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The graffiti

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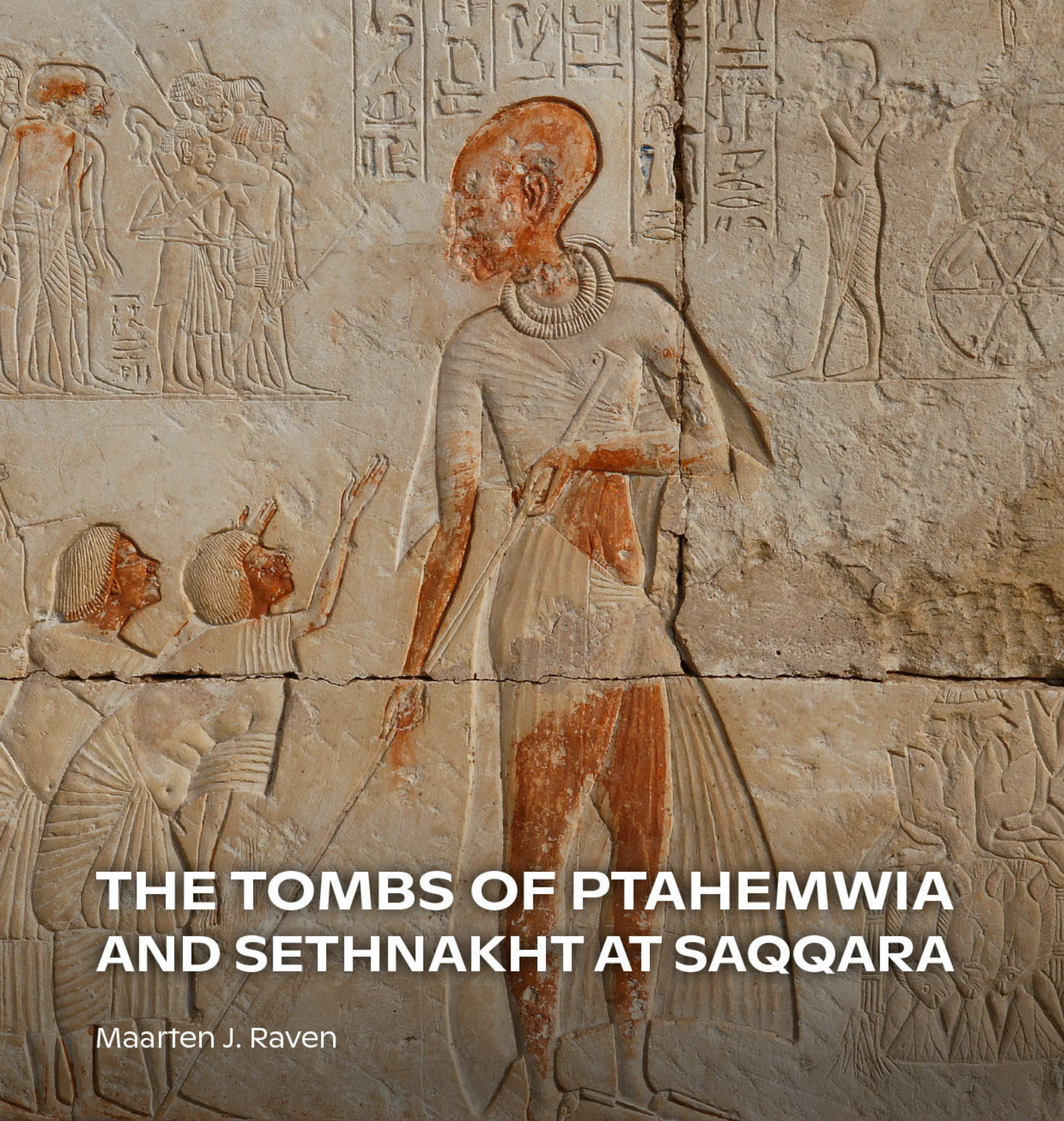
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The background of the cover is a photograph of an ancient Egyptian wall painting. The central figure is a large male figure, Ptahemwia, shown in profile facing left. He has a shaved head with a small tuft of hair, a prominent nose, and a beard. He wears a broad collar (wesekh) and a long, pleated kilt. He holds a long staff or scepter in his right hand. To his left, two smaller figures, likely his sons, are shown in profile, also facing left. They wear similar clothing and have their hands raised in a gesture of adoration or offering. Above Ptahemwia, there are several columns of hieroglyphs. To the right, another figure is visible, and a large wheel is depicted. The painting is on a light-colored, textured wall, possibly limestone, with some areas of discoloration and wear.

THE TOMBS OF PTAHEMWIA AND SETHNAKHT AT SAQQARA

Maarten J. Raven



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THE TOMBS OF PTAHEMWIA AND SETHNAKHT AT SAQQARA

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The graffiti

W. Paul van Pelt and Nico Staring¹

1. Introduction

In addition to the formal reliefs and texts, the limestone revetment and columns in the superstructure of the tomb of Ptahemwia bear several dozen unofficial inscriptions and depictions, some incised, some written in red ochre (*dipinti*). These graffiti warrant further analysis for two reasons. First, they provide strong, contextualised evidence about the various ways in which the tomb of Ptahemwia was used. Second, they have the potential to shed new light on a shadowy area of Egyptian religious history: the study of aspects of popular piety.

When literacy was the accomplishment of a minority, as was the case in New Kingdom Egypt, written graffiti were in all likelihood mainly the work of scribes or literate individuals belonging to the elite and sub-elite administration. Figural graffiti, on the other hand, may reflect a means of recorded expression for the illiterate and/or less literate section(s) of the Egyptian population to make reference to popular customs and beliefs. Most figural graffiti in the New Kingdom tombs at Saqqara may not convey the impression of having been created by an (artistically-)educated section of society, yet they are recognizable even to the present-day observer. Rather than being the product exclusively of literate individuals, they may well have been created by a wide social range of visitors: layman, priest, or scribe; man, woman, or child, whether literate or not. Thus, while written graffiti express the perspectives of the educated elite and sub-elite, figural graffiti may cross social divides and reveal folk practices and beliefs that have left a mark on them. The potential interaction between different groups participating in the same social system and built environment would be of particular interest, and makes figural graffiti an exciting data source.

Such were the considerations that motivated the authors to undertake the first systematic large-scale survey of textual and figural graffiti in the New Kingdom necropolis at Saqqara (Leiden-Turin concession area).² This analysis enabled us to assign provisional classifications to (figural) graffiti based on their purpose, distinguishing between

1 Leiden University Institute for Area Studies, research project *'The walking dead at Saqqara: the making of a cultural geography'*, funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO, Dutch Research Council) Vidi Talent Scheme, project no. 276-30-016.

2 Van Pelt/Staring 2019. The different reasons for tomb visits not only resulted in the production of graffiti. Many graffiti motifs are also encountered on other media, such as ostraca. Egyptologists typically deal with specific types of artefact, but symbolism that crosses object boundaries may be vital to interpreting how graffiti were understood and used. However, such cross-artefact research is beyond the scope of this catalogue.

devotional, ritual, and secular graffiti. This chapter shall first discuss these classifications and illustrate them using examples from the Saqqara New Kingdom necropolis and the tomb of Ptahemwia (Section 2). It shall then provide a full catalogue of the graffiti in the tomb of Ptahemwia together with a discussion of their date and distribution (Section 3).

2. Graffiti types

2.1. Devotional graffiti

Devotional graffiti represent a desire for an eternal interaction with the tomb owner, the gods of the necropolis, or the tomb space.³ Because of the inherent magic of texts and images,⁴ graffiti had the capacity to be benevolent, commemorative expressions that kept the names and identities of individuals magically alive and communicated them to contemporary and future generations. Moreover, when placed in tomb contexts, particular types of graffiti were a means of establishing a permanent contact with the deceased and the gods of the necropolis. Such a desire for ‘otherworldly’ interaction is made explicit in the so-called ‘piety-oriented’ graffiti, in which the graffitist invokes the deities of a site, not only on behalf of himself but occasionally also on behalf of family members. Although not stated as unambiguously, certain kinds of figural graffiti may have been directly associated with an individual or an object in much the same way as an inscribed name or text.

The clearest examples of devotional figural graffiti are possibly the incised footprints or sandals (*plantae pedis*) on the pavement of the tomb of Maya and Meryt and on a statue niche in the tomb of Horemheb.⁵ Such graffiti are relatively commonplace along the Nile Valley, and are also found, for example, in temples, such as on the roof of the temple of Khonsu in Karnak, where many such examples were left by the lower clergy of the temple.⁶ In contrast to their more elevated colleagues, these priests could not afford temple statues. However, by inscribing their name, title, and/or footprints on the temple roof, these priests too would remain forever in the presence of ‘their’ god, as texts accompanying some of the feet explicitly state.⁷ Because they represent the desire for an interaction between the devout and the divine, these graffiti can be considered the product of a devotional act. Potential examples of devotional graffiti in the tomb of Ptahemwia include three boat graffiti (Gr. 5, 11, 35). Boat graffiti

are common among the graffiti in Egyptian temples and tombs and, like the depictions of feet, they may have been intended to place the graffitist into the permanent, sacred space of the temple or tomb.

A striking group of devotional textual graffiti can be found in the pylon entrance of the tomb of Maya and Meryt and the inner courtyard of the tomb of Tia and Tia, where graffiti of personal names and titles were carved next to figures of offering-bearers belonging to the official tomb decoration. In the case of the tomb of Maya and Meryt the carved titles are all connected with the Treasury, of which Maya was the overseer, while in the tomb of Tia and Tia the graffitists consistently identify themselves as ‘servants’. Therefore, the clear suggestion must be that by naming the figures in the tombs, Maya’s and Tia’s subordinates were marking their perpetual presence in their patrons’ following in a manner comparable to the *plantae pedis*. Because of the graffitists’ close relationship with the deceased, it is certainly possible that these inscriptions were envisaged as very direct and personal appeals and may have involved human sentiments of direct involvement, admiration, and concern. It is even possible that piety and self-interest were tangled and the graffitists wished to share in the wealth of their powerful overseers by associating themselves with figures in the tomb decoration, which would allow them to partake of any offerings made in the tomb and benefit from the magical efficacy of the tomb’s representations. The marking of the perpetual presence in the following of the tomb owner could also be taken very literally, as the example of Iurudef, a subordinate of Tia, illustrates. This middle-lower rank official was buried within the confines of the tomb of his superior and his burial was marked by a small chapel.⁸

2.2. Ritual graffiti

Ritual graffiti can be considered as the materialisation of ritual acts. The subgroup of antiquarian or descriptive graffiti, which praise specific monuments and their owners, are commonly considered a ritualised reaction to what is commonly called the ‘Address to the Living’.⁹ Certain types of representations point towards a ritual dimension for some of the figural graffiti as well. In the tomb of Ptahemwia several of the graffiti focus on themes of rebirth and regeneration (e.g. lotus flowers, Gr. 3) or have protective and apotropaic associations (e.g. the *wedjat* eye, Gr. 23). This choice of subject matter, combined with the funerary context of the graffiti, is redolent of a conscious effort by the living to influence the fortunes of the deceased. At the same time graffitists may have aimed

3 Plesch 2002, 182.

4 Ritner 2001.

5 Martin 2012, pls 60.29, 61.30; Martin 1989, 107, pl. 149.

6 Jacquet-Gordon 2003, 5.

7 Jacquet-Gordon 2003, 5; Cruz-Urbe 2008, 203; Dijkstra 2012, 43-46.

8 Raven 1991.

9 Navrátilová 2010; Navrátilová 2015, 256-257.

at receiving benefits and blessings for themselves in return for the services rendered.

Perhaps most striking in the tomb of Ptahemwia are the graffiti of jackals atop a standard (Gr. 6, 7, 10, 12, 26 and 27) due to their large number, manner of execution, and orientation. Differences in style and technique – most figures being scratched, but some being incised – strongly suggest that the jackals were applied by different individuals, each with their own idiosyncratic *modus operandi*. Another interesting feature is that all jackals are oriented towards the inner sanctum of Ptahemwia's central chapel. This distinct pattern suggests that the orientation towards the focus of the funerary cult was an important part of the graffiti's creation. The frequency and the recognisable system in which these graffiti occur strongly suggest that they were purposeful messages with symbolic efficacy. This impression is enhanced by the medium in which most examples were executed. No less than eight out of nine specimens were originally painted in red ochre, implying that those responsible for their execution had to bring writing equipment to the tomb. While it is difficult to establish the exact reasons for creating these graffiti, one may assume them to be a means of communication with the divine, intended to secure divine protection for the graffitist, the deceased, or both. On the basis of analogous pictorial evidence, these jackals can be identified as images of Wepwawet.¹⁰ This god's capacity as *psychopompos* would certainly fit an apotropaic interpretation.

Another remarkable group of potential ritual graffiti in the tomb of Ptahemwia consists of graffiti depicting royal heads (Gr. 4, 9, 33, 34). The marked stress on such graffiti in the Leiden-Turin concession area in general and the tomb of Ptahemwia in particular can perhaps be connected with the later cult of Horemheb. The limestone elements of the entrance gateway of Horemheb's tomb display a marked patina and numerous shallow scratches and graffiti,¹¹ as if they were exposed to the elements and suffered from the passage of numerous visitors. The gateway also contains several graffiti of royal heads and figures. It seems reasonable to postulate that some participants of the cult for the deified king left graffiti of royalty, most notably royal heads, as part of ritualistic acts. Perhaps these graffiti served as votive offerings seeking grace or giving thanks to the king. Several graffitists may have subsequently deviated from their course and left graffiti of royalty in the surrounding tombs as well. Although this association between the cult of Horemheb and the graffiti of royalty is plausible, it is important to note that royal head graffiti are not restricted to the Saqqara area alone. Similar representations can be observed in Abydos,

Asyut and Karnak, albeit much less frequent in number. However, it is important to point out that at places like Abydos and Karnak there would have been numerous royal figures in the existing temple decoration that could have inspired graffitists to create similar depictions. In private tombs the situation was very different – especially at Saqqara where, compared to Thebes, only a limited number of tombs contained official depictions of the king.

2.3. Graffiti as secular expressions

Graffiti of this category do not point towards any devotional or ritualistic properties. As can be gleaned from certain textual graffiti, people could visit a tomb simply to amuse themselves.¹² Such graffiti were left by individuals who did not visit the tomb to partake in the offering cult, but rather to engage with the tomb in ways that we would normally not associate with the primary function of a grave site, for example to practise one's writing skills (Gr. 13, 14, 25).¹³

3. Catalogue

3.1. Introduction

In total 38 graffiti were identified in the tomb of Ptahemwia. These were numbered according to their position in the tomb, starting clockwise at the tomb entrance (Fig. V.1).¹⁴ The vast majority of graffiti were cut with a sharp instrument, most probably flint or split pebbles.¹⁵ Gr. 1 was roughly hammered or pecked out with a blunt tool, possibly a pebble, leaving more or less circular marks.¹⁶ In addition to inscribed and scratched graffiti, the tomb of Ptahemwia contains 16 graffiti applied in red ochre. The latter include three hieratic graffiti. The inscribed and scratched graffiti are all figural. The facsimiles were traced at scale 1: 1 from the original walls.

3.2. Date

In general, the figural graffiti have proven difficult to date and interpret because the images vary greatly in quality and manner of execution.¹⁷ There are at present no extensive datasets available for New Kingdom non-

10 Staring 2017.

11 Raven/Van Walsem 2011, 29-30, nos. 35-44; Raven 2013, 21.

12 Frood 2007, 141-143.

13 Kemyt (Gr. 14) is well known as a didactic text (e.g. Goelet Jr. 2013), yet the actual content remains obscure. A new interpretation of Kemyt VIII suggests that the protagonist, a man named Au, is actually deceased (Klotz 2009). This text's funerary associations may have been meaningful to the scribe who wrote it down on Ptahemwia's tomb wall.

14 In certain cases it proved difficult to distinguish between the original tomb decoration and secondary epigraphy. Where appropriate, uncertainties are pointed out in the catalogue.

15 Dunbar 1941, 24, technique 9.

16 *Ibid.*, 19, technique 3.

17 Van Pelt/Staring 2019, 28.



Fig. V.1. Distribution of graffiti over the tomb of Ptahemwia.

textual tomb graffiti. Consequently, the graffiti in the tomb of Ptahemwia cannot be easily compared to graffiti in other tombs.

The tentative chronology presented here is based on analogies to representations in datable finds related to the graffiti stylistically or typologically, and/or through careful scrutiny of the tomb's archaeological context. Although the deposits in the courtyard and chapels of the tomb of Ptahemwia all had the usual contamination with Late Antique pottery shards, the general history of the tomb can still be roughly reconstructed. It is readily apparent that two systemic pragmatic phases¹⁸ of tomb use can be distinguished. The first phase relates to the burial and associated funerary cult of Ptahemwia and members of his (extended?) family. The second systemic pragmatic phase relates to the reuse of the tomb chapels for numerous modest burials at the end of the New Kingdom. These burials have been dated through their associated pottery.¹⁹ In the south chapel, burials in mass quantity were stacked to a height of nearly two meters. The burials in the central and north chapels were not as well preserved, but these

chapels may have originally contained a large number of burials also. Since no pivot holes for doors have been noted between the chapels and the courtyard, one can reasonably assume that the sanding-up of the tomb coincided with the gradual filling of the chapels with bodies. If so, the graffiti on the lower parts of the walls were either made during the first or early second systemic pragmatic phase of tomb use.

One graffito in particular may provide additional evidence for the place the graffiti take in the tomb's life history. **Gr. 14** presents a line from the scribal exercise *Kemyt*, written in hieratic script and dated to the Ramesside period.²⁰ It is situated near the interior of the north chapel. For pragmatic reasons, one can postulate that a scribe would not write a scribal exercise so close to a group of burials. The burials were therefore most likely introduced after this text had been painted on the wall. The lower extent of the text is situated a few centimetres above pavement level, which means that the apprentice scribe was most likely sitting on the tomb's original stone floor. We may further surmise that

¹⁸ Van Walsem 2006, 112.

¹⁹ *Infra*, Chapter VII.

²⁰ Demarée 2009.

this part of the tomb had not sanded up when the scribe sat down to scribble on the wall. The interior of the tomb superstructure had apparently been well maintained, while at the same time the exterior ground level had risen considerably: small chapels of Ramesside date – such as chapel 2007/10, constructed against the exterior south wall²¹ – were built ca. 60 cm above the level of the pavement of Ptahemwia's courtyard.

The Late Period shaft at the north end of Ptahemwia's entrance gateway (2007/5) indicates that the surface level during the Late Period was considerably higher than during the New Kingdom. It seems reasonable to postulate that the superstructure of the tomb was largely inaccessible during the Late Period. This was almost certainly the case during the Coptic period, when the desert surface above and around the tomb was used for several constructions, including Coptic floor 2007/9. It is, of course, possible that intermittent small-scale disturbance took place during that long span of time. However, large-scale operations seem to have taken place only much later, presumably as late as the early 19th century, when art robbers cleared part of the tomb. Their activity is indicated by the presence of loosely stacked walls around the aperture of the shaft in the courtyard, and by the inscribed tomb elements that were removed from their original setting and subsequently entered public and private collections in Cairo and Bologna.²²

Drawing these different strands of circumstantial evidence together, it seems justifiable to argue that the superstructure of the tomb of Ptahemwia had been largely sanded up from the late New Kingdom to the early 19th century, implying that the tomb's graffiti most likely date from the end of the 18th Dynasty to the Late Ramesside Period.²³ A New Kingdom date for most of the graffiti would not be entirely surprising. With the onset of the New Kingdom there is a marked increase in textual and figural graffiti along the length of the Nile Valley.²⁴ Not only does one find more graffiti at the various mines and quarries, one also sees the emergence of visitor's graffiti. The latter development is perhaps related to the new form of religious experience, usually called 'personal piety', that developed during the mid-18th Dynasty and was particularly characteristic for the Ramesside Period.²⁵

3.3. Distribution

This section considers the distribution of the graffiti within the tomb (see Fig. V.1). This may provide insights into how space was used, where graffiti have a tendency to appear, and in what way(s) graffiti were conditioned by the space in which they were executed.

The distribution of graffiti shows a marked preference for leaving graffiti in the tomb entrance (18.4%). However, this preference is less marked compared to other New Kingdom tombs at Saqqara, where on average 40.1% of all figural graffiti are situated in the tomb entrance. The entrance may have been a pleasant location for visitors to sit as there may have been shadow or a cooling draught. People would also have passed through entrances relatively frequently, thereby increasing the potential for leaving graffiti.

The six graffiti (15.8%) painted on the stone elements of the central cult chapel in the westernmost part of the tomb also deviate from the general pattern observed in Saqqara, where graffiti appear only occasionally in the central (Pay, Maya, Khay I) or side chapels (Horemheb, Meryneith). This comparably high number of graffiti may have been due to the presence of numerous modest burials dating to the later Ramesside Period.

The highest concentration of graffiti occurs on the north and north-east wall of the courtyard (n=16; 42.1%). The courtyard was a space frequented by people, for example on various occasions related to services in honour of the deceased. Since the south half of the tomb is completely stripped of its original limestone revetment, the patterns observed in the distribution of graffiti are likely to be somewhat distorted.

Out of the 243 graffiti identified in the Saqqara New Kingdom necropolis, 202 are figural (83.1%) and 41 (16.8%) textual.²⁶ This shows that it was far more common to leave figural graffiti than it was to leave texts. Most textual graffiti (29.2%) are located in courtyards, particularly in the second courtyards of the larger tombs, where they are inscribed in the vicinity of doorways and on stelae. The subdivision of textual graffiti according to script shows an almost even distribution: hieroglyphic (n=19) and hieratic (n=22). The hieroglyphic script was normally used only for monumental texts and hieratic was used for administrative purposes. Generally, scribes would have been more familiar with hieratic. Many of the graffitists in the New Kingdom tombs appear to have adapted their script to 'fit' the monumental context of the graffiti. In the tomb of Ptahemwia, the textual graffiti are executed exclusively in hieratic. The texts indicate that the wall surfaces were used by (an) apprentice scribe(s) to practise their writing. This practice can be compared to

21 *Supra*, Chapter III, § 6.3.

22 *Supra*, Chapters I.2 and IV.

23 The construction of the tomb provides a *terminus a quo* for the application of the graffiti, except for those instances where there are indications for the reuse of particular stones.

24 Navrátilová 2010, 312.

25 Navrátilová 2015, 257-258.

26 Van Pelt/Staring 2019.

the production of visitors' graffiti, a literate phenomenon that belongs to the scribal realm and was part of the scribes' self-fashioning strategy.²⁷ Some visitors' graffiti in funerary monuments mention 'schools'.²⁸ Perhaps the hieratic graffiti recorded in the tomb of Ptahemwia should also be interpreted in the context of 'school excursions' for apprentice scribes (see **Gr. 14**).

It is possible in most cases to reconstruct the position that a graffitist assumed while making a graffito. The short distance between the graffito and the original pavement level shows that most graffiti were made by a graffitist sitting or crouching on the stone floor. The undecorated dado provided a suitable surface for applying graffiti. The position of the graffiti low on the walls also indicates that most specimens were added before the tomb had sanded up after the abandonment of the funerary cult.

Interestingly, the number of graffiti in the tomb of Ptahemwia is larger and the range of depicted motifs more varied compared to other New Kingdom tombs at Saqqara for which a full inventory of graffiti is available. This observation is all the more remarkable when one considers that Ptahemwia's tomb is far from the largest New Kingdom tomb at Saqqara, nor the best preserved in terms of its stone revetment surface area. There is a possibility that the large number of graffiti is related to the large quantity of modest burials in the west chapels, which is so far unique in the Memphite New Kingdom necropolis. More particularly, one wonders whether they could have to do with the large number of burials of children and infants.

3.4. Catalogue

Gr. 1. Geometric design

Dimensions: 20.6 × 27 cm.

Technique: Shallowly scratched.

Location: Pavement.

Orientation: n/a.

Description: Shallowly scratched geometric designs, possibly forming a gaming board or perhaps even a boat. The graffito ends abruptly. It does not extend onto the adjacent paving slab, which may indicate the reuse of this stone.

Gr. 2. Knife or feather (?)

Dimensions: 32.2 × 7.3 cm.

Technique: Roughly carved.

Location: Entrance, pavement.

Orientation: n/a.

Description: Roughly carved representation of a large knife or perhaps a large feather. There are two roughly parallel scratches down the length of the graffito.

Gr. 3. Lotus

Dimensions: 33.2 × 13.5 cm.

Technique: Roughly carved and shallowly scratched.

Location: Entrance, south reveal, 22.4 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: n/a.

Description: Roughly carved lotus flower with 9 petals, two lotus leaves (?), and a shallowly scratched stem.

Parallels: **Gr. 32**; Saqqara: Horemheb Gr. 27 (Martin 1989, 159, pl. 149), 52, 55 (unpublished); Thebes: e.g. Černý/Sadek 1970, 27; Jacquet-Gordon 2003, pl. 78.205.

Gr. 4. Two royal heads with blue crown

Dimensions: 15.6 × 24.1 cm.

Technique: Scratched.

Location: Entrance, south reveal, 29.2 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: West.

Description: Two scratched royal heads with blue crown adorned with a uraeus. The nose, eye, and eyebrow have been indicated in both instances, but only the head on the right includes an ear.

Parallels: **Gr. 9** and **34** (collection of three heads); Saqqara: Horemheb Gr. 36, 44 (Raven/Van Walsem 2011, 29, fig. 1.8); Thebes: e.g. Jacquet-Gordon 2003, pls. 17.48, 58.151, 108.208A, 117.301.

Gr. 5. Boat

Dimensions: 25.4 × 50.3 cm.

Technique: Incised.

Location: Courtyard, east wall, south side, north end, dado, 28.8 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: North.

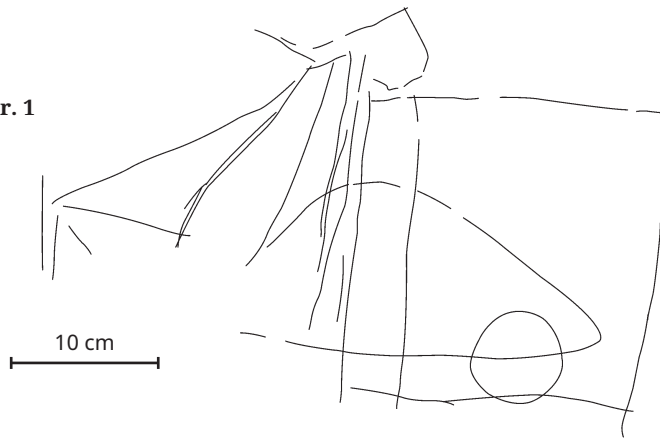
Description: Incised boat with a slightly curved body, a rather large cabin-like structure amidships, a small structure at both stem and stern, and a supported rudder. The stern of the ship is partly missing, suggesting the graffito was never completed.

Parallels: This type of boat seems to be related to Červíček type XXIII (Červíček 1974, 134; Červíček 1978, 49) which is documented since the 18th Dynasty. The same type is also depicted in the official tomb decoration in scene **[12]**, just below the depiction of the tent with Ptahemwia's wife.

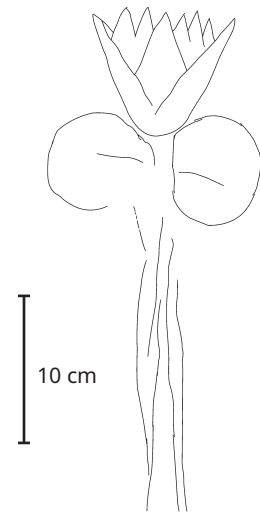
²⁷ Ragazzoli 2010, 165.

²⁸ Navrátilová 2015, 269; Volokhine 1988, 77; Megally 1981, 218-240; Firth/Quibell 1935, 79, Graffito A.

Gr. 1



Gr. 3



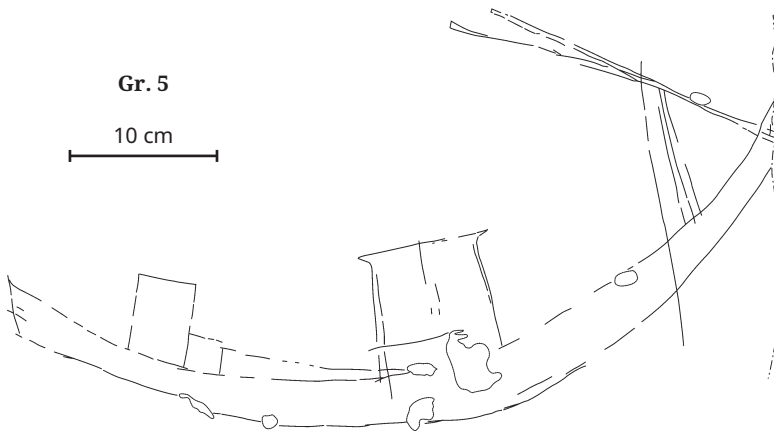
Gr. 2



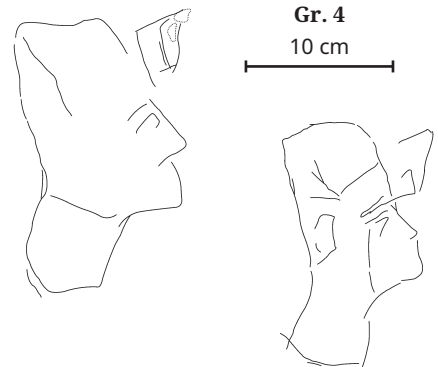
Gr. 3



Gr. 5



Gr. 4



Gr. 6. Jackal on divine stand²⁹

Dimensions: 14.1 × 9.7 cm.

Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: South chapel, south jamb, east face, dado (relief fragment SAK 2007-R63).

Orientation: North.

Description: Jackal on a divine stand, enclosed on all sides by thick strokes of red ochre.

Parallels: Gr. 7, 10, 12, 26 and 27; Saqqara: Tia (Martin 1997, 45, pl. 93 [325]).

Gr. 7. Jackal

Dimensions: 3.5 × 3.6 cm.

Technique: Incised.

Location: Central chapel, south reveal, dado, 36.4 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: West.

Description: Standing jackal.

Parallels: Gr. 6, 10, 12, 26 and 27.

Gr. 8. Male figure (?)

Dimensions: 18.3 × 20.3 cm.

Technique: Shallowly incised.

Location: Central chapel, south reveal, dado, 10.2 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: East (?).

Description: Unclear representation, possibly representing an unfinished male figure on top of the upper right corner of a rectangle with only part of the arm and the loincloth depicted.

Gr. 9. Royal head with blue crown

Dimensions: 6.9 × 5 cm.

Technique: Incised.

Location: Central chapel, south reveal, dado, 36.4 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: East.

Description: Royal head with blue crown, probably with a uraeus. The facial features are not indicated. The lower part shows the neck, curving to the shoulders.

Parallels: Gr. 4 and 34 (collection of three heads).

Gr. 10. Jackal on a divine stand

Dimensions: 12.3 × 4.5 cm.

Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: Central chapel, north column, north side, 32.6 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: West.

Description: Jackal on a divine stand. The stand rests on a simple base, formed by two roughly parallel lines with five vertical strokes in between.

Parallels: Gr. 6, 7, 12, 26 and 27.

Published: Staring 2011, 150-152, fig. 4.

Gr. 11. Boat (?)

Dimensions: 3.6 × 4.4 cm.

Technique: Shallowly incised.

Location: Central chapel, north reveal, dado, 39.2 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: East (?).

Description: Uncertain representation, just possibly a ship, showing the hull, rudder and sail.

Gr. 12. Four jackals on divine stands

Dimensions: 29 × 65.3 cm.

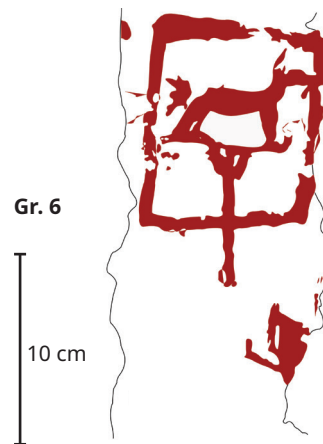
Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: Central chapel, north reveal, dado, 14.8 cm above pavement level.

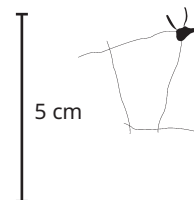
Orientation: West.

Description: Four jackals on divine stands. Small differences in style suggest that these jackals were applied by different individuals, each with their own *modus operandi*. For example, the stands of three jackals rest on a simple base, formed by two roughly parallel lines with vertical strokes in between, but only two of these seem to have been equipped with a uraeus. Note also that only three of the jackals have a tail.

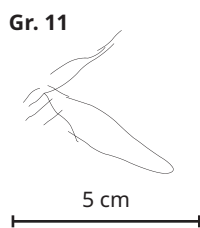
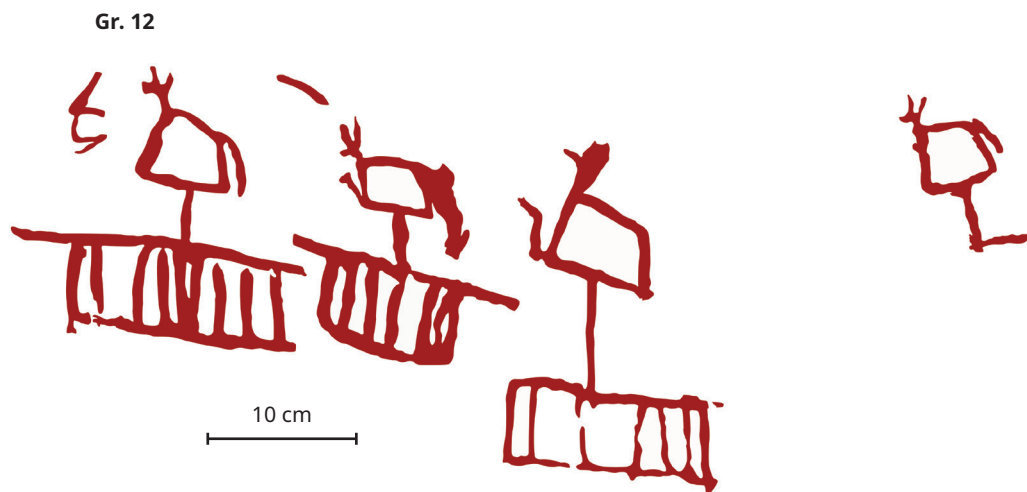
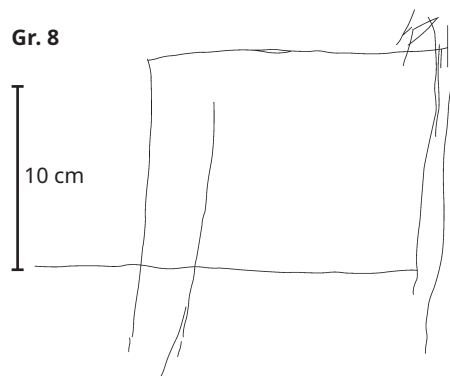
Parallels: Gr. 6, 7, 10, 26 and 27.



Gr. 7



²⁹ For a photograph, cf. Chapter IV, scene [5].



Gr. 13. Hieratic *dipinto*

Dimensions: 45.4 × 20 cm.

Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: North chapel, south jamb, east face, 36.5 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: n/a.

Description: Hieratic inscription in red ochre, consisting of loose signs without coherent meaning. The inscription most likely represents the efforts of an apprentice scribe who practised his penmanship.

Parallels: Gr. 14 and 25 are presumably also in the same hand.

Gr. 14. Hieratic *dipinto*

Dimensions: 72.6 × 58.5 cm.

Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: North chapel, south reveal, 9.8 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: East.

Description: Hieratic inscription in red ochre, consisting of one unframed column of hieratic and two horizontal lines with several loose signs without coherent meaning. The unframed column of this example contains the first sentence of a well-known scribal exercise, the so-called Kemyt:

b3k dđ hr nb=f mrr=f 'nh=f wd3=f snb=f 'It is a servant who addresses his lord, whom he wishes to live, be prosperous and healthy'.

Possibly the two separate groups to the left and right can be transcribed and translated as 'Au', who is the chief protagonist of the narrative section of the text of Kemyt. This graffito was presumably made by the apprentice scribe responsible for Gr. 13 and 25.

Parallels: An ostrakon inscribed in hieratic with an excerpt from the book of Kemyt was previously found outside the tomb of Horemheb and presents the single parallel from Saqqara (Eyre, in Schneider 1996, 13, no. 31, pl. I). Several full copies of the Kemyt are known from the period between the 12th Dynasty and the beginning of the 18th Dynasty, whereas hundreds of copies of parts or paragraphs are preserved on ostraca from the necropolis workmen's village of Deir el-Medina, dating to the Ramesside Period (cf. Posener 1951; Kaplony 1974; Barta 1978). Other ostraca with excerpts were found in e.g. Tell el-Amarna and the Dakhla Oasis (Kaper 2010). The presence of classical school texts on tomb walls is remarkable, but not entirely unique. A few years ago a German-Egyptian mission working in Asyut discovered a substantial number of New Kingdom graffiti in Tomb N13.1 of the late First Intermediate Period nomarch Iti-ibi-iker, with passages from well-known Egyptian didactic texts, interpreted as school exercises (Verhoeven 2013, 143-147). Excerpts from Kemyt occur three times, all of which contain §1, while only TN9 has a kind of introduction (Verhoeven 2012, 55-57, table on p. 56-57). Kahl postulated that teachers visited the tomb with students, who were taught classical literature (Kahl 2006). A somewhat similar scenario may

have occurred in the tomb of Ptahemwia, although there is no clear evidence that the apprentice student visited the tomb under the guidance of a teacher. There is nothing in the graffito that explicitly hints at the presence of an instructor and the scribe's mistakes in the first sentence of Kemyt were not corrected.

Published: Demarée 2009.

Gr. 15. Human head (?)

Dimensions: 22.2 × 12.6 cm.

Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: North chapel, south wall, east end, 100.2 cm above floor level.

Orientation: West.

Description: Uncertain representation, possibly the sketch of a human head in red ochre. This graffito is extremely weathered due to the bad quality of the mud plaster coating. In fact, it may have been a sketch for the official decoration scheme of the tomb as it cannot be ruled out that the two side chapels were envisioned to carry paintings on mud plaster (cf. the adjacent tomb of Meryneith).

Gr. 16. Chair

Dimensions: 9.9 × 12 cm.

Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: North chapel, south wall, east end.

Orientation: n/a.

Description: Uncertain representation, possibly part of a chair applied in red ochre. As was the case with Gr. 15, this representation may in fact be a sketch for the official decoration scheme of the tomb.

Gr. 17. Human head (?)

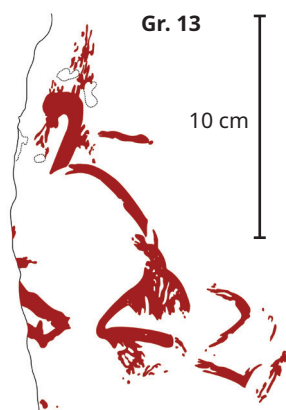
Dimensions: 16.7 × 17 cm.

Technique: Red ochre.

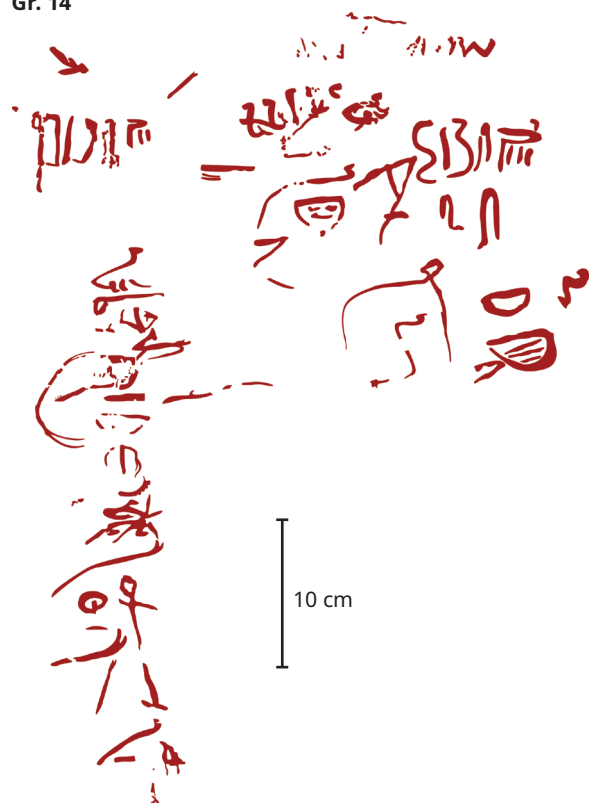
Location: North chapel, south wall, 40.1 cm above floor level.

Orientation: ?

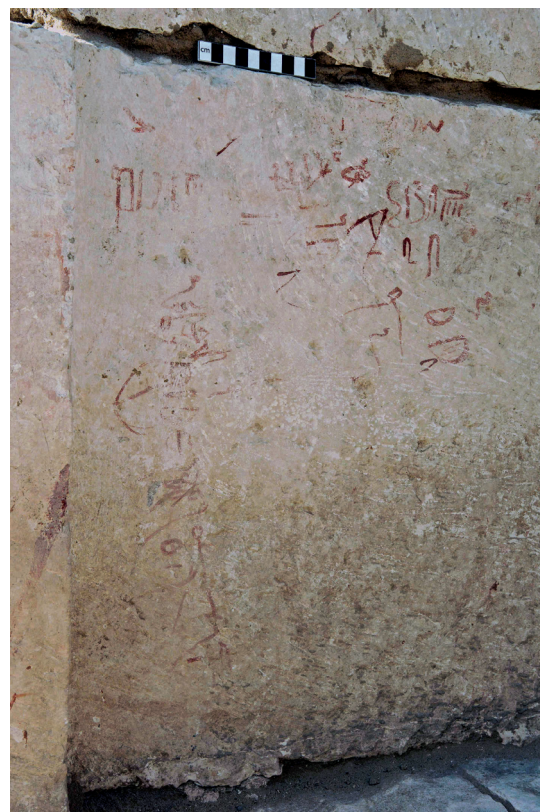
Description: Unclear representation in red ochre, possibly a human head. As with Gr. 15-16, this representation may be a sketch for the official decoration scheme of the tomb.



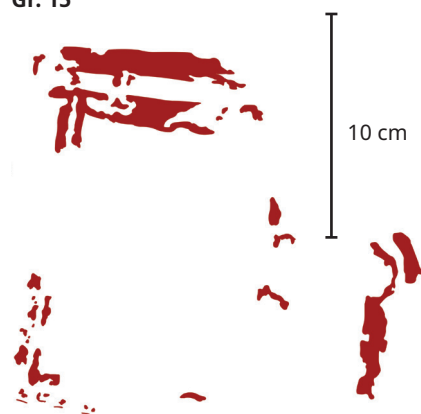
Gr. 14



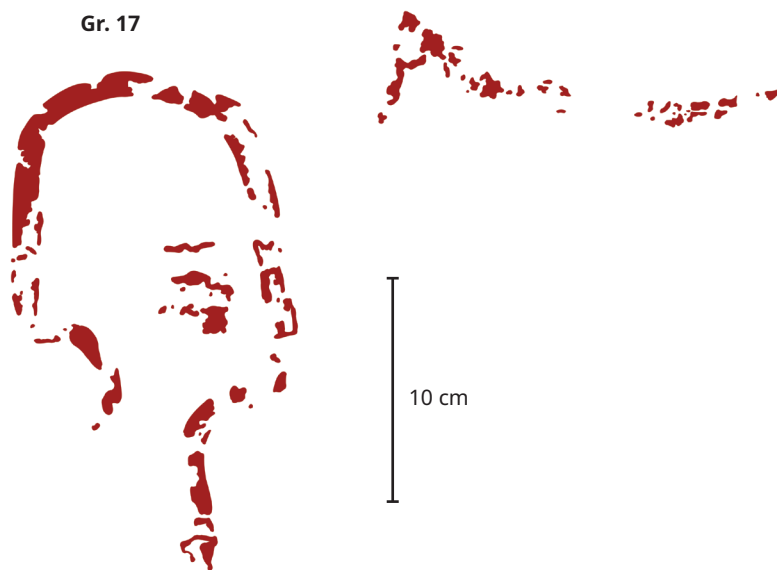
Gr. 14



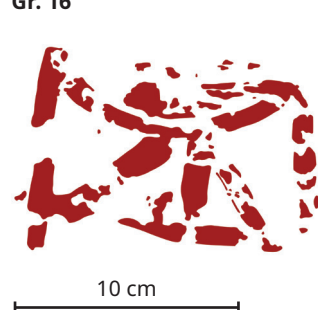
Gr. 15



Gr. 17



Gr. 16



Gr. 18. Human figure

Dimensions: 17.4 × 13.3 cm.

Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: North chapel, north reveal, 37.7 cm above floor level.

Orientation: Frontal view.

Description: Human figure wearing a loincloth and holding a tool (a hoe or boat?), sketched in red ochre in thick, blunt strokes. This figure was presumably applied by the same hand as **Gr. 19**, compare for instance the similar execution of the disproportionally short legs.

Parallels: This figure is reminiscent of the Late Antique *Strichmännchen* (stick-men) that are depicted in frontal view (Dijkstra 2012, 64). However, these figures usually have their arms raised in adoration (*orantes*). The presence of a Coptic floor that once continued over the north chapel also excludes such a late date. Comparative material from the Memphite necropolis may be found at Dahshur. Gr. 18 and 19 compare quite well with the red and black ink drawing of a complete human, non-royal figure painted on a block from the pyramid temple of Sesostris III (Navrátilová 2017, 659–660, fig. 8). A Ramesside date has been proposed for this graffito.

Gr. 19. Human figure

Dimensions: 16.1 × 6.2 cm.

Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: North chapel, north jamb, south face, 36.1 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: East.

Description: Human figure wearing a loincloth and a headdress with uraeus (?), sketched in red ochre in thick, blunt strokes. There appears to be some sort of liquid emanating from the figure's mouth.

Parallels: **Gr. 18**.

Gr. 20. Chisel marks (?)

Dimensions: 10.6 × 4.6 cm.

Technique: Roughly cut.

Location: Courtyard, north wall, fluted half column, west face, 55.8 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: ?

Description: Cluster of chisel marks.

Gr. 21. Quadruped

Dimensions: 1.8 × 4.1 cm.

Technique: Incised.

Location: Courtyard, north wall, west end, dado, 39.8 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: East or west.

Description: Incised quadruped. The lines on the left side of the graffito can be interpreted either as tusks, horns or a tail, making it very difficult to proffer an identification.

Gr. 22. Ovoid representation

Dimensions: 3.6 × 0.9 cm.

Technique: Incised.

Location: Courtyard, north wall, west end, dado, 28.6 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: ?

Description: Uncertain ovoid shape, possibly a fish (?) or a stone mason's mark (?).

Gr. 23. Wedjat eye

Dimensions: 8.4 × 9.4 cm.

Technique: Roughly carved.

Location: Courtyard, north wall, west end, dado, 41.4 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: East.

Description: A roughly carved *wedjat* eye. The graffitist made a mistake in the depiction of the markings around the falcon's eye, curling the 'teardrop' below the eye instead of the marking to its left.

Parallels: Anthes 1965, 90 [21], fig. 11, pl. 32c.

Gr. 24. Part of human head

Dimensions: 9 × 9.7 cm.

Technique: Roughly carved.

Location: Courtyard, north wall, west end, dado, 38.4 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: East.

Description: Roughly carved upper part of a human head with eye and eyebrow indicated. The face is largely missing, presumably due to weathering of the stone (the area to the right has flaked off).

Parallels: Thebes: e.g. Jacquet-Gordon 2003, pl. 12.36.

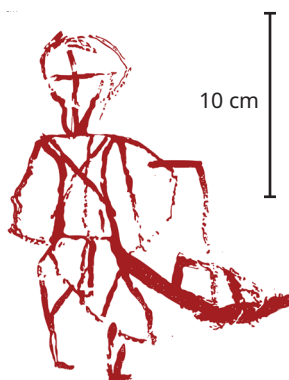
Gr. 25. Hieratic dipinto

Dimensions: 45.4 × 121.1 cm.

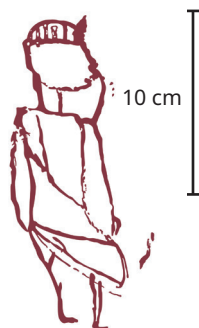
Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: Courtyard, north wall, dado, 5.4 cm above pavement level.

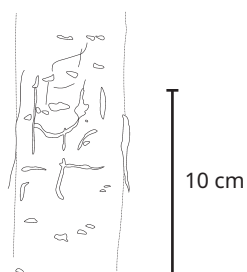
Orientation: ?

Gr. 18

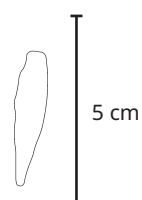
Gr. 19



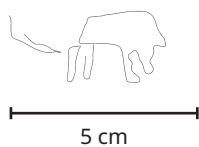
Gr. 20



Gr. 22



Gr. 21



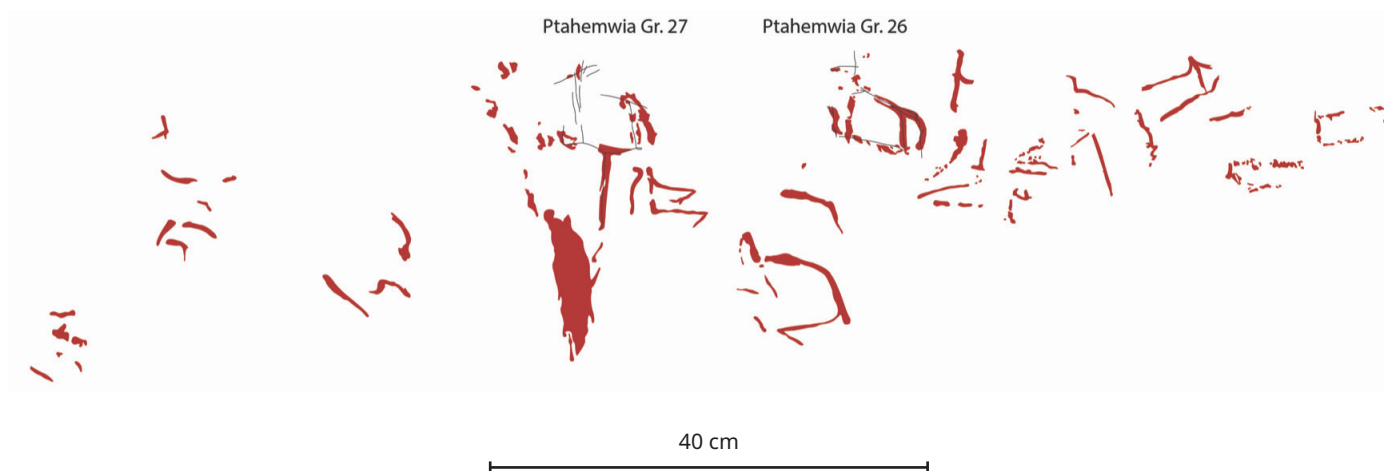
Gr. 23



Gr. 24



Gr. 25



Ptahemwia Gr. 27

Ptahemwia Gr. 26

Description: Collection of faint to very faint hieratic inscriptions in red ochre. It concerns one unframed text column and several dispersed, sundry scribbles that are seemingly practice material of an apprentice scribe. Cut by Gr. 26-27. H. 45, w. 121 cm. Gr. 13 and 14 seem to have been made by the same hand.

Gr. 26. Jackal on a divine stand

Dimensions: 8.9 × 8.4 cm.

Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: Courtyard, north wall, dado, 40.8 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: West.

Description: Jackal on a divine stand. The graffito was initially applied in red ochre, but subsequently scratched into the stone.

Parallels: It has basically the same subject matter as **Gr. 6**, **7**, **10**, **12** and **27**, but in this example the pole of the divine stand is not indicated. Cuts **Gr. 25**.

Gr. 27. Jackal on a divine stand

Dimensions: 15.3 × 8.8 cm.

Technique: Applied in red ochre.

Location: Courtyard, north wall, dado, 33.4 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: West.

Description: Jackal on a divine stand. Like **Gr. 26**, this example was initially executed on the dado in red ochre and later scratched into the stone. The paint has largely faded away, but the original composition can still be discerned from the scratch marks. Cuts **Gr. 25**.

Parallels: **Gr. 6**, **7**, **10**, **12** and **26**.

Gr. 28. Human head (?)

Dimensions: 2.3 × 5.9 cm.

Technique: Roughly incised.

Location: Courtyard, north wall, dado, 29.7 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: East(?).

Description: Uncertain representation, possibly part of a human head with one eye indicated, or perhaps a crude reproduction of the sign  (Gardiner D 32).

Gr. 29. Scribe's outfit (?)

Dimensions: 7 × 4.1 cm.

Technique: Roughly incised.

Location: Courtyard, north wall, dado, 38.8 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: n/a.

Description: Uncertain representation, just possibly a scribe's outfit, consisting of a palette, water jar, and reed-holder.

Gr. 30. Human head with hieroglyphs (?)

Dimensions: 11.9 × 26.6 cm.

Technique: Roughly incised.

Location: Courtyard, north-east corner, pavement.

Orientation: West.

Description: Complex graffito, incorporating a roughly incised human head with indeterminate hieroglyphs (including  ?) to its left. The surface of the paving stone is heavily eroded, making interpretation of the signs extremely difficult.

Gr. 31. Figure of tomb owner

Dimensions: 12.6 × 11.8 cm.

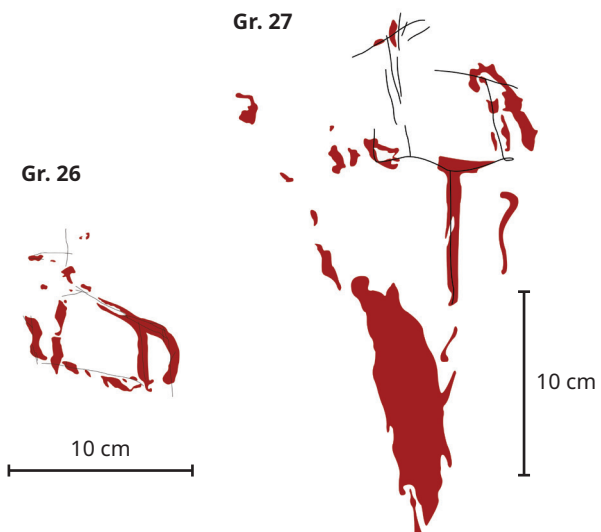
Technique: Scratched and incised.

Location: Courtyard, east wall, north side, north end, dado, 15.3 cm above pavement level.

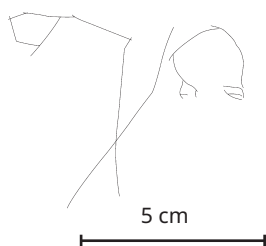
Orientation: North.

Description: Copy of the representation of Ptahemwia in scene [12]. The graffito is partly scratched and partly executed in real sunk relief. At certain points the graffitist shows an eye for minute detail, even reproducing Ptahemwia's navel and the strings of his gold collars, while in others he diverges considerably from the original, as in the position of Ptahemwia's hands. The graffito was never finished and the lower part of the legs, the feet and Ptahemwia's staff are missing. Perhaps this is due to the graffito's proximity to the pavement. Finishing the image would have forced the graffitist to work in an awkward position.

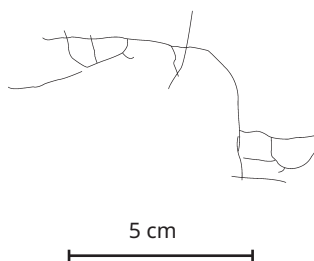
Parallels: For other graffiti copying motifs or scenes from original tombs at Saqqara, see Martin 1989, 159, [Gr. 25], pl. 149 (inner courtyard of Horemheb, showing a sequence of mourning figures that was perhaps inspired by a missing relief on the upper course of the wall); *ibid.* [Gr. 27] (figure of king Tutankhamun presumably copied from an adjacent relief). At Thebes, the practice is well attested at the temple of Karnak where worshippers emulated already existing decorations by replicating deities, offering tables, sacred barks, or flower bouquets (Cruz-Uribe 2008, 2).



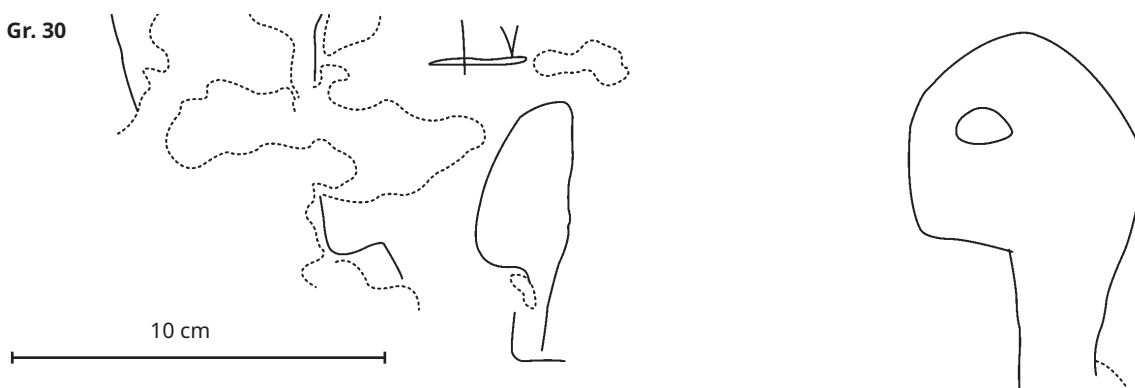
Gr. 28



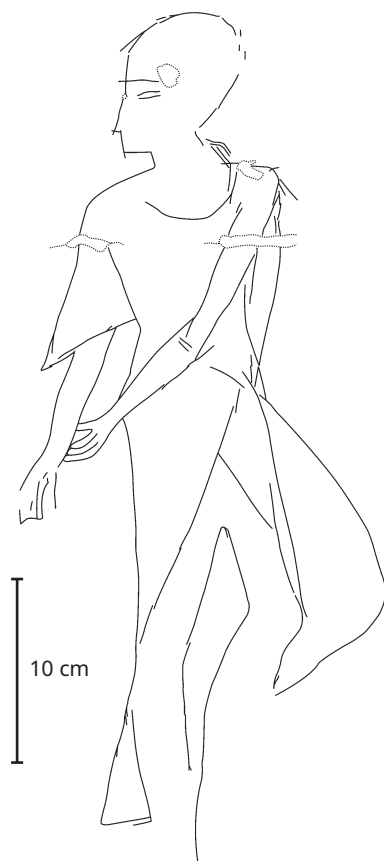
Gr. 29



Gr. 30



Gr. 31



Gr. 32. Lotus

Dimensions: 2.6 × 2.1 cm.

Technique: Incised.

Location: Courtyard, east wall, north side, north end, 144.7 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: South.

Description: Finely incised lotus flower with 5 petals. For drawing, see *supra* Ch. IV, scene [15].

Parallels: Gr. 3; Saqqara: Horemheb, Gr. 27 (Martin 1989, 159, pl. 149), 52, 55 (unpublished); Thebes: e.g. Černý/Sadek 1970, 27; Jacquet-Gordon 2003, pl. 78.205.

Gr. 33. Royal head

Dimensions: 20.3 × 24.9 cm.

Technique: Scratched.

Location: Courtyard, east wall, north side, north end, dado, 59.4 cm above floor level.

Orientation: North.

Description: Roughly scratched part of a royal head (or only crown?) adorned with a uraeus.

Gr. 34. Three royal heads with blue crown

Dimensions: 14.7 × 13.7 cm (total area).

Technique: Incised.

Location: Courtyard, east wall, north side, north end, 125.9 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: South.

Description: Cluster of three incised heads. Two heads are wearing the royal blue crown, as indicated by the presence of a uraeus. The head on the right has no internal decoration and a different outline from the others, partly due to the absence of a headdress. The shape of the neck varies for each head. Cuts an unfinished register depicting a ship.

Parallels: Gr. 4 and 9.

Gr. 35. Boat

Dimensions: 38.8 × 64.5 cm.

Technique: Shallowly incised.

Location: Courtyard, east wall, north side, north end, 124.6 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: ?

Description: Boat with a curved, crescent-shaped body with 15 oars. For drawing, see *supra* Ch. IV, scene [15].

Parallels: For a very similar graffito from Saqqara, see Martin 1997, 45, pl. 93, [326]. Possibly this graffito was inspired by the unfinished ship scene [15] on the same wall.

Gr. 36. Collection of M-shaped signs

Dimensions: 15.2 × 54.1 cm (total area).

Technique: Scratched.

Location: Entrance, north reveal, 46.4 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: ?

Description: Collection of 18 scratched M-shaped signs of varying sizes. They cut Gr. 37-38. It is possible that these are not graffiti but rather a 'key' for the top coat or finish plaster to adhere to.

Parallels: Horemheb, Gr. 52 (unpublished); these M-shapes seem to form a lotus.

Gr. 37. Chessboard pattern

Dimensions: 47.6 × 34.9 cm.

Technique: Scratched.

Location: Entrance, north reveal, 71.5 cm above floor level.

Orientation: ?

Description: Two rectangular, partly overlapping chessboard patterns. Some sections were scratched into spots of pink plaster. Cut by Gr. 36. It is possible that these are not graffiti but rather a 'key' for the top coat or finish plaster to adhere to.

Gr. 38. Loincloth

Dimensions: 16.2 × 34.9 cm.

Technique: Roughly carved.

Location: Entrance, north reveal, 112.4 cm above pavement level.

Orientation: East.

Description: Roughly carved outline of a loincloth. Cut by Gr. 36.

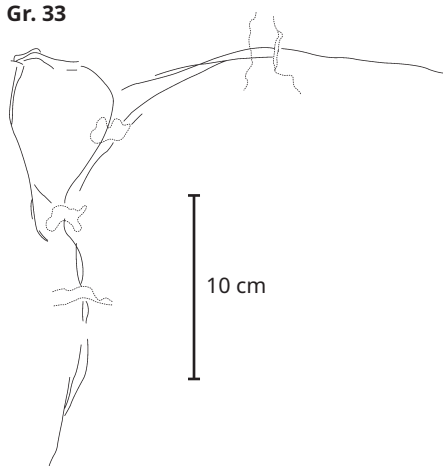
Comments: This graffito may belong to the official decoration of the tomb, being part of an unfinished representation of Ptahemwia facing the tomb entrance (i.e. looking out from his tomb).

Parallels: Horemheb, Gr. 59 (unpublished).

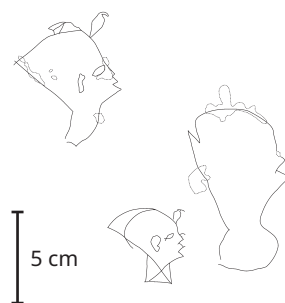
Gr. 32



Gr. 33



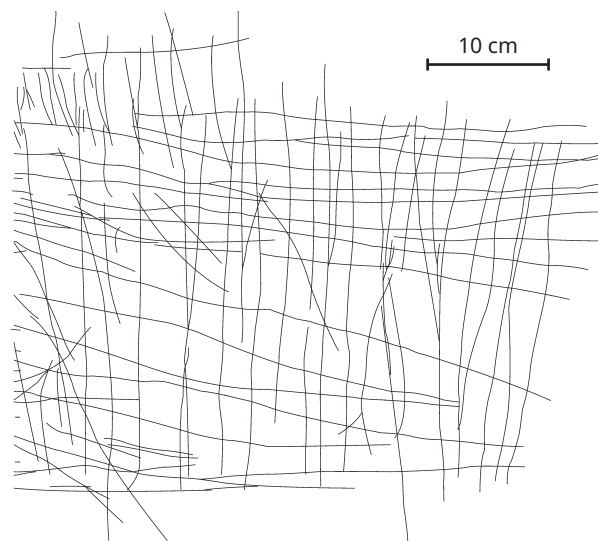
Gr. 34



Gr. 35



Gr. 37



Gr. 36



Gr. 38

