

Temple of Khonsu, Volume 3

The Graffiti on the Khonsu Temple Roof at Karnak: A Manifestat

by Helen Jacquet-Gordon

DESCRIPTION:

Graffiti incised on the roof blocks of the temple of Khonsu at Karnak, written in the hieroglyphic, hieratic, and Demotic scripts and accompanied by the outlines of pairs of feet, caught the eye of Champollion and other early voyagers who succeeded in clambering up onto that part of the roof still remaining over the colonnade of the first court. Such graffiti have usually been interpreted as mementos left by ancient visitors passing through Thebes. A complete survey of all the graffiti on the roof and a detailed study of the inscriptions, carried out over a considerable period of time, has revealed the unexpected fact that far from being casual tourists, it was mostly the priestly personnel of the temple itself whose graffiti have been preserved there. The inscriptions record the name and titles of the person whose footprints are depicted, as well as the name of his father and sometimes that of his grandfather, but only in three cases does the name of his mother appear. Prayers addressed mainly to Khonsu himself demonstrate the firm belief of these priestly servitors in the lasting protection afforded them by the god in whose sacred precinct their graffiti have been carved. The 334 graffiti recorded in the volume are richly illustrated by photographs and facsimile drawings. Transliterations, translations, line notes, and commentaries are provided. The text concludes with general, name, epithet, and title indices.

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