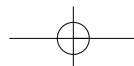
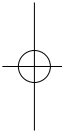
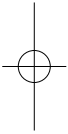
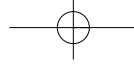


**Zbigniew E. Szafrński**



**DEIR EL-BAHARI  
TEMPLE OF HATSHEPSUT**





Polish scholars and conservation specialists, who were sent by Kazimierz Michałowski to Deir el-Bahari in 1961, were the latest in a long series of travelers and researchers visiting the site. The first to leave a description of the abandoned Coptic monastery that had once stood on top of the ruins of the temple of Hatshepsut was the famous English explorer Richard Pococke who stopped here in 1737. Jean-François Champollion copied the texts from the temple's granite portals and the walls of the Main Sanctuary of Amun-Re. John Gardner Wilkinson introduced the name *Deir el-Bahari* (Northern Monastery) in world literature in 1835. Richard Lepsius followed with the identification of the ruins as a temple of Hatshepsut. Regular excavations were started by Auguste Mariette, the founder of the Egyptian Antiquities Service, after which two institutions of great merit for Egyptological studies moved in. The first was a mission of the Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF) directed by Edouard Naville. Between 1893 and 1899 it managed to clear the Upper Terrace and most of the buried courtyards, chapels and colonnades. Roofs were installed over the Portico of the Obelisks and the porticoes of the Middle Terrace. The walls of the Main Sanctuary of Amun-Re were reinforced and a provi-

sional protection was carried out of the Sun Altar, Royal Cult complex, Hathor Chapel and Lower Northern Portico. Ten years later Herbert E. Winlock arrived in Deir el-Bahari at the head of a mission of the Metropolitan Museum of Art which stayed there for the next twenty years (1911-1931), penetrating the terraces and the two ramps of the uncovered temple.

When Leszek Dąbrowski came with his group of specialists from Warsaw University's Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology (PCMA), they found row upon row of decorated blocks arranged by their illustrious predecessors, waiting to be restored to their original positions in the walls, columns and architraves of the temple. The Poles had been invited to take over the project by the Egyptian Antiquities Organization. Kazimierz Michałowski remained at the head of this mission from its inception in the autumn of 1961 to his death in 1981.

Thus it is that the unique architectural undertaking of an exceptional pharaoh-queen of the Eighteenth Dynasty, daughter of the great Tuthmosis I, sister and wife of Tuthmosis II, who ruled the land on the Nile some 3500 years ago, has been the object of investigations for almost two centuries. The terrace temple of Hatshepsut, entered on UNESCO's list of world cultural heritage,

has its unquestioned place in textbooks dealing with the history of world architecture.

Reading the message that the Queen had recorded on the walls of the building erected in the Third Terrace became the most important task of the Polish-Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Mission. The decoration of the temple had changed during its existence. The origins of the building, its initial form from the times of Hatshepsut's husband or perhaps father, are practically unknown and the queen herself introduced changes repeatedly in the course of the project. After ruling for 21 years, Hatshepsut disappeared from the pages of history. Another 20 years later, her successor Tuthmosis III had her names and many of her representations erased from the walls of the building. At the order of Akhenaton, who introduced the cult of Aton, the names and images of Amun were destroyed. The following rulers, especially Horemheb and Ramesses II, reconstructed the earlier images and hieroglyphs, restoring Amun to the throne.

The stupendous work of documenting the remains of the Upper Terrace and the thousands of blocks lying in the stores was accomplished by the mission. The decoration and the texts were traced in 1:1 scale on transparent plastic film. The drawings were then reduced in size and photographed; today this stage is being processed digitally. The photos were made all in the same scale so that researchers could fit this enormous jigsaw puzzle together, resulting in a theoretical reconstruction of the representations. In the course of this work, scholars took note of all the recuttings, damages and restorations. Frequently enough daylight was insufficient to observe the changes. Sometimes

it was best to do the tracings at night, the strong side halogen lighting bringing out all the minor lines, dashes, hieroglyph traces, changes in the surface texture of the wall or block. It was a titanic undertaking. The decoration of most of the walls of the Upper Terrace was thus cast in hundreds of square meters of plastic film, tracing paper and ordinary paper.

Protection and reconstruction of particular architectural elements of the building were undertaken even while the studies of the decoration continued. The reconstruction envisaged at the time by the Egyptian Antiquities Organization (EAO) was an undertaking on an enormous scale. In 1968, a team from the Polish Ateliers for the Preservation of Cultural Property (PKZ) was brought in; working for the next two decades under the direction of Zygmunt Wysocki, it pushed the work forward in new directions. It was decided in consultation with the EAO to reconstruct fully certain parts of the temple. Thus, the Upper Portico and the walls of the Upper Terrace were restored to their full height. Some of the destroyed architectural members, like column drums, architrave blocks, fragments of cornices and balustrades were reconstructed of limestone quarried immediately next to the ancient Pharaonic quarries located north of West Thebes. Up to 200 workers were employed at times on this huge reconstruction project.

At the foot of the rock cliff rising vertically above the temple, the Queen's architects had constructed a platform designed to protect the building from rocks walls. The reconstruction of this platform, a fourth terrace of sorts, was the mission's first observable achievement. The space above the Bark Hall of the Main Sanctuary was also protected along with the relieving

stone slabs above the ceiling. The plain wall above the Upper Terrace was restored, forming a strong solar accent in a temple that was dedicated to the Sun God after all. As it was in the times of Hatshepsut, so today, this surface reflects like a mirror the first rays of the rising sun.

The Upper Terrace of the temple was the most important element of the entire building. Here Hatshepsut incorporated the most important information concerning the role that the temple was intended to play in the religious life of Egypt, information about the times of her reign and even about her bold plans for the future. Fragments of this huge jigsaw puzzle of stone blocks were put back together into scenes, permitting to be deciphered many of the Queen's messages.

The Upper Portico contains texts and images illustrating Hatshepsut's coronation as king of Egypt. The idea content here is a continuation and crowning of the narration presented in the lower two terraces, where the queen boasted raising to Amun-Re in his temple at Karnak four of the greatest obelisks of the world (in her times) and organizing a great expedition to the Land of Punt. She also made it clear that she was the daughter of Amun-Re, because Amun's intercourse with her mother Ahmes resulted in the birth of the boy Hatshepsut – as to this the scenes in the Portico of the Birth leave no doubt. The coronation was preceded by a long text, inscribed in 110 columns, reporting a series of miraculous events that occurred by the will of Amun and led to the crown of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt being placed on Hatshepsut's brow.

The most impressive element of the Coronation Portico are the 26 colossal

statues of Hatshepsut as Osiris standing against the pillars of the facade. Tuthmosis III had the names of the Queen and the uraei above the foreheads of the statues, hammered out. Without this traditional royal attribute the statues represented solely Osiris. So far, eight of these statues have been restored out of surviving fragments. The conservators' efforts have made many of the destroyed names of the Queen decipherable again. Two fragments of uraei found during excavations were returned to their place on the forehead of the statues. Centuries after they had been mutilated, these statues now represent Hatshepsut once again.

In cooperation with the Supreme Council of Antiquities (former EAO), the two ramps leading to the Middle and Upper Terrace respectively were restored. At the foot of the upper ramp, statues of two royal falcons sitting on the backs of huge cobras were reconstructed. The writhing bodies of the serpents topped the ramp's balustrade.

The reconstructed walls of the Upper Courtyard, recording scenes from 3500 years ago, have brought much new data on the colorful feasts that were celebrated here. The courtyard was known as the Festival Courtyard. The Queen is present in all of the episodes of the feasts. The scenes reconstructed to the right of the granite portal of the Courtyard, in the bottom registers of the east and north walls, roll like still shots from a movie telling the story of the *Beautiful Feast of the Valley* during which Amun-Re left his sanctuary in Karnak to cross the Nile and visit the temple of Hatshepsut on the western bank. The colorful and evidently music and singing procession proceeds toward the temple. The upper registers of these walls depict the procession leaving

the temple and returning to Karnak. Many of these scenes are simply unparalleled. The southern part of the east wall, to the left of the portal, represents the *Beautiful Feast of Opet* during which the statue of Amun-Re in a bark was carried out in procession from his temple in Karnak to the sanctuary in Luxor, stopping at several chapels along the way. The procession then sailed down the Nile to Karnak.

The restored west wall of the Courtyard appears as the monumental facade of the Main Sanctuary of Amun-Re. A set of eighteen niches divided by a monumental granite portal in the middle, was used for the worship of Hatshepsut. Osiriac statues of the Queen stood in ten of the larger niches; four of the statues were restored by the mission.

Scenes of the Daily Ritual appear on the south wall of the Courtyard. Here, Hatshepsut is shown, sometimes with Tuthmosis III and sometimes with her daughter Neferure and her mother Ahmes, performing the priestly rituals with regard to the statue of Amun-Re.

The reconstruction of the walls of the Festival Courtyard to their full height identified the position of sockets in the architrave, leading in effect to a determination of the number and arrangement of the columns. Initially, the courtyard had two rows of columns on all four sides. On the east, that is, the side of the entrance, Hatshepsut had a third row of columns installed. At the same time she cut an entrance in the south wall, providing access to a complex of two mortuary cult chapels, which must have been erected by then. One was intended for her father Tuthmosis I and the other for herself. The cutting of this doorway necessitated the columns in the rows

by the wall separating the courtyard from the chapels to be moved apart, thus eliminating one column per row. Thus, the third row of columns emphasized the second, transversal axis of the temple on the Upper Terrace. The reconstruction has restored this arrangement, emphasizing with the axis from the Courtyard to the Chapel of Hatshepsut, which was the most important place of her worship. The architrave resting on the capitals marks the importance of both the axis and the passage, recreating the Queen's message which was to underline the exceptional importance of her cult, practically equaling that of Amun-Re.

The Main Sanctuary was a challenge in all respects: conservation, Egyptological studies and reconstruction. And Polish restorers rose to the challenge, restoring the sanctuary to its former magnificence. The Bark Hall is the first room of the sanctuary. It is here that Amun's sacred bark stood with the huge piles of offerings placed before it. Conservators removed from the painted walls layers upon layers of dirt and soot accumulated through the ages. The magnificent polychrome reliefs depict in detail the ceremonies celebrated in this chamber. The colors, clean and fresh again, highlight the artistry of the carvings, particularly the finesse of the sculptor who rendered all the exquisite details of Amun's bark, the offerings, faces of the main characters in this story, hieroglyphic signs, birds, plants and many others. The lost fragments have been done as white artificial stone surfaces, but in order not to deter from understanding the full meaning of particular scenes, the missing elements were recreated. In a few of the scenes, the lost parts were carved delicately. Similarly sparing reconstructions were rendered also in some of the repre-



sentations of the walls of the Upper Courtyard. In the longer walls of the Bark Hall there are six niches and in the corners of the room there once stood four mummiform statues of Hatshepsut; two of these have been reconstructed and restored to their original position. The main thrust of the conservation work on the sanctuary dates to the time of the mission working under the direction of Franciszek Pawlicki from 1992 to 1999.

A short ramp with steps down the middle, also reconstructed by the mission, led to the second chapel of the sanctuary, the Hall of the Offering Table which together with the smaller lateral chapels and a great niche in the west wall is also the last part of the Holy of Holies. The niche in the west wall of this chapel was reconstructed in the latest season (2006/2007) and it has brought in effect a most important discovery changing our understanding of the layout of the original sanctuary. Instead of three chapels hitherto considered as the constituent parts of the Main Sanctuary, it is now clear that there were only two chambers ending in a large niche located on the main axis of the temple and closed with wooden doors. Inside the niche, on a pedestal, there stood an ebony naos and in it a statue. The third chamber was cut thirteen hundred years later, during the reign of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II. The western niche was eliminated, the niches in the Bark Hall were blocked and a portico was added in the Upper Courtyard, immediately in front of the granite portal leading inside the Main Sanctuary. The chapel was dedicated to Imhotep and Amenhotep son of Hapu, worshipped sages and great builders of the Third and Eighteenth Dynasties respectively. The efforts of the conservators also brought

to light the gilded reliefs of the Ptolemaic chapel. In this later period, the entire complex served as a religious faith-healing center where the needy sought help from the gods.

In restoring the Ptolemaic Portico a conscious effort was made to impart on the structure the appearance of a building added in the times of Hatshepsut. The joints between the stone blocks of the Portico were even widened artificially in order to heighten the effect of loose elements adjoining an older facade. The portico partly concealed the lower parts of the figures of Queen Ahmes represented in two very important scenes carved in symmetry on either side of the portal. The queen was shown standing behind the throne of Amun-Re, immediately next to the granite jambs. The scene was reworked a number of times already in Antiquity, the original figure being Neferure instead of Ahmes. The four blocks of the portico which had obstructed from view the original facade from Hatshepsut's time were dismantled and what was discovered revealed yet another of the Queen's mysteries. Neferure appeared in full light as a potential ruler of Egypt. Depicted as a priestess of Hathor, with her name inscribed in a royal cartouche, she greeted on the threshold of the Main Sanctuary two arriving important figures, in all likelihood Hathor and King Hatshepsut. These two scenes announced the will of the great Queen that her daughter Neferure would rule Egypt after her. This was not the case for Neferure disappears after the eleventh year of Hatshepsut's reign, and ten years later so does her mother.

On either side of the Festival Courtyard there are two big complexes of build-

ings: to the south the said Mortuary Cult Chapels and to the north the Solar Cult Complex. In the vestibule of the latter complex, three out of four walls were reconstructed to their full height. This vestibule was dedicated to the sun's journey across the night sky. Hatshepsut is shown here as a priestess of the Sun God, versed in the knowledge of the sun's transformations during the night hours, as set down in the so-called *Theological Treatise*, a poem written down on the walls of the vestibule. This room was once roofed and completely dark. From here an entrance led to the sun-flooded courtyard with a stone sun altar in the center. The undecorated walls of the courtyard concentrated sunlight, creating a mood for worshipping the day sun that restorers were able to evoke by using white limestone. Many of the lost elements of the altar's architecture were restored in new limestone.

The partly rock-cut Upper Chapel of Anubis was entered from a door in the north wall. The decoration of this chapel, preserved by the mission, is an artistic masterpiece of the age. The entire chapel has been isolated from its surroundings, sealed as if in a cage to protect it from the detrimental effects of climate and potential dislocation of the rock massif behind it. The chapel was yet another place of Hatshepsut's cult. Very subtly, the Queen identified herself here with *Imy-wt*, one of the aspects of the god Anubis.

The Mortuary Cult Complex located on the other side of the Festival Courtyard is the current focus of the mission's work directed by Zbigniew E. Szafranski since 1999. As already mentioned above, the complex incorporated chapels of Hatshepsut and her father. The chapel of Hatshep-

sut, which is the biggest interior in the whole temple, gives the impression of the inside of an Old Kingdom mastaba. The Queen had scenes from the walls of a temple of Pepi II from the Sixth Dynasty transferred to her chapel. Inscribed on the semicircular vault is the *Ritual of Night and Day Hours*. More than a third of this vault has survived in place; the rest, pieced together from fragments, is stored and awaits reconstruction.

The mission has extended its work also to the Middle Terrace. The decoration of the portico of the Lower Chapel of Anubis was cleaned and conserved, as was the decoration in the southern wing of the Portico of Punt. For a time (1989-1992) an epigraphic mission directed by Janusz Karkowski worked in the temple. From 1971 Karkowski coordinated the Egyptological studies carried out in the temple and in 1992 he became co-director with Nathalie Beau-Grimal of a Polish-French Epigraphic Mission, established on the grounds of an agreement signed between the Polish Centre and the Institut français d'archéologie orientale. This mission is charged with preparing a monographic publication of the Hathor Chapel.

Excavations, which are another aspect of the Polish-Egyptian Mission's program, are planned to bring answers to questions connected with the history of the building and the need to check the stability of wall foundations. Any endangered areas that are identified are protected immediately with appropriate supporting structures. Excavations also bring to light new blocks that can be fitted into the reconstructed walls.

The temple was destroyed by a quake and the ruins were subsequently used as a burial ground in the Third Intermediate Period. The shaft tombs hewn into the rocky



floor of the temple's chapels held the remains of high priests of the temples of Amun and Montu in Karnak and members of the royal family in the times of the Twenty-third and Twenty-fifth Dynasties. So far 15 burial shafts have been discovered. All were plundered already in Antiquity, but based on surviving elements of the tomb equipment, it was determined that the vizier Padiamonet was buried in the Chapel of Hatshepsut during the reign of Piye of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty.

The disturbed and mixed fill of the shafts has also yielded elements of the furnishings from the Coptic church that once occupied the Chapel of Hatshepsut. Scraps of papyrus, ostraca, sherds of pottery and pilgrim's flasks speak of the life of the monks who lived in the ruins of the temple. Visitors in Roman times also tended to lose an odd coin on occasion, thus informing us of their presence in the temple in the 4th century, before the construction of the monastery.

On 3 April 2000, the closing day of the Eight International Congress of Egyptolo-

gists, which was held in Cairo, the restoration work was finished on the Festival Courtyard, the Coronation Portico and the Main Sanctuary of Amun-Re. The most important part of the Upper Terrace was opened to Egyptologists and tourists from around the world.

The reconstruction respects historical truth and it reflects the main international legal acts in this respect, as much as comprehensive restoration conceptions and aesthetic trends current in the field of restoration today. In the end effect, the mission has been able to discover and save different phases in the functioning of the temple throughout the more than 2600 years of its existence.

The Queen was once sentenced to oblivion. Her successors wanted nothing more than to obliterate her memory and remove her name from the annals of the history of Egyptian pharaohs. They have been foiled in this attempt thanks to the efforts of the Queen's modern courtiers from the Polish-Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Mission.

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*Temple of Hatshepsut. Upper Terrace. Beginning of work on the temple in the early 1960s (in the background, excavations of the temple of Tutmosis III) (PCMA Archives)*

*Temple of Hatshepsut. Upper Terrace View from the northeast, after reconstruction (Photo M. Jawornicki)*







Temple of Hatshepsut. Upper Terrace. Portrait of Hatshepsut from the Main Sanctuary of Amun-Re  
Face and body of the queen painted pink  
(Photo M. Jawornicki)

Temple of Hatshepsut. Upper Terrace. Portrait of Tuthmosis III from the Main Sanctuary of Amun-Re  
(Photo M. Jawornicki)







*Temple of Hatshepsut. Upper Terrace. Portrait of Neferure, daughter of Hatshepsut. The headdress was changed to one typical of the queen's images when Hatshepsut changed the daughter's name to that of her mother Ahmes. Scene (left, southern) at the entrance to the Main Sanctuary of Amun-Re (Photo M. Jawornicki)*

*Temple of Hatshepsut. Upper Terrace. Main Sanctuary of Amun-Re, Bark Hall. After reconstruction (2000). In the background, Hall of the Offering Table and Ptolemaic Sanctuary (Photo M. Jawornicki)*







*Temple of Hatshepsut. Upper Terrace. Festival Courtyard after restoration. Two restored architraves mark the two axes of the temple  
(Photo M. Jawornicki)*

*Temple of Hatshepsut. Upper Terrace. Solar Cult Complex after restoration  
(Photo M. Jawornicki)*

