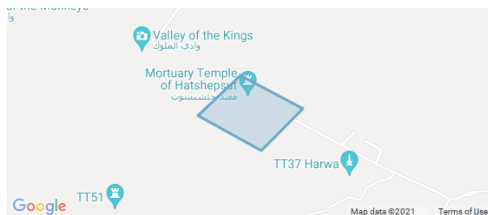


Ancient Egypt - The Temple of Mentuhotep II

By Maarten Praet, Johns Hopkins University

Entry tags: Religious Place, Egyptian Religions, el-Asasif, Deir el-Bahari, Bab el-Hosan, Cult of Hathor, Cult of Montu, Cult of Amun, Mortuary priesthood of Mentuhotep II, Tomb, Temple of Mentuhotep II, Tomb of Mentuhotep II, Religious Group, Temple

The temple of king Mentuhotep II (ca. 2055-2004 BCE) is located in the valley of Deir el-Bahari on the West Bank of the river Nile, opposite the modern-day city of Luxor. The ancient Egyptian term that was often used to indicate this monument was 3ḥ-swt-nb-ḥpt-Rꜥ (efficient/glorious are the places of Nebhepetre). The temple functioned as the cult place where the deceased king would have been provided with offerings for the afterlife. At the same time, it also functioned as a place of worship for the god Amun, whose cult statue stood in the sanctuary of the temple. It has been argued that there must have been an important connection between this temple and the temple of Amun at Karnak, because Mentuhotep II might have been the instigator of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley. This festival, during which the cult statue of Amun of Karnak travelled in procession to the temple of Mentuhotep II, maintained its popularity until the Greco-Roman period almost 2000 years later. Mentuhotep II is considered to have been the first king of a reunited Egypt after a period of political division (also called the First Intermediate Period). Therefore, his reign is considered as the start of what we now call the period of the Middle Kingdom (2055-1650 BCE).



Date Range: 2055 BCE - 2004 BCE

Region: Deir el-Bahari

Region tags: Africa, Northern Africa, Egypt, Egypt, Deir el-Bahari, el-Asasif

This entry focuses on the 11th dynasty temple of Mentuhotep II, which is located in the valley of Deir el-Bahari, next to the 18th dynasty mortuary temples of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III.

Status of Participants:

✓ Elite ✓ Religious Specialists

General Variables

Sources and Excavations

Print Sources

Print sources used for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Naville, Édouard 1907. The XIth Dynasty temple at Deir el-Bahari. Part I. Memoir of the Egypt Exploration Fund 28. London: Egypt Exploration Fund.
- Source 2: Naville, Édouard 1910. The XIth Dynasty temple at Deir el-Bahari. Part II. Memoir of the Egypt Exploration Fund 30. London: Egypt Exploration Fund.
- Source 3: Naville, Édouard and H. R. Hall 1913. The XIth Dynasty temple at Deir el-Bahari. Part III. Memoir of the Egypt Exploration Fund 32. London: Egypt Exploration Fund.

- Source 1: Arnold, Dieter 1974. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Band 1: Architektur und Deutung. Archäologische Veröffentlichungen, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Kairo 8. Mainz: Zabern.
- Source 2: Arnold, Dieter 1974. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Band 2: die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Archäologische Veröffentlichungen, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Kairo 11. Mainz: Zabern. Zeichnungen von Wolf-Günther Ledge und Reginald Coleman.
- Source 3: Arnold, Dieter 1981. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Band 3: Die königlichen Beigaben. Archäologische Veröffentlichungen, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Kairo 23. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern. Mit einem Beitrag von Dorothea Arnold.
- Source 1: Arnold, Dieter 1979. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. From the notes of Herbert Winlock, photos by Harry Burton, plans by Walter Hauser,. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Source 2: Oppenheim, Adela, Dorothea Arnold, Dieter Arnold, and Kei Yamamoto (eds) 2015. Ancient Egypt transformed: the Middle Kingdom. New Haven, London: Yale University Press.
- Source 3: Clère, J. J. and J. Vandier 1948. Textes de la première période intermédiaire et de la XIème dynastie: 1er fascicule. Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca 10. Bruxelles: Fondation égyptologique Reine Élisabeth.
- Source 1: Gestermann, Louise 1987. Kontinuität und Wandel in Politik und Verwaltung des frühen Mittleren Reiches in Ägypten. Göttinger Orientforschungen, 4. Reihe: Ägypten 18. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Source 2: Habachi, Labib 1963. King Nebhepetre Mentuhotep: his monuments, place in history, deification and unusual representation in the form of gods. Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo 19, 16-52.
- Source 3: Gabolde, Luc 2015. The "Kernbau" of the temple of Mentuhotep II at Deir al Bahari: a monumental sun altar? In Jasnow, Richard and Kathryn M. Cooney (eds), Joyful in Thebes: Egyptological studies in honor of Betsy M. Bryan, 145-154. Atlanta: Lockwood Press.
- Source 1: Winlock, H. E. 1942. Excavations at Deir el Bahri: 1911-1931. New York: Macmillan.
- Source 2: Winlock, H. E. 1947. The rise and fall of the Middle Kingdom in Thebes. New York: Macmillan.
- Source 1: Arnold, Dieter 2015. Some thoughts on the building history of the temple of Mentuhotep Nebhepetre at Deir el-Bahri. Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar 19, 59-68.
- Source 2: Arnold, Dieter 2010. A boat ritual of king Mentuhotep Nebhepetra. In Hawass, Zahi and Jennifer Houser Wegner (eds), Millions of jubilees: studies in honor of David P. Silverman 1, 43-47. Cairo: Conseil Suprême des Antiquités.
- Source 3: Arnold, Dieter 2008. The tombs of the queens of Mentuhotep II. In Ziegler, Christiane (ed.), Queens of Egypt: from Hetepheres to Cleopatra, 94-101. Monaco; Paris: Grimaldi Forum; Somogy.
- Source 1: Edwards, I. E. S. 1965. Lord Dufferin's excavations at Deir-El-Bahri and the Clandeboye Collection. Journal of Egyptian Archaeology 51, 16-28.
- Source 2: Freed, Rita E. 1997. Relief styles of the Nebhepetre Montuhotep funerary temple complex. In Goring, Elizabeth, Nicholas Reeves, and John Ruffle (eds), Chief of seers: Egyptian studies in memory of Cyril Aldred, 148-163. London; New York: Kegan Paul International, in association with National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh.
- Source 3: Freed, Rita Evelyn 1984. The development of Middle Kingdom Egyptian relief sculptural schools of late Dynasty XI with an appendix on the trends of early Dynasty XII (2040-1878 B.C.): a dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International.

- Source 1: Sabbahy, Lisa K. 1997. The titulary of the harem of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep. *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 34, 163-166.
- Source 2: Werbrouck, M. 1937. La décoration murale du temple des Mentouhotep. *Bulletin des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire* 9 (2), 36-44.

Online Sources

Online sources used for understanding this subject:

- Source 1 URL: https://www.osirisnet.net/monument/deb/mentuhotep/e_deb_mentuhotep.htm
- Source 2 URL: <http://www.mentuhotep.de>

Has this place been the focus of excavation (pre-modern, illicit, or scientific):

Answer 'Yes' for each period or type of excavation.

– Yes

Reference: Iorwerth Edwards Stephen. *Lord Dufferin's Excavations at Deir El-Bahri and the Clondeboy Collection*. issn: 03075133.



Type of excavation:

– Pre-modern

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1859 CE - 1860 CE

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)



Years of excavation:

– Year range: 1859 - 1860

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1859 CE - 1860 CE

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)



Name of excavation

– Official or descriptive name: Excavation conducted by Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 1st Marquess of Dufferin and Ava

– Yes

Reference: Henri Naville Édouard. *The XIth Dynasty temple at Deir el-Bahari*. Vols 1-3. London: Egypt Exploration Fund.



Type of excavation:

– Scientific

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1903 CE - 1907 CE

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)



Years of excavation:

— Year range: 1903 - 1907

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1903 CE - 1907 CE

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)



Name of excavation

— Official or descriptive name: Excavation conducted by Henri Édouard Naville, commissioned by the Egypt Exploration Fund

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 1903 CE - 1907 CE

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

— Yes

Reference: Herbert Winlock Eustis. Excavations at Deir el Bahri: 1911-1931. New York: The Macmillan Company.



Type of excavation:

— Scientific



Years of excavation:

— Year range: 1920 - 1921, 1920 - 1925, 1930 - 1931



Name of excavation

— Official or descriptive name: Excavations conducted by Herbert Eustis Winlock, commissioned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York

— Yes

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Vol. 1. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.



Type of excavation:

— Scientific



↳ Years of excavation:
— Year range: 1968 - 1971

↳ Name of excavation
— Official or descriptive name: Excavation and documentation campaigns conducted by Dieter Arnold, commissioned by the German Archaeological Institute, Cairo

Topographical Context

Is the place associated with a feature in the landscape

— Elevation

↳ Type of elevation
— Mountain

Notes: Especially from the New Kingdom onwards the Theban hills were considered as a natural pyramid, with the el-Qurn peak as the pyramid's pyramidion. It is unclear if such an interpretation of these hills was already prevalent during the reign of Mentuhotep II

Reference: Aidan Dodson undefined, Salima Ikram undefined. The tomb in ancient Egypt: royal and private sepulchres from the Early Dynastic Period to the Romans. London: Thames & Hudson. isbn: 9780500051399.

Does the place involve human-made features besides structure:

Other features might be ground clearing, terracing, other modifications of the local environment.

— Yes

↳ Type of feature
— Plantings

Notes: The forecourt of the temple was planted with sycamore figs and tamarisks, perhaps symbolizing the grove of Osiris, god of the afterlife.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Architecture. Building for Eternity across Egypt. (Adela Oppenheim , Dorothea Arnold , Dieter Arnold , Kei Yamamoto undefined, Ed.), Ancient Egypt Transformed. The Middle Kingdom. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. isbn: 9781588395641.

Is the place situated in an urban or significantly urbanized area:

— No

Notes: Deir el-Bahari is an uninhabited desert valley on the westbank of the river Nile opposite of the modern city of Luxor (Ancient Egyptian name: Waset, Greek name: Thebes)

Is the place situated in a rural setting:

— Yes

Notes: Even though the temple of Mentuhotep II itself is located in the arid desert valley of Deir el-Bahari, it was nevertheless connected to the rural area on the westbank of the Nile. The causeway connected the temple to its valley temple which must have been located close to the edge of the Nile's floodplain (its location has not been securely established).

Reference: Dieter Arnold undefined. Ein vergessenes Ensemble ägyptischer Architekten: die Taltempel und Aufwege im Asasif.



Are there settlements in close proximity to the place:

— I don't know

Notes: There are several smaller modern settlements in the proximity of Deir el Bahari, such as the settlements of el-Asasif, el-Tarif, and New Qurna. The ancient Egyptian settlement of Deir el-Medina is also in close proximity to Deir el-Bahari, however this village was only established several hundreds of years after the construction of the temple of Mentuhotep II (during the New Kingdom). At the moment, it is unclear whether there were any settlements in the vicinity of the mortuary temple of Mentuhotep II and where they would have been located.



Are there routes of travel in close proximity to the place:

— Yes

Notes: It has been argued that Mentuhotep II was the instigator of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley that would have continued into the Greco-Roman period. During this festival the cult statue of the god Amun would have left his temple at Karnak in procession, crossed the Nile by boat, and travelled further until it reached the temple of Mentuhotep II as its final destination. Therefore, Mentuhotep II's temple complex was quite likely connected to a landscape of roads and waterways in the Theban area.

Reference: Cabrol Agnès. Les voies processionnelles de Thèbes. isbn: 9042908661.

Is the place situated far removed from non-religious places of habitation:

— No

Notes: The ancient town of Waset (Greek: Thebes), now the modern city of Luxor is located opposite Deir el-Bahari on the eastbank of the Nile. It is unclear if there was habitation on the westbank of the Nile, close to Deir el-Bahari during the reign of Mentuhotep II. Deir el-Medina is in the proximity of Deir el-Bahari, but this settlement was founded only hundreds of years later (during the New Kingdom)

Structures Present

Are there structures or features present:

Instructions: Answer once for each structure/feature or group that can be differentiated.

— Yes



A single structure

— No

Notes: The temple complex of Mentuhotep II consisted of several structures that were connected to each other. The main temple was connected to a valley temple by a causeway.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

↳ One single feature

– Purposefully placed plants

Notes: The forecourt of the temple was planted with sycamore figs and tamarisks, perhaps symbolizing the grove of Osiris, god of the afterlife.

Reference: Dieter Arnold undefined. Building for Eternity across Egypt. (undefined undefined, Adela Oppenheim , Dorothea Arnold , Dieter Arnold , Kei Yamamoto undefined, Ed.), Ancient Egypt Transformed. The Middle Kingdom. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. isbn: 9781588395641.

↳ A group of structures:

– Yes

Notes: The temple complex of Mentuhotep II consisted of several structures that were connected to each other. For instance, the main temple was connected to a valley temple by a causeway. Furthermore, the main temple itself also consisted of several internal structures. When entering the temple, one would have first arrived in an open fore court which was surrounded by an enclosure wall. In this forecourt the entrance to a long shaft, called the Bab el-Hossan, that went deep into the ground was located. To enter the main building which was located on top of an artificial terrace, one would then go up a ramp, which was flanked on each side by a roofed colonnade each containing two rows of square pillars. On top of the terrace, one would have encountered another roofed colonnade with again two rows of square pillars. This colonnade is separated from an ambulatory by its back wall. The ambulatory contained octagonal columns and surrounded a solid central structure (also called "Kernbau") of which the function and design has been debated. On the west side of the ambulatory six chapels were located that were dedicated to women in the entourage of Mentuhotep II, but their exact role and status has been debated. To the west of the princess chapels another open court was located, which contained the entrance to another long shaft. This shaft leads to a burial chamber, which has been interpreted as the burial chamber of Mentuhotep II. After this open court, one would arrive at the westernmost end of the main temple, which consisted of a columned (octagonal) hall with a small sanctuary inside.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

↳ Are they part of a single design/construction stage:

– No

Notes: Dieter Arnold has convincingly argued that the temple complex of Mentuhotep underwent five building phases. During each subsequent phase old building structures were buried or dismantled and new structures were added. For instance, Arnold argues that the six so-called "princess chapels" belonged to building phase B, whereas the final causeway was only constructed during phase D1. Similarly, the orientation of the temple complex and the shape of large forecourt changed over time.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

↳ A group of features:

– No

↳ Is it part of a larger place/sanctuary:

– No

↳ What is the function of the structure/feature or group:

Answer "Yes" once for each distinct function

– Political

Notes: The architecture and decoration of the temple of Mentuhotep II have been interpreted as a political and religious statement from the king. For instance, the iconographic evidence suggests that Mentuhotep II was deified during his lifetime, which seems to have been very rare as most kings received such an honor only after death (however, there is still scholarly debate about the extent of his deification). Several interpretations link his deification to a changing concept of kingship during the reign of Mentuhotep II, arguing either that Mentuhotep II might have revived the image of the Egyptian king from the earliest stages of ancient Egyptian history, when they were considered to have been true incarnations of the god Horus, or that he might have taken on the role of important gods that his political adversaries (regional rulers whom he tried to overpower) considered as their divine overlords.

Reference: Dieter Arnold , Dorothea Arnold. A New Start from the South. Thebes during the Eleventh Dynasty. (Adela Oppenheim , Dorothea Arnold , Dieter Arnold , Kei Yamamoto, Ed.), Ancient Egypt Transformed. The Middle Kingdom. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. isbn: 9781588395641.

– Sacrificial

Notes: This function is suggested by the altar that was located in the sanctuary of the temple. Offerings would have been placed on this altar.

Reference: Dieter Arnold undefined. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.

– Worship

Notes: This monument was not only a place for the mortuary cult of Mentuhotep II, but also a divine temple dedicated to deities such as Hathor, Montu and especially Amun. For instance, a cult statue of the god Amun (possibly dating to the reign of either Tutankhamun or Horemheb, 18th dynasty, New Kingdom) that was found in the sanctuary of the temple of Mentuhotep II must have been a focal point of worship.

Reference: Marianne Eaton-Krauss. Post-Amarna Period Statues of Amun and His Consorts Mut and Amunet. Leiden and Boston: Brill. isbn: 9789004434691.

Reference: William Peck H.. A Seated Statue of Amun.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Architecture. Building for Eternity across Egypt. (Adela Oppenheim undefined, Dorothea Arnold , Dieter Arnold , Kei Yamamoto undefined, Ed.), Ancient Egypt

Transformed. The Middle Kingdom. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. isbn: 9781588395641.

↳ Worship:

— Communal

Notes: Graffiti on rocks on top of the cliff surrounding the valley of Deir el-Bahari mention the names of several members of the priesthoods of Mentuhotep II. This priesthood seems to have taken care of the ongoing cult for the deceased king in his temple and possibly also took part in the celebrations during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, when Amun's cult statue traveled from his temple at Karnak to Deir el-Bahari.

Reference: Herbert Winlock Eustis. The Rise and Fall of the Middle Kingdom in Thebes. New York: The Macmillan Company.

— Individual

Notes: The temple of Mentuhotep II also seems to have been a place for personal piety. This is indicated by several sandstone floor slabs from the temple, which preserve the outline of people's feet. Examples can be found in several museums (e.g., 07.537c in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and 910.34.67 in the Royal Ontario Museum). Incising the outline of one's feet in ancient Egyptian temples was a common practice that can also be found in other Egyptian temples (temple of Philae, temple of Khonsu at Karnak, etc.). One interpretation considers these outlines of feet to have been an alternative to statues for less wealthy people. Well-off people in ancient Egyptian society would have been able to purchase small statues to leave in temples, to metaphorically place themselves under the protection of the gods, whereas less affluent people would have left the outline of their feet to achieve a similar goal. The graffiti in the temple of Mentuhotep II has not been extensively studied, which makes it difficult to assess who left these outlines on the floor slabs of the temple.

Reference: Helen Jacquet-Gordon. The temple of Khonsu. The graffiti on the Khonsu temple roof at Karnak. A manifestation of personal piety. Chicago: Oriental Institute. isbn: 1885923260.

— Memorial

Notes: The mortuary temple of Mentuhotep II was the place where his funerary cult took place and where his memory would have been kept alive. There is a lot of evidence from later periods (later Middle Kingdom - late New kingdom) that shows that Mentuhotep II had attained a highly venerated status in the Theban Necropolis, and thus his memory was still very much alive. The evidence varies from representations of Mentuhotep II to mentions of his name on royal and private monuments, etc.

Reference: Khaled el-Enany. Le saint thébain Montouhotep-Nebhépetrê.

↳ Is the structure/feature finished:

— Yes

↳ Was the structure/feature intended to last beyond a generation:

— Yes

Notes: The mortuary temple of Mentuhotep II was the place where he intended that his funerary cult would have been carried out and his memory kept alive for eternity. The building lasted at least until the late New Kingdom, since evidence shows that the temple was restored during the reign of Ramesses II more than 700 years after the initial construction of the temple.

Reference: Dieter Arnold undefined. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.

↳ Was the structure/feature modified through time:

— Yes

Notes: Dieter Arnold has argued that the temple of Mentuhotep II underwent five construction phases (Phase A - Phase D2). During those phases several aspects of the temple, such as the orientation of the complex, and the shape of the forecourt changed. Gradually more architectural elements, such as the upper and lower colonnades, and the causeway were added to the overall design of the building. During the reign of king Akhenaten, some of the depictions of gods on the walls of the temple were purposefully hacked out. These destructions were seemingly restored after Akhenaten's death, but it is unclear when exactly those restorations were made. Arnold and Naville have argued that they seem earlier than the restorations carried out during the reign of Ramesses II, which seem to have been latest attested restorations of the temple of Mentuhotep II.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

Reference: Dieter Arnold undefined. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.

↳ Was the structure/feature destroyed:

— Yes

↳ How was the structure/feature destroyed

— Collapsed

Notes: Dieter Arnold has argued that the temple of Mentuhotep II was gradually dismantled from the reign of Ramesses IV or Ramesses VI onwards. This practice seems to have continued until the 21st - 22nd dynasties. This dismantling undermined the structural integrity of the building, which caused the temple to collapse. Afterwards the high quality limestone and sandstone blocks were taken away, quite possibly to be used in a new construction project. However, it is still unclear in which building the blocks from the temple would have been reused.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.

– Buried

Notes: The temple site was eventually buried underneath tons of stone rubble that fell down from the adjacent (but located on a higher level than the temple of Mentuhotep II) temple of Thutmose III, and from the top of the cliff behind the temple. Just like the temple of Mentuhotep II, the temple of Thutmose III was dismantled causing the remains of the building to collapse and tumble down on top of the remains of the temple of Mentuhotep II.

Reference: Dieter Arnold undefined. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.



With ritually deposited medium/material:

This might consists of pure sand, or a medium that has been consecrated.

– No



Was it destroyed deliberately:

– For economic reasons

Notes: The dismantling of the temple of Mentuhotep II was initiated to reuse the high quality limestone and sandstone, with which the building was constructed, in a new building project. However, it is still unclear in which building the stone from the temple of Mentuhotep II would have been reused.

Reference: Dieter Arnold undefined. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.



Was it destroyed by accident/natural phenomena:

– Natural phenomena

Notes: Dieter Arnold has argued that the dismantling of the Temple could have been preceded by a landslide, which might have caused initial damage to the monument.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.



Has the structure/feature been reconstructed:

– No

Notes: Currently, only the terrace on which the main temple building was constructed has received a modern casing wall to stabilize the core of the terrace. Dieter Arnold has published reconstructions of the architecture of the temple and of the wall decoration of the temple sanctuary. However, physical reconstructions of this monument are impossible as much of the temple has been quarried away, and many of the decorated fragments are currently spread out over different museum and private collections worldwide.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuaries. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.

Reasons for Creation/Construction/Consecration

Is the place used for the worship of/communication with non-human supernatural beings:

– Yes



Dedicated to a supernatural being:

– No



Dedicated to more than one supernatural being:

– Yes [specify]: The temple was dedicated to the god Montu-Ra (based on dedication plaques found in foundation deposits of the temple), but it is unclear if an actual cult was dedicated to this god in the temple. The sanctuary was dedicated to the cult of Amun to whom a cult was dedicated. Hathor was often depicted in the iconography of the temple, but it is unclear if a cult was dedicated to her in this temple. Since Mentuhotep II was seemingly already deified during his life, he might be considered as one of the supernatural beings worshipped in this temple.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.

Is the place used for the worship of a semi-divine human being:

– No

Notes: Since Mentuhotep II was seemingly already deified during his life, he might be considered as one of the supernatural beings worshipped in this temple.

Is the place used for the worship of non-divine ancestors:

– No

Notes: Since Mentuhotep II was seemingly already deified during his life, he might be considered as one of the supernatural beings worshipped in this temple.

Was the place commissioned/built by an official political entity:

A political entity is a local power structure that leverages a workforce.

– Yes





Specify

— King or emperor

Were the Structures built by specific groups of people:

— No

Notes: Monuments in ancient Egypt were built by groups of unskilled and skilled workers, who are designated with their own administrative titles (e.g., gnwty/qsty = sculptor, iqdw = construction workers, etc.).

Was the place thought to have originated as the result of divine intervention:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: It is unclear why Mentuhotep II decided to build his mortuary monument in the valley of Deir el-Bahari instead of close to the mortuary monuments of his direct predecessors in el-Tarif.

Was the place created to mark or commemorate the birthplace of a supernatural or human being:

— No

Was the place created as the result of an event:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: It is unclear why Mentuhotep II decided to build his mortuary monument in the valley of Deir el-Bahari instead of close to the mortuary monuments of his direct predecessors in el-Tarif.

Was the creation of the place sponsored by an external financial/material donation:

— No

Was the establishment of the place motivated by:

— Other [specify]: The temple of Mentuhotep II was first and foremost built to house his funerary cult that would provide him with offerings in the afterlife. Apart from that function, the temple was also used to worship certain gods such as Amun.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

Was the place built specifically for housing scriptures/sacred texts:

— No

Design and Material Remains

Overall Structure

Is the place made up of multiple built structures:

– Yes

↳ Are any of the structures attached to or associated with a landscape feature:

– No

Notes: Especially from the New Kingdom onwards the Theban hills were considered as a natural pyramid, with the el-Qurn peak as the pyramid's pyramidion. It is unclear if such an interpretation of these hills was already prevalent during the reign of Mentuhotep II and if his temple was associated with this landscape feature.

Reference: Dodson Aidan , Salima Ikram undefined. The tomb in ancient Egypt: royal and private sepulchres from the Early Dynastic Period to the Romans. London: Thames & Hudson. isbn: 9780500051399.

↳ Are any of the structures attached to other structures:

– Yes

Notes: The temple complex of Mentuhotep II consisted of several structures that were all connected. For instance, the main temple was connected to a valley temple by a causeway. Furthermore, the main temple itself also consisted of several internal structures that were connected to each other. When entering the temple, one would have first arrived in an open fore court which was surrounded by an enclosure wall. In this forecourt the entrance to a long shaft, called the Bab el-Hossan, that went deep into the ground was located. To enter the main building which was located on top of an artificial terrace, one would then go up a ramp, which was flanked on each side by a roofed colonnade each containing two rows of square pillars. On top of the terrace, one would have encountered another roofed colonnade with again two rows of square pillars. This colonnade is separated from an ambulatory by its back wall. The ambulatory contained octagonal columns and surrounded a solid central structure (also called "Kernbau") of which the function and design has been debated. On the west side of the ambulatory six chapels were located that were dedicated to women in the entourage of Mentuhotep II, but their exact role and status has been debated. To the west of the princess chapels another open court was located, which contained the entrance to another long shaft. This shaft leads to a burial chamber, which has been interpreted as the burial chamber of Mentuhotep II. After this open court, one would arrive at the westernmost end of the main temple, which consisted of a columned (octagonal) hall with a small sanctuary inside.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

↳ Is there a hierarchy among the structures:

– Yes

Notes: The temple complex of Mentuhotep II is built along an east-west axis which hierarchically orders the different structures in the temple complex. From east to west, the structures gradually become more sacred and thus hierarchically more important. The valley temple, which is both the entrance and the easternmost end of the entire complex, holds the lowest position in the hierarchy, while the sanctuary in the main temple, which is the westernmost end of the complex, was considered the most sacred structure in the entire temple complex and thus hierarchically the most important.

Is monumental architecture present:

Monumental architecture is defined here as a built structure that surpasses average human proportions and in general is larger and more complex than is necessary to fulfill the structure's utilitarian function(s). Examples of monumental architecture include Mesopotamian Ziggurats, Egyptian Pyramids, Greek and Roman temples, Mesoamerican Pyramids, North American and Aegean burial mounds, etc.

– Yes

↳ In the average place, what percentage of area is taken up by built monuments:
– I don't know

↳ Footprint of largest single religious monument, square meters:
Please add dimensions in the comments, if known.
– I don't know

↳ Height of largest single religious monument, meters:
– Height, meters: 11

Notes: Both Winlock and Arnold attempted to reconstruct the height of the central solid structure (the "kernbau"), which is located in the east part of the main temple building. Winlock reconstructed the height of this structure to have been ca. 8m, while Arnold reconstructed its height as ca. 11m. However, the structure's design and function are still debated, which would affect the reconstructions of its height. For instance, Winlock reconstructed a pyramid on top of the "kernbau", which would bring the total height to 22m. However, Arnold has dismissed this hypothesis. Other hypotheses, such as a smaller pyramid or mound of earth have also been proposed.

Reference: Luc Gabolde. The "Kernbau" of the Temple of Mentuhotep II at Deir Al-Bahari: A Monumental Sun Altar?. (Richard Jasnow, Kathlyn Cooney, Ed.), Joyful in Thebes, Egyptological Studies in Honor of Betsy M. Bryan. Atlanta: Lockwood Press. isbn: 9781937040406.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

↳ Size of average monument, square meters:
– I don't know

↳ Height of average monument, meters:
– Height, meters: 4

Notes: Arnold has reconstructed the height of several parts of the main temple, which all are around 4m high. Hypostyle hall: 3,67m Middle court: 4,20m Ambulatory: 4,72m

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur

Is the structure/feature made out of natural materials:

Answer [Yes] for each material type

– Yes

↳ Earth

– No

↳ Sand

– No

↳ Clay

– No

↳ Plaster

– Yes

Notes: Two types of plaster were used in the construction of the temple of Mentuhotep II: mud plaster and lime plaster

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

↳ Is this material sourced locally:

– I don't know

↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:

– I don't know

↳ Wood

– Yes

Notes: Certain architectural elements of the temple of Mentuhotep II, such as doors, were seemingly made of wood. Even though the doors itself have not been preserved, blocks with holes in which these doors would have pivoted to open and close them were found in the temple.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

↳ Is this material sourced locally:

– I don't know

Notes: None of the wood architectural elements seem to have been preserved.

↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:

– Yes

Notes: Deir el-Bahari itself is an arid desert valley. However, its location is not too far from the floodplain of the Nile where vegetation grows. Trees would have grown there that perhaps could have been used to make wooden architectural elements.

↳ Grass

– No

↳ Stone

– Yes

↳ Is this material sourced locally:

– No

Notes: De Putter and Karlshausen have argued that the limestone used in the temple of Mentuhotep II came from limestone quarries of el-Dibabiya in the area of Gebelein, about 40km south of Luxor. Winlock and Arnold have argued that the plum-colored sandstone used in the temple of Mentuhotep II came from sandstone quarries in the area of Aswan, about 180km south of Luxor.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

Reference: Christina Karlshausen , Thierry De Putter. From Limestone to Sandstone. Building Stone of Theban Architecture During the Reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmosis III.

↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:

– No

Notes: Limestone is widely available in the Theban Necropolis. For instance, local limestone was used in the construction of the temple of Hatshepsut, which is located next to the temple of Mentuhotep II. This limestone, however, is of lesser quality than the limestone from the el-Dibabiya quarries.

Reference: Christina Karlshausen undefined, Thierry De Putter. From Limestone to Sandstone. Building Stone of Theban Architecture During the Reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmosis III.

Is the structure/feature made out of human-made materials

– No

Decoration

Is decoration present:

– Yes

Notes: The walls of seemingly the entire temple were decorated with raised or sunk reliefs. Due to the destruction of this monument, its decoration has only been preserved in fragments of which now a large part are dispersed in museum collections worldwide.

Reference: Maarten Praet. The relief fragments of Mentuhotep II's mortuary temple in the Cinquantenaire Museum. Reconstruction and interpretation. Leuven: Unpublished MA thesis (KU Leuven).

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuaries. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Is decoration part of the building (permanent):

– Yes

↳ On the outside:

– Yes

Notes: Painted raised relief (sculpted material has been raised above the background plane) decorated the back walls of the lower and upper colonnades of the main temple building, which was visible from the outside.

↳ On the inside:

– Yes

Notes: Painted raised relief (sculpted material has been raised above the background plane) decorated the walls of the ambulatory and the sanctuary, while painted sunk relief (sculpted material has been sunk below the background plane) decorated the walls of the middle court and the hypostyle hall.

↳ Is decoration attached to the building, i.e. movable reliefs or tapestries

– No

↳ Is the decoration figural:

A figural representation is defined here as one that contains the depiction of discernible human, anthropomorphic, animal, or zoomorphic forms. In general, it differentiates between animate and inanimate beings, as well as between narrative compositions and still life, landscapes, abstraction, etc. Answer [Yes] for each type of figure depicted

– Yes

↳ Are there gods depicted:

– Yes

Notes: Several gods, such as Amun, Montu, and Hathor, were depicted in the reliefs that decorated the temple of Mentuhotep II

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuaries. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Are there other supernatural beings depicted:

– I don't know

↳ Are there humans depicted:

– Yes

Notes: A large variety of humans were depicted in the relief decoration of the temple of Mentuhotep II, such as the king Mentuhotep II himself, women in his entourage, high officials in his administration, offering bearers, etc. See for instance fragments 910.34.66 and 910.34.83 (Royal Ontario Museum)

↳ Are there animals depicted:

– Yes

Notes: Several scenes in the temple of Mentuhotep II included different types of animals. For instance, there was a hunting scene in the desert, where Mentuhotep seems to have been shooting desert game, such as oryxes, ibexes, gazelles, etc. Furthermore, there was also a scene showing Mentuhotep hunting in the marshes, which included types of fish, crocodiles, hippopotami, and waterfowl. Lastly, also domesticated animals, such as cattle (dead or alive) were depicted in offering scenes. Examples are fragments E.4989o (Art and History Museum Brussels), 06.1231.1 (Metropolitan Museum of Art), 910.34.44 (Royal Ontario Museum).

Reference: Henri Naville Édouard. The XIth dynasty temple in Deir el-Bahari. London: Egypt Exploration Fund.

↳ Are there animal-human hybrids depicted:

– Yes

Notes: Egyptian gods are often depicted with the body of a human and the head of an animal, such as falcon, ibis, etc.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuaries.. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Is the decoration non-figural:

– Yes

↳ Is it geometric/abstract

– Yes

Notes: In the temple of Mentuhotep II, every scene is surrounded by a geometric block border (painted in alternating colors). This is a common feature of ancient Egyptian wall art.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Floral motifs

– Yes

Notes: A so-called "kheker frieze" adorned the top of every wall in the temple of Mentuhotep II, just below the roof. A kheker frieze is a frieze consisting of stylized depictions of papyrus stalks bound together with the floral parts at the top.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Is it writing/caligraphy

– No

↳ Is the decoration hidden or restricted from view:

– Yes

Notes: It is unclear who would have had access to the temple of Mentuhotep II. However, evidence from other ancient Egyptian temples has shown that the general population was not allowed to enter them. Access was only reserved for the priesthoods connected to the building, and the more sacred areas of a temple such as its sanctuary would be restricted to only the highest ranking priests in the priesthood. It is possible that such a system was also in place in the temple of Mentuhotep II, which would mean that the general population would not have been able to see the decoration in the temple and access was restricted to the priesthood of Mentuhotep II. However, if they were allowed in the forecourt, they would have been able to see the decoration in the lower and the upper colonnades.

↳ Can the decoration be revealed:

– No

↳ Are there statues present:

– Yes

↳ Cult statues:

– Yes

Notes: A statue of the god Amun (possibly dating to the reign of the either Tutankhamun or Horemheb, 18th dynasty, New Kingdom) was found in the sanctuary of the temple of Mentuhotep II. This statue might have served as the focal point of the Amun cult in the sanctuary. It is currently in the Museum August Kestner in Hanover (on long-term loans from the Fritz Behrens Foundation). It is unclear if it replaced an older cult statue of the same god. A now largely destroyed statue of Mentuhotep II was also found in the same area of the temple, but it is unclear if this statue would have served as a cult statue for the king. This statue is now in the private collection of Clondeboye Hall, Northern Ireland.

Reference: Iorwerth Edwards Stephen. Lord Dufferin's Excavations at Deir El-Bahri and the Clondeboye Collection. issn: 03075133.

Reference: Marianne Eaton-Krauss. Post-Amarna Period Statues of Amun and His Consorts Mut and Amunet. Leiden and Boston: Brill. isbn: 9789004434691.

Reference: William Peck H.. A Seated Statue of Amun.

↳ Statues of gods/supernatural beings:

— Yes

Notes: A statue of the god Amun (possibly dating to the reign of the either Tutankhamun or Horemheb, 18th dynasty, New Kingdom) was found in the sanctuary of the temple of Mentuhotep II. This statue might have served as the focal point of the Amun cult in the sanctuary. It is currently in the Museum August Kestner in Hanover (on long-term loans from the Fritz Behrens Foundation). It is unclear if it replaced an older cult statue of the same god.

Reference: Marianne Eaton-Krauss. Post-Amarna Period statues of Amun and his consorts Mut and Amunet. Leiden and Boston: Brill. isbn: 9789004434691.

Reference: William Peck H.. A Seated Statue of Amun.

↳ Statues of humans:

— Yes

Notes: A now largely destroyed statue of Mentuhotep II was also found in the same area of the temple, but it is unclear if this statue would have served as a cult statue for the king. This statue is now in the private collection of Clondeboye Hall, Northern Ireland. Another seated statue of Mentuhotep II was found by Howard Carter on its side covered in linen in the Bab el-Hosan. This statue (JE 36195) is currently in the Egyptian Museum (by Tahrir Square) in Cairo. Several other statues of Mentuhotep II (both standing and seated) were found in the forecourt. One of them is currently in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (26.3.29) Senwosret III later placed statues of himself in the temple as part of his revival of the cult in the temple of Mentuhotep II.

Reference: Howard Carter. Report on the tomb of Mentuhotep Ist at Deir el-Bahari, known as Bab el-Hoçan.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.

Reference: Iorwerth Edwards Stephen. Lord Dufferin's Excavations at Deir El-Bahri and

↳ Are there reliefs present:

A relief as opposed to sculpture carved on the round is a work of sculpture in which the figures project from a background support, generally a flat surface. Reliefs can be carved out of stone, clay, or a similar material.

– Yes

↳ Reliefs representing the god(s) worshipped at the place:

– Yes

Notes: Several gods, such as Amun, Montu, and Hathor, were depicted in the reliefs that decorated the temple of Mentuhote

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Reliefs representing mythological narratives:

– Yes

Notes: Several of the reliefs represent several mythological narratives, mostly detailing the relation between the king and the gods. For instance, Mentuhotep II is depicted receiving life (ankh) from the gods, and a goddess (who is unfortunately not preserved) states that she, together with the gods of the Ennead, gave birth to the king.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Reliefs representing human/historical narratives:

– Yes

Notes: Some of the scenes depicted human activities, such as the king hunting animals in a desert setting (for instance fragment E.4989o in the Art and History Museum Brussels), the king hunting in a marsh setting, and Egyptian troops besieging a fortification (for instance fragment EA 732 in the British Museum). However, it seems unlikely that these scenes, even the war scene, might have had a specific historical narrative embedded in them. That does not mean it is not possible that such activities actually happened during the reign of Mentuhotep II, but these scenes were seemingly meant in a more metaphorical way: to display the power of the king and his ability to fight against chaos. Order versus chaos (Maat vs Isfet) was an important dichotomy embedded in ancient Egyptian kingship with the kings profiling themselves as the champions of order.

Reference: Maarten Praet undefined. The relief fragments of Mentuhotep II's mortuary temple in the Cinquantenaire Museum. Reconstruction and interpretation. Leuven: Unpublished MA thesis (KU Leuven).

↳ Are there paintings present:

– No

Notes: All the decoration in the temple seems to have been carved in relief, which was then painted.

↳ Are there mosaics present:

– No

↳ Are there inscriptions as part of the decoration:

– Yes

↳ Are the inscriptions ornamental:

– Yes

Notes: Hieroglyphs are in itself art and can thus be "ornamental", however that is not their purpose to just be "ornamental"

↳ Are the inscriptions informative/declarative

[e.g. historical narratives, calendars, donor lists etc...

– Yes

Notes: The hieroglyphic inscriptions in the temple of Mentuhotep II have several functions. Some of them are labels which generally explain what is happening in the scene they belong to, others are words spoken by humans, the king, or gods. The latter can therefore be considered religious temple texts. There is one particular fragment from this temple (1907,1015.383 British Museum) that preserves part of text detailing a battle between Mentuhotep II and the Aamu (sometimes translated as Asiatics, but rather a designation for people living either in the eastern desert of Egypt or to the East of Egypt). It is unclear if this text can be interpreted as a historical account of an actual battle, or if this text should be interpreted metaphorically. The latter option would entail that Mentuhotep II wanted to display his military power against the general idea of chaos (here embodied by non-Egyptians) rather than give an account of a specific battle.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Are the inscription a formal dedication:

– I don't know

Iconography

Are there distinct features in the places iconography:

– Yes

↳ Eyes (stylized or not)

– Yes

Notes: Eyes are depicted in this temple as hieroglyphs, very often to form the verb: "jrj" which can be translated as "to do/to make". One of the fragments from the chapel of Kemsit (one of the women in the entourage of Mentuhotep II who were buried in the temple) shows part of a so-called wedjat-eye (1907,1015.498 British Museum)

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Supernatural beings (zoomorphic)

– Yes

Notes: In some of the scenes, a vulture or a falcon is depicted at the top which symbolize divine protection. Therefore, these animals are interpreted as zoomorphic supernatural beings.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Supernatural beings (geomorphic)

– No

↳ Supernatural beings (anthropomorphic)

– Yes

Notes: Several gods, such as Amun, Montu, and Hathor, were depicted in the reliefs that decorated the temple of Mentuhotep II. Some of these gods were depicted as hybrid combinations of human bodies and animal heads. For instance, Montu is depicted with a falcon head.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Supernatural beings (abstract)

– No

↳ Portrayals of afterlife

– Yes

Notes: Even though the afterlife does not seem to be specifically mentioned, the scenes in the sanctuary show the king in interaction with several gods and performing activities set in a supernatural realm. As this was the mortuary monument of Mentuhotep II, it seems possible that these scenes would have represented portrayals of the king's afterlife, but I am not entirely sure at this moment.

↳ Aspects of doctrine (e.g. cross, trinity, Mithraic symbols)

– No

↳ Humans

– Yes

Notes: A large variety of humans were depicted in the relief decoration of the temple of Mentuhotep II, such as the king Mentuhotep II himself, women in his entourage, high officials in his administration, offering bearers, etc. See for instance fragments 910.34.66 and 910.34.83 (Royal Ontario Museum)

Reference: Maarten Praet undefined. The relief fragments of Mentuhotep II's mortuary temple in the Cinquantenaire Museum. Reconstruction and interpretation. Leuven: Unpublished MA thesis (KU Leuven).

↳ Supernatural narratives

– Yes

Notes: Several of the reliefs represent several mythological narratives, mostly detailing the relation between the king and the gods. For instance, Mentuhotep II is depicted receiving life (ankh) from the gods, and a goddess (who is unfortunately not preserved) states that she, together with the gods of the Ennead, gave birth to the king.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Human narratives

– Yes

Notes: Some of the scenes depicted human activities, such as the king hunting animals in a desert setting (for instance fragment E.4989o in the Art and History Museum Brussels), the king hunting in a marsh setting, and Egyptian troops besieging a fortification (for instance fragment EA 732 in the British Museum). However, it seems unlikely that these scenes, even the war scene, might have had a specific historical narrative embedded in them. That does not mean it is not possible that such activities actually happened during the reign of Mentuhotep II, but these scenes were seemingly meant in a more metaphorical way: to display the power of the king and his ability to fight against chaos. Order versus chaos (Maat vs Isfet) was an important dichotomy embedded in ancient Egyptian kingship with the kings profiling themselves as the champions of order.

Reference: Maarten Praet undefined. The relief fragments of Mentuhotep II's mortuary temple in the Cinquantenaire Museum. Reconstruction and interpretation. Leuven: Unpublished MA thesis (KU Leuven).

Beliefs and Practices

Funerary Associations

Is this place a tomb/burial:

– Yes

Notes: The shaft in the middle court of the main temple building leading to a subterranean room lined with granite has been interpreted as the entrance to the actual burial chamber of Mentuhotep II. Several wooden models, typical grave goods for Middle Kingdom burials, and a fragment of a coffin (1907,1015.1 British Museum) have been found there. It has been argued that this fragment belonged to the coffin of Mentuhotep II based on the painted inscription that is partially preserved on it. However, the text is so fragmentary that this reconstruction should not be considered as absolute proof. Whereas the wooden models suggest that this room must have been indeed used as a burial space during the Middle Kingdom, it is not at all certain that it was Mentuhotep II who was buried here.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die königlichen Beigaben. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9781588395641.

Is this a place for the worship of the dead:

– Yes



For the worship of a deceased person(s):

– Yes

Notes: Mentuhotep II built this temple as the location for his mortuary cult, which would provide him with the offerings he needed in the afterlife



For the worship of a deified human:

– Yes

Notes: The iconographic evidence suggests that Mentuhotep II was deified during his lifetime. This seems to have been very rare since most kings received such an honor only after death (however, there is still scholarly debate about the extent of his deification).

Reference: Dieter Arnold , Dorothea Arnold. A New Start from the South. Thebes during the Eleventh Dynasty. (Adela Oppenheim , Dorothea Arnold , Dieter Arnold , Kei Yamamoto, Ed.), Ancient Egypt Transformed. The Middle Kingdom. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. isbn: 9781588395641.



For the worship of a deceased hero:

– No

Is this a place for treatment of the corpse:

– I don't know

Notes: It is unclear if any of the bodies of the people that were buried inside the temple of Mentuhotep II were also treated there after their deaths.

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

Co-sacrifices are animal/human sacrifices prompted by the death of the primary occupant of the tomb/burial.

– I don't know

Notes: On the floor of the upper room of the Bab el-Hosan, where the seated statue of Mentuhotep II (JE 36195 Cairo Museum) and an empty coffin was found, Howard Carter found the skeletons of two birds (ducks?) and the two fore legs of a calf which still had dried up flesh on them. The offering of cattle legs and birds was common in ancient Egypt and has been often depicted in wall decoration. However, the shaft and rooms of the Bab el-Hosan were never used as a burial place (for unclear reasons). Therefore, it is unclear if these animals were sacrificed when Mentuhotep II died. To my knowledge no remains of animal offerings were found in the supposed tomb of the king of which the entrance is situated in the middle court of the main temple building

Reference: Howard Carter undefined. Report on the Tomb of Mentuhotep Its at Deir el-Bahari, known as Bab el-Hoçan.

Are grave goods present:

– Yes

↳ Personal effects:

– No

Notes: Not to my knowledge

↳ Valuable/precious items:

– Yes

↳ Significant value:

Gold, jade, intensely worked objects, or meaningful symbolic value

– No

Notes: Not to my knowledge

↳ Some value, valuable or useful objects:

– Yes

Notes: Several wooden models, typical grave goods for Middle Kingdom burials, and a fragment of a coffin (1907,1015.1 British Museum) have been found in the supposed burial chamber of Mentuhotep II. Burial goods were important in ancient Egypt. For instance, the models would make sure that the deceased was provided for in the afterlife.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die königlichen Beigaben. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9781588395641.

Are formal burials present:

– I don't know

Supernatural Beings

Is a supreme high god is present:

– No

Notes: Even though the concept of a supreme high god is not clearly attested in ancient Egypt (especially at the time of Mentuhotep II, in later periods it can be argued that Amun came to fulfill the function of supreme high god), certain gods seem to have enjoyed a higher popularity than others. Therefore, based on the evolution in the architecture and the iconography in the different areas of the temple, it seems that originally the god Montu, also called Montu-Ra (in his manifestation as the power of the sun Ra) was revered as the main god in the temple of Mentuhotep II. When in a later building phase the sanctuary was added to the temple, the main focus of worship seems to have shifted to the god Amun.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuaries. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

Does the supreme high god communicate with the living at this place:

– I don't know

Notes: The priests performed rituals in the sanctuary of Amun, thus clearly interacting with the god who housed in the cult statue. However, it is not clear if the priests expected the god to communicate with them through these rituals.

Are previously human spirits present:

– Yes

Notes: The cult for the deceased Mentuhotep II was performed in this temple, providing his spirit with offerings in the afterlife.



Human spirits can be seen:

– No



Human spirits can be physically felt:

– No

Do human spirits communicate with the living at this place:

– I don't know

Notes: The priests performed offerings to the deceased Mentuhotep II. However, it is not clear if the priests expected the spirit of the deceased king to communicate with them through the rituals and offerings.

Are nonhuman supernatural beings present:

– Yes

Notes: Amun (perhaps also Montu-Ra, to whom the front part of the temple was dedicated, and Hathor, who is often depicted in the iconography, but it is unclear where in the temple their cult would have been performed) was present in his cult statue in the sanctuary of the temple of Mentuhotep II.

↳ Human spirits can be seen:

– No

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt:

– No

Do nonhuman spirits communicate with the living at this place:

– I don't know

Notes: The priests performed rituals in the sanctuary of Amun, thus clearly interacting with the god who housed in the cult statue. However, it is not clear if the priests expected the god to communicate with them through these rituals.

Are mixed human-divine beings present:

– I don't know

Notes: Mentuhotep II seems to have been deified during his lifetime, which is rare as kings usually only receive that honor after their deaths. However, the extent of his deification does not seem entirely clear, therefore he might be considered a "mixed human-divine being".

Do mixed human-divine beings communicate with the living at this place:

– I don't know

Notes: The priests performed offerings to the deceased Mentuhotep II. However, it is not clear if the priests expected the spirit of the deceased king to communicate with them through the rituals and offerings.

Is the supernatural being/high god present in the form of a cult statue(s):

– Yes

↳ Is the cult statue visible:

– No

↳ Is the cult statue hidden:

– Yes

Notes: A statue of the god Amun (possibly dating to the reign of the either Tutankhamun or Horemheb, 18th dynasty, New Kingdom) was found in the sanctuary of the temple of

Mentuhotep II. This statue might have served as the focal point of the Amun cult in the sanctuary. It is currently in the Museum August Kestner in Hanover (on long-term loans from the Fritz Behrens Foundation). It is unclear if it replaced an older cult statue of the same god. A now largely destroyed statue of Mentuhotep II was also found in the same area of the temple, but it is unclear if this statue would have served as a cult statue for the king. This statue is now in the private collection of Clondeboye Hall, Northern Ireland. Both these statues were found at the westernmost end (the most sacred part) of the temple, meaning that they would quite likely not have been accessible to everyone and thus "hidden".

Supernatural Interactions

Is supernatural monitoring present:

— No

Do visitors communicate with the gods or supernatural beings:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: It is unclear if and which visitors would have been able to enter the temple. Nevertheless, the temple of Mentuhotep II seems to have been a place for personal piety. This is indicated by several sandstone floor slabs from the temple, which preserve the outline of people's feet. Examples can be found in several museums (e.g., 07.537c in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and 910.34.67 in the Royal Ontario Museum). Incising the outline of one's feet in ancient Egyptian temples was a common practice that can also be found in other Egyptian temples (temple of Philae, temple of Khonsu at Karnak, etc.). One interpretation considers these outlines of feet to have been an alternative to statues for less wealthy people. Well-off people in ancient Egyptian society would have been able to purchase small statues to leave in temples, to metaphorically place themselves under the protection of the gods, whereas less affluent people would have left the outline of their feet to achieve a similar goal. The graffiti in the temple of Mentuhotep II has not been extensively studied, which makes it difficult to assess who left these outlines on the floor slabs of the temple, priests or visitors?

Ritual and Performance

Sacrifices, Offerings, and Maintenance

Are sacrifices performed at this place:

— Yes

Notes: The offering of sacrificed animals as part of the temple cult is suggested by the altar that was located in the sanctuary of the temple and by the decoration on some of the walls of the temple depicting the sacrificial killing of animals. However, where exactly on site the animals would have been killed is currently unknown. The sanctuary in the temple of Mentuhotep II seems to have been too small to carry out the actual killing of sacrificial animals.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. *Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuaries*. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.



Are there animal sacrifices:

- Yes [specify]: The iconography in ancient Egyptian tombs and temples suggests that cattle and fowl (e.g., ducks) were often part of offerings. Such iconography is also present in the temple of Mentuhotep II.

Reference: Dieter Arnold undefined. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

- ↳ Are there human sacrifices:
 - No

- ↳ Are the sacrificed humans associated in some way:
 - No

Are there self-sacrifices present:

- No

Are material offerings present:

- Yes

Notes: Apart from food and drink also clothing, ointment, green copper, black eye-paint, natron, etc. would have been offered to the gods.

Reference: Unknown Daily Offering Ritual in ancient Egyptian temples

- ↳ Are material offerings mandatory:
 - Yes

Notes: The material offerings of clothing, ointment, etc., belonged to the standard offerings in ancient Egyptian cults.

- ↳ Are material offerings composed of valuable objects:
 - I don't know

Notes: It seems that not particularly valuable metals were offered in the temple. However, the incense and some of the oils used might have been imported from outside Egypt, which would have increased their value. The linen that was offered was probably of the highest quality thus increasing its value as well.

- ↳ Are material offerings composed of daily-life objects:
 - Yes

Notes: Clothing and black eye-paint are daily-life objects for example

- ↳ Are material offerings interred at this place (in caches):

— No

Notes: The offerings performed regularly in this temple were not buried, or at least such caches were not found. However, several foundation deposits have been found containing material and animal offerings. These deposits were buried below the four corners of the temple platform, the so-called "Kernbau" and underneath some of the so-called "princess chapels". This must have happened at the time that these structures were founded. These deposits contained offerings of bread, animal parts, linen sheets, tools, faience objects, metal figures, and dedication plaques containing the names of Mentuhotep II.

Reference: James Weinstein Morris. Foundation deposits in ancient Egypt. Philadelphia: Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation (University of Pennsylvania).

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die königlichen Beigaben. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9781588395641.

Is attendance to worship/sacrifice mandatory:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: At the moment, it is unclear how the priesthood responsible for the temple of Mentuhotep II operated. Therefore, it is difficult to assess which priests would have been in charge of the actual rituals in the temple, if all members of the priesthood were required to participate in every ritual, if there was a rotation system in place, etc.

Is maintenance of the place performed:

— Yes



Is it required:

— Yes

Notes: Since ancient Egyptian temples, and especially their shrines, were thought of as the earthly homes of the gods, the Egyptian kings saw it as their duty to maintain and restore the temples. For instance, inscriptions from Ramesses II show that the temple was restored during his reign.



Is there cleansing (for the maintenance):

— Yes

Notes: Since ancient Egyptian temples, and especially their shrines, were thought of as the earthly homes of the gods, they were considered to be truly divine places and needed to be kept pure at all times. This is one of the reasons why usually only a few people such as the king and the highest echelons of the priesthoods had access to the most holy areas (the sanctuaries and shrines) of the temple and that rigorous standards of purification were required of people participating in the cult.

Reference: Richard Wilkinson H.. The complete temples of Ancient Egypt. London: Thames & Hudson. isbn: 0500051003.



Are there periodic repairs/reconstructions:

— Yes

Notes: During the reign of king Akhenaten, some of the depictions of gods on the walls of the temple were purposefully hacked out. These destructions were seemingly restored after Akhenaten's death, but it is unclear when exactly those restorations were made. Arnold and Naville have argued that they seem earlier than the restorations carried out during the reign of Ramesses II, which seem to have been the latest attested restorations of the temple of Mentuhotep II.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. *Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Architektur und Deutung*. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390890.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. *The Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari*. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780870991639.



Is the maintenance performed by permanent staff:

— Yes

Notes: Graffiti on rocks on top of the cliff surrounding the valley of Deir el-Bahari mention the names of several members of the priesthood of Mentuhotep II. This priesthood seems to have taken care of the ongoing cult for the deceased king in his temple and possibly also took part in the celebrations during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, when Amun's cult statue traveled from his temple at Karnak to Deir el-Bahari. Therefore, it is probably this priesthood that took care of the maintenance of the temple as well. However, it is unclear if they played a part in the later New Kingdom reconstructions of this monument.

Reference: Herbert Winlock Eustis. *The Rise and Fall of the Middle Kingdom in Thebes*. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Pilgrimage and Festivals

Are pilgrimages present:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: The temple of Mentuhotep II also seems to have been a place for personal piety. This is indicated by several sandstone floor slabs from the temple, which preserve the outline of people's feet. Examples can be found in several museums (e.g., 07.537c in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and 910.34.67 in the Royal Ontario Museum). Incising the outline of one's feet in ancient Egyptian temples was a common practice that can also be found in other Egyptian temples (temple of Philae, temple of Khonsu at Karnak, etc.). One interpretation considers these outlines of feet to have been an alternative to statues for less wealthy people. Well-off people in ancient Egyptian society would have been able to purchase small statues to leave in temples, to metaphorically place themselves under the protection of the gods, whereas less affluent people would have left the outline of their feet to achieve a similar goal. The graffiti in the temple of Mentuhotep II has not been extensively studied, which makes it difficult to assess who left these outlines on the floor slabs of the temple and whether they made a pilgrimage to the temple of Mentuhotep II.

Reference: Helen Jacquet-Gordon. *The temple of Khonsu. The graffiti on the Khonsu temple roof at Karnak. A manifestation of personal piety*. Chicago: Oriental Institute. isbn: 1885923260.

Is this place a venue for feasting:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Even though there is evidence for people feasting in the tombs of their deceased relatives during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, it is unclear what exactly happened in the temple of Mentuhotep II during this festival. Additionally, there is currently no evidence for feasting in the temple of Mentuhotep II during the rest of the year.

Are festivals present:

– Yes

Notes: It has been argued that Mentuhotep II was the instigator of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley that would have continued into the Greco-Roman period. However, the later king Amenemhat I has also been put forward as the instigator of the festival. During this festival the cult statue of the god Amun would have left his temple at Karnak in procession, crossed the Nile by boat, and travelled further until it reached the temple of Mentuhotep II as its final destination.

Reference: Agnès Cabrol. *Les voies processionnelles de Thèbes*. Leuven: Peeters. isbn: 9042908661.



Frequency of festivals

– specify: The Beautiful Festival of the Valley happened yearly

Reference: Siegfried Schott. *Das schöne Fest vom Wüstentale: Festbräuche einer Totenstadt*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag.



Do all members of the society participate in the festival(s):

– Other [specify in comments]

Notes: Since the evidence for the existence of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley during the reign of Mentuhotep II is very scarce, it is impossible to say if all members of society participated in this event. The evidence for the Beautiful Festival of the Valley during the later New Kingdom seems to come primarily from elite sources (e.g., elite tombs of the New Kingdom), but that does not mean that non-elites would not have been able to participate in the Festival. Evidence during the Ptolemaic period shows that people would undertake a pilgrimage to Thebes to participate in the festivals, so it seems that not only local people might have participated in the Beautiful Festival of the Valley. As the popularity of the Festival during the reign of Mentuhotep II (if it existed during his reign already) is difficult to assess, it is impossible to say whether non-local people would have traveled to Thebes to participate in it.

Reference: Willy Clarysse. *Egyptian Temples and Priests: Graeco-Roman*. (Alan Lloyd B., Ed.), *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*. Chichester and Malden (MA): Wiley-Blackwell. isbn: 9781405155984.

Reference: Betsy Bryan M.. *Hatshepsut and Cultic Revelries in the New Kingdom*. (José Galán M., Betsy Bryan M., Peter Dorman F., Ed.), *Creativity and Innovation in the Reign of Hatshepsut*. Chicago: Oriental Institute. isbn: 9781614910244.



Are festivals a defining element in the construction/decoration of the place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It has been convincingly argued that the causeway of Mentuhotep II's temple is

oriented to the temple of Karnak, where the cult of Amun was already ongoing during the reign of Mentuhotep II. This suggests indeed a link between the two temples, but it is currently unclear if the causeway of the Mentuhotep Temple would have been constructed with the idea of the procession during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley between Karnak and Deir el-Bahari in mind.

Reference: Harco Willems. The First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom. (Alan Lloyd B., Ed.), A Companion to Ancient Egypt. Chichester and Malden (MA): Wiley-Blackwell. isbn: 9781405155984.



On average, how many participants gather at this place:

— number: Unclear

Notes: It is unclear how many people would have been allowed to enter the temple during this festival.



Is feasting part of the festival(s):

— Yes

Notes: From later sources, it is known that people would visit the tombs of their deceased relatives on the West Bank of the Nile during the Beautiful Feast to celebrate. This involved eating and drinking. Betsy Bryan has argued that drunkenness was central to the Beautiful Festival of the Valley during the New Kingdom, since wine specifically was the "facilitator of the divine experience". The rites were meant to "assist in the regeneration of deceased ancestors."

Reference: Betsy Bryan M.. Hatshepsut and Cultic Revelries in the New Kingdom. (José Galán M., Betsy Bryan M., Peter Dorman F., Ed.), Creativity and innovation in the reign of Hatshepsut: papers from the Theban Workshop 2010. Chicago: Oriental Institute. isbn: 9781614910244.

Reference: Jacobus Van Dijk. The Amarna Period and Later New Kingdom. (Ian Shaw, Ed.), The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt. Oxford University Press. isbn: 0198150342.



Is food consumption limited to certain members of the population:

— Elites

Notes: The evidence for people visiting the tombs of their deceased relatives during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley comes from tombs belonging to the ancient Egyptian elite.

Reference: Betsy Bryan M.. Hatshepsut and Cultic Revelries in the New Kingdom. (José Galán M., Betsy Bryan M., Peter Dorman F., Ed.), Creativity and innovation in the reign of Hatshepsut: papers from the Theban Workshop 2010. Chicago: Oriental Institute. isbn: 9781614910244.

Divination and Healing

Is divination present:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: No evidence of divination has been found

Is healing present/practiced at this place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: No evidence of healing practices has been found in the temple of Mentuhotep II. The temple of Hatshepsut adjacent to the temple of Mentuhotep II on the other hand, has provided evidence (inscriptions on the walls) that shows that the temple was used as a place for healing in the later periods of ancient Egyptian history.

Do rituals occur at this place:

Rituals are visibly enacted behaviors by one or more people for the purposes of religious observance.

– Yes

Notes: Rituals must have most definitely occurred in the temple of Mentuhotep II as part of the cult that was performed there. However, it is unclear what the scale and nature of these rituals would have been. Our understanding of temple rituals is based on evidence from later periods of Egyptian history (e.g., Papyrus Berlin 3055), but the rituals in the temple of Mentuhotep during the Middle Kingdom could perhaps have been similar to the ones recorded in the later evidence. It has been argued that during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley the cult statue of Amun would have traveled to the temple of Mentuhotep II, but it is unclear which rituals would have been performed in the temple during this festival. Their scale is therefore also impossible to assess.

↳ Do large-scale rituals take place:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Do small-scale rituals take place:

– Field doesn't know

↳ On average how many participants are present in large-scale rituals:

–specify: It is unclear how many people would have been allowed to enter the temple, and it is unclear how many priests were active in the rituals performed at the temple.

↳ How often do these rituals take place:

–specify: It is unclear how often the rituals took place in the temple of Mentuhotep II, but evidence from later periods (e.g., Papyrus Berlin 3055) shows that rituals were performed daily in ancient Egyptian temples. Perhaps the rituals in the temple of Mentuhotep II were performed daily as well.

↳ Are there orthodoxy checks:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is unclear if there would have been any orthodoxy checks in the temple of

Mentuhotep II.

↳ Are there orthopraxy checks:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: It is unclear if there would have been any orthopraxy checks in the temple of Mentuhotep II.

↳ Are there synchronic practices:

— I don't know

↳ Are there intoxicants used during the ritual:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: It has been argued that drunkenness was central to the Beautiful Festival of the Valley during the New Kingdom, since wine specifically was the "facilitator of the divine experience" (evidence comes from private tombs on the West Bank of the Nile). The rites were meant to "assist in the regeneration of deceased ancestors." However, it is unclear if intoxicants would have been used during the rituals as part of this festival in the temple of Mentuhotep II itself. It is unclear if intoxicants were used during the regular rituals.

Reference: Siegfried Schott. *Das schöne Fest vom Wüstentale: Festbräuche einer Totenstadt*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Reference: Betsy Bryan M., Hatshepsut and Cultic Revelries in the New Kingdom. (José Galán, Betsy Bryan M., Peter Dorman F., Ed.), *Creativity and innovation in the reign of Hatshepsut: papers from the Theban Workshop 2010*. Chicago: Oriental Institute. isbn: 9781614910244.

Institutions and Scriptures

Religious Specialists

Are religious specialists present/in charge of this place:

Religious specialists are individuals whose primary duties within a population group are not concerned with subsistence or craft production but the maintenance of the religious landscape and culture of the group.

— Yes

Notes: Graffiti on rocks on top of the cliff surrounding the valley of Deir el-Bahari mention the names of several members of the priesthoods of Mentuhotep II. This priesthood seems to have taken care of the ongoing cult for the deceased king in his temple and possibly also took part in the celebrations during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, when Amun's cult statue traveled from his temple at Karnak to Deir el-Bahari. Not much is known about this priesthood apart from the few names of members mentioned in the inscriptions (nothing about their class or ethnicity). It is unclear if these people worked in the temple full time for their entire lives or if they followed a rotating roster.

Reference: Herbert Winlock Eustis. *The Rise and Fall of the Middle Kingdom*. New York: The Macmillan Company.

|

↳ Present full time
– Field doesn't know

↳ Present part time
– Field doesn't know

↳ Are the religious specialists of specific sex/gender:
– Yes
Notes: The inscriptions left by the members of the priesthood of Mentuhotep II only show male names.
Reference: Herbert Winlock Eustis. The Rise and Fall of the Middle Kingdom in Thebes. New York: The Macmillan Company.

↳ Are the religious specialists of specific ethnicity:
– Field doesn't know

↳ Are the religious specialists of specific class/cast:
– Field doesn't know

↳ Are religious specialists dedicated to the place for life:
– Field doesn't know

↳ Are the religious specialists stratified in a hierarchical system:
– Yes
Notes: Some of the rock inscriptions left by members of the priesthood of Mentuhotep II on top of the cliff of Deir el-Bahari show that this priesthood was hierarchically structured. For instance, the inscriptions show that the priesthood of Mentuhotep II consisted of both "lector priests" (ancient Egyptian: Xry Hbt) and "chief lector priests" (ancient Egyptian: Xry Hbt Hry tp), thus showing the hierarchy among this class of priests.
Reference: Herbert Winlock Eustis. The Rise and Fall of the Middle Kingdom. New York: The Macmillan Company.

↳ Is access within the space segregated by this hierarchy:
– Field doesn't know

Does this place incorporate a living space for religious specialists:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: A mud brick structure, located in the South Triangular Court of the temple of Mentuhotep II, has been interpreted as a "priest's house". This structure has definitely been used as a dwelling, since

archaeological research has shown that fires were burnt both inside and outside of the temple. The bricks that make up this structure must be of a later date as they are completely different from the bricks used during the 11th dynasty. The building occupies the space of an older building, which might have dated to the 11th dynasty, since a couple of bricks of this older structure were archaeologically attested. Even though this building has been interpreted as a priest's house, there is no evidence that proves that any of the priests who worked in the temple of Mentuhotep II would have lived either in this specific structure or anywhere else on the temple site.

Is this place used for the training of religious specialists:

— Field doesn't know

Are there formal institutions for the maintenance of the place:

Institutions that are authorized by the religious community or political leaders

— Field doesn't know

Bureaucracy

Is there a formal bureaucracy present at this place:

A bureaucracy consists of a hierarchical system of accounting and rule maintenance primarily concerned with material wealth.

— Field doesn't know

Notes: Even though it is most likely that the temple of Mentuhotep II - like an other ancient Egyptian temple - would have had control over land to provide the cult and the members of the priesthood with economic resources, no evidence has been preserved that would support this. If the temple of Mentuhotep II had indeed economic resources at its disposal, it seems most likely that there would have been bureaucratic officials (not priests) connected to the temple that would have been in charge of organizing its economic profits. Again, no evidence mentioning such bureaucratic officials has been preserved.

Does this place control economic resources (land, goods, tools):

— Field doesn't know

Notes: Every Egyptian temple would have been allocated lands that would generate profits to sustain the cult and to remunerate the members of the priesthood associated with each temple. Therefore, it is most likely that the temple of Mentuhotep II would have had control over economic resources, but there is no specific evidence that suggests it for this temple.

Public Works

Does this place serve as a location for services to the community:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: Apart from the fact that the temple of Mentuhotep II might have functioned as an important location during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, it is unclear if the temple would have served the wider community of Thebes. The temple was first and foremost constructed as a temple for the

funerary cult of the deceased Mentuhotep II and at the same time serves as a divine temple where ancient Egyptian deities, such as Amun, Hathor and Montu, were worshipped. The graffiti that has been found in the temple might be an indication of the personal piety of visitors from the community, but this does not necessarily have to be the case as it is unclear (and perhaps unlikely) if visitors had access to the temple. Therefore, the graffiti might have been left there by members of the priesthood.

Writing/Scriptures

Is non-religious writing stored at this place:

Economic documents, records etc.

— No

Are there scriptures associated with this place:

— Yes

↳ Are they written:

— Yes

Notes: Hieroglyphic texts are carved on the temple walls.

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Are they written at this place:

— Yes

Notes: The hieroglyphs are carved on the temple walls after the temple was constructed

↳ Are they oral:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: It is unclear whether the texts that were carved on the temple walls would have been read out loud. It seems unlikely since most of them are either labels (small texts) describing the depicted scenes or conversations between the gods and Mentuhotep II. Nevertheless, sources from different places show that certain texts would have been recited in ancient Egyptian temples, but no such texts have not been preserved in the temple of Mentuhotep II.

Reference: Roger Forshaw. The Role of the Lector in Ancient Egyptian Society. Oxford: Archaeopress. isbn: 9781784910327.

↳ Is there a story associated with the origin and/or construction of this place:

— No

↳ Are there religious specialists in charge of interpreting the scriptures:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is unclear if all the members of the priesthood would have been able to read and if that was necessary for the job. Some of them, such as the attested lector priests, must have been able to read, but the question remains if they would have been required to read the texts on the walls in order to perform the rituals in the temple. It seems more likely that religious specialists like the lector priests would have recited texts from papyrus scrolls that were not preserved in the temple of Mentuhotep II.

Reference: Herbert Winlock Eustis. The Rise and Fall of the Middle Kingdom in Thebes. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Reference: Roger Forshaw. The Role of the Lector in Ancient Egyptian Society. Oxford: Archaeopress. isbn: 9781784910327.

↳ Are the scriptures part of the building/place:

– Yes

↳ Attached to the structures as decoration:

– Yes

Reference: Dieter Arnold. Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari. Die Wandreliefs des Sanktuars. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern. isbn: 9780306390906.

↳ Housed within the place/structure:

– Yes

Notes: Hieroglyphic inscriptions were decorating the inner and outer walls of the temple.

↳ As dedicatory inscription(s):

– I don't know

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