



The Pronaos Reliefs at Deir el-Haggar Temple: more light on the local theology

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ABSTRACT

The present study provides the systematic epigraphic documentation and publication of all carved reliefs and hieroglyphic texts of the Pronaos at Deir el-Haggar temple, which date to the Roman Period, by giving facsimiles, translation and the detailed discussion of the Roman emperors' decorations distribution. It also presents careful analyses of the decorative programme of the offering scenes. This approach will review the theory that the temple was mainly dedicated to the Theban triad. Several details strongly support that the temple was mainly dedicated to a local pantheon comprised of Amun, Thoth, Khonsu and Min jointly. All of these gods predominate in the majority of offering scenes on the two jambs of the doorways of the sanctuary and the Offering Hall, which are most likely a reference to the main gods. Analysis of the iconographic details displays the duality of the solar and lunar aspects of the main gods as a personification of the eternal cycle of the sun and the moon.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received 12 February 2023

Received in revised form 20 October 2023

Accepted 28 October 2023

Available Online 10 January 2024

KEYWORDS

Deir el-Haggar,
Dakhleh Oasis,
the Pronaos,
lunar and solar theology.

INTRODUCTION:

The Roman temple of Deir el-Haggar in the Dakhleh Oasis is situated 20km north-west of the modern town of el-Qasr, about 30km from Mut, the ancient and modern capital of Dakhla. Its hieroglyphic texts and carved reliefs allow for a good understanding of the local theology and the building activities of the Roman government in the first and second centuries CE. It probably dates back to the reign of Nero (54-68 AD), as evidenced by the earliest decoration on the sanctuary. Again, it was funded for substantial enlargements and full resumption of the decoration work under the reigns of Titus and Domitian.

In last decade of the 18th century and throughout much the nineteenth century, early European and then Egyptian visitors and geographers conducted research expeditions to the site and described the temple ruins; these include A. Edmonstone (Edmonstone, 1822), F. Drovetti, (Cailliaud, 1822), G. Rohlfs, (Rohlfs, 1875), H.E Winlock (Winlock, 1936), G. Elias, (Elias, 1917) and A. Fakhry, A. (Fakhry, 1973, pp. 207-222). In more

recent years, From 1972 to 1995, all the architectural remains of the temple and the site were surveyed and recorded by the Dakhleh Oasis Project (DOP) (Hope, 1981, pp. 233–241) (Mills, 1978a, pp. 104–05) (Mills, 1985, pp. 125–34) (Mills, 1993, pp. 192–98) (Boozer, 2013, pp. 117-156). The relief decoration was first recorded and described by H.E. Winlock whose voyage of 1908 took him past the temple. Based on the early drawing and photographs taken by H.E Winlock and now depositing in the Metropolitan Museum, L. Bull, provided appendix including a translation to the sanctuary texts, together with a brief discussion of its contents (Winlock, 1936, pp. 65-77). The other carved reliefs and hieroglyphic inscriptions, which overwhelmingly date to Titus (79–81 CE) and Domitian (81–96 CE) still relatively neglected, although they provide many aspects of the cultic function, local theology and exciting concepts of the temple, as will be shown below. The modern name of Deir el-Haggar which means literally “the stone monastery” suggests that the temple was remodeled, in some parts, into a basilica or church after the edict of Theodosius in the third century CE (Wagner, 1987, p. 80). O. Meinardus points out that there were standing remains of a simple basilical with three naves in front of the temple (Meinardus, 1977, p. 489) (Timm, 1992, p. 2945). The inscriptions mentioned the ancient name of the temple as 𓆎𓆏𓆐𓆑𓆒 *st-iḥ* “*The Place of the Moon*” (Winlock, 1936, p. 29).

The architectural layout measures 16.2m × 7.3m with a remaining preserved outer enclosure wall built in mudbrick and coated originally with a layer of lime plaster, *temenos wall* (Kapeer, 1999, pp. 223-258). The main doorway (F) which is in the eastern side leads to a processional road, *the dromos*, with ten round mud-brick columns, on either side (E). The lower parts of these columns have four colours, red purple, yellow and red. At the end of *the dromos*, toward the west, is the temple entrance which leads to the Pronaos with two columns (D), the focus of this paper. A doorway in its back gives access to the Hypostyle Hall, which contains four columns (C), and which itself leads into the Offerings Hall (B) before the sanctuary. The Sanctuary (A) is flanked by two chambers on both sides, one toward the north and the other to the west. The first north chamber is the stairway which would have been intended to lead to the roof, while the other southern chamber was used as a storage chamber (fig.1). (Kaper, 1996, p. 22). I will first list the distribution of decorations in the Pronaos from the outer screen walls to the south and north walls adjoining the doorway of the Hypostyle Hall.



Fig. 1: The temple of Deir el-Haggar, landscape view (Photo by the author)

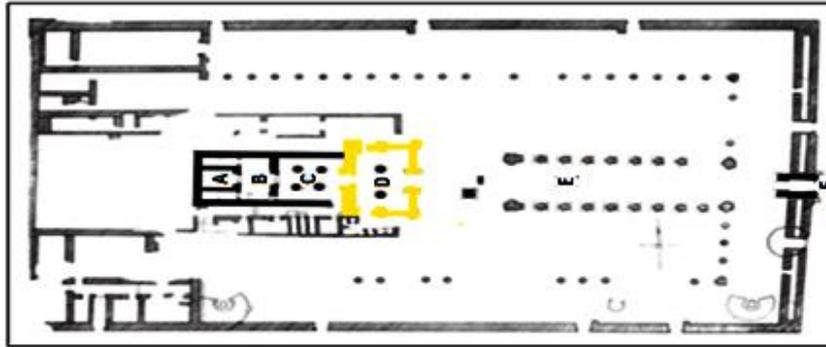


Fig. 2: Plane of Deir el-Haggar temple and the location of the Pronaos (drawing by J.E. Knudstad) (Winlock, 1936)

THE ARCHITECTURAL LAYOUT OF THE PRONAOS

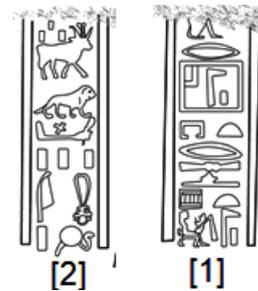
The Pronaos is accessible via an entrance in the eastern side. It is flanked by two jambs. Both of the two jambs measure 65 cm wide by 35 cm in depth, while the entrance between the two jambs is 1.60 cm in width. Two screen walls adjoining the doorway, toward the south and north, measure 2.35 m and still reach a height of approximately 1.70 m. Two semi-circular columns are engaged in the walls of the north and the south sides. They are partly destroyed but still reach a height of approximately 1.70 cm for the southern one and 1.77 cm for the northern. In front of the entrance is a sandstone altar measuring 55 cm long by 50 cm wide and 75 cm high. One bench measuring 55 cm in width runs the length of the entrance and its adjoining walls. Past the temple's entrance is a square hall measuring 6.65 m long by 6 m wide. Two walls adjoining the doorway of the Hypostyle Hall toward the south and north measure 180 m wide x 250 m in high. It has two circular pillars on a circular base cut in the sandstone to ensure the strength of the ceiling.

The relief decoration of the screen walls of the façade (fig. 3-4)

Both the lower decorative friezes are entirely depicted with a repeating pattern of *rhyt*-birds upon *nb*-signs and a clump of long stems ending with lotus blossoms. The southern screen wall has a scene now completely destroyed except for the lower halves of two goddesses holding palm ribs and flanking the emperor. Only two columns are preserved:

[1] *ii r hwt-ntr r shtp ntr šps* [2] *nbw... m3i wr nht mi R^c.*

[1] *Coming to the temple to appease the noble god* [2] *all...the lion, great of power like Re.*



The northern side shows Horus with the head of a hawk on the left and Thoth with the head of an Ibis on the right, wearing a short kilt with a ceremonial tail and a tripartite wig. They pour water upon the head of the emperor from two vessels. The emperor is shown wearing a short triangular-shaped skirt with a tail, a decorated belt tied under his chest and the blue crown upon his head.

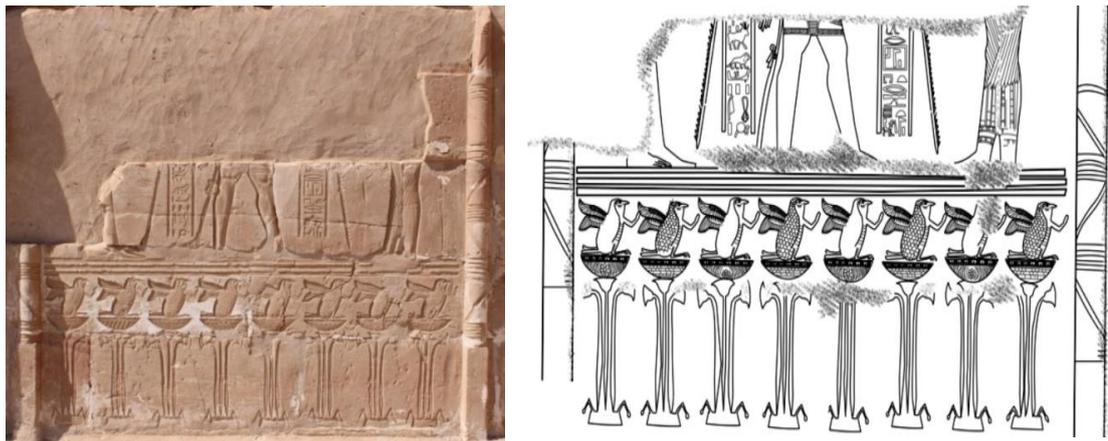


Fig. 3: Decoration of the screen wall of the façade, the south side (Photo by the author, drawing by S. Gaber)

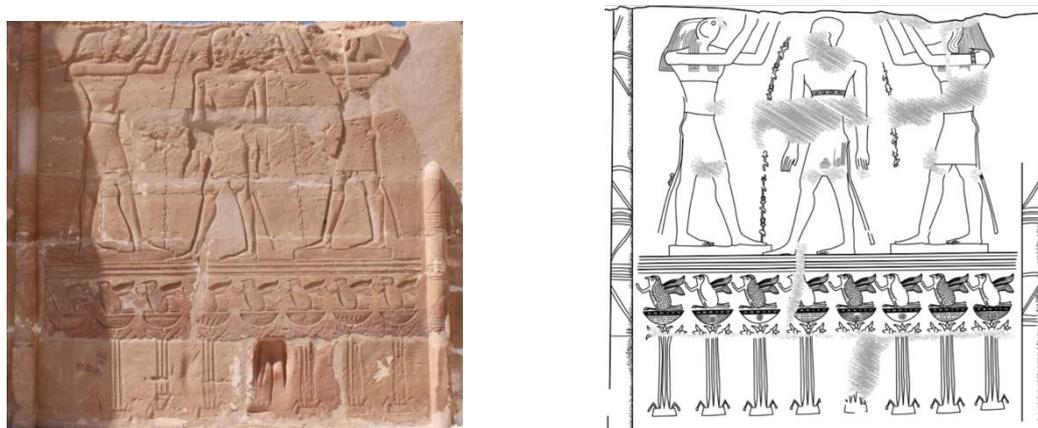


Fig. 4: Decoration of the screen wall of the façade, the north side (Photo by the author, drawing by S. Gaber)

1-2 The fecundity figures and the bandeau inscriptions of the walls of the Pronaos

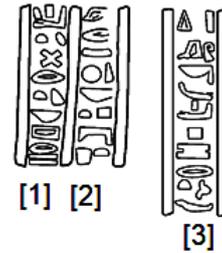
A. The south wall (fig. 5)

The emperor Titus is shown facing north leading a procession of the fecundity figures.^a He wears a short skirt and the white crown upon his head; he presents an offering table laden with round and oval flat bread, three pieces of meat and three liquid vessels on his two outstretched arms. Behind him, there is a figure of Hapy, who embodies Upper Egypt^b, with a full heavy stomach, pendulous breast and a clump of papyrus upon his head carrying lotus flowers, libation vessels and the *w3s*-sign. Sekhet stands in his back in her usual guise with a tight-fitting garment and three plants on her head. She carries an offering table laden with offerings that are now unclear because of a layer of lime plaster, except for the remains of birds on top.^c The fecundity figures procession was much more restricted because of the available limited space for the scene than in the case of other Greco-Roman temples. In front of them Amun stands facing towards the south. He holds the *w3s*-scepter in his right hand and the *ᶜnh*-sign in his left. His face seems to be willfully destroyed. Behind him, his consort Mut stands with the white crown and holds an *ᶜnh*-sign in her left hand, while her right is upraised in a gesture pose. All the columns which bear the texts remain blank except for Mut as follows;

[1] *mwt wrt nbt išrw* [2] *irt -Rᶜ nbt pt ḥnwt (nṯrwn nṯrw)*

[3] *di.i iw (n).k ḥᶜpy r.tr.f.*

[1] Mut,^d the great one, lady of Isheru, [2] the eye of Re, lady of the sky, mistress (of the gods and goddess),^e [3] I cause Hapy coming (for) you at his time.^f



Commentary

- a- The god Hapy and the fecundity figures are also shown at the gateway of the Ein Birbiyeh temple, the Kharga temples and the temple of Apries at Bahariya Oasis as is the case in the Greco-Roman temples.
- b- This suggestion based on his depiction on the south side with the white crown upon the king's head.
- c- The north wall depicted them again as round and triangle loaves in the lower, bouquet of flower in the middle and different kinds of meat in the top.
- d- The goddess Mut is shown in Dakhleh Oasis in Ein Berbiyeh on the southern jamb of the Temenos gateway (Kaper, 1996, p. 227).
- e- This completion is occurred in the first and the third registers on the south wall.
- f- See for example (Esna, VI, 491, 13; Esna, VII, 581, 11).

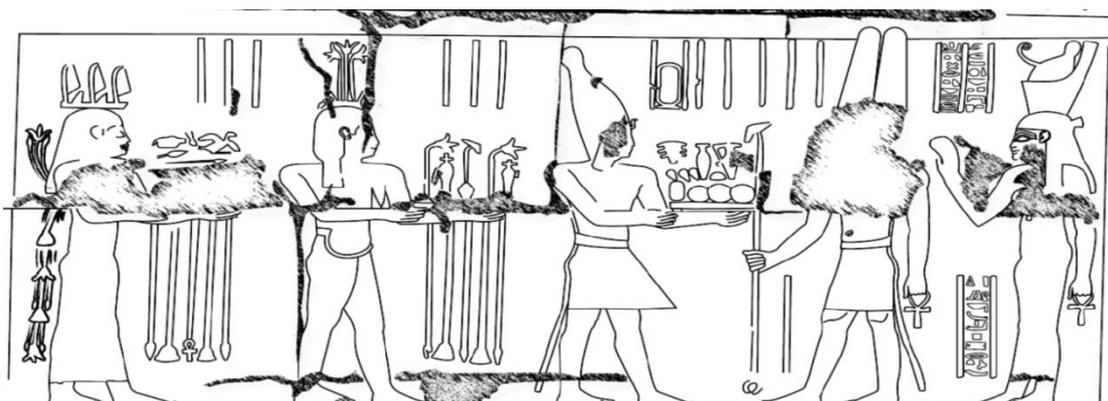
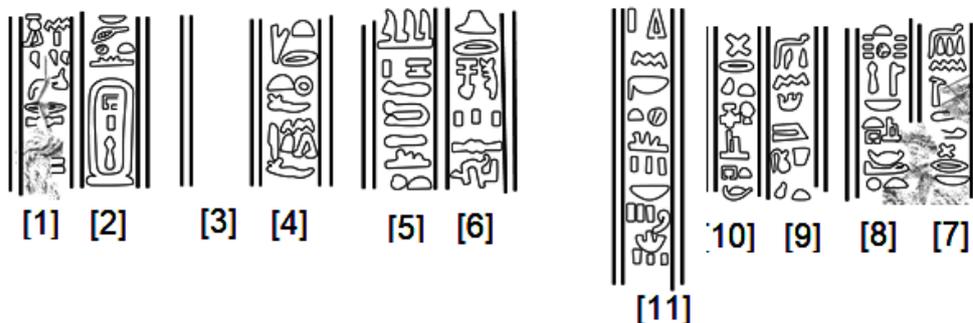


Fig. 5: Procession of the fecundity figures, the south wall (Photo by the author, drawing by S. Gaber)

B. The north wall (fig.6)

The Roman emperor and the same previous followers, Hapy and Sekhet, are depicted again without any changes except for the red crown upon the head of the emperor. Facing them towards the north, Thoth and Nehmetawayt are shown facing towards the south. Thoth is shown in an Ibis headed carrying the lunar crescent and three moon disc on his head. He holds the *w3s*-scepter in his left hand and the *ʕnh*-sign in his other left. Behind him, his consort Nehmetawayt stands wearing the vulture headdress. She holds the *ʕnh*-sign in her right hand while her other left is upraised in a gesture pose. Fortunately, all the columns which bear the texts are well-preserved.



The Roman emperor: [1] *in n.i hʕpy r shʕ t3wy* [2] *nb irt-ihʕ Pr-ʕ3.*

Hapy: [3] [4] *tr.f ink.f.*

Sekhet: [5] *shʕ ʕt ʕ3 iht* [6] *hr nfrw.s m ʕ ?.*

Thoth: [7] *ḏd mdw in ḏḥwty ʿ3 wr* [8] *nb Ḥmnw ntr ʿ3 nb St-iḥ* ? .

Nehmetawayt: [9] *ḏd mdw in Nḥmt-ʿwy* [10] *wrt ḥryt-ib St-iḥ*. [11] *ḏi.i n.k iḥt nbw phw*.

The Roman emperor: [1] I bring Hapy to make the two lands glad ^a, [2] lord of preparation of offerings, the Pharaoh.

Hapy: [3] [4] at his time, he brings ..? ^b

Skhet: [5] Sekhet, ^c the great on, great of offerings, [6] who carries her good things on the hand?

Thoth: [7] Words spoken by Thoth ^d, the very great one, [8] lord of Hermopolis, the great god, lord of the Place of the Moon ... ? .

Nehmetawayt: [9] Words spoken by Nehmetawayt, [10] the great one, who resides in the Place of the Moon [11] I give to you all the offerings and marshes ^e.

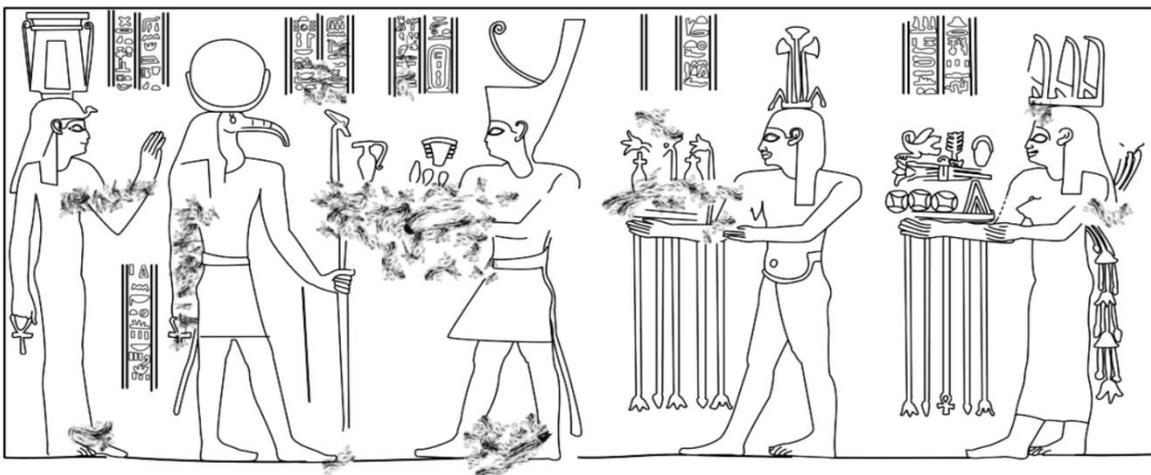


Fig. 6: Procession of the fecundity figures to Thoth and Nehmetawayt, the north wall
(Photo by the author, drawing by S. Gaber)

Commentary

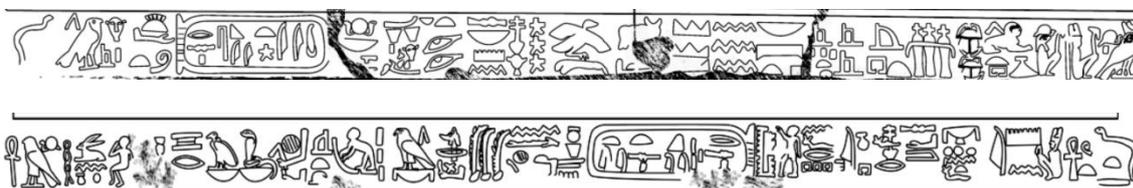
- a- For an ideal parallel comes from the sanctuary as *in ḥḥpy r shḥ idbw nbw* (Winlock, 1936, Pl. XXII, no. 28).
- b- The second figure of Hapy inside the sanctuary on the north wall gives a similar reading as *ḥḥpy mḥt iw r tr.fr inḳ.fr swr nw.f*.
- c- The goddess of the fields is depicted in a double scene on both inner jambs of the sanctuary, (Winlock, 1936, Pl. XXII). Her depictions in Dakhleh Oasis are

shown only in the tomb of Petubastis in el-Muzawwaqa presenting loaves of bread, water vessel and number of wheat spikes (Osing, 2007, Pl.27).

- d- An ideal parallel occurred again in the upper part of the lintel of the doorway of the offering Hall as $\overline{\text{Hr-Re}}$. Thoth iconographies are five while his consort Nehmetawayt is only four in the whole temple scenes. They are also shown in Ismant el-Kharab (Kaper, 1996, p. 51).
- e- For the marshes as a part of productions presenting by fecundity figures see (Dendera, IX, 210-212; 223-225; Edfou, V, 15-28).

3-4 lower bandeau inscriptions (fig. 5-6).

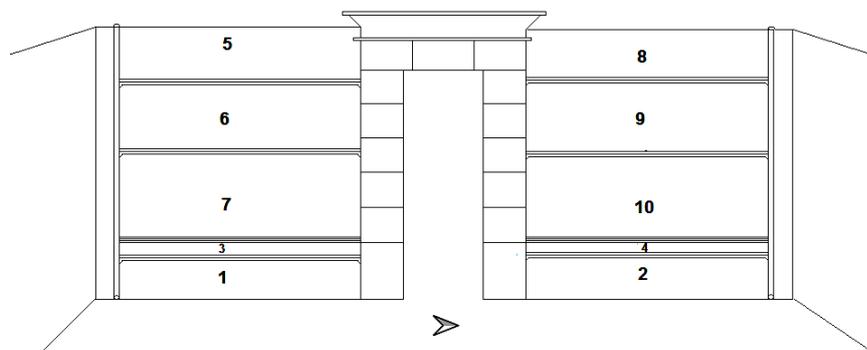
The lower bandeau inscriptions had to be run from the center of both walls adjoining the doorway of the Hypostyle Hall passing along the hall’s walls towards the center of the entrance of the temple, to the east side, but it has been stopped and left unfinished.



[1] *Hr-R^c Imn-R^c nb nst-t3wy hnt Ipt-swt nb pt mw dww k3 mwt.f t3y ntrw nfr hr shb mnty h^c hr m33.f nswt-bity nb t3wy Tyts kysrs h^c.tw hr st Hr dt.* [2] *nh Hr-R^c hwn (nfr) bnr mrwt nbty hw Kmt w^cf h3swt Hr nbw wsr rnpwt nht nb t3wy Tyts kysrs kd n.f r prw ipw nfrw s^cm nbw n it.f Imn nh dt.*

[1] Hor-Re, Amun-Re, lord of the thrones of the two lands in Karnak, lord of the sky, water and mountains, bull of his mother, phallus of the gods, beautiful of face, who makes festive the eyes, the face is rejoiced when seeing him, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, lord of the two lands, Titus, Kaisaros, who shines on the throne of Horus eternally. [2] May Hor-Re live, the (beautiful) child, sweet of love, the two Ladies, who protects Egypt, who beats down the foreign lands, Horus of Gold, strong of years, the mighty one, lord of the two lands, Titus, Kaisaros, who builds in the these temples and overlays with gold for his father Amun, living forever.

The Roman emperors’ decorations distribution on the southern and northern walls

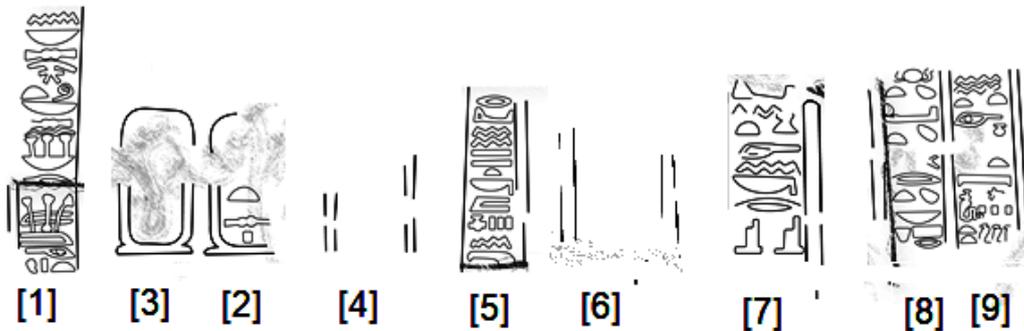


The Roman emperors’ decorations distribution on walls of the Pronaoas (drawing by the author).

Offering scenes of the south wall

5-Offering the wedjat-eye to the Theban triad (fig.7)

The scene has suffered badly from wind erosion, but all iconographies are well preserved. At the southern end of the wall, the Roman emperor Titus is shown wearing a short triangular-shaped skirt with a tail and the double crown upon his head. He is depicted raising up his left hand carrying an offering which is now unseen but seems to be the wedjat-eye, as evidenced by the text, while his right hand is raised in the attitude of adoration. In front of him, the Theban triad are sitting on their thrones. Amun is shown with a human head, wearing a crown composed of the sun-disk between two feathers, and holds the *w3s*-scepter in his right hand and the *ʿnh*-sign in his left hand. Behind him, Khonsu is shown with a hawk head and is crowned with the crescent and the moon disc. In back of him, Mut wears a tight-fitting garment and the white crown on her head, holding the *w3d*-scepter in her right hand and the *ʿnh*-sign in her other left.



The title: [1] (*di*) *n.k snwt snwt irt-Hr m irt.f*.

The Roman emperor: [2] (*nb t3wy Ty*)*ts* [3] (*nb hʿw Kysrs*).

Amun: [4]? [5] *rdi.n n.k mrt.k m ibw n t3y*.

Khonsu: [6]? [7] *di n.(k) nst ir n.k r nswt (t3wy)*

Mut: [8] *nswtt-bitt mwt wrt nbt išrw* [9] *irt-(Rʿ) hnwt pt hnwt ntrw ntrwt*.

The title: [1] (Take) to yourself the six day feast, the feast of the eye of Horus from his eye.

The Roman emperor: [2] (lord of the two lands, Ti)tus [3] (lord of crowns Kaisaros).

Amun: [4]? [5] I put your love in the hearts of men.

Khonsu: [6]? [7] I give to you the throne and make you on the thrones of (lands).

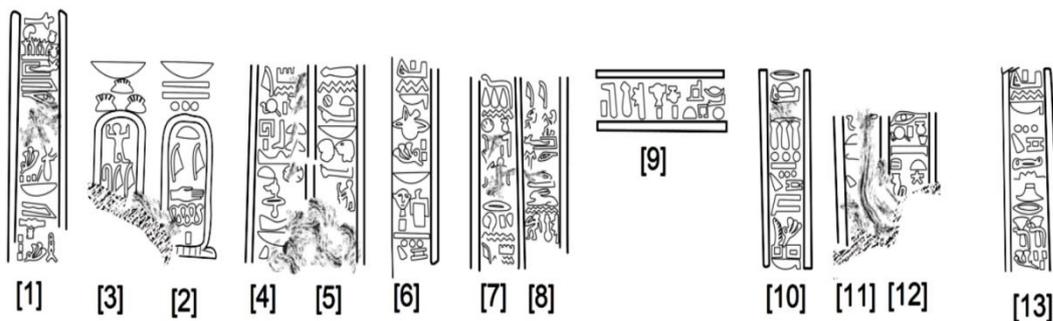
Mut: [8] Queen of Upper and Lower Egypt, Mut, the great one, lady of Isheru [9] eye of (Re), lady of the sky, mistress of the gods and goddess.



Fig. 7: Offering of the wedjat-eye to the Theban triad, the south wall (drawing by S. Gaber)

6-Offering the wine to the Theban triad (fig. 8)

This scene has elaborate iconographies and is entirely well preserved except for the areas that depicted the face of the Roman emperor, Khonsu and Mut which are completely destroyed. At the southern end of the wall, the Roman emperor is shown wearing the *3tf*-crown on his head. He is depicted with his two hands upraised, carrying an offering that is now destroyed. In front of him, the Theban triad are standing. Amun is shown with a ram head, wearing a triple wig and his usual crown, holding the *w3s*-scepter in his right hand and the *ʿnh*-sign in his left. Behind him, Khonus is shown as a naked child wearing a large transparent skirt and holding his finger to his mouth. Behind him, Mut is shown with the same details as previously.



The title: [1] *mn n.k š3 pr m irt (Hr) w3d nb m.s hn.*

The Roman emperor: [2] *nb t3wy Tyts* [3] *nb h^cw Kys[rs].*

Amun: [4] *Imn-R^c n hbt wsr hpš nb t3wy ?* [5] *ʿ3 nht nb phty nht .. ?* [6] *di n.k rd nb hr s3 t3.*

Khonsu: [7] *dd mdw in Hnsw (p3) hrd ʿ3 (w)r tpy n Imn* [8] *hy šps pr m irt (R^c) wnw nfr* [9] *ntr ʿ3 hry-ib St-i^ch* [10] *rdi.k w3dw t3 gs rnpwt.k.*

Mut: [11] *nswt-bitt (mwt wrt nbt išrw)* [12] *irt-R^c hnwt pt hnwt ntrw (ntrwt)* [13] *di.i n.k (w3dw) t3 ʿdt hr w3dw3dw.*

The title: [1] Take to yourself the wine which comes forth from the eye of (Horus) ^a, all papyrus from it and marsh plant ^b.

The Roman emperor: [2] lord of the two lands, Titus [3] lord of crowns Kaisa(ros).

Amun: [4] Amun-Re of Hibis, ^c mighty of arm, lord of (two lands? [5] Great of strength, lord of might and strength [6] I give you all plants on the back of the earth.

Khonsu: [7] Words spoken by Khonsu, the great eldest child of Amun, [8] the august child, who comes forth from the eye of Re, the beautiful child, [9] the great god in the Throne of the Moon [10] I give you the papyrus plant of the land beside fresh plants (for) you.

Mut: [11] Queen of Upper and Lower Egypt, Mut, (the great one, lady of Isheru), [12] eye of Re, lady of the sky, mistress of the gods (and goddess). [13] I give to you (the papyrus plant) ^d of the land and margin carrying green plants.

Commentary

- a- The completion is asserted according to Edfu temple (Edfou, V 356, 4).
- b- Wb. III 100 (1-4).
- c- Amun-Re of Hibis is occurred for one time in the temple. The usual title of him in his temple at Hipis is *Imn-R^c nb hpt ntr ʿ3 wsr hpš*. (Davies, 1953, pp. Pl.30- 35) For more see (Klotz, 1996).
- d- These signs are very similar to those in the line 10.



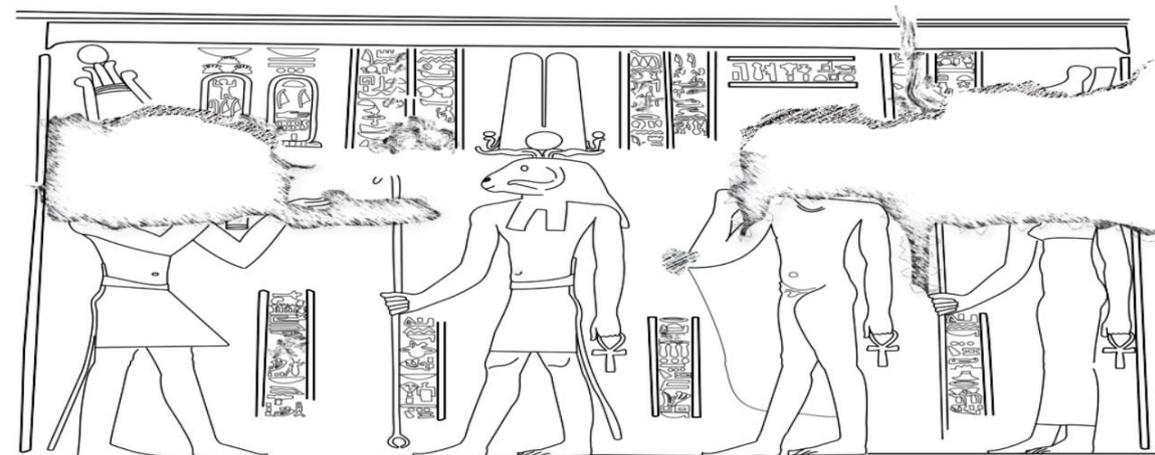
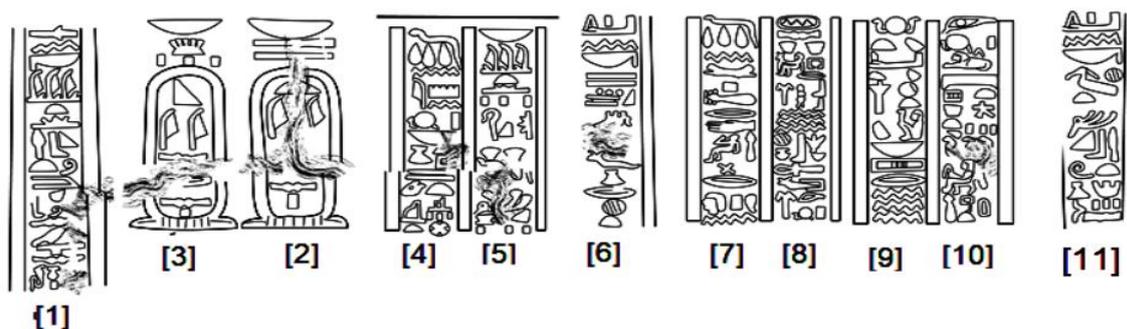


Fig. 8: Offering the wine to the Theban, the south wall (Photo by the author, drawing by S. Gaber)

7-Offering the filed to the Theban triad (fig. 9)

This scene is complete and has elaborate iconographies. At the southern end of the wall, the Roman emperor is shown wearing a short triangular-shaped skirt with a tail, a broad collar and a composite crown from the *3tf*-crown and the red crown embellished with one ostrich feather fastened on two ram horns. On the two outstretched arms of the emperor is the field offering with an amulet hanging down from it. It is noteworthy that the offered amulet is the same one which Amun wears on his chest. In front of him the Theban triad are standing and facing towards the south. Amun is shown with a human head holding the *w3s*-scepter in his right hand and the *ʕnh*-sign in his left. Behind him his child Khonsu wears a large transparent skirt and holds the *w3s*-scepter in his right hand, while his left hand is upraised with the crook and the flail on his shoulder. In back, Mut is shown with a lioness head wearing the white crown and holding the *w3d*-scepter in her right hand and the *ʕnh*-sign in her left.



The title: [1] *mn n.k sht b3k.tw m wbs wn.s n.k.*

The Roman emperor: [2] *nb t3wy Tyts* [3] *nb hʕw Kysrs.*

Amun-Re: [4] *dd mdw in Imn-Rʕ nb nst t3wy hnt Ipt-swt* [5] *nb sht hʕ3 w3dw3dw.* [6] *di n.k t3wy dr.f hry iht.*

Khonsu: [7] *dd mdw in Hnsw p3 hrd ʕ3 wr tpy n* [8] *Imn hʕ3 pr m hʕpy nhb ʕnh pr m irt-Rʕ.*

Mut: [9] *nswtt-bitt Mwt Shmt nbt isrw* [10] *irt-Rʕ nbt pt hnwt ntrw ntrwt špst ʕ3t pr rn* [11] *di.i n.k 3ht b3k.tw hr phw. š.*

The title: [1] Take to yourself the field, may you are bright with the plants, ^a (he) opens it for you .^b

The Roman emperor: [2] lord of the two lands, Titus [3] lord of crowns Kaisaros.

Amun: [4] Words spoken by Amun-Re, lord of the thrones of the two lands in Karnak [5], lord of the field, ruler of the green plants. [6] I give to you the two lands throughout the entire land ^c carrying offerings.

Khonsu: [7] Words spoken by Khonsu, the great eldest child ^d of [8] Amun, the child ^e who comes forth from the inundation ^f (on) the louts flower, the living one who comes forth (i.e. borne) from the eye of Re. ^g

Mut: [9] Queen of Upper and Lower Egypt, Mut, Skhmet, lady of Isheru, [10] eye of Re, lady of the sky, mistress of the gods and goddess, the noble lady, great of house and name... [11] I give to you the brightness field with its marshes.

Commentary

- a-  It is written with the corn package (Wb, I, 296. 13) but the scribe may uses the knife to point out the harvested corn. For more about the field offering in the Egyptian temples see (Labrique, 1992) (Montet, 1925 , pp. 1-15) (Meeks, 972, p. 3 ff)
- b- The usual formulas attested in the field offering come in differed meanings as *wp t3š .fr nmt šw .f* (Edfou, II, 13-14) *swšh t3š .fr mry .f* (Edfou, II, 7-8).
- c- A synonym gift occurred at Esna temple as *mn n.k ww m ifdw n t3 nb* “take to yourself the field in the four corners of all land” (Esna, VII, 581, 7).
- d- In Edfu texts, Khonsu is called as *hy m iʿh* “the moon child” (Edfou, I 255,4) *iʿh wr* “Great Moon” (Edfou, I 253,11) .
- e- — A mistake sign for . (Wilson, 1997 , p. 620).
- f- This spelling change is not attested elsewhere for the god Hapy.
- g- This title is not listed in LGG. It could be a synonym of *pr m nwn* “who comes forth from the primeval water” (LGG, III, 67). The inundation describing here is the primeval ocean from which Khonsu creation is took place upon the louts flower. For Khonsu as the lotus child and a replica of Nefertum see, (Mam. 76,11). For lotus child in general see (Edfou, V 51,9-10; VII 321,14; III 42,15; V 110,5; IV 139,15; V 245,8-9). For this title see (LGG, III).



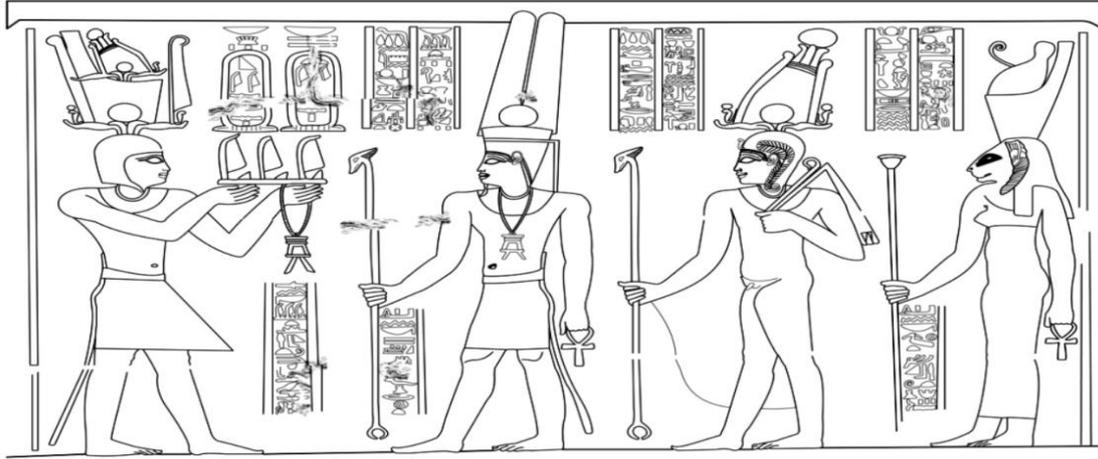
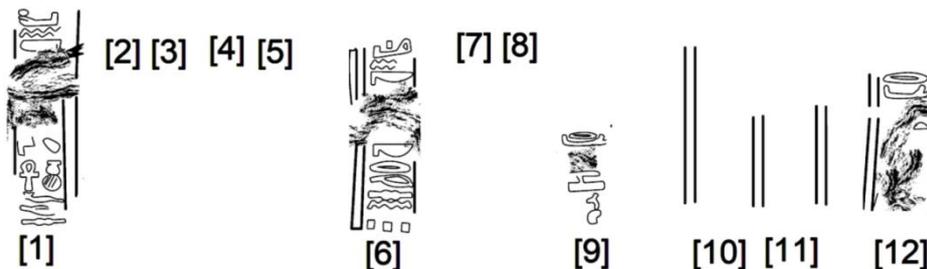


Fig. 9: Offering the filed to the Theban, the south wall (Photo by the author, drawing by S. Gaber)

Offering scenes of the north wall

8- Destroyed scene of an Offering to three deities (fig. 10)

This scene has suffered badly from erosion and destruction. Only the lower halves are preserved. The texts are also so faint to be difficult to read. At the northern end of the wall, the Roman emperor is shown in his usual guise wearing a short triangular-shaped skirt and upraising his two hands carrying a destroyed offering. In front of him, three deities are sitting on their thrones facing towards the north. The first God holds the document holder in his left hand and the nh -sign in his other right. Each of two deities behind him wears a tight-fitting garment and holds the usual nh -sign in the right hand and the $w3d$ - in the left. The third one is crowned with a disc between two horns and a frontal uraeus.



The title: [1] *di.n n(.k) ... nh.f ir.s*

The Roman emperor: [2] (*nb t3wy Tyts*) [3] (*nb h'w Kysrs*).

The first god: [4] [5] ... [6] *di n.k .. k r ir sn*.

The second goddess: [7] [8] [9] *rdi ... pt r.k*.

Hathor: [10] [11] [12] *rdi*

The title: [1] take to yourself his life which he creates.

The Roman emperor: [2] (lord of the two lands, Titus [3] lord of crowns Kaisaros).

The first god: [4] [5] [6] I give to you ... to make them.

The second goddess: [7] [8] [9] I give ... the sky to you.

Hathor: [10] [11] [12] I give

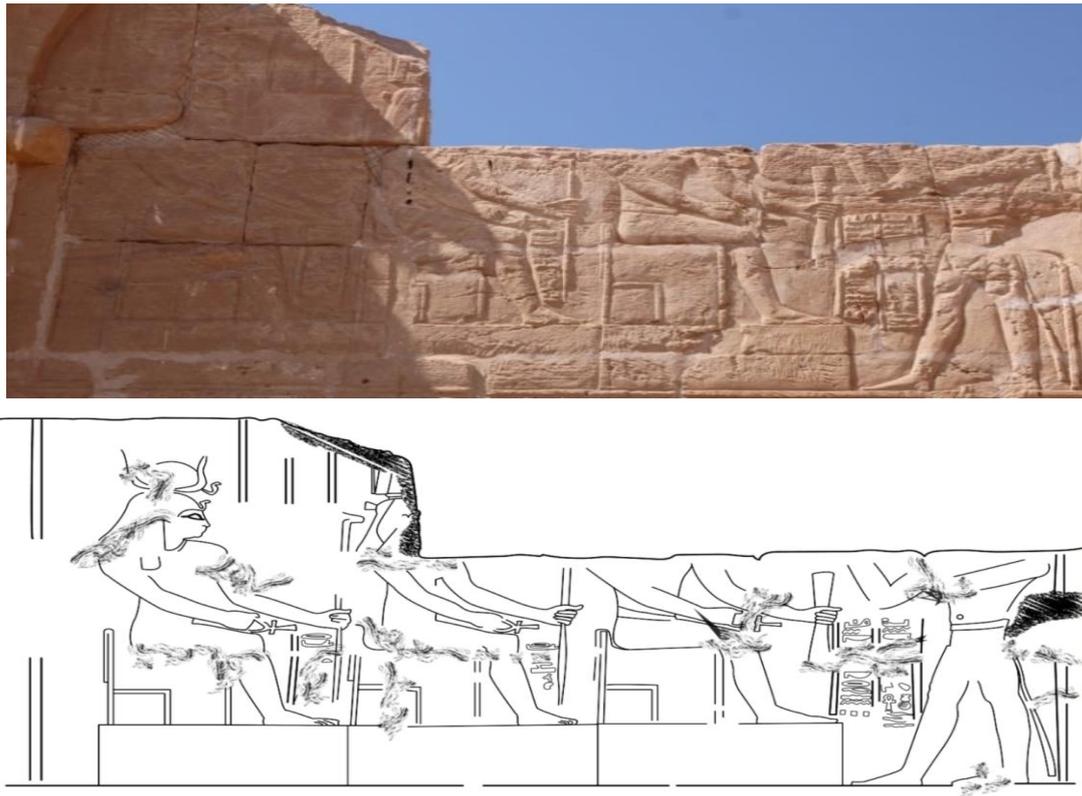
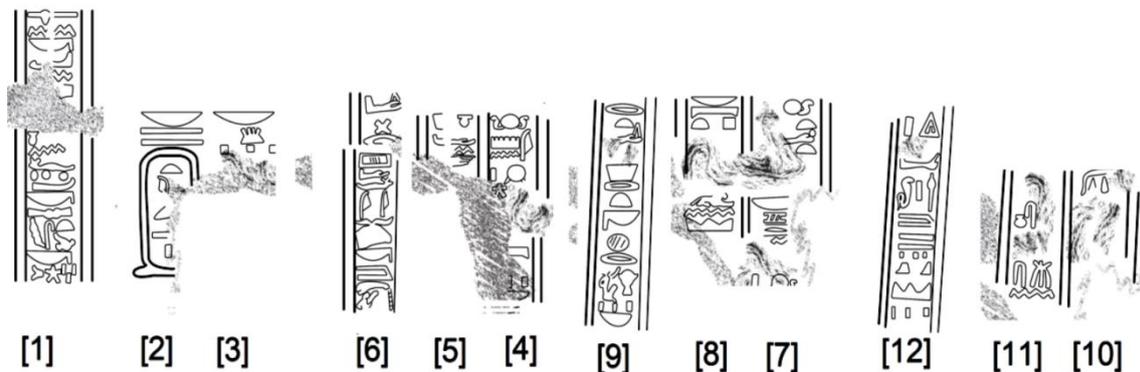


Fig. 10: Destroyed scene of an Offering to three deities, the north wall (Photo by the author, drawing by S. Gaber)

9- Offering the myrrh to the Theban triad (fig.11)

This scene is entirely well preserved except for the areas that depicted the faces of the Roman emperor and the Theban triad, which are completely destroyed. At the northern end of the wall, the Roman emperor is shown in his usual guise wearing a short triangular-shaped skirt with a crown, now completely destroyed except for three sun discs upon the feathers and two uraei holding a sun disc on their heads in the edges. Only a part of the myrrh vessel remains preserved on his two hands. In front of him Amun, Mut and Khonsu are standing in their usual guise as on the corresponding scene on the south wall.



The title: [1] *mn n.k ntyw inf hkn sndm.k r ntrw.*

The Roman emperor: [2] *nb t3wy Tyts* [3] *nb h'w [Kysrs]*.

Amun: [4] *nswt-bit Imn-R' [nb] ntrw ... pt nb* [5] *ntyw ...* [6] *di wr sfyt.k m t3yw.*

Mut: [7] *nswtt-bitt mwt (wrt) nbt išrw irt-R^c* [8] *nbt pt nbt n h3st* [9] *rdi.t mrt.k hr hrw nbw.*

Khonsu: [10] *dd mdw n* [11] *n.s ms n ?* [12] *di.i ..? hđ.k m t3wy hswt.*

The title: [1] take to yourself the myrrh ^a, incense ^b and unguent to make you pleasant more than other gods.

The Roman emperor: [2] lord of the two lands, Titus [3] lord of crowns (Kaisaros).

Amun: [4] King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Amun-Re, (lord of the) gods ... sky, lord of [5] the myrrh [6] I make your dignity great among the men.

Mut: [7] Queen of Upper and Lower Egypt, Mut, (the great one), lady of Isheru, eye of Re [8] lady of the sky, ... lady of the desert [9] I give your love among all people.

Khonsu, [10] Words spoken by ... [11] .. ? Who is borne from? [12] I give to you.. ? and your mace in the two lands and the desert.

Commentary

a- For the nature of the myrrh see (Goyon, 1996, pp. 47-82) (Chassiant, 1966, pp. 217-223).

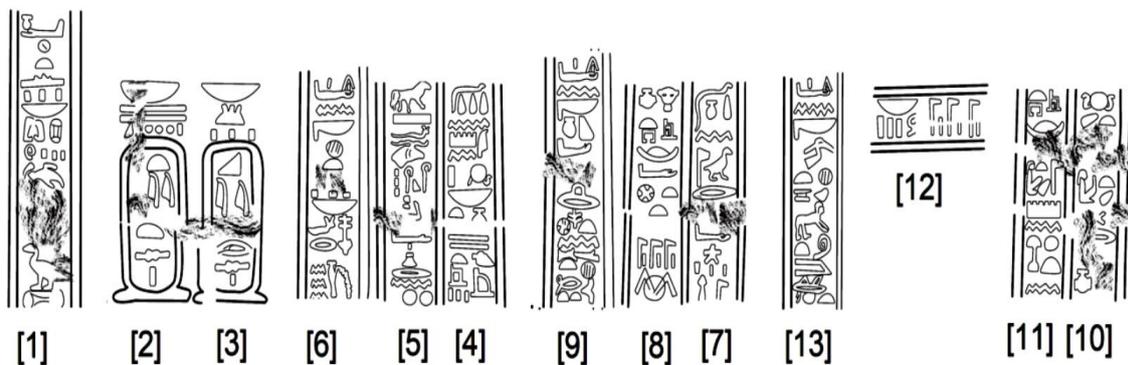
b- For this type of incense see (Wb I, 96.9) (Wilson, 1997 , p. 84).



Fig. 11: Offering of the myrrh to the theban triad, the north wall (Photo by the author, drawing by S. Gaber).

10- Offering of the provision to Amun, Geb and Nut (fig.12)

This scene is complete and has an elaborate iconography. At the northern end of the wall, the Roman emperor is shown facing south wearing a short triangular-shaped skirt with a tail, a broad collar and the *3tf*-crown. On his outstretched arms, he carries a tray laden with a variety of offerings such as round, triangular as well as oval flat breads, two pieces of meat and two liquid vessels. In front of him, Amun is shown with a ram's head and is crowned with the *3tf*-crown holding the *w3s*-scepter in his left hand, while his right hand is upraised with the crook and the flail on his shoulder. Geb stands in his back wearing a skirt and a crown composed of the red crown and the *3tf*-crown. He holds the *ḥh*-sign in his right hand and the *w3s*-scepter in the left. Behind them, Nut stands wearing a tight-fitting garment and crowned with the sign for her name over the vulture headdress. She holds the *ḥh*-sign in her right hand and the *w3d*- in the other.



The title: [1] *ḥnk iḥt nb ḥrt ... df3w*.

The Roman emperor: [2] *nb t3wy Tyts* [3] *nb ḥꜣw Kȝ[s]rs*.

Amun: [4] *ḏḏ mdw in Imn-Rꜥ nb nst t3wy ḥnt ipt-swt* [5] *nb šfyṯ ḥk3 ḥk3w [r]pꜣ ḥry nḥḥ3*
... [6] *di.i n.k iḥt nb nfr kbḥw*.

Geb: [7] *ḏḏ mdw in Gb r[p]ꜣ nṯrw nṯr ʕ3* [8] *ḥry-ib st-iꜥḥ (nb) nṯrw dmd* [9] *di.i n.k kny*
rsyt nḥt mḥt.

Nut: [10] *nswtt-bitt [Nwt] wrt [ḥryṯ-] ib* [11] *st-iꜥḥ nṯrt mnḥt n* [12] *nṯrw nbw* [13] *di.i*
n.k 3ḥt ks.tw m rd.

The title: [1] Offering all offerings and portion ... provisions.

The Roman emperor: [2] lord of the two lands, Titus [3] lord of crowns Kai[s]aros.

Amun: [4] Words spoken by Amun-Re, lord of the thrones of the two lands in Karnak
[5] lord of dignity, ruler of the rulers, the prince who carries the flail ^a [6] I
give you all beautiful and cool offerings.

Geb: [7] Words spoken by Geb ^b, the prince of the gods, the great god, [8] who resides
in the throne of the Moon, (lord of) all gods [9] I give to you the strong south
and the might north.

Nut: [10] Queen of Upper and Lower Egypt, [Nut] ^c, the great one, who resides in [11]
the throne of the Moon, the excellent goddess [12] among all gods [13] I give
to you the field bowing down with plants.

Commentary

a- A reference to the iconography which Amun is shown in the current scene.

dedicated to a local pantheon comprised of Amun, Thoth, Khonsu and Min. All these gods appear in the majority of offering scenes on the two jambs of the doorway of the sanctuary and the Offering Hall, most likely a reference to the main gods.

The fecundity figures on the north wall of the Pronaos represented the emperor leading a procession of Hapi and Sekhet specifically to Thoth and Nehmetawayt. According to Greco-Roman temples this tradition is only for the main gods of the temple. Also he is seen on the decorative program of the main gods on both left jambs of the doorways of the sanctuary, Offering Hall and the Hypostyle Hall, 1st register. Further evidence shows the equal status between Thoth and Amun-Re, on one dipinto, visitors' graffiti, depicts Amun-Re as a standing ram facing Thoth as a crouching baboon with two hands on its knees. Each of them is shown wearing the crescent and lunar disc on their head. An offering table laden with a bunch of grapes between them (Kapeer, 1999, pp. 245-246) suggest a position of honor and popular devotion for the two gods by the local priesthood and the visitors. O. Kaper inclined to this fact by saying *Thoth and Amun-Re are combined in one figure as a pantheistic Sarapis* (Kapeer, 1999, p. 245). The emperor Vespasian are shown holding two palm ribs in front of Thoth and Nehmetawayt on a private votive stela found in the temple and now in the Egyptian Museum under the inventory number JE51943 (Lefebvre, 1928, pp. 29-34). This may a supportive evidence of the temple double dedication. Petubastis whose tomb is at el-Qaret el-Muzaww, about 2.5 km away to the east of Deir el-Haggar temple, recorded on his tomb's ceiling that he was a high dignitary priest of Thoth in a temple which is known *St-w3h*, a reference to the nearby Roman settlement of Trimithis (Amheida), lies only 3 km east of the temple. (Kaper, 1992) (Tallet, 1999, pp. 169-172) (Osing, 2007, p. 80) O. Kaper suggested that the temple of Deir el-Haggar may have served by the population of Amheida (Kaper, 1996, p. 23). If we accept this suggestion, Thoth incontestably was identified within the temple as a main god by the priests and locals of this settlement. Additionally, sacred mummified birds of Ibis have been found nearby the necropolis of Qaret el-Muzawwaqa (Osing, 2007, pp. 95, pl. 35.i).

Khonsu is most often appears as a naked child holding his finger to his mouth behind his father and mother as he is shown for six times on both north and south walls of the sanctuary. He is shown, additionally, in some other reliefs in a position of honor as a personality distinct rather than Khonsu the child; 1) He is shown standing three times in front of his mother and directly behind Amun on the south wall of the Pronaos. 2) He is depicted with a falcon head and a lunar disk on the south and north walls of the Pronaos and on the south wall of the sanctuary, 1st register. 3) Amun himself is seen in one of his poses that is surprisingly rare and does not feature elsewhere when he holds the *w3s*-scepter in one hand while the other is upraised with the crook and the flail on his shoulder (Perdu, 2005, pp. 46-157) on the corresponding scene on the north wall wearing the same crown, 2nd register. 4) Clear alternative between him and Amun is shown in the decorative scheme of the offering scenes on both jambs of the doorway of the Offering Hall. Amun and Mut feature on one side of the jamb Whereas Khonsu and Mut appear on the opposite side. He is also shown with Mut on the left jamb of the

sanctuary, 2nd register up to the scene of Amun and Mut. This equal status occurred also in the temple of Nadura and prompted D. Klotz's conclusion that the temple was actually dedicated to Khonsu (Klotz, 2013, p. 297) Furthermore, Khonsu is depicted twice standing in front of Amun in Nadura temple as a clear evidence to his highly position in the western oases temples at that time (Klotz, Chonsu at Nadura Temple, 2010, p. 29). 5) In his study about the astronomical ceiling of Deir el-Haggar, O. Kaper argues that the uniting of the two bulls and the left eye with the right eye indicate that Khonsu and Amun are two equal gods (Kaper, 1981, p. 191). 6) Demotic ostraca were found nearby the necropolis of Qaret el-Muzawwaqa belonged to priests of Khonsu (Osing, 2007, pp. 103-117).

The ancient name of the temple "The Throne / Place of the Moon" sheds more light on the precise nature of the temple and the connection with the lunar theology with a local cult. It also establishes a clear interconnection with the main deities of this temple. The texts address Amun, Thoht and Khonsu as the primary divinities of the temple. It is an oft-repeated title that Amun bears the explicit label "*the great god who resides in the throne of the Moon*". Both Thoht, in the fecundity figures on the north south wall and Khonsu, on the south wall, 2nd register, bear the same title. This brings to mind the Mansion of the Moon at Akhmim where Min is frequently known lord of this Mansion (Kuhlmann, 1979 , pp. 165–88). Analysis of the iconographic details displays both solar and lunar aspects of the main gods as contrasting partners in the day–night and sun–moon. In adverse motion around the celestial dome, both unending cycles of the sun and the moon are depicted as . Illumination by the sun and the full moon during the day and the night-time played a significantly role before the invention of the electric light.  *r^c-nb* which means "every day" was written by the signs of the sun and the moon in a reference to the unending nature of both cycles (Wilson, 1997 , p. 575). Only in one case, the upper bandeau inscriptions on the south wall of the central sanctuary provides a binary description of the temple as  "*the Place of the sun and the Place of the moon*". (Winlock, 1908, Pl. XXII). Thus, the temple was explicitly regarded as the place where the two brightest celestial luminaries dwell, that is the sky. Amun is the solar representative while Thoht, Khonsu, Min and Horus are the perfect nocturnal deputies as will be shown below.

Unsurprisingly, Amun-Re had a strong solar association as it is shown clear in the second register on the astronomical ceiling (five slabs of sandstone measure 3.25 X 2.42) at Deir el-Haggar. His manifestations are shown inside three boats. The first boat carries a scarab within a sun disk representing the newborn of the sun in the early morning on the left. The second boat carries the god Atum in the center while the third boat carries a sun disk pulled by three jackals. (Kaper, 1981, p. 185). Also it can hardly be doubted that the temple's entrance is orientated the east to show the daily course of the sun from the east to the west while the sanctuary which lies at the end west is the western mountain where the nightly course begins from the west to the east as evidenced by depicting Amun-Min on the inner lintel of the sanctuary as a Ithyphallic

god inside sun disc, forming the horizon sign with a bird's body and human-headed and two arms. He wears tall plumes and raises his left arm with the flail in attitude of Min while his other right holding his phallus. Four of standing deities flanked him on both sides with two arms upraising in an adoration pose (Winlock, 1908, Pl. XXII).

Thoth, Khonsu Min-Re and Horus were assigned roles and attributions of the moon in their manifestations as the nightly illuminators at nightfall. In the fecundity figures on the north wall of the Pronaos, Thoth is shown in a rare pose that unconventional elsewhere in the oases temples. He is depicted carrying the lunar crescent on his head. The most striking scene here is the lunar disc placed above the crescent. It may bear a fine indication to the full moon in the mid-month, the equal status with the solar disc and the complete identification between Thoth and Khonsu. Most notable in this regard is one dipinto depicting both the sacred ram and crouching baboon crowned with a crescent and lunar disc on the *temenos wall* (Kapeer, 1999, pp. 254, fig.7). It must be pointed out that the lunar crescent is a general symbol of Thoth but it is unusual in the iconographies of Amun. This situation may refer to the solar and the lunar disc in the time of complete lighting. Thoth as an Ibis bird carrying the lunar crescent on his head is also shown in one dipinto on the *temenos wall* (Kapeer, 1999, pp. 254, fig.8). Both later dipinti bring to mind the netting of the wedjat-eye depicting in the Sokar chapel at Dendera where a crouching baboon carries the lunar crescent on his head on the stern of the boat in which both Thoth and Horus carrying the wedjat-eye in a net. Back to back are two remains of Ibis bird are under the net (Dendara, II, pl. cxxvii ; Dendara, X/2, pl. 146). Also it is well attested textually that the offering of Wedjat-eye (Priskin, 2002, pp. 75-81) on the south wall, the 3rd register, to Amun, Mut and Khonsu held a strong lunar character of the sixth day feast. It occurred three times in the temple as supportive evidence reveals the importance of lunar background in the local cult and in the lunar cycle. Titus addresses Amun, Khonsu and Mut “*Take to yourself the sixth day feast, the feast of the eye of Horus*”. On this feast, six portions of Horus eye had been reassembled to be a whole eye (Wilson, 1997 , pp. 857-858). At Edfu texts, this feast is mentioned as “ *(in) this beautiful day, the 3rd of Shemu, the 30th of the sixth day of this feast, he appears to the earth, the heart of Re is happy with him, it is the happy day of coming Iusas and filling the eye with its requirements*” (Edfou, II 26,12-13). The same date of the new moon occurred at Dendera (Labrique, 1998, p. 123). According to Garcia-Fernandez, there are six festivals of the moon (Garcia-Fernandez, 2017 , p. 224):

					
					
29 th -1 st day	2 nd day	6 th day	7 th day	15 th / 16 th day	

Further lunation scene appeared on the astronomical ceiling. One of its scenes, 2nd register, shows sixteen gods, as part of the Theban Ennead, standing and proceeding to unite with the left wedjat-eye inside a lunar disk until it is full in the first half of the month. O. Kaper notes that this scene shows the ritual of the waxing moon. Directly

under the central band, a scene depicts the uniting between the moon and sun. On the left, two figures with human faces stand in a boat holding hands. One of them whose head is lost carried a sun disk with a uraeus on his head while the other one carries a moon disc. To the right are two boats facing each other. The left one has a child within a sun's disc while the right one has a baboon inside a moon disc (Kaper, 1981, p. 184).

Till now, allusions to the first part of the of the lunar month which depict the waxing phase in the temple are shown in the offering the Wedjat-eye, the festival of the six day and the astronomical decoration on the ceiling. Further emphasis on the lunar characteristics is also shown by depicting the ithyphallic Min, Osiris, Horus, Isis and Nephthys behind him on south wall of the sanctuary as well as Min and Horus on the doorway of the Hypostyle Hall addition to Min-Re and his consort Triphis on the north jamb of the outer gateway Whereas Domitian carries two Wedjat-eyes in front of them. In light of this, I venture to suggest that the spatial arrangement of Min scenes in the temple depict the moon's path from west to east and the time span across the celestial dome. The scene at the west end in the sanctuary represents the new crescent moon on the second day of the lunar month (*tp*) *3bd*. Min rejuvenates himself as a moon child at the beginning of the 30 days (Altmann-Wendling, 2017 , p. 10). Also Horus at Edfu's texts becomes a new crescent on second day of the month (Edou, IV 32,1; III 210,13) (Parker, 1950, pp. 12-13). Min and Horus on the doorway of the Hypostyle Hall, in the middle of the temple, show the complete lighting of the moon on the 15th day(*tp*) *smdt*. On the half of the lunar month, *md-diw*, Horus becomes a full moon as the moon child in the nome of Sebennytos (Edfou, IV, 17 (3); IV 32, 1). Min-Re and Triphis on the outer doorway (F) in the east represents the crescent moon of the end of the lunar month.

Two questions arise now: Is there a connection between the scene of Min, on the 2nd register, and the contexts of the upper bandeau inscription on the south wall of the sanctuary? And what is the theological background that they refer to?

The scene depicts the emperor Vespasian raising his left hand with a vessel while his right holds a *hs*-vessel from which he pours water on a brazier in front of five standing deities, Min, Osiris, Horus, Isis and Nephthys. The bandeau inscription reads “*May the good god live, Amun-Re, lord of the throne of the two lands, the great god who is in the throne of the moon, Horus who goes round the deserts seeking the limbs of the god ... ? Who comes to make offering? in the place of the sun and the place of the moon, Horus, who hides his name, bull of his mother, phallus of the gods, beautiful of face, who makes festive the eyes, the face is rejoiced when see him*”. (Winlock, 1936, Pl. XXII) .

Comparable relevant texts appear in the eastern bandeau inscription of the sanctuary of the Athribis temple, 7 km southwest at Sohag, providing idea aid for our understanding. This text also sheds more light on Min, who is identified with Horus who crosses the mountains, the inundation and the flooded land seeking the divine efflux and looking for the body parts of Osiris to replace and renew them on the day of the moon. Also 60 gods

are depicted on the sanctuary D 3 carrying canopic jars that contain the ingredients of the recipe of an unguent in their hands. Texts and scenes of the Athribis temple provide substantial information about the different healing processes of the body parts of Osiris on the day of the moon within the Mansion of the moon by the lunar god, Min. (Altmann-Wendling, 2017 , pp. 11-12). This aim corresponds precisely with the scene and the bandeau inscription of Deir el-Haggar. Here the emperor Vespasian performs the libation ritual in front of the five deities who were sharing the healing of Osiris's parts in the place of the moon. The legend of collecting the divine efflux and the body parts of Osiris seems to have a certain priority in the themes of the Greco-Roman temples. This may explain the lunar scenes in the Osirian chapels. (Cauville, 1997). As stated above, the upper bandeau inscription and the astronomical decoration put some emphasis on the healing of Osiris's parts and the treatment of the Wedjet-eye which had been reassembled to be a whole eye.

The same local theology was also incontestably popular in the Apries temple at Bahariya Oasis, where Amun-Re bears a solar epithet "Lord of the Great Mountain" (LGG, III,793.) while Khonsu has "Who makes the Wadjet-eye perfect". (LGG, V, 343.) Djed-Khonsu-iu-ef-ankh, the best-known governor during the 26th dynasty, was appointed a high dignitary of Khonsu, as it appears in his titles on one block found in the temple:

"1- The Count of the Oasis, The Priest of Khonsu-Thot, The Priest of Khonsu, The Judge, The Priest of Montu, Khenmmt and Kh[onsu] 2- [The] Child, The Scribe of the Temple, The Great of the month, Djed-Khonsu-iu-ef-ankh [...]."

The excavations season of 2020 undertaken by the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities at the site revealed a baboon statue, which is now in the Bahariya Magazine and represents the same local theology of the three gods, Amun, Thoth and Khonu. One might suppose that Djed-Khonsu-iu-ef-ankh had a sacerdotal position related to the moon within the temple along the lunar month. The straightforward identification of this monthly position is a bit problematic due to a lack of textual references. It is most likely related to an astronomical observation of the moon's path across the celestial dome by different rituals performed by him in each lunar phase. Also, both courses of the sun and the moon that intrigue us are found in the tomb of Bannentiou on the eastern and western sides of the pillared hall. (Fakhry, 1974, pp. 72-75).

Moreover, Amun of Hibis holds a prominent position in both the temple of Deir el-Haggar, on the south wall of the Pronaos, 2nd register, where the text addresses him as "*Amun-Re of Hibis*" and on the gateway of the temple of Ein Berbiyeh (Kaper, 1996, p. 51). The same role is also seen for Amun of Karnak, who ultimately appears presiding over all the temple's gods through a repeated title "*Amun-Re, lord of the thrones of the two lands in Karnak*". O. Kaper suggested that the local theology was adopted from Thebes. (Kaper, 1981, p. 191).

CONCLUSION

The intense phases of decoration activities in the Hypostyle Hall were carried out under the reign of Titus (79–81 CE). Consequently, the temple building and decoration work flourished in the first century CE. It remained in use into the third century CE as evidenced by the Greek dipinti. (Wanger, 1973). Epigraphic evidence and ritual inscriptions refer to intrinsic ties between the principal gods of the temple as contrasting partners and the solar and lunar theology as it is shown in the orientation of the temple, the offering the Wedjat-eye, the festival of the sixth day, depicting the ithyphallic Min, Thoth carrying the lunar crescent on his head, the eternal cycle of sun and moon on the astronomical ceiling, and both the sacred ram and crouching baboon crowned with a crescent and lunar disc on the temenos wall. Allusion to this is made in a binary description of the temple as “the Place of the sun and the Place of the moon” in the upper bandeau inscriptions of the sanctuary.

The lunar and solar aspects of the temple establish a direct association with the legend of collecting the divine efflux and the body parts of Osiris, the different healing processes of his body parts in the day of the moon within the Mansion of the moon, and the treatment of Wedjat-eye.

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نقوش البروناوس بمعبد دير الحجر : مزيد من الضوء على العقيدة المحلية

الملخص

تتناول الدراسة الحالية توثيق ونشر المناظر والنصوص المسجلة بالخط الهيروغليفي على جدران بروناوس بمعبد دير الحجر خلال النصف الثاني من القرن الأول الميلادي وذلك من خلال عمل فاكسيمي للمناظر والنصوص المسجلة وترجمتها وتحليل توزيع مناظر الأباطرة الرومان، كما تهدف الدراسة إلى إعادة النظر في كون المعبد قد تم تكريسه بشكل أساسي من أجل ثلوث طيبة فقط وذلك من خلال تحليل التوزيع الزخرفي لمناظر المعبد والذي كشف أن هذا التصور بعيد إلى حد ما عن الدقة وأن المعبد قد تم تشييده من أجل مجموعة من الآلهة المحلية الرئيسية تتألف أمون وتحوت وخونسو ومين مجتمعين، فلقد ظهرت هذه الآلهة بغالبية كبيرة في مناظر تقدمات القرابين على أكتاف أبواب المقصورة الرئيسية وصالة القرابين وصالة الأعمدة في إشارة لآلهة المعبد الرئيسية، كما أظهر تحليل التفاصيل الدقيقة للمناظر ازدواجية في عرض المظاهر الشمسية والقمرية لتلك الآلهة الرئيسية وذلك من خلال دورة الشمس والقمر.

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بيانات المقال

تاريخ المقال

تم الاستلام في 12 فبراير 2023

تم استلام النسخة المنقحة في 20 أكتوبر 2023

تم قبول البحث في 28 أكتوبر 2023

متاح على الإنترنت في 21 يناير 2024

الكلمات الدالة

دير الحجر؛

واحة الداخلة؛

بروناوس؛

العقيدة القمرية والشمسية.