

BUILDING *DIPINTI* FROM THE TEMPLE OF HATSHEPSUT

PRELIMINARY REMARKS, 2005/2006

Dawid F. Wieczorek

Building *dipinti*,¹ otherwise referred to as 'masons' marks' and "*Baugraffiti*" (cf. Hörscher and Anthes 1939: 99; Verner 1992), have been encountered repeatedly during the past 40 years of archaeological and reconstruction works in the two neighboring temples of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III in Deir el-Bahari. Jadwiga Lipińska (1977: 21-25) recorded the epigraphic material from the Tuthmosis III temple, while that from the temple of Hatshepsut was never discussed except for a few cursory mentions (Navelle and Hall 1907: 37, 19; Winlock M.M.A: 33, 41, 226, 230, 237 (the last two after Lipińska 1977: 23); Szafranski 1995: 371-374).

In the 2005/2006 season, excavation of trial pit S.1/06 uncovered the outer face of the south wall of the vestibule of the chapel of Hatshepsut's funerary cult (for this work, see above, report by Z.E. Szafranski in this volume). On a section of wall c. 5.30 m

long, reaching c. 1.50 m below the vestibule floor level and evidently unfinished [*Fig. 1*], the excavators identified 29 building *dipinti*; an additional 41 *dipinti* were recognized on loose blocks found in the fill of the trial pit. This discovery prompted a study of the numerous building *dipinti* from the Hatshepsut temple, undertaken by the present author.² The following are a few preliminary remarks concerning this category of inscriptions.

All the newly uncovered building *dipinti* were recorded in hieratic script with elements of cursive hieroglyphics, using red paint – ocher most likely – applied with a thin or thick brush. Those executed with a thin brush are about 10 by 15 cm in size, those with a thick brush about 20 by 30 cm.

A preliminary study of the material has distinguished seven different kinds of building *dipinti*:

- 1 The term *dipinti*, which has been ignored so far in egyptological studies (Thissen 1976: col. 880-882), is to my mind essential for characterizing the textual material presented here and distinguishing it from the numerous Theban graffiti (as in cf. Spiegelberg 1921; Černý 1956; Černý and Sadek 1969-1983).
- 2 Following in the wake of Andrzej Niwiński, Krzysztof Winnicki and Zbigniew E. Szafranski, all members of the PCMA Hatshepsut Temple Restoration Mission, who have documented this kind of material over the years, but without bringing the analysis beyond a preliminary stage. During the present season, 49 of the newly discovered *dipinti* were recorded by the author.

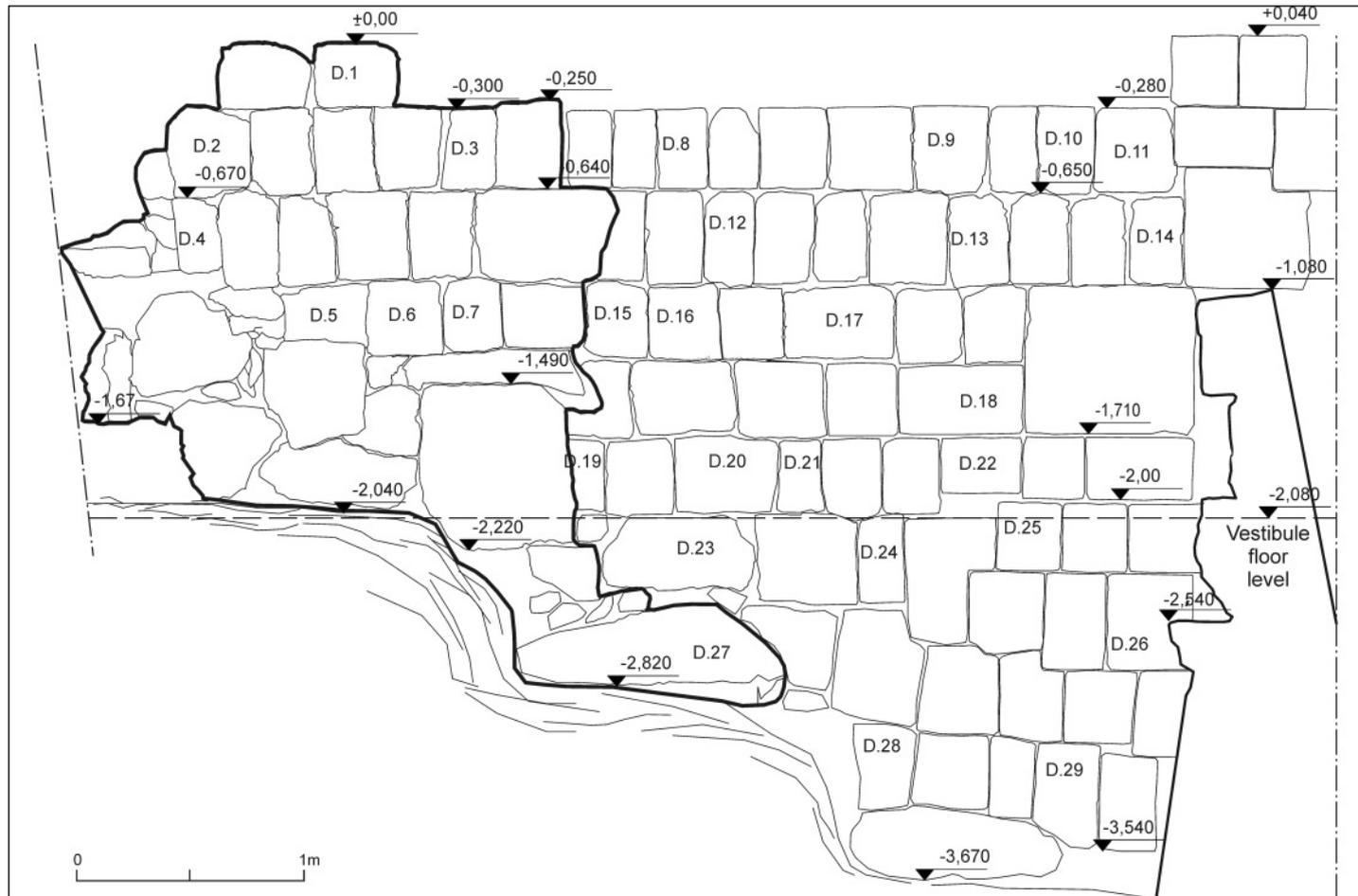


Fig. 1. Building dipinti on the south wall foundation in the vestibule of the Chapel of Hatshepsut (Drawing D. Wiczorek)

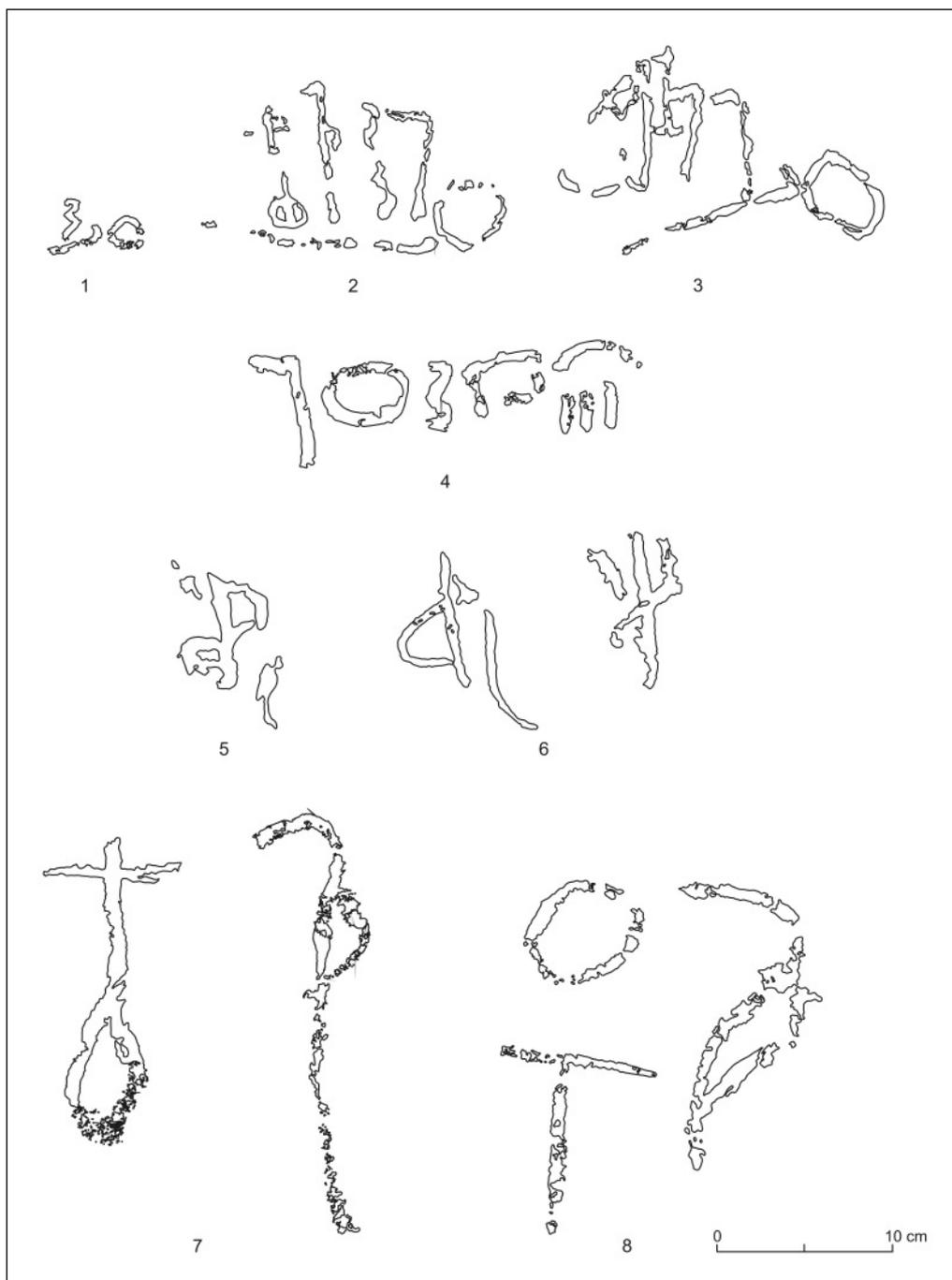


Fig. 2. Types of building dipinti from the Hatshepsut Temple
(Tracing D. Wiczorek)

1. Day-date: *sw* + *h* [Fig. 2:1];
2. Day-date + sign group *rnp.t-nfr* [Fig. 2:2];
3. Day-date + sign group *j* + A24 (according to Gardiner's Sign List) [Fig. 2:3];
4. Date: month + season + day [Fig. 2:4];
5. Sign group A9 and A9 + A2 [Fig. 2:5, 6];
6. Sign group *rnp.t-nfr* [Fig. 2:7];
7. Sign group *rnp.t-hr* [Fig. 2:8];

The most numerous type is the date of the day together with sign group *rnp.t-nfr* [cf. Fig. 2:2]. It appears only on the face of blocks, which were or are part of the wall face. The same is true of a day-date given without a sign group [cf. Fig. 2:1], day-dates with the sign group *j* + A24 [cf. Fig. 2:3], and incomplete date, e.g. CRCV-OFSW-D.5 [cf. Fig. 2:4]. Not one day dipinti has been recorded on any other side of block. The same goes for sign groups A9 and A9 + A2 [cf. Fig. 2:5, 6]. On the other hand, two

groups of signs. *rnp.t-nfr* [cf. Fig. 2:7] and *rnp.t-hr* [cf. Fig. 2:8] appear in a totally different context, having been recognized on all sides of blocks except their bottom.

Earlier archaeological investigations (Z.E. Szafranski, pers.comm.) and my personal observations have confirmed the presence of building dipinti throughout the temple of Hatshepsut, on blocks from the foundations as well as from the walls. As mentioned already, these inscriptions were executed in red paint only on unfinished sides of blocks. Dates were written evidently on the outside faces of walls, while sign groups, like *rnp.t-nfr* and *rnp.t-hr*, are evidenced chiefly in the core of walls and their foundations. Therefore, it seems certain that dates were added immediately after a block was positioned in the wall structure, while the said sign groups *rnp.t-nfr* and *rnp.t-hr* much earlier, somewhere between the quarries and the placement of blocks in the walls.

REFERENCES

- Černý, J.
1956 *Graffiti hieroglyphiques et hiératiques de la nécropole thébain. Nos 1060 a 1405*, Le Caire
- Černý J., Sadek, A.
1969-1983 *Graffiti de la Montagne Thébaine, vols I-IV*, Le Caire
- Hörscher, O., Anthes, R.
1939 *The Temples of The Eighteenth Dynasty. The Excavations of Medinet Habu*, vol. II, Chicago, Illinois
- Lipińska, J.
1977 *The Temple of Tutmosis III Architecture, Deir el-Bahari II*, Warsaw
- Naville, E., Hall, H.R.
1907 *The XIXth Dynasty Temple at Deir el-Bahari, Part I*, London
- Spiegelberg, W.
1921 *Aegyptische und andere graffiti (Inscriben und Zeichnungen) aus der thebanischen Necropolis*, Heidelberg

Szafránski, Z.E.

- 1995 On the foundations of the Hatshepsut Temple at Deir el-Bahari [in:] *Gedenkschrift für Winfried Barta*, D. Kessler, R. Schulz (eds), Frankfurt am Main, 371-374

Thissen

- 1976 s.v. Dipinti, *LÄ* II, col. 880-882

Verner, N.

- 1992 *Baugraffiti Der Ptahschepses Mastaba – Abusir II*, Praha

Winlock, H.

- M.M.A. Winlock's Notebook [in:] *The Archive of Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York*, vol. VII, *XVIII dynasty temple architecture* [= *Metropolitan Museum of Art Theban Expedition*, vol. VII], Department of Egyptian Art