

Current research at Deir el-Bahari

10.04–5.06, Thursdays, 2 pm (Warsaw Time) on Zoom

The temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari is considered one of the most important monuments of ancient Egyptian architecture. Since 1961, it has been the subject of research and work by a Polish-Egyptian expedition from the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw, whose task is to study the history of this sacred space, its reconstruction and conservation.

As part of this lecture series, members of the Polish-Egyptian expedition will present the results of the latest fieldwork and studies, focusing on archaeological excavations, epigraphic research, as well as restoration and conservation treatments.

Program of Lecture Series

10 April **Monika Czerniec**

Preliminary conservation research in the Lower Anubis Shrine of the Hatshepsut temple

17 April **Patryk Chudzik**

The Hathor Project. Results of an archaeological investigation in the Temple of Hatshepsut

24 April **Cynthia May Sheikholeslami,**

The Baraize Tomb at Deir el-Bahari, 100 Years of Exploration

8 May **Paulina Staszkiwicz**

Sanctuary of the Hathor Shrine in the Hatshepsut Temple. Preliminary research of the polichrome relief decoration

15 May **Anastasiia Stupko-Lubczynska**

Hatshepsut's artists

22 May **Anna Konopko**

Conservation of textiles in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. Current work and research perspectives

29 May **Dawid F. Wieczorek**

Tool Marks Pattern Analysis: morpho-technological studies on Ancient Egyptian and Nubian building stone blocks – possibilities and limitations

5 June **Patryk Chudzik, Anna Duda-Maczuga, Wojciech Myjak, Anna Kudzia, Kacper Prus**

Restoration work in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari

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Abstracts

10.04.2025

Monika Czerniec, MA (independent researcher)

Preliminary conservation research in the Lower Anubis Shrine of the Hatshepsut temple at Deir el-Bahari

The Lower Anubis Shrine, located on the northern side of the Middle Terrace of Hatshepsut's Mortuary Temple in Deir el-Bahari, Egypt, dates back to the 15th century BCE. The painted relief decoration of the shrine features representations of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III in front of various deities, including Anubis, Hathor, Ptah, Osiris, Amun and others. The shrine has suffered extensive damage over time and now requires comprehensive conservation treatment. The Polish-Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Expedition to the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari, in collaboration with the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, undertook an effort to prepare documentation of the current state of preservation as the first, necessary step of the whole restoration process.

As part of the initial recognition of the object, detailed photographic documentation was supplemented with microscopic photographs, made using Handheld Portable Digital LCD Microscope. Furthermore, photographs in UV light were taken to identify the original varnishes and the extent of pharaonic reconstructions.

Close examination revealed not only two phases of destruction of relief decoration, but also the restorations, attempted most likely during the Ramesside era. Additionally, studies found that there are two chronological painting layers extensively present in the Shrine as well as thick layer of varnish belong to the first phase of decoration from queen Hatshepsut era. UV light analysis revealed distinctive luminescence in certain areas of the polychrome.

This presentation will share results of the research we obtained so far, these initial steps are vital for developing targeted conservation strategies to stabilize and preserve the shrine's delicate painted surfaces and structural elements and also enlarge the knowledge about materials and technology of the polychrome relief, decorating the Lower Anubis Shrine at the Hatshepsut's Mortuary Temple.

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17.04.2025

Patryk Chudzik, PhD (PCMA UW)

The Hathor Project. Results of an archaeological investigation in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari

At the end of 2020, the Polish-Egyptian expedition to Deir el-Bahari initiated a new project in the temple of Hatshepsut, focusing on archaeological, architectural, epigraphic and conservation research and studies of the Hathor Cult Complex located in the southern part of the precinct. This lecture will present the progress and the most important results of the archaeological investigation. The work began with a comprehensive exploration of the so-called Hathor Path, a long, open alley on the south side of the middle terrace. The next phase involved excavations in the Hathor Chapel at the southern end of the middle colonnades, ending with the hypostyle halls that preceded the chapel.

The material uncovered during the excavations allows for an almost complete reconstruction of the history of the Deir el-Bahari sacred space, starting from the early Middle Kingdom tomb of the royal family member, through the construction and functioning of the Hatshepsut temple, its destruction at the end of the New Kingdom and reuse in the first millennium BCE, to the activities of early explorers.

24.04.2025

Cynthia May Sheikholeslami, PhD (independent researcher)

The Baraize Tomb at Deir el-Bahari, 100 Years of Exploration

Ninety-two years ago, in the winter/spring of 1933, Emile Baraize discovered a tomb with a cache of coffins while he was searching the pavements of the upper terrace at Deir el-Bahari for blocks belonging to the chapel of Hatshepsut. Baraize, director of works for the Egyptian Antiquities Service, spent a great part of his career on the restoration of the temple, but he never published anything about his work. His discovery of the four coffin sets belonging to two priests of the god Montu and two women was only briefly announced in international newspapers and Egyptological journals. Twenty-three years later, in 1956, after Baraize had died, his friend, archaeologist Bernard Bruyère, published a short report focused on the genealogical information.

When I first came to Egypt in 1975, I saw three inner coffins from this group selected for the new Luxor Museum; only one was eventually displayed. During the past 50 years since then, I have relocated and studied what now survives from this cache. The "Baraize tomb" was rediscovered by Polish archaeologists in 2009. After almost a century, publication of the entire find by the Polish-Egyptian Mission at Deir el-Bahari will appear in 2028.

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08.05.2025

Paulina Staszkievicz, MA (PCMA UW)

Sanctuary of the Hathor Shrine in the Hatshepsut Temple at Deir el-Bahari. Preliminary research of the polychrome relief decoration

This lecture presents preliminary research on the polychrome reliefs in the Hathor Shrine at the Temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari. Built in the 15th century BCE, the Temple of Hatshepsut, known as the Temple of a Million Years, is a unique architectural complex. The Hathor Shrine, situated on the south side of the middle terrace, is among the best-preserved parts of the temple, consisting of two Hypostyle Halls, the Vestibule, the Bark Hall, and the Sanctuary. The shrine, partially carved from rock, survived an ancient earthquake. Its polychrome reliefs bear witness to various phases of destruction from Thutmose III's reign and the Amarna period, as well as subsequent Ramesside restorations. Thutmose III's destruction targeted images and titles of Hatshepsut, while Amarna period damage focused on divine figures, with Ramesside restorations filling defects with mortar and recreating the polychrome.

The project focusing on Sanctuary of the Hathor Shrine aims to conserve, but also to analyze materials and technology of painting layers. This includes analytical research, in-situ microscopic, UV light examinations and identification of the technique and technology of the painting layer's execution. The conservation project is conducted within the research programme of the Polish-Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Expedition in cooperation with the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw.

15.05.2025

Anastasiia Stupko-Lubczynska, PhD (PCMA UW)

Hatshepsut's artists

In Ancient Egypt, the authors are rarely connected to their works. However, the latest research demonstrates that the initial assumptions about the anonymity of Egyptian art as a whole are becoming obsolete; examples are becoming quite numerous, for instance, of private tombs that have their leading artists identified. Still, with large-scale projects, such as temples, this anonymity is often an effect of workshop settings and diversification of tasks imposed, again, by the scale. In other words, the authors dissolve in their collective endeavour.

Yet for Hatshepsut times (ca. 1500 BCE), there is an abundance of sources indicating the involvement of various people in the construction projects commissioned by the state. The focus of this talk will be on Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari, and on Hatshepsut's courtiers supposed to be supervising the temple construction and designing its decoration. Evidence of their participation found within the temple, as well as in their monuments will be collated and examined, including newly discovered data within the temple interpreted as a "self-portrait *in assistenza*". Against this background, a long-accepted and widely commented view of Senenmut being the chief architect of Hatshepsut's monument in Deir el-Bahari will be revisited.

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22.05.2025

Anna Konopko, PhD (Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw)

Conservation of textiles in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. Current work and research perspectives

Conservation and research work conducted for two previous seasons by conservators of textiles in the Hatshepsut Temple in Deir el-Bahari is mainly focused on a collection of fragments of polychrome shrouds from tombs dating to 10th century BCE, discovered in the Hathor Shrine by The Polish-Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Expedition led by Dr. Patryk Chudzik in the years 2021–2023. The aforementioned collection consists of over 350 fragments of two types of Roman painted funerary shrouds – one in the Soter type, painted on thin fabrics and dating to the 2nd half of the 2nd century CE and another with modelled faces from the 2nd half of the 3rd century CE.

The goal of current conservation works is preparation for assembling the shrouds. Simultaneously, the technology of the textiles is thoroughly studied to allow correct matching of the pieces.

The lecture is going to present the methodology and results of the technical analyses, as well as advances in the conservation treatment of fragments of the shrouds conducted in 2023 and 2024 and plans for the upcoming seasons.

29.05.2025

Dawid F. Wiczorek, PhD (PCMA UW)

Tool Marks Pattern Analysis: morpho-technological studies on Ancient Egyptian and Nubian building stone blocks – possibilities and limitations

Once the *Tool Marks Pattern Analysis* (TMPA) was developed to stratify epigraphic material, building *dipinti* uncovered in the temple complexes of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III at Deir el-Bahari from the early 18th Dynasty of the New Kingdom (c. 1479–1425 BCE), it became evident that while developing a new method for relative dating, a new approach was simultaneously developed for the morpho-technological studies of building stoneblocks.

As a result, it became possible not only to study the epigraphic material but, more importantly, the stone material itself, which ultimately makes this method universal. As demonstrated by the technological research conducted on the stone material at Deir el-Bahari, this method, in addition to providing a basic morpho-technological description, also allows for the reconstruction of the complete technological production process for a specific group of building stoneblocks. Thus, it seems that the TMPA method may have much broader research potential, and its universal assumptions allow it to be applied to building stone material found at other archaeological sites as well.

Current research at Deir el-Bahari

Preliminary research already undertaken on stone material dating to both earlier and later periods than the 18th Dynasty has shown that the TMPA method can also be successfully used for dating building stoneblocks themselves. Using TMPA, it is possible, for example, to identify and date reused material. Initial observations at this early stage of the research already reveal a clear development line in the technology used for dressing building stoneblocks, within which typical for them morpho-technological features can be distinguished – features characteristic for a specific period or even particular architectural structures.

05.06.2025

Patryk Chudzik, PhD (PCMA UW), Anna Duda-Maczuga, MA (Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw), Wojciech Myjak, MA (freelance), Anna Kudzia, MA (freelance), Kacper Prus, MA (Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw)
Restoration work in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari

This lecture will summarize the current restoration work undertaken by the Polish-Egyptian expedition at the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. Monumental realizations such as the osiride statues on the third terrace, the colossal statue of Hatshepsut, and the statue of Amenhotep I will be presented.

It will be impossible to miss the reconstructed sphinxes, which will be presented along with an element of the concept for the future restoration of part of the avenue of sphinxes on the lower terrace, whose project includes the reconstruction of four more sculptures. In addition, the lecture will cover other smaller objects from later periods of the temple's life, from Ptolemaic stone sarcophagi, a decorated sandstone slab from the Ramesside period, to elements of stone architecture from the time of the Coptic church's activities at the temple of Hatshepsut, which have been restored in cooperation with the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. In addition, the results of the expedition's cooperation with Egyptian conservators will be presented in the form of reconstructed vestibule niches in the Complex of the Royal Cult.