

## A Rock Inscription of Ramesses IV at Gebelein A Previously Unknown New Kingdom Expedition

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**Abstract:** The article presents a rock inscription of the Twentieth Dynasty king, Ramesses IV, found at the southern end of the Middle Hill of the Western Rock of Gebelein. It yields new evidence related to an unknown expedition sent *via* Gebelein to the south, and very likely, concerned with the acquisition of stone material for mortuary cult or/and king's burial place.

**Keywords:** Gebelein, New Kingdom Egypt, inscription, Ramesses IV, expedition

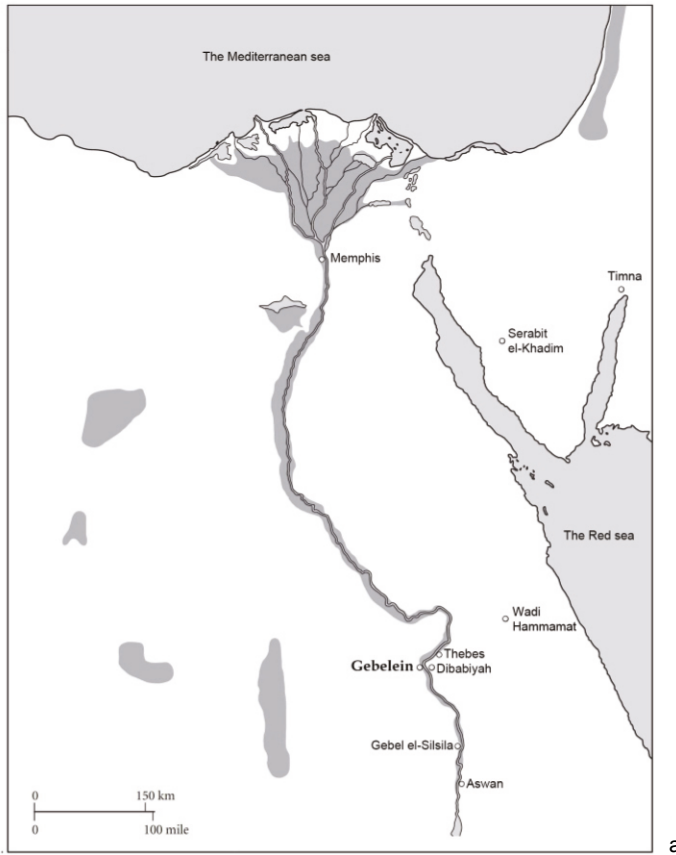
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Since 2013, the team of the Gebelein Archaeological and Epigraphic Survey<sup>1</sup> has been continuing works at the site located approximately 28km south of Luxor on the west bank of the Nile (**Fig. 1**). One of the main tasks was to document ancient graffiti in this area, which surprisingly, were omitted by previous Italian missions that had been working there.<sup>2</sup> Since the survey was carried out in an area already investigated several times for the past one hundred years, initially it was not expected to find any graffiti or rock inscriptions. Already in the very first season, however, we have found two concentrations of graffiti, unknown and not published. These are mainly hieroglyphic but also hieratic and Coptic inscriptions as well as figural drawings dated to various periods. One of these is the subject of the present paper, providing us with what seems to be new information concerning the history of the Twentieth Dynasty and Gebelein itself.

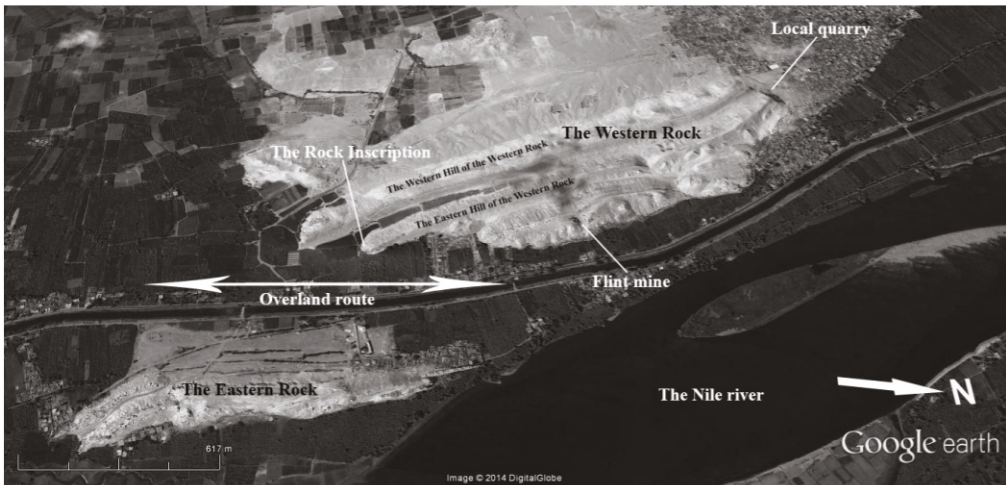
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<sup>1</sup> The team was composed of the following members: Wojciech Ejsmond (director of the project), Dawid F. Wieczorek (archeologist and epigraphist), Julia Chyla (archaeologist and GIS analyst), Cezary Baka (Egyptologist) and Piotr Witkowski (photographer and RTI specialist).

<sup>2</sup> Donadoni Roveri 2001: 7–9.

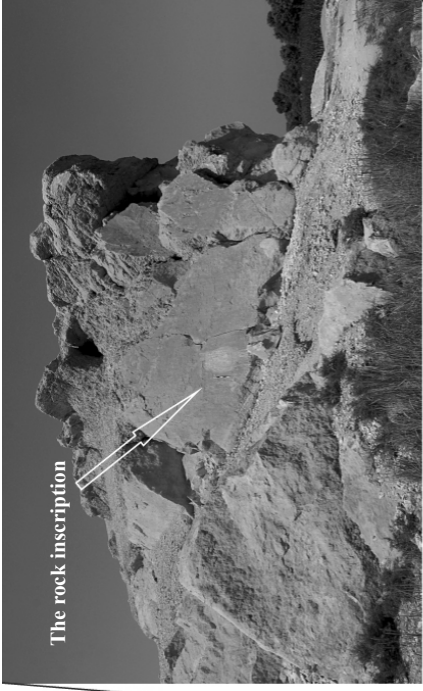


a

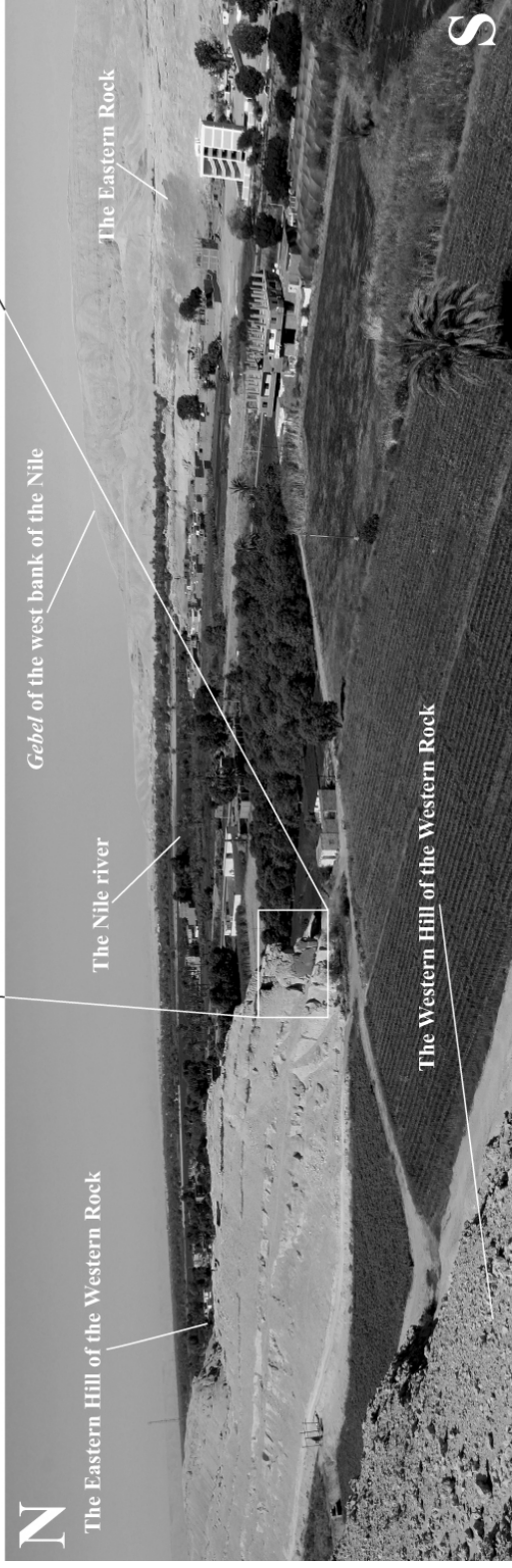


b

1a. Map of Egypt (based on: Bard 2007: 48); b. Google Maps satellite photograph of the Gebelein site with localisation of rock inscription of Ramesses IV and other features marked.



The rock inscription



N

The Eastern Hill of the Western Rock

The Nile river

Gebel of the west bank of the Nile

The Eastern Rock

The Western Hill of the Western Rock

S

2. The location of the southern end of the Middle Hill of the Western Rock of Gebelein and rock inscription (Phot. D.F. Wiczorek).

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ROCK INSCRIPTION

The rock inscription<sup>3</sup> being the subject of this analysis (Field no. GWRVI6)<sup>4</sup> measures 104 x 63cm. It was found at the southern end of the Middle Hill of the Western Rock of Gebelein (**Figs 1b, 2**). The text was executed 1.2m above the present ground level and about 4.5m above the level of the fields, on a natural rough and flat surface of rock oriented to the south (**Fig. 2**). Large hieroglyphic signs, about 15–20cm in height (**Fig. 3**) were roughly engraved in shallow sunken-relief (*c.* 5mm in depth) using the hammering technique.<sup>5</sup> The whole surface occupied by the inscription is clearly brighter than the rock around it, with well visible damp patches (**Fig. 3a**). It seems that these are remains of white chalk applied by previous explorers of Gebelein to make the inscription more discernible.<sup>6</sup>

Inscription in one horizontal line and two columns (**Fig. 3**).

Transliteration:

[L1] *rnp.t-sp* (1) *mš<sup>c</sup>*

[C1] *nsw.t-bitj Wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-R<sup>c</sup> stp-n-Imn*

[C2] *s3-R<sup>c</sup> R<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw mrj-Imn Hk3-m3<sup>c</sup>.t*

Translation:

[L1] *Year (1), the expedition.*

[C1] *the King of the Upper and Lower Egypt Usermaatra-setepenamun*

[C2] *the Son of Re Ramesses-meriamun heqa-maat.*

Comments:

[L1] The date has been extremely abbreviated. The traditional date formula consisted of three elements – regnal year, month of a season and day.<sup>7</sup> Here, however, only a regnal year phrase – *rnp.t-sp* – has been written. Similar abbreviated form of the date, giving only the regnal year, but with its number, is well attested on many inscriptions mentioning expeditions of a purely military character but also those connected with the exploitation of natural resources. It has been observed in inscriptions dating from at least the Middle Kingdom<sup>8</sup> and certainly until the end of the New Kingdom.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, in this particular case, it has been

<sup>3</sup> As for the terminology adapted in this article, see: Delia 1993: 72, n. 6.

<sup>4</sup> GWRVI6 = Gebelein West Rock VIth, Object 6.

<sup>5</sup> Delia 1993: 72, n. 8.

<sup>6</sup> This method is well known and quite frequently used by epigraphists both recently and in the past (see: Seidlmayer 2013: 206).

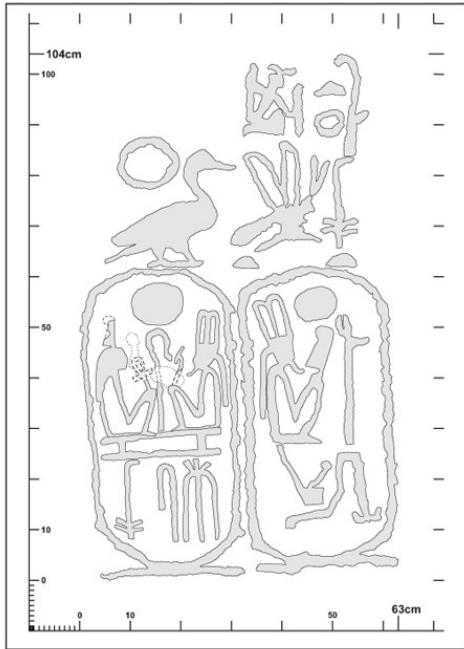
<sup>7</sup> Gardiner 1969: 203.

<sup>8</sup> Engelbach 1938: 389, Pl. LV/3. The sandstone stela bears the date of the eighteen year of an unnamed king. Its dating to the Old Kingdom is not certain. See in the article the rest of the stelae published here, dated to the reigns of Khufu and Sahura, Fourth and Fifth Dynasty respectively. See also: Rowe 1938: 391–396, Pls LV/1–2, LIX; Gardiner, Peet 1917: Wadi Magharah and Serabit el-Khadim, Amenemhat III, Pls X/23, 25; XXI/73A, XXVIII/93 Face E; Senuseret III, Pl. XVI.47; Engelbach 1933: Amenemhat III, 72, Pl. III/3.

<sup>9</sup> Gardiner, Peet 1917: Serabit el-Khadim, Amenhotep III, Pl. LXVI.212; Ramesses II, Pl. LXX/252; Ramesses III, Pl. LXXIII/273; *KRI* VI: Ramesses IV, 41.11 (Karnak), 47.3 (Luxor).



a




b




c

3. The Rock Inscription: a. photograph; b. facsimile; c. hieroglyphic transcription (Phot. and drawing: D.F. Wiczorek).

recorded only by a regnal year phrase – *rnp.t-sp* – and its number has been clearly intentionally omitted. Thus, it seems that the notation *rnp.t-sp* has to be interpreted and read as it was written, namely as a regnal year phrase written *in singularis* with the digit ‘1’ left implicit.

Directly after *rnp.t-sp* the ideogram A12 <sup>10</sup> has been engraved. In a general sense it refers to an ‘army’ word *mšꜥ*<sup>11</sup> but can be also understood as ‘troops’,<sup>12</sup> ‘gang of workmen’<sup>13</sup> and ‘expedition’.<sup>14</sup> In the context of this inscription, the latter seems to be the most accurate interpretation and apparently, only one making sense. In accordance with such a translation, it clearly mentions and identifies an event to which the inscription itself refers.

From a grammatical point of view, the [L1] *rnp.t-sp mšꜥ* construction is the noun phrase in which the two nouns are in apposition.<sup>15</sup>

Another feature is the palaeography of the *mšꜥ* sign  itself.<sup>16</sup> On the head of the kneeling figure of a bowman two feathers are clearly visible. This detail is a typical element of this particular hieroglyphic sign appearing only in inscriptions at least from the beginning of the reign of Ramesses II<sup>17</sup> and is well attested throughout the Ramesside period<sup>18</sup> and, significantly, on the monuments of Ramesses IV, with precisely the same palaeography as at Gebelein.<sup>19</sup>

[C1] and [C2]

Both the names in the cartouches belong to Ramesses IV, the third ruler of the Twentieth Dynasty.<sup>20</sup> Their orthography clearly corresponds to the Type T1 and E2 variants listed

<sup>10</sup> Gardiner 1969: 443 (A12).

<sup>11</sup> *Wb* II, 155; Lesko, Switalski Lesko (Eds) 2002: 207–208.

<sup>12</sup> *Wb* II, 155.4, 5, 6; Lesko, Switalski Lesko (Eds) 2002: 207.

<sup>13</sup> *Wb* II, 155.12; Lesko, Switalski Lesko (Eds) 2002: 208; see: Faulkner 1953: 38.

<sup>14</sup> *Wb* II, 156.3; Hannig 1995: 367; *mšꜥ*: 368:4; Eyre 2010: 130–132; 1987: 187–188; see the graffito of Sethemheb, Royal Scribe and Overseer of Treasury of Medinet Habu, from the speos of Horemheb in Gebel el-Silsila: *KRI* V: 228, Text C: 6.

<sup>15</sup> Allen 2010: 42, § 4.11. The only alternative interpretation which can be suggested is the noun phrase expressing possession by the direct genitive (Allen 2010: 42, 43, § 4.13:1). However such an interpretation must be rejected because of the indirect genitive required by the noun *rnp.t-sp*, (*Wb* II, 431.8, 16) as may be observed in many instances (Nelson 1942: 137, Fig. 19; Gardiner 1948: 79.4, 7, 14; 80.1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11; Černý 1973: 22, n. 5; Grajetzki 2009: 51, Fig. 21h).

<sup>16</sup> Gardiner 1969: 443 (A12).

<sup>17</sup> Two feathers on the head of bowmen are clearly visible, e.g. in the Text of the Battle of Qadesh: *KRI* II, 10.3, 12.3, 13.13, 14; 15.11–13. Nevertheless, alongside them we can also observe in the same poem the occurrence of bowman signs with one feather: *KRI* II, 10.1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9; 12.1. In hieratic texts, there is always one feather, which we can explain by the exceptional character of the hieratic script, e.g. the Battle of Qadesh in the Papyrus Chester Beatty III: *KRI* II, 10.4, 12.4, 13.15, 15.15.

<sup>18</sup> Christophe 1949: 20, n. A. Although, Christophe correctly pointed out that the individual depicted in the *mšꜥ* sign in the Ramesside period has on his head two feathers, he did not note that they are deflected in two opposite directions. Moreover, he did not notice that the depicted bowman has the end of one foot hidden beneath the heel of the other. See also: *Epigraphic Survey 1930*: Pl. 27, col. 23; Pl. 29, cols 2, 7, 30; *Epigraphic Survey 1932*: Pls 81–82, col. 24; Pl. 83, col. 57; Pl. 91, col. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Christophe 1949: 20, n. a, Pl. I; *KRI* VI, 7.6 (Karnak).

<sup>20</sup> Beckerath 1999: 166, 167: T1; 168, 169: E2.

by von Beckerath. However, they do not precisely conform to them but constitute their orthographic variants which are also well known from other sources.<sup>21</sup> It is obvious that Gebelein cartouches represent the older version of Ramesses IV's titulary, dated to the very beginning of his reign, namely the first two years of his rule.<sup>22</sup>

## CONTEXT OF THE ROCK INSCRIPTION

The inscription in question represents the only evidence, known to date, of the activities of Ramesses IV's agents in the area of Gebelein. Therefore it is important to analyse its archaeological and historical context. The content, both the date phrase [L1], at the beginning, and the orthography of the king's names [C1][C2], lead one to significant conclusions.

The horizontal line [L1]: 'Year (1), the expedition' most probably mentions the year in which an expedition under rule of Ramesses IV was undertaken. It seems certain that the author of the graffito wanted to commemorate here the first regnal year of Ramesses IV. The early variant of king's cartouches confirms the chronology. Unfortunately the estimation of the closer date of the venture, due to the lack of any other direct evidence, has to remain unsolved.

The archaeological and historical context provide further premises for dating. At the beginning of his reign, Ramesses IV embarked on several very ambitious building projects, particularly his royal tomb (KV 2) in the Valley of the Kings<sup>23</sup> and memorial temples in Western Thebes.<sup>24</sup> Apart from that, it seems that he undertook an unparalleled widespread program of the exploitation of resources in Serabit el-Khadim and Timna, on the Sinai peninsula<sup>25</sup> and especially in the Wadi Hammamat in the Eastern Desert (**Fig. 1a**).<sup>26</sup> He had sent at least five expeditions to Serabit el-Khadim<sup>27</sup> and Egyptian activity seems to be continued after the death of Ramesses III up to the reign of Ramesses V.<sup>28</sup> After the reign of Ramesses VI, Egyptian mining interests in Sinai were apparently brought to an end for good.<sup>29</sup>

There are no direct textual sources mentioning any other enterprises undertaken by Ramesses IV in southern Egypt, comparable to that from Wadi Hammamat. However, based on many unofficial rock graffiti and inscriptions, known from the First Cataract<sup>30</sup> one can assume that occasional expeditions were still sent to the Aswan quarries.<sup>31</sup> The evidence suggests that Egyptian quarrying activity at the site came to an end only in the reign of

<sup>21</sup> *Prenomens*: KRI VI, 7.1; *Nomens*: KRI VI, 4.3 (Karnak).

<sup>22</sup> Beckerath 1999: 166–168; Peden 1994: 15, n. 2.

<sup>23</sup> Carter, Gardiner 1917: 130–158; Hornung 1990; Reeves, Wilkinson 2005: 162–163.

<sup>24</sup> Peden 1994: 43–47, 48–51; Shaw (Ed.) 2003: 299.

<sup>25</sup> Peden 1994: 28–32.

<sup>26</sup> Peden 1994: 24–28.

<sup>27</sup> Peden 1994: 28.

<sup>28</sup> Peden 1994: 32.

<sup>29</sup> Peden 1994: 32; cf. 2001: 123–124.

<sup>30</sup> Peden 2001: 127, n. 433.

<sup>31</sup> Peden 2001: 127.

Ramesses VII.<sup>32</sup> Under the rule of Ramesses XI, Egypt finally lost its economic and military sovereignty over Nubia.<sup>33</sup>

Four expeditions to Wadi Hammamat are among the most impressive ventures of Ramesses IV's reign, and particularly the third one, which seems to have been the biggest enterprise of the New Kingdom.<sup>34</sup> It seems that they are the key to the interpretation of the Gebelein rock inscription.

Despite the fact that exploitation of the mining resources in the Sinai peninsula should be considered as a part of the dynastic economic policy, the Wadi Hammamat ventures appear to be elements of Ramesses IV's activity completely devoted to preparation of his final resting place and mortuary cult. According to the stelae and graffiti left behind by leaders and members of the four expeditions to Wadi Hammamat,<sup>35</sup> the expeditions were concerned with the acquisition of *Bekhen*-stone<sup>36</sup> for the king's monuments in Western Thebes.<sup>37</sup> The stela of Usermatrenakht, dated to the first year of Ramesses IV, mentions, for example, that the obtained blocks of stone were used for sculptures, needed for the inner parts of the memorial temple of the king.<sup>38</sup> The *Bekhen*-stone would have been brought to the *s.t-mꜣ.t* – the Place of Truth, a place related to the Theban Necropolis – a workshop located to the west of the Ramesseum where stone block material was initially dressed.<sup>39</sup> However, it is interesting to note that the *Bekhen*-stone was also destined for the king's tomb in the Valley of the Kings, as Černý proved pointing out that in many inscriptions of the period the same term – *s.t-mꜣ.t* designates the king's tomb as well.<sup>40</sup>

All these data indicate that the four expeditions to Wadi Hammamat carried out in Ramesses IV's rule were part of one massive venture destined to properly organize and prepare the king's mortuary cult and his burial place. Moreover, the high priority given to these preparations is emphasized by the doubling of the workforce of Deir el-Medina to 120 workmen at that time.<sup>41</sup> The haste character of the works was perhaps a result of the

<sup>32</sup> Peden 2001: 129.

<sup>33</sup> Peden 2001: 133; Shaw (Ed.) 2003: 302, 303.

<sup>34</sup> Christophe 1949: 2–38; Peden 1994: 24–28; 2001: 124–126.

<sup>35</sup> Wadi Hammamat, Graffito no. 89 (Expedition Year 1): Goyon 1957: 103–104, Pl. 29; *KRI VI*, 1.10; Peden 1994: 82–84; Graffito no. 86 (Expedition Year 1): Couyat, Montet 1912: 64, Pl. 19; Christophe 1948: 151–152; Graffito no. 101 (Expedition Year 1): Goyon 1957: 113, Pl. 34; *KRI VI*, 2, 3; Graffito no. 240 (Expedition Year 2): Couyat, Montet 1912: 112–113, Pl. 40; *KRI VI*, 9–11; Peden 1994: 84–85; Graffito no. 231 (Expedition Year 2): Couyat, Montet 1912: 109; *KRI VI*, 11.9; Graffiti no. 232–234: Couyat, Montet 1912: 109, Pl. XLIV; *KRI VI*, 11.9; Graffito no. 235: Couyat, Montet 1912: 110, Pl. XLIV; *KRI VI*, 11.12, 13; Graffito no. 236: Couyat, Montet 1912: 110; *KRI VI*, 11.14; Graffito no. 12 (Expedition Year 3): Couyat, Montet 1912: 34–39, Pl. IV; Christophe 1949: 3–28, Pl. 1; *KRI VI*, 12–14; Peden 1994: 86–89; Graffito no. 223: Couyat, Montet 1912: 108, Pl. XL; *KRI VI*, 12.1–6; Graffito no. 222: Couyat, Montet 1912: 107–108, Pl. XLIII; *KRI VI*, 15.1–7; Graffito no. 238: Couyat, Montet 1912: 110–111, Pl. XLV; *KRI VI*, 15.9–16, 16.1, 2; Koptos Stela (Expedition Year 3): *KRI VI*, 16; Peden 1994: 90–91.

<sup>36</sup> Greywacke: Harris 1961: 78–81; see also: Peden 1994: 24, n. 2.

<sup>37</sup> Peden 1994: 26 and n. 4; 2001: 124.

<sup>38</sup> Goyon 1957: 103–104, Pl. XXIX; *KRI VI*, 1.10; Peden 1994: 24, 82–84.

<sup>39</sup> Černý 1973: 59–67.

<sup>40</sup> Černý 1973: 61, 66.

<sup>41</sup> Peden 1994: 45; Shaw (Ed.) 2003: 299.

advanced age of the king at the moment of his accession to the throne.<sup>42</sup> This seems even more plausible in the light of the chronology of the aforementioned events. According to current knowledge, Ramesses IV ruled seven, perhaps eight, years,<sup>43</sup> whereas the majority of his main investments were initiated before his third regnal year or just after. The building projects included following structures: Medinet Habu, year 1;<sup>44</sup> Birabi year 2–3;<sup>45</sup> Asasif year 4.<sup>46</sup> The expeditions to Wadi Hammamat have a similar chronology: the first and second expeditions were both in the year 1, the third expedition was in year 2, while the fourth in year 3.<sup>47</sup> The construction of the tomb took place in year 2.<sup>48</sup>

A comparison of the dates and the character of the king's ventures suggests that the expedition recorded by the Gebelein rock inscription dated to the first regnal year of this sovereign was most probably undertaken for the same reasons, to prepare Ramesses IV's mortuary cult or his burial place.

Even so, the exact purpose of the expedition and its final destination remain unclear. It seems that in order to answer these questions, the formula and the location of the rock inscription itself are significant. The formula of the inscription unequivocally refers to the form of commemorative rock inscriptions of the period, mentioning mainly the king's names in cartouches with abbreviated royal titulary and sometimes followed by brief additional dedicatory phrases.<sup>49</sup> Most of them are attested in remote desert regions, albeit located alongside ancient routes and situated on prominently visible rocks.<sup>50</sup> It is evident that they were left behind on the rocks by members of expeditions on the route of a march, very likely during a temporary stop.

The Gebelein rock inscription has been placed in a similar context. It was executed in a well visible place on the highly exposed portion of the southern end of the Western Rock's Middle Hill, facing to the south (**Fig. 2**). This is adjacent to the open space between the two rocks at Gebelein, giving passage to the only overland north-south route in the region of the site (**Fig. 1b**).<sup>51</sup> Such location of the inscription suggest that it can be considered as a commemorative one, referring to an expedition. The latter would obviously have been sent to the south from Thebes, where the main building activity of Ramesses IV was focused at the very beginning of his reign.

<sup>42</sup> Peden 1994: 16–17; Hornung 2006: 215. At the time of his death Ramesses IV was *c.* 40–50 years old.

<sup>43</sup> Budka 2009: 41 and n. 124; cf. Peden 1994: 15–16; Hornung 2006: 215.

<sup>44</sup> Budka 2009: 42; cf. Peden 1994: 48–51.

<sup>45</sup> Budka 2009: 43; Peden 1994: 49.

<sup>46</sup> Budka 2009: 27–44; Peden 1994: 49.

<sup>47</sup> Peden 1994: 24–28.

<sup>48</sup> Peden 1994: 44–45.

<sup>49</sup> Somaglino, Tallet 2011: 368, Figs 1–3; Tallet 2012: (Ramesses III) 185, Doc. 207, Fig. 10/1–3 (vol. 1); 129 (vol. 2); 191, Doc. 210, Fig. 11/1 (vol. 1); 131 (vol. 2); *KRI V*, 272.10–11. Also unpublished material, e.g. two cartouches of Ramesses III on the surface of the gebel in Tihne el-Gebel in the Middle Egypt (*KRI V*, 271.9) – personal observation on the site in 16th of January 2008. See also: Couyat, Montet 1912: 107, Insc. 219 (Ramesses IV).

<sup>50</sup> Somaglino, Tallet 2011: 368, Figs 1–3.

<sup>51</sup> See: Seidlmayer 2013: 208–209.

Gebelein, however, does not seem to have been the final destination point of the expedition. Two facts can support this presumption. First of all, there were no natural resources of interest in ancient times which would require sending an expedition to Gebelein. As the Gebelein Archaeological and Epigraphic Survey Team works clearly revealed, even the limestone forming the Gebelein rocks is of very poor quality, intensively eroded and full of natural pebble inclusions, making it useless as a construction material in any monumental building project, particularly such as a royal memorial temple. The survey team has not noticed any traces of regular exploitation of stone building material on a wide scale like, for example, in the Gurna quarry<sup>52</sup> or any other similar quarry site.<sup>53</sup> Secondly, Gebelein is also excluded as a source of stone building material by the fact that traditionally the Dibabiyah quarry (**Fig. 1a**) – located just on the opposite bank of the Nile<sup>54</sup> – was employed in the New Kingdom for such purposes.<sup>55</sup>

The evidence from the building activity of Ramesses IV at Western Thebes also gives some clues which help resolve this issue. It is noteworthy that, according to the newest evidence,<sup>56</sup> Ramesses IV constructed, or rather initiated, erection of two memorial temples at the very beginning of his reign. The earlier one (in regnal year 1) at Medinet Habu was of sandstone,<sup>57</sup> and the later one (regnal years 2–3) at Birabi of reused limestone blocks.<sup>58</sup> In addition, he also carried out a third building project (regnal year 4) in the area of Asasif, that had hardly started when work was finished; this was constructed of reused limestone and sandstone blocks, too.<sup>59</sup> Thus the expedition commemorated by the Gebelein rock inscription apparently could hardly have been sent to Gebelein or Dibabiyah for building material. Therefore the only reasonable goal for the expedition has to be placed further to the south.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Nishimoto, Yoshimura, Kondo 2002.

<sup>53</sup> See: Arnold 1991: 27–35. While it is true that a limestone quarry has been identified at Gebelein (Harell 1989: 5; Arnold 1991: 29), the quality of local limestone is so poor that it is highly unlikely that it would have been used to erect a memorial temple at any time in Egyptian history. During the 2013 and 2014 seasons of our survey, two potential sites of exploitation of local stone material have been recognized. The first one, located at the northern edge of the Western Rock of Gebelein (**Fig. 1b**), was apparently only a local quarry, used by a local community of Pathyris, for building purposes in the town and nearby necropolis. The second one has been located in the central part of the Eastern Hill of the Western Rock of Gebelein (**Fig. 1b**) and it comprised a complex of flint mines for local use.

<sup>54</sup> Endo, Nishimoto 2009: 204–210.

<sup>55</sup> Hikade 2001: 47, 215.

<sup>56</sup> Budka 2009: 42.

<sup>57</sup> Peden 1994: 50; Robichon, Varille 1938: 99–102.

<sup>58</sup> Carnarvon, Carter 1912: 8, 9, 48, Pls 30, 40. Most of the preserved limestone blocks of the Birabi temple bear remnants of original relief decoration of Hatshepsut, and some of them include building dipinti coming from the Hatshepsut temple complex (Wieczorek 2008: 287, Fig. 2/8) – personal observation on the site winter 2008.

<sup>59</sup> Budka 2009: 19–20.

<sup>60</sup> So far there is neither textual nor archeological evidence indicating existence of any direct trail from Gebelein to the west, connecting the Nile Valley with the *Darb Bitan*, the desert route leading from the Theban region and Rayayna Desert, in the north, to Kurkur Oasis, in the Aswan region in the south (Darnell, Darnell 2013: 36–37, n. 12, Fig. 1). That is why this direction should be excluded.

Thus, based on all the available evidence, the most plausible conclusion is that the expedition was sent to Gebel el-Silsila or to Aswan (**Fig. 1a**). If we take into consideration the events connected with the first regnal year of Ramesses IV (see above), when the expedition in question took place, we can see that there are only two attested projects which would require the acquisition of material: the building project of the king's memorial temple at Medinet Habu (regnal year 1) and construction of the royal tomb KV 2 in the Valley of the Kings (regnal year 2). In the opinion of the present author, one should, most likely, link this expedition with the latter project and the acquisition of a block for the king's sarcophagus (which is still *in situ* in KV 2) from the Aswan granite quarry. It seems less consistent to connect the expedition with any other building project of Ramesses IV at Western Thebes, considering that all these edifices were constructed exclusively from reused material.

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