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A pyramid casing stone with the opening passage of Kemyt Dahshur, pyramid precinct of Senwosret III

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Abstract

The secondary epigraphy in the pyramid precinct of Senwosret III in Dahshur has revealed a new excerpt of *Kemyt* (reg. no. 03.467). This paper offers the edition of this new dipinto and provides a discussion of its context. It also highlights parallels between royal and non-royal secondary epigraphy.

The pyramid complex of Senwosret III in North-Eastern Dahshur was frequently visited during the 18th dynasty and probably largely dismantled during the 19th dynasty (some of the burials had probably been robbed already in the Second Intermediate Period). Hitherto, most of its attested secondary epigraphy production related to the visitors' specific and localised experience at that time¹. The find of *Kemyt*² expands the known repertoire of the secondary epigraphy contents. It adds an instruction text to the visitors' texts (of the *iw.t pw* narrative type³), and to historical references to the reign of Thutmose III (using phraseology close to biographical texts and monumental record⁴), not to mention the specific demolition texts⁵. Yet, no excerpt or quotation of literary texts were recorded in this precinct up to now.

¹ Cf. J.P. Allen/H. Navratilova/F. Arnold, New Kingdom graffiti in Dahshur, pyramid complex of Senwosret III: preliminary report. Graffiti uncovered in seasons 1992–2010, in: JARCE 49, 113–141; H. Navratilova, Ramesside docketts on blocks from the pyramid complex of Senwosret III in Dahshur, in: JEA 101, 2015, 107–116.

² See *inter alia* W.C. Hayes, A much-copied letter of the early Middle Kingdom, in: JNES 7, 1948, 4–6; B. van de Walle, La transmission des textes littéraires égyptiens, with an appendix of G. Posener, Brussels 1948; G. Posener, Catalogues des ostraca hiératiques littéraires de Deir el Médineh: II (Nos 1109 à 1167), Cairo 1951; A. Gasse, Catalogue des ostraca littéraires de Deir al-Medîna: nos 1775–1873 et 1156; Tome V, DFIFAO 44, Cairo 2005; B. Mathieu/V. Ritter, Les sections finales du manuel scolaire Kémyt (§ XV–XVII). In Chr. Gallois/P. Grandet/L. Pantalacci (eds), Mélanges offerts à François Neveu: par ses amis, élèves et collègues à l'occasion de son soixante-quatrième anniversaire, Cairo 2008, 193–238; E. Petersmarck, Die Kemit. Ostraka, Schreiftafel und Papyrus, Göttingen 2012; or A. Motte, Kemit, writing-boards, and palaeographic studies. In S. Gülden/T. Konrad/U. Verhoeven (eds.), Ägyptologische „Binsen“-Weisheiten IV. Hieratisch des Neuen Reiches, Stuttgart 2022, 337–379 with further bibliography.

³ About this specific corpus, see for instance W. Helck, Die Bedeutung der ägyptischen Besucherinschriften, in: ZDMG 102 (1), 1952, 39–46; M. Negm, 1998, Tourist graffiti from the Ramesside period, in: DE 40, 1998, 115–123; H. Navratilova, Visitors' graffiti of Dynasties 18 and 19 in Abusir and northern Saqqara: with a survey of the graffiti at Giza, southern Saqqara, Dahshur and Maidum, Wallasey² 2015; Chl. Ragazzoli, Lire, inscrire et savoir en Égypte ancienne: les inscriptions de visiteurs du Nouvel Empire, in: Chr. Jacob, Lieux de savoir 2: Les mains de l'intellect, Paris 2011, 290–311; U. Verhoeven (ed.), 2020. Dipinti von Besuchern des Grabes N13.1 in Assiut, The Asyut Project 15, Wiesbaden 2020 (DOI: 10.13173/9783447115230) 15–19; or Chl. Ragazzoli, Les inscriptions de visiteurs dans les tombes thébaines (I). Epigraphie secondaire en Égypte ancienne, MIFAO, Cairo forthcoming.

⁴ Examples of this type include fragments reg. nos 94.1411 and 94.1413 from the South Temple area of the pyramid precinct of Senwosret III at Dahshur.

⁵ About 350 New Kingdom written and figural graffiti have been recorded up to now. See J.P. Allen/H. Navratilova/F. Arnold, New Kingdom graffiti in Dahshur, pyramid complex of Senwosret III: preliminary report. Graffiti uncovered in seasons 1992–2010, in: JARCE 49, 2013, 113–141 for an earlier overview and previous bibliography.

The fragments of texts of *Kemyt* appear in secondary epigraphy across but a few sites in Egypt: Assiut, Saqqara and, thanks to the present example, Dahshur. The most extensive material hitherto available is from Assiut, Middle Kingdom tomb N13.1 (Verhoeven 2020), where three quotes from *Kemyt* appear alongside many other literary texts in a secondary epigraphy corpus dated to the New Kingdom, probably to the 18th dynasty⁶. Secondary epigraphy usually displays parallel textual collections as do contemporary finds of ostraca⁷ – the material in Assiut includes *Instructions of Amenemhat* and *Khety* as do ostraca both in the 18th dynasty and in later collections. The texts not only appear in the same collections, they may also be written on the same ostrakon⁸.

Royal funerary complexes in the Memphite area have so far yielded a more limited corpus⁹, for example quotes from other instruction texts are not yet attested, although a ‘beginning of an instruction’ is known from the Step Pyramid precinct. The *Kemyt* fragment from the precinct of Senwosret III at Dahshur is a welcome addition to our understanding of scribal self-representation displays in diverse realms of memory. There might have been possibly more traces across the pyramid complex: of either direct quotes from *Kemyt*, or writing style in vertical columns inspired by *Kemyt*¹⁰, but so far only one fragment has been identified as a specific quote from this much-copied text.

The pyramid complex of Senwosret III at Dahshur offers a particularly eloquent example of a use of the pyramid precinct by several generations of users with different motivations. The *chaîne opératoire* of this site included complex processes, starting with the building of the pyramid and its adjacent enclosure, and continuing with its use as a cult site of the king, and a burial site of the royal family and officials¹¹. In the Second Intermediate Period, the interior substructure of the pyramid might have been already open¹², but its surrounding above-ground temples and chapels were most probably still standing in the 18th dynasty.

⁶ Cf. Verhoeven, *Dipinti von Besuchern des Grabes N13.1*, 313.

⁷ See Fr. Hagen, *Ostraca from the temple of millions of years of Thutmose III*, CHANE 120, Leiden/Boston 2021 DOI: 10.1163/9789004447561 and others.

⁸ See for instance O. IFAO 1541 (*Khety + Kemyt*) in G. Posener, *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques littéraires de Deir el Médineh*: tome 3. Nos 1267–1675, DFIFAO 20, Cairo 1977–1980, 64 and pl. 40 or O. IFAO 1869 (*Amenemhat + Kemyt*) in Gasse, *Catalogue des ostraca littéraires*, 155–156.

⁹ The Memphite pyramid fields corpus was outlined by A. J. Peden, *Graffiti of Pharaonic Egypt*, Leiden 2001, and an updated edition of select texts is provided in H. Navratilova, *Graffiti of Dynasties 18 and 19 in Abusir and Northern Saqqara*. The corpus located in different pyramid precincts has not yet been subject to a systematic state of the art epigraphic survey.

¹⁰ For example, reg. nos 04.208 (North Chapel) and 08.852 (Causeway).

¹¹ PM III², 882–885; Di. Arnold, *The pyramid complex of Senwosret III at Dahshur: architectural studies*, PMMA 26, New York 2002; discussion regarding the actual burial site of Senwosret III – J. Wegner, *The tomb of Senwosret III at Abydos: considerations on the origins and development of the royal Amduat-tomb*, in: D. Silverman/W. Kelly Simpson/J. Wegner (eds), *Archaism and innovation: studies in the culture of Middle Kingdom Egypt*, New Haven, CT; Philadelphia, PA, 2009, 103–168, esp. 129–131. Wegner argues for an innovative character of the Amduat-tomb type, foreshadowed at Abydos; this is particularly interesting in context of the innovative architecture at Dahshur (especially where the South Temple is concerned, as indicated by ongoing excavations in 2018, 2019, and 2021, personal communications Di. Arnold). Both complexes of Senwosret III, Abydos and Dahshur, had used archaising elements inherited from the complex of Djoser, but in an innovative fashion, as argued by Wegner, *The tomb*, 118 and Arnold, *Architecture*, 57–58 and 121–123.

¹² Di. Arnold, *Architecture*, see also Do. Arnold on the ‘Hyksos’ type dipinti in: 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*, Leuven 2010, 183–221.

The earliest New Kingdom secondary epigraphy material may be dated to the reign of Thutmose I¹³ (unless the fragmentary text refers to an institution of this king, such as his memorial temple, in which case the text might be later)¹⁴.

1 Fragment reg. no 03.467

The limestone fragment with prominent yellowish patina was found in square M/37 (see plan, fig. 1) in the pyramid precinct of Senwosret III in northeast Dahshur; the square includes a portion of the North Chapel and areas to the east and slightly north of it that contained extensive amounts of debris from the structure. The fragment itself is a patch stone, and because of the distinct patina certainly came from an exterior surface¹⁵; it almost certainly originates from a structure in the area in which it was found, that is from the North Chapel, the casing of the king's pyramid, or less likely the nearby chapels or pyramids of royal women. The limestone inner enclosure wall is also a possible origin for the patch stone¹⁶. It is not possible to define its original position more precisely, as the north side of Senwosret III's pyramid complex was heavily disturbed during the demolition process that seems to have begun in the Ramesside Period¹⁷; continued with the reuse of the area as a burial site from the Late Period to the Coptic era; and culminated with extensive archaeological activity focused on the search for the entrance to the king's burial chambers (outline Porter-Moss III²; notably Perring and Vyse, Maspero and de Morgan).

However, the dispersal of the material was not indiscriminate, and, with the exception of the area in and around the causeway, there are only rare instances in which an object was found a great distance from its original position.¹⁸ The dismantling process likely involved the gradual disassembling of structures, with their stones carried off for reuse at other sites. Material appears to have been moved to the southeast and the area of the causeway, where the slope from pyramid plateau to the cultivation is more gradual¹⁹. Thus, for example, numerous column fragments that must have originated in the South Temple were abandoned at the upper end of the causeway. On the north side of the king's pyramid, there was some mixture of fragments from the North Chapel and the nearby queens' pyramid, particularly numbers 2 and 4²⁰.

It is also worth noting that because of their small size and irregular shape, patch stones generally could not be either reused in a new structure or formed into stone implements such as bowls or anchors. Like other New Kingdom ostraca (for example the even larger Ashmolean Ostrakon of Sinuhe), the patch stone under discussion here is also not a lightweight

¹³ Column fragment reg. no. 453, South Temple, pyramid precinct of Senwosret III, Dahshur.

¹⁴ This was the case in Medum. See Griffith in Petrie, *Medum*, 40 and pl. xxxiii.

¹⁵ Personal communication Di. Arnold and A. Oppenheim, 21 October 2021.

¹⁶ The outer surface of the inner enclosure wall was embellished with a series of projections, recesses, grooves, and small sunk rectangles, see Di. Arnold, *Pyramid Complex of Senwosret III*, 23–25.

¹⁷ Compare ostrakon MMA 32.1.119, with the *Instruction of Amenemhat*. See for instance D. Lorand, *Un scribe sur les lieux de l'Histoire. À propos de l'ostrakon MMA 32.1.119 et de la fréquentation des pyramides de Licht à la XIX^e dynastie*, in: BIFAO 112, 2013, 225–242.

¹⁸ These include a few small fragments from the North Chapel that were found in the Pyramid Temple and vice versa, and pieces of the colossal statue that were spread over a large portion of the South Temple, presumably because the sculpture was broken into smaller sections that were further cut down in different locations.

¹⁹ Personal communication Di. Arnold and S. Allen, 2018, 2021.

²⁰ Excavation records, the Egyptian Expedition, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

object easily carried or shifted by wind or drifting sand. Even if it was part of a debris from the limited Perring or Maspero operations or other excavation work²¹, it is highly unlikely to originate from a distant part of the complex.

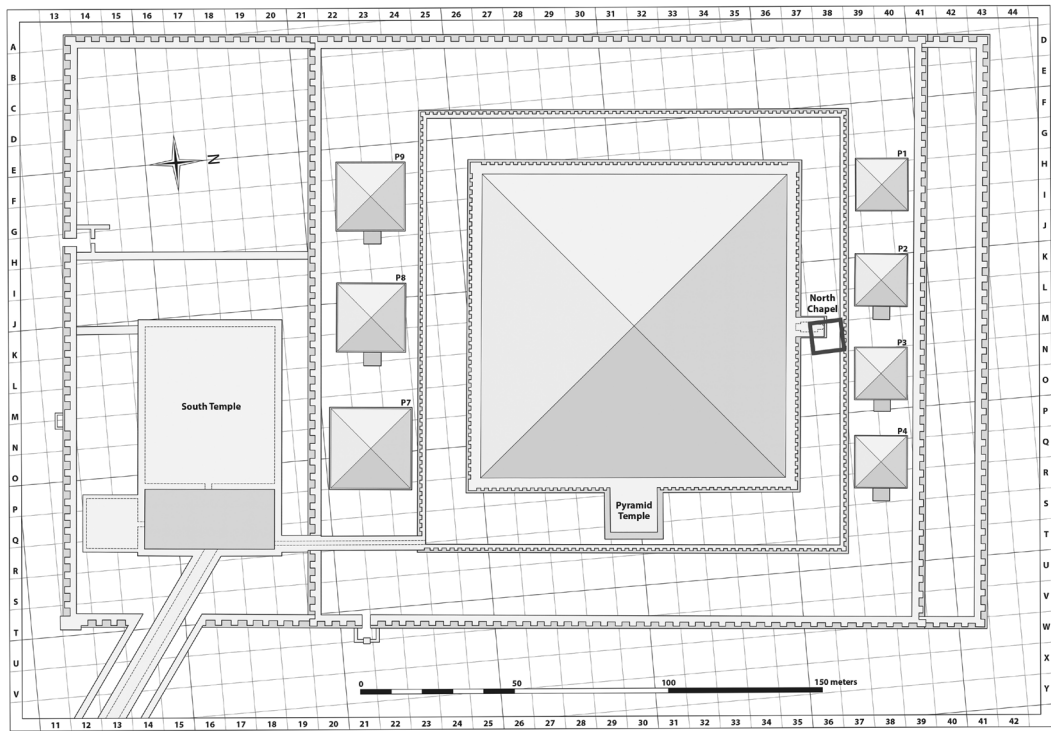


Fig. 1: Plan of the pyramid precinct of Senwosret III in North-Eastern Dahshur
© Metropolitan Museum of Art, plan drawn by Sara Chen

It is a large fragment, its surface measuring 36×24 cm. The edges of the patching stone are broken off and damaged at several places. Its smooth surface is covered with evident patina, and bears two columns of black ink dipinti executed in large, angular, archaizing hieratic signs typical for the copies of *Kemyt* (see figs. 2–3). The signs (sign height between 2 to 5 cm, complete text surface coverage 16×21.5 cm) are also much larger than they would have been on a more standard writing surface of an ostrakon or limestone writing-boards. Unlike the other known *Kemyt* dipinti²², the columns, the width of which is 8 cm, have black dividing lines. The brush strokes are thin and appear consistently faded as if the dipping was very light. The thin lines almost suggest an ill-prepared or unusual writing tool.

The text goes slightly over the preserved edges of the fragment surface, but not to any prominent extent, it would almost appear as if the writer tried to crowd the text in the limited

²¹ Bibliography for the earlier explorations: PM III², 882.

²² See Gr. 14 in R. Demarée, A hieratic graffito in the tomb of Ptahemwia, in: *Saqqara Newsletter* 7, 2009, 11–12 and N. Staring/P. van Pelt in M.J. Raven, *The tombs of Ptahemwia and Sethnakht at Saqqara*, PALMA 22, Leiden 2020, 154–155 and TN6, TN8, and TS10 in Verhoeven, *Dipinti von Besuchern des Grabes N13.1*, 35–38, 140–141, 242–243, pl. 46–47, pl. 107, pl. 187–188, and pl. 270.

space of the original patching stone after the stone was already removed from its original wall.



Fig. 2: Picture of the fragment reg. no. 03.467 with the opening passage of *Kemyt*
© Metropolitan Museum of Art, photo by Anna Serotta

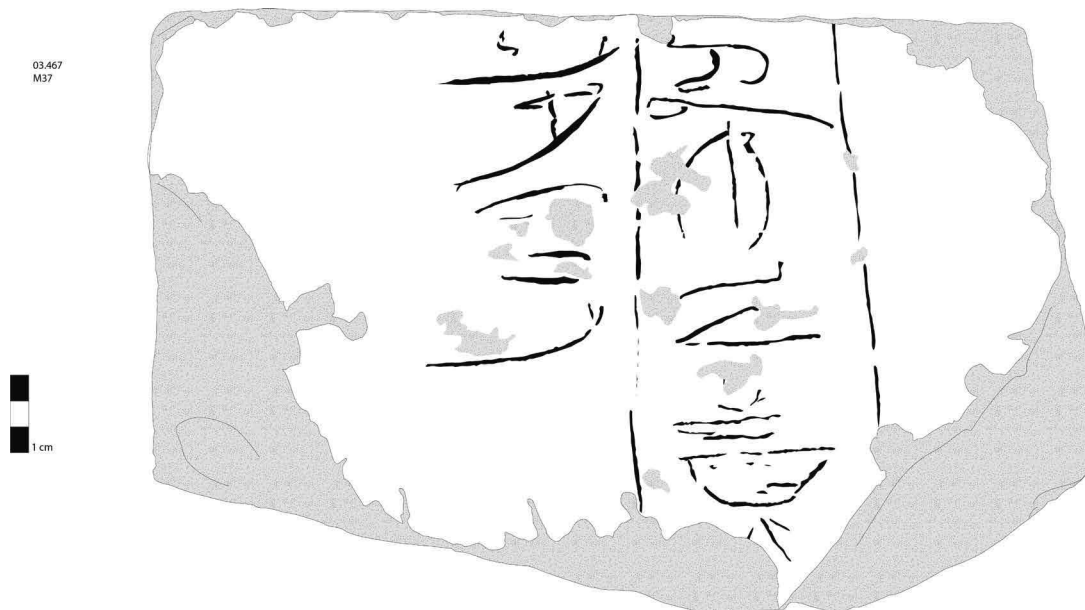


Fig. 3: Drawing of reg. no. 03.467 with the opening passage of *Kemyt*
© Metropolitan Museum of Art, tracing by Hana Navratilova


Text

1. *b3k dd hr nb*2. =*f mrr=f*










1. ‘The servant says before

2. his beloved master’

The ‘crowding’ of signs in the first column did not prevent the need to add the suffix pronoun of *nb=f*, ‘his master’ at the top of the second column. The usual *w* of *mrr:w=f* is missing, and it would often have been written out as a quail chick sign G43. However, there is an option to consider the writing as just *b3k dd hr nb=f mrr=f* as in Gr. 14 from the tomb of Ptahemwia or in Assiut dipinto TS 10²³.

The A1 classifier () at the end of the first column is partially lost, but A1 following *b3k* is specific (cf. tab. 1), as indeed is the *b3*-sign (cf. tab. 2)²⁴.

Tab. 1: Examples of seated man (A1) in *Kemyt* material, scale 1/2

Frag. 03.467	Saq. Gr. 14	Assiut TN6	Assiut TN8	T. Carnarvon III	T. Louvre AF 497	O. T3.L13	O. T3.L14
				h.1 ²⁵ : 			
				h.2: 			

²³ Cf. fn. 22 above. On ostraca and writing boards the quail chick is usually not omitted. Cf. Posener, *Catalogues des ostraca hiératiques littéraires*, pl. 1 and Petersmarck, *Die Kemit*, 115–118 for instance.

²⁴ We are grateful to our colleagues Fredrik Hagen, Paul van Pelt, Nico Staring, and Ursula Verhoeven, who kindly shared their material with us. Other drawings are our own based on published material. Chr. Barbotin, *Une nouvelle attestation de Kémit*, in: *RdE* 48, 1997, 247; Carnarvon/H. Carter (eds), *Five years' explorations at Thebes: a record of work done 1907–1911*, London 1912, pl. LXXVI (1–2); Fischer-Elfert/Navrátilová/Onderka/Toivari-Viitala†, *The Deir el-Medina and Jaroslav Černý collections III*, pl. VIII; J. Galán, *An apprentice's board from Dra Abu el-Naga*, in: *JEA* 93, 2007, fig. 1; Gasse, *Catalogue des ostraca littéraires*, 98–99, 115–118; Hagen, *Ostraca from the temple of millions of years*, pl. 63–64; O. Kaper, *A Kemyt ostrakon from Amheida, Dakhleh Oasis*, in *BIFAO* 110, 2010, fig. 1; J. López, *Ostraca ieratici*, *Catalogo del Museo Egizio di Torino, serie seconda – collezioni 3 (1–2)*, Milan 1978–1980, pl. 29–29a, pl. 150–150a; Mathieu/Ritter, *Les sections finales du manuel scolaire Kémit (§ XV–XVII)*, pl. I–II; Staring/van Pelt in Raven, *The tombs of Ptahemwia and Sethnakht*, 154–155; Verhoeven, *Dipinti von Besuchern*, 35–38, pl. 46–47, and pl. 187–188; as well as the following websites (pages consulted November 18, 2021): <https://www.ifao.egnet.net/bases/archives/ostraca/?id=19575>, <https://www.ifao.egnet.net/bases/archives/ostraca/?id=19577>, and <https://petriecat.museums.ucl.ac.uk>.

²⁵ About the two hands, probably apprentice (reverse) and master (obverse), on this board see Motte, *Kemit, writing-boards, and palaeographic studies*, 351–353.

O. UC 31912	O. Naprstek P 2034	O. IFAO 1138	O. Cairo JE 54949	O. IFAO 1127	O. IFAO 1129	O. IFAO 1828	O. Amheida

The ductus of the seated man on the casing stone is similar – though not completely identical – to the A1-signs in the Ramesside copies of *Kemyt* (i.e. second line in tab. 1). The 18th dynasty versions display more variety in the way of doing the stroke depicting the left arm and knee.

The lower part of the *b3*-sign is, on the other hand, unique in its kind. No parallel has been recorded up to now²⁶. The *Kemyt* material display a range of shapes for the bird legs and this specimen comes to enrich the *Kemyt* palaeography.

Tab. 2: Examples of the bird sign *b3* (G29) in *Kemyt* material, scale 1/2

Frag. 03.467	Saq. Gr. 14	Assiut TN6	Assiut TN8	T. Carnarvon III	T. Luxor J 1001	O. T3.L13	O. T3.L14
				h.1: 			
				h.2: ^f 			
O. UC 31912	O. CGT 57054	O. CGT 57447	O. Cairo JE 54949	O. IFAO 1127	O. IFAO 1129	O. IFAO 1828	O. Amheida

It is possible that the sign shape choice was dictated also by writing surface, but the surface alone may not be a sufficient explanation.

The surface of the patching stone is somewhat damaged after the second =*f*; but upon repeated examination, the surface after the last legible =*f* appears quite clear. It is possible that the text indeed ended after *mrr(.w)=f*, without any further addition, as it is the case with other text examples²⁸.

²⁶ See for instance J.P. Allen, *The Heqanakht papyri*, PMMA 27, New York 2002, 200; H. Goedicke, *Old Hieratic palaeography*, Baltimore 1988, 15a–b; Th. James, *The Heqanakhte papers and other early Middle Kingdom documents*, PMMA 19. New York 1962, pal. 4; signs 208 and 211 in G. Möller, *Hieratische Paläographie: die ägyptische Buchschrift in ihrer Entwicklung von der fünften Dynastie bis zur römischen Kaiserzeit*, Leipzig 1909–1912; St. Wimmer, *Hieratische Paläographie der nicht-literarischen Ostraka der 19. und 20. Dynastie*. Teil 2: Tafeln, ÄAT 28, Wiesbaden 1995, 137.

²⁷ The *b3*-sign is not preserved on the obverse.

²⁸ Cf. TN6 and O. T3.L15 among the published material. See Verhoeven, *Dipinti von Besuchern des Grabes N13.1*, 35–36, pl. 46, and pl. 187 and Hagen, *Ostraca from the temple of millions of years*, 43 and pl. 65.

The text is the characteristic opening of the Book of *Kemyt*, the very first words of section one (§ 1). Section one²⁹ in full would include the following text:

b3k dd hr nb=f
mrr.w=f nh=f
wd3=f snb=f
m 3wt d.t r nhh
mi mrr b3k im

Section one is a frequently copied part of the text³⁰, its choice for a demonstration of scribal knowledge is therefore representative of a typical and fairly conventional scribal display. As a matter of fact, *Kemyt* secondary epigraphy displays only section one, be it in the Memphite area or in Assiut.

As the quote reflects a hierarchical relationship, it might have echoed the presence of junior and senior members of administrative staff on site (as shown in the Step Pyramid complex³¹); its precise context may be more difficult to define. Group visits are attested elsewhere across the pyramid precinct, most visibly in the area of the South Temple³². The junior staff member would thus allude to his own position in relation to his superior by applying the deferential archaizing text quote (see below). However, this is only speculative, a lone scribe might have used the quote equally well.

The archaizing script of *Kemyt* makes this text difficult to date; given the context of other secondary epigraphy in the pyramid complex, it is likely that it would be of a New Kingdom date, as secondary epigraphy of a Middle Kingdom date is so far unknown from Middle Kingdom royal temples and chapels. The above palaeography selection has highlighted both the similarities and differences in respect of other *Kemyt* material datable to the New Kingdom. The application of text on a (presumably freely lying) patching stone has some, but limited, dating implications. Large parts of the monument were still standing in the 18th dynasty period³³, whereas the precinct was probably dismantled in the reign of Ramesses II. A patch-

²⁹ This division of verses follows the verse dividers found in a few Ramesside copies, like O. IFAO 1110, O. IFAO 1111, O. IFAO 1112, O. IFAO 1824, O. IFAO 1826, O. IFAO 1829, and O. Heidelberg 14. The rubric of the first words of this opening paragraph sometimes includes part of the spelling of *mrrw=f* – cf. for instance O. IFAO 1428v°, O. IFAO 1826, and O. UC 31913 – but this remains exceptional. Most of the time, rubric stops after *nb=f*. All this may suggest a Ramesside interpretation that is reflecting the period understanding and emphasis. It is, however, clear from a morpho-syntactic point of view that *mrrw=f* is the participle accompanying *nb=f*, whereas *nh=f* goes with *wd3=f snb=f*.

³⁰ There are many excerpts preserving only section one (eventually completed with the first words of section 2 as a way to conclude the copy). See for instance O. IFAO 1825, O. IFAO 1826, O. IFAO 1827, O. IFAO 1828, O. IFAO 1831, O. IFAO 1832, O. IFAO 1833, O. IFAO 1834, O. IFAO 1835, O. IFAO 1836, O. IFAO 1837, O. IFAO 1838, O. IFAO 1839, O. IFAO 1840, O. IFAO 1842, O. IFAO 1844 in Gasse, *Catalogue des ostraca littéraires*, 95–99, 106–120, 122, and 125; T. Louvre AF 497 in Barbotin 1997, *Une nouvelle attestation de Kémit*, 247–250; T. Luxor J 1001 in J. Galán, *An apprentice's board from Dra Abu el-Naga*, in: *JEA* 93, 2007, 95–116; or more recently O. T3.L12–16 in Hagen, *Ostraca from the temple of millions of years*, 42–43, pl. 63–65.

³¹ Scribe Ahmose and his teacher Sethemheb, Navratilova, *Visitors' Graffiti*, 119–122.

³² For instance: doorframe fragment reg. no. 94.989+17.299+17.302, including a copying grid on a nearby relief.

³³ The columns were often inscribed whilst standing, as were the doorways and dados, compare Allen/Navratilova/Arnold, *New Kingdom graffiti in Dahshur*.

ing stone might have fallen off its place whilst large parts of the precinct were still standing, hence the *Kemyt* fragment may still be dated contextually to the 18th dynasty, when group visits by literate professionals are attested by other evidence³⁴. However, as noted above, some shapes reflect the Ramesside *Kemyt* palaeography. Consequently, this later date, which would make the scribes contemporaries or directly members of the demolition crews, cannot be categorically ruled out, especially in context of the Ramesside copy of a literary text at Lisht, where a demolition was probably also in progress³⁵. The (modern) tension between a veneration of a *lieu de savoir/de mémoire* and a practical second-hand quarry was not perceived by the Ramesside intellectuals on the same terms as it is by more recent observers³⁶.

2 Finding *Kemyt* in pyramid complexes?

Interpreting a text fragment of secondary epigraphy involves looking at its contents, and also at its writing style, and its location (within the building) and placement (on the wall), in relation to the space and to primary epigraphy³⁷, if the latter is present.

The spatial context of this patching stone is unknown, except it had originally been located on an exterior surface. Surviving ink written dipinti often appear in the interiors. In turn, New Kingdom texts on the (exterior) pyramid casing of Pepi I for instance (mostly scribal titles and names³⁸) were carved/incised. It is possible, however, that more exterior dipinti were simply damaged over time, causing a survival bias, which has led to a suggestion that dipinti were more characteristic of an interior secondary epigraphy production, and graffiti of an exterior performance³⁹.

Consequently, it is possible that this might have been an exterior dipinto; it is nonetheless more likely that it was written on an already detached patching stone. Ultimately, its precise relation to the original space and extant primary epigraphy remains unknown. In any event, the writer created their own writing space on the wall fragment, demarcating with dividing lines executed in the same black ink as the text. No red ink was used in the making of this *Kemyt* quote.

Their choice of text reflected a specific format of scribal training, which involved an archaizing text written in columns, hence preparing the writer potentially for writing tasks

³⁴ For example, doorframe fragment 94.989 with lines of visitors' graffiti written by different hands, but probably within a short time span (they are close to one another, but appear to respect each other's writing space).

³⁵ Lorand, *Un scribe sur les lieux de l'Histoire*, 240.

³⁶ Lorand, *Un scribe sur les lieux de l'Histoire*, 240, H. Navratilova, *Prolegomena to a pyramid biography*, in: *Abusir and Saqqara 2020*, Prague, forthcoming.

³⁷ See for instance dipinto TN8 (Assiut), inscribed alongside a servant who faces his master, which may have prompted the scribe to add the beginning of the *Kemyt* with the explicit reference to the servant (*b3k*). Cf. Verhoeven, *Dipinti von Besuchern des Grabes N13.1*, 38. Such interactions between primary and secondary epigraphy occur in other places of the Assiut tomb N13.1. See J. Kahl/M. el-Khadragy/U. Verhoeven, *The Asyut project: fifth season of fieldwork* (2007), in: *SAK 37*, 2008, 200; Chl. Ragazzoli, *Scribes: les artisans du texte en Égypte ancienne*, Paris 2019, 541; and Verhoeven, *Dipinti von Besuchern des Grabes N13.1*, 296.

³⁸ *Inscription autopsy and personal communication P. Collombert*, October 2017.

³⁹ See discussion E. Cruz-Urbe, *Hibis Temple Project 3: The Graffiti From the Temple Precinct*, San Antonio, 2008, 199–225, Navratilova, *Graffiti Spaces*. More details are expected in the forthcoming work by E. Frood and Chl. Ragazzoli on Theban secondary epigraphy.

in a funerary production environment⁴⁰. Both a more general interest in scribal display and a more personal motive of deference to one's superior could have spurred the writing of this particular dipinto (see also above).

As early as Late Middle Kingdom *Kemyt* is known in royal contexts⁴¹, on ostraca and papyrus: pyramid precincts⁴², king palace⁴³, temples⁴⁴, etc. but this dipinto is the first evidence of *Kemyt* as secondary epigraphy in royal context. Up to now, *Kemyt* dipinti were known in elite tombs only. Gr. 14 from the Saqqara tomb of Ptahemwia is most likely the work of an apprentice scribe⁴⁵, who hasn't mastered yet the skill of writing, suggesting on-site instructional activity during the construction of the tomb. The Assiut dipinti are, on the other hand, visitors' inscriptions as this dipinto. The N13.1 tomb was a *lieu de savoir*, in which scribes could not only display localised community and professional identity⁴⁶, inclusive of highlighting their individual competence, but also transmit a sense of shared scribal culture and

⁴⁰ For *Kemyt* discussions see note 2, and O. Goelt Jr., Reflections on the format and palaeography of the *Kemyt*: implications for the *Sitz im Leben* of Middle Egyptian literature in the Ramesside period, in: G. Moers/K. Widmaier/A. Giewekemeyer/A. Lümers/R. Ernst (eds), *Dating Egyptian literary texts*, Hamburg 2013, 111–121; as well as Gasse, *Catalogue des ostraca littéraires*, 86–90.

⁴¹ *Kemyt* material is also found in non-royal contexts, like in private cemeteries (near from or within an elite tomb), in cities, in sites thought to be teaching places, as well as in many locations linked to the Deir el-Medina workforce.

⁴² See for instance O. DAN hierat. 5 in G. Burkard, Ein früher Beleg der Kemit (O DAN hierat 5), in: N. Kloth/K. Martin/E. Pardey (eds), *Es werde niedergelegt als Schriftstück: Festschrift für Hartwig Altenmüller zum 65. Geburtstag*, BSAK 9, Hamburg 2003, 37–48.

⁴³ Cf. O. Hayes 5 from Malqata, see W. Hayes, *Inscriptions from the palace of Amenhotep III*, in: *JNES* 10 (1), 1951, 241–242 and fig. 39.5.

⁴⁴ See for instance the ostraca (O. T3.L11–L16) from the temple of millions of years of Thoutmosis III in Hagen, *Ostraca from the temple of millions of years*, 42–43, pl. 63–65, the published ostraca probably from the Ramesseum (O. Naprstek P 2034 and O. BNU H 101) in Fischer-Elfert/Navrátilová/Onderka/Toivari-Viitala†, *The Deir el-Medina and Jaroslav Černý collections III*, 39–40 and pl. VIII and Y. Koenig, *Les ostraca hiératiques inédits de la Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de Strasbourg*, DFIFAO 33, Cairo 1997, pl. 35 and 113, as well as O. Amheida from the Thoth temple in the Dakhla oasis, in Kaper, *A Kemyt ostrakon*, 115–126 and R. Bagnall/N. Aravecchia/R. Crioliore/P. Davoli/O. Kaper/S. McFadden, *An oasis city*, New York 2015, 42–43. In fact, the first known witness with an extract of *Kemyt*, P. UC 32271A, may come from the Lahun temple. The papyrus description on the Petrie Museum website specifies that it belongs to the “lot XLI,” which also contains P. UC 32191, a journal listing as a table the presences (or absences) of the dancers and musicians during the festivals that took place in the year 35 of Amenemhat III (see M. Collier/St. Quirke, *The UCL Lahun Papyri: accounts*, BAR-IS 1471, Oxford 2006, 92–95). Circumstantially, we can deduce that this lot was found at the end of the first season of Petrie's excavations, in April–May 1889, or at the start of the second season, in October–November (based on information from M. Collier/St. Quirke, *The UCL Lahun papyri: letters*, BAR-IS 1083, Oxford 2002, vii and Collier/ Quirke, *The UCL Lahun Papyri: accounts*, 4). The content of P. UC 32191 makes it possible to consider a precise findspot. Both could come from the foundation deposit of the lower temple, excavated by Petrie's team between April 28 and May 4, 1889 (according to C. Gallorini, *A reconstruction of Petrie's excavation at the Middle Kingdom settlement of Kahun*, in St. Quirke (ed.), *Lahun studies*, Reigate 1998, 55). It was near this same temple that Borchardt discovered the Lahun archive now housed in Berlin. In this archive, there are several fragments revealing other lists of festivals. This is one of the rare points of contact between the two Lahun corpora, which could be explained, perhaps, via an identical (or close) provenance of the documents (already suggested in U. Luft, *The ancient town of El-Lâhûn*, in: St. Quirke, *Lahun studies*, Reigate 1998, 7).

⁴⁵ According to Staring/van Pelt in Raven, *The tombs of Ptahemwia and Sethnakht*, 154, the hand is identical to two other dipinti from the tomb (Gr. 13 and 25), which constitute as many indecipherable calligraphic attempts. See also P. van Pelt/N. Staring, *Interpreting graffiti in the Saqqara New Kingdom necropolis as expressions of popular customs and beliefs*, in *RiME* 3, 2019, 22, DOI: 10.29353/rime.2019.2577.

⁴⁶ Ragazzoli, *Scribes*, 552.

values⁴⁷. The finding of fragment reg. no. 03.467 expands thus the repertoire of the *Kemyt* dipinti to both non-royal and royal contexts. This pyramid precinct is also a new finding spot for *Kemyt* and, as such, corroborates its countrywide diffusion during the New Kingdom⁴⁸.

Conclusion

The increasingly better mapped presence of different secondary texts and their writing styles (as well as varied figural epigraphy) across the pyramid precincts, and indeed also non-royal tombs⁴⁹, points to a considerable diversity of people working at and visiting the Memphite necropolis during the New Kingdom. The 18th and 19th dynasty appear as two distinct but related phases of use of these burial and cult places.

The selection of texts in secondary epigraphy largely corresponded to the chief texts used in New Kingdom scribal training, as attested in Assiut and corroborated to a certain extent at Dahshur and Saqqara. The patterns of scribal display seem to be parallel both in a royal and in a non-royal context of secondary epigraphy, although more extensive examples of literary texts were not yet identified in the pyramid precincts.

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⁴⁷ Verhoeven, *Dipinti von Besuchern des Grabes N13.1*, 314. It might have been used as a teaching place for apprentice scribes as in several votive chapels from Deir el-Medina. See Kahl J. Kahl, *Ein Zeugnis altägyptischer Schulausflüge*, in: *GM 211*, 2006, 25–29, Ragazzoli, *Scribes*, 542 and Verhoeven, *Dipinti von Besuchern des Grabes N13.1*, 322–323) as well as Gasse A. Gasse, *Le K2, un cas d'école?*, in: R. J. Demarée/A. Egberts (eds), *Deir el-Medina in the third millennium AD: a tribute to Jac. J. Janssen*, *EgUit 14*, Leiden 2000, 119 about the chapels from the K2 area in Deir el-Medina.

⁴⁸ Kaper, *A Kemyt ostrakon*, 125.

⁴⁹ Pelt/Staring, *Interpreting graffiti in the Saqqara New Kingdom necropolis*.