



THE WADI SHATT EL-RIGAL



RICARDO A. CAMINOS AND JÜRGEN OSING

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Handwritten text in Arabic script, likely a signature or a short phrase, oriented vertically.



THE EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY

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Excavation Memoir 118

THE WADI SHATT EL-RIGAL

By

Ricardo A. Caminos[†] and Jürgen Osing

Egypt Exploration Society
2021

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I. FOREWORD

Author's foreword

Recording Gebel el-Silsila was a task which the late Prof. Caminos, together with T. G. H. James, began for the Egypt Exploration Society in 1955.¹ The results of the first season were presented in the joint publication of *Gebel el-Silsilah I: The Shrines* (ASE 31, London 1963).

The long campaigns in Nubia, where Prof. Caminos recorded the temples of Buhen, Semna and Kumma, interrupted the project at Gebel el-Silsila, but in 1974 he returned to the site and accomplished his epigraphic work there in 1981-82. In some of these seasons he was assisted by Dr. Mark Smith (1981-82) or myself (1979, 1980).

In the season of 1955, the Wadi Shatt el-Rigal, 3.5 km. further north, was included in a preliminary epigraphic survey of neighbouring sites north of Gebel el-Silsila.² This Wadi is famous for an abundance of epigraphic records from the late Eleventh Dynasty with two reliefs of Mentuhotep II, one of them of monumental size, and a third one of Mentuhotep III, many graffiti of high court officials, and even many more of minor personnel. Only a few graffiti have been added later. The reason for their presence in this remote site has remained an intriguing problem that has never ceased to draw the attention of scholars and has caused much debate.

In 1983, an expedition of the Egypt Exploration Society set up camp here for an exhaustive documentation. The staff consisted of R. A. Caminos, both field-director and epigraphist, myself as an epigraphist, and our skilled and faithful Egyptian workmen Mohammed Wardani, Mohammed Zaman and the cook el-Suryan. The mission enjoyed the support of the Chief Inspectorate of Aswan, represented by Mr. Mohiy, who effectively supervised the mission. At all stages of the project, the mission benefited immensely from the kind hospitality and valuable help extended by Prof. Lanny Bell and his wife Martha, of Chicago House, Luxor, and Prof. Werner Kaiser of the German Archaeological Institute, Cairo.

The scope of the project was accomplished in one season, which lasted from 21 February to 29 March. Besides the three royal reliefs, more than 800 inscriptions and rock-drawings etc. were documented. Prof. Caminos gave a preliminary report in the same year³ and made part of the results accessible some years later.⁴

After the seasons at Gebel el-Silsila and the Wadi Shatt el-Rigal, the immense material of tracings and field notes came to London, where Prof. Caminos, in his new home next door to the Egypt Exploration Society, began to prepare the publication. When his sudden death in 1992 abruptly stopped all work, much of it had already been completed, especially for the speos of Horemheb and the Nile shrines at Gebel el-Silsila, but much still remained to be done.

When the Egypt Exploration Society looked for ways of publishing all of this material, it was agreed that those who had assisted Prof. Caminos in the field should also assist in the publication. Thus it fell upon me to assist in publishing the stelae, reliefs, graffiti and rock drawings from Gebel el-Silsila (West and East) and the Wadi Shatt el-Rigal. For the latter site, Prof. Caminos, immediately after the 1983 season, agreed that the publication should be a joint one. For the preparation of this volume, I was privileged to have the support of the Egypt Exploration Society, which kindly consented to handing over all of the material (September 1995) and allowed me to work on it in Berlin.

During the work at the Wadi Shatt el-Rigal, the various epigraphical tasks were shared between Prof. Caminos and me, the tracings being mutually checked. Most of the field notes with the detailed record of the locations, however, were written by Prof. Caminos. In the present volume, the extensive catalogue of locations is given, as far as possible, in the form of his field books. Utilizing also his preliminary publications, I have added commentaries and the introductory history of the site and have inked in the field tracings, mostly on the basis of reduced copies (1:2, 1:2.5 or 1:4).

In 2004, a short season at the site (28 January – 17 February) gave me the opportunity to check the previous documentation. During this stay, I had the privilege to count on the effective assistance

of Mr. Hosam el-Din Mostafa Sughair, the Inspector of the SCA at the Kom Ombo office, and to be accommodated in the home of Mr. Adel Musa, guardian of the SCA at Nag^ḥ el-Hammam, whose cordial hospitality, company and support also paved my ways. For kind accommodation at the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo and Aswan (Elephantine) during the days before, I am much indebted to its director, the late Prof. Günter Dreyer.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge how much this volume is indebted to previous scholarly work in the Wadi Shatt el-Rigal, especially by W. M. F. Petrie, F. Ll. Griffith and H. E. Winlock, and to the results of intense research on Egyptian titles achieved during the past decades, especially by O. D. Berlev, H. G. Fischer, D. Franke, W. Helck, D. Jones, S. Quirke, and W. A. Ward.

Two former students of mine, Ms. Nadine Eßbach and Mr. Cristian Crăciun, Berlin, visited the Wadi themselves and kindly supplied me with photographs and documentation of supplementary findings that had escaped previous notice: Ms. Eßbach for the locations *8 C-D*, *9*, *12* and *13 K*; Mr. Crăciun for *60 F* and *100 E* as well as the small quarries of *101*. Mr. Crăciun also took upon himself the demanding tasks of scanning and, eventually, digital imaging the photographs and the oversize drawings destined for the plates of the publication.

Over the years of my work on the manuscript, I enjoyed valuable personal help, which I remember with deep gratitude, from former collaborators and students of mine.

Mrs. Anne Zeeberg, the former librarian of Carsten Niebuhr Institute at the University of Copenhagen, undertook the labourious task of critically reading the whole manuscript, saving it from many an error and linguistic flaw, and improving its English style (2008). For parts of it, the same gratitude is owed to Mr. Paul O. Ford (2006) and Mr. Thomas Gertzen (2008), Berlin. Mr. Ford and Mr. Crăciun also provided the aerial photographs of the site from Google Earth which served as the base for the location map.

Above all, the project enjoyed, from the very beginning through all its stages, the invaluable support of the Egypt Exploration Society. Personally, Harry James, Patricia Spencer and Jan Geisbusch are gratefully remembered for their kind help, mediation and encouragement. In the final stage, the manuscript was privileged to find in Jan Geisbusch an editor whose expertise and patience shaped it into the present form.

To all contributors the authors are indebted in sincere gratitude.

Jürgen Osing
November 2020

Publisher's foreword

After more than 60 years since the first mission to the site, with *The Wadi Shatt el-Rigal* the Egypt Exploration Society takes the penultimate step towards the full publication of its epigraphic survey of Gebel el-Silsilah and the nearby Wadi Shatt el-Rigal. The final volume, on Gebel el-Silsilah itself, is currently in active preparation and expected to join its present sister volume within a year or two.

Previous publications have appeared in monograph form as *Gebel es-Silsilah. I. The Shrines* (ASE 31, 1963) by Ricardo Caminos and T. G. H. James, and as articles in the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* (R. A. Caminos, "Surveying Gebel es-Silsilah", *JEA* 41 [1955]; id., "Amenophis III's Vizier Amenhotep at Silsilah East", *JEA* 73 [1987]).

Unfortunately, the death of Ricardo Caminos in 1992 led to a hiatus in publishing activities related to Gebel el-Silsilah, and after some years the outstanding volumes began to slip from the Society's full attention as other fieldwork projects and their publications moved to the fore. With more than three decades having passed since the most recent *JEA* article and closer to four since the mission that yielded the material for the present volume, it needs to be kept in mind that *The Wadi Shatt el-Rigal* represents something of a legacy publication, to a substantial degree reflecting the state of research of its time. Carried out today, with the technological advances since the 1980s, in particular the use of digital recording and analysis, the plates section would certainly look different. Even so, the Society feels that it is still sensible to adhere to its commitment to publish this material, making it more easily available to a wider audience, alongside its very detailed and thorough textual corpus.

The Society is therefore very grateful to Prof Jürgen Osing, whose determination and dedication has finally seen this volume through to its publication.

Jan Geisbusch
Publications Manager
Egypt Exploration Society
November 2020

II. HISTORY OF THE SITE

North of Gebel el-Silsila, c. 65 km north of Aswan and 40 km south of Edfu, where the Nile has forced a passage through a huge massif of sandstone, the bordering *gebel* retreats and forms a wider valley. On the west bank, however, the distance to the river does not exceed 200-300 m for a length of about 15 km, leaving only a narrow strip of fertile land. At intervals, some short transverse wadis cut deep through the *gebel* and wind westwards into the desert, one of them the Wadi Shatt el-Rigal 3.5 km north of Gebel el-Silsila between the villages of el-Hosh (5.5 km N) and Nag^c el-Hammam (1.5 km S). The Arabic name Wadi Shatt el-Rigal means 'The Wadi of the Bank of the Men' and seems to refer to the steep cliff with the figures of the great relief of Mentuhotep II.⁵ However, Wadi Shaṭb el-Rigal 'The Wadi of the Carving of the Men',⁶ is the local form of the name and was so already when W. Golénischeff visited the Wadi in 1886. In the 19th century, the Wadi was also known by the name of 'Hunter's Rest'.⁷

In pharaonic times, the area seems to have been the northernmost part of the first Upper Egyptian nome, *T3-zti* 'Nubia',⁸ while in late prehistory, the natural barrier of Gebel el-Silsila seems to have marked the southern border of the Egyptian Naqada culture towards the Nubian C-group further south. Very little archaeological work in the form of surveys or excavations has been done here, but this has not saved the sites from looting and destruction which occurred soon after their discovery already a century ago.

Immediately north of Gebel el-Silsila, excavations have revealed the settlement of *Hnw* on the east bank⁹ and on the west bank, a little north of the speos of Horemheb, that of *Nfr*, dated to the New Kingdom on the basis of finds from the Amarna period.¹⁰ North of Kagug, there was a tomb with an Egyptian relief of undefined date, and close by a late Roman cemetery around a boulder with Egyptian graffiti and figures (New Kingdom?).¹¹ At Nag^c el-Hammam ('Village of the Bath') on the west bank were found another late Roman cemetery with numerous graves and tombstones with Greek names as well as the remains of a large vaulted Roman building ('Bath') and of a drain-pipe, as well as Nubian ('Ababda') pan-grave burials of the Second Intermediate Period,¹² a hieroglyphic graffito of two scribes (probably New Kingdom), a Greek graffito, and Coptic graffiti. At the northern end of the Roman cemetery, a quarter of a mile north of the village, there were five older rock tombs at the top of the cliff and below them two Carian graffiti and several graffiti from the Eleventh Dynasty, one of them 'cut over the figure of a giraffe hammered out with a flint; the outlines of the giraffe are as weather-worn as the natural surface of the stone, whereas the inscription still looks comparatively fresh.'¹³ Further pan-grave burials came to light south of el-Hosh.¹²

At the foot of the northern cliff of Gebel el-Silsila East, close to the stela of Amenophis IV, there was a predynastic cemetery, the southernmost of all Egyptian archaic cemeteries,¹⁴ probably from the Naqada IId period.¹⁵ In Gebel el-Silsila East and West and between Nag^c el-Hammam and el-Hosh, in particular in the *wadis* of Shatt el-Rigal, Khor el-Salam and Khor el-Tangura, the cliffs are crowded with prehistoric rock-drawings of giraffes, gazelles, etc.¹⁶ All those remains show that some parts of the area were inhabited in historic times, one of them even in prehistoric times.

In antiquity the only natural resource of more than local importance was sandstone. In Gebel el-Silsila, on both sides of the river, and in places further north in the Gebel Ramadi on the west bank as far as El-Hosh, the sandstone has a solid, dense quality, very suitable for blocks for monumental buildings. Enormous quantities have been quarried at Gebel el-Silsila and Nag^c el-Hammam from the end of the Old Kingdom to the Roman period, and at el-Hosh in the Graeco-Roman period.¹⁷

The Wadi Shatt el-Rigal starts from a huge sand dune which descends from a very wide sandy plain on the desert plateau and meanders from west to east over a length of 700 m. It has cut a deep gorge, only 10 m wide at the head and widening up to 44 m in front of the big relief of Mentuhotep II and 49 m at the mouth. The cliffs are steep and high, up to 30 m near the mouth, descending to a few metres only in the central section of the southern cliffs. Shifting sand covers the bed of the Wadi, leaving only a few blocks of stone to emerge here and there.¹⁸

In and near the Wadi, a few small, isolated quarrying trials and an abundance of rock-drawings – already from the prehistoric period – as well as reliefs and graffiti are the only traces of human activity. The animals of the desert have trodden a number of narrow tracks which run across the *gebel* on both sides of the Wadi, in certain places down into it and along the edge of the southern cliffs. No traces of a settlement or of other buildings, even of stone huts, have been found.¹⁹ The narrow strip of alluvial land between the river and the Wadi, once subject to the annual inundation, would have prevented a permanent settlement.

The first European traveller who saw the site and recorded his visit was A. C. Harris in 1850,²⁰ followed by J. G. Wilkinson (1855?),²¹ É. Prisse d'Avennes,²² and A. Eisenlohr (1869).²³ They copied the great relief of Mentuhotep II and some of the neighbouring inscriptions, but only Harris's copy was published (by A. Eisenlohr).

In 1887, W. M. F. Petrie and F. Ll. Griffith copied the three royal reliefs and most of the graffiti, an admirable work accomplished within one day.²⁴ Petrie's *A Season in Egypt. 1887*, London 1888, pp. 14-19 and pls. XIV-XVII has been the standard publication since. Parts were re-published and additions provided by Petrie himself,²⁵ A. H. Sayce,²⁶ G. Legrain,²⁷ F. W. von Bissing,²⁸ and especially H. E. Winlock.²⁹ PM V, pp. 206-8, gives a full bibliography; Peden, *Graffiti*, p. 81f., gives an overview of some of the graffiti. Legrain notes that he re-copied all the inscriptions of the Wadi in January 1895,³⁰ but his copies have remained unpublished. Of the hundreds of rock-drawings, only very few have been mentioned and published by G. I. Chester,³¹ Petrie, H. A. Winkler,³² Winlock,²⁹ and P. Červíček.³³

Winlock took a special interest in the Wadi when he was excavating the monuments of the Eleventh Dynasty at Deir el-Bahri. After two days of intense work in the Wadi in 1926 (with P. E. Newberry) and 1927 (with H. Burton), he published two substantial reports²⁸ which included a fresh interpretation and a detailed account of all previous scholarly work in the Wadi.³⁴ In the abundant evidence from the time of Mentuhotep II he saw 'the mementoes of a picnic of four thousand years ago' and drew a vivid picture of the scenery in which all the groups of visitors found their place: '... the King and his courtiers would have sailed up river from Thebes and have moored their traveling boats to the river bank at the mouth of the little valley – Meket-Rē' among them in his dahabiyeh with a kitchen boat trailing on behind just as he is among the models in the Cairo and the Metropolitan museums.' 'Without doubt many of the other graffiti in the Shatt el-Rigal name the lesser fry in the train of Neb-ḥepet-Rē' Mentu-ḥotpe and his nobles. The rocks were scribbled over by innumerable other Mentu-ḥotpes, In-tefs, Ipi, Khetys – and even a Meket among them – all names common in the Eleventh Dynasty. ... of later visitors ... there seems to have been a continuous procession the next five hundred years, from the reign of S'ankh-ka-Rē' at the end of the Eleventh Dynasty to that of Thutmose III in the Eighteenth ...'³⁵ The present publication will largely confirm this scenery.

II.i. Reliefs and inscriptions

General remarks

Inside the Wadi and on the *gebel* to the south and the north of it, the rocks are crowded with inscriptions and drawings. Most of them are found on the southern cliffs of the Wadi which are lower than the northern ones, but steeper, shady and much less buried in sand, thus much more suitable for writing and drawing. The northern cliffs have been used only near the mouth of the Wadi.

Three royal reliefs are found at the opposite ends of the Wadi: Two of Mentuhotep II (51 regnal years, c. 2009–1959 BC) near the mouth in a small bay with high, steep walls ('High Bay') and a further one of Mentuhotep III (12 regnal years, c. 1958–1947 BC)³⁶ near the head. Most of the graffiti are centred around these reliefs and in a large bay with low cliffs halfway between them ('Low Bay', locs. 57–64). Far fewer occur outside these centres or even on the rocks of the *gebel* south and north of the Wadi.

Graffiti

As is the case with the royal reliefs, most of the graffiti date from the late Eleventh Dynasty. This is indicated by the names (many *'In-it.f*, *Mntw-htp*, *Hty*, *Nht*, *Ihy*, *Tti*, names composed with *Hry-š.f* and *Sbk*, etc.), distinctive signs of Old Hieratic, which was in use until the early Twelfth Dynasty (, *tw*),³⁷ and coherent groups of titles which are connected with such names and hieratic signs. Some signs show the peculiar forms of the latest phase of Old Hieratic as attested in the Heqanakhte papers³⁸ and at Hatnub (, , ).³⁹

In fact, only a few graffiti cannot be attributed to the late Eleventh Dynasty, most or even all of them dating from the late Twelfth Dynasty to the Ramesside period. The double cartouche of an obscure king *Ntr-kz-R^c - Htp* in loc. 46 A would seem to date from the Thirteenth Dynasty rather than from the end of the Sixth Dynasty.

Among the personal names, those composed with an element *qz(y)* 'the High one', hitherto unknown and perhaps referring to a god, deserve special mention (*Sz-qz*, *Sz-qzy*, *Htp-qz* (?), *Nht-qz*).⁴⁰ Some of the minor persons have a distinctive 'the elder' (*wr*, *ʕ*) or 'the younger' (*nḥnw*) added to their names (26 G 2, 27 P.AB, 31 G, 58 E, 60 E; 49 C, 54).⁴¹ In some cases, these additions may serve to distinguish homonymous persons even here in the Wadi (*Ihy*, *Nht-Sbk*, *Sbk-m-sz.f*).

The graffiti make use both of hieroglyphic and hieratic writing, though with some differentiation. Under Mentuhotep II, those of his courtiers are, with the exception of the Royal Documentary Scribe *Izi* and the God's Treasurer and Scribe *Wzḥ*, all hieroglyphic, whereas those of the lower ranks, with the exception of some scribes and petty officials (*imy-r-s.t*, *wdpw*), are hieratic. Under Mentuhotep III the evidence is all hieratic, except in some captions of the royal scene.

Nearly all of these graffiti are restricted to single persons, sometimes accompanied by a subordinate, and they mention, quite laconically, only names, often with one title or more, sometimes also with epithets.⁴² Only two texts, very short ones and by persons of low rank, contain passages in the first person singular (27 AC-AD, 59 AG).

Most of the graffiti are written horizontally, much fewer vertically, i.e. nearly all those of more than one line. Most of the graffiti from the reign of Mentuhotep III in locs. 75-78, perhaps also 68, are written vertically, only three out of 16 being written horizontally, and none of them is put in a frame.

Filiation

Filiation is often expressed, both for the upper and the lower ranks, mostly in the form A *s3* B 'A's son B' with the peculiar kind of (graphic) inversion (26 S, 27 G.K.Y, 28 B, 31 G, 48 C, 59 X, 61 Y, 63 P.U, 78 A) or by *ms.n* 'born by/to' (63 I, 76 E), both of them formulae which were in use since the Sixth Dynasty⁴³ In the hieratic graffiti, *s3* is written in the specific form of the 'egg'-sign , probably originating from a hieratic ligature of  .⁴⁴

Occasionally, the indirect genitive is used (*Mntw-htp n 'In-it.f* in 61 AB, *Isw n 'Itw-m-sz.f* in 59 K),⁴⁵ once both mother and father are indicated (*Idy*, born by/to *Iryt* (?), son of *'In-it.f* in 76 E). The later formula *ir.n* 'made by', attested only since the Middle Kingdom,⁴⁶ is found in three graffiti, in fact of later visitors (26 T, 32 D, 40 A: Twelfth to Eighteenth Dynasties).

Epithets

In many of the graffiti, laconic though they are themselves, the authors, high courtiers as well as minor officials, make use of short, traditional phrases to express their close attachment to a superior, often the king himself, and the favour they enjoyed.

Epithets referring to a 'lord' (*nb*)⁴⁷ are most frequent: *mry nb.f* (*m3^c*) '(truly) beloved of his lord' (25 L1, 27 T.Y, 61 M.AA, 75 C-E, 76 B.C, 77 A, 78 D.F) and *mrr nb.f m3w* 'he whom his lord loves anew and anew' (27 Z); *ḥsy (n) nb.f* (*m3^c*) '(truly) praised by his lord' (27 N, 59 U, 62 E, 63 I.J; similarly 62 D3, perhaps also 25 F and 59 P) and *ḥsy n nb.f mrr.f* 'praised by his lord and beloved of him' (80 D).⁴⁸ Here in the Wadi, the phrases with *mry/mrr* usually precede a name,⁴⁹ while those

with *h_{sy}* follow it. Vice versa: 25 *L*, 61 *AA* (end) and 27 *F*. *nb* ‘lord’ clearly refers to the king in the graffiti of the entourage of Mentuhotep II close to the great relief (27 *F.N.T.Y.AA*), and probably in the graffiti close to the relief of Mentuhotep III (75 *C-E*, 76 *B.C*, 77 *A*, 78 *D-F*); but to a superior in those of low ranking persons (kitchen personnel, Herdsmen of Hounds), mostly in the Low Bay (59 *U*, 61 *AA*, 62 *E*, 63 *I.J*), but also in other places (25 *L?*, 80 *D*). In the graffito of the ‘Overseer of the Seat *N-k₃*, his beloved one and his praised one of his affection in the course of every day, efficient for his (royal) Lord, without peer’ in the Low Bay (59 *D*), *nb* is written with the god’s determinative, hence it probably refers to the king.

The epithet ‘beloved of his Lord (i.e. the King)’ is particularly frequent around the relief of Mentuhotep III. Most of these persons had their names written more than once, usually preceded either by their title or that epithet (*In-*it*.f*: 75 *C*, ? 78 *B*; *Hpy*: 78 *D.E*; *Hmy*: 78 *F*; *Nht-q₃*: 75 *D*, 76 *B.C*, 77 *A*). Both epithet and title are used for *Ihy* (75 *C.E*), perhaps to distinguish this man from another *Ihy* (76 *E*), and for the [Overseer of] Lower Egypt [*M*]*nt*[*w-h_{tp}*] (76 *B*). In six cases (75 *C-E*, 76 *B.C*, 77 *A*), *nb* ‘lord’ is written with the god’s determinative and in front of *mry* ‘beloved’, hence it refers directly to the king. In two graffiti of *Hpy*, an Overseer of the Seat (78 *D.E*), *nb* is written with the determinative  after *mry*, referring rather to a superior rather than the king.

Two Butlers call themselves respectively ‘one whose name the King knows’ (27 *AD*) and ‘one whose name is known every day’ (61 *T*).

Only a few officials, none of the high courtiers, bear the epithet or rank of *rh nswt (m₃ˁ)* (True) Acquaintance of the King:⁵⁰ From the time of Mentuhotep II a God’s Treasurer (25 *S*, 80 *A*) and together with him a Scribe of Mixtures (?) in the House of Embalming (80 *A*), an Overseer of Lower Egypt (27 *X*), and a Sealer (68); from the time of Mentuhotep III a certain *Ih?y* (75 *C.E*), perhaps identical with the Overseer of Royal Ornaments *Ihy* (76 *E*).

Sometimes the wish ‘*nh wd₃ snb* ‘may he live, be prosperous, be healthy’ is added to the name (40 *C*, 59 *Y*, 61 *L*) – as elsewhere in expedition sites of the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom.⁵¹

Two minor persons have added *m₃ˁ hrw* ‘true of voice, justified’, a wish for the afterlife, to their names (59 *S*, 61 *N*); a visitor of the Second Intermediate Period has added it, in the feminine form *m₃ˁ.t hrw*, to the name of his mother who had probably died already by that time (32 *D*).

Later visitors

After the Eleventh Dynasty, the Wadi saw only occasional visitors, evidently attracted by the reliefs of Mentuhotep II. They left their own or their ruler’s name, preferably close to the reliefs.⁵² The great diversity of their names and titles, most of them unique in the Wadi, and different from those of the Eleventh Dynasty, markedly distinguishes them from the latter group.

Beside the smaller relief, there are a graffito from ‘Regnal year 3’ of Amenemhet IV (33 *B*; 1772–1764 BC),⁵³ another one from the Twelfth or Thirteenth Dynasty (33 *A*), and two graffiti from the Thirteenth Dynasty (32 *C-D*). 32 *C*, the longest graffito in the Wadi, mentions a party of eleven persons, four of them women. The double cartouche of an obscure king *Ntr-k₃-Rˁ - Htp*, an equally obscure Horus name *W₃d*, and a Mayor (‘Overseer of the Town’) *Mntw- <h>tp*, all of them presumably from the Thirteenth Dynasty, occur further up the Wadi (46 *A*, 49 *A*, 67 *B*).

Beside and below the great relief are found cartouches of Neferhotep I and Sobkemsaf I or more likely II of the Thirteenth and Seventeenth Dynasties and of Amenophis I (26 *M.G.I*; 1514–1494 BC).⁵⁴ Among the private graffiti, mostly written in hieratic, some names, titles, or hieratic signs suggest a dating to the Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties: High Steward *Is*; Mayor *Rs-snb*; the Royal Marine (‘Man of the Ruler’s Crew’) *Snbt₃fy*; the Scribe’s Assistant (‘Keeper of Documents’) *S₃-Nwy*; web-Priest *B₃-nb-mnt*, Sculptor (?) *Rs-snb*. The Kitchen Employee of the Quarrying Galleries (?) *Sn* (26 *E*), may have come over from the quarries of Gebel el-Silsila, perhaps also the Scribe of a Compound *Ddw-Sbk* (26 *D*) and the Overseer of a Compound *Hty* (27 *V*), if their convicts served compulsory labour in that place.⁵⁵

Scribe *ʾlb*, who was here together with Scribe *Dʒb* and placed his graffito right beneath the feet of Mentuhotep II, had come explicitly ‘to see (king) [Nebhepetre]’ (26 *J*), probably early in the Eighteenth Dynasty. *Pn-izty*, the famous Theban architect of that period, has left two graffiti: One close to the great relief (Overseer of Work of Amenophis I, true of voice, ... of Thutmose I and II, *Pn-izty*; 26 *W*) and another one, with the cartouches of Thutmose III (1479–1425 BC) and Hatshepsut (1479–1458 BC),⁵⁶ on a desert cliff southwest of the Wadi (Overseer of Work in the House of Amun, *Pn-izty*, justified; 79 *B*). *Pn-izty*, and perhaps also other visitors of the Eighteenth Dynasty, may have come over from their work for the rock-shrines or in the quarries of Gebel el-Silsila.⁵⁷ An Accountant Scribe of Cattle ʿ with a title specific to the New Kingdom is found on the cliffs north of the Wadi (102 *AD*). Epigraphic reasons suggest a Ramesside date for *Sʒ-Imn*, son of Scribe *Ms* (40 *A*), and the *web*-Priest of Sakhmet *Hr-ḥtp* (59 *T*).

These are the latest Egyptian graffiti of the site, and centuries elapsed before four Carian graffiti were scratched on a boulder south of the Wadi (4 *B.C.E.F*), perhaps in 593 BC during a stop of Carian soldiers *en route* to or back from the Nubian campaign of Psammētikhos II. A shallow burial pit for a man by the Greek name of Σωτηριος (16 *E*), presumably of Roman date, is found nearby on the plateau and a Greek graffito of Αμμων Κερδ[ω?]ν inside the Wadi (61 *Z*).

II.ii. Mentuhotep II and his court

The two reliefs of Mentuhotep II *Nb-ḥp.t-Rʿ* are carved with great care, a monumental one in an impressive position in the centre of the High Bay above herds of prehistoric giraffes (26 *H*) and a smaller one on a ledge of rock a little further up the Wadi (33 *B*). In both of them the (Royal Treasurer), Overseer of the Treasury *Hty*, the senior official of the Palace, the ‘King’s House’ (*pr nswt*), is represented – as the only official, and in the smaller relief as the only person – in a prominent position in front of the king.⁵⁸

A date ‘Regnal year 39’ is found close to the smaller scene, ‘Regnal year 37’ close to the monumental one. Both of these dates evidently refer to Mentuhotep II who reigned for 51 years and reunited Egypt before year 41.⁵⁹ His throne name *Nb-ḥp.t-Rʿ* was added to the graffiti of Butler *By* (61 *Q*) and the Royal Documentary Scribe *ʾzi* (86 *A*). In all four cases *ḥpt* is written with the oar-sign, as was usual after the reunification.⁶⁰ The name of ‘Horus *smʒ* (*tʒ.wy*)’ in 88 *A*, a little north of 86 *A*, and the bare signs for Horus, Gold Horus, and King of Lower Egypt in 29 *G*, 30, 33 *B*, close to the royal relief of 33 *B*, must refer to him, too.

On the cliff west of the High Bay (27), many royal officials had their names and titles written in elaborate hieroglyphic graffiti, often in large, well carved characters, in the vicinity of their lord. Some of them are known from Deir el-Bahri where they were represented in the mortuary temple of Mentuhotep II⁶¹ and had their tombs in the cliffs nearby (*Hty*, *Mkt-Rʿ*, *Mrw*, *Dʒg*).⁶² The association of their graffiti to the royal relief in the High Bay illustrates the same close attachment to the king.

In addition to the Overseer of the Treasury *Hty*,⁶¹ they are:

‘Overseer of the Six Great Mansions *Dʒg*, born by *Nm.t*’ (27 *AA*);

‘Royal Treasurer and Sole Friend, Overseer of the Eastern Deserts to whom the great officials come bowing at the gate of the King’s House,⁶³ beloved of his Lord, Overseer of Treasurers *Mrw*’ (27 *T*), or just a bare ‘Overseer of Treasurers *Mrw*’, subsequently deleted (27 *A*);

‘He whom his Lord loves anew and anew *Mkt-Rʿ* (27 *Z*), probably identical with the Overseer of the Treasury *Mkt-Rʿ*.⁶⁴

Attested at Deir el-Bahri are also:⁶⁵

‘Royal Chamberlain (*hry dp nswt*) *Hpi*, praised by his Lord’ (27 *N*);⁶⁶

‘Royal Treasurer and Sole Friend, Royal Documentary Scribe (*sʒ ʿ n nswt*) *ʾzi*’ (27 *L*), the king’s secretary,⁶⁷ who has left two more hieroglyphic graffiti, one in a very conspicuous position beneath a

cartouche of *Nb-ḥp.t-R^c* (86 A) right at the mouth of the Wadi as a kind of entrance mark, the other one further up the Wadi (40 C), and two hieratic ones, probably also a hieroglyphic one, above the Wadi (7 A-C). Another Royal Documentary Scribe, *In*, has left a tiny graffito in 102 Z.

‘Count, Chief Lector-priest, Scribe of the God’s Book *Htyy*’ (26 O),⁶⁸ the only courtier who had his graffito written next to the king in the High Bay.

Not attested at Deir el-Bahri:

‘The King’s Herald, whose name the God knows, to whom Upper and Lower Egypt listen, truly beloved of his Lord, *S3-M3-ḥs3*’ (27 Y);

‘Great *web*-Priest in the Mansion of Gold, Chief of Sculptors in the Palace, Overseer of Sculptors *Wsr-inr*’s son *In-it.f*’ (27 G), who was perhaps responsible for the execution of both reliefs of Mentuhotep II and for the graffiti of the other court officials in loc. 27;

‘Overseer of Royal Retainers (i.e. of the royal guard) *Sbk-ḥtp* together with the Overseer of Leathercrafts [...]’ (27 H);

‘Confidant of the King in all his places, truly praised by his Lord, Royal Treasurer, Overseer of Treasurers *Mry* – one with many offices in the King’s House⁶¹’ (27 E-F);

‘True Acquaintance of the King, Overseer of Lower Egypt *Itw*’ (27 X);

‘Overseer of Lower Egypt *Hnmw-nḥt*’ (27 W and above loc. 26 in 8 C).

The title of ‘Overseer of Lower Egypt’ was rather common within the Treasury (*pr ḥd*) during the Middle Kingdom, and was often borne by the leading staff of expeditions to Serabit el-Khadim,⁶⁹ ‘God’s Treasurers’ (*ḥtmty nṯr*) and ‘Overseers of the Cabinet’ (*imy-r ḥ hnwty*), but also ‘Trustworthy Sealers’ (*ḥtmw kf3 ib*). It has been suggested that it ‘may have been intended to provide a palace official with authority for levies’ on missions outside the residence,⁷⁰ but the exact function is yet to be determined. Compared with the other courtiers of loc. 27, the ‘Overseers of Lower Egypt’ with their short graffiti were evidently officials of lower rank.

The same is true of some graffiti on the cliffs right to the east of the High Bay which seem to belong to the same group (25 F and R hieroglyphic, carefully carved; 25 S and 80 A in large, 25 O in smaller hieratic characters):

‘Acquaintance of the King (*rḥ nswt*), God’s Treasurer (*ḥtmty nṯr*),⁷¹ Scribe *W3ḥ*’, who has left two graffiti in a conspicuous position, as a kind of entrance mark, on the opposite cliffs of the mouth of the Wadi (25 S, 80 A); and together with him in 80 A ‘Acquaintance of the King, Scribe of Mixtures (?) in the House of Embalming (*pr nfr*), *Ḥk3*’;

The ‘Assistant of an Overseer of the House of Embalming’ is mentioned in 59 Q.

‘Overseer of the King’s Sandal-makers *ḥh*, who sews up the leather sacks and skin bags of the King’s House for his Lord daily’ (25 O);

‘Overseer of Treasurers *M-Sbk* (?)’ (25 M);

another ‘Overseer of Treasurers *Mkt*’ in the Low Bay (59 M);

‘Scribe of the God’s Book *Mntw*’ (25 F);

‘Overseer of the Gateway *Isṯ*’ (25 R).⁷²

A number of minor ranks have also added their names on the cliff of loc. 27, mostly in the western half, to the east of the High Bay (22-25) and close to the small relief of Mentuhotep II (33) in small inconspicuous hieratic characters:

Two ‘Scribes of Offerings’ (*s3 ḥtpw*; 27 AI and 34 C);⁷³ one ‘Butler’ (27 D); one ‘Overseer of the Seat’ (27 U); six or seven ‘Sealers’ (*ḥtmw*) (25 M; 27 R.AB-AE.AG; 34 A?; 25 M and 27 R hieroglyphic), one of them ‘Sealer *S3-ḥrd.w* who was praised by his Lord at the State Portal’ and ‘whose name the King knows’ (27 AC-AD), evidently a servant of the king in the residence; and several men without titles (25 A.J2.3.L1.2.N1.O1, 27 I.J.M.O.Q.S.AH). It should be recalled that Mentuhotep II had at least two Sealers (*Mzi*, *Nḥt*) represented in the reliefs of his mortuary temple in Deir el-Bahri.⁷⁴ – A ‘Director of Work (*hrp k3.t*)’ (27 K); an ‘Overseer of the Compound (*imy-r ḥnr.t*)’ (27 V); and a ‘Priest (?) *Hnw*’ (33 A) may have been be later visitors.

Further low ranks, explicitly attached to the king, are found in and near the Low Bay:

‘Sealer of the King’s Jewellery/Equipment / Crew *Mri*’s son *Sbk-nḏm*’ (63 D.F);

‘Keeper of the King’s Linen *Šd-ḥtp*’ (?) (64 G);

‘Clothier (?) [NN (?)]’ (64 K), who seems to have been responsible for resp. 300 and 200 pieces of cloth;

‘Keeper of fresh buffet-tables *Bḥ*, who prepares the jar and the bread which are prepared for the Majesty of his Lord’ (63 K);

‘Overseer of the Seat *N-kz*, his beloved one and his praised one of his affection in the course of every day, efficient for his (royal) Lord [*nb* written with the god’s determinative], without peer’ (59 D);

‘Scribe of Offerings of the King’s House, praised and beloved by him in the course of every day, his beloved assistant who administers all [offerings of/and (?)] all his duties under the charge of what [he] (i.e. the king) orders with his mouth, *Nn*’ (58 D);

a ‘Scribe of God’s Offerings (*sš ḥtpw nṯr*): *ṯqr*’ (59 AH);⁷⁵

a ‘God’s Scribe (*sš nṯr*) (?) *Nḥtw* (54)’, unless he was a later visitor;

‘*Šz-qz*, [praised] every day by his lo[rd], beloved of Re’ (61 Z); and perhaps

‘[...] of the King[’s Hou]se (?) [...]’ (58 A).

All those court officials of high and lower ranks would hardly have come to a deserted spot like the Wadi Shatt el-Rigal unless they accompanied the king himself.⁷⁶ The most prominent of them, the ‘Overseer of the (Royal) Treasure (*imy-r ḥtm.t*) *Hty*’, the senior official of the palace, had authority over all precious materials and products of the King’s House (*pr-nswt*) in the residence, oversaw expeditions and building projects far away, and accompanied the king on his inspection tours through Egypt.⁷⁷ His staff comprised Overseers of Treasurers (*imy-r ḥtmty.w*), who seem to have directed the provisioning department of the palace, later also Overseers of the Treasury (*pr-ḥd*),⁷⁸ Sealers (*ḥtmw*) and other officials, among them Stewards (*imy-r pr*),⁷⁹ some of whom are found as leaders of expeditions in the Wadi Hammamat and Wadi el-Hudi in the Elveneth and Twelfth Dynasties and in the Sinai in the Eighteenth Dynasty.⁸⁰

The ‘Overseer of Ships (*imy-r (‘)ḥ‘w*) *Sbk-nḥt* (?)’ with his assistant ‘*Šz-??*’ (27 P) and his colleagues *Mntw-ḥtp*’s son *Šz-Mntw* (48 C) and [...] (64 M ?) may have brought Mentuhotep II and his entourage to the site.

Like the court officials of locs. 27 and 25, three more persons of higher rank have left hieroglyphic graffiti, but they may be suspected to have been later visitors. Neither titles nor locations suggest a relation to the court:

‘The Overseer of the Troop (*imy-r mš‘*) *Sḏm-ṯmn*’,⁸¹ who has left a crude graffito in 31 E;

‘Scribe, Great Lector-priest *Hr*’ (15 B); and

‘Lector-priest and sem-Priest *Nfr-tm*’ (42 B).

II.iii. The train of Mentuhotep II

When the king and his entourage travelled through the country, usually by boat, they were certainly accompanied by a large train of assistants, messengers, servants, and provisioning personnel. Since most of the minor graffiti of the late Eleventh Dynasty here in the Wadi, in particular the very numerous provisioning personnel, in fact belong in this category, it seems reasonable to assign them to the royal train.⁸²

While all of the high courtiers of Mentuhotep II have left their names around his monumental relief in the High Bay, the very numerous minor ranks have done so only occasionally (i.a. six Sealers, two Retainers, and some Scribes), but mostly at a greater distance, in particular in the Low Bay further up the Wadi, out of sight of the High Bay (locs. 57-64).⁸³ The Low Bay would seem to be the place where the train was encamped during its stay.

This distribution reflects a clear and simple distinction between superiors and subordinates, the same as observed when they travelled together on the Nile – the kitchen personnel in a separate boat,

as attested in the contemporary models of Meket-Re⁸⁴ and as described in a passage of the *Story of Sinuhe*, slightly later.⁸⁵

The same distinction determines the relationships among the lower ranks. Quite frequently, a subordinate refers explicitly to a superior as ‘his lord’ (*nb.f*) or to his own status as ‘his assistant’ or ‘assistant of ...’ (*hry-^c.f*, *hry-^c n* ...). The same can be expressed by adding the name in smaller characters, written less carefully, close to a superior (62 C, 80), by hieratic beside hieroglyphic writing in the same tablet (59 M, 62 C), or by a cluster around a central tablet (62 D). Beside a specific function, most of the titles themselves denote a hierarchical position.

Whether or not initially intended for this purpose, the name of King Nebhepetre^c (Mentuhotep II) attached to that of Butler *By* in 61 Q would seem to provide a date for nearly all of the many graffiti in the Low Bay, and the wish to be ‘In the favour of the Sovereign!’ in 61 J could have been a suitable device for the whole train.

Most of the minor personnel served in the *šn^cw* ‘kitchen (for preparing and storing victuals, mostly bread, beer, and meat)’,⁸⁶ an institution which is attested in the Middle Kingdom for the large households of the king, nomarchs and temples. It comprised various food departments which were called, at least in a later part of that period, *ṯ.t / hnq.t / iw.f*... ‘Chamber of Bread / Beer / Meat / ...’, Bakery, Brewery, etc.’⁸⁷ In the royal household, it was under the authority of Overseers of Treasurers (*imy-r htmt.y.w*), Overseers of Lower Egypt, and the Overseer of the Treasure (*imy-r htm.t*) himself⁸⁸ – court officials who are here recorded in and near the High Bay close to their royal lord (see *supra*, pp. 17-19).

Here in the Wadi, this staff is represented by numerous personnel: Two Overseers of the Kitchen (*imy-r šn^cw*)⁸⁹ and many of their subordinates: two to four Stewards (*imy-r pr*, perhaps as an abbreviation for *imy-r pr n šn^cw* Steward of the Kitchen⁹⁰), 19-20 Overseers of the (Administrative) Seat (*imy-r s.t*),⁹¹ two Keepers of the Kitchen (*iry šn^cw*),⁹² two Keepers of the Chamber (*iry-^c.t*),⁹³ a Keeper of the Magazine (?) (*iry-wdž*),⁹⁴ at least 18 Butlers (*wdpw*), three to four Attendants (*wbž*),⁹⁵ and two to four Employees of the Kitchen (*šn^cw*),⁹⁶ also five Butchers (*sftw*),⁹⁷ an Overseer of all Butchers (*imy-r sft nb*),⁹⁸ at least 19 Sealers (*htmw*)⁹⁹ and, perhaps connected with them, a Sole Friend (*smr w^cty*) and two Cooks (?). Some Overseers of the Seat had Assistants (*hry-^c*),¹⁰⁰ though they are not mentioned with specific titles (58 B, 60 F, 62 D). The Retainers (*šmsw*)¹⁰⁰ may have been a separate group, since they had a Scribe of their own, and most of their graffiti are found outside of the Low Bay.

This personnel forms a coherent group, in fact the largest one of the site. In accordance with sources of the early Twelfth Dynasty, in particular the scenes in the tomb of the nomarch *Imn-m-ḥz.t* at Beni Hasan (temp. Sesostri I),¹⁰² none of their titles is followed by a specification ‘of the Chamber of Bread / Beer / Meat / ...’

The presence of the butchers and the claim that one of them ‘directed the attendants of the Overseer of the Seat *Nht*’ would indicate that slaughtering and carving of meat were of importance here – activities which, in the Twelfth Dynasty, could also characterize the Overseer of the Seat, the Overseer of the Kitchen,¹⁰³ the Butler,¹⁰⁴ the Attendant¹⁰⁵ and, together with baking and brewing, the whole institution of the Kitchen.¹⁰⁶

In addition, there are many names without a title, though sometimes with an epithet or a filiation. Like the provisioning personnel, they are particularly frequent in the Low Bay (locs. 57-64) and along the way from the High to the Low Bay (locs. 28-56). In the clusters of locs. 63-64, they even give the impression of a continuous series, interrupted only by a few graffiti with low ranking titles. They might here form a coherent group, separated from the provisioning personnel and singers in the preceding locations (46-62), and perhaps with an even lower status such as the lowermost grades within the kitchen personnel, the *hry-^c* Assistant or the *ihms* Apprentice.¹⁰⁷ Only few of these names occur for other low ranking persons, but any identity is uncertain, even for *Sz-qz(y)*, a name found six or seven times here in the Wadi and hitherto nowhere else, twice for a Retainer (50 A.B) and four or five times without a title (32 E, 44 A?, 46 B, 61 Z, 63 E).

Titles without a name occur less often. They are probably to be regarded as unfinished graffiti.

Kitchen: Overseer of the Kitchen *In-it.f*’s son *Sn-(n)-it(.f)* (?) together with Butler *nh*’s son *In-*

it.f, beloved of his lord (61 AA); Butler *Mntw-ḥtp*, praised by the Overseer of the Kitchen *S3-Ḳ[mn ?]* (62 D3); Keeper of the Kitchen *Mnw* (59 AE). Employees of the Kitchen (?): *Nfr-sšm* together with (?) *Nfr* and *ʿry* (61 AD); *W3ḥ.f-di.f* (65 A). An anonymous person is called ‘[praised/lov]ed by his lord and without peer in the Kitchen’ (59 P). Butcher *Ḥtpi* claims: ‘I directed all the attendants of the Overseer of the Seat *Nḥt*. He had chosen me from within the Kitchen because I had a strong position in his heart’ (59 AG), and another person calls himself: ‘Sealer *Tniy* (?) who has no pee[r (?) in the] Kitchen (?) ...’ (34 A).

Stewards: *Bbi* (48 F); *Qd-mrw* together with Butler *Bhy* (61 X); *ʿIn-it.f* (?) (67 C); the bare title in 59 R. In 59 F, the Overseer of the Seat *N-k3* boasts: ‘There is nobody like him for the Steward to be content with.’

Overseers of the Seat: *Sh* (14 B); *ʿI[h]y* (?) (27 U); *Ḥnty-ḥty* (29 D); *Ḥty* ? (29 E ?, 59 E ?); Butler *[Ḥt?] p*, assistant of the Overseer of the Seat *Ḥp* (58 B); *W3d-šn.w* (59 C, 60 B); *N-k3* (59 D.F); *Ḥty*’s son *Ḥty* (59 X); *Ḥn* (59 Z); *Nḥt* (59 AG); *Ḥq3w 3* (60 E); *Šmsi* (61 E); *Sn*’s son *ʿIn-it.f* and his assistant *ʿIn* (?) (62 D); *By* (63 C) and his assistant <no name> (60 F); *Sn-ms* (63 H); *Wḥ3i.w* (63 L); *Gw3w* (64 L); *Ty* (67 D); *Sbk-<n>ḥt* (80 D). Bare titles of an Overseer and of an Assistant: 59 J and 60 F. The title in a writing *imy-<r> st*: 29 E, 61 E.

Butlers: *Nb-mrt* (1 C); [*Sn*]’s son’s *ʿIn*’s son *ʿIn* (25 N); *Rn.f-ḥnh* (26 S); *Ḥry-š.f* (27 D); *Nḥt* (?) [(29 A); *Swh*’s son *ʿIn-it.f* (32 B); *Nḥt*’s son *Hy* (35 B); [*Ḥt?*] *p*, assistant of the Overseer of the Seat *Ḥpw* (58 B); *Ḥ3-ḥnh.f*’s (?) son *Ḥ3(s?)* (58 C); assistant of Butler *Nfr-pr* (?) (59 Q); *By* (61 AF, 74 B), with cartouche of king Nebhepetre (61 Q); *ʿIn-it.f* (61 T, 62 E); *Bhy* together with Steward *Qd-mrw* (61 X); *Mr.sn-r-in.t* (61 Y); *ḥnh*’s son *ʿIn-it.f* together with the Overseer of the Kitchen *ʿIn-it.f*’s son *Sn-(n)-it(.f)* (?) (61 AA); *ʿIpi-m-s3.f* (61 AE); *Nmty-ḥp* (64 A). The bare title, without a name, in 59 R. In 62 D, several Butlers have their graffiti centred around the Overseer of the Seat *Sn*’s son *ʿIn-it.f*, probably their lord: *Mntw-ḥtp* praised by the Overseer of the Kitchen *S3-Ḳ[...]*; ...; and *Nḥt*.

Attendants: *Mry* and *ʿIn[-it.f]* (?) (29 H), *Ḥtp* (40 H, 99 G); Butcher *Ḥtpi* directing all the attendants of the Overseer of the Seat *Nḥt* (59 AG); Attendant *Ḥp* who directs the attendant<s> of his lord (61 V); *..-wr* (?) (64 L).

Cooks (*ps*) (?): *Ḥty* ? (62 D 6); *Nb-ḥpt* (87 N).

Butchers, all of them close to each other in one location: *Nb-it(f)*; *ʿḥ-ms* (?); *S3-S3byt*; *ʿIn-it.f*; and *Ḥtpi* (59 H.U?.AA.AF.AG; for *Ḥtpi*, cf. supra); and perhaps a Butcher of the Kitchen (?) *Nn*, the elder (58 E).

Keeper of the Chamber: *Msi*’s son *Ḥty* (25 J).

Keeper of the Magazine (?): The bare title in 63 M.

Sealers: *Ḥty* (11, 27 AG, 32 A, 71 C); *Mri* (25 M); *Rḥ.w-r-3w.sn* (27 R); *ʿIpi-ḥnh-rn* and perhaps *ʿThy* (27 AB); *S3-ḥrd.w* (27 AC.AD); *Ti* (27 AE, 65 C); *Mkt* (29 A, 42 D); *Tniy* (?) ‘who has no pee[r (?) in the Kitchen (?)’ (34 A); *(T)t(f)-ibi* (?) (39); *Nḥt* (42 A); *Ḥnsw* (58 F, ? 63 T, 66 A); *Ḥnti....* and *ʿIsw n ʿItw-m-s3.f* (59 K); *Nfr-tm* (59 AB); *ḥnh* (60 A; 80 C), *Mt* (61 N); *Qmw* (67 A); True Acquaintance of the King, Sealer *ʿIr*. Assistant (?) <...> (68); *Nfri* (71 A); *ʿIt(f)-ḥrd* (100 AH). The bare title, without a following name: 11 (?), 26 V, 32 A, 50 A.

Sole Friend: *ʿIn-it.f* (61 M).

Scribes: *Ddw*’s son *ʿIn-it.f* (28 B), *Sbk-m-s3.f*, the elder (31 G1), *Nfri* (32 B2), *Nḥt* (?) (34 B), *Ḥnty-ḥty* (?), 58 E), *Th* (60 C), *Gg* and *ʿIi* [(?)] (62 C). The mere title: 34 B(?), 51 (?).

Further subsidiary personnel:

Retainers: *S3-Mntw* (14 J); ? *Rs-snb* (26 N); *ḥnh-Sbk* (26 P); *ḥnhw* (49 C ?); *S3-q3(y)* (50 A.B). Two are mentioned together with their masters: *ʿIpi-nḥt*, the elder, with Sealer *ʿIpi-ḥnh-rn* (27 AB); *Nḥbs* with the Overseer of Treasurers *Mkt* (59 M). A Scribe of Retainer<s> *ʿIs* in 61 I.¹⁰⁸

Three Herdsmen of Hounds (*minw tsm.w*):¹⁰⁹ *Mi* (48 A); *Mntw-ḥtp* (63 I, 76 B); *Ḥnmw-ḥtp* (63 J); also a Herdsman of cattle (*minw iḥ.w* ?) (64 I); the mere Herdsman *Ḥtyw* (?) (64 C), perhaps also [...] (?) (65 B).

10-12 *šmʿw*-Singers: *Mntw* (?); *Nḥt*; *ḥnhw*; *Ḥrw*; *Mrr*; *Ḥry-š.f-ḥtp*, the younger; *ʿIpi*; *Mntw-ḥtp* of *ʿIn-it.f*; *Ḥ<t>y-m-ḥw.t.f*; *Mntw-ḥtp* (2x); *Sr* (22 B.C; 40 E; 48 E; 61 B.L.R.AB.AC, 63 A.B, 64 M). Since most

of them are found close to each other in the southwest corner of the Low Bay, a kind of ‘singers’ corner’, they had probably come as a group. An Overseer of *hsw*-Singers (*imy-r hsw.w*)¹¹⁰, *Sbk-m-nw* and his assistant *Mr-ib-R^c*, occur in 53. The title *šm^cw*, evidently of low status,¹¹¹ is attested in the Middle Kingdom¹¹² for men singing or accompanying dancers by rhythmically clapping their hands (and by singing).¹¹³

Bare names without a title: *ʿTy-wz* (2 D; together with the figure of a seated official), *ʿTy* (22 D), *Nb-hp.t* (22 E), *ʿnhw* and *Snb.f* (25 A), *ʿIt(f).i-snb* (25 J2), *Sz-Mnw* (25 J3), *Hty* (25 L1, 27 I.O.AH, 61 H), *Nht* (25 L2, 29 B, 34 B ?), *ʿIn* (25 N1), *N-sw-Mntw* (25 O), *Mnt* (?) (25 P), *Mnh-sz* and *R-ʿnh* (?) (26 F), *Ppi* (26 K), *Wzd-mnt* (26 Q), *ʿzm* or *qmz* (?) (26 V), *ʿnh-r-fnd*’s (?) son *Tty* (27 J), *Mntw-ʿz* (27 M), *Mn* (27 Q), *N-sw-Mntw* (27 S), ... called *ʿIhy* (29 B), *Rn.f-rs* (-n.i ?), *Hr* and their brother *Nhi.n* (29 C), *ʿIn[-it.f ?]* (29 H), *Mntw-wsr* (31 D), *Ffi*’s son *Dp* (31 G2), *Sz-qz* (32 E, 44 A, 46 B, 61 Z, 63 E), *Sn-mry* (40 B), *Wsir-wnn.f* (40 D), *Nwy* (40 G), *Mr-ir(y)* (40 I), *Hr* (?) (41 B, 59 L), *Hbs-š* (42 E), *Hw-wi-Sbk* (44 B), *Htp-Hry-š.f* (47 B), *Hry-š.f* [f-htp (?)’s son] *Htp-qz* (?) and *ʿIp* (?) (48 B), *ʿnhw* (49 C), *Htp* (55 A, 61 C), *Mntw-htp* (55 B, 57, 99 G ?), [..]ptw (?) (59 G), *ʿIsw n ʿItw-m-sz.f* (59 K), *R^c-m-hz.t* (59 N), *ʿIhy*, the elder, true of voice (59 S), *ʿImn-nfr*, may he be alive, safe and healthy (59 Y), *Nht-Sbk* (60 A), *ʿIpi-m-sz.f* (60 D, 64 F), *Htpw* (61 K), *ʿnh-r-hnt.f* (61 S), *Sbk-m-sz.f* (61 W), *Hty*’s son *Rhw-r-zw.s* and *Nhn-ʿnhw* (61 Y), *Snbw.f*, his son *Whz.sn* (61 Y), *Nfr* and *Ty ?* (61 AD), *Rdi-n.i-Sbk-hry-š.f* (62 D5), *ʿIt(f)-ʿz*’s son *ʿIn-it.f-Mntw* (63 P), *S^cnh-Sbk* (63 R), *Hnsw* (63 T), *Snb.f*’s son *Hnt* (-Sbk) and *Hp* (63 V), *Qd-mrw* (63 W), *Mtnw* (63 X), *Hsw* (64 B), *Pth-m-sz.f* (64 D), *Kz*’s son *Mntw-htp* (64 E), *ʿIry* (?) (64 I), *Smn-ntr-m-ʿnh* (?) (80 B), *Sz* (?) - *Szb* (98 E), *ʿImz-in-pn* (?) (98 H), *ʿIc-ib* (99 A).

The personnel of the *šn^cw* is known also from Nubia¹¹⁴ and from remote sites of mining or quarrying expeditions of the Eleventh / Twelfth Dynasties (Wadi Hammamat,¹¹⁵ Wadi el-Hudi,¹¹⁶ Sinai).

In the greywacke quarries of the Wadi Hammamat, c. 100 km from the Nile, the vizier *ʿImn-m-hz.t* had an Overseer of the Kitchen (*imy-r šn^cw*), *ʿIn-it.f*, to assist him in providing 2,000 men with all kinds of food (*iw drp.n.i s 2000 m h.t nb*) in year 2 of Mentuhotep IV.¹¹⁷ In year 38 of Sesostri I, a very large expedition was sent here, stayed for one month (30 days), and brought back 60 sphinxes and 150 statues.¹¹⁸ It was led by the ‘Inspector of Inspectors of the gangs of recruits, Overseer of the military force of the expedition (*imy-r mnfzt mš^c*) and Herald *ʿImny*’ and the ‘Overseer of the Expedition of Stone-cutters, Overseer of Craftsmen, and Overseer of all Works of the King, LPH, who smoothens everything, *N-sw-Mntw*’, assisted with administrative tasks by two Stewards (*imy-r pr*), each with four scribes, of the Great Council (*d3d3t ʿzt*) and the Treasury (*pr-hd*), the True Acquaintance of the King, Overseer of the Cabinet *N-sw-Mntw*, three Policemen (*s3-pr nht-hrw*), and ten Sealers (*hmtw*). The working staff comprised 1,660 men: 300 Marines (‘Soldiers of the Ruler’s Crew’) of Thebes, 700 Nome-soldiers, 30 Hunters, 100 Quarrymen, 100 Stone-masons, 200 Sailors, 60 Fowlers/Fishermen, 60 Sandal-makers, and for provisioning a ‘*šn^c*-personnel’ of ‘20 Brewers, 20 Corn Grinders, 20 Bakers, and 50 Attendants (*wbz*).’ All provisions were supplied by royal institutions (‘... of the Lord, LPH’: (Barley for) the daily rations of bread and beer from the Granary (*šnw.t*), meat and fowl from the *šn^c*,¹¹⁹ other equipment from the Treasury (*pr-hd*). The 30 Hunters (*nw*) may have supplied further meat.

A workforce of 17,000 men, all from southern Upper Egypt and operating in groups of 5,000 (2,000-1,500-1,000-500), came to haul the stone monuments back to the Nile – divided, as it seems, into three groups operating at intervals of ten days and led by three Superiors of (crews of) Tens of Upper Egypt (*wr mdw.w šm^cw*), 20 Mayors (*h3ty-^c*) and 30 Retainers of the Lord, LPH (*šmsw n nb ʿnh wdz snb*, i.e. royal guards). One of those Superiors of Tens of Upper Egypt led a contingent consisting of the Mayor of Edfu *ʿIsi* and ten further Mayors (*h3ty-^c*) from southern Upper Egypt (*dp-rsy*), three Retainers of the Lord, LPH (*šmsw n nb ʿnh wdz snb*), 30 Craftsmen (*hmtw.t*) and 4,500 men, who hauled 80 stone blocks to the Nile in 16 days.¹²⁰ He confirms that provisions (*ʿqw*) were supplied by the ‘*šn^c*-personnel of the House of the King (*pr-nswt*)’ and adds that 30 men of his own ‘*šn^c*-personnel were (in) the minor personnel of the troop’ (*šn^c.i ds.i m d.t n.t ts.t hsb* 30)¹²¹ and that a staff¹²² of 50 Attendants of his (*t.t [n.t] wbz.w.i*), the same number as those of the whole expedition, went with him to the quarries.¹²³

On the Sinai, Butlers, Attendants, and in particular Sealers¹²⁴ are frequent, Retainers rather rare,¹²⁴ and an Overseer of the Seat occurs only once as part of the titulary of a God's Treasurer, Overseer of the Cabinet, Courtier of the Palace, ... , Overseer of the Seat (no. 86,3; temp. Amememhet III).¹²⁵ Butlers, Sealers, and Retainers are known from the Wadi el-Hudi,¹²⁶ Sealers¹²⁷ and Retainers¹²⁸ from the Wadi Hammamat; and Retainers from Nubia.¹²⁹

Herdsmen of Hounds (written as in the Wadi Shatt el-Rigal, though with three instead of four plural strokes) have been found also in Nubia (Middle Kingdom),¹³⁰ the Wadi Hammamat (temp. Mentuhotep IV),¹³¹ and the Wadi el-Hudi (nos. 93 and 94, early Middle Kingdom),¹³² in no. 93 together with two Hunters (*nw*).¹³³ Hunters and Overseers of Hunters (*imy-r nw.w*) are attested also in the Wadi Hammamat,¹³⁴ and one Hunter at Serabit el-Khadim (New Kingdom).¹³⁵ All these men were probably engaged in hunting in order to provide the expeditions with meat.¹³⁶

The Middle Kingdom graffiti of the Wadi Hammamat¹³⁷ and of the Wadi el-Hudi¹³⁸ mention one Singer (*šmꜥw*) each (none in Sinai). Their function in the expeditions is not clear, though it may have been for entertainment during festive occasions.

This comparison shows that, apart from the Butchers and the Overseer of Singers, all the ranks of the provisioning and other subsidiary personnel from the Wadi Shatt el-Rigal are known also from sites of mining or quarrying expeditions of the Eleventh / Twelfth Dynasties. Their relative quantities, however, are quite different: Very few in those sites, very many in the Wadi Shatt el-Rigal. Moreover, none of the graffiti here mentions leaders of quarrying or mining expeditions to this site, none contains an expedition report, and the ordinary workforce of quarrymen, other craftsmen, and transport personnel is entirely absent. The Wadi was evidently not the site of such expeditions.

There would seem to have been at least two visits under Mentuhotep II (years 37 and 39) and a further one under Mentuhotep III. It is difficult to judge how large the royal train was, but for a single visit 19-20 Overseers of the Seat, the chefs of the kitchen, would seem to be too many, even if they had different areas of responsibility. While not only Overseers of the Seat, but also Butlers and Sealers are found in significant numbers, their superiors are remarkably few: Two Overseers of the Kitchen and Stewards. This discrepancy might suggest that there were only few visits, each time with a more or less numerous provisioning personnel, but headed by only one or two directors.

Few individuals have left more than one graffito. Six elaborate graffiti (7 A-C, 27 L, 40 C, 86 A) and a favourite grotto above the Wadi (loc. II) suggest that the Royal Documentary Scribe *Ỉỉ* had spent more than one day in the Wadi, either during a single visit or repeat visits. If there were at least three visits, the fluctuation of the minor personnel would have been rather high and their presence only temporary. Around the monumental relief of Mentuhotep II, none of the high courtiers has left more than a single inscription, while outside this area some of their subordinates were eager to leave more than one graffito: Under Mentuhotep III *Ỉhy*, *NỈt-qꜣ*, and *Hsy* (three each), under Mentuhotep II the king's secretary *Ỉỉ* (five to six) and quite a number among the provisioning and other subsidiary personnel (see supra p. 18-19). The Retainer *Sꜣ-qꜣ(y)* has two (50 A.B), perhaps even up to seven, if he is identical with the bare *Sꜣ-qꜣ* (32 E, 44 A, 46 B, 61 Z, 63 E).

Twice their titles and names, written in small, mostly hieratic characters, are attached to those of high officials, written in large hieroglyphic characters in rectangular frames: Two Scribes (?) under the Overseer of Treasure[rs ...] in 62 B, an Attendant under the Overseer of Treasurers *Mkt* in 59 M). A Steward and two Overseers of the Kitchen are mentioned as the superiors in 61 X.AA and 62 D3.

II.iv. Mentuhotep III and his officials

The scene of Mentuhotep III *Sꜥnh-kꜣ-Rꜥ* is found on a boulder near the entrance of the Wadi (76 B). Unlike the two reliefs of Mentuhotep II, this was not carved, but only incised and rubbed on the rock. The scene shows the king seated on a chair in the costume of the *sed*-festival with a dog sitting below