



Graffiti Gazetteer
An Infrastructure for Secondary
Epigraphy in Egypt

ABSTRACT

This handout contains an introduction to the pilot project and data description template: column contents definitions for the dataset.

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Introduction

Ancient Egyptian interaction with places, buildings, and artefacts was reflected in the practice of secondary epigraphy (graffiti for short). Short texts and images, some outwardly resembling modern ‘tags’ and others more like ‘street art’, appeared in the funerary environment, or on temple architecture. They share features with rock inscriptions and rock art, such as select phraseology or functions. These seemingly unprepossessing artefacts are in fact eloquent traces of ancient societies and cultures, allowing fragmentary insights into both elite and non-elite lives and the roles that monuments continued to play in both of these long after their original construction. Their study has benefited from using concepts developed in anthropology, cultural history, literacy studies and cognitive archaeology, offering a rich interpretation.

The ‘Graffiti gazetteer’ conversion grant aims to test conversion of select research data from Egypt followed by an investigation of new approaches to analyse these data in a micro-project exploring a potential research infrastructure. The project reconnoitres structure and functions intended to collate existing data on graffiti in order to establish a way of integrating Egyptian data in the FAIR Epigraphy framework (https://ontology.inscriptiones.org/type_of_inscription/), developed in Classics, whilst respecting the current development of thesauri and ontology used for the description of ancient Egyptian resources included in the Thoth project (<https://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/index.html>).

The gazetteer data also include identifiers from other existing projects that map Egyptian written and archaeological resources: these projects include converted digital and born digital infrastructures, such as the Online Egyptological Bibliography, Topographical Bibliography (a.k.a. Porter/Moss), Trismegistos, and others.

Project design team

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Column contents definitions

Unique identifier

The unique identifier (UI) for each epigraphic feature; it has the following format: *see100001*, with the sequence continuing *see100002*, and so on. It is required to identify each entry, cite it, etc. It is thus an essential descriptor for each entry in the data collection. This column always needs to be populated at the beginning of a new entry. The abbreviation *see* in the UI code stands for ‘Secondary Epigraphy in Egypt.’

Pleiades ID

If the site or location has a Pleiades ID (see <https://pleiades.stoa.org/>), it is added to this column, to enable interlinking with the Stoa Consortium project.

Longitude and Latitude

These two columns contain information about the longitude and latitude of the location where the epigraphic feature is located. In many instances, this will be valid for the site, although Google Earth should help in getting a more accurate reading for a specific building or geographical feature. The data can be obtained either from Pleiades (site) or Google Earth (targeted on a specific feature).

TM identifier

If the epigraphic feature is included in Trismegistos (see <https://www.trismegistos.org/>), its Trismegistos ID is added in this column, to enable cross-referencing with the Trismegistos dataset.

TLA identifier

If the epigraphic feature is textual and this textual feature is included in the Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae (see <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/home>) its TLA identifier is added to this column, to cross-reference to the digital record of the text in the TLA.

TLA stable URL

If the textual feature is included in the Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae (see <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/home>) its TLA stable URL is added to this column, to ensure access to the digital record of the text in the TLA.

Land

This column describes the country location. As this is a data collection mapping secondary epigraphy in Egypt, it's always *Egypt*.

Region

This column describes regions included in the land. This category uses the large regional descriptors based on the Porter/Moss (or *Topographical Bibliography*) volumes. These are: *Lower Egypt*, *Upper Egypt*, *Nubia*, *Eastern Desert* and *Western Desert*. [**design note: ideally, a drop-down menu**].

Area

This column describes areas included in the regions. The category follows the area breakdown in Porter/Moss (or *Topographical Bibliography*) volumes: *Saqqara*, *Memphis*, *Western Thebes*, etc. It

also includes larger geographical areas for wider scope and convenience- *Wadi Hammammat* for example, or the *Sinai Peninsula*. [design note: ideally, this too could be a drop-down menu, best with the option when authorised users can add to the menu, and the very best option would be to link with the TopBib menus].

Site conventional modern name

This column describes a specific archaeological site. It uses the conventional names for specific sites from the Porter/Moss (or *Topographical Bibliography*) volumes: *Central Saqqara*, *Deir el-Medina*, etc. the column is also used to describe a specific smaller geographical area (like wadis in the Theban Mountain). [design note: ideally, this too could be a drop-down menu, best with the option when authorised users can add to the menu, and the very best option would be to link with the TopBib menus].

Site ancient name(s)

This column provides ancient name(s) of the site, if known, e.g. *Mennefer*. The names in different languages or from different historical periods are entered as comma separated values; when entering names in different languages, make an attempt to keep a probable chronological order, e.g., *Egyptian, Greek, Coptic, Arabic*.

PM code

This column specifies the bibliographic reference to the printed volumes of Porter/Moss (*Topographical Bibliography*) as e.g.: PM iii².486.

TopBib code

[While the column has already been added, it is expected to be populated at a later stage and not at the initial data entry stage.] This column cross-references the site entry in the Porter/Moss (or *Topographical Bibliography*).

Building

This column describes a specific built feature: *temple of Seti I*, *tomb TT 100*, *pyramid precinct of Senwosret III*, etc.

Part of building

This column describes a defined part of a built feature: First hypostyle hall, burial chamber, pyramid temple, etc. The structuration and names follow conventions used in the Porter/Moss (*Topographical Bibliography*) volumes, if available. [NB: although this column is already included and tentatively populated, the next step of the project will need a more specific glossary/standardisation]

Landscape feature

This column describes a specific landscape feature: like a locus in a wadi, a cave, etc., or a specific mine or quarry (such as '*quarry P in Hatnub*').

Room/space

This column describes a specific space within a larger built or landscape feature: for example, a court, hall, room, chamber, chamber within a cave, a part of a quarry or wadi.

Wall

This column describes a wall within a space, a part of a cliff (*west wall, east wall, interior or exterior wall*, or a combination *exterior of the west wall*, etc.). For clarity, a 'west' wall means here the west-side wall.

Scene

This column is specific for the built environment that contains primary decoration. It describes a primary decoration unit (*offering scene, king with a deity, tomb owner at the offering table, banquet scene*, and similar).¹ Preferred descriptions are those in the Porter/Moss (or *Topographical Bibliography*) volumes, if available. The description should also contain a Porter/Moss number. Add the technique of execution of the primary decoration as comma separate values: specifically if the decoration executed in an additive or subtractive technique; i.e., if it is *painted* or *in relief, incised, sunk* or *raised* (see terminology in <https://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/concept/thot-19241>); and add a note if the relief is polychrome.

Plan

This column will contain a link to an illustration of the plan of the building, with a marker showing the position of the epigraphic feature. It will also contain stable URL links (plus other references) to any other standardised plan of the building available online - preferentially the records in *Aegaron*: <https://aegaron.ucla.edu/> or in any future version of Porter/Moss (*Topographical Bibliography*). If there are multiple records with links available, they are entered as comma separated values.

Material

This column describes the material of the surface on which the secondary epigraphy has been produced; follow <https://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/concept/thot-6200> : *man-made, non-organic, organic*; then further details of the exact material and type of material; all information is entered as comma-separated values. E.g.: *non-organic, stone, limestone*.

Execution technique

This column describes if the secondary inscription is executed in an additive or subtractive technique, i.e., is it *painted/drawn with pigments*, or is it *carved/incised*? Describe the technique of execution of the secondary epigraphic feature as comma separate values: if the text/image is *painted* or *in relief, incised, sunk* or *raised* (see terminology in <https://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/concept/thot-19241>); an example: *additive, painted*. The colour of the ink or other pigment is listed in a separate column.

Colour

This column registers the colour of the ink or pigment used in creating the epigraphic feature. In most cases a generic description, such as *red, black, blue* will be most practical. If the contributor has access to the feature and an opportunity to establish the main pigment colour or colours on the Munsell scale (<https://munsell.com/about-munsell-color/how-color-notation-works/dictionary-color-terms/>), they are invited to add the Munsell code.

Object type

[Although this column is already included, it will be populated at a later stage. To be specified later according to FAIR Epigraphy]

¹ Design note: ideally, this too could be a drop-down menu, best with the option when authorised users can add to the menu, and the very best option would be to link with the TopBib menus.

State of preservation

[Although this column is already included, it will be populated at a later stage. To be specified later according to FAIR Epigraphy and Thoth Thesauri.]

Languages

This column captures all relevant languages that are used in the secondary text; if it is multilingual, please list the individual languages as comma separated values in this field. For ancient languages, use values from <https://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/concept/thot-1834>.

Height above ground

This column registers the height above the original ground, in metres, if known. If only the height above current ground is known, note 'current' as a comma separated value after the number.

Location 1 - primary scene placement

This column registers the location of the secondary inscription in relation to the primary decoration. It is a free text field; after a description, also add, separated by a comma, a note if the graffito is *on a figure* or *on figures*, *next to* or *between figures* of the original decoration.

Location 2 - in relation to other graffiti

This column describes the spatial relations of one secondary epigraphy feature to other secondary epigraphy features. I.e.: *under*, *above*, *in-between* other secondary epigraphy features, or *clustered* (in a group larger than 2 features). Add the UIs for the other secondary epigraphy features.

Type of feature

This column characterises the secondary epigraphy feature as *text* or *image*.

Type of inscription

This column describes what type of inscription a textual epigraphic feature is, using descriptors from <https://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/concept/thot-18634>.

Contents

The column captures formulae from a textual epigraphic feature and contents of an image. For textual epigraphic feature, all significant parts of the formulae are entered as comma-separated values: *iw.t pw ir.n X r mAA*, *gm.n.f sy mj pt*, *Ra Hr wbn im.s*, *offering n kA n* [owner], *offering/prayer in favour of the writer*, *myrrh sequence*, *ir nfr*, *ἦκω*, *προσκύνημα*, *εὐτύχη*, *ἑσώθη*, etc.

For an image: *human*, *part of human*, *head or profile*, *footprints & sandal prints (plantae pedis)*, *deity*, *king*, *animal*, *part of animal*, *eye(s)*, *genitals and erotica*; *signs and symbols (horned altar, palm frond, swastika, cross, pentagram, spiral, loop, ...*

Script type

This column describes what type of script was used in a textual epigraphic feature; use the Thoth vocabulary: <https://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/concept/thot-66>

Royal name(s)

If a textual epigraphic feature contains (a) royal name(s), they are entered in this column as comma-separated values. Use royal names in a conventional writing as listed in <https://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/concept/thot-141>

Private name - writer/signature

This column contains a name that can be attributed as the writer/maker of the secondary epigraphic feature.

The private names follow conventional English transcription if available, and will have to be standardised and input moderated [instructions, cross-referencing to existing name lists to be added].

Other private names

This column captures all other private names in a textual epigraphic feature: accompanying colleagues, family, people who co-signed the text, or added their names to it. Dedictees of prayers. All names are entered as comma-separated values, if possible also with a definition of relationship to the writer: *Ahmose student scribe, Amenemhet brother/colleague*.

Name cross-references

This column contains cross-references to indices or lists of ancient names. For Egyptian names use Ranke 1933- (published volumes), prefix RPN and/or *Prosopographia Aegypti* (<https://www1.ivv1.uni-muenster.de/prosoaeg/index.html>); for Greek names use Lexicon of Greek Personal Names (<https://www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk/>) - prefix LGPN.

You may want to add any further cross-references from Trismegistos People or other Egyptian name databases listed here: <https://www1.ivv1.uni-muenster.de/prosoaeg/index0pg.htm>

Divine names

This column contains all divine names involved in a textual epigraphic feature, entered as comma-separated values.

Title(s)

This column contains titles included in textual epigraphic features. These could be titles of the writer, their companions, dedictees; entered as comma-separated values: *scribe Sethemheb, scribe Ahmose*.

Date of primary surface

This column registers the dating (if at all possible) of the primary surface: it should contain as many as possible of the following: period, dynasty, absolute date, BC or AD: all as comma separate values. The vocabulary to be used is <https://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/concept/thot-114>. Absolute dates should follow Hornung et al. 2006.

Date of secondary feature

This column registers the dating (if at all possible) of the secondary feature: it should contain as many as possible of the following: period, dynasty, absolute date, BC or AD: all as comma separate values. The vocabulary to be used is <https://thot.philo.ulg.ac.be/concept/thot-114>. Absolute dates should follow Hornung et al. 2006.

References unpublished

This column registers unpublished sources if relevant, organised as archive call number followed by the name or abbreviation of the archive in round brackets²; individual entries are comma-separated: for example: Gunn Mss. XIII.3 (Griffith Institute Archive), Gunn Collection box 23 (UPMAA), etc.

² Abbreviations to be added as a feature in the introduction to the Gazetteer.

Reference archive/unpublished URL

This column registers URL for the archive resources listed in the previous column.

References published (with OEB codes)

This column lists publications pertinent to the secondary epigraphy feature, as free text, including their OEB codes in brackets. References should follow OEB formatting.

Zotero link

This column includes a URL of a Zotero bibliography collection pertinent to the feature (Zotero collections will follow individual sites or monuments, exceptionally individual features).

Photograph

This column registers a URL of a digital online record of a photograph of the epigraphic feature if available. If there are multiple records with links available, they are entered as comma-separated values.

Drawing

This column registers a URL of a digital online record of drawing of the epigraphic feature if available. If there are multiple records with links available, they are entered as comma-separated values.

Palaeography information

This column contains any cross-references or links to palaeography repositories or publications (e.g., AKU - <https://aku-pal.uni-mainz.de/>). [This column may need to be refined later and divided into 2 columns: AKU link and any other palaeography information.]

Research log

This column contains a brief research history of the epigraphic feature, specifically: any information on when/how/under what conditions, or with which tools was the feature read/recorded, revised. It may contain a longer textual description noting several stages of documentation and interpretation. [This entry may need to be refined to provide links to other project pages and/or to biographical information about the stakeholders from biographical dictionaries.]

Scan/3D model

This column registers a URL of a digital online record of a scan or another digital model of the epigraphic feature if available. If there are multiple records with links available, they are entered as comma separated values.

Text edition

This column registers a URL of a digital online edition of the epigraphic feature if available. If there are multiple records with links available, they are entered as comma separated values; If there is no digital edition, a cross-reference will be provided to a hardcopy edition.

Contributor(s)

The contributors of the entry add their full name(s) here. If the entry has multiple contributors over time, they keep adding their names as comma separated values .

Timestamp latest entry modification

[Design note: This entry should be a system-generated timestamp - ideally we also need a log of all modifications for an entry].

References

Hornung, Erik, Rolf Krauss, David Warburton, and Marianne Eaton-Krauss. 2006. *Ancient Egyptian Chronology*. Handbuch Der Orientalistik. Erste Abteilung, Nahe Und Der Mittlere Osten 83. Leiden: Brill.

Ranke, Heinrich Johannes Hermann. *Die ägyptischen Personennamen*. Hamburg: N.p., 1933-