

Publications of the Office of the Hungarian Cultural Counsellor in Cairo 2014–2015

Current Research of the
Hungarian Archaeological Mission in Thebes



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Foreword

The present yearbook is the first one of a hopefully longer series entitled *Publications of the Hungarian Cultural Institute in Cairo*. With the launching of the series the Institute aspires to present an impression of the work carried out in Egypt or in relation with Egypt by Hungarian academics, scholars and artists.

This inaugural volume is dedicated to the current Egyptological work of the *Hungarian Archaeological Mission in Thebes* (est. 1983) and its three archaeological projects presently doing field-work in the ancient necropoleis of Thebes. The last occasion highlighting their research and its presentation to the general public came in 2009 within the framework of a temporary exhibition mounted in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. The exhibition, organized in cooperation with the *Ministry of State for Antiquities and Heritage* (then SCA) and the Museum, also celebrated the more than hundred-year involvement of Hungarians in Egyptian archaeology.

Our aim with this volume then is to offer a glimpse of the most recent researches of Tamás A. Bács in the Funerary Complex of Hapuseneb (*TT 65 Project*), of Zoltán I. Fábrián into an Eighteenth Dynasty Mud Brick Mortuary Chapel (*TT 184 Project*), and of Gábor Schreiber in the tombs of Khamin and Nebamun (*TT -400- South Khokha Project*).

It is my pleasure as the coordinator of the Hungarian Cultural Institute to write this brief prologue to the reports given by the three internationally recognized Hungarian scholars.

Last but not least, I would like to recognize the valuable financial support of the National Cultural Fund of Hungary (NKA, Nemzeti Kulturális Alap) it lent to the publication of the current volume.

Renáta Kovács
Cultural Counsellor in Cairo

Attempts of Reconstruction of an Eighteenth Dynasty Mud Brick Mortuary Chapel in the Theban Necropolis

Zoltán Imre Fábián

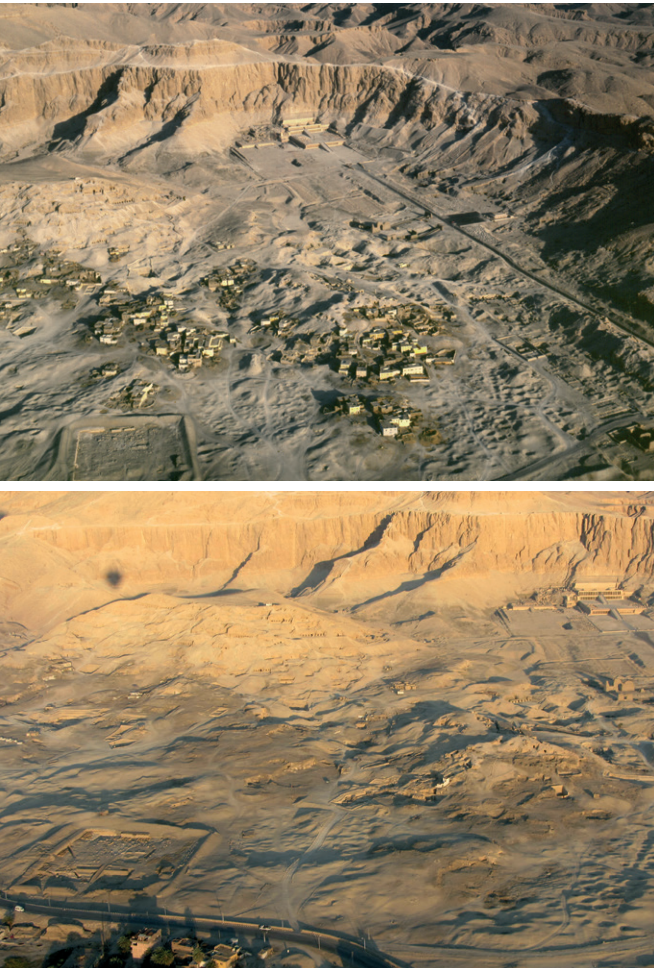


Fig. 1-2 Aerial views of the central part of the Theban necropoleis in 1989 and in 2013 (*Photos by György Csáki and Marianna Fa*). El-Khokha hillock is in the middle of the pictures.

The remains of the mud brick chapel were exposed on the south slope of the el-Khokha hillock in the Theban necropolis in 2008 by the Hungarian Archaeological Mission.¹

El-Khokha is in the central part of the necropolis, halfway between Deir el-Bahari and the Ramesseum, a quarter of an hour walk from each, somewhat north-east of the Eighteenth Dynasty memorial temple of Thutmosis III, south-east of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, it is in fact the southern slope of el-Assasif (**Fig. 1**).

Hungarian excavations have been carried out in this area since 1983. In the upper rows of the rock cut tombs, research was begun in 1995 with the epigraphic recording of TT 184, a Nineteenth Dynasty monument of Nefermenu, governor of Thebes.²

Since then, the landscape has changed a lot (**Fig. 2**), and the research area has also been enlarged (**Fig. 3**). Now, the history of a whole section of the necropolis is being investigated. This section is about 50 m wide, and comprises most of the ancient (and “modern”) monuments in the upper part of the slope (**Figs. 4-5**), which were constructed in all the major periods of ancient Egyptian history.³

¹ The excavation and research would have been impossible without the support of the National Cultural Fund (NKA) and the National Scientific Research Fund of Hungary (OTKA), as well as joint scholarships granted by the Hungarian Scholarship Board Office and the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education. For earlier publications concerning the chapel, see FÁBIÁN 2009 27–30; FÁBIÁN 2010a; FÁBIÁN 2010b; FÁBIÁN 2011a 57–58; FÁBIÁN 2011b 46–47.

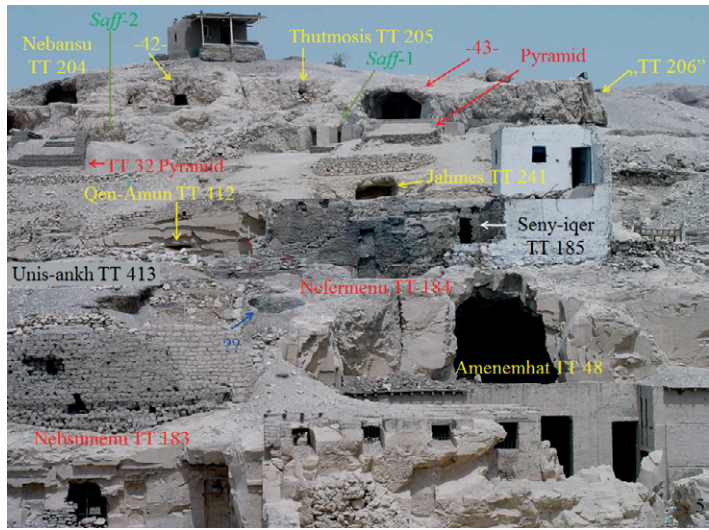
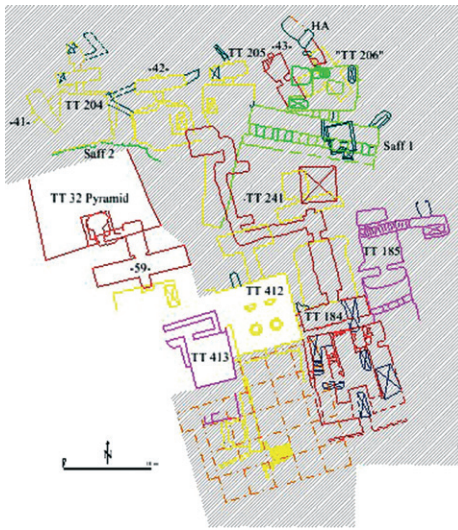
² For the general description of the site and the rock tombs previously identified, see PORTER–MOSS 1960; as well as KAMPP 1996.

³ For my publications on the earlier research at the site, see FÁBIÁN 1997; FÁBIÁN 1999; FÁBIÁN 2000; FÁBIÁN 2002; FÁBIÁN 2005; FÁBIÁN 2005b; FÁBIÁN 2005c; FÁBIÁN 2006; FÁBIÁN 2007; FÁBIÁN 2008; FÁBIÁN 2009; FÁBIÁN 2011a; FÁBIÁN 2011c; FÁBIÁN 2011d.

► **Fig. 3** The south slope of El-Khokha in 2013 (Photo by Marianna Fa). The remains of the mud brick chapel are in the centre, west (left) of the whitewashed modern house.



▼ **Fig. 4-5** Sketch plan and view of the researched area on the south slope of El-Khokha. Colours mark the different periods of the monuments. Black/lilac: Old Kingdom; Green: First Intermediate Period or Middle Kingdom; Yellow: Eighteenth Dynasty; Red: Nineteenth Dynasty.



The architectural layout of the site with the decorated rock cut tombs and subsequent reuses is rather complex. This is the place where Dr. Mohamed Saleh (later the director of the Cairo Museum, then in the 1960's, a local inspector) excavated in the most ancient known decorated Theban tombs, which had been created in the late Old Kingdom, among others, TT 413 of Unis-ankh. However, he could expose and publish only a part of this tomb.⁴

As in 2008, it was possible to dig around the forecourt of Unis-ankh's tomb, there was some hope to expose its unknown parts.

Though the modern building called Bet Boghdady was still standing there, we began our work in 3 x 3 m squares in order to learn more about this Theban Old Kingdom monument. Soon, however, near the surface, the remains of the small mud brick edifice were exposed (Figs. 6-7).

It was indeed built in the forecourt of Unis-ankh's monument, but on high debris, with a south-north orientation (Figs. 8-9), considering its painted decoration, during the Eighteenth Dynasty, in the 15th century B.C, some seven centuries later than Unis-ankh's tomb. It

⁴ SALEH 1970; SALEH 1977; besides the adjacent TT 412 (Qen-Amun): SALEH 1983.



Fig. 6–7 Remains of the painted mud brick chapel in the forecourt of TT 413 (Unis-ankh), and a closer view, both from the north.

seems to be contemporary with TT 412, Qen-Amun's tomb, Unis-ankh's eastern neighbour.⁵

In front of the small building, a low stone wall supported the debris. Only the inner side of this wall was plastered, as well as the pavement around the building (**Figs. 10–11**). In front of the entrance, a small hole can be observed in the plastering. The entrance of the chapel on its southern side could probably be approached from the west.

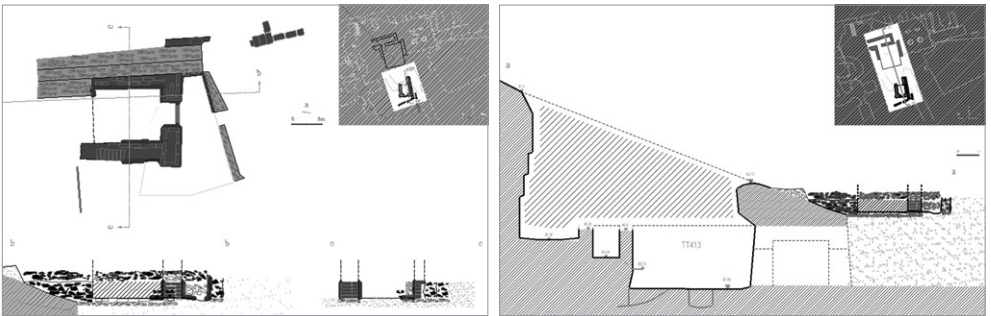


Fig. 8 Plan and sections of the mud brick chapel (*Survey and drawing by Katalin Wéberné Jánossy*).

Fig. 9 N–S section of the mud brick chapel as related to TT 413 (Unis-ankh). (*Survey and drawing by Katalin Wéberné Jánossy*).



Fig. 10–11 The mud brick chapel from south and north-west with the surrounding plastered pavement and the low stone wall supporting the debris in front of the entrance.

⁵ For the dating of the chapel considering its paintings, see FÁBIÁN 2010a = FÁBIÁN 2010b, with further literature.

The façade of the building was formed pylon-like. The eastern and northern walls of the edifice are joined to the sidewall of Unis-ankh's forecourt and to the upper part of its façade. The bricks of the rear part show that this part of the building was burnt down (**Fig. 12**).

The forecourt of Unis-ankh's tomb must have been covered by high debris during the Eighteenth Dynasty, the floor of the mud brick building is at a 3.5 m higher level than that of Unis-ankh's inner room.

The façade and the sidewalls of the chapel have survived about 1 m high, consisting of mostly nine rows of bricks. The mud bricks are of different sizes; most of them are, however, 36 x 16 x 10 cm. The western wall is one and a half brick-length in thickness (52–53 cm = probably an intended 1 cubit), with a regular bonding technique providing a combination of a longitudinal row and a diagonally laid row of bricks⁶ (**Figs. 13–14**). The bonding in the other surviving walls is more irregular. Of the northern, rear wall only traces survive, but both the inner and outer corners can be identified. The inside measurements of the small building are 1.80 x 2.25 m (perhaps an intended 24 x appr. 30 palms). For the bonding, as well as for the plastering of the walls, only white *muna (hibe)* was applied. The floor was plastered in the height of the first brick row of the wall, on a base of small stones.

As opposed to the external surfaces of the walls, inside, they were decorated with paintings. These were arranged above a black plinth and a red-yellow *dado* (**Fig. 15**).

The mud brick building decorated with paintings similar to those in rock cut monuments, can put forward the question of its function. No burial place that could possibly be interpreted as belonging to this edifice has been found as yet, but it may have been part, perhaps the superstructure of a nearby rock cut monument.⁷ Its mortuary character is however obvious on the basis of the painted decoration.

It was urgent to protect this small monument and its paintings, so the paintings were cleaned. Then another row of bricks was added to the walls, and the unpainted surfaces



Fig. 12 The north-eastern corner of the chapel joined on to the façade of TT 413 (Unis-ankh). The bricks obviously indicate that this part of the edifice was once burnt down.

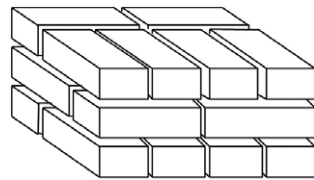


Fig. 13–14 The western wall of the chapel showing the bonding technique of the bricks.

⁶ See SPENCER 1979 Pl. 1: type A2.

⁷ The decorated mud brick chapel is in the axis of (Kampp) -64- of Amenhotep, which is situated between TT 32 (Djehutimes) and TT 183 (Nebsumenu), in the lowest row of tombs on the southern slope of el-Khoka; their relationship cannot be ruled out.

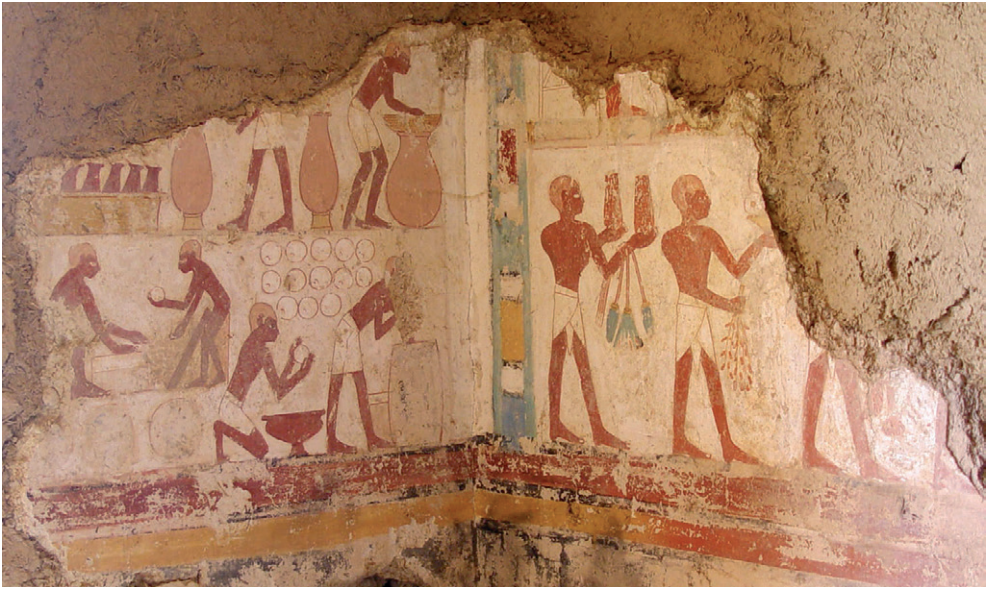


Fig. 15 Paintings in the south-west corner of the chapel.



Fig. 16-17 The chapel after the cleaning of the paintings and partial reconstruction, and its actual outlook, protected with a plywood cover.



▲ **Fig. 19a-b** Remains of paintings on the western thickness in the entrance.

◄ **Fig. 18** The entrance of the chapel with the threshold and the eastern thickness.

were plastered with light *muna* following the original technique (**Fig. 16**). Now, the edifice is covered with plywood (**Fig. 17**).

For the planning of later restoration and reconstruction it has to be taken into account, however, that the original purpose of the excavation in this place was the forecourt and

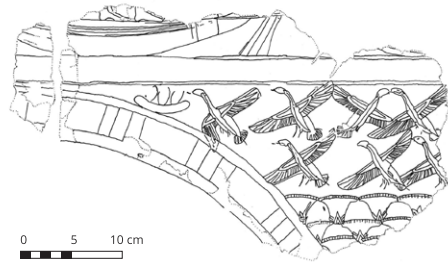


Fig. 20a-b Remains of the decorated surface above the entrance on a larger fragment.



Fig. 21 Red and white striped decoration of the vaulted ceiling in the entrance on the larger fragment.

Fig. 22 Curved bricks probably from the ceiling.

the façade of Unis-ankh's tomb, which is certainly hindered by the fact that this small monument was exposed here.

As for further architectural characters, in the entrance, the characteristic features of the threshold and the jambs can mostly be understood (**Fig. 18**). They must have been inserted wooden or perhaps sandstone elements, but only their nests survive. These were carved in the brick walls after the brick rows were laid. There must have been a wooden door, opening inside, to the left; the groove can be seen behind the threshold. On the western thickness of the entrance, the painting of the owner's figure can be seen as he is stepping out of the chapel (**Figs. 19a-b**). On the other side, a parallel representation was probably depicted with the owner's figure stepping inside.

A larger fragment, containing whole bricks too (**Figs. 20a-b**), suggests that the entrance was vaulted. The ceiling of the entrance was decorated with red and white stripes (**Fig. 21**). The ceiling of the building was probably similarly vaulted; among the fallen bricks, there are several curved ones (**Fig. 22**).

PAINTINGS

As for the paintings, smaller or larger parts of them have remained to us on all the four walls, and as we have just seen, even from the entrance. During the excavation, however, several further painting fragments were found, partly fallen from the sidewalls, and from the collapsed ceiling too.

On both sides of the entrance wall, a part of the so-called workmen's scenes has survived, where the preparation of beer is depicted⁸ (**Figs. 23a-b and 24a-b**).

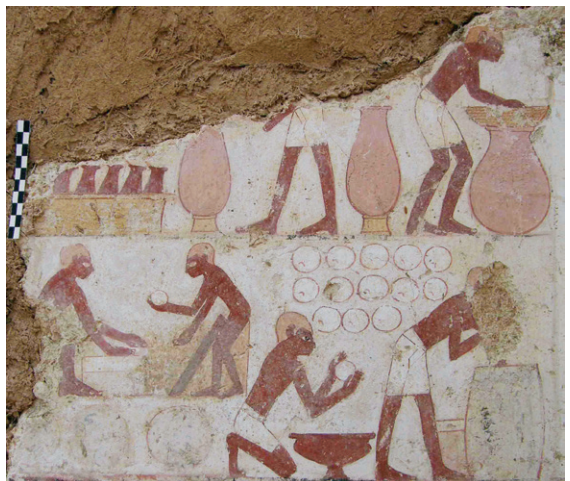
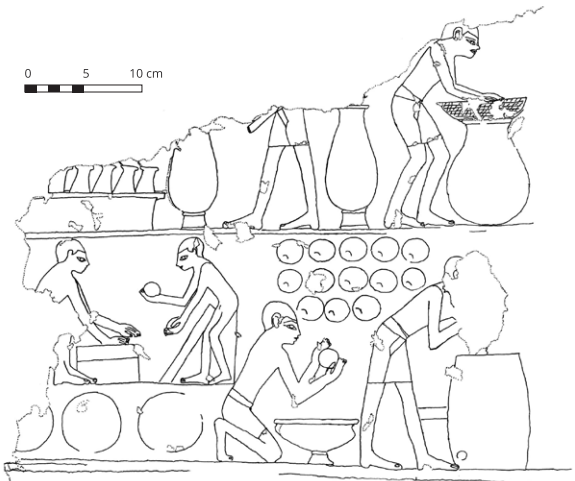
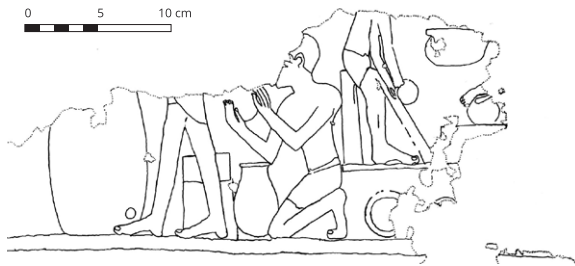
⁸ For the rather ample and near contemporary representation of beer brewing, see TT 93 (Qen-Amun, Amenhotep II). For the explanations of the working process, see DAVIES 1930, I, 51, and Pl. LVIII. A further representation of the same topic also frequently cited is in TT 17 (Neb-Amun, Amenhotep II) published by SÄVE-SÖDERBERGH 24,

On the western side of the entrance, two lower registers (h: 39 cm, w: 54 cm) have remained to us, on the eastern side only one register (h: 16 cm, w: 50 cm). On the basis of the surviving lower registers, we can suppose that the same scenes were depicted on each side, the same phases of the working process in beer brewing were shown mirrored. The scenes are not identical in every detail though, the vessels and the movements of the workmen are different in certain places.

The persons depicted in the beer brewing scenes are all men. Their skin is brownish red, their nails are white, they wear a short kilt, and a further character of their representation is that their hair was not painted black, it is pink. The reading direction of the details in the beer brewing scenes seems to be from the inside towards the corners.

A group of fragments found nearby must be supposed to have belonged to the decoration of the entrance wall. Some fit in the thematic group of beer brewing, and on two pieces the remains of the block border can also be recognized.⁹ This decoration element is not present in the outer corners of the entrance wall. The two fragments could, thus, originally be on the western wall surface, directly beside the entrance. For the position of the other fragments only some hypothetical propositions can be put forward for the moment (**Fig. 25**).

Besides the beer brewers, there are other fragments that may also have been on the entrance wall. The larger fragment mentioned above (**Figs. 20a-b**), with elaborately painted details could be part of the vault of the entrance, and the entrance wall. Here, above the door, at least two boats were represented. The fowls and the plants depicted here



▲▲ **Fig. 23a-b** Beer brewers on the eastern part of the entrance wall.

▲ **Fig. 24a-b** Beer brewers on the western part of the entrance wall.

Pl. XXII; otherwise: WRESZINSKI 1926.

⁹ For the origins and types of the decoration element, see MACKAY 1916.



Fig. 25 Beer brewer fragments with their possible arrangement on both sides of the entrance. The green line indicates the probable position of the block border.

make it probable that above and beside the upper part of the entrance, above the beer brewing scenes, marshland fishing and hunting scenes were represented.

The vaulted edge was framed with a block border. The presence of this element in this position can confirm our earlier observation regarding the two fragments of beer brewing, that block borders framed the entrance.

In the upper part of the fragment, above a blue stripe of water, the prow part of a boat and two red feet survive. On the right, a detail of a further boat can be seen. Both these boats seem to proceed in the same direction, to the right.

Below the blue stripe of water, above some rows of papyrus flowers, precisely finished water birds are flying in two rows, in an artistic arrangement.

Some further, smaller fragments may also have belonged to this composition. One represents papyrus flowers (**Figs. 26a-b**).

Another fragment group could be joined from two pieces. Here, above the blue stripe of water, the prow of a papyrus boat is depicted, which proceeds in the marsh, and a part of the red foot of the man on the boat is also preserved (**Figs. 27a-b**).

Another unit of fragments joined from four pieces represents a man with a harpoon and a lady, who tenderly touches him (**Figs. 28a-b**). The couple is turning to the left, where their boat may have proceeded.

It is difficult to locate these fragments in the composition (**Figs. 29a-b**), but perhaps the blue stripe above the harpooning man can give us some basis for the approximate position of this detail. It could be either below the blue stripe of the water of the two-boat register, in that of the birds and the papyri, or the blue stripe may have marked the sky and not the water. Its position was in any case on the right side of the composition, as the slightly curved line on its right, partly covered by the harpooner's hand must have been

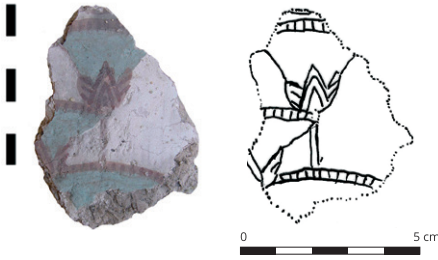


Fig. 26a-b Papyrus flowers probably from the entrance wall.



Fig. 27a-b Prow part of a papyrus boat proceeding in the marsh, with remains of the red foot of a man in the boat.



Fig. 28a-b The harpooner fragments probably from the upper part of the entrance wall.

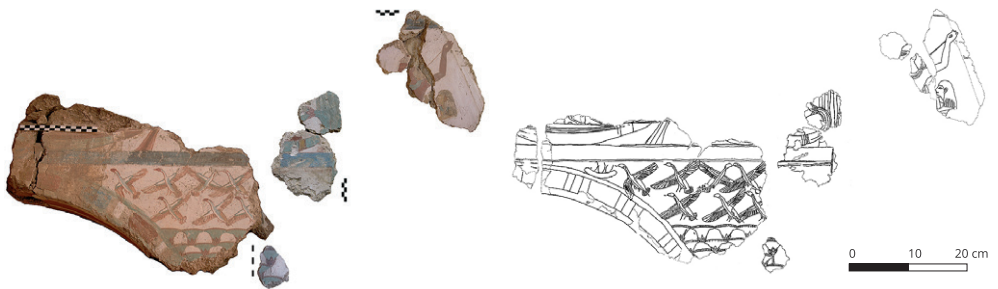


Fig. 29a-b A possible reconstruction of the positions of the painted fragments in the upper part of the entrance wall.

a borderline in the corner of the painting and the vaulted ceiling.

The painting remains of the eastern sidewall are very fragmentary (**Fig. 30**). Above the lower *dado*, merely three smaller fragments have survived. In the corner of the rear wall, a yellow lady can be identified seated on a throne, probably a goddess, and in front of her, an adoring man's red feet (**Figs. 31a-b**).

The fragment in the middle of the wall surface has preserved a man's two legs and feet going left, towards the entrance (**Figs. 32a-b**). The third fragment is in the corner of the entrance wall (**Figs. 33a-b**). Above the *dado*, the detail of the vertical block border can be seen and beside this, a sort of a grating pattern, which was probably a detail of an offering list.

On the rear wall of the chapel, only some remains of the north-eastern corner



Fig. 30 Remains of paintings on the eastern wall.

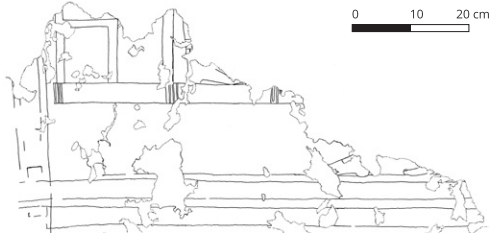


Fig. 31a-b Yellow lady, probably a goddess, seated on a throne in the corner of the eastern wall; in front of her: an adoring man's red feet.



Fig. 32a-b Red feet of an offering bearer (?) in the middle of the eastern wall.

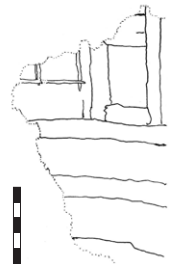
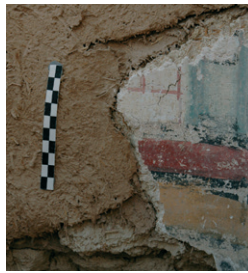


Fig. 33a-b Remains of the vertical block border and the grating pattern, on the eastern wall, at the corner of the entrance wall.

have remained to us. With these however the inner measurements of the edifice can be reconstructed. Here, above the *dado*, which apparently ran all around below the decorated surfaces, in the corner, the remains of the vertical block border element can be recognized (Figs. 34a-b).

The western wall has preserved a larger section of paintings in the corner (Figs. 35a-b). Above the *dado*, the vertical block border can be reconstructed. In front of this, in the lower register (h: 28 cm), offering bearers proceed towards the inside of the chapel.

The painted details of these men are similar to the beer brewers; all of them, however, wear the kilt type with the pointed middle part.

In the register above the offering bearers, the legs of a man's chair and his red feet can be seen, and another man's foot stepping in front of him. This was perhaps a part of a banquet scene?

From a number of fragmentary pieces, we could reassemble an almost one meter wide part of a painting (Figs. 36a-b), but only virtually. The paintings were traced on transparent paper by fragment-pairs, and then the drawings reassembled. Then the photos were placed below the drawings on computer, and finally the drawings removed.¹⁰

¹⁰ Marianna Fa and Zsuzsanna Köllő assisted in the adjusting of the fragments and their tracings, and in the graphic solutions necessary for the publication, for which I am grateful.



Fig. 34a-b The only remains of the decoration of the rear wall: dado and vertical block border in the north-east corner.

This part of the painting represents two registers of offering bearers (h: 25 cm) and an offering person who occupies the height of both the upper two registers. In front of this man, there are a large jar, an offering table with a dead bird, and then the empty chart of the usual offering list.

Below the row of the offering bearers, there must have been a further register probably with other offering bearers and offerings. Here, even some signs of a hieroglyphic inscription survive in a horizontal line (*šsp in wdn [...]* and after a long *lacuna*, a human figure, probably a determinative). The text may have referred to the receiving of offerings.

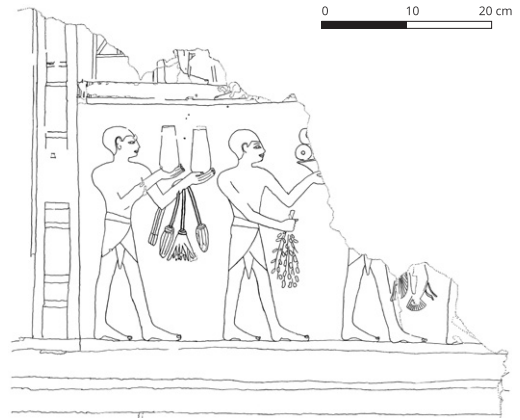


Fig. 35a-b Painted remains of the western wall: offering bearers in the lower register and a seated man with the red foot of an offering person above them.

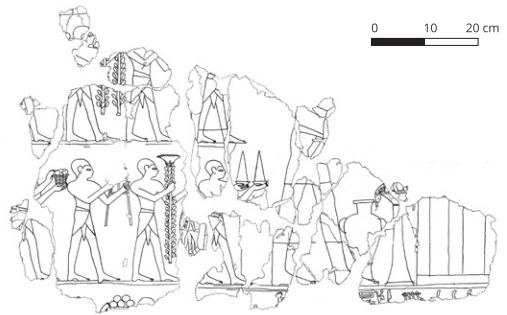


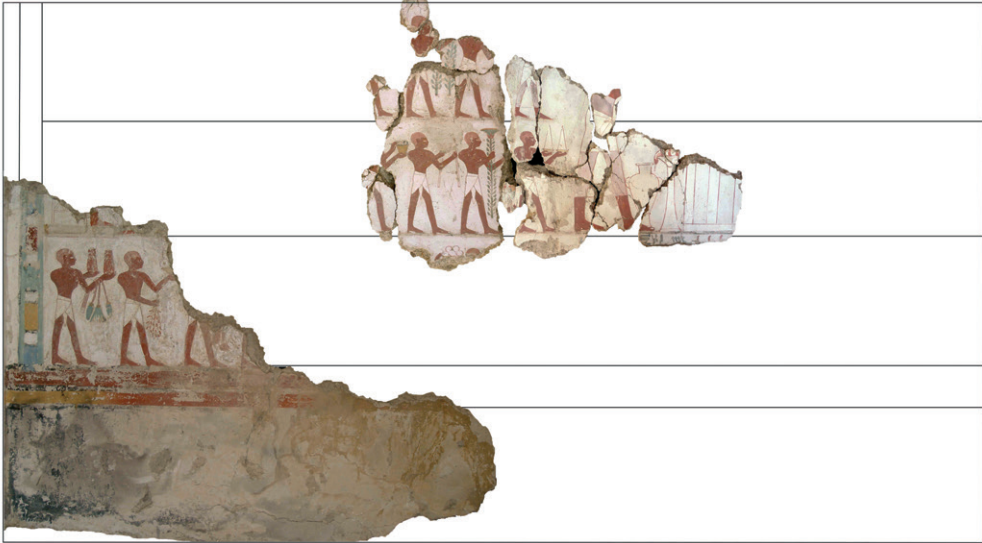
Fig. 36a-b Offering bearers reconstructed from several fragments.

It is tempting to position this large painting part on the western wall, around its offering bearers, but a part of these fragments also contained larger wall-remains, even whole bricks, and the western wall has survived around a metre in height. If we still insist on the west wall, the reassembled fragments could only be above this height (**Fig. 37**).

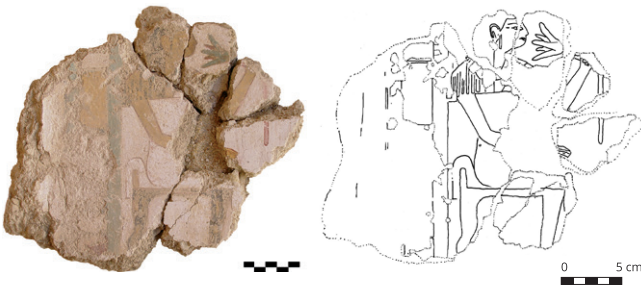
If we were able to place it accurately on-to this wall, even the exact height of the wall could be defined, because above one of the offering bearers in the upper row, remains of

a horizontal block border can also be observed, and this cannot be anything else but the upper edge of the decoration of the sidewall.

What can be considered most certain, however, is that this reassembled part of the paintings comes from the uppermost registers of one of the sidewalls. Nevertheless, it is possible that we should take in consideration four registers with the reconstruction and not three as is shown in the reconstructed picture.



▲ **Fig. 37** A possible position of the offering bearers fragments on the western wall.



◀ **Fig. 38a-b** The yellow lady fragments from one of the corners.

Some further groups of painted fragments can also expand our knowledge on the rich decoration program of the chapel. I would like to demonstrate two groups now. One has been reassembled from six fragments and represents a yellow lady, who is enjoying the odour of a lotus flower (**Figs. 38a-b**). This can be a characteristic element of a banquet scene, and it was without doubt in one of the corners of the walls, for the vertical block border is clearly visible behind the lady.

Another group of fragments proves the presence of at least one sailboat in the decoration program. The nine fragments depict the details of the vessel sailing to the right, and those of the crew.

The picture has been reconstructed on the basis of available near contemporary parallel boat representations, and one of Menna's (TT 69) famous boats has proved to be the best parallel. The photo of Menna's boat has been mirrored, as in the original painting it is sailing to the left; and our fragments are projected on this picture (**Fig. 39**). The arrangement of the two paintings seems to be so identical that it is rather probable that the artist of the mud brick chapel and that of Menna's tomb had one and the same model or

“sample book”, and it cannot even be ruled out that the artist of the two paintings was one and the same person.

No significant hieroglyphic inscription has remained to us on the walls or in the fragments. The owner’s name is still unknown. However, a lot of fragments also contain text

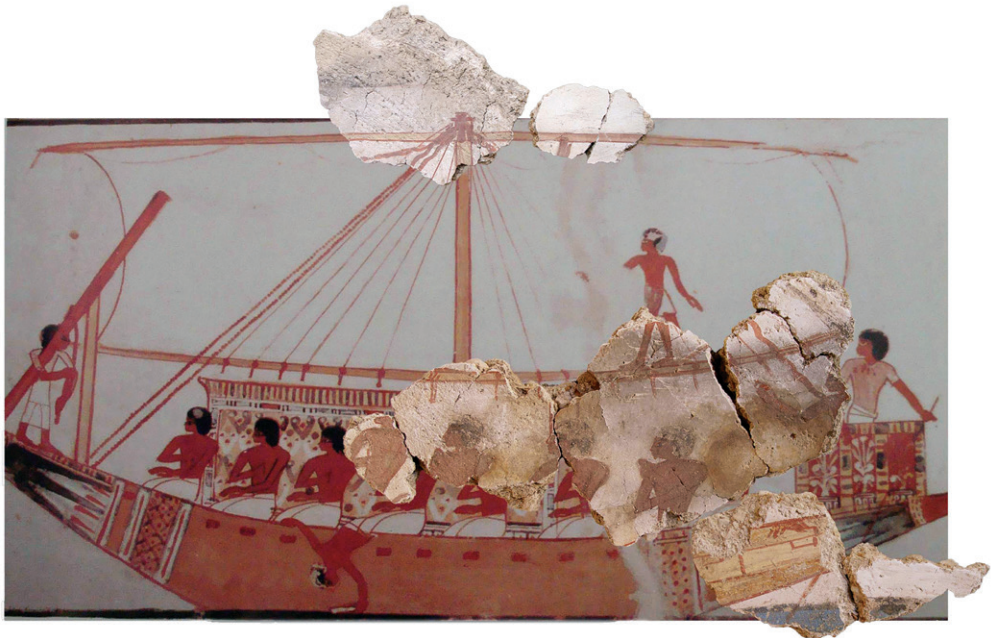


Fig. 39 Reconstruction of the sailing boat fragments on the mirrored image of Menna’s boat (TT 69).

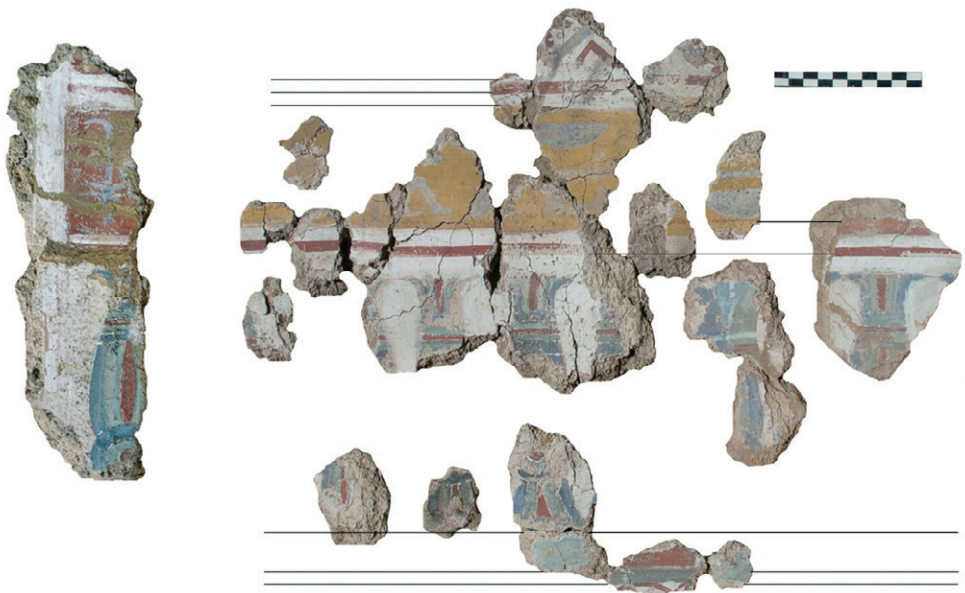


Fig. 40 Fragments of the heker frieze and the horizontal line of the hieroglyphic inscription above it and below the carpet pattern of the ceiling.

remains, proving that the pictorial representations were accompanied by inscriptions. One of these fragment groups clearly proves that above the pictorial registers, above the horizontal block border, one of the most frequent bordering element, the *heker*-frieze was depicted (**Fig. 40**).

Above the *heker-s*, between red lines, remains of a horizontal line of a hieroglyphic inscription can be read. The original place of the upper left fragment was surely one of the corners. The text began here, it was to be read from left to right, and probably the first sign of the most frequent offering formula (*hṯp dj nswt*) can be seen painted in blue; while the background colour appears to be red.

Several other fragments with also blue hieroglyphic signs may indicate that their background colour was yellow. As we could observe during the excavation that the rear part, especially the north-western corner of the chapel had been burnt down, we can presume that the yellow ochre background of the fragment with the initial sign of the formula must have become red in the fire, and that the fragment came from this part of the building.

The case may be similar with another fragment, which was probably part of the same text (**Figs. 41a-b**). It probably contains a part of the owner's title, two hieroglyphs painted in blue: [...]*sš n* [...]. Now, at last we know something about this person: he was a scribe, perhaps a royal scribe.

In the fragment group which appears above the *heker*-frieze and depicts blue hieroglyphs on a yellow background, the reconstruction of the text is not yet possible. It is clear however, that it is to be read from right to left, as opposed to the hieroglyphs on red background on the other two fragments. The two groups were thus parts of different texts, and the yellow ones come from another part of the wall.

As below the *heker-s*, there are the remains of the horizontal block border closing the pictorial registers of a wall, and above the text-line, those of the carpet pattern of the ceiling, we can reconstruct the height of these decoration elements, which were above the pictorial registers. This can be 26–27 cm, similar to the height of the pictorial registers.

This result can be significant, because, as on the top part of the large fragment group depicting the two registers of the offering bearers, we could identify the horizontal block border, it seems to be possible to reconstruct the overall height of the sidewalls, too. For the moment, however, let us return to the fragments with hieroglyphic inscriptions, possibly from the ceiling.

On a further fragment group, we can see once again blue hieroglyphs on red background, with a red separating line on white background, and on the other side of this, once again a red background (**Fig. 42**). One can again presume that the background was originally yellow, and the plaster indeed indicates burning. Again, the remains of the text are not sufficient for the reconstruction of the inscription, but it is enough to understand that the text was written in a vertical column. The text could be written either in one of the corners, or perhaps framing a niche (?), but what is much more probable is that the text columns ran along the ceiling somewhere, but not at the edge of the carpet pattern, rather in the middle of the ceiling, in the axis of the vault.

From the decoration of the ceiling, fragments of only one single pattern type have come to light during the excavation.¹¹ It is a characteristic composition found in several Eight-

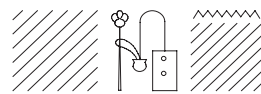


Fig. 41a-b The scribe fragment, probably a part of the owner's title.

¹¹ For the rich material and types of carpet patterns, see FOŘTOVÁ-ŠÁMALOVÁ-VILÍMKOVÁ 1963.

eenth Dynasty Theban (and non-Theban) tombs, – among others, in Menna’s TT 69 (**Fig. 44**), whose sailing-bark representation has just helped us in the reconstruction of our bark and its crew.



Fig. 42 Fragment group with blue hieroglyphs actually on red background probably from the ceiling.

Fig. 43 Ceiling fragments with carpet pattern above the heker-frieze and the text bandeau.

Fig. 44 Menna’s carpet pattern of the ceiling in TT 69.

ARCHITECTURAL RECONSTRUCTION

As for the architectural reconstruction, I do not know any other, essentially free-standing, at least near contemporary edifice similar to our chapel, which was built of mud bricks and decorated with paintings of funerary character.¹²

Closer parallels in measurements and architectural elements are perhaps the Middle Kingdom memorial chapels in Abydos.¹³

After all, for an architectural reconstruction, the pieces of information collected during the excavation could be applied. The starting points of my constructions and drawings are, thus, frequently, almost in the case of each step, uncertain and hypothetical.

For the reconstruction of the height of the sidewalls, as we have seen, the starting point can be the overall height of the painting remains on the western wall, the reassembled pieces of the fragment group with the offering bearers, and the *heker*-frieze with the horizontal line of the hieroglyphic inscription above it. While preparing the following constructions (**Fig. 45**), drawings and models, a three-registered sidewall was taken as a starting point. In case there were four pictorial registers, the height of the sidewall may have been 25–30 cm more than the here constructed figures.

Whether the jump of the ceiling was right above the *heker*-frieze or only above the yellow text band cannot be clearly understood from the surfaces of the fragments.

¹² The mud brick constructions of the Theban necropoleis are rarely published, those of later periods are better documented: EIGNER 1984; SCHREIBER–VASÁROS 2005, with the possible parallels of the reconstruction.

¹³ O’CONNOR 2009, 92–96, esp. Figs. 45–47; O’CONNOR 1979.

The ceiling must have started very steeply. In my drawing, I have attempted to represent the inscription stripe as already part of the ceiling. Thus the height of the sidewalls in the relatively small edifice seems to have been 1.5 m, which perhaps seems to be too low.

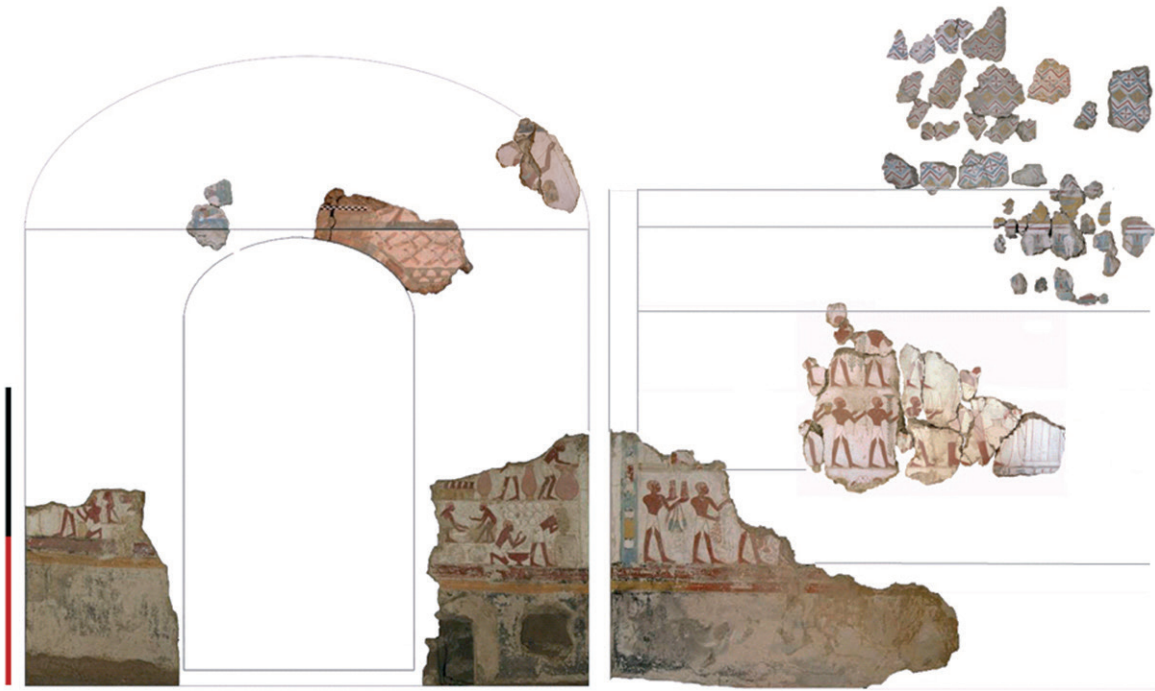


Fig. 45 Reconstruction of the front and western walls with painted fragments.

The reconstruction of the vault of the ceiling has been based on two presumptions. One is that one of the characteristic lines of the entrance wall could be in the same height as the jump of the ceiling at the sidewalls. The other is that the architect may have followed a similar line while constructing the ceiling of the room and that of the entrance.

Such a characteristic line can be the blue water-stripe separating the boats and the birds on the entrance wall, perhaps its lower line. If the fragment is placed on the entrance wall, its arch can be applied for the construction of the ceiling line.

The result is that the height of the entrance cannot have been more than 1.5 m, and the maximum inner height of the small edifice was around 2.20 m. I have to emphasize, however, that the four-pictorial-register reconstruction of the sidewalls is also to be taken into account. In this case, another 25–30 cm should be added to the reconstructed height. Perhaps this is a more realistic, and more probable possibility, and the proportions may change somewhat.

After the inner space of the building, we can turn our attention now to the external architectural elements. Here, our starting point can be that the thickness of the vaulted roof must have been similar to that of the sidewalls, which supported it (i.e. 52–53 cm = 1 cubit). The height of the building could be, thus, around 2.7–2.8 m; in the case of four-registered sidewalls, around 3 m.

With the external reconstruction, the most problems can be caused by the understanding of the pylon-like façade in the context of the arched roofing. In the following, I would like to show three models that I have prepared. In the first one (**Figs. 46a-b**), the arched roof is simply placed on the sidewalls. The outlines of the façade thus follow those

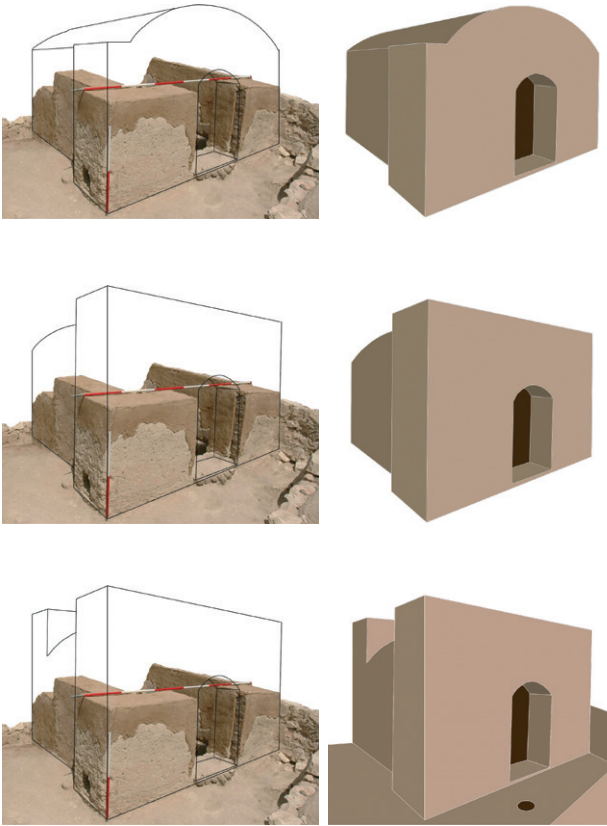


Fig. 46a-b, 47a-b, 48a-b Possible models for the architectural reconstruction of the chapel.

of the arched roofing of the building, similarly to the Abydos memorial chapels, but there is a buttress on the side. However, this model seems to be rather clumsy and not very functional.

In the second model (**Figs. 47a-b**) the pylon-like character of the façade can prevail. The façade wall is raised to the height of the arched roof, and this had some role in the stability of the building, too. This seems to be a more realistic possibility.

The third model (**Figs. 48a-b**) also takes into consideration the stability problem of the arched roofing, and besides the façade, also in the rear, a revetment wall is proposed in the height of the arched roof. In its model, I have marked the low stone wall in front of the entrance

and the sidewall of Unis-ankh's forecourt, too, as well as the small hole that can be seen at the entrance in the plastered floor.

No significant find referring to its function has come to light from this hole, but the reconstruction drawings of the memorial chapels in Abydos show that in the little court, a plant was growing. Perhaps our little hole is the trace of a similar feature.

In the vicinity of the painted mud brick chapel, further excavation is not possible at the moment. Earlier digging on its western side, however, pointed out that below it, a further edifice had also been built on the level of Unis-ankh's forecourt.

In order to explore this as well as the unknown parts of Unis-ankh's Old Kingdom tomb, while preserving what has remained to us from the painted chapel too, rather difficult procedures are to be taken.

The attempts of the reconstruction of the painted chapel, however, even if only in a virtual form at the moment, will hopefully help its physical reconstruction – in the proper place and in the proper time.

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