

DEIR EL-BAHARI TEMPLE OF TUTHMOSIS III, CAMPAIGNS 2012–2013

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Abstract: In 2012 and 2013 the mission continued research and documentation work, concentrating on scenes located in the Hypostyle Hall, the Bark Room, and rooms D, G and H. Dozens of painted stone fragments were cleaned and protected. Photoscanning techniques were used to improve detailed rendering of the temple. New photomontages were produced and subsequent walls were drawn, joining previously separate scenes.

Keywords: Tuthmosis III, Deir el-Bahari, temple decoration, temple architecture, photomontage, reconstruction

The two seasons, in 2012 and 2013, lasted altogether a little over two months and were conditioned largely by the general situation in Egypt, which resulted in a number of logistical and personnel issues. The reconstruction of the last two blocks in the wall with the niche, decorated on both sides could not be completed as a result. Otherwise the East Wall of the sanctuary would have been made ready for exhibition.

Lacking two conservators to handle blocks, the one restorer present, a specialist in painting restoration, concentrated on securing the polychrome layer on endangered and/or especially valuable fragments [*Fig. 1*]. The painted surface of blocks is constantly abraded by sand particles present in the current, less than perfect storage conditions, causing a fa-

ding of the original intensity of colors. Fragments that had suffered in the catastrophic rainstorm of 1994 were also in need of attention, having salt efflorescence come heavily to the surface. Although restoring the original condition is usually not possible, consolidation of the stone and paint layer is of utmost necessity. In 2013 the most endangered stone surfaces were protected, many more were cleaned and hardened, and storage conditions were improved (special shelves and linen covers) to prevent further deterioration.

ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES

Long years of research have still not addressed all the problems related to the architecture of the temple. Progress has been made in some areas thanks to a metho-

dical examination of architectural elements by a specialist, architect Mariusz Caban. Included in the study were architrave fragments, Hathor capitals, remains of the ramp and adjoining structures, as well as loose blocks left near the Hathor chapel.

Foremost, the arrangement of the lower porticoes and the length of the ramp was found to be different than previously assumed. The ramp must have been longer and consequently the lower porticoes had to be shifted slightly to the east. Adjoining



Fig. 1. Fragment of a royal feather dress, before (left) and after cleaning (Photos M. Szewczyk, M. Dolińska)

Team

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MSA representatives: Nafesa El Azab Mohamed Ahmed (2012), Mohamed Ahmed Husein Abu Gad (2013)

Egyptologists: Janina Wiercińska (National Museum in Warsaw; 2012, 2013), Piotr Czerkwiński (PhD candidate, Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw; 2012), Filip Taterka (student, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań; 2012)

Photographer: Zbigniew Doliński (National Museum in Warsaw; 2012, 2013)

Documentalist: Marek Puzkarski (PCMA UW; 2012)

Architect: Mariusz Caban (PhD candidate, Wrocław University of Technology; 2012, 2013)

Conservator: Magdalena Szewczyk (freelance; 2013)

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structures, previously interpreted as a sort of kiosk or annex, now are seen as belonging to the portico structure. The proposed arrangement has found illustration in a new 3D model of the temple [Fig. 2 bottom].

Room F appears to have contained a staircase leading to the roof. The idea has been put forward based on a similar

arrangement in the Medinet Habu temple, for example, and a staircase has been added to the temple plan [Fig. 2 top].

A block with oblique opening that was discovered in 2011 is a new element as well, believed to be part of the roof. It is enticing, although less probable, to see in it a wall block with small window letting daylight stream in and fall upon the cult

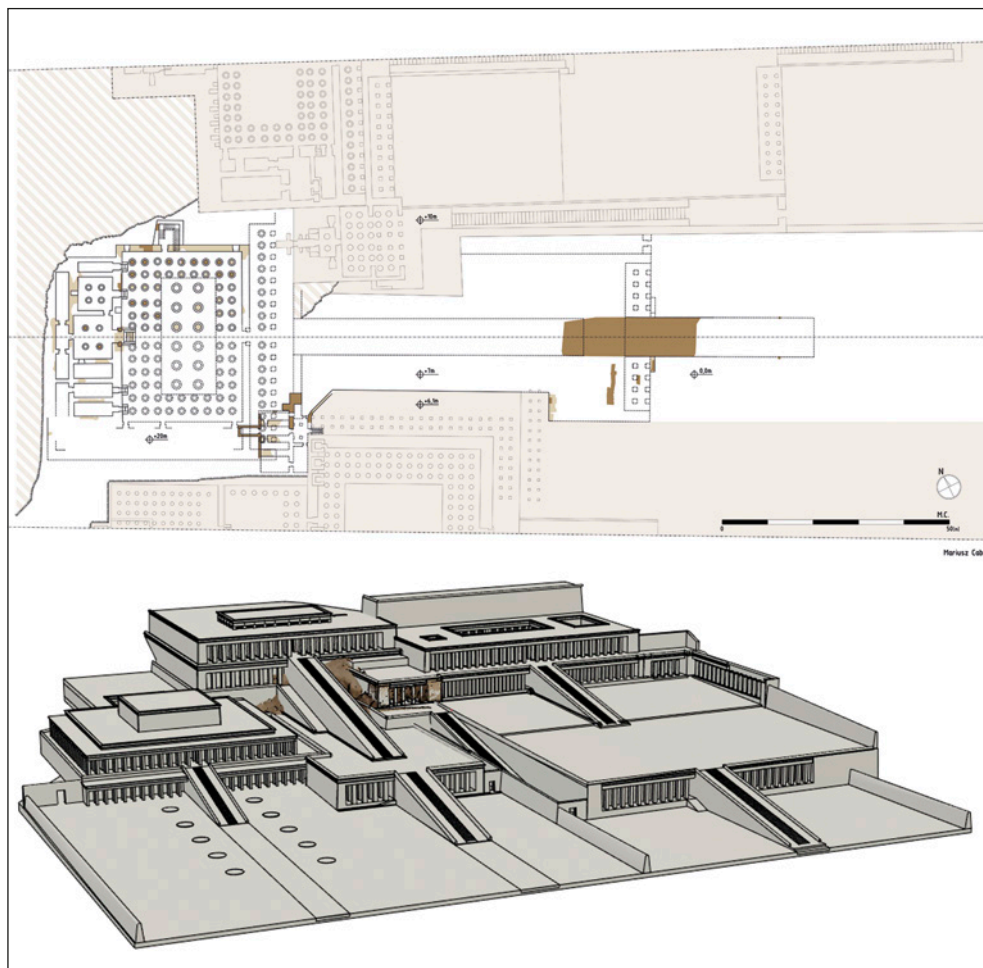


Fig. 2. Temple of Tuthmosis III in Deir el-Bahari: top, new plan following architectural reexamination; bottom, 3D computer model (Drawing and modelling M. Caban)

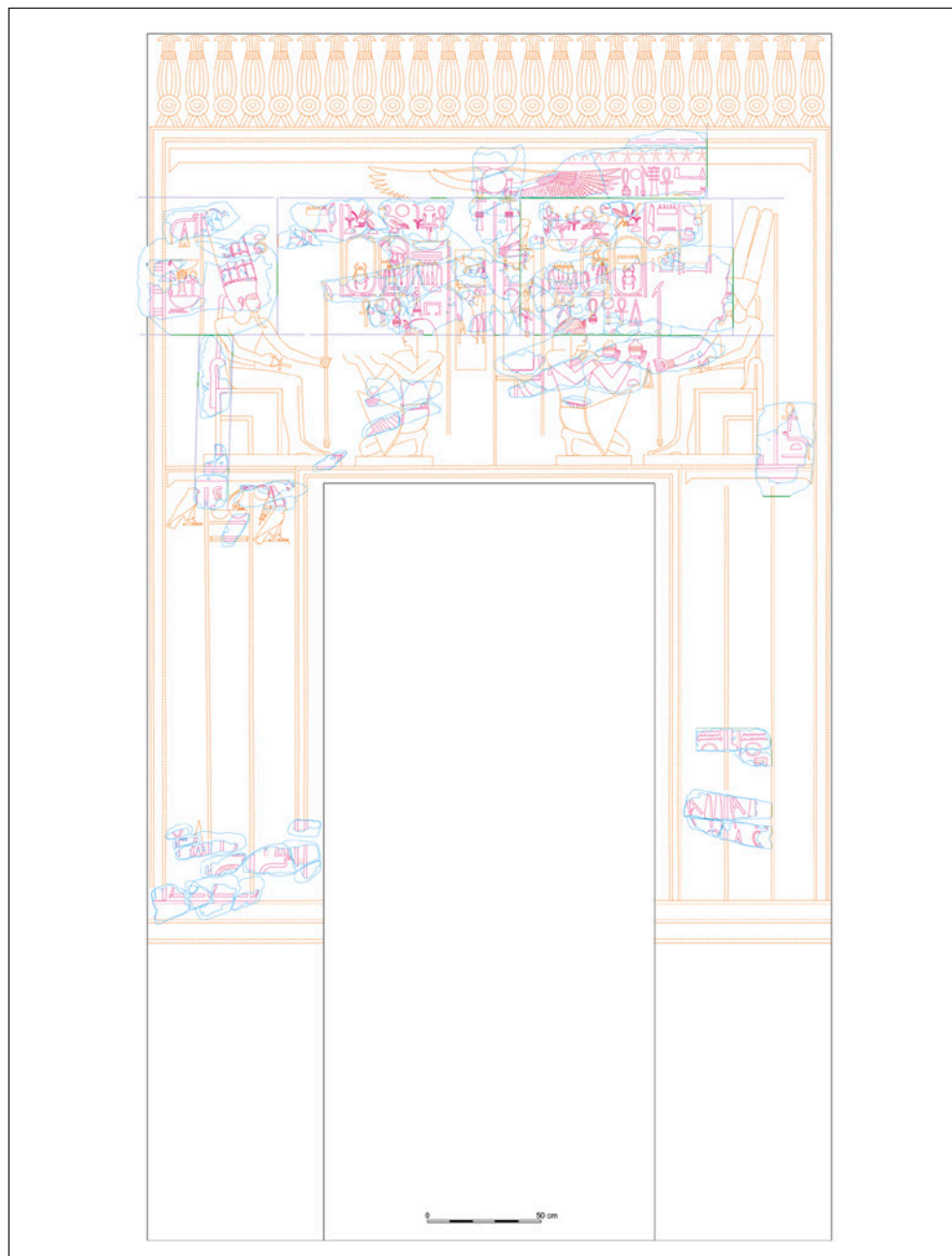


Fig. 3. Drawing documentation of the East Wall in Room H
(Drawing M. Puzkarski)



Fig. 4. Reconstruction of a Hathor capital
(Photoscanning and drawing M. Caban)

statue, as in the neighboring temple of Hatshepsut.

Photoscanning techniques were applied to restore the Hathor capital based on just a few preserved fragments [Fig. 4]. The naos of the capital turned out to have only one uraeus, instead of the two seen in the neighboring Hatshepsut temple. It is likely that only two pilasters with Hathor capitals existed, completed perhaps by two columns.

DOCUMENTATION TASKS

Documentation of scenes has progressed, with all the reconstructed and localized scenes being drawn in Corel or Illustrator software. Still to be accomplished is the drawing of new fragments added to scenes, reconstruction of whole walls from separate scenes, drawing of fragmentarily preserved scenes that have yet to be localized. New drawings made in 2012 and 2013 include the West Wall of the Bark Room, the East Wall of room H [Fig. 3], the West and East Walls of room D, scenes between doors on the West Wall of the Hypostyle Hall.

The preparation of a corpus of photographic documentation has also progressed methodically, especially with regard to fragments of scenes to be used in photomontages as well as joining pieces not photographed previously [Fig. 5]. Some complete blocks stored in the rear chamber of the storeroom will have to be rephotographed in the future once proper access has been ensured.

Several new photomontages were assembled, including the left wall of the niche in room D [Fig. 7], a figure of the king seated on a throne in a royal bark from the East Wall of the Hypostyle Hall and a part of the South Wall in room D with

the royal titles [Fig. 8]. The photomontage of a figure of the king with royal *ka* from the same scene is in preparation.

EGYPTOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The publication of the temple is intended in parts, dedicated to the different parts of the temple. The most advanced is the study of rooms D, G and H connected with the royal cult (Part I by Monika Dolińska). The complex history of the temple exemplified by changes in the architecture of the Hypostyle Hall will be analyzed in a separate section (Part II by Janina Wiercińska). Subsequent parts will deal with the Bark Room, Offering Table Room, Sanctuary, Ritual Vessels Chamber



Fig. 5. Joining fragments with royal titles from room G, South Wall (Photo and photomontage Z. Doliński)

and the remaining fragmentarily preserved rooms. Wiercińska recently identified new evidence concerning the widening of the door between the Hypostyle Hall and the Bark Room — fragments of cut away doorjambs with royal titles [Fig. 6]. Some very fragmentary scenes in the Offering Table Room were also newly located.

SMALL FINDS INVENTORY

The inventory of small finds, encompassing fragments of statuary, stelae, coffins, shabtis, tools etc., has been continued, both in the mission storeroom and in the central Carter Store, where some of the most interesting fragments and complete statues had been taken. Some of the finds had been published by Jadwiga Lipińska, but a substantial number still needs to be studied (task charged to Piotr Czerkwiński, epigraphic studies conducted by Filip Taterka).



Fig. 6. Fragment cut-away from the entrance to the Bark Room, with the unerased name of Amun (Photo Z. Doliński)



*Fig. 7. Reconstruction of the left wall of the niche
(Photo and photomontage Z. Doliński)*

STORAGE

Fragments in the open-air lapidaries and in the temple area continued to be relocated (in 2012), taking care to ensure that painted architraves would not be damaged by increasingly frequent rains

and potential harm from the operation of the Cliff Mission right above the temple. The procedure adopted by the project is to build brick-and-wooden benches under the fragments of architraves and to cover them with canvas sheets.



*Fig. 8. Royal titles in room D, South Wall
(Photo and photomontage Z. Doliński)*

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