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Deir El-Bahari: The Temple of Queen Hatshepsut, 1998

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DEIR EL-BAHARI

THE TEMPLE OF QUEEN HATSHEPSUT, 1998/1999

Franciszek Pawlicki

Conservation and preservation work in the temple of Queen Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari was carried out between November 15, 1998, and April 15, 1999.¹⁾ The objective of the season was to conclude several restoration and engineering projects in the Upper Portico, Upper Courtyard, Northern and Southern Chapels of Amun, and Main Sanctuary in order to open the Third Terrace to visitors in April 2000 (Fig. 1).²⁾

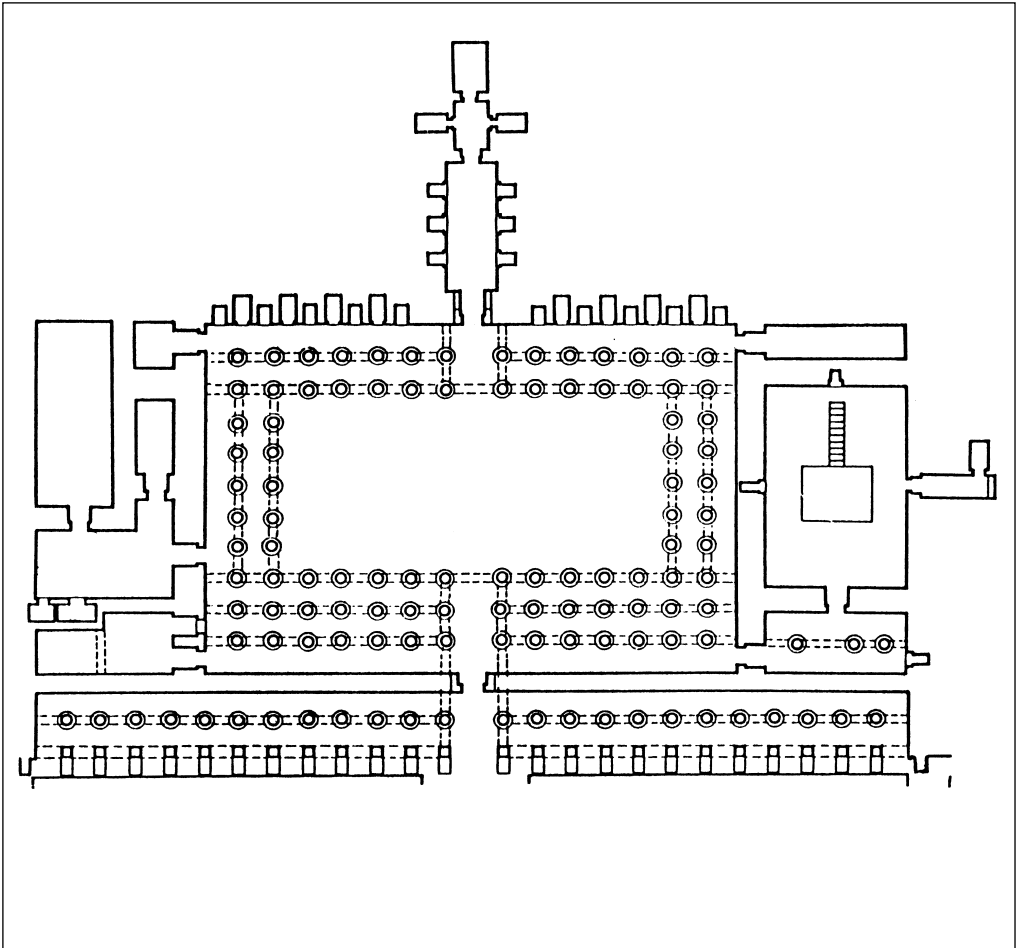
¹⁾ The work of the expedition was financed jointly by the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt and the Polish Center of Archaeology of Warsaw University. Our gratitude is due to SCA Secretary General Prof. Dr. Gaballa Ali Gaballa, General Director of the SCA Pharaonic Department Dr. Muhammed Soghayer, Director of Antiquities in Luxor Dr. Muhammed Nasr, Director of Antiquities in Qurna Dr. Sabri Abdel Aziz, and his deputy Mr. Muhammed Biali. Special thanks are due to the General Director of the Restoration Department of Antiquities, Mr. Muhammed Ali Salam, and to Mr. Muhammed Shawki Bakri, who represented the Engineering Department of the Qurna Inspectorate.

²⁾ The expedition led by the present writer included: Mrs. Justyna Bonikowska-Stożek, Mr. Rajmund Gazda, Mrs. Aleksandra Kann, Dr. Maria Lulkiewicz-Podkowińska, Ms Barbara Mrożkiewicz, Mr. Wojciech Myjak, Mrs. Katarzyna Rachuta-Wierniewska, Dr. Janusz Smaza, Ms. Agata Wiaderny, conservators; Messrs. Marcin Dąbrowski, Piotr Dąbrowski, Andrzej Kwaśnica, architects; Mr. Mieczysław Michiewicz, civil engineer; Mr. Mikołaj Budzanowski, Mr. Mariusz Jucha, Dr. Ewa Laskowska-Kusztal, archaeologists; Prof. Dr. Jan Krzysztof Winnicki, egyptologist; Messrs. Maciej Jawornicki, Waldemar Jerke, photographers; Ms Eunika Rozmarynowska, graduate student of the Institute of Archaeology of Warsaw University. Mrs. Lidia Smaza and Ms Izabela Uchman worked with the mission on a voluntary basis.

Representing the SCA was Mr. Yasser Youssif Ahmed, inspector, who was of considerable assistance in many ways.

Conservation intervention and repairs were undertaken wherever urgently required: on the western wall of the Birth Portico, some of the pillars of the Punt Portico, balustrade of the Upper Portico. The reconstruction of the staircase of the lower ramp and of the pavement on the middle platform court-

yard was carried out simultaneously by a separate team from the Supreme Council of Antiquities. The Polish Mission concentrated its work on the northern wall and inner colonnade of the Upper Courtyard, the Main Sanctuary of Amun and the Northern Chapel of Amun.



*Fig. 1. Plan of the Third Terrace
(Drawing A. Kwaśnica)*

NORTHERN WALL OF THE UPPER COURTYARD

The overall objective of the season was to preserve the original substance of the wall (which had survived intact in part) and to harmonize – in color and texture – the modern plaster with the original stones, many of which were fitted into their origi-

nal positions over the past few seasons.³⁾ On one hand, after years of weathering the modern plaster and mortar is no longer acceptable from the aesthetic point of view. On the other hand, more and more time is being spent on protecting blocks that were

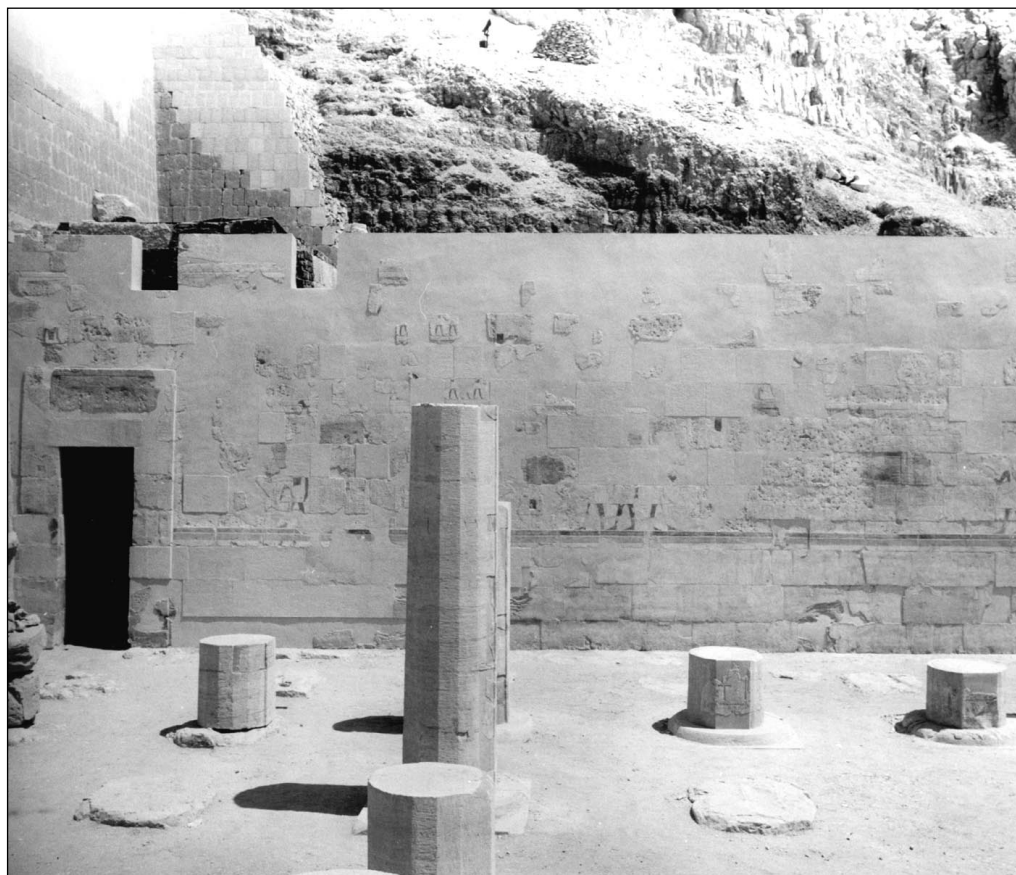


Fig. 2. Northern wall of the Upper Courtyard. General view of the western section after final restoration (Photo W. Jerke)

³⁾ Minor restoration and consolidation work in the 1930s by French engineer E. Baraize was followed with a project for reintegration executed by a Polish-Egyptian Preservation Mission, cf. Z. Wysocki, "Deir el-Bahari, Chronique des fouilles", *ETXVI* (1992), 436-485; and more recent work, especially in the upper registers where the Beautiful Feast of the Valley is depicted, cf. J. Karkowski, "Notes on the Beautiful Feast of the Valley as represented in Hatshepsut's Temple at Deir el-Bahari", in: *50 Years of Polish Excavations in Egypt and the Near East* (Warsaw 1992).

reinserted into the wall previously without appropriate conservation treatment and are now slowly starting to disintegrate. Preventing exfoliation of very thin superficial layers of stone, especially in the upper courses of the wall, was a top conservation priority. All loose fragments were protected with Japanese tissue-paper to avoid further detachment. Sand was cleaned from the empty blisters and cracks using pure alcohol. A mineral filler was then applied to re-attach the endangered parts to the

stone substratum. The surface was washed with water and non-ionic detergent to make the decoration clear. Weathered and cracking modern plaster was removed and replaced with an artificial shelter coat (Remmers' Funcosil LA Siliconfarbe) (*Fig. 2*).

Some minor reconstruction of the outlines of the missing representations of king Tuthmosis III and of sacred bark of Amun was attempted in modern plaster to make the decoration clearer for visitors (*Fig. 3*).



Fig. 3. Tuthmosis III with incense in front of the sacred bark. Representation of royal statues, dancers and priests during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley. Northern wall of the Upper Court after final conservation (Photo W. Jerke)

INNER COLONNADE OF THE UPPER COURTYARD

The arrangement of the colonnade of the Upper Court (known as the court of the feast *wshyt hbyt*) was established some twenty years ago.⁴⁾ It was then believed that the court was lined with two rows of columns along the eastern, northern and southern walls, while in front of the wall with niches there had been three rows of columns. Many of the bases and sixteen-sided proto-Doric columns were reconstructed accordingly.

Recent research,⁵⁾ however, has indicated that the inner colonnade of the court was originally composed of only two rows of columns. A third row, along the eastern wall, was added later on, presumably during the rearrangement undertaken by Queen Hatshepsut. In the light of egyptological and architectural evidence (reworked original fragments of architrave), it became clear that the objective of the rearrangement was to create a new axis leading toward the Chapels of the Royal Cult.

The goal of the current restoration of the inner colonnade was to make this plan evident. Two columns with the architrave were restored on the main court axis. The latter, leading to the Main Sanctuary of Amun, was emphasized by the image of a winged solar disc on the inner face of the architrave (*Fig. 4*). Another architrave bearing the inscription: "Life [for] the mighty bull, powerful of strength, king of Upper and Lower Egypt, *3-hpr-n-Rc*, Two Ladies, Divine of the crowns, Horus of gold:

Powerful in forms, Son of Re of his body: [...] may he live, be enduring and prosperous, enjoy with his ka on the seat of Horus eternally like Re", was attributed to the central intersection. Its restoration, however, will be possible only together with a neighboring column of the inner row.

In view of the importance of the southeast corner intersection of the colonnade for the general layout of the Upper Courtyard, the columns situated in the vicinity of the entrance leading to the Royal Complex started being reconstructed. The front of the reconstructed column was decorated with the names of Tuthmosis II (originally of Queen Hatshepsut) and a representation of a kneeling *rꜥkhyt*-bird turning towards the passage axis. In order to rearrange the plan of the colonnade, one of the columns alongside the southern wall was reconstructed using two huge original drums of a sixteen-sided proto-Doric column. An inscription on the front side referring to Queen Hatshepsut, partly removed, preserves the name of the court (*wshyt hbyt*). Though the feminine endings and suffixes have been hammered, the remaining words of the final formula are well preserved.⁶⁾ Other original elements from the inner rows of the colonnade have been gathered in storage in preparation for further restoration. Some of them bear inscriptions referring to the Sed feast, others seem to be situated in the southeastern corner of the courtyard, close to the so called "window of appearance".⁷⁾

⁴⁾ Z. Wysocki, "The Upper Court Colonnade of Hatshepsut's Temple at Deir el-Bahari", *JEA* 66 (1980), 54-69; J. Karkowski, "Dekoracja kolumn górnego dziedzińca", *Biuletyn Informacyjny PKZ* (1975), 21-32; id., "The Arrangement of the Architraves in Hatshepsut's Temple at Deir el-Bahari", *ET XIII* (1983), 140-153.

⁵⁾ Studies by A. Kwaśnica, Maciej G. Witkowski and Jan K. Winnicki.

⁶⁾ The column reconstructed once by E. Baraize in the hypostyle hall of the Hathor Shrine was long ago identified as belonging to the Upper Court. Cf. A. Nawiński, "Les colonnes proto-doriques avec inscriptions du temple de Hatchepsout à Deir el-Bahari", *ET IX* (1976), 81-111.

⁷⁾ F. Pawlicki, "Inscriptions des colonnes proto-doriques du Temple d'Hatchepsout a Deir el-Bahari", *ET XII* (1978), 77.



*Fig. 4. Architrave restored on the main axis of the Upper Court
(Photo W. Jerke)*

UPPER PORTICO

During the previous seasons five gigantic stone statues of Hatshepsut were set up in front of the pillars of the Upper Portico facade. All of them depicted the temple founder standing, encased in the white shroud of Osiris. Several corrections were now introduced into three already restored statues. Many original fragments from the surviving statuary elements were fitted into the torso, shoulders and arms of the statues. The head of one of them was replaced with another original piece, the temple thus acquiring a fine portrait of Queen Hatshepsut. Though a little pathetic in expression, her features still show a certain feminine softness: delicate pointed chin and almond-shaped eyes in an attractive oval face (*Fig. 5*).⁸⁾

The restoration of a lion-shaped gargoyle in the southern section of the Upper Portico was completed as well. A disintegrated and partly broken piece was

replaced with another original statue chosen from the open-air reserve. The missing parts of the lion's face and paws were sculpted in modern mortar, then given a final coat of plaster. The huge block of the gargoyle was then fitted into the balustrade of the portico and fastened to the slabs of the pavement with steel anchors.⁹⁾ The drainage gutter running alongside the balustrade was cleaned and repaired. With all these operations completed, the conservation of the pillars of the Punt Portico was initiated.

To protect the northern section of the Birth Portico from rainwater, the pavement in the northern wing of the Upper Portico was repaired. The accumulated soil was removed and replaced with waterproof mortar. A water disposal system including a sandstone gargoyle above the neighboring Lower Shrine of Anubis had already been restored in the 1997/98 campaign.

MAIN SANCTUARY OF AMUN

Ever since the mission resumed work in 1993, top priority has been accorded to the conservation and restoration of the temple's main sanctuary. This season the conservation of all the chambers of the sanctuary has been finished. During the re-excavation of the tombs of priests of Amun, some 30 decorated blocks were found and introduced into the niches and walls of the Hall of the Bark. Among fragments found in the burial shafts there were pieces

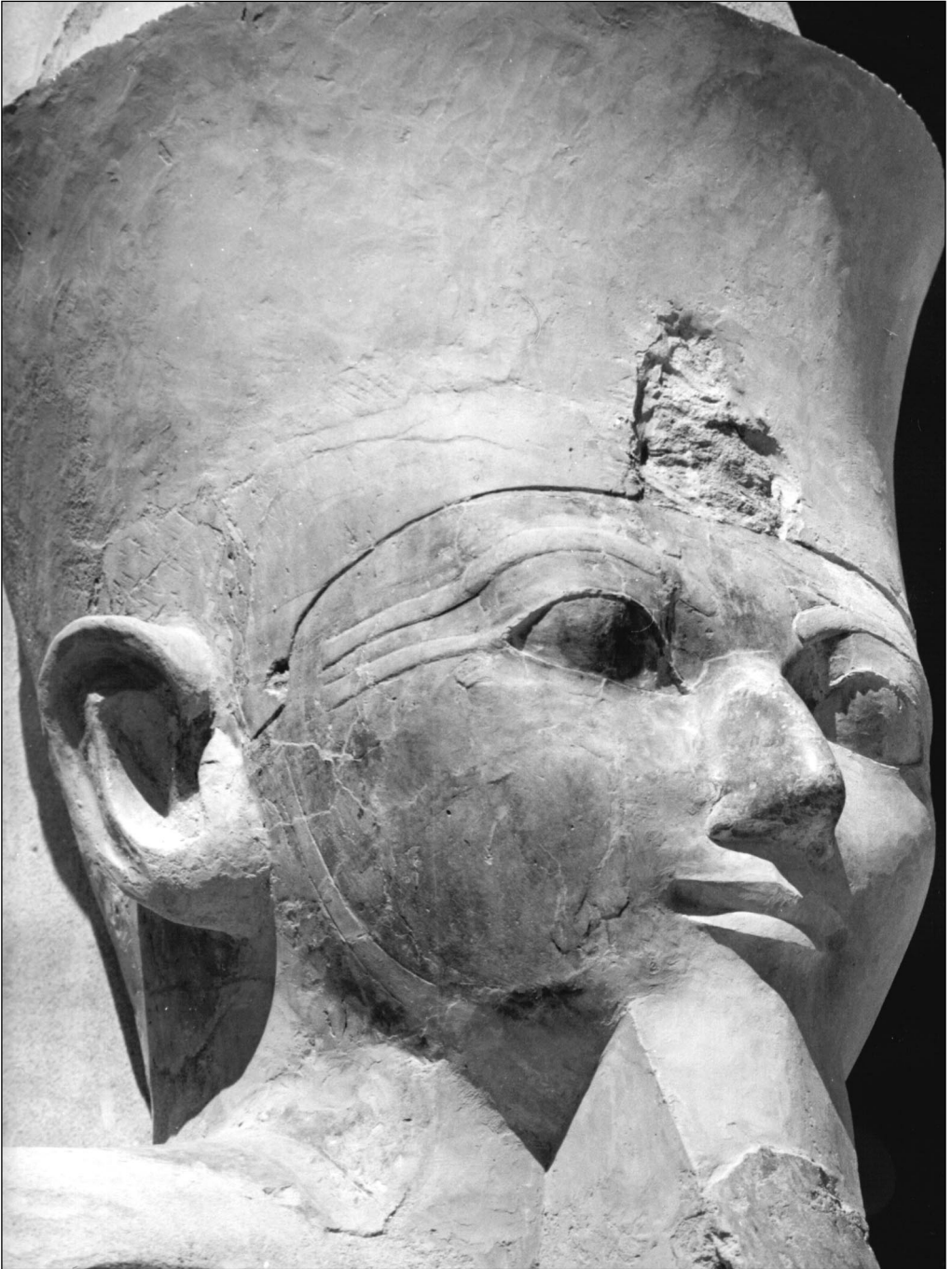
belonging to the offering-list, the offerings and the elements of the prow of the sacred bark depicted on the southern wall.

H. Winlock first ascertained that there were four statues of Queen Hatshepsut standing in each corner of the Hall of the Bark.¹⁰⁾ The shoulder and crown outlines are still visible on the original blocks preserved in the eastern wall of the room. Two of these figures have now been restored. The missing elements (but not the heads)

⁸⁾ The head of the statue was restored by Wojciech Myjak.

⁹⁾ The restoration was carried out by Janusz Smaza, who is also responsible for the restoration of the Osiriatic statues in the Hall of the Bark and in the niche of the southern section of the western wall of the Upper Court.

¹⁰⁾ H. Winlock, *Excavations at Deir el-Bahari 1911-1931* (New York 1942).



*Fig. 5. Restored face of an Osiriac statue of Queen Hatshepsut. Northern wing of the Upper Portico
(Photo W. Jerke)*



Fig. 6. Western wall of the Hall of the Bark in the Main Sanctuary of Amun-Re, after final conservation with the restored statues of Queen Hatshepsut (Photo W. Jerke)

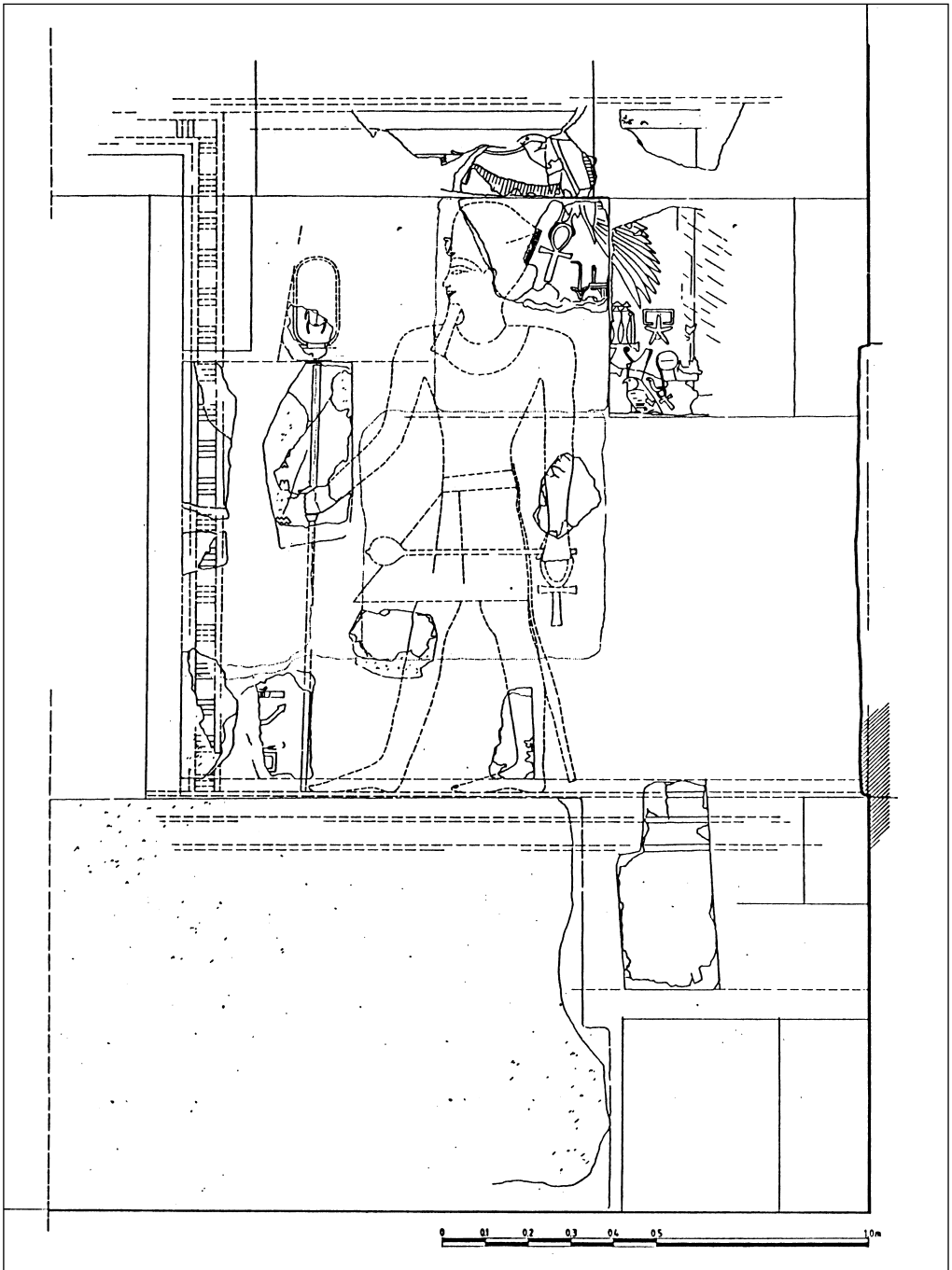


Fig. 7. Tuthmosis III with royal ka entering the sanctuary. Northern wall of the Hall of the Bark (Drawing M. Dąbrowski)

were sculpted in mortar made of powdered limestone, sand and white cement and covered with a final coat similar in color to the original fragments (*Fig. 6*).

The decision to remove the undecorated blocks that had been introduced in the Ptolemaic Period in the bottom register of the northeastern corner of the wall in the Hall of the Bark led to the discovery of some original decorated blocks. One of these belongs to a representation of Tuthmosis III. With this fragment in place, twelve others could be re-introduced into this section of the northern wall (*Fig. 7*).

A thick layer of soot and dirt was removed from the walls of the southern and northern chapels of the sanctuary. Flaking and detached parts of the polychromy and plaster were re-attached and consolidated. Empty blisters and air pock-

ets were filled in with filler and mineral putties. All the reliefs (except for the eastern wall of the southern chapel) were cleaned and traced on transparent plastic film, the drawings subsequently reduced to a scale of 1:5.

On the rear wall of the northern chapel, a representation of small figures of Hatshepsut kneeling in front of two enthroned gods, Amun and Atum, became visible. The reverse composition (figures of Amun flanking a large cartouche of Hatshepsut) is located on the tympanum above the entrance to the chapel. It may suggest that the position of the queen was considered equal to that of the god. The iconography of the remaining walls is typical. However, a multiplication of images of Atum and Montu should be noted, in view of the lesser than expected number of representations of Amun-Re.

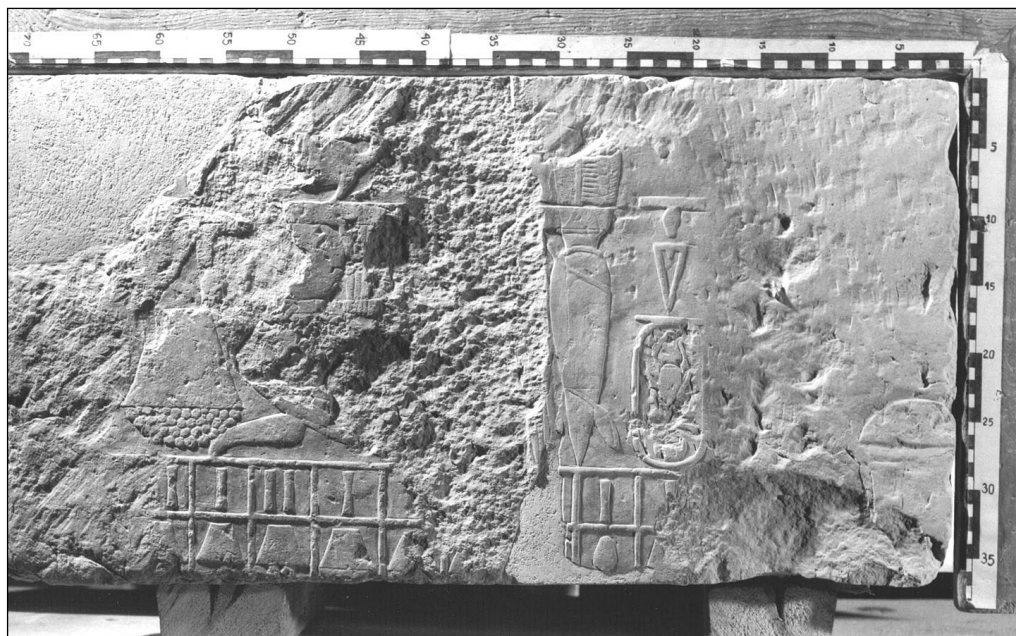


Fig. 8. Newly discovered decorated blocks attributed to the offering-chapel of the Main Sanctuary (Photo W. Jerke)

In the Ptolemaic Sanctuary, directly underneath the accumulated soil, a number of limestone blocks were discovered. It now appears that the pavement of the Ptolemaic Sanctuary was made haphazardly of stone elements taken from the chamber that had previously stood in this place in the times of Queen Hatshepsut. One of the blocks depicts Queen Hatshepsut with a stick and a mace turning to the right. It had belonged to the northern jamb of the entrance leading to the room of the offering-table. Many other blocks belonging to this doorway were assembled over the course of the past season.¹¹⁾ A second block found below the pavement of the Ptolemaic Sanctuary belonged to the wall of the dismantled chamber of the offering-table. Its decoration consisted of offerings, a part of

the offering-list and a cartouche of Tuthmosis II (originally of Queen Hatshepsut) (*Fig. 8*). It seems that the general character of the decoration of the inner chamber of the sanctuary recalls the iconographical program depicted on the walls of the offering chapel of Queen Hatshepsut erected in the Royal Cult Complex to the south of the Upper Courtyard. Also here there had been a false-door of granite in the middle of the rear wall, as indicated by a block with double incisions on the side, apparently meant to accommodate this element. The last chamber of the sanctuary was covered with a vaulted roof. The localization of the offering chapel in the rear part of the sanctuary corresponds to the principal features of a mortuary temple well known since the Old Kingdom.

NORTHERN CHAPEL OF AMUN

Restoration and protection of the eastern and southern walls of the Northern Chapel of Amun was one of the most important objectives of the season. Situated in the northwestern corner of the Upper Terrace, the almost completely preserved Chapel was excavated first by J. Greene¹²⁾ and then by E. Naville.¹³⁾ E. Baraize covered it with a concrete ceiling, which, however, proved too heavy for the relatively thin and weak eastern wall of the structure. The stability of the wall has thus been affected, resulting in severe deformation, like the dangerous bulge of the southern section in the vicinity of the original passage to the sun-altar court. Moreover, heavy down-

pours recorded in Deir el-Bahari in 1992 and 1994 resulted in the painted plaster beginning to detach.¹⁴⁾

The affected section of the eastern wall was dismantled course by course and a huge amount of eroded Esna-shale debris was removed from in back of the wall. Archaeological finds were not many, however, one of these being a bowl dating to the Eighteenth Dynasty. The cleaning completed, a supporting steel structure was installed. Reinforced concrete banks were introduced around iron tee-bars. The remaining part was filled in with broken limestone blocks and cement mortar. Finally, the wall was re-erected. Loose fragments of colored plasters were

¹¹⁾ Cf. F. Pawlicki, *PAM X, Reports 1998* (1999), 126, fig. 5

¹²⁾ J. Greene, *Fouilles exécutées à Thebes dans l'année 1855* (Paris 1855).

¹³⁾ E. Naville, *The Temple of Deir el-Bahari I* (London 1895).

¹⁴⁾ Cf. F. Pawlicki, *PAM VII, Reports 1995* (1996), 69.

re-attached to the stone. Empty joints and voids were filled in with cotton gauze strips dipped in lime and white cement mortar.

The southern wall of the chapel was also restored. The broken lintel was reinforced with steel bars, while the deformed eastern jamb of the entrance was dismantled down to the foundations and rebuilt. Sixteen decorated blocks were re-introduced into the upper register of the southern wall, directly above the lintel. The

scene depicting Queen Hatshepsut offering wine to Amun-Re was almost completely restored. The hammered figure of Hatshepsut was replaced with a representation of Tuthmosis II. Yet the original decoration is still easy to recognize. Preserved in the western part is an inscription, which records the words of Amun: "I have given to you my seat, the dignity of heiress of the throne, because you love [me] living eternally like Re".

EXCAVATIONS IN THE MAIN SANCTUARY OF AMUN-RE

The reconstruction of the pavement in the room for the cult statue and in both side chapels required a compact layer of earth and rock debris to be cleaned from the floor. Three shafts leading to four burial chambers of the priests of Amun and Montu

were discovered immediately underneath the accumulated soil. Two were situated in the side chapels, and the third was in the western part of the main room. The priests had been buried together with their relatives in the period of the Twenty-First and Twenty-Second Dynasties.¹⁵⁾ The rock-hewn shafts reach a depth of c. 4.00-4.20 m. They are square in cross-section, measuring either c. 1.10 or 1.40 m to the side. In all three there was a compact fill of earth, rock, broken limestone blocks and Ptolemaic sandstone fragments apparently cast down in modern times. The tombs were explored and then robbed presumably in the early 19th century.¹⁶⁾ Another tomb situated below the Hall of the Bark was excavated by E. Baraize in the early 1930s.¹⁷⁾

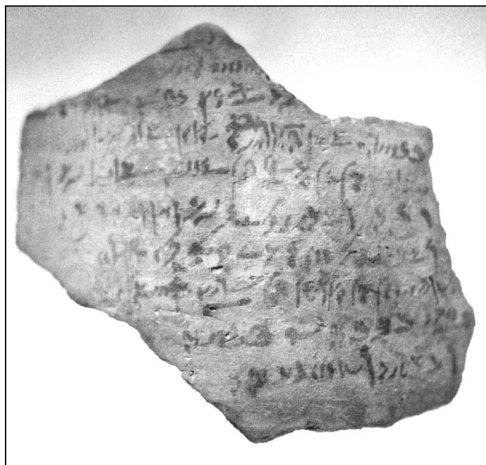


Fig. 9. Demotic ostrakon found below the pavement of the southern chapel of the Main Sanctuary (Photo W. Jerke)

Excavations yielded many written documents: small fragments of papyri, a number of ostraca in Demotic and Coptic. One Demotic ostrakon is a business letter of sorts (*Fig. 9*). A man, whose name has not been preserved, was associated with the temple of Amun-Re in Karnak in the 2nd

⁵⁾ Family burials are typical of the Third Intermediate Period.

¹⁶⁾ The sanctuary was accessible already at the time of the Napoleonic Expedition. The tombs were plundered probably by Belzoni or soon after his examination of the sanctuary. H. Brugsch, who visited Hatshepsut's temple in the early fifties, saw the open shafts.

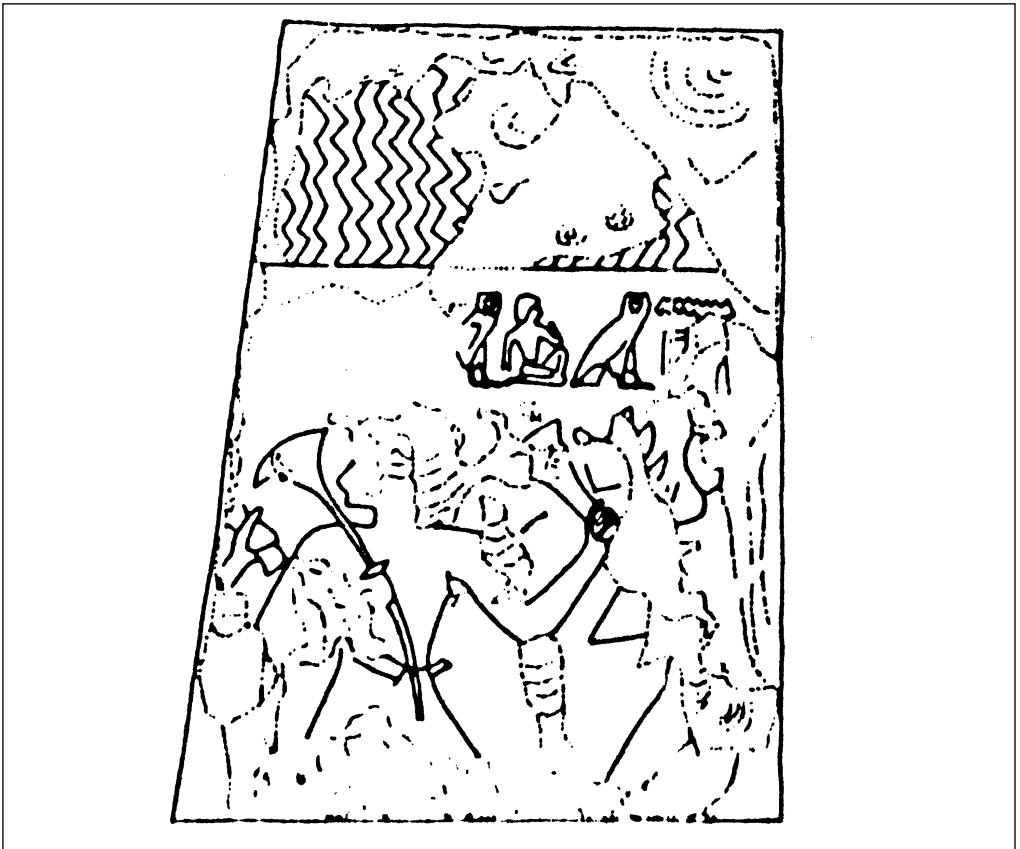
¹⁷⁾ B. Bruyère, "Une nouvelle famille de prêtres de Montou trouvée par Baraize à Deir el Bahari", *ASAE* 54 (1957), 11-33.

or 1st century BC.¹⁸⁾ A Greek text on an ostrakon is a note made by a professional scribe, whose cursive writing with many abbreviations is clearly a Roman documentary hand.¹⁹⁾

Explorations yielded a considerable pottery assemblage. Numerous sherds of amphorae, bowls and vessels of local origin are both Late Roman and Coptic. Unfortunately, the archaeological context is completely disturbed. Finds from the shafts and burial chambers include numer-

ous small blue-glazed ushebti figurines, remains of cloth, painted fragments of cartonnages, human bones, wooden sticks, and small fragments of sarcophagi.

Among the decorated blocks discovered in the shafts there are two with a representation of offerings from the southern wall of the Upper Court, and one depicting a procession of the Beautiful Feast of the Valley from the northern section of the eastern wall (*Fig. 10*). Other elements belong to the Ptolemaic sanctuary portal.



*Fig. 10. Block with a procession of soldiers from the Beautiful Feast of the Valley
(Drawing E. Rozmarynowska)*

¹⁸⁾ To be published by J. K. Winnicki.

¹⁹⁾ To be published by A. Łukaszewicz.