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Title: Of marks and men : the functional and historical context of the workmen's marks of the Royal Theban Necropolis
Issue Date: 2016-09-15

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 THE MEANING OF OSTRACA INSCRIBED WITH IDENTITY MARKS

The ostraca with marks from the 18th Dynasty are least well understood, but an administrative function is evident for the majority of these documents. Many records will have pertained to the activities of the crew at the construction site and may record attendance or the individual output of workmen during a day's work. It seems likely that other ostraca deal with the distribution of tools, supplies and rations. In this period occur for the first time ostraca, of limestone as well as pottery, which are inscribed with a single mark. Similar pieces display a double instance of the same mark, or two different marks. Their exact meaning is doubtful, but they seem to have been used in the settlements in the Theban Valleys as well as in the village of Deir el-Medina. Particularly the larger examples may have been set up in a designated space as a means to convey ownership of property. Others may have had a votive function, as may some ostraca inscribed with a series of marks.

A votive function cannot be dismissed for some Ramesside ostraca, but there is no uncertainty that the greater majority of the ostraca with marks are of a documentary nature. The ostraca with marks from the Ramesside Period are occasionally concerned with supplies and tools for the construction of the tomb, but more often they record the delivery and distribution of commodities, goods and rations. In addition, many of the ostraca from the 19th and 20th Dynasties are lists of workmen, regularly arranged in an ordered sequence, like their 18th Dynasty counterparts. These documents too will have played a role in oral or scribal administrative practices, connected most probably with the documentation of attendance at the worksite. There is a significant number of ostraca with marks from the middle of the 19th Dynasty and from the first half of the 20th Dynasty that record the turnus of workmen who partook in the delivery system wherein commodities were transferred to the community. In the 20th Dynasty more than in the 19th Dynasty ostraca can be recognised that pertain not to the collective necropolis administration, but that are private accounts. The subject of such records is also exclusively of a material nature. They include what seem to be inventories of private property and records of transactions. A particularly 20th Dynasty document type records workmen who are involved in the production and decoration of items, mostly furniture but also i.a. coffins and statuary, for the funerary equipment of individuals outside of the Theban necropolis and perhaps even the royal burial.

When identity marks are used in combinations with hieroglyphic or hieratic script, these texts deal with practical, mundane matters, related to work on the tomb, and mostly to the supply and distribution of commodities, as well as private transactions. Significantly, identity marks were not incorporated in any of the literary ostraca that were composed in Deir el-Medina during the Ramesside Period. Likewise, they do not occur in documents with medical texts, magical texts, or hymns.[1] We do not know of private letters between two correspondents that feature marks, and they are not found on ostraca that record court proceedings either. It would thus seem that ostraca that do contain identity marks – whether combined with script or not – are mostly concerned with matters of everyday life, with a focus on the work on the tomb, rations and personal property.

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[1] The only exception is perhaps O. BTdK 547, which has been interpreted as an invocation to the god Amun-Re, but the connection between the mark on the bottom of the piece and the text on another side of the stone is unclear, see chapter 4, 4.3.1.

6.2 THE CONTINUITY OF THE PRACTICE OF CREATING OSTRACA WITH MARKS

Ostraca with identity marks were created throughout the history of the Theban necropolis. A few brief periods may mark a drop in this practice, but these moments of decline aside, the ostraca are attested more or less continuously from the reign of Thutmosis III to the reign of Ramesses XI.

6.2.1 Ostraca with identity marks of the 18th Dynasty

The exact moment that the identity marks were introduced in the community of necropolis workmen is unknown, but the first datable ostraca with marks originate from the reign of Thutmosis III. It is during this period that we may for the first time speak of a 'community', because archaeological evidence suggests that under Thutmosis III or Hatshepsut the crew was permanently settled at Deir el-Medina. We know next to nothing about the origins of these early necropolis workmen, but in view of the occurrence of marking systems in the context of construction projects at other times and other locations in Egypt, it is tenable that the usage of identity marks was established by workmen who were familiar with such systems from previous work elsewhere. Before the reign of Thutmosis III workmen of the Theban Royal Necropolis may already have marked their property with identity marks, but the archaeological material is not dated accurately enough to draw substantiated conclusions.

6.2.2 Ostraca with identity marks of the end of the 18th Dynasty

Ostraca with marks are attested throughout the reigns of Thutmosis III, Amenhotep II, Thutmosis IV and Amenhotep III. Only a few instances of workmen's marks are known from the end of the 18th Dynasty after the reign of Amenhotep III. These late examples appear not on ostraca but mostly on ceramic ware.[2] It is therefore unclear if the practice of composing ostraca with marks was abandoned or not. This is not unambiguous proof of a transfer of the Theban necropolis workmen to Amarna. The continued use of identity marks at Deir el-Medina during and immediately after the Amarna Period, as well as the construction of various monuments and tombs of workmen from that time indicate that several workmen had remained in Thebes. Supposing that only a segment of the original Theban crew had moved to Amarna, the custom of marking property with identity marks as well as the creation of ostraca with identity marks does not seem to have been maintained at the new location. To be sure, groups of marks are attested at Amarna, but they are not evidently the identity marks of the Theban workmen. One might even be inclined to interpret the lack of ostraca with identity marks at Amarna, and the absence of marks that are related to the Theban crew as a signal that no resettlement of a significant scale had taken place.

6.2.3 Ostraca with identity marks of the beginning of the 19th Dynasty and the reorganisation of the crew

Ostraca with identity marks are again recognisable in the archaeological record of the Theban Royal Necropolis in small numbers in the reign of Seti I and the first half of the reign of Ramesses II. The reappearance provokes the question as to what had happened in the necropolis at the turn of the 18th Dynasty. It has often been stated that the administration of the tomb building project was reorganised under Horemheb.[3] Hieratic ostraca O. BM 5624

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[2] Discovered in the Valley of the Kings, see chapter 2, 2.2.14.

[3] Davies, *Who's who*, 1; Valbelle, *Les ouvriers*, 4-5;160-163; Häggman, *Directing Deir el-Medina*, 60-61; Haring, 'Scribes and Scribal Activity', 109; Haring, 'Workmen's Marks and the Early History of the Theban Necropolis', 88-89; Dorn, 'Ostraka', 37. Valbelle, *Les ouvriers*, 160 and Häggman, *Directing Deir el-Medina*, 60, placed the reorganisation of labour on the Royal Tomb in the context of several other administrative changes that were imposed under the reign of Horemheb. For these policies see Jean-Marie Kruchten, *Le Décret d'Horemheb. Traduction, commentaire épigraphique, philologique et institutionnel.* Université Libre de

and O. Toronto A 11 seem to refer to year 7 of this king as the starting point of a new phase in the Royal Necropolis, that could have entailed such a restructuring. The reign of Horemheb has for that reason been connected with the extension of the enclosure wall around the village and an enlargement of the residential sector,[4] which in turn has been interpreted as an increase in the number of workmen. Häggman suggested the reorganisation of the administration of the necropolis also meant that a new crew of necropolis workmen was installed.[5] Still, for reasons unknown this reorganisation does not reverberate in the administrative records until the reign of Seti I, as no documentary texts – composed with marks or written in hieratic – from the reigns of Horemheb and Ramesses I have been identified.[6] Only after the reign of the latter king, hieratic accounts in the form of ostraca that mention the delivery of provisions emerge, indeed indicating important changes in the administration of the work on the royal tomb.[7] It would thus seem that it took the newfound tomb administration several years before written documentation was kept or discarded on site.

  If the crew was indeed reorganised, why then did the marking system reappear at the beginning of the 19th Dynasty? That question can to some extent be addressed by advancing the same argument used to explain the emergence of the marking system of the 18th Dynasty: the new workmen of the 19th Dynasty had previously laboured at construction sites where marks had been used as well. While this is certainly imaginable, it does not account for the reintroduction of the habit of creating ostraca with identity marks, which appears to be a phenomenon characteristic of the community of Deir el-Medina. The picture that comes to the fore is that of a number of the original 18th Dynasty workmen, or some of their descendants, who must either have continued or reinstated the practice of inscribing marks on limestone chips and ceramic fragments. Indeed, there are at least four workmen who were incumbent on the gang during the first years of the 19th Dynasty that are related to men that were in all likelihood active as necropolis workmen at the end of the 18th Dynasty. They are listed below (TABLE 99)[8] with their titles, as well as the names and titles of their predecessors:

Name	Title	Period	Attestation
Neferhotep (i) son of Neferhotep (iv)	Chief workman of Djoserkheperrure-[setepenre] (Horemheb)	Horemheb – Seti I	Offering table, *Rapport 1923-1924*, pl. XII
Neferhotep (iv)	Servant in the Place of [...]	Horemheb	Graff. nr. 3305
Buqentuef (i) son of Nakhy (iii)	Servant in the Place of Truth	First half Ramesses II	St. Stockholm MM N.M.E. 28
Nakhy (iii) son of Didi (i)	- Servant of the West - Servant in the Place of Truth on the West of Thebes - Chief Draughtsman in the Place of Truth	End 18th Dynasty – Early 19th Dynasty	- St. BM 360 - St. Turin CG 50010 and st. BM 281 - St. Stockholm MM N.M.E. 28

Bruxelles. Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres 82 (Brussels 1981); Barry J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt. Anatomy of a civilization*. 2nd ed. (London and New York 2006), 305-306.

[4] Bonnet and Valbelle, 'Le Village', 433-434; Bonnet and Valbelle, 'Le Village (suite)', 325-328; Valbelle, *Les ouvriers*, 161; cf. Haring, 'Scribes and Scribal Activity', 109.

[5] Häggman, *Directing Deir el-Medina*, 61. In the same vein, Davies, *Who's who*, 149.

[6] As seems to be the case for the 18th Dynasty, such records may have never been stored at the necropolis itself, and drafts of the texts may not have been produced. The absence of documentary texts from the reign of Horemheb speak in favour of a reign of 15 rather than 20 + years, compare Dorn, 'Ostraka', 37 and n. 49.

[7] Janssen, 'Literacy and letters', 86 and n. 24; Davies, *Who's who*, 1; Haring, 'Scribes and Scribal Activity', 109; Dorn, 'Ostraka', 31; 38-41.

[8] For the sake of brevity, TABLE 99 as well as TABLES 102 and 103 mention only the names of the crew members in combination with the identification number attributed to them in Davies' *Who's who*, where they can be retraced and where the primary literature of the attestations are given.

Didi (i)	- Great sculptor in the Place of Truth on the West of Thebes	Late 18th Dynasty	St. BM 1629 + fragm., *Rapport 1933-1934*, 119, nr. 2
Nebdjefa (i) son of Amennakht (xiii)	'Great of Arm'	Horemheb – Seti I	St. *Rapport* 1934-1940 II, 47, 98
Amennakht (xiii)	Servant in the Place of Truth	End 18th Dynasty – Early 19th Dynasty	Graf. nr. 2187
Baki (i) son of Wennefer (i)	- Great one of the gang in the Place of Truth - Chief of the gang in the Place of Truth	Horemheb – Seti I	- St. Turin CG 50055 - TT 298
Wennefer (i)	- Servant of the Lord of Both Lands in the Place of Truth on the West of Thebes - Servant in the Place of Truth	Horemheb, and earlier?	- TT 298 - St. Turin CG 50051

TABLE 99. EARLY 19TH DYNASTY DESCENDANTS OF LATE 18TH DYNASTY WORKMEN

Men like Neferhotep (i), Nakhy (iii),[9] Nebdjefa (i) and Baki (i) could still have witnessed the practice of inscribing ostraca with marks as young boys, or would at least have been aware of this custom. It is plausible that the tradition lived on into the Ramesside Period by virtue of their endeavours. In addition, 19th Dynasty workmen may have been inspired by 18th Dynasty ostraca that were discarded in and around the village and the Valley of the Kings.

The epigraphic evidence from Deir el-Medina thus suggests that only very few workmen with family ties that hark back to the 18th Dynasty can be identified. This is of course partially due to the state of the archaeological documentation. The period of the late 18th Dynasty and the early 19th Dynasty is simply not well recorded. However, support for this view is found when we compare the set of identity marks known from the time of Amenhotep III to the marks attested in the early 19th Dynasty. We notice that there is little overlap between the two sets. Naturally, caution is in order. The period between, let us say, the middle of the reign of Amenhotep III (c. 1371 BCE) and the middle of the reign of Seti I (c. 1285 BCE) spans c. 86 years. We therefore lack data of about two generations of workmen. Nevertheless, the analysis of identity marks of the 18th Dynasty has demonstrated that the during the c. 80 years between the middle of the reign of Thutmosis III (estimated at 1452 BCE) and the middle of the reign of Amenhotep III the repertory of marks did not change drastically. It certainly expanded, but older marks were still employed towards the end of the reign of Amenhotep III: 17 of the 24 marks found in core group A are still attested in core group C. In other words, about 70% of all marks inscribed on ostraca attested on ostraca securely dated to Thutmosis III were still in use in the reign of Amenhotep III. We expect therefore that if all crew members of the early 19th Dynasty descended from their 18th Dynasty forefathers, many of their identity marks would still be in use in the Ramesside Period. The evidence, however, suggests otherwise. When we compare the marks attested on the earliest ostraca from the 19th Dynasty to the set of marks known from ostraca dating *to the entire 18th Dynasty* (TABLE 100), we notice that out of 41 marks, 15, perhaps 18 marks – representing about 40% of the entire set – are also found in the 18th Dynasty.

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[9] For the use of identity marks in the family of Nakhy (iii) see below, 6.5.4.5.

Table 100 — left portion:

Early 19th Dyn.	18th Dyn.
[mark]	
[mark]	✓
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark] / [mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	✓
[mark]	
[mark]	✓
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	✓
[mark]	
[mark]	✓
[mark]	

Table 100 — right portion:

Early 19th Dyn.	18th Dyn.
[mark]	✓
[mark]	✓
[mark]	
[mark]	≈ [mark] ?
[mark]	✓
[mark]	✓
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark] / [mark]	≈ [mark] ?
[mark]	
[mark]	?
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	✓
[mark]	≈ [mark] ?
[mark]	✓
[mark]	
[mark]	✓
[mark]	✓
[mark]	✓
O ?	✓

TABLE 100. MARKS ATTESTED ON EARLY 19TH DYNASTY OSTRACA COMPARED TO MARKS FROM THE 18TH DYNASTY

This percentage is significantly lower than the percentage of Thutmoside marks that survived into the reign of Amenhotep III. Moreover, the marks that are attested in the early 19th Dynasty as well as in the 18th Dynasty, such as [mark], [mark], [mark], and O are very common marks that were in use at other sites at different times as well.[10] It may thus be a coincidence that these marks occur in the 18th Dynasty as well as in the subsequent period. Studying the ostraca of the reign of Amenhotep III, it would seem that many workmen's marks that were in use at the time had disappeared in the early 19th Dynasty. OL 6788, the ostracon that records the entire crew of workmen at some point in the reign of Amenhotep III serves as a good example. Out of 42 different marks in this document, only seven or perhaps nine marks (c. 19%) are still attested during the early 19th Dynasty (TABLE 101).

Table 101 — left portion:

OL 6788	Early 19th Dyn.
[mark]	✓
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	✓
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	≈ [mark] ?[11]
[mark]	✓
[mark]	
[mark]	✓

Table 101 — right portion:

OL 6788	Early 19th Dyn.
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	
[mark]	

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[10] Compare the corpora of marks in Excursus I; in Haring and Kaper (eds.), *Pictograms and Pseudo Script*; in Andrássy, Budka and Kammerzell (eds.), *Non-Textual Marking Systems*.

[11] For a possible relationship between mark [mark] and mark [mark] see below, 6.5.4.5.

Mark		Mark	
�handle		⚶	
Y	✓	⏦	✓
⚘		⋔	
⋏		⌇	
⎰		⌸	
⌐	≈ 𓏤 ?	⍴	
⊙	✓	⊓	
⚲		⌣	
⚵		✕	
⊤⊤		⧖	

TABLE 101. MARKS ATTESTED ON OL 6788 COMPARED TO MARKS FROM THE EARLY 19TH DYNASTY

The identity marks from this period therefore agree with previous ideas about the crew of the early 19th Dynasty. A minority of necropolis workmen descended from individuals that were involved in the construction of the tomb of Amenhotep III, and some of them could have inherited from them their identity marks.[12] Yet, the fact that so many 18th Dynasty marks were no longer in use during the early 19th Dynasty combined with the introduction of several new marks at that time conforms to the idea that new workmen had been transferred to the Royal Necropolis of Thebes.

This development can be seen as a reflection of the assumed reorganisation of the crew and its administration under Horemheb. Circumstantial evidence for the installation of new crew members during the beginning of the 19th Dynasty has been advanced by several authors. McDowell for instance remarked the following:

> "New arrivals seem to have been most common in the community's early days, although this impression may be due to the greater number of Nineteenth Dynasty tombs and stelae, which furnish the most useful genealogical information."[13]

A few insightful comments on this matter were made by Davies,[14] and a very important though brief overview was presented by Bogoslovsky.[15] Both scholars brought into focus the fact that the origin of some of the 19th Dynasty necropolis workmen lay outside of Deir el-Medina. As point of departure for further investigation we turn to the career of one of the first identifiable necropolis scribes of the Theban necropolis, Amenemope (i).[16] The many monuments of this man[17] attest of a great variety of titles:

> Royal Scribe in the Place of Truth, Overseer of the gang in the Place of Eternity
> Royal Scribe in the Place of Truth, Count in the Necropolis (*spꜣ.t nḥḥ*)
> Royal Scribe, Scribe of the Cattle in the Place of Truth
> Royal Scribe of Silver and Gold, Overseer of the gang in the Place of Truth
> Royal Scribe of the West (*im.y-wr.t*)
> Royal Scribe of the Treasury in the Place of Truth
> Royal Scribe in the Tomb in the Place of Truth
> Overseer of Work in the Place of Truth
> Confidant of the King in the Secret Place

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[12] Compare the case of the ancestors of Buqentuef (i) below, 6.5.1.

[13] Andrea G. McDowell, 'Contact with the Outside World' in: Leonard H. Lesko (ed.), *Pharaoh's Workers. The Villagers of Deir el Medina* (Ithaca and London 1994), 42.

[14] Davies, *Who's who*, 76; 149; 274.

[15] Evgeni S. Bogoslovsky, review of Alain-Pierre Zivie, *La tombe de Pached à Deir el-Médineh [No. 3].* MIFAO 99 (Cairo 1979) in: *CdE* 57 (1982), 276-277.

[16] Černý, *Community*, 194-195; Davies, *Who's who*, 76; Haring, 'Scribes and Scribal Activity', 109.

[17] *KRI* I, 381-389.

Both Eyes of the King in the Place of Truth

Priest (w'b), scribe in the Temple of Amun Lord of the Thrones of Both Lands, in (ḥr) Kush

It seems hardly plausible that the titles truly represent different administrative offices. Instead it is likely that Amenemope (i) ringed together self-appropriated epithets. All titles seem to point to one and the same role: that of administrator of the construction of the royal tomb and of the affairs related to its workmen. One exception is formed by the last title of the list above. It informs us that before Amenemope was stationed in the Royal Necropolis, he was affiliated with the temple of Amun in Kush at Gebel Barkal. It is very likely that this title can be taken at face value, as the father of Amenemope, called Nakht, is similarly mentioned as *wab* priest of Amun, Lord of the Thrones of Both Lands in Kush on the statues of Amenemope.[18] Amenemope thus seems to have been transferred from Kush to Thebes,[19] where he became a necropolis scribe.

Amenemope is not the only 19th Dynasty member of the crew who hailed from a location other than Deir el-Medina, as will be demonstrated below. First some caution is in order. We know that the recruitment of workmen from other sites is not a uniquely early 19th Dynasty phenomenon. A perfect example is the famous scribe Ramose (i), who was introduced to the crew in year 5 of Ramesses II after his career in Thebes had taken off.[20] His case and a few others indicate that in the period following the reigns of Horemheb, Ramesses I and Seti I, external workmen were occasionally attracted. However, during the remainder of the Ramesside Period positions on the gang of necropolis workmen were *in general* hereditary.[21]

It is therefore noteworthy that several workmen from the early phase of the 19th Dynasty are the sons of men who had been active outside of the Theban necropolis. These workmen are presented below (TABLE 102) with their titles and those of their predecessors:

Name	Title	Period	Attestation
Pay (i) son of Ipu(y) (v)	Draughtsman of Amun in the Place of Truth	Horemheb – Seti I	- Graff. nr. 817 - St. Turin CG 50048
Ipu(y) (v)	Draughtsman of Amun in the Southern City	Horemheb (?)	St. Turin CG 50048
Kel (i) son of Simut (i)	Stonemason of Amun in the Southern City	Seti I (?) – early Ramesses II	TT 330
Simut (i)	Stonemason of Amun in the Masonry Work	End 18th Dynasty – Early 19th Dynasty	TT 330
Maaninakhtuef (i)[22] son of Pashedu (vii)	- Servant of the Place of Truth, Draughtsman of Amun - Draughtsman of Amun	Ramesses II	- St. BM 269 - TT 323
Pashedu (vii) son of Amenemhat (i)	- Draughtsman of Amun in the Mansion of Sokar	Early 19th Dynasty;	- TT 323

[18] Berlin 6910, see *KRI* I, 386-388.

[19] For the connection between the temples of Amun in Gebel Barkal and those in Karnak during the New Kingdom, see Timothy Kendall, 'The Origin of the Napatan State: El Kurru and the Evidence for the Royal Ancestors' in: Steffen Wenig (ed.), *Studien zum antiken Sudan. Akten der 7. Internationalen Tagung für meroitische Forschungen vom 14. bis 19. September 1992 in Gosen/bei Berlin.* Meroitica 15 (Wiesbaden 1999), 55-56.

[20] Davies, *Who's who*, 79.

[21] Valbelle, *Les ouvriers*, 111-113.

[22] Maaninakhtuef (i) was not a great grandson of Amenemhat (i) as stated by Davies, *Who's who*, 156, but a grandson of the latter man. Davies seems to have confused Pashedu (viii) and Amenemhat (i) on accident.

	- Draughtsman of Amun in the Place of Truth - Chief draughtsman	contemp. Didi (i) on stela from TT 359 (*Rapport 1930*, 91, nr. 11)	- St. from TT 323 - St. Hermitage 8726
Amenemhat (i)	Draughtsman in the Mansion of Sokar	End 18th Dynasty – Early 19th Dynasty	TT 323
Amennakht (xxi) son of Nebenmaat (i)	- Servant in the Place of Truth (on the West of Thebes) - Servant in the Place of Truth on the West of Thebes, [one who summons monuments of Amun] on [sic] the Southern City - One who summons (ꜥš) monuments of Amun in Opet, Servant in the Place of Truth	First half Ramesses II	TT 218
Nebenmaat (i)	One who summons (ꜥš) monuments of Amun in the Southern City	c. Seti I – Ramesses II	TT 218
Pashedu (x) son of Menna (iii)	- Servant in the Place of Truth (on the West [sic]) - Servant (bꜣk) of the Workshop of Amun in the Southern City - Servant in the Place of Truth on the West of Thebes, servant (bꜣk) of the Workshop of Amun, Stonemason of Amun in Karnak - Great one of the gang in the Place of Truth - Chief of the workshop of Amun	Early Ramesses II	- TT 3 - Sarcophagus fragm., Černý, *Répertoire*, 43. - TT 326 - St. Cairo JE 36671
Menna (iii)	Servant (bꜣk) of Amun	End 18th Dynasty – Early 19th Dynasty	TT 3
Amenemope (xvii) son of Mose (vii)	- Servant in the Place of Truth	First half Ramesses II	St. Louvre C. 280
Mose (vii)	- Servant in the Place of Truth - Stonemanson of Amun in the work at Opet	Early 19th Dynasty	- St. Louvre C. 280 - doors, Pushkin Museum I. 1a. 4867 a/b
Sennedjem (i) son of Khabekhnet (iii)	Servant in the Place of Truth	Seti I – Ramesses II	TT 1
Khabekhnet (iii)	One who summons (ꜥš) of (n(y)) Amun in the Southern City	End 18th Dynasty – Early 19th Dynasty	TT 1

TABLE 102. EARLY 19TH DYNASTY DESCENDANTS OF MEN ACTIVE OUTSIDE OF THE ROYAL NECROPOLIS

The overview demonstrates that fathers of these early 19th Dynasty workmen were employed at several Theban institutions connected with the cult of Amun. They are simply recorded as servant (bꜣk) of Amun, or as stonemason of Amun, but other titles refer to Amun in the Southern City (Thebes). Amenemhat (i), Draughtsman in the Mansion of Sokar, was perhaps related to the cult of Amun as well, because his son was a Draughtsman of Amun in the

Mansion of Sokar. Several of the early 19th Dynasty workmen themselves may have begun their careers in one of the institutions of Amun at Thebes, as their titles relate them to the cult of Amun.[23] This notion agrees with Bogoslovsky's statement that "[i]n the early period of the XIXth dynasty quite a number of workers retained their relation to the economy of the temple of Amun from which they were transferred after the reorganisation of the necropolis on the 7th year of the reign of Haremhab."[24] With this knowledge, we may propose a similar career path from the East bank of Thebes to the West bank for three workmen, about whose parentage we possess little information:

Piay (ii)[25]	- Sculptor of Amun - Sculptor in the Place of Eternity	Horemheb – Seti I	- Graff. nr. 817 - St. Bankes 8
Amek (i) son of Pakharu (viii)	- Servant in the Place of Truth, 'Great of Arm' in the Place of Eternity - Servant (*bꜣk*) of Sobekre	Seti I	- St. Bankes 5 - doorjamb, *Rapport 1948-1951*, 51-52
Pakharu (viii)	*No title attested*	End 18th Dynasty – Early 19th Dynasty	
Pashedu (xv) son of Harmose (i)	- Servant of the Place of Truth - Stonemason of Amun in the Temple of Karnak	Ramesses II	- doorjamb TT 339
Harmose (i)	*No title attested*	Early 19th Dynasty	

TABLE 103. EARLY 19TH DYNASTY WORKMEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE CULT OF AMUN

Piay (ii) and Pashedu (xv) bear titles that connect them both with the Royal Necropolis as well as to sanctuaries of Amun in Thebes. Whether Amek (i) was previously affiliated with a sanctuary of Sobekre elsewhere is unclear. Apart from this individual, all men, including the scribe Amenemope (i) from Kush, were related to the cult of Amun. Like the men discussed above, they were very probably installed at Deir el-Medina during or just after the reorganisation in the reign of Horemheb. At the new location they will have been introduced to the marking system that prevailed in this community, although they could well have been familiar with similar customs from other construction sites. They adopted an identity mark of their own, or used a mark that they had employed elsewhere. Hence we possess ostraca from

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[23] Pay (i); Kel (i), whose title does not associate him with the Royal Necropolis, but the fact that he was buried at Deir el-Medina (TT 330) is evidence that he surely was a member of the crew; Maaninakhtuef (i); Amennakht (xxi); Pashedu (i), whose attestations are confusing. It is plausible that the workman Pashedu, owner of TT 3, is the same man as the chief workman Pashedu who owned TT 326. For this discussion, see Alain-Pierre Zivie, *La tombe de Pached à Deir el-Médineh [No. 3]*. MIFAO 99 (Cairo 1979), 120-130; Bogoslovsky, review of Zivie, *La tombe de Pached*, 276; Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions Translated and Annotated. Notes and Comments*. I. *Ramesses I, Sethos I and Contemporaries* (Oxford and Cambridge 1993), 270-280. It is evident that at least one of the owners of the two tombs had come from outside of Deir el-Medina; Pashedu (xv).

[24] Bogoslovsky, review of Zivie, *La tombe de Pached*, 276.

[25] The father of this man is unknown. Davies, *Who's who*, 178, appears at this point to have gotten lost in his own arguments. He suggested after Jaroslav Černý, *Egyptian Stelae in the Bankes Collection* (Oxford 1958), nr. 8, that there is a possibility that the father of Piay (ii) is mentioned on Bankes Stela nr. 8. This is however not what Černý proposed. Instead, Černý identified the two men on the stelae as Piay (ii), the sculptor known from the Royal Necropolis, and his son – not his father – of the same name. The latter Piay, who is mentioned as Piay (iii), son of Piay (ii) in Davies' chart 14, bears the title 'sculptor of Amun'. On account of this title Černý thought Piay (iii) would not have worked on the royal tomb, but in view of several sculptors attested in the Royal Necropolis with the same title, that can be disputed.

the early 19th Dynasty with few marks that appear in the 18th Dynasty with several previously unattested marks.

6.2.4 Ostraca with identity marks of the 19th Dynasty

Identity marks are abundantly attested on ostraca from the middle of the 19th Dynasty, and particularly the second half of the reign of Ramesses II is well documented. There are relatively few ostraca with identity marks that can be dated to the end of the 19th Dynasty. Finds from the excavations near the tomb of Siptah (KV 47) support the perceived decline in the number of ostraca with marks, but it cannot be stated categorically that the motivation behind the creation of ostraca with marks had waned. Instead, the smaller number of ostraca from this period may be due to the absence of informative anchor points for this period, and our inability to recognise late 19th Dynasty ostraca with marks because its repertory does not diverge much from that of the earlier 19th Dynasty. Be that as it may, the practice of employing identity marks to compose administrative records and notes is attested from the early 19th Dynasty to as late as the end of the reign of Siptah.

6.2.5 Ostraca with identity marks of the 20th Dynasty

No ostraca are attributed to the beginning of the reign of Ramesses III, a situation that is mirrored by the paucity of hieratic documentary texts from the first part of his reign. Nevertheless, there is no cause for doubt about the continuation of the use of identity mark from the end of the 19th Dynasty into the next dynasty, as they return in our scope around the middle of the reign of Ramesses III. Throughout the 20th Dynasty numerous ostraca with identity marks were created. Relatively little documentation in the form of hieratic administrative texts is known from the period between year 2 of Ramesses IV and the beginning of the reign of Ramesses IX. This gap is partially bridged by ostraca with marks. In particular they record deliveries and duty rosters from the time of Ramesses IV and Ramesses V. Ostraca with marks continued to be produced well into the reign of Ramesses IX, and there are strong indications that this custom persisted even after this period in the reign of Ramesses XI. The last datable ostraca with marks are dated to the closing years of his reign. Around this period, the deterioration of the tomb administration had begun, and it is likely that the habit of composing ostraca was abandoned.

6.3 THE PHENOMENON OF OSTRACA WITH MARKS IN THE CONTEXT OF LITERACY

The usage of a marking system at Deir el-Medina appears to have been one out of a plethora of systems that had been developed throughout the New Kingdom. These marks are attested in the context of large scale building, quarrying, the construction of coffins, the production of textile and pottery, and the keeping of cattle. The majority of the individuals involved in the activities were labourers and craftsmen who, like many of the necropolis workmen of the 18th Dynasty, were not trained as scribes. The feature that sets the usage of marks in Deir el-Medina apart from other systems is their application in the creation of documentary records. As far as we know, ostraca inscribed with identity marks appear to have been produced in ancient Egypt only in the community of royal Theban necropolis workmen. What may have inspired the workmen of the 18th Dynasty to embrace this practice is unclear, but it is paralleled by their interest in and affinity to hieroglyphic script. Despite their lack of formal scribal training the workmen took to decorating tomb walls and coffins with poorly written, but comprehensible hieroglyphic texts. In that respect the 18th Dynasty community of Deir el-Medina seems to have been rather unique as well, and we suspect that their involvement in the decoration of royal tombs, the audits by a scribe of the kings, and perhaps even the workmen's involvement in the burial of the king may have stimulated their attraction to script

and practices akin to writing. We surmise that the usage of identity marks was not influenced by script, but the idea to compose ostraca with series of marks probably was.

It is improbable that the custom of recording data with marks was imposed by higher authorities, although policies of this nature are not inconceivable. In contemporary narratives illiteracy has often been viewed as a sign of deficiency and as a disadvantage that requires remedying.[26] This idea has prompted numerous studies that investigated the perceived problem, some of which proposed a solution in the form of communication through signs. Two recent papers, for example, advocate the development of "visual" or "symbol-based" address books in mobile telephones, for "low-literate users".[27] The Theban authorities of the 18th Dynasty will not have embarked on a comparable campaign to battle illiteracy. For them it sufficed to send a scribe to the Royal Necropolis in order to monitor the progress on the tomb. If this man had instructed the workmen to record information with the aid of identity marks, we would expect more aspects of formal scribal practice in the documents, such as hieroglyphic or hieratic numerals. The marking system thus must have been an initiative of the necropolis workmen themselves. Empirical evidence indicates that it is not impossible for illiterate or semi-literate individuals to develop notation systems in a society wherein script plays an important role. To keep to the topic of telephones, one of the studies that suggested introducing visual phonebooks on mobile phones records that a number of "low-literate or illiterate" shop keepers and small-scale farmers in the villages of Chinchavli and Ukaral (c. 100 km from Mumbai, India) had created their own phone books. They noted names and phone numbers in notebooks, often incorrectly spelled. Others employed Latin alphabetic characters to refer to a name, such as A for someone named Atul.[28] Similarly, artist Yto Barrada wrote the following about the phonebooks of her grandmother (FIG. 20):

> "These are the notebooks of Z.A.B. She was my grandmother and was illiterate. She gave birth to twelve children, of whom ten lived. To keep in touch with them all she made herself a telephone directory from an old recipe notebook. To identify each member, she made a coded drawing: the one with spectacles, the one with four sons. The corresponding telephone numbers were recorded as a series of little lines […]. She had someone else write the name as well."[29]

In the 18th Dynasty community of Deir el-Medina, a similar wish to note things down will have occurred, and a lack of scribal training did not prevent them from composing their own form of documentation. All the ingredients for it were after all well available: the idea of identity marks had existed in the context of labour for ages; the writing material, limestone chips and fragments of pottery, was ubiquitous; and in the presence of draughtsmen and occasionally an administrative scribe ink and pens will have been accessible too.

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[26] James Collins, 'Literacy and literacies' *ARA* 24 (1995), 83.

[27] Anuradha Bhamidipaty and Deepak P., 'SymAB: Symbol-Based Address Book for the Semi-literate Mobile User' in: Cécilia Baranauskas, Philippe Palanque, Julio Abascal *et al.* (eds.), *Human-Computer Interaction – INTERACT 2007. 11th IFIP TC 13 International Conference. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, September 2007. Proceedings*. Part I. Lecture Notes in Computer Science 4662 (Heidelberg and New York 2007), 389-392; Anirudha Joshi, Nikhil Welankar, Naveen Bagalkot *et al.*, 'Rangoli: A Visual Phonebook for Low-literate users' in: Henri ter Hofte, Ingrid Mulder and Boris de Ruyter (eds.), *Mobile HCI 2008. Proceedings of the 10th International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction with Mobile Devices and Services* (New York and Amsterdam 2008), 217-223. Compare also the use of symbols in hospitals in the United States, see Jamie Cowgill and Jim Bolek, *Symbol usage in health care settings for people with limited English proficiency*. Part I. *Evaluation of use of symbol graphics in medical settings*. Hablamos Juntos Report 1 (Scottsdale 2003).

[28] Joshi, Welankar, Bagalkot *et al.*, 'A Visual Phonebook', 217-218.

[29] http://www.sharjahart.org/projects/projects-by-date/2011/the-telephone-books-barrada. This work was kindly brought to our attention by Janko Duinker.
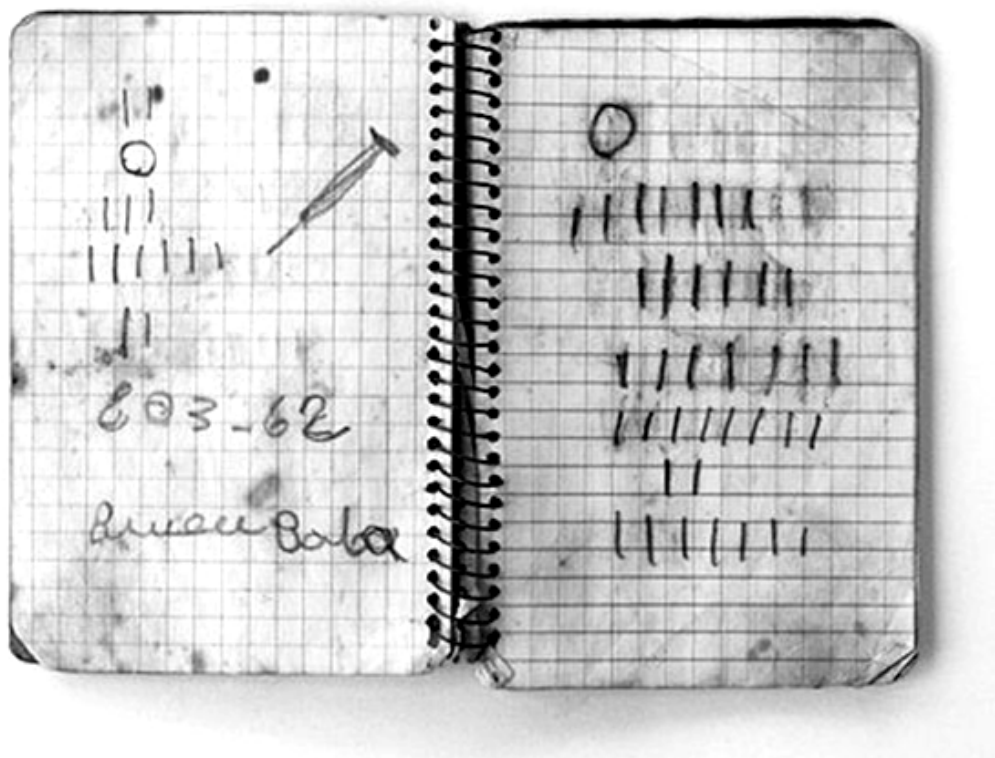
FIGURE 20. 'THE TELEPHONE BOOKS' – YTO BARRADA

The palaeography of the 18th Dynasty ostraca with marks demonstrates that several different individuals were responsible for their creation. The majority of these men were clearly not trained in the writing of script, as evidenced by the absence of numerals or phrases written in hieratic or hieroglyphic, with perhaps the single exception of O. Cairo JE 96285. Several ostraca provide insights into the different approaches to recording information by these untrained scribes: inscribing marks along the edge of an ostracon, writing in *boustrophedon*, writing in lines and the – seemingly – random distribution of marks across an ostracon. The heterogeneity of specimens of a single mark, as well as of the orientation of marks reveals their inexperience in noting down signs with a pen. The number of ostraca that display the hand of an individual that was educated in the usage of script is tentatively estimated to be about 20%. The ductus of the marks as well as the absence of any hieratic phrases indicates that these men were no hieratic scribes, but it is likely that they were draughtsmen.

The practice of composing ostraca with marks was apparently persistent enough to survive even after a period of diminished activity at the Theban necropolis during the Amarna Period. Moreover, the phenomenon was able to withstand the reorganisation of the administration of the Royal Necropolis in the reign of Horemheb, which brought a professional scribe into the midst of the necropolis workmen. The renewed administration would eventually bring about a trend towards standardisation of written administrative practice, and the number of functionally literate individuals would increase during the Ramesside Period. These developments did not expel the usage of identity marks. On the contrary, the usage of marks thrived under them, as evidenced by the increase over time in the number of ostraca with marks, and by the diversification of documents for which marks were used in comparison to the 18th Dynasty. The evidence therefore suggests that the installation of a necropolis scribe in Deir el-Medina at the beginning of the 19th Dynasty did not affect the older tradition of using identity marks. It only seems to have encouraged the

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necropolis workmen in the usage of marks and in their interest in script, an interest that can be detected already during the 18th Dynasty when some individuals attempted to write funerary inscriptions to the best of their abilities.

Nevertheless, the practice of inscribing ostraca with marks was certainly not a widespread phenomenon. That is true for the 18th Dynasty, for which we know of 138 ostraca with marks for a period of c. 125 years, but also for the 19th Dynasty. We have identified only 159 ostraca with marks that can be attributed to the latter period, and ostraca with identity marks from the section of the workmen's huts in front of the tomb of Amenmesses represent a mere 20% of all ostraca from that site. A concise palaeographic survey suggests that about 10% of the 19th Dynasty ostraca with marks were made by an individual who was formally trained in hieratic or hieroglyphic script. This figure is somewhat lower than the estimated number of trained hands of the 18th Dynasty, but the ostraca with marks from the 19th Dynasty still attest to an increase in the level of literacy of its authors in several aspects. The orientation of individual marks is not as variable as during the previous period, because marks that are rotated 90 or 180 degrees are no longer attested. In terms of lay-out, marks are no longer written in *boustrophedon*, and marks are frequently presented in a more orderly fashion. For the first time, marks are arranged in orderly columns in some ostraca, and a tabular format is occasionally followed in the reign of Ramesses II. Another innovation of the period is the introduction of hieratic signs, hieratic numerals and brief hieroglyphic phrases, although such elements are far from frequent; ostraca with hieratic numerals represent c. 9% of the entire corpus.

The 19th Dynasty ostraca provide once again unique insights into the strategies of men who were not trained as scribes. We have seen the work of a man from the time of Ramesses II who had learned how to write a date line in hieratic. Apart from hieratic numerals he was able to use the sign for *ḫt* 'wood' and he used the uniliteral sign *s* for the word *smḥy* 'left'. Hieratic numerals for '10', '20' and '100' seem to have been known to many of the non-professional scribes of ostraca with marks, but these signs were often used as if they were hieroglyphic numerals. We assume they did not know how to write higher numerals and therefore e.g. repeated the numeral '10' six times when they wanted to convey the figure '60'.

The 19th Dynasty also constitutes the period when the creators of ostraca with marks came up with solutions for creating more intricate documents than ostraca with lines of identity marks with series of tallies. Bypassing the – assumed – obstacle of their lack of scribal training, we observe that necropolis workmen begin to invent their own notation systems. Some are rather pictorial in nature, such as references to loaves of bread, chisels, and items of clothing. Other signs are – at least to our eyes – rather abstract. An example is ◺, used in the 19th Dynasty to refer to an unknown commodity.

A total of 359 ostraca with marks has been attributed to the 20th Dynasty.[30] This figure is approximately twice as high as the total number of ostraca with marks from the 19th Dynasty. Nevertheless, the practice of inscribing ostraca with marks must still be regarded as a marginal custom. We estimate that, as in the 19th Dynasty, the ostraca with marks represent about 20% of all 20th Dynasty ostraca of a documentary nature. Although the ostraca show many different hands, these figures suggest that ostraca with marks were not habitually created by many of the necropolis workmen. The number of 20th Dynasty ostraca that, on account of a cursory survey of palaeographic details, orientation of marks, and the occurrence of textual phrases, has been attributed to an individual that was professionally trained in hieratic and/or hieroglyphic script represents about 25% of the entire corpus. This figure is

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[30] There may certainly be more documents from this period among the very fragmentary and poorly preserved ostraca for which an accurate date cannot be proposed, cf. above, Introduction, p. 17, n. 107.

higher than in the 19th Dynasty. Since the ratio of hieratic documentary ostraca to ostraca with marks during the 20th Dynasty is about the same as during the 19th Dynasty, this increase should not be explained as an indication that professional scribes systematically created more of their administration with marks. Instead, the larger number is probably reflective of the increase in the number of literati during the 20th Dynasty.

As in the 19th Dynasty, the majority of ostraca with marks was made by individuals without a formal training in hieratic or hieroglyphic script. The example *par excellence* is the scribe whom we have tentatively identified as the '*smd.t* scribe' Pentaweret (iii). Despite the fact that he was not a professionally trained scribe, he prepared notes of the deliveries brought to the village. This man employed hieratic numerals and identity marks within a self-invented system of signs for commodities, *smd.t* agents, and months. There are strong indications that during the reigns of Ramesses III and Ramesses IV he cooperated closely with a professional scribe, perhaps Hori, who seems to have consulted and on occasion edited the records composed with marks to write hieratic accounts, details of which were sometimes included in larger necropolis journals. Towards the close of the 20th Dynasty a similar construction could have existed in which a man with very restricted knowledge of hieratic and hieroglyphic script seems to have recorded deliveries on ostraca by combining his own system of signs, semi-hieratic numerals and identity marks.

In many of the ostraca from the 20th Dynasty we see untrained 'scribes' at work. As in the 18th Dynasty, the scribe of O. ARTP 99/27, clearly not a professional, aligned one column of marks to the edge of the ostracon. Another parallel can be drawn between the 18th Dynasty and the 20th Dynasty. In chapter 2 it was briefly mentioned that the artist of the early 18th Dynasty tomb TT 340 was a limitedly literate man, who preferred the use of uniliteral signs over multiliteral signs.[31] To some extent we notice the same predilection with the self-invented signs of the scribe of the duty and delivery texts from first half of the 20th Dynasty. It seems therefore plausible that individuals without a formal training in script would be able to recognise and employ more of these uncomplicated, easy to draw signs, rather than the often more elaborate biliteral and triliteral hieroglyphs.

Among the authors of ostraca with identity marks that were educated in hieroglyphic and/or hieratic script there were certainly draughtsmen. One of these created a number of such ostraca throughout the course of the 20th Dynasty, and he may have been Harshire (i) or Amenhotep (vi). We wonder why on a few occasions trained draughtsmen or scribes, having invested considerable time in crafting the art of script, would resort to the usage of identity marks to compose ostraca. No irrefutable answer presents itself, and there could be several reasons behind this matter. Importantly, emphasis must again be placed on the fact that ostraca with marks were only sporadically created by trained scribes or draughtsmen. It could be argued that draughtsmen may have been attracted to the pictorial nature of the workmen's marks, and that they may have enjoyed drawing up the occasional list of workmen by noting down their identity marks. Additionally, it has been proposed on several occasions in this work that the scribes may have created a quick draft using marks and numerals before writing out the hieratic text proper. Some of 20th Dynasty accounts of grain rations with workmen's marks come to mind. On such documents, the scribe could have calculated the individual rations of the workmen, making quick use of identity marks. Adding up their portions, he may then have used the total in his hieratic account. This could also explain the correspondence between the hieratic text on O. Cairo CG 25660+ and the partially corresponding column of marks to its left.

However, this and many other documents may also be transcriptions of a hieratic account, specifically created to serve workmen who were not able to read hieratic texts. In

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[31] Chapter 2, 2.6.1.

favour of the latter idea weigh the so-called furniture ostraca from the 20th Dynasty. We understand these pieces as accounts recording the individual tasks of a group of workmen related to the production of pieces of furniture. The particular stage of the production that is recorded by the ostraca is that of crafting rather than of decorating, tasks that were performed by 'regular' workmen. The ostraca may therefore be work sheets that explicate the individual responsibilities of different workmen. The ostraca were perhaps not created by the necropolis scribe, but the majority do display the steady hand and ductus of someone with knowledge of hieroglyphic and hieratic script, probably the draughtsman that coordinated the production of these objects. By composing a highly pictorial document in which identity marks were incorporated, workmen without knowledge of script that were involved in the operation could 'read' the work sheets. The coordinating scribe may have used it to explain the division of work. It is possible that the workmen consulted the ostracon at a later moment, and through this document they could perhaps even be held accountable for an oral agreement about the production of items as recorded on the ostracon.

The highly pictorial account of O. Brooklyn 16118+ attests perhaps to the same practice: a trained scribe or draughtsmen created an ostracon with marks with the aim of making information clear to workmen who did not read hieratic or hieroglyphs. That interpretation follows from several parallels between this ostracon, which records the distribution of goods as well as what seems to be the performance of certain tasks by individual workmen, and the furniture ostraca. As so often, the ostraca document a collective of workmen. They are not records of singular events, such as a dispute between two individuals, or the visit of a high dignitary. Instead, the ostraca record matters in which a group of workmen hold a stake. It was in their interest to know about the distribution of the commodities listed in O. Brooklyn 16118+, as it was relevant to them to know which piece of furniture they were tasked with crafting. Like the furniture ostraca, O. Brooklyn 16118+ is very pictorial and will have been comprehensible to anyone within the community. Moreover, the usage of brief hieroglyphic and hieratic captions that accompany some of the drawings is proof that, like the scribes of several furniture ostraca, the author of O. Brooklyn 16118+ had knowledge of script. We suspect therefore that the ostracon was made specifically so that it could be understood by workmen. The hieroglyphic and hieratic caption may not have been understood by all of them, but much of the document is explained through drawings and identity marks.

The majority of ostraca with marks that were created by a professional scribe or draughtsman – which appear to constitute only a relatively small portion of all ostraca with marks – can be explained in this manner. Still there may have been instances were a professional scribe wanted to preserve time by using marks rather than hieratic script. A case in point is perhaps ONL 1371. Although this ostracon concerns a collective of workmen like O. Brooklyn 16118+ and the furniture ostraca, the scribe of the ostracon employed, besides identity marks, several hieratic signs and sign groups that were entirely written in hieratic. It is likely that not every member of the community will have been able to completely decipher this amalgam.

Ostraca with identity marks thus reveal unknown aspects of the concept of literacy at Deir el-Medina. On the one hand they attest to the strategies of untrained 'scribes' in their quest to preserve data not in traditional writing, but through alternative ways. On the other, a much smaller group of ostraca seem to illustrate how individuals who were instructed in writing adapted to the needs of their colleagues by creating documents they would be able to understand. But on the basis of the identity marks themselves we may make some assumptions about the degree of literacy throughout the history of the community of workmen, and compare this to a previous assessment by Haring. Analysing the hieratic documentary texts from the Royal Necropolis, Haring was able to outline the scribal output

over time. A clear rise in the number of texts is visible from the early half of the 19th Dynasty to the middle of the 20th Dynasty, indicating that ever more villagers were occupied with writing.[32] The corpus of identity marks would seem to agree with this and provides additional data for the 18th Dynasty, although it must be admitted that the method through which one arrives at these results is of uncertain validity. The reasoning is based on the occurrence of marks that are borrowed from script and the marks that are not, thus taking an identity mark to be representative of the degree of literacy of its user.

Two aspects of this approach are problematic. Firstly, a mark that does not appear to be a character from script may in actuality be an abstract form of a character that is not recognised as such. Take for example the 18th Dynasty mark ⚘. This seemingly abstract mark, also attested by its allomorph ⚘, may in fact represent some sort of mammal, as suggested by mark ⚘ on ONL 6416 and ⚘ on O. Cairo JE 96603. If this interpretation is correct then variants ⚘ and ⚘ appear to depict a double-headed form of that mammal. Mark ⚘ could thus be the hieroglyph ⚘, a sign not included in Gardiner's list, perhaps because it only occurs in religious texts. The hieroglyph appears first in the Pyramid Texts for the word *ẖns* 'double doors'[33] or for the double bull deity,[34] and does not seem to be connected to the name of the god Khonsu.[35] In later times, however, the sign is used for other words as well. It is attested in the Coffin Texts for the spelling of the word *ẖns* 'to traverse'[36] and it is used as such in the New Kingdom[37] and many later texts.[38] The similar and perhaps related sign ⚘ is used in the Ptolemaic period for the name of the god Khonsu.[39] If a connection between mark ⚘ and hieroglyph ⚘ does exist, we have to assume that the individual who had chosen it as his personal mark or who assigned it to a particular workman was to some extent acquainted with religious texts. The sign may even have referred to the name of the god Khonsu in the proper name of this particular workman, or one of his predecessors. All of this is however far from certain, more so since no other 18th Dynasty mark is evidently borrowed from hieroglyphs used in religious texts.

Secondly, it is unclear to what extent an identity mark is telling of the scribal capabilities of its owner.[40] The method is thus far from secure, but nevertheless worth exploring by taking ostraca and ostraca groups that we believe are representative of the entire repertory of marks at a specific moment. For the reign of Amenhotep III, OL 6788 is selected (probably the entire crew); for the reign of Ramesses II we select O. Schaden 16, O. Schaden 1, and O. Hawass and O. Cairo JE 96336 (together more or less representative of the right and left sides of the crew; O. BM 50716 and O. ARTP 99/27 record almost the entire right and left side from the time of Ramesses IV-Ramesses V; and jointly O. BM 5642 and OL 170+ present a good indication of the entire right and left sides of the reign of Ramesses IX.

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[32] Haring, 'From Oral Practice to Written Record'; Haring, 'Scribes and Scribal Activity', 107, 111.

[33] Rami van der Molen, *A hieroglyphic dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*. PdÄ 15 (Leiden, Boston and Cologne 2000), 395.

[34] Van der Molen, *Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 394. For this word in the Coffin Texts see Dirk van der Plas and Joris F. Borghouts, *Coffin Texts Word Index*. PIREI 6 (Utrecht and Paris 1998), 228. For this deity see Brigitte Altenmüller, *Synkretismus in den Sargtexten*. GÖF 7 (Wiesbaden 1975), 166.

[35] U. Paradisi, 'La doppia protome di toro nell'arte rupestre sahariana e nella tavolozza predinastica egiziana della caccia al leone' *Aegyptus* 43 (1963), 269-277; Georges Posener, 'Philologie et archéologie égyptiennes' *Ann CdF* 65 (1966), 339-346.

[36] Van der Plas and Borghouts, *Coffin Texts Word Index*, 228.

[37] *WB* III, 299, 10.

[38] See e.g. Christian Leitz (ed.), *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*. Band V. OLA 114 (Leuven 2002), 757, 758 and 761; Christian Leitz, *Quellentexte zur ägyptische Religion I. Die Tempelinschriften der griechisch-römischen Zeit*. EQÄ 2. 2nd ed. (Berlin 2006), 159, sign E177.

[39] Leitz (ed.), *Lexikon* V, 761.

[40] On this question, see also below, 6.5.1.

The marks on these ostraca are listed below (TABLE 104), counting only once the double marks on a single ostracon (e.g. ⸗ on OL 6788) or marks that occur on both sides of the crew (e.g. ⸗ on BM 50716 and O. ARTP 99/27). Marks above the black line are (mostly) straightforwardly recognised as hieroglyphic or hieratic signs, marks below the line are not. Although hieroglyph ⸗ was not included in Gardiner's sign list, this mark does belong to the group of scriptural signs because it possesses the phonetic value *imꜣḫ* and is used in writings of *mꜣꜣ* 'to see'.[41] A comparison of the signs leads to the following overview:

OL 6788	Amenhotep III	From script:	26	61.9%
		Not from script:	16	38.1%
O. Schaden 16	Ramesses II	From script:	30	78.9%
O. Schaden 1		Not from script:	8	21.1%
O. Hawass				
O. Cairo JE 96636				
O. BM 50716 (right)	Ramesses IV – V	From script:	57	86.4%
O. ARTP 99/27 (left)		Not from script:	9	13.6%
O. BM 5642	Ramesses IX	From script:	43	86.0%
OL 170+		Not from script:	7	14.0%

From the end of the 18th Dynasty to the middle of the 20th Dynasty the number of marks that occur as signs in script increases slightly, and the marks that do not seem to have been inspired by characters found in writing diminish.[42] The overview brings to light similar developments. In the 18th Dynasty, the only example of a mark that consists of more than one sign is ⸗, readable as *nb tꜣwy*.[43] Such groups become more common over time. In the reign of Ramesses II we find ⸗, ⸗ and ⸗, while around the time of Ramesses IV – Ramesses V we observe more than twice as many of such marks: ⸗, ⸗, ⸗, ⸗, ⸗, ⸗, ⸗ and ⸗. Striking is also the fact that it is in the second part of the 20th Dynasty that such sign groups are for the first time composed with hieratic signs: ⸗ and ⸗.

[41] Ben Haring, 'Nineteenth Dynasty stelae and the merits of hieratic palaeography' *BiOr* 67 (2010), 27-28.
[42] Compare preliminary but similar observations by Haring, 'On the nature', 127.
[43] With perhaps the exception of ⸗ on ONL 6520.

OL 6788
Schad. 1, 16 Hawass JE 96636
BM 50716 (right)
ARTP 99.27 (left)
BM 5642 OL 170+ (right)
BM 5642 OL 170+ (left)
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TABLE 104. MARKS ON OSTRACA THAT RECORD THE ENTIRE CREW (EXCLUDING DOUBLE MARKS).

These observations – whether valid or not – do coincide with the increase in scribal activity and an increase in literacy as signalled by Haring. They also agree with the perceived low levels of literacy during the 18ᵗʰ Dynasty. If there is any truth in this brief overview, we may suggest that despite the apparent decline in the production of hieratic texts during the second half of the 20ᵗʰ Dynasty,[44] the degree of literacy among the villagers remained in general constant.[45]

6.4 THE PURPOSE OF IDENTITY MARKS AND OF OSTRACA INSCRIBED WITH IDENTITY MARKS

The identity marks must have been an essential constituent in the lives of the Royal Necropolis workmen. As markers of property they were ubiquitous in everyday life situations, featuring on ceramic vessels, tools and perhaps clothing.[46] Such items also accompanied the deceased in their tombs, while friends and colleagues donated funerary gifts with their own identity marks to the funerary equipment. The significance of the identity marks during the 18ᵗʰ Dynasty is demonstrated by the two notable instances of marks that were worked into valuable bronze vessels from the tomb of Kha.[47] It is evident that the identity marks were an important vehicle to distinguish one individual from another, both in everyday life situations in affairs of material or perhaps spatial ownership, and in lists of workmen recorded on a particular document. Nevertheless, no effort was made to eradicate any form of ambiguity. This is well illustrated by the use of mark ⚕ for three different individuals during the reign of Ramesses IV. At this time, a workman of the right side called Mose (iv) was designated by this mark, as was an unidentified but different workman of the left side. Moreover, in the duty and delivery texts composed with marks, ⚕ was also employed to refer to a *smd.t* agent, the woodcutter Ptahmose. The context of the identity mark is therefore crucial to its understanding, but in most cases it will have been absolutely clear which person was meant. There will have been no doubt whatsoever that ⚕ for a workman recorded in a *wrš* duty was no other than Mose (iv), the member of the right side. If this mark were connected with a batch of commodities in the very same document, it could only have been *smd.t* agent Ptahmose. Similarly, it is inconceivable that anyone would have mistakenly interpreted mark ⚕ in a list of workmen of the left side like O. ARTP 99/27 as a reference to Mose (iv) of the right side. It was perfectly clear which workman was meant, because the mark occurred within an ordered list of the left side of the crew.

Comparable examples occur already in the ostraca of the 18ᵗʰ Dynasty, where two instances of the same mark are occasionally found within a single document. We assume they refer to a senior workman and his assistant, but to the author of the ostracon and perhaps its users it must have been crystal clear who was recorded. That can be deduced from the simple fact that double marks continue to occur throughout the 18ᵗʰ, 19ᵗʰ and 20ᵗʰ Dynasties. If double marks would have led to administrative errors, this practice would have been

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[44] Haring, 'From Oral Practice to Written Record', 254; Haring, 'Scribes and Scribal Activity', 111.

[45] This statement is made with many reservations; it seems that during much of the 20ᵗʰ Dynasty the repertory of the workmen's marks changed very little, see below, 6.5.4.5, which could explain why the percentage of marks that are borrowed from script is almost as high as during the middle of the 20ᵗʰ Dynasty. On the other hand, the appearance of marks consisting of a hieratic sign group during the late 20ᵗʰ Dynasty does weigh in favour of a high degree of literacy at that time. If that assumption proves to be correct, the paucity of hieratic ostraca from the second half of the 20ᵗʰ Dynasty is not a symptom of reduced scribal activity. Instead, the administrators of the tomb may have employed papyri rather than ostraca at this period (see Eyre, *Employment and Labour Relations*, 44-47; Haring, 'Scribes and Scribal Activity', 111), which have not survived as well as ostraca, or which exist among the Theban papyri that remain to be published.

[46] The only examples of identity marks on clothing from Deir el-Medina come from the tomb of Kha (TT 8), where they are attested in numerous instances.

[47] Turin S. 8361 RCGE 19406, see Schiaparelli, *La tomba*, fig. 119; Turin S. 8218 RCGE 19799, see Schiaparelli, *La tomba*, fig. 118.

abandoned long ago. We may surmise from this that the ostraca with identity marks are to a great extent *aides-mémoires*: they record events to which the author himself was a participant or a witness, and therefore he required a minimum of marks (and other signs) to compose a comprehensible document. Of course the same can be said about much of the hieratic administration of the Theban necropolis, which includes numerous documents that cannot be understood without contextual knowledge. Yet, there are also scores of hieratic records that are very descriptive of their content (containing e.g. headings), while ostraca with marks as a rule are not.

The identity marks inscribed on objects must have functioned in the same manner as the marks on ostraca. Theoretically, the identity marks are not unambiguous, but in practice their meaning will not have been questioned. Let us imagine that during the reign of Ramesses IV an amphora marked with ⚲ was stored in a workmen's hut in the Valley of the Kings. This mark could have referred to Hori (ii) = (iii), a member of the right side of the crew, but also to Nebnefer (ix) son of Hori (ix), a workman who belonged to the left side of the crew. It is the context of the marked amphora that lends the mark its significance. Any member of the crew of necropolis workmen would have known the location of the hut of Hori (ii) = (iii), and if anyone noticed mark ⚲ in his hut, it would be clear that the amphora was in the possession of this Hori, and no one else.

This view contrasts somewhat with a preliminary idea of David Aston. In an attempt to explain the frequency of identity marks on pottery from the community of the Royal Necropolis workmen he remarked the following: "[W]ith the Deir el-Medineh workforce we have a group of men who went away from their village to work in the Valley of the Kings for periods of ten days at a time, where in a more communal, and probably more regimented working environment, certain individuals may have felt the need to mark their own property, otherwise just like Goldilocks and the three bears there will come the question 'Who has been eating out of my dish?'"[48]

FIGURE 21. WOULD GOLDILOCKS'S TALE HAVE ENDED DIFFERENTLY WITH IDENTITY MARKS? (MARGARET W. TARRANT, *MOTHER GOOSE NURSERY TALES* (LONDON, 1925) 20).

It is suggested that it was necessary for the workmen in the Valley of the Kings to mark vessels to prevent inappropriate use of its content, whether deliberate or not. Some comments on this statement are in order. First of all it is evident from the large numbers of workmen's marks on vessel fragments from the village of Deir el-Medina that the marking of property is not a practice that is typical for the temporary settlements in the Valley of the Kings. Secondly, building on Aston's use of the tale of Goldilocks, would the story have ended any differently if the three bears had marked their bowls of porridge? Probably not. Supposing that Goldilocks would have recognised the marks of the bears, she would have been informed about the owners of the bowls, but it would have had no effect on the motivations for her actions. With or without identity marks on the bowls, Goldilocks knew she was stealing a spoonful of someone else's porridge. It is therefore doubtful

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[48] Aston, 'Theban Potmarks', 54.

if the use of marks would avoid or discourage theft or misuse. In a cohesive community that laboured together on a daily basis, we may assume each member to have possessed his own hut[49] in which he would have stored his possessions. Accidental misappropriation is then not expected to be a common problem, and theft would certainly not have been averted by the use of identity marks.

In that sense, the identity marks inscribed on property are *not necessary per se*. The commentary on the Goldilocks-comparison underlines moreover what we had already established: to a great extent identity marks derive their meaning from knowledge a member of the community already possessed. The required conditions for a mark on an object to have any significance are that one is embedded in the community and thus knows 1) which mark belonged to which workmen, and 2) which space belonged to which workman.

If the identity marks were not required to avoid misappropriation and theft, what then is the motivation behind the usage of marks? It is perhaps inherent in the nature of research of ancient civilisations to seek the reason behind particular phenomena. We, in the year 2015 CE, observe a group of workmen who lived together c. 3500 years ago, and ask them: "Why would you pick up these limestone fragments and inscribe them with marks?" in the hope that anyone will reply with well laid out arguments for his actions. But instead, one of the workmen may answer back: "Well, why wouldn't I? There are limestone pieces all around, and I have a pen and some ink." There is perhaps no purely practical reasoning behind all of the uses of identity marks, whether employed as markers of property or inscribed in series to form a documentary record, in the same way that there is no completely rational motivation behind every textual inscription.

Take for example the hieratic graffito carved in a mountain wall in the Valley of the Kings by the famous 19th Dynasty scribe Qenherkhopshef (i).[50] The graffito reads 'The seat of the scribe Qenherkhopshef' and it was inscribed by this individual just over a recess in the rock where he had apparently made a bench for himself. To the modern egyptologist this text is of course very convenient, and without it we would have never known by whom the seat was used. But if we evaluate the inscription in terms of practicality, it seems extremely futile and superfluous. First of all, we assume that the majority of workmen would not have been well enough acquainted with hieratic script to decipher the hieratic characters. Secondly, the entire crew would have been well aware of the fact that this particular bench was the spot Qenherkhopshef always sat in, and it is likely that throughout most of the day the workmen would have seen Qenherkhopshef sitting on that very bench! Like many of the vessels that were inscribed with an identity mark, the inscription is *not necessary*, but it is nevertheless meaningful.[51]

Apart from graffiti, the motives behind administrative practices are not necessarily sensible or efficient. We are once again reminded of Eyre's words, who remarked that it is a characteristic of most bureaucracies that some records become an end in themselves instead of a means to an end.[52] Janssen touched upon the same topic, noticing that many of the hieratic administrative documents created in the Royal Necropolis during the Ramesside Period occasionally contain inaccuracies and mistakes, while some accounts are evidently incomplete.[53] The records therefore do not appear to be reliable, which lead Janssen to

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[49] Sometimes shared with a family member or colleague; see Dorn, *Arbeiterhütten*, 71-72.

[50] Theban Graffito nr. 1400, see Černý, *Community*, 334; Černý, *Graffiti 1060 à 1405*, 28, pl. 76.

[51] Most hieratic graffiti left by the necropolis workmen in the Theban valleys are not of an administrative or purely religious nature, but appear to have been made to commemorate individuals, see Rzepka, *Who, where and why*, 257-274; 276.

[52] Eyre, *Employment and Labour Relations*, 1-2.

[53] Janssen, 'Accountancy at Deir el-Medîna', 148-156. Some of the errors noted by Janssen may be explained as the result of careless copying. See chapter 3, 3.3.19.

question the value of the documents: could these inaccurate texts be of any significance to the higher Theban authorities, and if not, why would the scribes continue to put such efforts in their production? [54] Janssen was unable to provide an explanation.

For all we know, the necropolis scribes themselves had no straight answer to these questions either. Administrative practices may have grown out of a habit to occasionally record particular events without a specific need for such texts. In our times we also encounter examples of administrative practices that after some scrutiny seem to make little sense. This is illustrated by the rather entertaining cleaning rosters that are present in the public bathrooms of the Matthias de Vrieshof building of the University of Leiden (FIG. 22). The roster is instantly comprehensible to the visitor of the bathroom. It consists of a table with a column that lists the five working days of the week, and the two columns to its right each represent a cleaning round. One round is conducted around 9.15 in the morning, the second one around 13.45 in the afternoon. The moment one round is completed, the cleaner signs the corresponding cell of the table. As self-explanatory as the roster is, on closer inspection one wonders what its purpose is, and for whom it is meant. If the roster was collected at the end of a week and submitted to the supervisor of the cleaners, what does the document factually demonstrate? It only attests of the cleaner's presence in the building, but it does not prove if he or she had cleaned the bathroom, and if so, how well the bathroom was cleaned. Moreover, a colleague of a cleaner who had skipped work could have covered for the other and forged his or her signature. Therefore, the roster has little meaning as an administrative document that records the accomplishment of specific tasks. One may suggest that the roster has another function, which is to inform the visitor that the bathroom had recently been cleaned. But in that case our previous objections remain valid: the roster itself is no evidence that the toilet truly has been cleaned. Moreover, it is disputable if a signed roster on a bathroom wall is more of a warrant of the toilet's standard of hygiene than the perception of the toilet by one's own physical senses. We can therefore make the case that the roster does not serve an exclusively practical function. In addition, the use of this roster appears to be far from efficient. When asked about the roster, the cleaning lady responsible for the morning round fumed in a rant about how time consuming and useless the upkeep of the roster was.

Purely practical matters aside, the cleaning roster may serve another function. It can be argued that its sheer presence operates as an incentive or at least a reminder to the cleaners to perform their tasks. On the other end of the spectrum, it may provide the supervisor with a sense of control, real to some extent, but largely imagined. It may be this perceived sense of control that stimulated trained scribes, partially literate and illiterate workmen alike to compose ostraca with identity marks. A brief *aide-mémoire* created with marks of a specific event, important to a certain extent, may in part have provided the illusion of the ability to regulate the outcome or consequences of that event.

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[54] Janssen, 'Accountancy at Deir el-Medîna', 157.

FIGURE 22. CLEANING ROSTER IN PUBLIC BATHROOM AT LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

Returning to the Royal Necropolis, we have proposed several different purposes for the ostraca with marks. The majority served a role in the administration of the construction of the royal tombs, the provision of the workmen and private transactions. It has even been shown that the delivery ostraca composed with marks may well have been an important link in the chain of copying and accumulating data that was eventually submitted to the authorities. The available data are in support of these interpretations, but the examples mentioned above illustrate that several ostraca, whether composed with marks or written in hieratic, need not have served any other purpose beyond the notation of certain events.

6.5 THE ACQUISITION OF IDENTITY MARKS

6.5.1 The conception of new identity marks

Numerous identity marks of the Ramesside Period are demonstrably connected with proper names. Such identity marks comprise of a sign or a sign group taken from hieroglyphic or hieratic script, the phonetic value of which represents either an element of the individual's name, or the name in its entirety. Some evident examples are:

⸸	sign F12 with phonetic value *wsr*	*Weser*hat
⥱	signs W3 and Aa15 with phonetic values *m* and *ḥb*	Amen*emheb* (?)
⸷	sign F31 with phonetic value *ms*	*Mose*
⥠	signs V30 and F35 with phonetic values *nb* and *nfr*	*Nebnefer*

The dearth of data from the 18th Dynasty precludes the possibility to make such statements about the identity marks from that period. Marks ⸗, ⸸ and ⸾, are somewhat tentatively attributed to Heqanakht, Nekhunefer and Kha respectively, and in these three instances the mark seems unrelated to the corresponding name. Still, it seems at least plausible that some marks, in particular hieroglyphic signs such as ⸗,[55] ⸶, ⸷, ⸸, ⸹ and ⸺, are references to (elements of) the proper names of the owners of the marks, or the names of predecessors from whom they were inherited. In the case of marks that we do not immediately recognise as signs borrowed from script, such as ⸻, ⸼, ∥, ⸽, and ⸾, a relation between the mark and

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[55] Compare the possible allomorph ⸿ recorded on ONL 6520, perhaps used for a man named Maaninakhtuef.

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proper name of the referent is not evident, but cannot be excluded either. As demonstrated in chapter 2, two marks that appear to be abstract geometric shapes may have been based on hieroglyphs as well.[56]

It is also not certain if an individual's choice – supposing for the moment that a workman was free to adopt any mark he preferred[57] – for an abstract mark is any indication of his affinity with writing. Vice versa, a fully literate person would not necessarily have taken on a mark that derives from script. We may consider for instance the mark of Kha, the 18th Dynasty overseer of work on the royal tomb, who was an official with close connections with high-ranking Theban dignitaries such as the overseer of the treasury Amenmes.[58] In addition Kha was the recipient of very valuable status objects produced in royal workshops, presented to him by the king as a reward for his achievements.[59] Among other epithets, Kha bore the title Royal Scribe,[60] and two scribal palettes and a writing board were included in his funerary equipment.[61] All of this could be taken as strong indications that Kha was educated as a scribe and that he was a functionally literate person. Yet, his personal identity mark ⚷ was not a sign borrowed from hieroglyphic or hieratic script.

Another example is the case of Harshire (i), a man who certainly had performed scribal duties,[62] and who must have been proficient in hieratic script as well as hieroglyphic script. He must have been to a considerable measure a literate person, actively involved in inscribing tomb walls with hieroglyphic texts as well as in the creation of hieratic administrative records. One could make the case that his scribal capabilities are reflected in his identity mark ⊕, which is indeed a character from hieroglyphic script. However, as far as we are able to determine, this sign (with phonetic value $ḥbs$; also used as a determinative in words related to clothing) is in no manner connected with the name of Harshire. It is therefore completely unclear what the motivations were behind what seems to have been Harshire's own choice for this particular identity mark. Both examples serve as a warning against the assumption, however plausible in itself, that an individual's identity mark is indicative of the level of literacy of that person.

Besides drawing on proper names, identity marks were occasionally modelled after nicknames that were bestowed upon workmen. The clearest instance is mark ⚲ for Amennakht (vi)/(xii) nicknamed Pawonesh. The name Amennakht was enormously popular at Deir el-Medina, and one can imagine why nicknames will have played an important role in differentiating contemporaneous workmen. It is assumed that marks ⋔ and ⚹ were similarly derived from nicknames, and in the case of the former mark that is probable because of the rare attestations of a draughtsman called Pa-imyperhedj. It is plausible that this man as well as the individual with the mark that reads $ṯ3ty$ 'vizier' were in fact named after high officials of their time, a vizier and a treasurer, perhaps after a memorable visit by these notables to the village. The necropolis workmen may have light-heartedly styled their nicknames and marks after these dignitaries. These examples of marks that were inspired by nicknames all originate from the 20th Dynasty. Three of them are identifiable because they are highly textual in nature. A lack of data prevents an exhaustive analysis, but it is feasible that other identity marks may have come into existence through the same principle. Letting one's imagination run wild it could be proposed that during the 18th Dynasty e.g. mark ⊕,

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[56] See the discussion of marks ⊓⊓ and ▯, as well as ⋔ and ⌐, chapter 2, p. 89, ONL 6461; p. 106, ONL 6465; and p. 108-109, ONL 6266; p. 130, O. Cairo JE 72492.

[57] On this matter, see below, 6.5.3.

[58] Russo, *Kha*, 32-33; 36-37.

[59] Russo, *Kha*, 10-13; 23-31.

[60] Russo, *Kha*, 67.

[61] Schiaparelli, *La tomba*, 81, fig. 48; 85, fig. 53; Russo, *Kha,* 33. One palette was a gift from the overseer of the treasury Amenmes.

[62] Davies, *Who's who*, 114-117.

representing a razor, could have been used by a workman nicknamed The Razor because he was known for his 'razor-sharp' comments.[63]

A more reasonable, although uncorroborated guess would be that this man, besides performing his duties as a necropolis workman, had taken on the role of the crew's barber. While there is no textual evidence for barbers in support of this view, it is evident that the creation of several identity marks was not motivated by an individual's proper name but rather by his role or function within the crew.[64] The clearest example is the use in the Ramesside Period of mark 𓏞 to refer invariably to the scribe of the tomb, regardless of the name of the individual that held that office at a specific time. A mark existed also for a less formal but nevertheless respected occupation, that of the so-called scorpion controller.[65] For this job mark 𓆙 was employed, and like mark 𓏞 it referred to whoever occupied the position at a specific moment, without a connection with the name of that person. Although we cannot offer any proof it is plausible that in the same vein mark 𓃂, readable as w^cb, was used by a member of the community who held the title of *wab* priest in one of the local cults,[66] a position that likewise may have evoked a higher social status than that of regular workmen.[67] It is similarly likely that the famous draughtsman Amenhotep (vi) had personally chosen the hieroglyphic sign 𓏭 (*qd*), once perhaps even 𓊋, as his identity mark, as a reference to his profession (*sš-qd*). There are indications that the villagers may have simply called him 'the draughtsman', because he appears to be listed as such in P. Turin Cat. 2084+.[68]

Interestingly, mark 𓆤 appears at some point in the Ramesside Period to have become synonymous with the position of the foreman of the right side of the workforce.[69] Whether the bee, the hieroglyph with the phonetic value *bỉ.t*, was somehow connected with the word *bỉ.t.y* 'king'[70] to reflect the sovereignty of the position of the foreman is unclear. The significance of the mark is however wonderfully illustrated in documents from the reigns of Ramesses III and Ramesses IV that demonstrate that workmen were able to change identity marks during their careers. Workman Nakhemmut (vi) possessed mark 𓏱 during the first years of his professional life, but when he was promoted to the position of foreman of the right side, he abandoned it to take on mark 𓆤.

6.5.2 'Marks' for non-crew members
During the 20th Dynasty some of the users of the marking system had invented new marks that are not related to fellow necropolis workmen, but to other individuals associated with labour in the Royal Necropolis. These 'marks' are the conventions of a single person, and ostraca such as O. DeM 264 and O. DeM 10121, which feature names of *smd.t* agents suggest these men were not consistently referred to by means of a mark. The practice was exploited at great lengths by the author of the duty and delivery texts composed with marks, the man whom we have tentatively identified as the '*smd.t* scribe' Pentaweret (iii). In his documents he used marks to refer to a number of woodcutters and fishermen. There are no

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[63] The verb *ḫ^cq* 'to shave' is used metaphorically in P. Anastasi I = P. BM EA 10247, l. 25.1, seemingly denoting a scribe who critically cut short the end of a letter, see Hermann Grapow, *Die bildlichen Ausdrücke des Ägyptischen. Vom Denken und Dichten einer altorientischen Sprache.* [2nd ed.] *Mit einem Vorwort zum Nachdruck von Hellmut Brunner* (Darmstadt 1983), 173.

[64] Hence the objection against the term "*Namenszeichen*" for the identity marks from the Theban Necropolis, see Daniel Soliman, review of Dorn, *Arbeiterhütten*, in: *BiOr* 69 (2012), 485, n. 5.

[65] Janssen, *Village Varia*, 27-29.

[66] Valbelle, *Les ouvriers*, 328-331; for 𓏃, a mark with perhaps a similar origin, see below, 6.5.4.2.

[67] Barbara S. Lesko, 'Rank, Roles, and Rights' in: Lesko (ed.), *Pharaoh's Workers*, 23.

[68] See above, chapter 4, 4.2.16.

[69] A mark for the chief workman of the left side of the crew may have existed as well, see below, p. 522-523.

[70] *WB* I, 435, 2.

reasons to assume that these marks were employed by these persons themselves. Like the signs for commodities, month names and the two sides of the crew, the marks for *smd.t* agents sprung in all probability from the mind of the '*smd.t* scribe'. Comparable marks were invented by another scribe during the second half of the 20th Dynasty. In order to be able to include the doorkeeper in what are most likely lists made for the distribution of grain rations, mark ⫯ was employed. In contrast to the marks for *smd.t* agents, the mark refers to the function of this man rather than to his person. One ostracon (O. Cairo CG 25317) that also records a doorkeeper uses mark ⩨ in two different manners: once to refer to a necropolis workman, and once to designate a royal chapel.

6.5.3 Personal selection
There are no indications that identity marks were assigned to the individual workmen by one of the captains of the crew,[71] although it is conceivable that this had happened at two formative moments in the history of the Theban Royal Necropolis: the first time the gang was assembled somewhere in the 18th Dynasty, and perhaps some time in the reign of Horemheb when the crew was reorganised and many new colleagues were introduced. But that remains mere conjecture. It is far from implausible that the workmen themselves had chosen their own identity marks. This assumption is likely in the view of the wide variety of identity marks ranging from highly textual in nature (e.g. ⧖ꝑ) to (seemingly) highly abstract (e.g. ⋏⋏). No restrictions in the choice for a particular mark can be detected, and marks that are borrowed from hieroglyphic script fall into each of the categories of hieroglyphs distinguished by Gardiner. Indeed, there were apparently no objections against the use of the perhaps sarcastic marks ⫘ and ⫯. Moreover, there were moments when a single mark could designate two different workmen, one from the right and the other from the left side, which speaks against the idea of centrally attributed marks.

6.5.4 Transference of identity marks
Throughout this work it has been stated that identity marks were passed on from one man to another. In many instances such an event has been described as the 'inheritance' of a mark, but that word is only applied in the metaphorical sense. Many questions about the details of transference of marks remain unanswered. It is impossible to determine if a son freely chose to take over his father's mark, or whether the father bestowed it upon his son. We will come back to this matter below. In addition it is completely obscure at exactly what point a mark may have been transferred. The most logical explanation would be that a mark was transferred from a father to a son at the moment the former retired. Yet there are indications, for example from the 18th Dynasty, that fathers and sons were simultaneously designated by the same mark. Our knowledge of the workmen's community is not sufficiently complete for an exhaustive analysis of the different mechanisms behind the transference of a mark from one generation to another. Such an undertaking would ideally require the identification of the mark of each individual in a given family as well as their respective age and occupation, data we currently do not possess. In the sections below we shall therefore examine some cases that are thought to be representative of the possible practices.

6.5.4.1 From father to son
A common procedure of the transference of marks occurred via a father and his son. The presence of twin marks, i.e. two instances of the same mark, in ostraca from the 18th Dynasty might be early examples of this custom. Several instances of this practice during the Ramesside Period have been pointed out in this work. We have seen for example that in the

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[71] But see below, 6.5.4.5.

19th Dynasty the foreman Baki (i) and later his son Haremwia (i) were represented by mark ☖. In the 20th Dynasty, workman Kasa (v)/(vi) was represented by mark ⊔, obviously related to his name. His son Penanuqet (iii) is attested with the same mark, and thereby the connection between the phonetic value of the sign that was used as a mark and the name of the user of the mark was lost.

A clear example of the transference of a mark from father to son is seen in the family of Siwadjet (iii) (CHART 6). This man utilised mark ⚚, and later it was used by his son Aapatjau (i).[72] It seems that this man in turn handed down the mark to his son Amenhotep (iii). The parentage of Siwadjet (iii) is unknown, but it is noteworthy that a homonymous Siwadjet (ii), active in the reign of Ramesses II, possessed the very same mark ⚚. We do not know if the two men employed the same mark ⚚ (a sign with the phonetic value *w3ḏ* and obviously connected with the name Si*wadj*et) simply because they had the same name. However, there is probably one generation between Siwadjet (ii) and Siwadjet (iii), who was active in the reign of Ramesses III. The latter man could therefore have been the grandson of the former.

A similar case presents itself in the family of Iyerniutef (iii) (CHART 7). This man possessed mark ◌ and he transferred it to his son Khons (iv). His other son Penmennefer (II) is known to have used mark △. Two generations before Iyerniutef (iii), another man named Iyerniutef (i) was active under the reign of Ramesses II. This man too employed mark ◌, yet he is not known to have been related to Iyerniutef (iii). It is theoretically possible that Iyerniutef (iii) was a grandson of Iyerniutef (i), because the parentage of the former man is unknown. Since both men possessed the same mark, a sign that is not evidently related to the name 'Iyerniutef', such a connection is quite possible.

The family of Wennefer (ii) (CHART 8) presents another interesting case. We know Wennefer (ii)'s mark to have been ♀. This mark is not evidently related to the name of Wennefer (ii), and it is unknown what motivated him to utilise this mark. Although we do not know the mark of Wennefer (ii)'s son Khaemwaset (i), it has been established that his grandson Penamun (iv) = (iii) and his great grandson Khaemwaset (iii) employed mark ♮ as well. Since the mark is not evidently related to the names of these men either, we may propose that Khaemwaset (i) had possessed the mark as well. This would at least explain the chain of transference from Wennefer (ii) to Penamun (iv). In the same vein one could suggest that Wennefer (ii)'s father, Penamun (ii), had possessed mark ♀ as well. With Penamun (iv)'s son Wennefer (iii) a new line had begun, and he adopted for himself ⊇, a mark related to his name.

Surely not every identity mark was hereditary. This we see for example in the family of Aanakht (i) = (iii) = (iv) (CHART 9). His mark ⚲ was not taken over by any of his two sons, who both employed a mark that was connected with their own proper names.[73]

It is furthermore worth noting that in a few instances in the reign of Ramesses V,[74] the scribe of a document referred to particular workman by writing down the mark of that man's father and adding the element ∠ for *šri* 'the young' or 'son' to it. We are not quite sure why this happened. It may be that these younger men did not (yet) possess their own identity

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[72] It will require further research to determine why the mark was not passed on to Siwadjet (iii)'s other son Qenymin (i)/(iii), who was designated by mark ⍟.

[73] We may only speculate if the fact that the sons of Aanakhtu did not take over their father's mark is related to a bad reputation this man may have had after being punished for assaulting three men, see e.g. Davies, *Who's who*, 40.

[74] O. Cairo CG 25651; O. OIM 19125; ONL 323.

mark.[75] It is also conceivable the father and the son made use of the exact same identity mark and the scribe of these particular documents made an effort to distinguish one from the other.
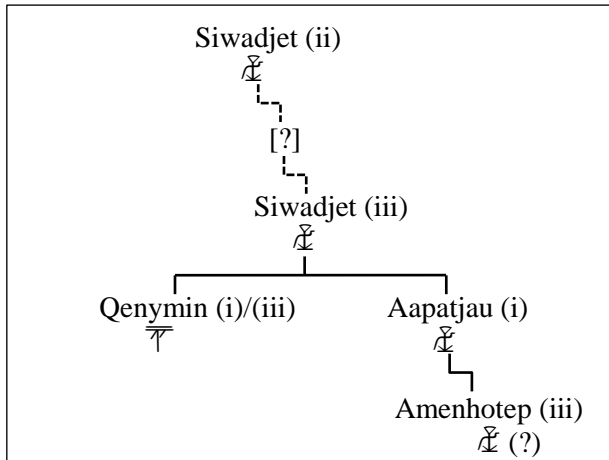
Siwadjet (ii)

[?]

Siwadjet (iii)

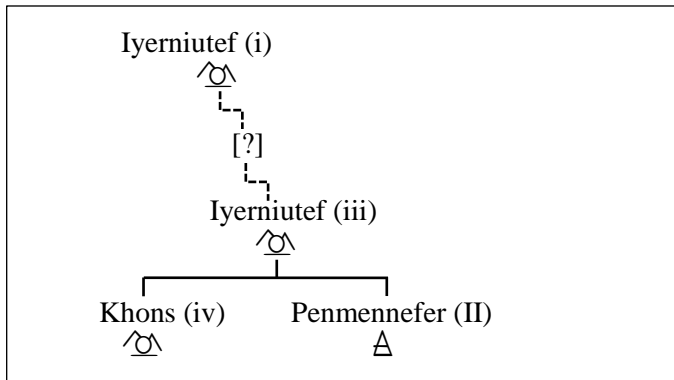Qenymin (i)/(iii)

Aapatjau (i)

Amenhotep (iii)

CHART 6. THE FAMILY OF SIWADJET (iii)

Iyerniutef (i)

[?]

Iyerniutef (iii)

Khons (iv)

Penmennefer (II)

CHART 7. THE FAMILY OF IYERNIUTEF (iii)

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[75] Perhaps they had been recently added to crew at the time of the enlargement of the crew under Ramesses IV, see below, 6.5.4.5.
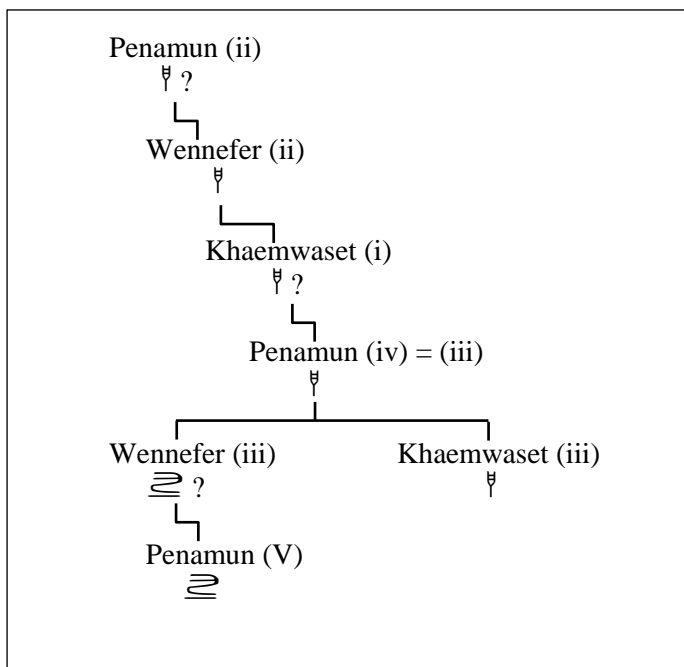
CHART 8. THE FAMILY OF WENNEFER (ii)
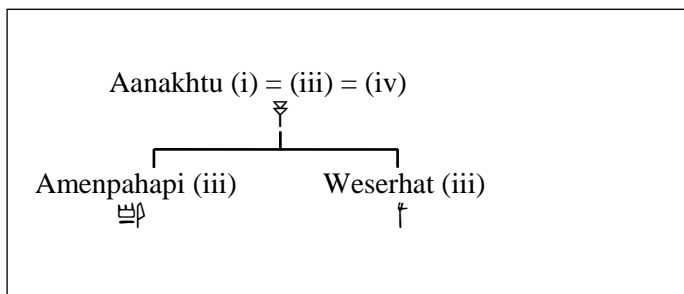
CHART 9. THE FAMILY OF AANAKHTU (i) = (iii) = (iv)

6.5.4.2 From grandfather to grandson?

As in many cultures, Egyptian couples often named their son after the father of the child's father. Within a given family a proper name would thus be repeated each second generation. This tradition was customary at Deir el-Medina as well.[76] That identity marks were transferred along similar lines comes thus as no surprise. The practice is demonstrated by the three generations of men called Nakhtmin, all three attested with mark ✛ (CHART 10). The family tree demonstrates that Nakhtmin (iv) passed on his mark to his son Khaemope (iv). Remarkably, one generation later it is Nakhtmin (vi), the son of Nakhtmin (iv)'s other son Nebnakht (vi), who uses mark ✛. Whether Nakhtmin (vi) had passed on the mark to his own son Pentaweret (viii) is unknown, but we do know that his grandson, Nakhtmin (vii) had taken over the use of the mark. Similarly we observe that the use of mark ♭ passes over one generation from Nebnakht (vi) to Nebnakht (viii).

In the family of Neferher (iv) (CHART 11) the same phenomenon occurs: mark 𝍸 of Neferher (iv)'s son Pahemnetjer (i) was also used for the grandson of the latter, Pahemnetjer (ii). Unfortunately we do not know if Painefer (i), grandson of Neferher (iv), had adopted

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[76] Davies, *Who's who*, xxiii.

⊞†, the mark of the latter. The same mark is attested for Neferher (vi), seemingly unrelated to Neferher (iv). We may, however, argue that these two men were grandson and grandfather. Neferher (vi) is known to have been a son of Ipuy (iii), a workman who is attested during the reign of Ramesses III and perhaps the beginning of the reign of Ramesses IV. Besides workman, Ipuy (iii) bore the priestly title *ḥm-nṯr* 'prophet',[77] and it is therefore plausible that we can equate him with the workman Pahemnetjer (i). This man was active in the second half of the 19th Dynasty and could well have been incumbent at the beginning of the 20th Dynasty. The proposed equivalency would mean that "Pahemnetjer" was a nickname or rather a honourary title for the man named Ipuy (iii). Ipuy (iii), whose parentage was so-far unknown, would then appear to have been a son of Neferher (iv), and Neferher (vi) son of Ipuy (iii) would have been named after his grandfather. In analogy, Neferher (vi) inherited the identity mark of his grandfather.
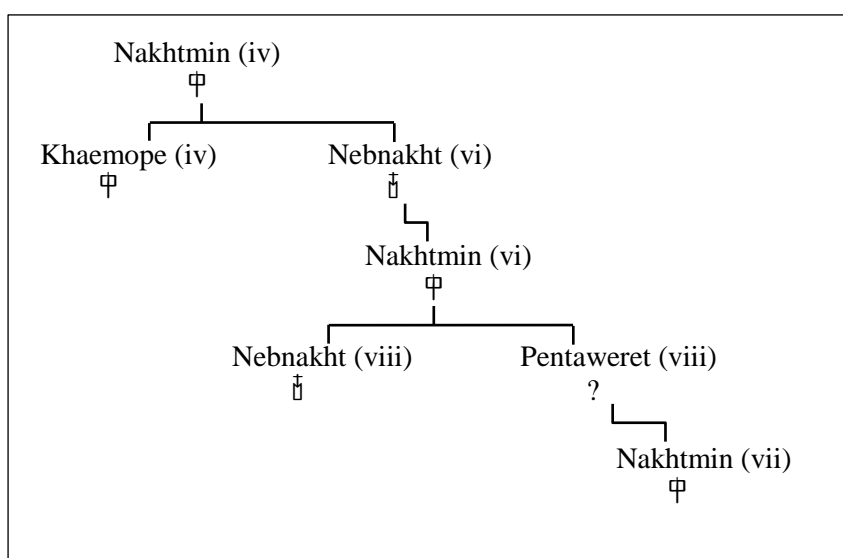
CHART 10. THE FAMILY OF NAKHTMIN (iv)
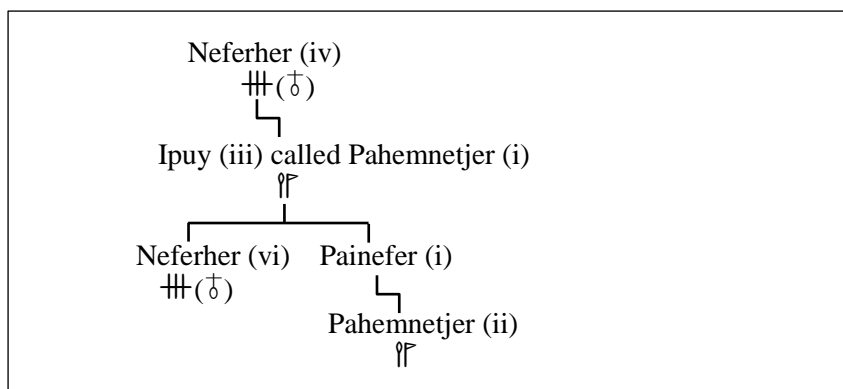
CHART 11. THE FAMILY OF NEFERHER (iv)

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[77] Davies, *Who's who*, 51-52; 152; Collier, 'The right side', 9.

6.5.4.3 Brothers with the same mark?

There are several ostraca with two instances of the same mark. We have encountered several of such documents in the 18th Dynasty, but there are examples from the Ramesside period as well.[78] Because we possess abundant evidence that marks could be transferred from a father to a son, such instances are mostly explained as documents that record an older workman and his son who were both active at the same moment. There are, however, indications that a father did not transfer his mark to only one, but to two sons. In theory this would mean that two brothers possessed the same mark at the same time. One possible example concerns the men Anuy (v) and Khaemnun (i), who are proposed in this work to have been brothers.[79] The same phenomenon may have occurred in the family of Amenemope (ix) = (iii). We can follow his interesting family tree rather well (CHART 12). A phonetic connection exists between the name of Amenem*ope* (ix) – (iii) and his mark ⊡ / ⌂ (the latter mark is hieroglyph Gardiner sign O45 with phonetic value *ip.t*). His homonymous grandson Amenemope (x) used a very similar mark, while his son Meryre (v) took on a mark for himself. This mark too was related to his name: mark ⋏ (*mr*) for *Mery*re. Meryre (v)'s second son, Neferhotep (xi), did not inherit his father's mark. Instead he possessed mark ⊓, the inspiration of which escapes us. Meryre (v)'s mark ⋏ did not transfer to his son, but to one of his grandchildren. He had two grandchildren, one called Neferhotep (xii), the other called Meryre (vi), and it is interesting to observe that mark ⋏ did not come to be used for the latter. In our eyes it would make sense that both Meryre (v) and Meryre (vi), homonymous men, would have used mark ⋏. Yet, Meryre (vi) used mark ⊓, the mark of his father Neferhotep (xi). The reason for this seems to have been Meryre (vi)'s inheritance of his father's position on the right side of the crew when he retired.[80] The same explanation can be offered for Neferhotep (xii)'s appropriation of mark ⋏ used by his grandfather Meryre (v): he seems to have taken over his grandfather's position on the right side of the crew, and with it his grandfather's mark. The mark of Meryre (vi), ⊓, is possibly attested both for his son Panefer (i) and his son Pasennedjem (i). As in the case of Anuy (v) and Khaemnun (i), we do not know whether they used it simultaneously.

The usage of identity marks in the family of Reshupeteref (i) (CHART 13) provides tantalising data. Reshupeteref (i)'s mark ±ↄ presumably stems from the name of his grandfather who was called Neferhotep. Unfortunately we possess no information about the mark of Reshupeteref (i)'s father, Hesysunebef (i), or of Reshupeteref (i)'s brother Neferhotep (v). That is unfortunate, because it would be interesting to see if Neferhotep (v) would have used mark ±ↄ as well, which would make sense because he was named after his grandfather Neferhotep (ii). This might, however, not have been the case, because Reshupeteref (i)'s other brother Nesamun (III) apparently was assigned mark ⊠ when he took over Irsu's slot on the right side of the crew. The son of Reshupeteref (i), Amennakht (xxv) never seems to have used mark ±ↄ. He was designated by mark ✧ and seems to have passed it on to his son Pakhayamun (i).

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[78] E.g. O. Ashmolean HO 1120; O. MMA 09.184.784+; ONL 6576.
[79] See chapter 5, p. 429-430, CHART 5.
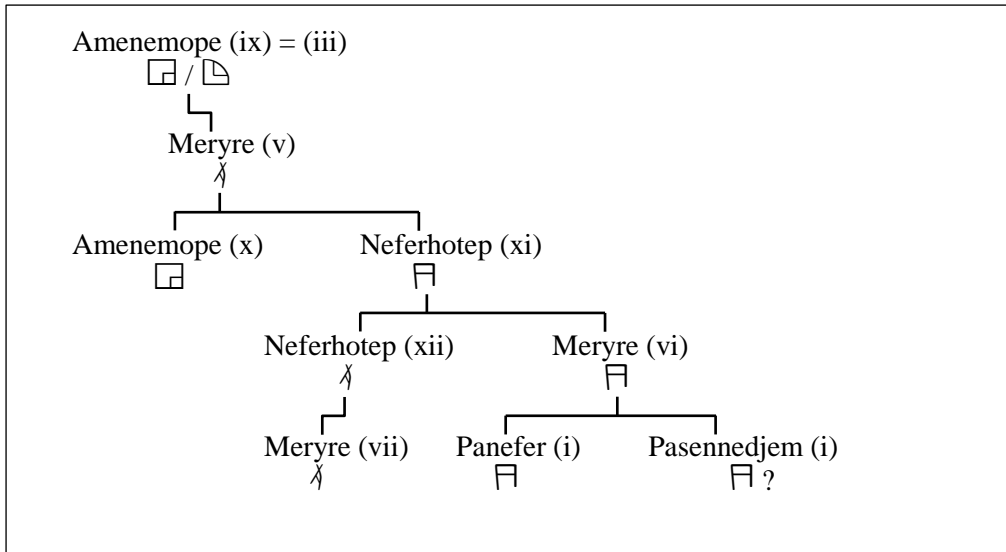[80] See below, 6.5.4.5; compare Collier, 'Integrating Hieratic and Marks Data', [16].

Amenemope (ix) = (iii)

Meryre (v)

Amenemope (x)   Neferhotep (xi)

Neferhotep (xii)   Meryre (vi)

Meryre (vii)   Panefer (i)   Pasennedjem (i)

CHART 12. THE FAMILY OF AMENEMOPE (ix) = (iii)

Neferhotep (ii)
±†?

Hesysunebef (i)
?

Nesamun (III)   Reshupeteref (i)   Neferhotep (v)
                  ±†   ?

Amennakht (xxv)

Pakhayamun (i)
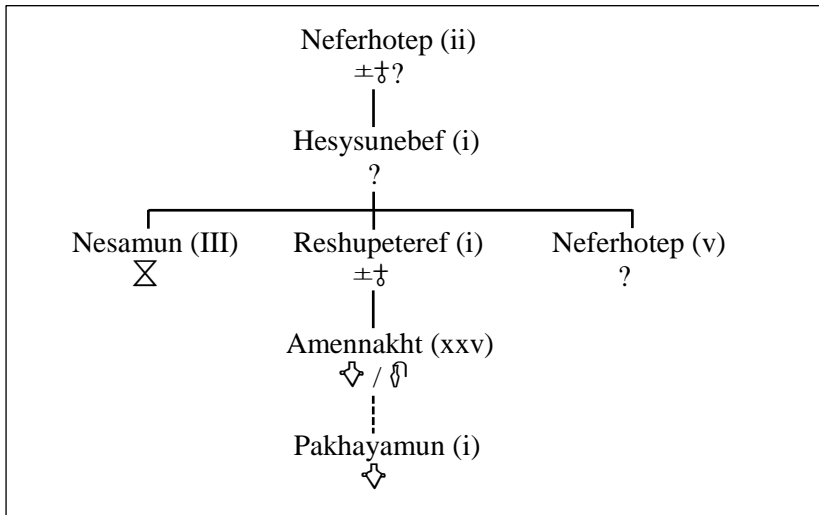
CHART 13. THE FAMILY OF RESHUPETEREF (i)

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6.5.4.4 The maternal line

In the case of Penniut (i) (CHART 14) it is evident that his identity mark had come down to him through the maternal line. His identity mark ⚓ was not related to his father Khnummose (i), but to his grandfather on his mother's side, Nebimentet (i). Again we find a parallel for this form of transference of marks in the name-giving practices of the community. Occasionally parents would name their son after the child's maternal grandfather.[81] An example is provided by the family of Penniut (i) himself: his nephew Nebamun (iv) was probably named after the father of his mother, Nebamun (v). The case of Nebamun (iv) demonstrates an interesting discrepancy between the origin of his name and the origin of his identity mark ⚔, which was not derived from the maternal line but instead was inspired by that of his father Wesekhnemtet (i) with mark ⌒.

      Another transference of a mark along the maternal line may have occurred during the 19th Dynasty. We have considered the possibility that Khaemseba (i) was represented by mark ⋀⋀, and if this connection is correct then his mark may well have been inspired by ⋀, the mark of Qaha (i), his grandfather on his mother's side.[82]

Nebimentet (i)
⚓

Nebamun (v)   Khnumose (i) = Henutwati (i)=(ii)
               ⚐   fem.

Isis (xv) = Wesekhnemtet (i)   Penniut (i)
fem.   ⌒   ⚓

Nebamun (iv)   Khnummose (iv)
⚔   ⚐
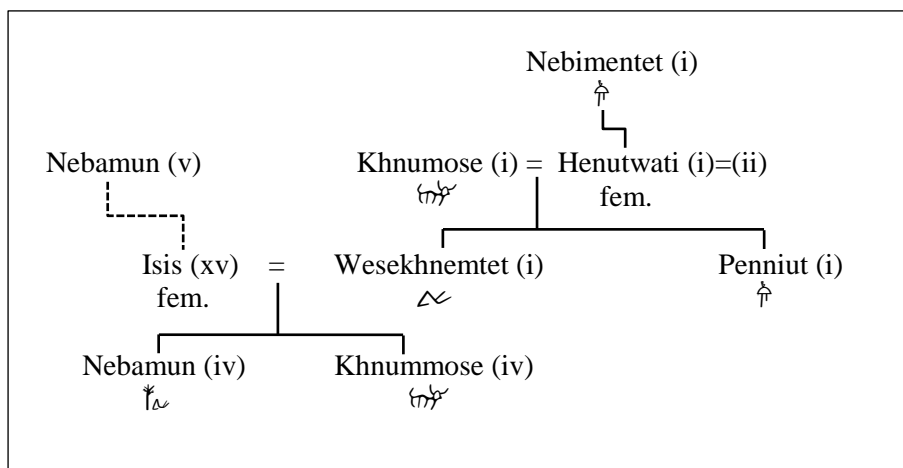
CHART 14. THE FAMILY OF NEBIMENTET (i)

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[81] The practise of naming a son after his maternal grandfather is not uncommon in Deir el-Medina. This is well illustrated by the family of Iniherkhau (i) and his wife Henutdjuu (i) (see Davies, *Who's who*, chart 3): one of their sons, Qaha (ii), was named after the father of Iniherkhau (i), Qaha (i), but another son, Kel (ii), was named after the grandfather on his mother's side, Kel (i). Other examples of crew members that were named after their maternal grandfather are Nakhemmut (iii), see Davies, *Who's who*, 71; Nebwa (ii), see Davies, *Who's who*, 180; Nebnefer (iii), see Davies, *Who's who*, chart 6; and Amennakht (x), see Davies, *Who's who*, chart 8.

[82] See chapter 5, 5.2.3.1.

6.5.4.5 The marks of Hay (vii) and his family members

It has been pointed out on several occasions that Amennakht (vi)/(xii)'s mark ⚒ was derived from his nickname Pawonesh, or 'the jackal'. The nickname is perhaps related to the literary topos of the *wnš dd* 'lustful jackal'.[83] Interestingly, Hay (vii), father of Amennakht (vi)/(xii), called himself a lustful jackal in a hymn to Amun-Rehorakhty composed by him.[84] It is worth exploring the possibility that this nickname is related to an ancestor of Hay (vii) and Amennakht (vi)/(xii) (CHART 15). The word *dd* 'lustful', written 〰〰 or 〰〰〰〰[85] is of Semitic origin,[86] and it seems to resonate in the name of Didi (i), great-great-grandfather of Hay (vii). The name of this early ancestor, written 〰〰 *ddi*,[87] is a foreign name as indicated by sign ⎹ and probably derives from the same Semitic root.[88] Hay (vii)'s mention of the 'lustful jackal' could therefore be more than a literary topos: it may be a reference to his forefather who lived four generations earlier. Such retrospect is not wholly unexpected. Hay (vii)'s family was one the oldest of the community, and Didi (i) was incumbent on the crew before the reorganization during the reign of Horemheb. This seems to have been a source of pride and perhaps of authority to Hay (vii) and his family members, as evidenced e.g. by the genealogy recorded on a stela dedicated by Hay (vii) in which his family tree is traced back to Didi (i).[89] On the stela Hay (vii)'s ancestors [Nakhy (iii)][90] and Didi (i) are given the honorific title of deputy of the crew, although it is generally accepted that they never held this position.[91] It seems rather that one of the reasons for Hay (vii), himself a deputy, to erect the stela was to consolidate his claim to that office by exhibiting his ties to illustrious ancestors,[92] crew members who had been involved in work on the royal tomb almost two centuries before the careers of Hay (vii) and his colleagues. If it is true that Hay (vii)'s epithet 'the lustful jackal' harks back to his ancient forefather Didi (i), we may consider the possibility that Hay (vii)'s identity mark ⚒ is as old as well. Before him, the mark was in use by Hay (vii)'s grandfather Buqentuef (i). It is conceivable that Buqentuef (i) in turn received mark ⚒ from his grandfather, Didi (i). We have not securely identified the identity mark of Didi (i), who must have been active during the end of the 18th Dynasty (see TABLE 99), but ostraca dating to the reign of Amenhotep III do include mark ⚒.[93] We do not know what the mark depicts, but on ostraca like OL 6788 it is clearly distinguished from the flower-shaped mark ⚒. It is therefore theoretically possible that, like mark ⚒, mark ⚒ is a pomegranate, and that it belonged at one time to Didi (i). Would one accept this theory, then mark ⚒/⚒ is one of the

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[83] Hans-Werner Fischer-Elfert, *Lesefunde im literarischen Steinbruch von Deir el-Medineh*. Kleine ägyptische Texte 12 (Wiesbaden 1997), 122-123; Dorn, *Arbeiterhütten*, 190, f and n. 674.

[84] For these texts see Dorn, *Arbeiterhütten*, 190.

[85] *WB* V, 419; Fischer-Elfert, *Lesefunde*, 123; Renata Landgráfová and Hana Navrátilová, *Sex and the Golden Goddess* I. *Ancient Egyptian Love Songs in Context* (Prague 2009), 128.

[86] Derived from the word דוד *dwd* 'beloved', 'lover', also used in the erotic sense, see Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das alte Testament* (Leipzig 1921), 157.

[87] O. BM 8494, see Dominique Valbelle, 'Témoignages du Nouvel Empire sur les cultes de Satis et d'Anoukis à Éléphantine et à Deir el-Médineh' *BIFAO* 75 (1975), 135-138; O. Cairo CG 25573; O. Medelhavsmuseet MM 14126.

[88] Thomas Schneider, *Asiatische Personennamen in ägyptischen Quellen des Neuen Reiches*. OBO 114 (Freiburg and Göttingen 1992), 261, nrs. 561 – 564; James E. Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period* (Princeton 1994), 378-379, nr. 568.

[89] O. BM 8494, see Valbelle, 'Témoignages du Nouvel Empire', 135-138.

[90] The name of Nakhy (iii) is lost but can be restored in the lacuna, see Morris L. Bierbrier, *Hieroglyphic texts from Egyptian stelae etc.* Part 10 (London 1982), 27; Davies, *Who's who*, 64.

[91] Davies, *Who's who*, 64 and n. 19.

[92] On the same stela Hay (vii) attempted something similar by claiming to be a son of the foreman Hay (iv), see chapter 4, 4.2.6.

[93] See chapter 2, 2.2.3; 2.2.9 (group C). The mark also appears on older ostraca, see chapter 2, 2.2.4; 2.2.10 (group D).

oldest marks of the workmen's community. This long-standing tradition may be the reason why during the late 20ᵗʰ Dynasty Amennakht (vi)/(xii) called Pawonesh appears to have discarded his original mark 𓃭 to take on 𓀭, the mark that belonged to his father and other ancestors. The assumed change may well have been connected to his aspirations to follow in his father's footsteps as deputy of the left side. Taking on mark 𓀭 would create a closer association with deputy Hay (vii) as well as with his ancestors of old, along the same lines as Hay (vii)'s stela. Alternatively Amennakht's shift to mark 𓀭 can be seen as a result of his promotion to the office of deputy or that of foreman. Having obtained that position, mark 𓀭 may have lent Amennakht authority that would be beneficial in his role as (co-) director of the left side of the crew.
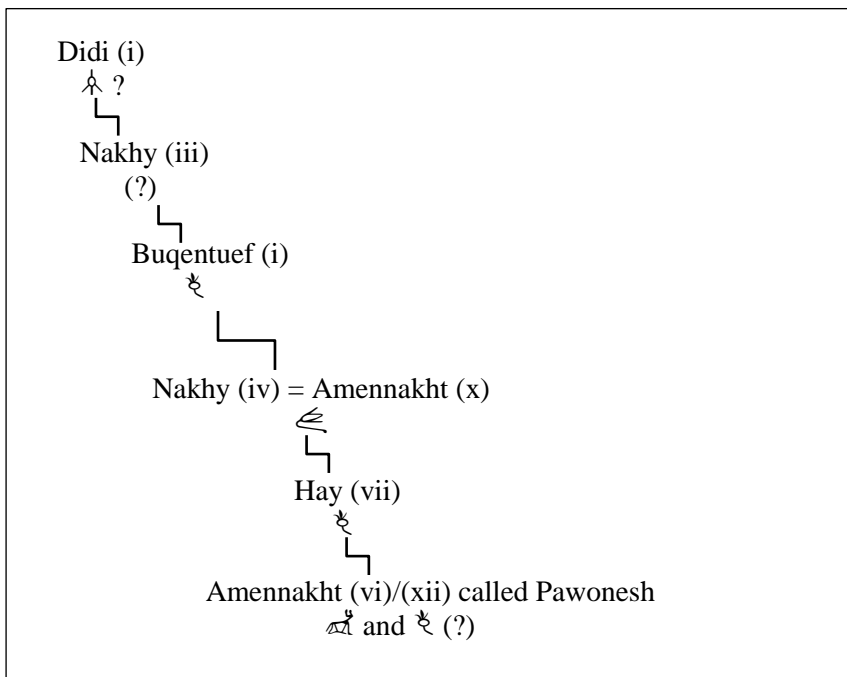
Didi (i)
𓀭 ?
|
Nakhy (iii)
(?)
|
Buqentuef (i)
𓀭
|
Nakhy (iv) = Amennakht (x)
𓄑
|
Hay (vii)
𓀭
|
Amennakht (vi)/(xii) called Pawonesh
𓃭 and 𓀭 (?)

CHART 15. THE FAMILY OF DIDI (i)

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6.5.4.6 A position within the workforce

In chapter 3 we discovered that the transference of a mark was not always based on a family connection, but could be caused rather by the replacement of a workman in the duty roster of the right side of the crew.[94] When workman Irsu with mark ⧓ was replaced in the turnus by Nesamun (III) he took over Irsu's mark even though the two men were apparently not related by blood. The same happened when Nakhemmut (vi) was promoted to the position of chief workman. He abandoned his old mark ⋏⋏, and when Pamedunakht (i) filled in his slot in the turnus he received Nakhemmut (vi)'s mark.

In fact, there are indications that certain marks were connected with a specific slot in the ordered list of workmen of one of the sides, regardless of the performance of any *wrš* duty.[95] It seems that in these cases, the moment a slot was freed at the occasion of the retirement or demise of an older workman the mark of the departing crew member was taken over by the novice who was introduced to the crew in his stead. This idea cannot be proven, but it does follow from an examination of mark ⧓ that features in the ordered list of workmen of the right side on O. BM 5642. This ostracon must date to the reign of Ramesses IX, and because mark ⧓ is situated in the third position, the mark represents in all probability the deputy of the right side. At the time O. BM 5642 was composed this must have been Khons (vi). Much earlier in the 20th Dynasty, mark ⧓ was used by Nesamun (III). Since no family ties exist between Khons (vi) and Nesamun (III), it is very well plausible that the transference of the mark was based on Khons (vi)'s adoption of Nesamun (III)'s position on the right side of the gang.

A comparison of the marks that were in use by the regular workmen of the right side of the crew throughout the 20th Dynasty leads to the same conclusion (TABLE 105). Few new marks are introduced to the right side of the crew after Ramesses IV, and a large majority of marks that are attested in the reign of Ramesses IX were already in use under Ramesses IV. The exception is of course the period of Ramesses V, when the workmen who joined the crew after its enlargement in the reign of Ramesses IV become apparent in the documentation created with marks. These men, however seem to have taken their leave in subsequent years and much of the original set of marks remains. We thus get the impression that during the greater part of the 20th Dynasty many identity marks were connected with a particular position within one side of the crew.

If this theory is correct, we suspect that the inhabitants of the village did not possess their own identity mark before becoming a full crew member. Otherwise we would expect them to be represented in lists of marks by their own mark, and not by those of workmen whose positions they had filled. Prior to being assigned the identity mark of the workmen for whom they were substituted, such individuals may not have required a mark because they were still boys without many personal possessions and no income of their own. Alternatively, they may not have had a mark because they were employed elsewhere before they were added to the gang.

This idea also ties in with the apparent lack of identity marks for the women of Deir el-Medina. The word "apparent" needs to be underlined: identity marks *could* have been used by the wives and daughters of the necropolis workmen who resided at Deir el-Medina, and

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[94] See also Collier, 'Integrating Hieratic and Marks Data', [16-17].

[95] The considerable number of ostraca that record one or both sides of the crew by ordering them in accordance with a particular hierarchical order suggests that Egyptologists have put too much emphasis on the sequence of the duty roster. The sequence of the duty roster seems to be merely one application of the ordered sequence of the sides of the crew. The ordered sequence was also used to record attendance and the distributions of commodities. The ubiquity of ordered lists from the middle of the 18th Dynasty to the end of the 20th Dynasty, as well as the many changes in the order that are attested in the duty rosters of the 20th Dynasty suggest that the sequence reflects an important reality in the organisation of the work on the tomb. See also chapter 4, 4.1; compare similar observations in Collier, *Dating Late XIXth Dynasty Ostraca*, x-xi.

we may simply not recognise them in the archaeological material. Having said that, ostracon O. MMA 09.184.785 may be advanced in objection to any assumption that women possessed their own identity marks. This ostracon is inscribed with the identity marks of several workmen, including Khaemnun (i) and his son Maaninakhtuf (iii). The ostracon also mentions Wasetnakht (i), daughter of Khaemnun (i). In contrast to all of the workmen on the ostracon, who are signified by their identity mark, the scribe wrote out her name in cursive hieroglyphs. The most logical explanation is that she did not have her own personal identity mark.

Involvement in the construction of the royal tomb may not even have been sufficient reason for the use of an identity mark. Not enough data is available at this point but there are indications that not every person among the 60 additional workmen that were assigned to work in the necropolis in the reign of Ramesses IV possessed his own identity mark. The reason for this could be that among the reinforcements were younger, unskilled boys, who were not individually included in the administration of the tomb as their tasks were not important enough.

Ram. IV	Ram. V	Ram. V - VI	Ram. VI - IX	Ram. IX
⧻	◿◠		◿◠	ⵣ
⊡	⧻		⧼	⧼
ⵣ	⊡		𓏤	𓏤
⩘	ⵣ		ⲫ	ⲫ
⩘	⩘		ⲏ	ⲏ
𓏤	⩘	…	⌐	◇
⊔	𓏤	⌐	?	ΛΛ
ⵡ	⊔	ΛΛ	ΛΛ	⯗
ⲫ	ⵡ	ⵡ	ⵡ?	…
⫧	ⲫ	ⲫ	⌐	⊓
⧻	⫧	ⵣ	ⵣ	⋆
ⵝ	⧻	⊡	⊡?	⩘
ΛΛ	ⵝ	⩘	⩘	⋈
†	ΛΛ	⌐	⸱	⤙
♀	†	†	†	⚊
⋆	♀	⫶	◇	ⵝ
ⵔ	⋆	⊓	⊓	ⵔ
⫦	ⵔ	⊓	⊓	⫦
⸟	⫦	…	⫧	⤙
⸟	⸟		♀	⸟
⸱	⸱		⸱	⸟
∿	⋈		⋈	⊔
⋈	…		⋆	⌐
⊓	⌐	…	⤼	⊇
⧍	⸱	⤫	⤫	⫧
⤙	∿	∿	ⵝ	
⸮	⸱	⫧	ⵢ	
⸱	⊓	⫤⸱	∿	
⸕	⧍	⸟	⧬/⫧	
⤛	⤙	⸟	⸟	
◿◠	⫺	⩘	⩘	
	⤫		⸟	
	ⲏ			
	⌂			
	⤛			
	⫪			
	⊤			
	⸝			
	⫨			
	…			
	⫫			
	⤏			
	⫦			
	⸟			
	⊓			
	⸒			

TABLE 105. ORDERED LISTS OF THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE CREW IN THE 20TH DYNASTY

6.5.4.7 Family marks?

There are a few instances in which we get the impression that the mark of a workman is a modified form of that of his predecessors. One example is the mark of Nebamun (iv), ⵋ. His mark is obviously inspired by that of his father Wesekhnemtet (i), whose mark was ⌇. His son used the same mark with the added element ⵌ. However, we are not quite sure how to interpret his compound mark, because Nebamun (iv) is also referred to in one document by ∠ ⌇, which is perhaps not so much a mark but rather a reference that needs to be understood as 'Wesekhnemtet's son'.[96] It is unclear if ⵋ somehow conveys that very same message. Perhaps a slightly more plausible case is mark ⵌⵣ, tentatively related to Hori (xii). The attribution of this mark to him is partly based on the resemblance between this mark and that of Amenwa (i), father of Hori (xii), who possessed mark ⵣ. On the other hand one could object that ⵌⵣ is not a modified mark but rather a more elaborate allomorph of ⵣ.

The most convincing instances of marks that were modified concern identity marks that have as their ground form the shape ⴷ. Marks of this kind occur in two longstanding family lines that produced several deputies and foremen. The two families are not clearly related and it is not evident why the marks are so alike. We turn first to the family of Sennedjem (i) (CHART 16). This famous workman was the owner of mark ⴷⵣ, and it is striking that the mark of his son Khabekhnet (i) is ⴷⵥ. The marks are very similar. Both consist of the element ⴷ with a vertical sign adjacent to it, ⵣ in the case of Sennedjem, ⵥ in the case of his son. The similarity is all the more striking because four generations after Sennedjem (i), Nakhemmut (vi), the grandson of Nakhemmut (i), who in turn was the grandson of Sennedjem (i), was designated by mark ⴷⴷ. We have seen several instances where this mark was substituted by its allomorph ⴷ.[97] The latter mark appears to hark back to the much earlier mark Sennedjem (i). Unfortunately we have been unable to reveal the identity marks of the generations between Sennedjem (i) and Nakhemmut (vi). Still it would seem that the resemblance between marks ⴷⵣ, ⴷⵥ and ⴷ or ⴷⴷ is not coincidental. Particularly Khabekhnet's mark is a good example of the modification of the original mark of a predecessor.

Similar instances of the modification of an identity mark used in a particular family are attested in central Asian cultures.[98] It is a quite common feature of tamga-signs, originally emblems of tribes and clans used by Eurasian nomadic peoples, but later adopted by other cultures in which they came to be employed as personal identity marks.[99] More recent examples of this practice have been documented in fishermen's communities in Gallaecia, northern Portugal, where identity marks are employed to this day. In the marking system of these villages a family makes use of derivatives of and variations on a particular mark (FIG. 20). An important difference between the creation of the marks in Deir el-Medina and in these communities is the fact that in Gallaecia the marks were created according to particular rules. Evans Pim explains:

> "Within the family, every individual had their own mark that was derived through long-established rules adding certain modifying elements (*piques*, "slashes"), so that

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[96] See also above, p. 509.

[97] The same allomorph was occasionally used for mark ⴷ, see below, p. 522-523.

[98] The phenomenon occurs in the usage of identity marks by medieval stone masons in Western Europe, see Herman Janse and Dirk J. de Vries, *Werk en merk van de Steenhouwer. Het steenhouwersambacht in de Nederlanden voor 1800* (Zwolle and Zeist 1991), 55-56 and fig. 54; Jean-Louis van Belle, *Pour comprendre les signes lapidaires*. Collections Précisions 3 (Brussels 2014), 34-35 and fig. 8.

[99] Compare e.g. the tamga-signs used in medieval times by Turkic peoples in South Siberia, where a son or a grandson could alter the tamga-sign by adding "tails" or "legs" to the original sign of his father or grandfather, see Sergey A. Yatsenko, 'Some Problems Related to Early Medieval Turkic Tamga-Sign Studies' *re:marks* 1 (2013), 10-13; fig. 3.

anyone in the community could know exactly to whom a mark would refer. […] The system could be described as [a] set of rules for individual and family identification wherein a relatively small set of radicals or root elements (the 'ground form') is modified by a series of prefixes, suffixes, affixes or desinences (variations) following basic rules of association."[100]
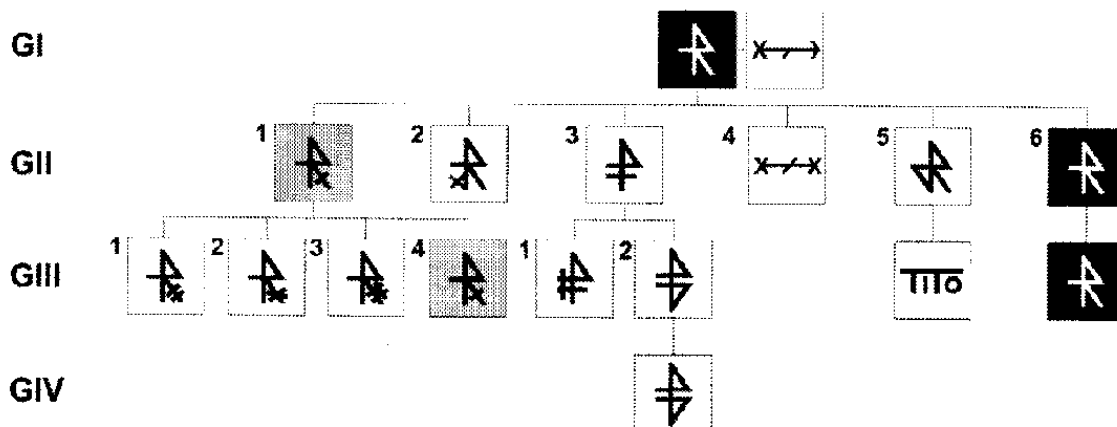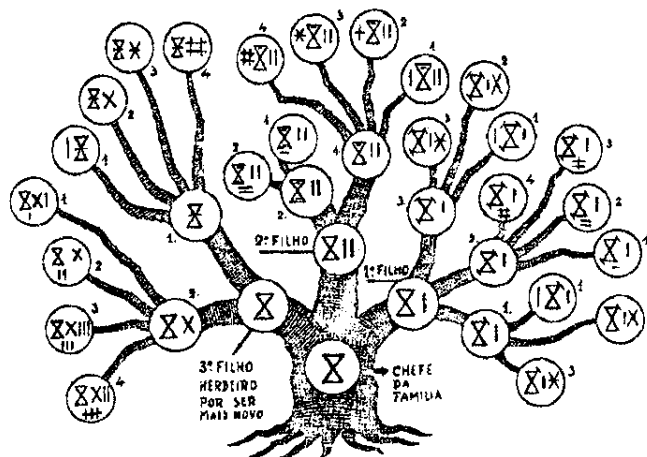

FIGURE 20. MODIFIED IDENTITY MARKS FROM GALLAECIA, PORTUGAL, AFTER EVANS PIM, 'FROM MARKS TO OGHAM', FIGS. 8 AND 9

At Deir el-Medina we lack the necessary data to ascertain the motives behind the apparent derivative forms used by later generations. In any case, the available data do not indicate that the practice was widespread, and it seems therefore that the practice of marking in the Theban necropolis followed rules different to those in Gallaecia.

A close parallel for this practice is observed in the family of Qaha (i) (CHART 17). This man was the foreman of the left side during the early 19th Dynasty, and we have identified his mark as 𐤀. The mark of his son, Anuy (i), deputy of the left side, is of a very similar shape: 𐤀. An allomorph attested for this mark is 𐤀, which resembles Qaha (i)'s mark 𐤀 even closer: if the left element is incorporated with the right element this results in the shape of Qaha's mark. One could say that Anuy (i) had deconstructed his father's mark and employed the separated elements as a mark for himself. What happened to mark 𐤀 after Anuy (i) is not clear. We have established that one of Qaha (i)'s most influential sons and his successor in the office of deputy of the left side, Iniherkhau (i), employed a mark different

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[100] Joám Evans Pim, 'From Marks to Ogham: Rethinking Writing in Gallaecia' *re:marks* 1 (2013), 108.

from that of his father: his mark was $\bar{\mathbb{R}}$, derived from his own name. Subsequent foremen of the left side were in turn descendants of Iniherkhau (i): Hay (iv) and Iniherkhau (ii), with a mark unrelated to that of Qaha (i). However, Harmose (ii), son of Iniherkhau (ii), also at one time foreman of the left side, may have been represented by mark ⋏ and its allomorph ⋏. We wonder if this is a coincidence, or whether mark ⋏ and its variants were somehow after all these years still associated with the family of Qaha (i). We may suggest that such a connection had indeed existed. That would explain why the scribe of the duty and delivery texts composed with marks used sign ⋏ to designate the left side of the crew: it was the mark of the descendants of Qaha (i), the family that had directed the left side of the crew for generations. This may also explain our suspicion that during the 20th Dynasty mark ⋏ /⋏ could have been used as the universal mark for the foreman of the left side of the crew, based on its position at the head of ordered lists of workmen's marks.
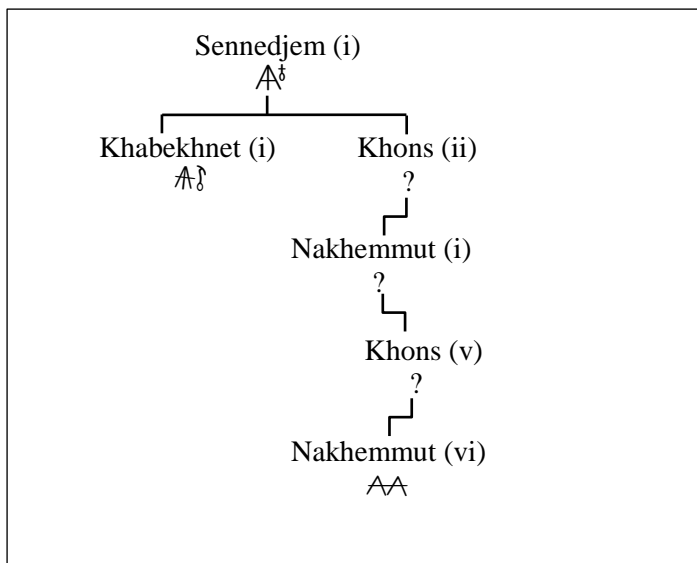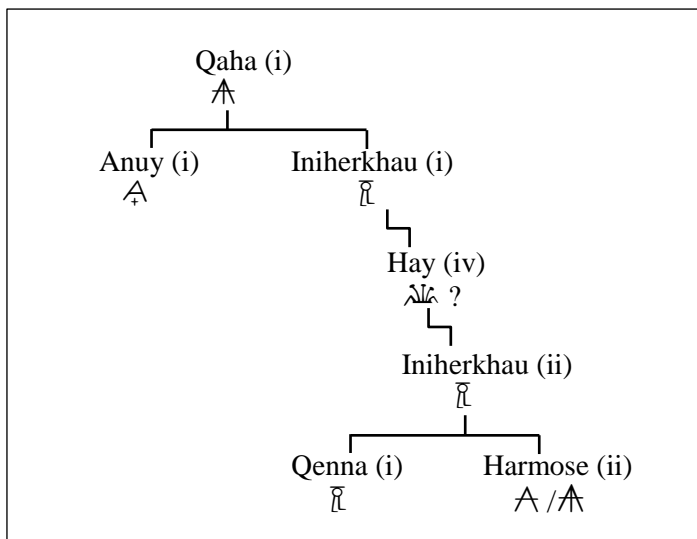

CHART 16. THE FAMILY OF SENNEDJEM (i)

CHART 17. THE FAMILY OF QAHA (i)

6.6 Overview of new prosopographic and historic data

Weserkhepesh (i)
This man must have been deputy of the right side during the end of the reign of Ramesses IX, see chapter 4, 4.2.5.

Aanakhtu (i), (iii) and (iv)
Aanakhtu (iii) is probably the same man as Aanakhtu (i) and Aanakhtu (iv), see chapter 4, 4.2.7; 4.2.8.

Nebnefer (vi) and Bakenwerel (vii)
The father of Bakenwerel (vii) may have been Nebnefer (vi), see chapter 4, 4.2.8; 4.2.11; chapter 5, 5.2.3.1; chapter 6, chart 47.

Henutwati (i) and (ii)
Henutwati (i) is probably the same woman as Henutwati (ii), see chapter 4, 4.2.8; chapter 6, chart 14.

Amenemone (ii), (iii) and (iv)
Amenemone (ii) / (iii) may be the same man as the guardian Amenemone (iv), see chapter 5, p. 401, n. 16.

Siwadjet (ii) and Siwadjet (iii)
Siwadjet (iii) may have been a grandson of Siwadjet (ii), see chapter 5, 5.2.1; chapter 6, 6.5.4.1.

Iyerniutef (ii) and Iyerniutef (iii)
Iyerniutef (iii) may have been a grandson of Iyerniutef (ii), see chapter 5, p. 407, n. 43; chapter 6, 6.5.4.1.

Amenemope (xvi), (iii) and (ix) and Meryre (iii) and (v)
'Scribe' Amenemope (xvi) and 'scribe' Meryre (iii) may be equated with Amenemope (iii) = (ix) and his son Meryre (v), see chapter 5, 5.2.2.3.

Merysekhmet (i) and (ii)
Merysekhmet (i) may well be the same man as Merysekhmet (ii), see chapter 5, 5.2.2.6.

Amenemwia (i)
The deputy of the right side who was in office during the middle of the reign of Ramesses II may well have been Amenemwia (i), see chapter 5, 5.2.2.10.

Pahemnetjer (i), Ipuy (iii) and Neferher (vi)
The workman Ipuy (iii) is probably the same man as Pahemnetjer (i), hence Neferher (vi) was a grandson of Neferher (iv), see chapter 5, 5.2.3.3; chapter 6, 6.5.4.2.

Thutmose (i) and Mose (viii)
Thutmose (i) may have been the same man as Mose (viii), see chapter 6, Excursus III.

Huynefer (v) and (xi)
Huynefer (v) may have been the same man as Huynefer (xi), see chapter 6, Excursus III.