Cryptographic Compositions of *s.t mꜣꜥ.t*

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Function
Compound logogram

Value
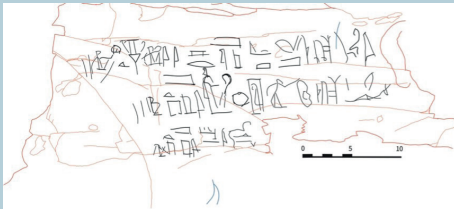*s.t mꜣꜥ.t*
"Place of Truth"

The Place of Truth *s.t mꜣꜥ.t* was the name of a place in western Thebes associated with the work and living sites of the workmen's community of Deir el-Medina. These workmen held *s.t mꜣꜥ.t* in great esteem, as reflected in its frequent inclusion in their official titles, such as *sḏm-ꜥš m s.t mꜣꜥ.t,* "the servant in the Place of Truth" or *sš m s.t mꜣꜥ.t,* "the scribe in the Place of Truth". The term *s.t mꜣꜥ.t* is attested in a variety of spellings, with one of the rarest found in Graffito 1463, located near the tomb of Thutmose IV in the Valley of the Kings. In this instance, the draughtsman Merysekhmet (iii) from the mid-20th Dynasty created a unique cryptographic composition of the name *s.t mꜣꜥ.t*: a rectangle enclosing a *mꜣꜥ.t* feather (H6). The rectangular structure is attested in papyrus Brooklyn 47.218.84 as a classifier for the word "place" (*s.t*) and likely symbolizes the outline or boundaries. The placement of the *mꜣꜥ.t* feather within the rectangular structure for *s.t* formally resembles the hieroglyph of the goddess Hathor (O10).

References:

Ragab, M.R. 2024. *The Workmen's Graffiti in the Valley of the Kings: The Impact of Landscape and Social Networks on Graffiti-Making, with a Focus on the Unpublished Graffiti Discovered by Howard Carter in 1915–1918,* Uppsala Studies in Egyptology VII: 126–127; 301–303, figs. 60, 168. Uppsala, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.

Feder, F. with contributions by Altägyptisches Wörterbuch, Simon D. Schweitzer, Jonas Treptow, Daniel A. Werning, Token ID IBUBdQa5v4fmpUPFrjRB5AhxXs0 [https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/token/IBUBdQa5v4fmpUPFrjRB5AhxXs0], in: *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae,* Corpus issue 19, Web app version 2.2.0, 11.5.2024, ed. by Tonio Sebastian Richter & Daniel A. Werning on behalf of the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften and Hans-Werner Fischer-Elfert & Peter Dils on behalf of the Sächsische Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig (accessed: 1.13.2025).

Davies, B.G. 1999. *Who's Who at Deir el-Medina: A Prosopographic Study of the Royal Workmen's Community,* Egyptologische Uitgaven 13. Leiden, Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten.

HIEROGLYPHS

Document: Graffito 1463 in the Valley of the Kings

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside, Dynasty 20, Ramesses IV, year 22–
Ramesses VI, year 4 (ca. 1153–1147 BCE)

Provenance: Valley of the Kings

Current location: *In situ*

Object type: Graffito

Material: Limestone

Hieroglyphic source

MdC: (H8-Z1):I9-Y3-Aa28-D18-A26-O39\171\R90**H6
{{165,120,98}}-N5-C10C-Aa15\101**M17{{0,379,61}}**
Q3{{215,543,61}}**X1{{637,379,61}}**O1{{460,713,61}}-
A50-Aa11\R270-P8

Transliteration: *s3=f sš-ḳd sḏm-ꜥš (m) s.t m3ꜥ.t ḥḳ3-m3ꜥ.t-r-m-ip.t m3ꜥ-ḫrw*

Translation: His son the draughtsman and servant (in) the Place of truth
Hekamaatre-emope (Hekamare-enope in Davies 1999), justified

Location: Second line