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THE «ROMAN TEMPLE»
AT TEHNA EL-GEBEL

BY

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Introduction

The modern village of *Tehna el-Gebel* is situated on the east bank of the *Nile*, at a distance of approximately 6 kilometers to the north from the town of *el-Minya*.

A paved road, running alongside an irrigation canal, leads through the 700 meters broad strip of cultivation to the northern slope of an isolated mountain, which resembles a human head and is visible from the shore. This mountain is the *Tehna el-Gebel* or *Tehna* — »the mountain».

The first part of the name is perhaps derived from the ancient Egyptian *dhnt* or the Coptic TE2NE, both meaning »the forehead» and perhaps being a reminiscence of the name of the fortifications built here during Dynasty XXI.²

The modern village, bearing the same name as the »Mountain», is situated to the north from the paved road at the mouth of the valley of *Wadi el-Tehna*, which enters the cultivated strip from the south-east. The village follows the steep and rocky slope with remains of ancient quarries, which borders the valley in the east and the north-east. In the northern part of the village stands a mosque, whilst its southern part is dominated by a modern Coptic church³, surrounded by a large christian cemetery with graves, having mudbrick superstructures.

¹ The intention of the authors was to publish this description in the first issue of »*Acta Aegyptologica Fennica*» which due to the lack of granted funds had to be postponed.

Their thanks are therefore directed to the management of the *Finnish Oriental Society* for the permission to publish it in the present volume.

² KEES, p. 203. For the discussion, concerning the name cf. GARDINER, p. 92*.

³ Since 1903, when KAMAL (KAMAL, p. 232) published his sketchmap of *Tehna el-Gebel*, the area occupied by the modern village has grown.

If the church, mentioned in his map, is the same as the modern one, its location is wrongly indicated. Either is the church placed too far to the south or the edge of the »*kôm*» pushed too far to the north. It is, however, also possible that the modern habitation has »devoured» the northernmost part of the »*kôm*». In any case the modern church is located westward from that marked in *Kamal's* map.

In this, southern part of the village is the »Roman Temple»¹, subject to the present description, situated.

Between the paved road and the mountain of *Tehna* lies the large »kôm» of the ancient town of *Acoris*, whose name is established from the large stela of *Ptolemy V*² in the south-western slope of the »Mountain». On its northern slope, facing the »kôm» and the modern village, lies the temple of *Nero*, the Graeco-Roman chapel³ and several rock-cut graves. Similar graves continue along the eastern slope and are evidently to be dated to the hellenistic period.⁴

The inscriptions in the so called »*Fraser's tombs*», two kilometers further south, indicate that the district of *Tehna el-Gebel* already during Dynasty IV was an important site, connected with the worship of *Hathor*, »mistress of the valley»⁵. The re-used blocks in the temple of *Nero* indicate a building activity by *Ramses II*. To judge from the stela of *Ramses III*, the worship of *Amûn* and *Sobek-Re* was introduced here at least during the Dynasty XX, to remain until the Graeco-Roman period as indicated by the archaeological finds of the mummies of crocodiles and rams and by the lintel from the temple of *Nero*, where both *Sukhos* and *Sobek-Re* (or *Sukhos-Re* as a sphinx) are represented.

During this period also the cult of *Osiris* and *Isis* seems to have been in-

¹ Designated as A in PORTER-MOSS, p. 129, in which also the bibliography concerning earlier research and documentation of the site of *Tehna el-Gebel* is presented, and therefore omitted here. Cf. fig. 1. 1.

² *Ibid.*, p. 130, designated as (2).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 129, designated as B and C. Unless specially mentioned, all monuments treated below are found in *Op. cit.* pp. 127—133.

⁴ A brief documentation of the inscriptions on the rock-hewn graves has produced following texts:

1. Cintred rock-hewn stela:

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΙΟΣ

ΑΜΜΩΝΙΟΥ Ε ΑΗ

ΚΑΙ ΑΛΕΧΑΣ

ΑΔΕΛΦΟΣ ΕΛΕ

Απολλώνιος | Αμμωνίου ἐ(τῶν) λη' | καὶ Ἀλεξᾶς |
ἀδελφός ἐ(τῶν) λε'

Translation: Apollonios, the son of Ammonios, 37, and Alexas — the brother, 35.

2. Rectangular rock-hewn stela:

ΑΜΜΩΝΙΟΣ

ΠΟΛΥΔΕΥΚΗΣ

ΕΚ

Ἀμμώνιος Πολυδεύκης

ἐ(τῶν) κ'

Translation: Ammonios Polydeukes, 20.

(The interpretations are by Dr. H. SOLIN of the Helsinki University).

⁵ GOEDICKE, p. 131 and Pl. XIV.

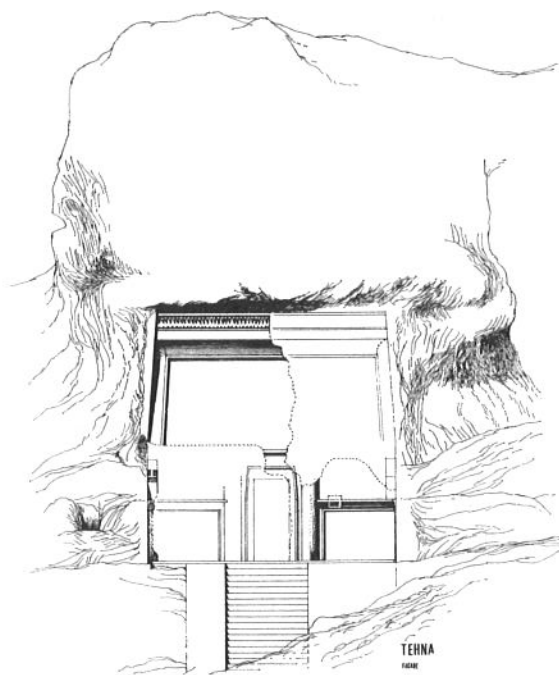


Fig. 1. The «Roman temple». The facade (partly reconstructed).

troduced as shown by the text and the representations on the stela of *Ptolemy V*.¹

The occupation at the «kôm» of *Acoris* seems to have reached its peak during the Graeco-Roman period as indicated by the large contemporary cemetery and the extensive building activity. The last datable objects from the cemetery are two fragments of Coptic textile — one with geometrical patterns in purple of the Vth century A.D. and another one with polychrome patterns of the «late style», introduced in the middle of the VIIth century.²

*The present documentation.*³

The present documentation is a result of the fieldwork training program of the Finnish Egyptological Society, carried out in connexion with two visits to the village of *Tehna el-Gebel*, by the student members of the society.⁴

¹ DITTENBERGER, 94.

² SHURINOVA, p. 19.

³ ZAYED, pp. 74 f. His description is, however, mainly based upon the information given in PORTER-MOSS, p. 129.

⁴ The team consisted of the authors, R. HOLTHOER as egyptologist and R. AHLQVIST as

When visiting the site of the Roman temple¹ for the first time, in April 1969, only general notes were made.

These notes were during the second visit, in April 1971, complemented with a more detailed field documentation. At this time the measurements necessary for the preparation of the sections and plans were taken. At the same time the reliefs as well as the architectural details were recorded on the spot by means of sketches and photographs.²

General description of the temple.

The temple is hewn in the soft limestone rock of the steep hillside, surrounding the mouth of *Wadi el-Tehna* from the east.

It is of a hemispeos-type, with 8 meters of its original length of 18 meters cut in the rock. The longitudinal axis of the temple runs strictly along the magnetic direction, south to north (Figs. 1,2 and 5).

The temple is approached from the south by a stairway, leading to a forecourt (p. 7 f.), whose northern wall forms the facade (p. 8 f.).

A doorway in the facade gives access to a roofed outer hall, whose walls are decorated with reliefs, representing different deities.

The northernmost room, the inner hall (p. 00), is undecorated and has roughly cut walls. The niche, cut in its east wall, was found filled with debris and therefore left undocumented.

The temple is uninscribed, apart from possible text graffiti, which due to the bad lighting conditions have passed unnoticed by us.

The graffiti, mostly carved, sometimes painted with white paint and covering the reliefs of the outer hall together with a layer of soot, indicate that the temple has been re-used and inhabited in later times. Almost all the faces of the deities, represented in the outer hall, have been mutilated and the lower portion of the western part of the facade has been quarried away as a result of this secondary occupation.

Also the erosion by rains has caused much damage. The water penetrating through the fissures in the rock has in many cases cracked the surface and

architect, assisted by J. BERGMAN (1971), J. JUSSILA (1969), J. KERAVUORI (1969/71), P. LUPPI (1969), H. NISKANEN (1969/71), I. NISKANEN-MARTE (1969), I. OJAMAA-KOSKINEN (1969), A. PITKÄNEN (1969/71) and A. ÖLJYMÄKI (1971).

¹ Here and in the following chapters, whenever possible, the denominations of PORTER-Moss are used.

² The measurements of the upper portions of the facade (cf. p. 9) were calculated from photographs taken with a 300 mm. lens, which eliminates the errors caused by parallax. The resources at our disposal do not permit us to publish the photographs here. The list of them is found at the end of the article. The photographs can be ordered from the Finnish Egyptological Society, by mentioning the reference number.

caused the upper portion of the eastern part of the facade to fall down.

No fragments of this fallen part were despite efforts, discovered neither on the ground nor in the numerous grave pits in the proximity of the temple.

Location of the temple.

At the present the temple is from the south and from the west surrounded by the modern habitation.

The temple is situated at a distance of approximately 200 meters to the north from the edge of the «*kôm*» of the ancient town of *Acoris* and about 150 meters to the north-east from the coptic church, at an elevation of approximately 7 meters above the christian cemetery, lying to the east and to the north-east from the coptic church (Fig. 5: 1).

The stairway.

The southernmost part of the temple consists of a stairway, irregularly pushed slightly to the west from the longitudinal axis.

The stairway has a length of 5 meters and is 210 cms. wide and is built up from fifteen visible steps.

Each step has an average length of 30 cms., being 15 cms. in height. It is probable, that the number of steps is larger, but it proved impossible to verify this fact without a foregoing excavation, as the lower part of the stairway was found covered with debris. A ramp, being 105 cms. in width and flanking the stairway in the west, can be traced in the ground at a distance of 2 meters from the lowest step down.

No signs of a similar ramp were discovered to the east of the stairway. (Cf. figs. 1 and 2).

The forecourt.

From the stairway, a rectangular forecourt whose measures are 670×520 cms. is approached. (Cf. figs. 1, 2 and 5: 2).

Its floor is otherwise smooth, but has an almost square (95×120 cms.) vertical pit cut in the south-western corner. This pit is probably younger than the temple, to judge from the southern edge of the forecourt, which is here roughly cut away to permit admission to the grave pit. The latter one was found filled with debris and thus left undocumented.

Except for in the south, the forecourt is surrounded by rock-hewn walls, mounted upon a socle, being 7 cms. in height and projecting 2 cms.

Of the east wall and the west wall only the northernmost portions are pre-

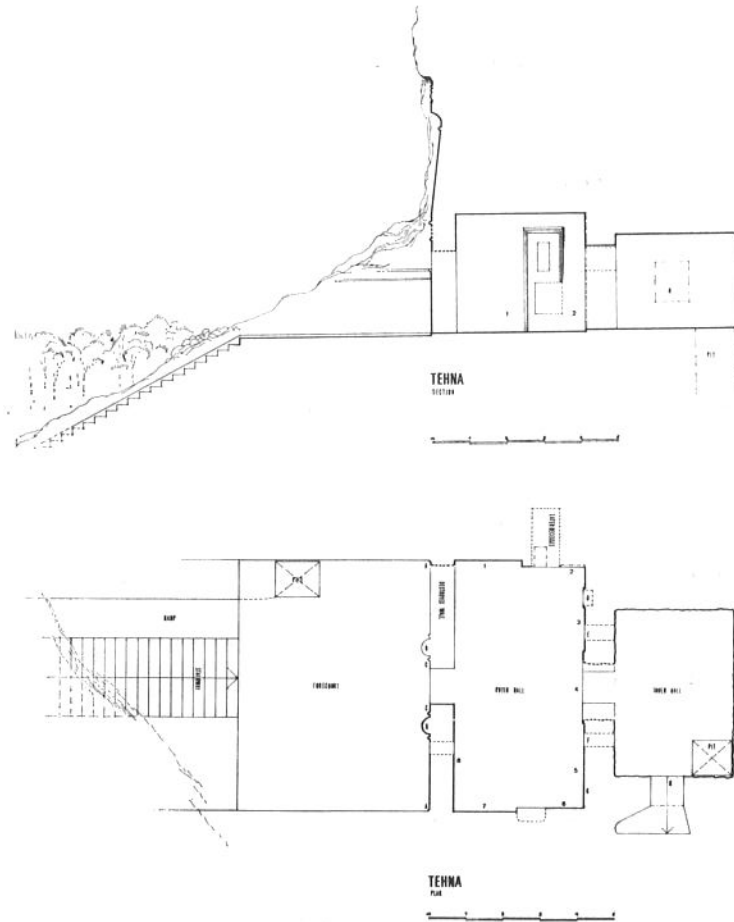


Fig. 2. The «Roman temple». The section and plan. The location of the entrance to the side chamber in the inner hall is shown on the section. The direction north is towards the right on the figure. The scale is in meters.

served almost to their original height, the other parts of these walls having been strongly denuded by the erosion. Originally, these walls were adorned with a cornice, 28 cms. in height, starting at a level of 145 cms. above the floor. This cornice continues on the north wall.

The west wall bears secondary graffiti, carved in the rock and resembling the greek letter «Φ». They are repeated several times and sometimes placed one upon another.

The north wall of the forecourt forms the facade of the temple (Figs. 1 and 5: 3).¹

¹ The evident, strictly symmetrical construction of the facade permits certain restoration

Its total height is 7 meters. The upper part consists of a frontone, whose slightly inclined edges provide it with the features of the typical Egyptian pylon. Its top is adorned with a frieze of uraei, standing on a cornice, which is mounted upon a torus-moulding in relief.

The lower part of the facade reflects the features of the facades of the tomb chapels at *Tuna el-Gebel*.

In the west and in the east it is flanked by a pair of engaged and, to judge from the existing traces, clustered papyrus bud columns (Figs. 5 :2 and 2: A, A). The western one, being better preserved, stands up to a height of 2 meters.

Two more engaged columns (Fig. 2: B,B) have once adorned the facade. Of these only the eastern one is partly preserved. The existence of a western counterpart is verified from the traces on the ground. These pillars were, however, of a shape different from that of the pillars in the corners. They were rounded and protruded almost 25 cms. from the surrounding wall. The space between the two pairs of engaged columns (Fig. 2: A,B and B,A) is decorated with a cornice and a torus roll in relief, being a continuation of the cornice of the western and the eastern walls of the forecourt.

The cornice of the eastern part of the facade is interrupted by a square opening to the outer hall. This opening is certainly of a later date than the temple as it caused damages to the reliefs, adorning the south wall of the outer hall (p. 11).

In the center of the facade, between the rounded engaged columns, is the door leading to the outer hall. Its original width has, to judge from the traces on the threshold, been 90 cms..

The door was originally flanked with doorjambs (Fig. 2: C, C), each of them having been 30 cms. in width at the ground. These jambs ran parallel with each other up to a height of 175 cms. after which they seem to have inclined towards each other.

The bad state of preservation, does not permit to estimate the height of the doorway nor to render a reconstruction of the lintel. The existing traces, however, advocate the existence of one or, even better, several cornices.

In any case the inclination of the doorjambs gives to the doorway a slight touch of disharmony.

The outer hall.

The rectangular outer hall is approached through the door in the facade. This hall measures 670×350 cms., i.e. it has the same width as the forecourt.

of its lost portions, apart from some details above the doorway and above the engaged columns (A, A) in the northern corners of the forecourt.

The height to the ceiling varies from 320 cms. in the western part to 330 cms. in the eastern part, due to the slightly sloping floor.

This room is lighted up through the opening, left by the destroyed lower portion of the western part of the facade and through the secondary window, cut in its eastern part.

The fallen part of the frontone has also left a wide gap in the south-eastern, upper corner of this room.

The walls are to an average height of 220 cms. smoothed by ticking technique and have originally been coated with pale/pink stucco, traces of which still remain (cf. fig. 5: 2).

The lower register of the walls is to an average height of 150 cms. occupied by a procession of 23 (originally 27 or 28) gods and goddesses. The first-mentioned are usually holding a *w*'s-scepter, the latter ones a staff with a flower shaped top. Almost all of them are holding an 'nh-sign in their left hand.¹ The procession starts at the door (Figs. 2: 4, 3: 4 and p. 00) and proceeds towards the visitor, i.e. the deities are walking from right to the left (Fig. 4: 1—3) in the western part of the room and from left to the right (Figs. 4: 5—7 and 3: 8) in the eastern part of the room.

The upper registers of the walls are undecorated, apart from those of the western and the eastern walls, where the cornices of the shrines of *Osiris* and *Anubis-Upuaut* almost reach the ceiling.

Above the procession of the deities of the northern wall, are four original windows (Fig. 4: D—G), two of which are unfinished (D and G, cf. p. 21).

The bad lighting conditions and the soot, adhering to the walls and the ceiling, did not permit to establish whether the latter one was decorated or not.

The decoration of the outer hall has suffered extensive damage during the period of re-occupation and furnished with numerous, mostly senseless carved graffiti, which, however, also include some crosses.

The eastern procession.

South wall (8): Only the part to the east of the doorway leading to the forecourt, is preserved. The western part has been quarried away by the inhabitants during the period of re-occupation, up to the height of the ceiling. Here, the carefully smoothed cut, however, indicates a possibility that this part of the wall, was never hewn out in solid rock but substituted for some reasons by a masonry wall. Being easy to dismantle, this wall has since long ago disappeared and its stones re-used in the buildings of the village of *Tehna el-Gebel*.

¹ For the reason of simplicity the forward limbs are designated as right and those behind the body as left.

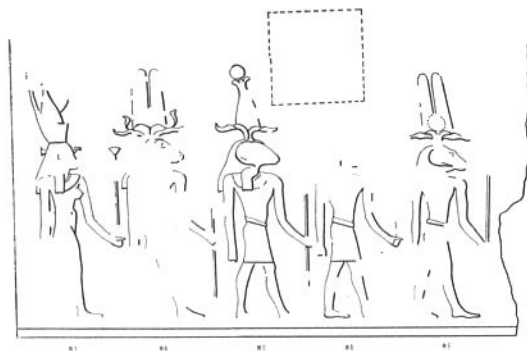


Fig. 3. The outer hall. The eastern (= preserved) part of the southern wall (8). The figures of the deities 8 A, B, C, D and E.

The preserved eastern part has a length of 290 cms. and has 5 deities depicted on it. They form the continuation of the procession of the east wall.

Of the four gods, introducing the eastern procession, only three have their crowns and ram's heads preserved (Fig. 3).

*The first god (8 E)*¹ has a ram's head and wears a *šwtj*-crown with twisted horns, mounted upon a long wig. Due to the eroded surface of the rock no evidence of uraei was discovered. The traces show, that the god was dressed in a short apron.

The second god (8 D) has his head and crown destroyed by the secondary window, penetrating the wall from the forecourt (p. 9). The clearly visible short apron indicates that the figure is that of a god.²

The third god (8 C) has a ram's head and wears an *atef*-crown with twisted horns. No traces of the plumes nor the uraei are visible. The god has a long wig and an *wsh*-collar and wears a short apron.

The fourth figure (8 B) is much mutilated. Despite the damage, a ram's head can be identified. The god is wearing a *šwtj*-crown with twisted horns, adorned with uraei. His upper body as well as legs are almost completely destroyed.

The identification of each particular god provides difficulties as the iconographical features, represented here, can be attributed to several ram-headed gods. Provided, that also the second god (8 D) once had a ram's head, the four «souls», depicted at Esneh³, could be suggested. On the other hand the icono-

¹ The number gives the designation of the locality, as given in PORTER-MOSS. The letter indicates the individual deity.

² Porter-Moss, p. 129 (8), «... four ram-headed gods». As the original manuscripts of NESTOR L'HÔTE have not been available to us, we could not verify whether all the heads were preserved at the time, when he visited this temple.

³ SAUNERON II, p. 252 (text 140). Without crowns.

graphical features permit also their identification with i.a. *Harsaphes*, *Herishef* of *Herakleopolis Magna*, *Banebdjedet* of *Mendes* and *Khnum*.¹ Of these gods, the three lastmentioned are associated with Ptah of Memphis², depicted on the east wall (Fig. 4: 7 C) and thus provide a link between the representations on the eastern and the southern walls.

The figure of Mut (8 A): The last figure represents the human-headed Mut. She wears a *shmtj*-crown, placed upon a *nhbt*-headdress. She is dressed in a long robe and wears an *wsh*-collar round her neck. Her left hand and leg are destroyed.

The position of *Mut* as the last deity in the procession of this wall, brings her into the association with the Memphite triad, whose two members, *Nefertum* (Fig. 4: 7 D) and *Ptah* (7 C) introduce the procession on the east wall.

Although a lion-headed *Mut-Sekhmet* would have been expected here, instead of a human-headed version of the goddess, the syncretism of the Graeco-Roman period, to which this temple can be safely attributed, could perhaps explain the presence of a Theban goddess as a member of the Memphite triad.³

The east wall (Fig. 4): This wall has suffered much damage during the re-occupation of the temple. 5 deities are depicted on it.⁴

The main deity seems to be *Anubis-Upuaut* (*Macedon*), standing in a shrine, almost 270 cms. in height and protruding 20 cms. from the wall.

The other gods, counted from right to the left, *Nefertum*, *Ptah*, *Re'-Atum* (?) and possibly *Tatenen*, standing behind the shrine, are much smaller. The gods in front of the shrine are standing on a podium, whilst *Tatenen*(?), behind the shrine is standing directly on the floor level.

With the exception of *Anubis-Upuaut*, associated with the cult of *Osiris* and that of the dead, the gods on this wall seem to be primaeval gods, connected with the creation of the world.

The figure of Nefertum (7 D): The god wears the typical headdress, consisting of a lotus flower with stiff feathers emerging from it, mounted upon a long wig. The front and the right leg of the figure are destroyed.

The figure of Ptah (7 C): The figure of the god is almost erased. Only a part of the mummyform body and the two hands, emerging from it and holding a scepter, are preserved. Also the shape and the position of the head can be traced.

¹ I.a. SAUNERON II, passim, *Egyptian Mythology*, p. 129, SCHMIDT, Pl. XXII (= KOEFOED-PETERSEN, Pl. 56), KOEFOED-PETERSEN, Pl. 30 and BONNET, pp. 135 ff., 287 f. and 451, CHAMPOLLION, Pl XXXVIII bis: 2.

² SANDMAN-HOLMBERG, pp. 176 f. and 187 f.

³ BONNET, pp. 491 ff. and SANDMAN-HOLMBERG, p. 190.

⁴ PORTER-MOSS, p. 129, does not identify any of them, — «five gods (four destroyed)».

Ptah is shown, standing in a shrine, whose top has disappeared.

The figure of Re'-Atum (7 B): The whole figure, with the exception of the lower part of the leg and the scepter as well as the sun disk, has been destroyed.

The remaining traces show, that the deity, which originally was depicted here, was associated with the cult of the sun. In this connexion, together with *Nefertum* and *Ptah*, one would expect a representation of *Sekhmet*, whose iconography also includes a sun disk, but the angle of the preserved leg indicates a longer step than is typical for a goddess (compare Figs. 4: 1 B, C, D, 2 and 3: 8 A).

Thus, the remaining traces do not provide enough reasons for a certain identification but permit a tentative identification with *Re'-Atum*, which also suits the context well.¹

The figure of Anubis-Upuaut (Macedon) (7 A): The god is represented, in a similar manner as his counterpart, Osiris (1 E), within a shrine of which, however, only traces remain. Also here, the figure has suffered extensive damage by a later recess, which has destroyed the head and the upper body of the god.

The pointed, upright ear, visible above the recess permits to identify the god with *Anubis* or *Upuaut*. He is represented wearing the *shmtj*-crown mounted upon a long wig.² The preserved legs show that the god was represented walking.

The figure of Tatenen (6): Behind the shrine of *Anubis-Upuaut (Macedon)* stands a god with an *atef*-crown, mounted upon a long wig, wearing an *wsh*-collar and a short apron. A later, unfinished niche has destroyed the face of the god, which probably was represented as human-headed.

These characteristics permit an identification with a variety of the gods of the Egyptian pantheon. However, the position of the figure together with other primaeval creator gods and gods of memphite origin, brings this god to a close association with *Memphis*.³ Therefore his identification with *Tatenen* is advocated and preferred to the figure with similar characteristics,

¹ JUNKER, p. 64, shows a figure, where *Re'-Atum* takes part in the marriage between HATHOR-TEFNUT and ŠU-ONURIS, which are depicted also in our temple (1 C, 5 D and C).

² The iconography of Anubis and Upuaut with a crown is rare and found mostly in late representations (i.a. MASPERO, fig. 525, ERMAN, fig. 169, *Egyptian Mythology*, p. 80). It is difficult to establish whether ANUBIS or UPUAUT is represented here, the first one being associated with the cult of OSIRIS (BONNET, pp. 44 f.), UPUAUT, on the other hand, being associated with the royal doctrine (BONNET, pp. 251 and 844) as MACEDON would suit our iconography. ANUBIS-UPUAT with a *shmtj*-crown is otherwise found i.a. on the coffin of *Ankhefenamun* (dyn. XX-XXI, now in Helsinki), on Louvre C 319 *et al.* and at TUNA EL-GEBEL (GABRA, Pls. X, XII: 1, XVI: 2).

³ BONNET, pp. 769 f.

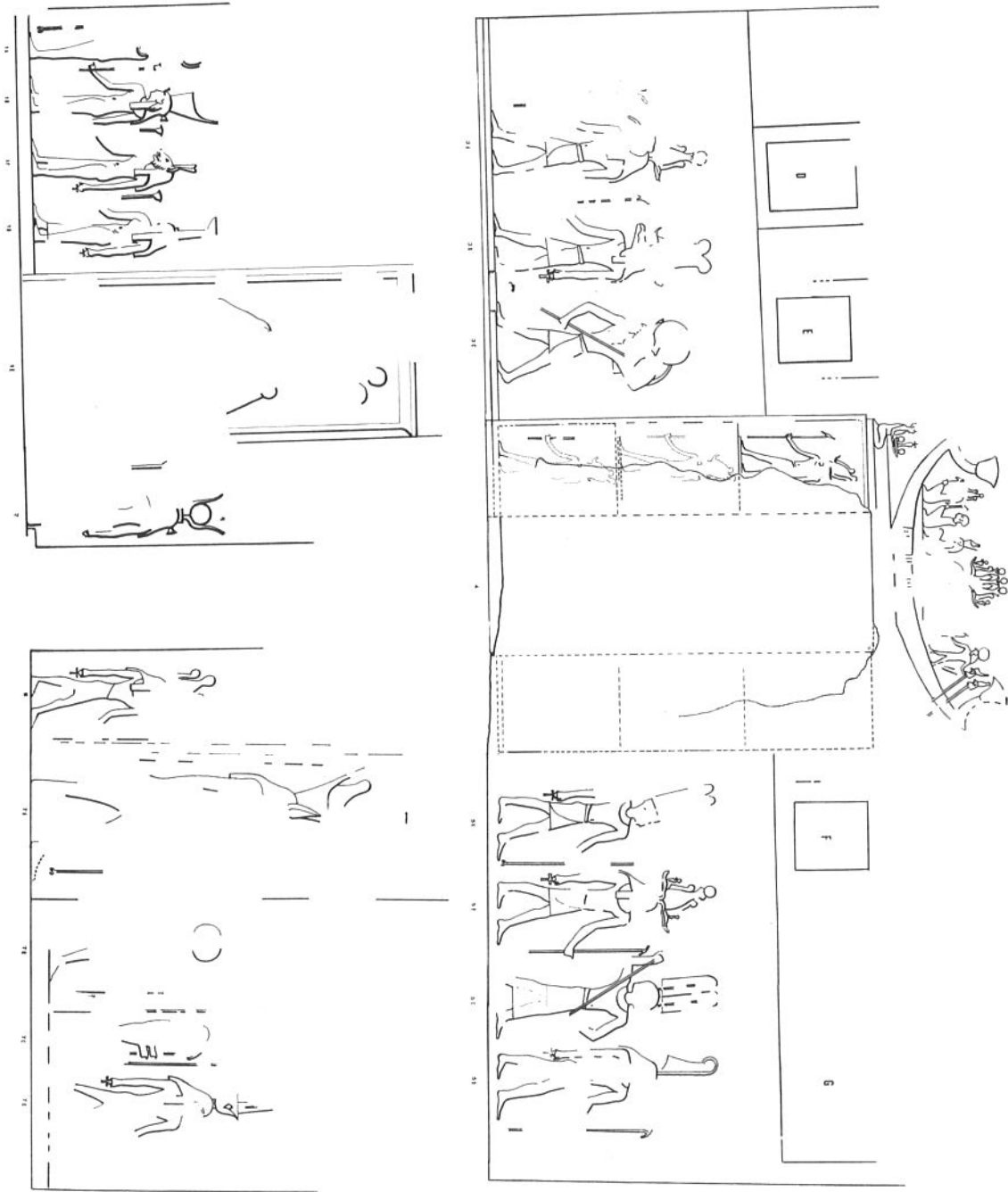


Fig. 4. The outer hall. The northern wall with the door (4) and the deities 3 A, B and C as well as 5 A, B, C and D. The western wall with the deities 1 A, B, C, D, E and 2. The eastern wall with the deities 6 and 7 A, B, C and D.

depicted on the eastern part of the north wall (5 B).

The eastern part of the north wall (Fig. 4): The length of this part of the north wall is 285 cms. Four gods, *Šu*, *Onuris*, an unidentified god and finally *Amûn*, terminate the eastern procession.

To the west this wall was limited by the eastern jamb of the door to the inner hall, which has now almost entirely disappeared.

At the height of 160 cms. there is a window, F, to the inner hall. Its measures, 40 × 50 cms., are approximate and calculated from the existing traces of the frame in relief.

To the east from this window, near the eastern corner, are the vague traces of another frame, G, and signs of an unfinished recess in the wall indicate that another window was intended here.

As usual several carved graffiti have been added to the decoration of this wall. Some of them represent stylized human figures, others are of geometrical patterns.

The figure of Šu (5 D): The god is represented as dressed in a long wig, and *wsh*-collar and probably a short apron. On his head he wears a big plume, being the emblem of *Šu*.

The figure of Onûris (5 C): The god is dressed in a short wig, an *wsh*-collar and a long apron, under which the contours of a short one are visible. In his hands he holds a spear and wears a crown, being the emblem of *Onûris*, on his head. Consequently no doubt remains about the identification of this figure with *Onûris*.¹ This fact is also verified by the position of the figure behind *Šu*, with whom *Onûris* was identified at *Kôm Ombo*.²

The figure of an unidentified god (5 B): The god wears an *atef*-crown, adorned with a sun disk, twisted horns and two uraei. The crown is mounted upon a long wig. The god wears also an *wsh*-collar round his neck and a short apron round his waist.

Iconographically these features would suit those of *Tatenen*, already identified with a figure on the east wall (6). Consequently the present figure, if not also that of *Tatenen*, remains unidentified.

The figure of Amûn (5 A): The figure of *Amûn* is the last one in the eastern procession of the deities. He has no wig and wears the *šwtj*-crown on his head and an *wsh*-collar round his neck. He is dressed in a short apron.

The western procession.

The beginning of the western procession was depicted on the lost portions of the south wall (cf. p. 10) and probably included three or four deities.

¹ PORTER-MOSS, p. 129, »a god with spear» is identified by ZAYED (p. 75) as *Onuris*.

² MATTHEW, pp. 49 f., BONNET, p. 546.

The west wall (Fig. 4): The length of this wall is 350 cms., being slightly less at the floor level.

To judge from the size of the representation, the main god is *Osiris*. In a similar manner as his counterpart, *Anubis-Upuaut* on the east wall, *Osiris* is surrounded by a shrine, protruding 20 cms. from the wall and adorned with a cornice at the height of 230 cms.

On this wall are altogether 6 deities depicted. In front of the shrine, the procession is introduced by *Khons*, followed by the human-headed *Neith*, a lion-headed goddess and *Nephthys*. All of them are standing on a podium, whose height is 15 cms. above the floor. Behind the shrine stands *Isis*, the wife and sister of *Osiris*, directly on the floor level.

The figure of Khons (I A): The figure of *Khons*, being the first one in the procession and thus most close to the destroyed western part of the south wall, is much mutilated.

His face and chest have disappeared. The remaining traces provide, however, enough reason for an exact identification of the figure with *Khons*. The god has a mummyform body, adorned with the characteristic collar of *Khons*. He wears a headdress, which included a moon crescent, part of which is preserved. Of the scepter in his hands, only the lower part is visible.¹

The figure of Neith (I B): The figure of this goddess is well preserved. Only parts of her staff, legs and the palm of her left hand are lost. The goddess is dressed in a long robe and wears the red crown, mounted upon a *nḥbt*-headdress.²

The figure of a lion-headed goddess (I C): The figure of the goddess is well preserved, apart from her right hand and the lower part of the staff, which are missing.

The goddess is dressed in a long robe. Her face bears the features of a lion's head, wearing a long wig. From the head emerge two upright protuberances with rounded tops.

The identification of this goddess, provides difficulties as most of the lion-headed goddesses wear a sun disk as their emblem, on their heads.

The two protuberances could be associated with the horns of *Sutekh* and thus indicate an aspect of violence, characteristic to several lion goddesses. The most probable identification is with *Sekhmet*³ but other possibilities, i.a.

¹ As *KHONS-RE*, worshipped at *KOM OMBO* as a son of *SUKHOS-RE* and *HATHOR*, whose cult existed also at *TEHNA EL-GEBEL* (cf. p. 4).

² The identification as *NEITH* is certain, however, *PORTER-MOSS*, p. 129, mentions her as *HATHOR*. The association of *NEITH* with the cult of the crocodile (*BONNET*, p. 514 and *MATTHIEW*, p. 160) brings her into a close relationship with *TEHNA EL-GEBEL* (cf. preceding note).

³ So *PORTER-MOSS*, p. 129.

with *Mekhyl*, the wife of *Onuris*¹, and *Menhyt*, the wife of *Khnum*², should not be excluded.

The figure of Nephthys (I D): The figure of the goddess is mutilated. The face and the right palm as well as the lower part of the staff are lost.

She is identified with Nephthys by the well preserved, large *nbt-hwt*-sign, mounted upon a long wig. She is dressed in a long robe.

The figure of Osiris (I E): This figure is much mutilated by two secondary recesses.³ The upper one, being of a depth of 53 cms., has destroyed the crown, the face and the upper body and the lower one, being of a depth of 160 cms., has destroyed the lower body and the feet of the god.

What remains of the original figure, is, however, enough for a certain identification of the god with *Osiris*. The bulb above the upper recess and the upper contour of an ostrich plume, visible to the right from it, indicate an *atef*-crown. The preserved contours of the elbows and the upper arms are also characteristic to the iconography of *Osiris*. Also the position of the figure, between those of *Nephthys* and *Isis*, confirm this identification.

It remains unclear, whether *Osiris* was represented sitting or standing. Considering the other representations in this temple, the latter alternative is to be preferred (cf. fig. 5: 4).

The figure of Isis (2): Behind the shrine of *Osiris* stands the badly mutilated figure of *Isis*, of which only the back contours and the headdress remain. Due to the blackening of the wall by soot and the bad state of preservation, this figure has by previous visitors been identified with that of *Hathor*.⁴ However, the upper part of a *st*-sign is visible above the sun disk, between the cow's horns, which form the crown of the goddess.⁵ Consequently the goddess should be *Isis* and not *Hathor*. The crown is mounted upon a *nht*-headdress, of which the tail is clearly recognizable. Also the position of the figure in connexion with those of *Osiris* and *Nephthys* support this identification.

The western part of the north wall (Fig. 4): The length of this part of the wall is 280 cms. Three gods, *Toth*, *Sukhos* and *Horus* terminate here the western procession.

To the east, this wall is limited by a partly preserved western jamb of the door to the inner hall (cf. p. 19).

At a height of 160 cms. there are two windows, of which only the eastern

¹ BONNET, p. 445.

² *Ibid.*, p. 33 and SAUNERON II, p. 36. Another identification could be that with HATHOR-TEFNUT at KÔM OMBO (Cf. MATTHIEW, pp. 45 ff., with references).

³ Unidentified in PORTER-MOSS, p. 129, which states »temple-door (above entrance to niche), . . .».

⁴ So PORTER-MOSS, p. 129 (2).

⁵ For a similar iconography cf. i.a. STOCK-SIEGLER, Pls. 17 and 23.

one, E, is finished. It has the measures of 43×50 cms. and a clearly visible frame in relief. A similar frame is also found around the unfinished western window, D, which has the measures of 45×62 cms. and the depth of 10 cms.

The wall is mounted upon a socle of a height of 10 cms., projecting 3—4 cms. from the wall.

Several carved graffiti have been later added to the decoration of this wall. They represent stylized human figures, three palmtrees(?) and geometrical patterns.

The figure of Thoth (3 A): The figure of the god is much mutilated, but the remaining traces of the bill of an *Ibis* permit a certain identification of the god with the ibis-headed *Thoth*. The hands as well as parts of the head and the feet are missing.

Thoth is dressed in a short apron and wears an *atef*-crown, adorned with a sun disk and a pair of twisted horns. This crown is mounted upon a long wig.

The figure of Sukhos (3 B): The figure of Sukhos is well preserved apart from parts of the face and the crown, which are missing. The preserved portions, however, confirm that the god had a crocodile's head, adorned with a crown, composed from a pair of twisted horns and a pair of plumes. The god is wearing a long wig and an *wsh*-collar and is dressed in a shorta pron.

The figure of Horus (3 C): This fairly well preserved figure represents a falcon-headed god, holding a spear in his hands and piercing a small animal, possibly a fish or a hedgehog,¹ standing on a separate podium at the feet of the god. The god is leaping forwards holding his left hand upright and bending his right hand down. He is dressed in a short apron and wears a sun disk, surrounded by a serpent,² mounted upon a long wig. The wig is adorned by a short studlike horn.³

These attributes permit the identification of the god with a *Horus* and his attitude identifies him with the *Horus of Behdet* — probably with his form, worshipped in the nearby *Kom el-Ahmar* as »*Horus*, the foremost at *Hebenu*, smiter of the men».⁴

¹ Traces of what can be the remains of a dorsal fin of a fish can be interpreted as pins of a hedgehog as well.

² Traces of the serpent's head are visible near the forehead of the god. The traces behind his head should, however, be interpreted as the remains of a ribbon rather than those of the serpent's tail.

³ HORUS with small horns is also represented in following publications: KOEFOED-PETERSEN, Pl. 69 (Unfinished stela showing AMUN-RE' together with RE'-HORAKHTE in front of a king), MASPERO, fig. 513 (uncertain evidence, the »horns» perhaps due to a misprint), SAMIVEL, fig. 32 (HORUS and THOTH introducing RAMSES III in his tomb), VILIMKOVA, Pl. 9 (falcon-headed griffins, personifying the pharaoh and thus probably also Horus).

⁴ Cf. MATTHEW, pp. 121 f. and 149 f., with references.

The door to the inner hall (4): In the center of the northern wall is a door, giving access to the inner hall.

The state of preservation of this door is very poor; its left (western) doorjamb being only partly preserved and its right (eastern) doorjamb having disappeared completely.¹

The lintel has preserved the original height of the doorway, whose width can be estimated from the traces remaining on the lintel and on the threshold. The measures of the doorway have been 220 × 84 cms.

The part of the wall, situated above the doorway is decorated with a representation of a solar(?) barge, whose prow and stern are adorned with stylized lotus flowers. Five deities are depicted in the barge, facing left.

In the aft stands probably Montu with a sun disk on his head (cf. *Champollion II*, Pl. CXXIII: 1) and a *w's*-scepter in his right hand, steering the barge with a pair of oars, whose upper ends are decorated with falcon's heads, wearing the crown of Lower- and the crown of Upper Egypt, respectively.

The main passenger of the boat is an unidentified god, who wears the triple *hemhemet*-crown. Being of bigger size than the others one would suggest him to be the ramheaded sun god, but the existing traces do not support this theory. The curved line to the left, below the crown, reflects more a beak of an *Ibis* than the muzzle of a ram. This line could also be a part of a *nemes*-headdress, provided that the god is in this case turned towards the opposite direction, i.e. facing right.

To the left from this unidentified god, sit three smaller deities — a falcon-headed god with a *shmtj*-crown, a humanheaded god(?) without a crown and finally a god, whose face is destroyed, crowned with an *atef*-crown. Each of the two lastmentioned gods holds a *w's*-scepter.

Slightly below and to the left from the barge is a picture of a kneeling man, facing the barge. He wears no crown and holds in his hands a tray of offerings, consisting of two round loaves and a *hs*-vessel. It is possible, that a similar representation once adorned the wall to the right from the barge, but has now disappeared.

Of the doorjambs, only the western one is partly preserved. Being 55 cms. in width, it once contained three superimposed square sections, each of them decorated with a representation of the king. From the best preserved uppermost section can be seen, that the king was wearing an *atef*-crown, an *wsh*-collar and a short apron. In his right hand he was holding a *w's*-scepter. From the traces of a leg and the scepter, in the lower section, can be judged that a similar representation adorned it. Consequently the completely lost central section once had a similar representation too.

¹ PORTER-MOSS, p. 129 mentions only «... boat above door».

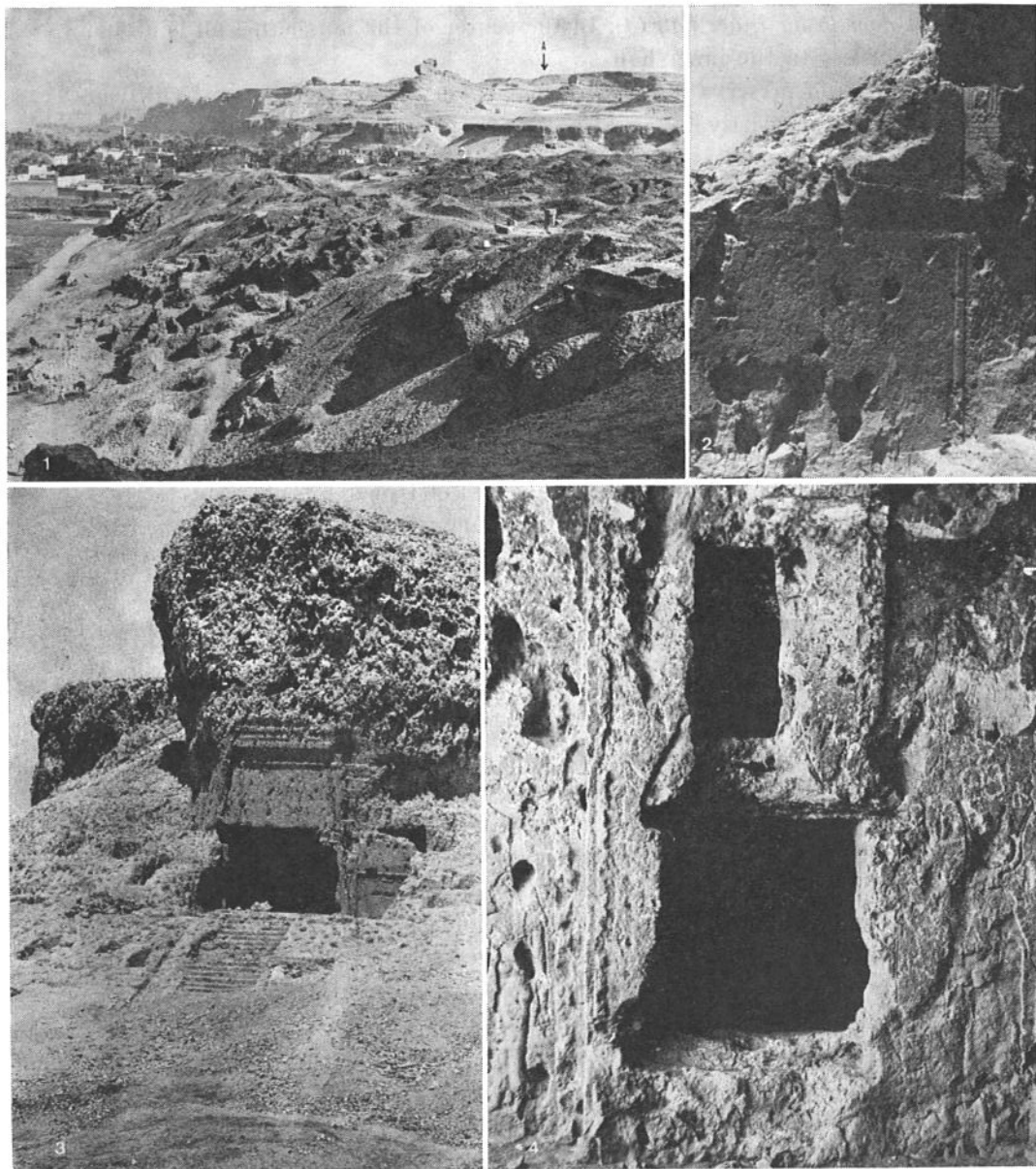


Fig. 5:

1. General view of the «kôm» from the south. The «temple» is indicated as A (photo 219).
2. Close up of the north-western corner of the forecourt, showing the remains of the pillar (photo 226).
3. The facade of the temple as seen from the south-east (photos 223 and 227).
4. The shrine of Osiris on the western wall of the outer hall. Note the damages caused by secondary recesses (photo 244).

The inner hall.

The inner hall is separated from the outer hall by a wall, whose thickness is 85 cms. The floor level is here, 5 cms. higher than in the outer hall. At the moment of documentation this room was filled with debris up to a height of approximately 10 cms. above the floor.

The original height of this room was only 255 cms. and its measures are 320×445 cms.

The walls are undecorated and roughly cut. In the east wall is a secondary access to a side chamber of irregular shape. This access is situated at height of 70 cms. above the floor. The side chamber was found filled with debris and therefore left undocumented.

In the north-eastern corner of the inner hall, a rectangular grave pit (105×94 cms.) is easily distinguished. The second pit, seen by previous visitors,¹ was not noticed by us.

Conclusions.

The so called »Roman Temple« at *Tehna el-Gebel* seems to have been left unfinished.

This conclusion is supported by the following circumstances: The unfinished condition of the inner hall and the two unfinished windows on the north wall of the outer hall (D and G) indicate that the inner hall was originally intended to be wider, perhaps as wide as the outer hall. For some unknown reason it was left unfinished.

Also the lack of the inscriptions supports this conclusion. It is, however, possible, that the inscriptions were originally painted on the stucco, which now has almost disappeared.

The ramp, missing on the east side of the stairway, could also indicate an interrupted building activity.

The closest parallels for this temple are found at *Tuna el-Gebel*, on the opposite bank of the *Nile*, where the Graeco-Roman necropolis of *Hermopolis Magna* is situated.

Although most of its chapels are entered from the north, a few of them have their facades and entrances in the south,² like our temple.

Also when the ground plan of our temple is concerned, with its stairway, decorated outer hall and an inner hall, the closest parallels are found at *Tuna el-Gebel*.³ There, however, only the temples 11 and 12⁴ have in a similar man-

¹ PORTER-MOSS, p. 128 (Plan).

² GABRA, Pls. XIX, XXVII, XXVIII, XXIX.

³ *Ibid.*, passim.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Pls. XXVIII and XXIX.

ner a forecourt between the stairway and the outer hall.

Also the features of the facade of our temple resemble those of the chapels at *Tuna el-Gebel*,¹ apart from the pylonlike frontone, for which no exact parallels, so far, are known to us.

The rather rough stylistical features, shown by the figures in the temple of *Tehna el-Gebel*, indicate a style prevailing in Egypt during the Roman period, but existing also earlier.

In this respect too, parallels are found among the representations in the chapels of *Tuna el-Gebel*. E.g. the representation of *Anubis*, with a *shmtj*-crown as in the »house 21» and at *Tehna el-Gebel* are mostly of later date.¹

Because of the great number of parallels one is tempted to regard the so called Roman Temple as contemporary to the chapels of *Tuna el-Gebel*, i.e. to date it to the period about the reign of Ptolemy V (203—181 BC),² whose building activity is already verified from *Tehna el-Gebel*, by the stela (2).³

It must be admitted, that many stylistic features of the Ptolemaic period continued to exist during the Roman period, i.e. after the year 32 BC.

One has therefore to accept the tentative term »Roman» but to designate it as a mortuary chapel at *Tehna el-Gebel*, a term preferred to the »Temple».

¹ *Ibid.*, Pls. XX, XXII:2, XXV and XXX:2.

² GABRA, p. 12.

³ Cf. above, p. 5.

List of the photographs, available from Finnish Egyptological Society.

Ref. Nr.: Subject:

- 211 Facade of rock-hewn grave in the western slope of the Tehna-mountain.
212—213 Greek stelae in the cemetery, to the south-east of the temple of Nero.
214 The southern slope of the Tehna-mountain with the stela (1) (cf. *Porter-Moss*, p. 130), from the south.
215 Rock-hewn stairway, leading to the stela of Ptolemy V, (cf. *Kamal*, fig. 1). View from the northeast.
216 The western slope of the Tehna-mountain with the stela of Ptolemy V (2) (cf *Porter-Moss*, p. 130), from the west.
217—218 The lintel of Nero (portion (3) of *Porter-Moss*, p. 129).
219 The western part of the «kôm», viewed from the south.
220 View of the Tehna-mountain from north, with the entrance to the temple of Nero, visible.
221—222 The lintel of Nero (portion (4) of *Porter-Moss*, p. 129).
223/227 The facade of the «Roman Temple» viewed from the south-east.
224 View from the «Roman Temple» towards the Tehna-mountain, showing the coptic cemetery and the eastern part of the «kôm».
225 The facade of the «Roman Temple» viewed from the south.
226 Close up of the north-western corner of the forecourt of the «Roman Temple».
228—229 Gods on the western part of the south wall of the outer hall (8 in *Porter-Moss*, p. 129).
230. The east wall of the outer hall (6—7, *Ibid.*).
231—232 The lintel of the door to the inner hall (4, *Ibid.*).
233 The king on the western jamb of the door to the inner hall and the «owner».
234 Greek stelae in the cemetery, to south-east of the temple of Nero.
235—236 Rock-hewn graves with Greek stelae in the same cemetery, viewed from north.
237—238 Greek stelae from the same cemetery.
239 The coptic church of Tehna el-Gebel, viewed from the north-east. Coptic graves in the foreground.
240—241 Gods on the eastern part of the north wall of the outer hall (5, *Ibid.*).
242 The western part of the north wall of the outer hall (3, *Ibid.*).
243—244 The gods on the west wall of the outer hall (1—2, *Ibid.*).

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