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The Hatshepsut Temple at Deir El-Bahari, 1993 : The Epigraphic Mission

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THE HATSHEPSUT TEMPLE AT DEIR EL-BAHARI, 1993 THE EPIGRAPHIC MISSION

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This year the Mission concentrated on the Hathor shrine, continuing to record the decoration and study the shrine's architecture.¹ Another objective was the continuing search for blocks from the shrine, now in temple stores.

The following scenes were studied and traced this season:

- the one scene from the outer colonnade wall that had not been recorded yet;
- Hatshepsut before Hathor on the northern wing of the western wall.

¹ Members of the mission: Dr. Janusz Karkowski, director of the Mission, Dr. Nathalie Beaux, Miss Rosanna Pirelli, egyptologists, Mrs. Małgorzata Karkowska, artist and Mr. Boleslaw Kobielski, architect. The Antiquities Organization delegated inspectors, Mr. Ashraf Abd-el-Al in October and Mr. Mahmud Sadek in November.

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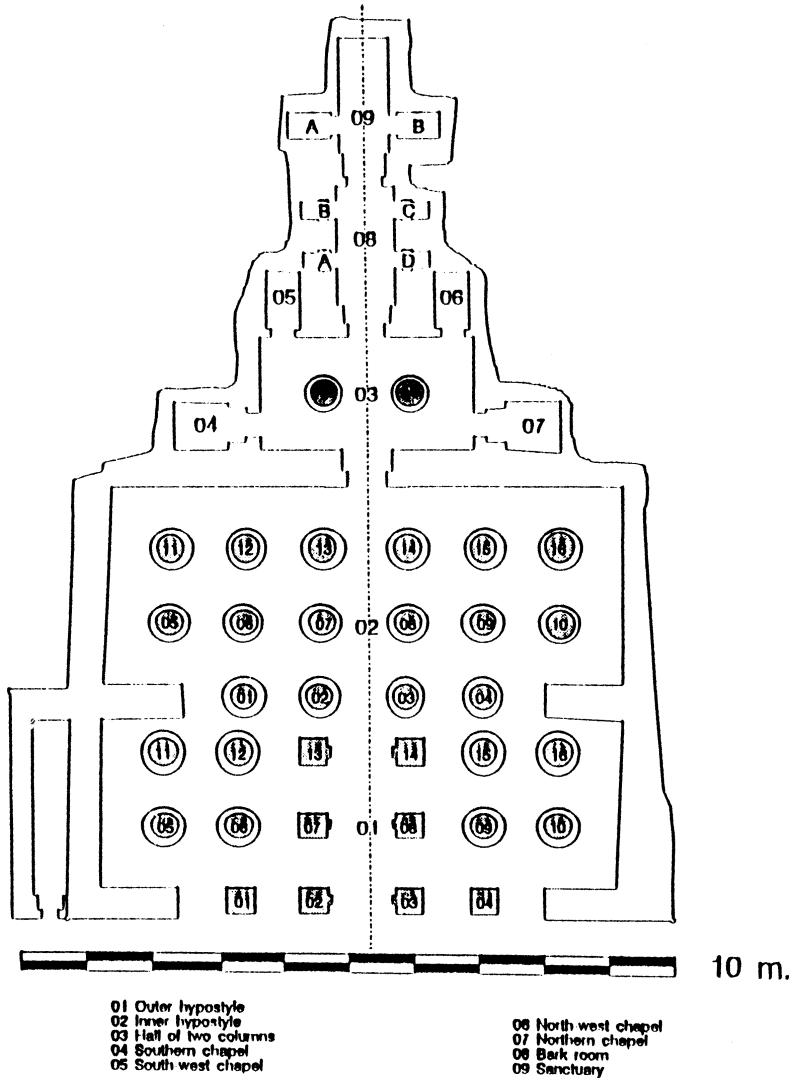


Fig. 1. The Hathor shrine: general plan. Drawing B. Kobielski.

In the hall of two columns that precedes the bark shrine, all the scenes that E. Naville had not published were recorded. On the northern wall the scenes of the presentation of mimi-fruits or seeds, and the presentation of shebet (hour-glass) to Hathor were traced. On the western wall the scene of making incense in front of Hathor over the southern chapel was recorded. Finally, the striking of four *meret*-boxes from the southern wing of the eastern wall and the texts on the architraves were traced.

During the previous season the mission discovered many errors in the restoration of walls of the outer hypostyle. This season over 60 blocks from the stores were found to come from these walls. A significant number of them were attributed to particular scenes. It was possible to establish the subject of each of the scenes and the majority of iconographic details. This includes parts of walls where no decoration has been preserved in situ, as in the case of the facade of the older shrine with decoration in sunk relief showing Tuthmosis III in front of Hathor to the south and Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III following the procession with barks of Hathor and Amun on the southern wall of the inner hypostyle.

Also the pillars and column texts of the colonnade were recorded. Here again, many errors in Baraize's old restoration were discovered. Many blocks, which he had inserted into a single pillar, bear conflicting inscriptions, e.g. the Horus name of Tuthmosis III was placed twice over the cartouche of Hatshepsut, a royal name is followed by a divine epithet, etc.²

² Cf. A. Niwiński, *Miscellanea de Deir el-Bahari*, *MDAIK* 41 (1985), 197-227, pls. 28-35.

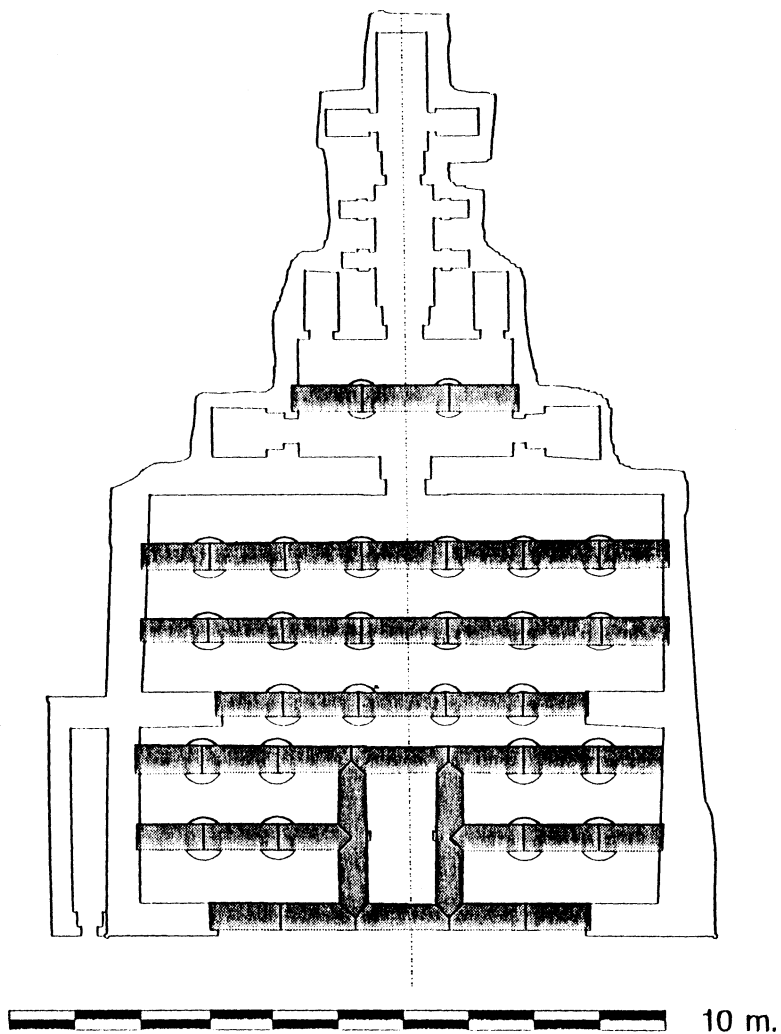


Fig. 2. Restoration of the architraves in the Hathor shrine.
Drawing B. Kobielski.

The study of pillar inscriptions permitted their "grammar" to be established and significant progress was achieved in attributing blocks to particular pillars and in correcting various errors.³

Also the architraves of the colonnade were recorded, both large blocks and fragments. In the future an important part of these architraves can be put back in their original places. The architraves of the inner colonnade with the royal tutelary on one side and a short dedicatory formula on the other are preserved in about 75%. It was established that texts on the Hathoric pillars facing the axial passage were made in sunk relief, despite the fact that they were in the shadow of a roof.⁴

Architectural studies centered on the access to the Hathor shrine. The southern retaining wall of the first terrace was measured anew and all the traces of lines in red paint were recorded. The results differed from previous publications by E. Naville and Z. Wysocki. Only the oldest and the latest ramps have been confirmed archaeologically, although it is not possible to determine whether the older of the two was ever completed. No preserved line on the southern retaining wall corresponds to the final ramp of which parts of the balustrade remain.⁵ The other lines of intended ramps can be linked with the three stages of the

³ Most of the documentation and the study of the pillars were done by R. Pirelli.

⁴ For the use of sunk and low reliefs during the Tuthmoside Period, cf. Karowski, *Faras V* (Warsaw 1981), 59 with n. 247.

⁵ Fact overlooked by previous authors.

platform in front of the shrine, established in the previous season,⁶ but there is no archaeological evidence for their construction.

In connection with architectural studies, a small test trench was dug between the southern retaining wall and the limestone wall of Mentuhotep, which marked the southern extent of the Hatshepsut temple. The objective was to establish the location of the western foundation deposit pits, opened three times already by E. Naville, H. Winlock and Z. Wysocki. The pits were marked on the plan along with all related markings on both walls and on the foundation blocks.

Another small trench was dug in the bark room to establish whether there were any remains of the original pavement below the rubbish in the eastern part of the room. Some 30 cm of this rubbish was removed along the southern and northern walls, but since no remains of paving slabs nor bedrock appeared in the trenches, they were filled in again. There is presumably a tomb shaft in this place, apparently opened once before. All the pavement of Hatshepsut's times must have been removed from here when the tomb was made.

The mission expects further results from an analysis of the collected documentation. The study of the Hathor shrine should be completed in about two years.

⁶ N. Beaux, J. Karkowski, La chapelle d'Hathor du temple d'Hatchepsout à Deir el-Bahari, Rapport préliminaire, *BIFAO* 93 (1993), pp. 1-10.