

HATSHEPSUT'S TEMPLE AT DEIR EL-BAHARI EGYPTOLOGICAL DOCUMENTATION 1989-1990

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An Egyptological mission of the PCMA worked for a brief period in April of 1989.¹ The main objective of this season was to trace the scenes of the Opet Feast from the southern end of the east wall of the Upper Court, as well as details of the upper, unpreserved scenes on fragments in the temple stores.

In addition, the mission documented some of the unpublished figural graffiti of Greco-Roman times preserved on the walls and columns of the Ptolemaic portico and verified copies of the texts of the birth scenes in the northern middle portico and the texts in the royal complex to the south of the upper court.

During the second season,² conducted in 1990, studies in the temple stores were continued in order to provide new material for further restoration in this temple and for final publication. A separate study concerned Greek inscriptions left by pilgrims who visited the important sanctuary of Amenhotep, son of Hapu and Imhotep, which functioned in the temple ruins for over 500 years.

The mission used transparent plastic film for tracings. The drawings were then re-traced and photographically reduced to produce

¹ The mission comprised Miss Hanna Koczowska, artist; Dr. Janusz Karkowski, egyptologist, Director of the Mission; Miss Małgorzata Koperwas, archaeologist; Dr. Maciej Witkowski, egyptologist and Mr. Nur Abd el-Gaffar Muhammad, who acted as the inspector of the EAO.

² During this season, which lasted from 21 January to 3 April 1990, the mission comprised: Dr. Janusz Karkowski, egyptologist, Director of the mission; Mr. Mirosław Barwik, egyptologist; Dr. Nathalie Beaux, egyptologist; Mrs. Dorota Bielińska, archaeologist-documentalist; Miss Joanna Kusek, artist; Mr. Adam Łajtar, Greek epigraphist and Mr. Stefan Sadowski, photographer. The EAO delegated two inspectors : Messrs Reda Ali Suleiman and Nur el-Gafar.

plates for the planned publication. Altogether over 120 full scale copies, averaging 1.10 x 1.50 m in size, were made.

In choosing the scenes to be recorded the mission applied the following criteria:

1. Completing the documentation of temple elements which were recently restored. This included the walls of the upper portico, eastern, southern and northern walls of the upper court and the northern wall of the same court. Here, it may be signaled that some additional fragments were identified in the temple stores as coming from the southern wall of the upper court. They belong to the western jamb of the entrance to the room with the window. The tracing of all the decoration on these walls was completed.

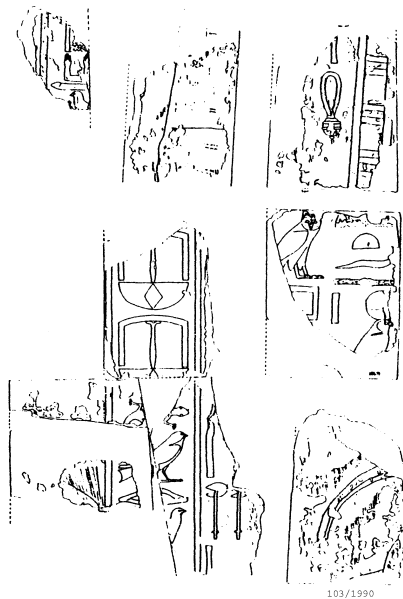


Fig. 1. New blocks from the walls of the solar chapel.

2. Recording the decoration of the parts of the temple which are closest to the rocks towering above the temple or which are excavated in the rock. Thus, the mission recorded the innermost part of Amun's sanctuary (chapel of Amun's cult statue and the southern chapel of the Ennead), as well as the solar complex. Tracing of the decoration in these rooms was completed. In the solar complex, a number of stored fragments could be ascribed to the western, unpreserved wall of the solar chapel (Fig. 1).

In addition, the recording of the wall with niches in the upper court was started. All the scenes above the smaller niches were traced as well as the largest, unpublished scene to the south of the sanctuary entrance. During studies in the temple stores eight additional fragments were identified; they belong to the wall with niches and their exact location has been established (Fig. 2).

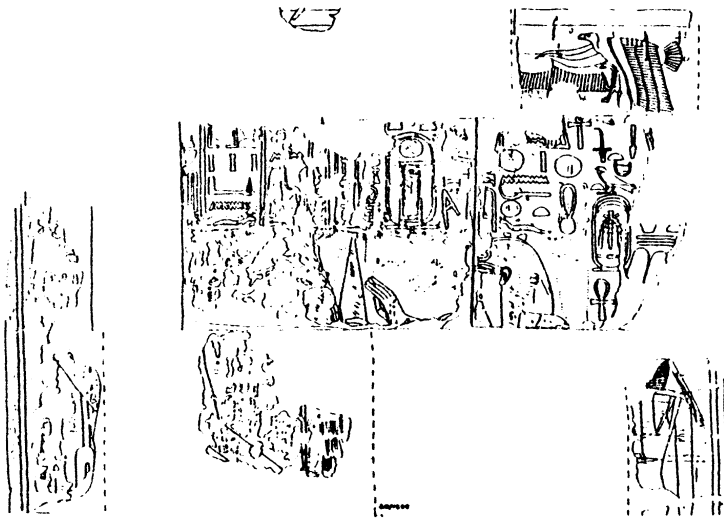


Fig 2. New fragments from the wall with niches.

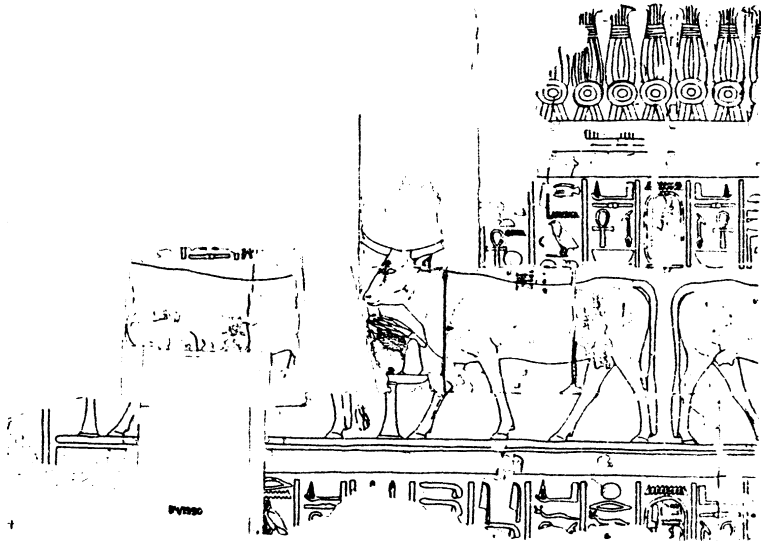


Fig. 3. Two new fragments from the east wall of the niche of seven cows in the royal complex.

Yet another task of the mission was the study of a group of texts and representations in the royal complex to the south of the upper court. This season the three versions of Chapter 148 of the Book of Dead were fully recorded together with loose fragments from the temple stores (Fig. 3). They were placed in Hatshepsut's hall of offerings on both sides of the false door, by the entrance to Tuthmosis I's offering hall and in the niche in the eastern wall of the vestibule of Hatshepsut's chapel.

A preliminary study of the loose fragments of the unpublished Ritual of Hours from the ceiling of Hatshepsut's offering hall was done as well. All the texts were copied. Many fragments were assembled to form larger blocks. During the season it was possible to ascribe about 30% of the preserved blocks to the hymns of the particular hours of day and night. Already it is obvious that in the

future not only the theoretical restoration of the oldest preserved copy of this important text will be possible, but also the practical reconstruction of the hall's roof.

The last study completed during the season concerned Greek graffiti left on the temple walls by pilgrims in Greco-Roman times. These graffiti had been published by A. Bataille in 1952, but the present work proved that he omitted a number of important texts. Altogether Bataille's catalogue could be supplemented with 125 new texts. In addition, numerous corrections could be introduced to his readings of the texts. Among the unpublished texts the most interesting is the Hymn to Amenhotep son of Hapu, on the southern wall of the Ptolemaic Portico. Another unpublished text from one of the niches of the upper court dates from the time of Diocletian and shows that the cult of Amenhotep son of Hapu and Imhotep did not disappear in the 2nd century AD as Bataille believed, but survived until the end of the 3rd century.

In some cases Greek inscriptions on loose fragments enable them to be placed in the walls. This primarily concerns fragments of the Ptolemaic Portico where, thanks to graffiti, five large fragments could be added to the cornice and column capitals.