses II and Amenophis III’, *ZÄS* 97 (1971), 70–71, figs 4–5, pl. VIIa–b). Habachi suggests that the statues were erected on the occasion of a Sed-festival celebrated by the king, and that the blocks may derive from the (lost) tomb of Khaemwaset.

¹⁵¹ In the tomb of Tia, only the lower part of Ramesses II depicted on the south and north reveals of the entrance pylon doorway remained: Martin, *Tia and Tia*, 18–19, scenes 14 and 18, pls 11, 13. Tombs with the representation of the King are more numerous at Thebes. See: PM I, appendix A, 1–3, 4; A. McDowell, ‘Awareness of the Past in Deir el-Medina’, in Demarée and Egberts (eds), *Village Voices*, 95–109; G. Hollender, *Amenophis I. und Ahmes Nefertari: Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung ihres posthumer Kultes anhand der Privatgräber der thebanischen Nekropole* (DAIK Sonderschrift 23; Berlin, 2009).

¹⁵² Seti I on relief Louvre E 3337 = C 213 (tomb of Hormin, LS 29: PM III/2, 664–665; C. Barbotin, *La voix des hiéroglyphes: promenade au Département des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Louvre* (Paris, 2005), 170–171, No. 92).

¹⁵³ The Fifth Dynasty king Menkauhor as represented in the tomb of the late Eighteenth Dynasty Chief Goldsmith Amenemone (Louvre B.48; Ockinga, *Amenemone*, scene 13, pls 21, 68).

¹⁵⁴ Martin, *Horemheb* I, 100, scene 81, pl. 117.

¹⁵⁵ For ostraca depicting the King, see also E. Brunner-Traut, *Die altägyptischen Scherbenbilder (Bildostraka) der deutschen Museen und Sammlungen* (Wiesbaden, 1956), pls 10–16 (Deir el-Medina); Schulman, *JARCE* 6, 154 (Ptah temple, Memphis); Stevens, *Private Religion*, 157 (Amarna).

¹⁵⁶ McDowell, in Demarée and Egberts (eds), *Village Voices*, 98.

¹⁵⁷ W.J. Murnane, ‘The Kingship of the Nineteenth Dynasty: A Study in the Resilience of an Institution’, in D. O’Connor and D.P. Silverman (eds), *Ancient Egyptian Kingship* (PdÄ 9; Leiden, 1995), 185–220; P. Brand, ‘Ideology and Politics of the Early Ramesside Kings (13th Century BC): A Historical Approach’, in W. Bisang,

legitimacy, both Seti I and Ramesses II widely promoted the cults of their deceased fathers¹⁵⁸ and the royal ancestors.¹⁵⁹ The emerging search for the past ascribed to the early Ramesside period conforms to these developments.¹⁶⁰

At Thebes, the cult of the deified king Amenhotep I and his mother Ahmes Nefertari was promoted during the reigns of Seti I and Ramesses II.¹⁶¹ According to Hollender, their cult served to emphasize a continuity with the pre-Amarna monarchy as well as the succession from father to son (Ahmose to Amenhotep I), with Ahmes Nefertari as the matriarch not only of the Eighteenth Dynasty, but also for the new Ramesside Dynasty.¹⁶²

A cult for the royal ancestors has also been demonstrated in some private tombs at Saqqara. By means of king-lists, the cult of the royal ancestors was incorporated into the private mortuary cult of the deceased.¹⁶³

It is perhaps no coincidence that the most elaborate king-list at Saqqara was found in the tomb of Tjuneroy, the Overseer of Works on all Monuments of the King during the reign of Ramesses II.¹⁶⁴ The building activities in the Memphite necropolis realised by Khaemwaset have been described by Snape as ‘the manipulation of the monumental landscape in the early Ramesside period’.¹⁶⁵ He argued that this was motivated by contemporary views of the past, and especially those views stressing the projection of aspects of kingship. The tomb of Tjuneroy is lost, but that of his brother, the Overseer of Builders of the Lord of the Two Lands named Paser, is located immediately behind the tomb of Horemheb.

T. Bierschenk, D. Kreikenbom, and U. Verhoeven (eds), *Prozesse des Wandels in historischen Spannungsfeldern Nordafrikas/Westasiens: Akten zum 2. Symposium des SFB 295 Mainz, 15.10–17.10.2001* (Würzburg, 2005), 27.

¹⁵⁸ T. Ling, ‘Ramesside Filial Piety’, *BACE* 3 (1992), 59–66.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. M. Becker, *Identität und Krise: Erinnerungskulturen im Ägypten der 22. Dynastie* (BSAK 13; Hamburg, 2012), 30: ‘Erinnern konstruiert Vergangenheit’. Perhaps the restructuring and enlargement of the Serapeum by Khaemwaset should be evaluated in the same light.

¹⁶⁰ Ling, *BACE* 3, 63; J. Assmann, *Stein und Zeit: Mensch und Gesellschaft im alten Ägypten* (München, 1997), 306; J. Assmann, *Steinzeit und Sternzeit: Altägyptische Zeitkonzepte* (München, 2011), 261–278. However, Navrátilová (*Visitors’ Graffiti*) noted that the Eighteenth Dynasty graffiti in the greater Memphite necropolis on the whole exhibit an awareness of the past (admiring old monuments) unattested in the Nineteenth Dynasty graffiti.

¹⁶¹ Their representations initially appear sporadically in tombs dating to Amenhotep III (1390–1353 BC). During the reign of Seti I, a chapel for Amenhotep I and Ahmes Nefertari was constructed at Deir el-Medina. For Amenhotep I (1514–1494 BC) as an oracle god at Deir el-Medina, see: B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1934 à 1935)*, III (FIFAO 16; Cairo, 1939), 321; A.G. McDowell, *Jurisdiction in the Workmen’s Community of Deir el Medīna* (EU 5; Leiden, 1990), 107–141; L. Weiss, ‘Markings on Oracle Ostraca from Deir el Medina: Conflicting Interpretations’, in B.J.J. Haring and O.E. Kaper (eds), *Pictograms or Pseudo Script? Non-Textual Identity Marks in Practical Use in Ancient Egypt and Elsewhere. Proceedings of a Conference in Leiden, 19–20 December 2006* (EU 25; Leiden and Leuven, 2009), 221–222, fig. 1.

¹⁶² Hollender, *Amenophis I*, 149–157. Compare Ramesses II and his mother Tuya on relief block Vienna 5091 (see n. 149, above).

¹⁶³ As an appendix to Book of the Dead Chapters 141–142: D. Meeks, ‘Une fondation Memphite de Taharqa (stèle de Caire JE 36861)’, in J. Vercoutter (ed.), *Hommages à la mémoire de Serge Sauneron 1927–1976*, I: *Égypte pharaonique* (Cairo, 1979), 245–246; Van Dijk, *New Kingdom Necropolis*, 202.

¹⁶⁴ PM III/2, 666.

¹⁶⁵ S. Snape, ‘Khaemwaset and the Present Past: History and the Individual in Ramesside Egypt’, in M. Collier and S. Snape (eds), *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K.A. Kitchen* (Bolton, 2011), 465.

The Cult of the Deified King Horemheb

The cult of the deified King Horemheb was performed in the Nineteenth Dynasty by a number of priests.¹⁶⁶ Cult activities are corroborated by additional material evidence. Two deposits of pottery found in the first courtyard of the tomb contained material originally placed in the cult chapels.¹⁶⁷ Additionally, a number of offering stands and basins were introduced in the tomb in the course of the Nineteenth Dynasty.¹⁶⁸

There are indications to suggest that the exterior pylon was gradually covered with sand in the course of the Nineteenth Dynasty, but that the gateway itself was kept clear for a longer period of time.¹⁶⁹ Visitors thus frequenting the tomb also left graffiti. A large number of graffiti depicting boats were scratched on the stone surface of the entrance pylon doorway.¹⁷⁰

Miniature Stelae Depicting the King

The king was depicted not only in graffiti but also on additional votive objects. One irregularly shaped limestone round-topped miniature stela depicting the king was found in the tomb of Horemheb.¹⁷¹ The standing figure of the king wearing the *khepresh* crown is boldly incised without much attention for physiognomic details. The king is positioned in front of two offering stands painted in black ink.¹⁷² The style of the figure appears to be indicative of a late Eighteenth Dynasty date. A close parallel for this miniature stela was found at Amarna.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁶ The plinth of the *hr.y-hb n(.y) Hr-m-hb Ph.f-nfr* (who named one of his sons after Horemheb: *Hr-m-hb-m-ntr*) was found *in situ* in the tomb of Horemheb (Martin, *Horemheb* I, 70–3, scenes 65–66, pls 68–71; Nineteenth Dynasty); and the stela of the *wb3 nsu.t w' b .wy hm-ntr n(.y) Hr-m-hb Pth-p3-tur* derives undoubtedly also from Saqqara (Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico EG 1906, temp. Ramesses I–Seti I; PM VIII/4, 803–045–020; E. Bresciani, *Le stele egiziane del Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna* (Bologna, 1985), 68–69, No. 24, pls 33–35; S. Pasquali, *Topographie culturelle de Memphis I, a- Corpus: Temples, et principaux quartiers de la XVIII^e dynastie* (CENiM 4; Montpellier, 2011), 65, A.133).

¹⁶⁷ Aston, in M.J. Raven et al., *Horemheb* V, 217–219, 223–224. The deposit contained some late Eighteenth Dynasty pottery (perhaps pertaining to the burial of Horemheb's wife), but the majority dated to the first half of the Nineteenth Dynasty. The first deposit consisted of 151 vessels (with 138 (91%) so-called beer jars); the second contained a minimum of 142 vessels (with 110 (77%) beer jars).

¹⁶⁸ Martin, *Horemheb* I, 110–111, pls 171–174 (all uninscribed).

¹⁶⁹ Aston, in Raven et al., *Horemheb* V, 226.

¹⁷⁰ Eight boat-graffiti were recorded by the author in March 2013, see: M.J. Raven, B.G. Aston, L. Horáčková, D. Picchi, and A. Bleeker, 'Preliminary Report on the Leiden Excavations at Saqqara, Season 2013: The Tombs of Sethnakht and an Anonymous Official', *JEOL* 44 (2012–13), 21; Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press), fig. 30.

¹⁷¹ Measuring 10.5 × 9.6 × 2.5 cm: Schneider, *Horemheb* II, 18, Cat. 62, pls I, 8, 56. For more, comparable votive stelae, see: *ibid.*, Cat. Nos 60, 63 and 64; Raven, *Maya* II, 24, Cat. 33, pl. 31.

¹⁷² Schneider, *Horemheb* II, 18, considered the object as an *ex-voto* placed in the tomb on the occasion of the burial of Horemheb's wife, and identified the King as Ay (cf. *Ibid.*, 18–19, Cat. 61 and 65, pls I, 8, 55, 56). Mutnodjmet was buried in the tomb, and the fragment of a votive stela depicting her (with her husband, wearing the *khepresh*), left by a Ramesside visitor to the tomb of Horemheb, was found in the rubble covering the forecourt of the tomb of Tia: Raven and Van Walsem, *Horemheb* V, 74, Cat. 8, figs on p. 70, 75; measurements as preserved: 13.5 × 8.7 × 3.6 cm.

¹⁷³ Stevens, *Private Religion*, 136, fig. II.5.4; approximately 7 cm high, current location unknown. For more royal votive stelae from Amarna, see: *ibid.*, 133–138.

An ostracon found in the tomb of Horemheb depicted the king in a similar pose, although without the offering stand (fig. 8).¹⁷⁴ This suggests that while a different medium was used to carve the image, it served a similar purpose, i.e. as a votive object (votive miniature stela) deposited in the sacred setting of the deified king's tomb.

The donors of votive stelae need not necessarily be represented on them, and neither do such stelae necessarily bear inscriptions.¹⁷⁵ Following Pinch¹⁷⁶ and Stevens,¹⁷⁷ New Kingdom stelae from Saqqara showing the king can be divided into three types:

1. The living or deceased king depicted as an intermediary to a deity.¹⁷⁸

For example the stela of the Outline Draughtsman Ptah-Sety (early Nineteenth Dynasty, from the Teti pyramid cemetery; Boston, MFA 25.635), depicting Teti offering to Osiris (upper register), and Ptah-Sety and his wife standing in adoration (lower register).¹⁷⁹

2. The deceased king, or his cult image, being worshipped, alone or on equal terms with deities.

For example the stela of the Overseer of Horses Amenemhat (late Eighteenth Dynasty, Teti pyramid cemetery; present location unknown), depicting Amenemhat offering to Osiris (seated) and Teti (standing behind Osiris);¹⁸⁰ the stela of *NN* (Nineteenth Dynasty; Cairo TN 9.2.15.1), depicting Teti seated in front of an offering table (upper register), and various individuals standing in adoring pose (lower register);¹⁸¹ the naos-shaped

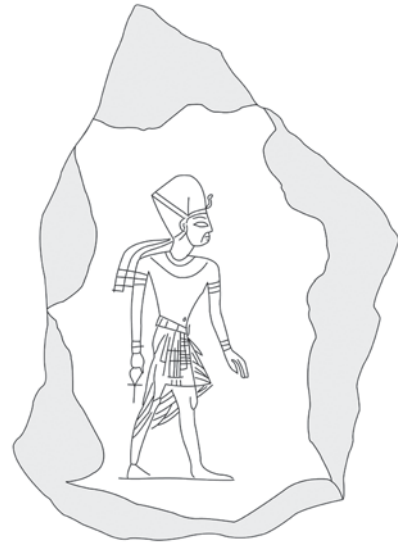


Fig. 8. Limestone ostrakon (20 × 14.5 × 5 cm) with the incised depiction of a King (Raven *et al.*, *Horemheb V*, Cat. 103). Image courtesy of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden.

¹⁷⁴ Raven *et al.*, *Horemheb V*, Cat. 103. The king holding an *ankh* scepter represents one iconographic marker denoting the king's deified status: P.J. Brand, *The Monuments of Seti I: Epigraphic, Historical and Art Historical Analysis* (PdÄ 16; Leiden, 2000), 43–44.

¹⁷⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 96, 98.

¹⁷⁶ See Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 95–96; Stevens, *Private Religion*, 138.

¹⁷⁷ Stevens, *Private Religion*, 138.

¹⁷⁸ H. Altenmüller, 'Amenophis I. als Mittler', *MDAIK* 37 (1981), 1–7; A.R. Schulman, *Ceremonial Execution and Public Rewards: Some Historical Scenes on New Kingdom Private Stelae* (OBO 75; Freiburg and Göttingen, 1988), 3–4, 192–197. Schulman argues that the stelae commemorated the donor's attendance at a festival or temple ritual also attended by the king. See also K. Exell, *Soldiers, Sailors and Sandalmakers: A Social Reading of Ramesside Period Votive Stelae* (GHP Egyptology 10; London, 2009), 69–91, 133–134.

¹⁷⁹ Dunham, *JEA* 21, 148–149, pl. 17.2; Málek, in Lloyd (ed.), *Studies J. Gwyn Griffiths*, 68 [S6], fig. 3, pl. 7.

¹⁸⁰ Gunn MSS XIX 2[2]; Notebook 7, No. 41; Málek, in Lloyd (ed.), *Studies J. Gwyn Griffiths*, 68, pl. 6.1–2. The reverse contains an offering formula mentioning Teti alongside Osiris Lord of Rosetau.

¹⁸¹ J.E. Quibell, *Excavations at Saqqara (1907-1908)* (Cairo, 1909), 114, pl. 77.4 [left].

pedestal of the Scribe of the Altar of the Lord of the Two Lands Amunwahsu (Nineteenth Dynasty, temp. Seti I, Teti pyramid cemetery; Marseille, Musée d'archéologie No. 211), depicting Teti standing in his pyramid and adored by both Amunwahsu and his wife;¹⁸² the stela of the Royal Butler and Priest (*hm-ntr*) of Horemheb, Ptahpatener (Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico EG 1906), depicting Ptahpatener and his wife bringing offerings to a seated (statue of) Horemheb; the stela of Mery-Ptah (late Eighteenth Dynasty, Teti pyramid cemetery; Cairo JE 34188) depicting Mery-Ptah and his son Thutmose (who dedicated the stela) in front of an offering table (lower register), and Teti represented by two cartouches in the upper register.

3. Statues of the living king as the object of worship.¹⁸³

No examples from Saqqara.

Málek interprets the renewed interest for the Old Kingdom kings at Saqqara in the context of the location of their pyramids, particularly in the case of Teti.¹⁸⁴ The area around the pyramid of Teti was densely populated by New Kingdom tombs, and it was located on the approach to the Serapeum. Teti's presence within the sacred and mortuary landscape may have made him a powerful local deity; one of several deities who dwelt in the Memphite necropolis.¹⁸⁵

Horemheb may have acquired the same status as a local deity at the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty. The significance of Horemheb as the founder of the Ramesside dynasty, and the great emphasis on the ancestors, aptly made him a particularly powerful such deity. All representations of the king in graffiti, on ostraca, and votive stelae depict him standing, actively receiving offerings and mediating between the living and the gods.

The amuletic¹⁸⁶ use of an ostrakon bearing the representation of a deified king?

Graffiti depicting human figures may have been related to the later reuse of the monumental tombs.¹⁸⁷ The chapels of the tomb of Ptahemwia, for example, were reused for

¹⁸² M. Nelson and G. Piérini, *Catalogue des Antiquités Égyptiennes: Collection des Musées d'Archéologie de Marseille* (Marseille, 1978), 33, fig. 64.

¹⁸³ L. Habachi, *Features of the Deification of Ramesses II* (ADAIK 5; Glückstadt, 1969), 34, pl. 21; R. El-Sayed, 'Stèles de particuliers relatives au culte rendu aux statues royales de la XVIII^e à la XX^e dynastie', *BIFAO* 79 (1979), 155–166.

¹⁸⁴ Málek, in Lloyd (ed.), *Studies J. Gwyn Griffiths*, 72.

¹⁸⁵ With regards to the status of the Old Kingdom rulers during the Middle Kingdom, in the Memphite area, Málek argued that the deified kings, unlike the 'real gods' of the Egyptian official religion, may have been 'invoked locally as intercessors because their posthumous state and local associations made them more 'approachable' than other gods (J. Málek, 'Old-Kingdom Rulers as "Local Saints" in the Memphite Area during the Middle Kingdom', in M. Bartá and J. Krejčí (eds), *Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2000* (ArOr Supp 9; Prague, 2000), 257.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged*, 1 (Chicago, 1976), 74: Amuletic: 'functioning as an amulet'; and Amulet: 'a charm (as an ornament, gem, or relic) often inscribed with a spell, magic incantation, or symbol and believed to protect the wearer against evil (as disease or witchcraft) or to aid him (as in love or war)'.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Den Doncker, in Kóthay (ed.), *Art and Society*, 24–25.




Fig. 9. Figured limestone ostrakon (14.3 × 11.5 × 3.9 cm; a, obverse; b, reverse) found in the central chapel of the tomb of Ptahemwia, Royal Butler (excavation no. SAK 2007-037). © Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden.

the burials (initially) of infants. The central chapel contained the graffito of a jackal on a divine stand: Wepwawet in his role as *psychopompos*.¹⁸⁸ A limestone ostrakon (fragment) was found in the same chapel (fig. 9a–b).¹⁸⁹ It contains several representations carved in sunk relief that were painted in red and black ink. The obverse shows a depiction of a *wdb.t* eye (a left eye): perhaps one of the best known Ancient Egyptian apotropaic symbols.¹⁹⁰ The same side depicts a partly preserved male human figure standing on a register line. The reverse shows the representations of a young boy raising his left hand, a hieroglyphic inscription, and part of a standing male figure. The hieroglyphic inscription was

¹⁸⁸ Van Pelt and Staring, *BMSAES* 24 (in press), fig. 10.

¹⁸⁹ Measurements: 14.3 × 11.5 × 3.9 cm: Raven et al., *Ptahemwia and Sethnakht*, Cat. 127. I thank Maarten Raven for information on this object and permission to publish it here.



¹⁹⁰ C.A.R. Andrews, *Amulets of Ancient Egypt* (London, 1994), 43–44.

intended to read *Imn(.w)-R^c(.w)*, although curiously written as (→) .¹⁹¹ The male figure appears to represent a standing king wearing the *nemes* headdress, holding an object (*ankh* sign?) in his right hand and extending his left hand towards what might be an offering table, which is similar to the depiction of kings on some votive stelae.¹⁹² It is tempting to interpret this set of loose drawings as forming a coherent, apotropaic ‘amulet’ introduced to (one of the) child burials. The young boy is represented on the object surrounded by protective symbols: the *wḏ3.t* eye, the name of a god, and the figure of a king: perhaps the deified King Horemheb as the powerful, local deity. The tomb of Ptahemwia received an exceptionally large number of child burials, and a similarly large number of graffiti depicting the king were carved on its walls.

11. CONCLUSIONS

In this article, the graffiti recorded in the New Kingdom tombs at Saqqara were studied as the products of the physical engagement with sacred space. Graffiti can be considered as the material expressions of mental reflections of (individuals from) the (distant and recent) past, and they can be used to analyse the reception-history of a monument – an active process of memory-making through time, which contributes to a further understanding of contemplations of the past in the past.¹⁹³ Memories of ancestors are perpetuated via the maintenance of predecessors’ monuments, and they are conveyed through ritual performances and commemorative ceremonies.¹⁹⁴ Tomb-graffiti were produced in connection with exactly those activities.

The spatial distribution of graffiti depicting human figures revealed a preference for the entrance doorways. As with the depictions of footprints and boats, depictions of human figures mark an individual’s worshipful presence at a certain place. They are metonyms of both identity and journey, and the figural equivalent of certain textual graffiti that convey the same message more explicitly. Inscribing a figure secured one’s permanent presence in the following of the tomb owner and ensured that one would also benefit from the magical efficacy offered by the tomb’s decoration programme. Additionally, the spatial distribution of graffiti demonstrates a correlation between the increasing sacredness of the tomb from outside to inside spaces and public accessibility, which compares well with the distribution

¹⁹¹ A similar writing of the name Amun-Re can be observed on panel AP6-b from the (lost) Saqqara tomb of Merymery, Custodian of the Treasury of Memphis (Eighteenth Dynasty, temp. Amenhotep III): (→)  (P.A.A. Boeser, *Beschrijving van de Egyptische verzameling in het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden: De monumenten van het Nieuwe Rijk. Eerste afdeling: Graven* (The Hague, 1911), pl. 18). Compare also to the graffiti mentioning the same deity written as (↓→)  on a stela found at the hill-top monument of Khaemwaset at Abusir South: Waseda University, Institute of Egyptology, *Abusir South [III]* (Tokyo, 2006), 90, No. 2, pl. 14.1: object no. AK04-0131; limestone, 45.7 × 30.5 × 6 cm. The unfinished stela depicts an anonymous king before one standing and four sitting deities, and also contains graffiti depicting sitting baboons (2) and a horse.

¹⁹² Cf. fig. 8 and nn 159 and 162, above.

¹⁹³ R. Bradley, *The Past in Prehistoric Societies* (London, 2002).

¹⁹⁴ S.D. Gillespie, ‘Personhood, Agency, and Mortuary Ritual: A Case Study from the Ancient Maya’, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 20 (2001), 73–112.

of graffiti in contemporaneous temples for the gods. The sacralisation of the tomb, and the appearance of the tomb as a contemporary temple may have provided easier access to the gods than provided by the state temples with a higher level of exclusivity.¹⁹⁵ Deceased family members provided direct access to the gods in return for offerings and adoration presented by the living.

The varying degrees of formality observed for graffiti enables their comparison with depictions on other media, such as (limestone and pottery) ostraca and miniature stelae, which stresses the opinion that graffiti should not be studied in isolation.

Because of the status inherent in written texts, one would expect the figural graffiti to have been produced by illiterate (or less literate) individuals. If a certain image (such as a human figure in adoring pose) was the equivalent of an inscription (such as the text ‘... adoring X by N’), then why would someone with the ability to write choose to carve an image? While the answer to this question may appear to be rather straightforward, this study suggested that the figural graffiti, including those of low artistic merit, need not necessarily have been produced by illiterate individuals. Moreover, the saying or reading out of spells could also serve to identify a figure with whom it should represent, so that these anonymous representations of human figures would have been just as effective as their presumed textual equivalents.

One group of graffiti from the New Kingdom necropolis south of the Unas causeway depict the king. These graffiti and additional votive objects (such as ostraca and miniature stelae) were left in connection with the cult of the deified King Horemheb, who may have acquired the status of a local deity at the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Harrington, *Living with the Dead*, 102; J. Baines and P. Lacovara, ‘Burial and the Dead in Ancient Egyptian Society: Respect, Formalism, Neglect’, *Journal of Social Archaeology* 2/1 (2002), 12.