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Of marks and men : the functional and historical context of the workmen's marks of the Royal Theban Necropolis

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PROPOSITIONS

1. The identity marks of the Theban Necropolis were employed by individuals who were extensively involved in the construction of the royal tombs, and there are indications that they were not used by women or temporary, ancillary workers.
2. During the 18th Dynasty identity marks were almost exclusively employed by individuals without formal scribal training.
3. The majority of ostraca from the Theban Necropolis inscribed with identity marks are concerned with matters of everyday life, with a focus on the work on the tomb, rations, and personal property.
4. During the reigns of Ramesses III and Ramesses IV documents composed with marks recording deliveries and the duty roster were created by a so-called '*smd.t* scribe', probably Pentaweret (iii), and revised and transcribed into hieratic by a professional scribe.
5. Duty rosters for the delivery of daily supplies were already in use in the middle of the 19th Dynasty, and during the reign of Ramesses II such rosters were occasionally recorded using identity marks.
6. The village of Deir el-Medina was permanently inhabited by Royal Necropolis workmen and their families from about the reign of Hatshepsut/Thutmose III, and most likely not before that moment.
7. The tombs in the Eastern Cemetery of Deir el-Medina most likely belong to Royal Necropolis workmen and their family members.
8. There are indications that in the middle of the 19th Dynasty supplies and deliveries to the community of Deir el-Medina were transported by the workmen themselves rather than by external agents.
9. Weserkhepesheh (i) probably acted as the official deputy of the right side of the crew towards the end of the reign of Ramesses IX.
10. On the basis of an analysis of style and iconography of the statuary inscribed for, and attributed to, Sobekemsaf I, there are no reasons to shift the chronological position of this king from the Seventeenth Dynasty to the late Thirteenth Dynasty as proposed by Stephen Quirke in 2010.¹
11. Students studying Middle Egyptian would benefit from an introduction to Egyptian participialia immediately after having been familiarised with the noun and the adjective.
12. It is imperative for the Egyptian government to improve security of the Egyptian cultural heritage, and it is the responsibility of the international community to encourage and to financially support the Egyptian government in this mission.

¹ Stephen Quirke, 'Ways to measure Thirteenth Dynasty royal power from inscribed objects', in: Marcel Marée (ed.), *The Second Intermediate Period (Thirteenth-Seventeenth Dynasties). Current research, future prospects*. OLA 192 (Leuven, Paris and Walpole, 2010), 55-68.