Reconsidering two Monuments found at Karnak
(pls.1-5)

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The topic of this article presents an attempt to study and offer some new remarks concerning the gate and the fragment of lintel that were uncovered among the numerous monuments at Karnak by the Egypt Exploration Fund. The two monuments had been built by Tuthmosis II, who, instead of his short reign, contributed to establishing the buildings in the temple of Amun at Karnak.

The gate with the fragment of lintel, the subject of this article, formed a very important and distinguished style of the buildings erected in the complex of Karnak during the New Kingdom period. They manifest archaeological evidence of the architectural activities that date back with certainty, to this time.

For important comments I am especially indebted to, Luc Colson, for his approval to study and publish these interesting monuments. Assistant Prof. at Queen faculty of Arts, Dept of Egyptology, South Valley University, Egypt.


Forbes, D. Akhenaten. The all-but-Forgotten Thutmose in KMT vol. 11, no. 2, summer 2000, 62-75. (first article about the king. Thutmose II is an adaptation of a chapter from the Author’s forthcoming book, Imperial Lives: Illustrated Biographical Sketches of Significant New Kingdom. Volume I. The Early Eighteenth Dynasty, to be published by KMT). As with most reigns of the New Kingdom, there is little scholarly agreement on the length or exact time-frame of Akhenaten Thutmose III’s period on the throne. Some of the options are: Baines and Malek, 1492-1479; BC; Dodson, 1491-1479; Clayton, 1518-1504; Montet, 1510-1490; Grimal, 1493-1479; Steindorff and Seele, 1508-1504; Montet, 1510-1490.

for the preliminary mentioning for these blocks see: H. Chevrier, in ASAE 36, 1936, p. 137, id., ASAE 38, p. 600; id., ASAE 47, 1947, 172); id., ASAE 50 1950, p. 433; B. Letellier, «La cour à peristyle de Thoutmosis IV à Karnak (et la cour des fetes) de
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The gate and the fragment of the lintel, the subject of this article, have been built by Thutmosis II between the fifth and sixth pylons and later on were enlarged by Thutmosis III. But unfortunately their blocks were dismantled and reused during the rule of kings Thutmosis IV and Amenhotep III. 4

The style and the workmanship of the two monuments, which will be discussed in the following pages are very useful, the figures (all in sunk relief) are well drawn and the composition of the scenes is pleasing and the hieroglyphs are well designed. 5

1. The Gate
1.1. The archaeological circumstances of the blocks of the gate.
The blocks of the gate and the fragment of the lintel in question bearing the name of Thutmosis II have been already mentioned by L. Gabolde in his publication of the monuments of Thutmosis II at Karnak in (Cahiers de Kanak VIII, IX). They were discovered by Mohammed Abdul-Qader and Legrain during the restoration works carried at the third pylon at Karnak temple, where most of the Thutmosis II structures at Karnak were dismantled a few generations later - probably by Amenhotep III. Some of them were used as filler in the third pylon, preserving them for posterity. For these reasons, the gate with the lintel fragment of Thutmosis II found was broken into several pieces, together with a lintel of Thutmosis IV. These blocks were removed away from

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king Thutmose II, unfortunately the right one is missing. The god Amon wears his typical high crown with two plums. He is also dressed in an identical tight kilt with a bull’s tail fastened to his belt. He is extending his right arm towards the king’s name with a \( \Theta \) *\( \text{nh} \)-sign, the symbol of life. His left arm holds the same sign hanging down at his side.\(^9\)

1.4. Reconstruction of the gate
As it is pointed out, the gate has been reconstructed in 1997 in its preserving place at the Open Air Museum by the Egyptian-French team work of restoration who joined the blocks together and filled the gaps. Also the fragmentary text of the lintel was restored and completed by parallels found in other gates from the same period.\(^1\)

1.4.1. Translations and comments upon the inscriptions
The texts of the gate, in general, are restored and completed as follows:\(^1\)

1.4.1.1. The central cartouche of Thutmose II reads:
\[ (\Theta \rightarrow) n-sw-bit(y) \ nb \ itr \ '(\text{-}lpr-n-R) \ (\text{di} \text{-}f \text{\( \text{nh} \)).} \]
The king of upper and Lower Egypt, lord of fulfilling the rites (Aakhper-en-Re) (great is the form of Re) granted life.\(^1\)
The epithet relating to the winged sundisk, which means the personification of the Horus from Behdet, is preserved on both sides of the lintel and it reads as: \(^1\)


\(^{10}\) Le Saout, Maarouf, Zimmer, Karnak VIII, p. 303.

\(^{11}\) The fragmentary texts of our monuments are restored by parallels found in the same period at Karnak. For example, the complete gates belong to Thutmose IV and Amenhotep III. see L. Gabolde, op. cit., p. 36-37.

\(^{12}\) L. Gabolde, op. cit., p. 48-49.

\(^{13}\) J. Von Bcrath, op. cit., p. 225-226.

\(^{14}\) In the inscription, there are two different toponyms referring to Edfu: Behdet in terms of the sanctuary of Horus at Edfu and Mesen, probably a broader term referring to the Edfu settlement as a whole.
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their discovery place and scattered for a long time around the temple of Montu.\(^6\)

1.2. The already published information on the blocks:

The monuments of Thutmosis II originated from Karnak and dated to his reign are quite few, and unfortunately most of them were usurped or totally damaged. For example, the gate has been found in a very bad state of preservation and some of its blocks were reused during the time of Thutmosis IV and Amenhotep III. Although the gate of Thutmosis II, is mentioned and briefly, described by Luc Gabolde in Karnak IX, 1993, p. 27, 28. Unfortunately, the gate was never studied in detail and it is, therefore, the subject of this study.\(^7\)

1.3. Measurements and discription:

The limestone lintel of this gate is 3.75 m long, 2.15 m high, and 1.20 m thick. The south door jamb is 1.57 m long, 3.20 m high, and 1.40 m thick. The north door jamb is 1.17 m long, 3.35 m high, and 1.70 m thick.

The incomplete lintel consists of four pieces. Two main fragments at its left side with two smaller fragments at its central part are missing. Most of decoration about two third of the lintel are defaced (disfigured).

The whole composition of the lintel is topped by the sky sign \(^7\) supported on both sides by the \(\text{s'w's}^7\) scepters (symbol of dominion.) Below the sky, still above the central pair of the standing figures of Amon (one figure of him at the right side is missing except the two plums of his crown are preserved) there is a sun disk with outstretched wings and with two pendent uraei on both sides of the disk.\(^8\)

The god Amon appears on the scenes of the lintel on its both sides, facing two vertically cartouches containing the name of the

\(^6\) L. Gabolde, op. cit., 48-49.

\(^7\) For a similar arrangement see H. G. Fisher, The Orientation of hieroglyphs I, Reversals, 20, 92-97, figs. 18: 21.
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Bḥdšt ntr '3, nb pt dl=f ('nh)
"The Behdētī, the great god, lord of the sky. May he be given (life)"

1.4.1.2. The inscription of the left part of the lintel:

(«) Bḥdšt, ntr '3 nb pt dl(f) 'nh
"The Behdētī, the great god, lord of the sky May he be given life". The inscription (begins from outside to inside): where the god Amon grant 'nh-sign, the symbol of life to Horus who stands on the palace facade (serekh) followed by the erased cartouche of the king Thutmose II.

(d) Hr k3 nb t wsr plht(l)

The victorious bull Wser phty, the son of Re, beget (him) from his body, Thutmose II nb-Rṣ.

1.4.1.3. The upper inscription (above the columns) is:

(«) dl 'nh gb (who is granted eternally life)

1.4.1.4. The lower column under the god reads:

(«) 1mn Rṣ nb pt ( Amon-Re lord of the sky.)

1.4.1.5. The column in front of the god reads:

(«) dl 'nh nb ḡd wṣ nb The one who is given all life, all stability and force.

1.4.1.6. The caption at the back of the god reads:

(«) ḡd mdw: dl n(zl) n ḡk 'nh, wṣ nb ni Rṣ Words to be spoken: I have given to you all life and force, all health like Re

The inscription in the central part mentions Wadjet.

In this part, the goddess Wadjet stands upon the nb-sign, holding the Sn-circle, the scene is surrounded by a papyrus flower.

1.4.1.7. The text under the goddess reads:

(Wṣdt dl zṣ 'nh wṣ ni Rṣ gb)


P. Barguet, op. cit., 150.
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Wadjet, she is given life and force eternally like Re.

1.4.1.8. The caption at back of the goddess reads:
\[ \text{Wadj Dp P nb.t p.t m hnw pr-Mnw hnw.t ntr.w.} \]
Wadjet of Dep and Pe, mistress of the sky in Pr-Mnw, lady of the gods.\(^{17}\)

1.4.1.9. In the south part of the lintel, Amon is represented standing and facing left and he is granting the \( \text{nb-sign, the symbol of life} \) to the name of the king as \( \text{w r} \) Thutmosis II.

\( \text{(\( \rightarrow \)) Hr k3 nb.t wsr phi(l)} \) Horus, the strong bull wser-phty
\( \text{s3 R'} Dhwty ms nty-R', dt (\text{nb})} \) the son of Re Dhwty Mes (may he be given) eternally life.

1.4.1.10. Under these columns read:
\( \text{(\( \leftarrow \)) di 'nb \{nbb\}} \) The one who is given life \{eternally\}

1.4.1.11. The caption under the god reads:
\( \text{(\( \rightarrow \)) Inn-R' nb p.t Amon-Re the lord of sky.} \)
\( \text{(the column of the text in front of the god is disappeared)} \)
\( \text{(\( \leftarrow \)) di 'nb \ nb \ w5s nb \ (The one who is) given all life, all\}} stability and force.

1.4.1.12. The column behind the figure of the god Amon reads:
\( \text{(\( \rightarrow \)) dd ndu: \ d i n(\text{=}) n=k 'nb w5s nb \ ni R'}} \) "Words to be spoken: (I) have given to you \{all\} life and force\{all health (prosperity) like Re.

1.4.1.13. In the middle part of the lintel stands the goddess Nbjt above the \( \text{nb-sign with lotus-blossom, giving the } \) &n-circle to the king. The inscriptions under the goddess reads:
\( \text{(\( \leftarrow \)) Nbjt (hd.t) d\(t\)s 'nb w5s ni R'} \ ) d.t.\)
Nekhbet, (the white one) of Nekhn, she is given life and dominion eternally.

\(^{17}\) Bonnet, \textit{RARG}, p. 853-854.


\(^{19}\) A common epithet associated with the god Amon-Re, see P. Barguet, temple d' Amon-Re à Karnak, 150.
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1.4.1.14. The caption at back of Nekhbet reads:
\[\text{Nekhbet the white one of Nekhen.}^{20}\]

1.4.2. The inscription of the two door jambs can also be reconstructed as follows

1.4.2.1. Left door jamb: (west), Its inscription disposed in three vertical lines of texts

\[\text{(a) } \text{Hr k3 nght wsr-phty nfr nfr} \text{ '3-hpr-n-R'} \text{ mry ttn nb n sw(t) tswy}\]
\[\text{di } 'nh \text{ mR}' \text{ t.t}\]

Horus, the strong bull victorious, Wser Phtj, the good god Aa-kheper-en-Re beloved of Amon, lord of the thrones of the two lands, who is given life eternally like Re.

\[\text{(b) Nbty n-sw(t)-bity n-sw(t) nfr.w s3 ttn Dhwty-mst ndty R'} \text{ mry ttn R}' \text{ ns(w(t) ntrw di } 'nh \text{ mR}' \text{ t.t}\]

Who belongs to the two ladies (goddesses), the King of gods, the son of Amon, Dhwty-Mes Ndjtly-Re, beloved of Amon-Re the king of the gods, who is given eternally life like Re.

\[\text{(c) } \text{Hr nwb shtm hprw nb b.w it lb.t nfr n-sw(t)-bity ('} \text{3-hpr-n-R'} \text{) mry ttn-R'} \text{ h' tpy t3.wy nb p.t di } 'nh \text{ mi R}' \text{ t.t}\]

The golden Horus Sekhem-Kheperu, lord of diadems, who wears the beautiful and white crown, the king of upper and lower Egypt Aa-kheper-en-Re, beloved of Amon-Re, who is upon the two lands, lord of the sky, who is given life eternally like Re.

1.4.2.2. The inscriptions of the left door-jamb are repeated at the south door jamb on three vertical lines, unfortunately their state of preservation are lesser than the right one, though they are reconstructed as follows:

\[\text{(a) } \text{Hr k3 nght wsr phtl nfr nfr} \text{ '3-hpr-n-R'} \text{ mry ttn nb ns(w(t) tswy}\]
\[\text{di } 'nh \text{ mR}' \text{ t.t}\]

Horus, the strong bull victorious, Wser Phtj, the good god Aa-kheper-en-Re beloved of Amon, lord of the thrones of the two lands, who is given life eternally likes Re.\[^{21}\]

{b} Nbty n-sw(t)-bity nsw(t) nfr:w s3 Inn Djhwty-ns nnty R' mry
Inn R' n-sw(t) nfr:w di 'nḫ mi R' q.t
(The king who) belongs to the two ladies, the king of gods, the
son of Amon, Djhwty Mes Nedjty Re, beloved of Amon-Re, the
king of the gods, who is given eternally life like Re.

{c} Hr nbw shn hprw nb b'y w it hdp.t nfr n-sw(t)-bity (?)-hpr-n-R')
mry Inn-R' hr tpy t,iwy nb p.t di 'nḫ mi R' q.t.22
The golden Horus Sekhem-Kheperu, lord of diadems, who wears
the beautiful and white crown, the king of upper and lower Egypt
Aa-kheper-en-Re, beloved of Amon Re, who is upon the two
lands, lord of the sky, who is given life eternally like Re.23

2. Fragment of lintel of Thutmosis II:
This fragment of the lintel was found by Legrain in the depres
"de la cour de la Cachette" foundation sector A, in front of the 4th
Pylon at Karnak. It is more probably formed main gate for the
festival hall and some of its blocks used as filler in the third pylon
erected by Amenhotep III. and is now stored in the open air
museum at karnak under the registration number B 111 (LG
403).24

2.1. Measurements and description:
2.1.1. The fragment of limestone lintel measure 135 cm long,
114,5 cm high and 91 cm thick. The surface of the block is
relatively well preserved except on the right part and the left
corner of the relief being completely lost. Both the relief and the
inscriptions are made in sunken relief. The incomplete monument
consists of two main pieces. The right part with the lower corner
of the left part being completely lost.
2.1.2. The decoration of the fragmentary relief arranged into two
symmetrical groups facing towards the center (the right part is

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For the similar arrangement of the epithets associated with Amon (Nb
twy nb b'y w) see Urk. IV 1688, 9, 1694, 9.

22 The golden Horus name is more disputed. Some high authorities have
supposed, that the monogram symbolized Horus as victorious over
Nbt (b), the Ombite i.e the god Set who was worshipped at Ombos
near the modern Kas. For more details see: A. Gardiner, Egyptian
Grammar, and p.73.

23 Ibid, p. 73.

24 L. Gabolde, Karnak VIII, 1982-1985, p.307, pl. VIII B.
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missing but there is a fair possibility that it was identical with that situated on the left side.

2.1.3. The whole composition of the lintel is topped by the sky sign \( \text{p.t} \) supported by the \( \text{w3-} \) scepters. Below the sky above the central pair of the standing figures of Amon and the king (were lost) still the winged sun disk with two uraei on both sides of the disk (the feathers of wings only remain).

2.2. Translations and comments upon the inscriptions

2.2.1. The epithet relating to the winged sun, the personification of the Horus from Behdet, is preserved on the left side of the lintel and it reads:

\[- (\text{ Behdet, the great god with colored plume, lord of the sky; (May) he be given life.)}\]

2.2.2. The symmetrically placed horizontal inscription to the right of the sun disk with outstretched wings is missing but it should be identical with the left side as follows:

\[- (\text{ Behdet, the great god with the colored plume, lord of the sky (or lord of Mesen?) May he be given life).}\]

In the above mentioned inscriptions and in the traditional texts of the New Kingdom documents, there are two different toponyms referring to Edfu: Behdet in terms of the sanctuary of Horus at Edfu and Mesen, probably a broader term referring to the Edfu settlement as a whole.

The goddess Nekhbet closes the procession of gods on the left side of the lintel. (Disappeared) In her hands she holds two long palm fronds, symbols of million of years, in front of her the god Set, which the upper part of his ear only remain.

\[\text{L. Habachi, Tell Basta. fig.2.}\]
\[\text{A.H. Gardiner, JEA 30, 1944, 23ff.}\]
2.2.3. The column below Nekhbet reads:

\(\text{\textit{di}} \text{\textit{s}} \text{\textit{n}b} \text{ \textit{dd} \text{\textit{w}3s} \text{\textit{nb}} \text{ (May)} \text{ She be given all life, all stability and dominion.} \text{\textit{Nh}t \text{\textit{hd}t} \text{\textit{Nh}n}, \text{\textit{3w}t-\textit{f}}} \text{\textit{ht3w} Nekhbet, the white one of Nekhen, stretch (its) sail? } \text{\textit{nb}t \text{\textit{p}t} \text{ mistress of the sky ....?}} \text{\textit{hnw}t \text{\textit{ntr-w}}} \text{ mistress of the gods.}}^{29} \)

2.2.4. The columns below the god reconstructed on three vertical lines reads as follows:

\(\text{\textit{di} \text{\textit{s}f} \text{\textit{n}h} \text{ \textit{dd} \text{\textit{w}3s} \text{\textit{nb}} \text{ (May) He be given all life, all stability and dominion.} \text{\textit{Nbt(y) nb t3 \textit{3n}t}} \text{ Ombite, lord of the south,} \text{\textit{hnt sIs} w} \text{ who settle in Sesou}} \)

2.2.5. The column behind the god reads:

\(\text{\textit{dd} \text{\textit{m}d}w: \text{\textit{di}n (=f) n-k \textit{rup} \textit{wt} \textit{nhn} \textit{hr} \textit{ist-hr} \textit{q} \textit{ti} \textit{ni} \textit{R}} \text{ Words to be spoken: I have given to you eternal years (may you) appear on the throne of Horus eternally like Re.}}^{30} \)

For the bad state of preservation of this monument, specially the right part which is totally missing, the two cartouches of the king Thutmosis II in front of the figure of the god Amon in both sides were missing.

It seems that the king represents the central motif of the scene of this lintel. He is being offered by Amon (the main god of Thebes) and Horus and Nekhbet and Seth respectively.

2.3. Conclusion

A number of results can be drawn from the evidence presented in the previous pages as follows:

2.3.1. Our monument from Karnak is almost identical with the previously mentioned gate of the same king where the god Amon seemingly a principal god worshipped in Karnak.

2.3.2. The design at the top of the lintel helps in determining a date in the beginning of eighteenth dynasty lintels. Some of iconography details place the lintel of the eighteenth dynasty for the piece, as the upper decoration is typical of the period of the

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30 For the Throne of Horus as Edfu see: Gauthier, Dictionnaire V, 84: also LeGrain, \textit{ASA} IV, 1903, p. 13.
New Kingdom: the whole composition of the lintel topped by the sky sign p.t supported by the w3-scepter and the winged sun disk with two urae occurs most frequently during that period.

2.3.3. The terminology of the epithet relating to the winged sun disk, the personification of Horus from Behdet refers to the same date.

2.3.4. The exact provenance spot of the monument is the third pylon built by Amenhotep III but its original position is in the festival hall erected by Thutmosis II between the fifth and the sixth pylon. Regarding the composition and arrangement of the scene, it seems plausible that the lintel was made originally as part of a monumental gateway erected by Thutmosis II and it was completed by his royal wife Hatshepsut and her son Thutmosis III. A close parallel to the lintel provides evidence from the reign of Amenhotep III (gate C Karnak IX p.44-47) in the northern wall of festival hall from Karnak.

3. General Commentary:

3.1. The architecture style of the gates built at Karnak temple on the first half of dynasty XVIII could be viewed as a final development of the classic Egyptian style that had grown up in the Middle Kingdom.

3.2. The great work of the period is the temple of Amon at Karnak. While the name of Thutmosis II was attested on many buildings, which were erected during his short reign, it is completed after his death by his royal wife Hatshepsut or by his son Thutmosis III.

3.3. These buildings evolved according to a principle of the additive growth, which is so characteristic of the great Egyptian sanctuaries. Karnak, being the best preserved of these, provides the most striking example of such structural accumulation over the centuries.

3.4. The two points requiring more elucidation are the exact finding spot of the two documents, and the significant function of the festival hall which our two documents were used. Actually, the inscriptions offer no clue. The blocks of the two gates of the festival hall have been reused in the entire Karnak complex.
3.5. Regarding the finding spot, they certainly come from the debris of the third pylon erected by Amenhotep III as it was stated by M. A. Abdul Qader.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{31} Abdul Qader Muhammad, op.cit., 145, pls. VII-VIII, X-XVII.
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