

Preliminary report on work carried out during the field season 2013 – 2014

Work related to the study of the undecorated non-royal tombs in the side valley leading to KV 34 of Thutmosis III was carried out between November 2013 and April 2014.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the Minister of State for Antiquities Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim and the Secretary General Dr. Mustafa Amin, to the Director of Foreign Missions Dr. Mohamed Ismail Khaled, to the General Director of the Antiquities of Egypt Mr. Ali El-Asfar, to the General Director of Upper Egypt in Luxor Mr. Abd El-Hakim Karrar, to the General Director of Luxor East and West Mr. Ibrahim Soleiman and to the General Director of Luxor Sultan Eid and to the Inspectorate of Western Thebes and its General Directors Dr. Mohamed Abd El-Aziz and Talaat Abd El-Aziz, to the Director of the Westbank Mr. Nour Abd El-Ghaffar, to the Director of the Valley of the Kings Mr. Ayman Mohamed Ibrahim and the inspectors Mr. Mohamed Asab, Alaa Hussein Mahmud and Ahmed Abu El-Kassim for their helpful cooperation, assistance and advice during our working season.

Participants during this season were: Susanne Bickel: Project Director, Egyptologist; Elina Paulin-Grothe: Field-Director, Egyptologist; Tanja Alsheimer: Archaeologist; Agnieszka Wos-Jucker: Textile Conservator; Erico Peintner: Conservator; Mataz Kacicnik: Photographer; Faried Adrom, David Aston, Miriam Hauser, Salima Ikram, Nadine Meier, Yasmin Müller, Hans-Hubertus Münch, Daniel Reber, Katharina Vogt: Egyptologists; Frank Rühli, Anatomist-Palaeopathologist.

The work concentrated on the following tasks:

KV 40

- surveying and mapping of KV 40
- clearing of KV 40 rooms D, E, and F
- cleaning, conservation, and documentation of finds from KV 40
- study of inscribed pottery fragments from KV 40

KV 36

- surveying, mapping and photographic documentation of KV 36
- clearing of KV 36 and construction of a protective structure

documentation, conservation, and study

- architectural survey of KV 33
- photographic documentation of tomb structures and objects
- documentation of the finds and of the study material of KV 59 and KV 33
- study of the pottery from KV 31, KV 33, KV 36 and KV 30
- study and conservation of textiles from KV 64 and KV 40
- study of the human remains from KV 64 and KV 31
- study of animal remains from KV 31

Tomb KV 40

History of the work in KV 40: No previous record of archaeological research on KV 40 is known (fig. 1). Work of the *University of Basel Kings' Valley Project* began in 2011 with the clearing of the shaft A and of the corridor B and with a pre-clearing survey of room C. A protective structure was installed to cover the shaft entrance, this intervention leading to the discovery of KV 64 immediately next to KV 40. In 2012 room C was documented and cleared. In 2013 a pre-clearing survey and photographic survey was realised of room D, E and F and part of room D was cleared. This season, after a revision of the pre-clearing documentation (fig. 2), rooms D, E and F were cleared following a pre-defined grid of rectangular quadrants.

This large tomb structure contained important quantities of pottery, fragmentary burial equipment of wood, cartonnage, and textile, as well as human remains (estimated about 50 individuals). Due to at least three robbing and looting phases in Antiquity and in the 19th/early 20th century, and as a result of the fire that affected all rooms, the remains are in a very disturbed and fragmentary condition (fig. 3).

The analysis of the remains will be the main task of the following seasons. A preliminary overview of the material shows that the tomb was used for multiple interments during two distinct phases, one in the 18th dynasty, and one in the 22nd dynasty.

The original tomb owners of KV 40: During the current field season, KV 40 could be identified as the burial place of members of the families of the pharaohs Thutmosis IV and Amenhotep III (ca. 1400-1350 BC).

Among the very abundant pottery fragments, some sherds bear hieratic inscriptions in black or yellow paint (fig. 4). A preliminary study of these inscriptions has revealed the identity of over 30 individuals buried in KV 40, among which at least eight wear the title of "King's daughter" and four the title of "King's son". Taking into account the textual evidence as well as the material setting of KV 40, it appears that this tomb served as burial place for people of the royal family, for both children and adults. Among the human remains, several new-borns or small infants could be identified; their elaborate mummification points to their high-status background. Next to princesses, princes and individuals without titles, the jar inscriptions reveal another group of people, namely foreign women designated as such by the orthographic determinative affixed to their hieroglyphic names. They can tentatively be connected with the numerous women who accompanied the foreign princesses whom the pharaohs brought to the Egyptian royal court in course of diplomatic marriages and who presumably also lived in the royal living quarters.

With this discovery, the *University of Basel Kings' Valley Project* fills an important gap in Egyptological research, insofar as the individuals buried in the non-royal tombs of this necropolis hitherto remained largely anonymous.



Fig. 1. The area of KV 40 and KV 64 in 2009.



Fig. 2. KV 40, room D, square G2.

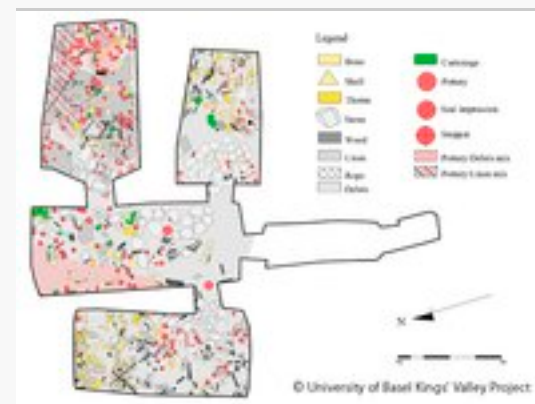


Fig. 3. Pre-clearing survey in KV 40, rooms C, D, E, F. (T. Alsheimer)



Fig. 4. Storage jar with inscription from KV 40.



Fig. 5. Fragment of an 18th dynasty cartonnage funerary mask and constructional detail. (E. Peintner)



Fig. 6. Surroundings of KV 36 with shaft entrance. (M. Kacicnik)

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Anthropological analyses as well as examination of the fragmentary burial goods will provide further insight into the social and ethnic structure of the pharaonic court during the 18th dynasty, as well as into the conditions of life and the burial customs.

Conservation work mainly focused on the cleaning (removal of soot), consolidation and analysis of cartonnage fragments. Corresponding to the tomb structure's two periods of use, two groups of cartonnage can be differentiated on the basis of technical and typological criteria: the first group includes fragments of linen cartonnage with black and yellow stripes belonging to funerary masks of the 18th dynasty. Different types of layering and application of raw material indicate the provenience of these masks from several workshops (fig. 5). Polychrome cartonnage fragments covered with an albuminous varnish can be attributed to the second group and belong to mummy containers of the 22nd dynasty.

Fragments from wooden coffins were consolidated, and at least 11 types of different luting substances coming from the sealing of joints between wooden boards of coffins or furniture could be identified.

The architectural survey of tomb KV 40 was continued from previous seasons. The coordinate system set up by the Theban Mapping Project was adopted for the tomb and could be assigned to the subterranean structure via laser measuring down the 5,5m deep shaft. The geodetic and architectural survey of rooms C and D and E was successfully accomplished paying special attention to steps and entrances into the rooms as well as the specific door shapes of each room.

Tomb KV 36

Tomb KV 36 was discovered by Victor Loret in 1899, its burial goods are now in the Cairo Museum. It belonged to a young man from the royal nursery called Maiherperi. The tomb has a single chamber. A general survey was undertaken by the Theban Mapping Project in the 1980s.

On request of the Egyptian authorities, the tomb and its immediate surroundings were cleared from large quantities of litter and sand. A pre-clearing survey was carried out, integrating some of the surrounding landscape features such as the mountain face outline and topographical levels in the immediate vicinity. Three survey points for absolute height were measured next to the shaft entrance in order to assist further clearing. In the course of the work carried out during this survey, special care was taken to map specific features of the shaft of KV 36 such as the rock-cut mountain conglomerate lip that makes out the western side of the shaft (fig. 6).

The entrance to the tomb chamber is marked by a bold red line of paint (fig. 7). The chamber itself is well cut. Fragments of three incomplete storage jars still remained, although it is unclear whether they were left there by Loret in 1899, or were introduced sometime later.

An architectural and a topographical survey as well as an extensive photographic documentation were realised and a secure protective structure with an iron door installed at the entrance of the shaft.

Documentation, conservation, and study

Tomb KV 59

Tomb KV 59 was relocated and cleared in 2010. The documentation of the study material found mainly in the shaft and the surroundings of the small tomb was completed this season.

Tomb KV 33

KV 33 was cleared last year. Large amounts of pottery, some fragmentary stone vessels and wooden fragments were found. No object revealed the identity of the original tomb owner(s). The finds and study material from KV 33 – especially some fragments of fine "alabaster" vessels – were documented this season.

The pottery assemblage shows a typological grouping of medium-sized bowls with red splash decoration on the one hand and at least 40 large storage jars which were probably used for the storing of mummification material on the other hand. Most of these vessels could be reconstructed from base to rim (fig. 8). The high number of vessels might suggest that originally three people were buried in KV 33. Other vessel forms are rare: a delicate red-slipped carinated bowl with a black band at the rim, as well as a few larger carinated bowls with red rims, and a single flower pot came to light. Marl clay vessels were only represented by a handful of sherds. The overwhelming presence of red splash decoration and the similarity of the material to that from KV 31 indicate a dating for this pottery into the reign of Tutmosis III.

A complete architectural survey of the KV 33 was carried out, and the ground plan outline of the tomb was recorded alongside sections of all rooms. This data will be used for modeling a detailed 3D reconstruction of the tomb. Special attention was given to architectural features such as door shapes and step shapes, and to the debris lines still visible along the walls.

The photographic documentation of KV 33 has been completed.

Tomb KV 30

The pottery from KV 30 is distinctly different from the one in KV 33 and KV 31, and there is no doubt that it belongs to a later pottery phase which developed during the reign of Amenhotep III (and continued down to the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty). Not much pottery has remained – only 43 vessels being numbered – but it comprised Nile clay pots, Marl clay vessels, and Canaanite imports. The Nile clay corpus included small plates, flower pots, a funnel necked jar, a solitary beer jar and at least three large storage jars which differ from the vessels found in KV 31 and KV 33 in being much wider. Besides this fragments of at least five Marl D amphorae were found, along with at least three LB IIB Canaanite Jars.

Study and conservation of textiles

The analysis of the textile fragments from KV 64 was continued and is now completed. An evaluation of the various qualities of textiles and of the quantity of material involved in the mummification of one person is being prepared.

In KV 40 an almost entire linen sock was found. It has been cleaned and consolidated by the textile conservator (Agnieszka Wos-Jucker, Abegg Stiftung Riggisberg/Switzerland), giving it back its original shape and appearance (fig. 9). Consolidation work on this item will continue next season.

Photographic documentation of tomb structures and objects

The photographic coverage of tombs KV 33 and KV 36 was completed and interactive panoramaic images of these tombs as well as of KV 64 were created. Finds from KV 64 were photographed for the forthcoming publication.

Study of the human remains from KV 64 and KV 31

In preparation of a publication (F. Rühli, S. Ikram, S. Bickel), the remains of the five mummies found in KV 31 were visually reassessed

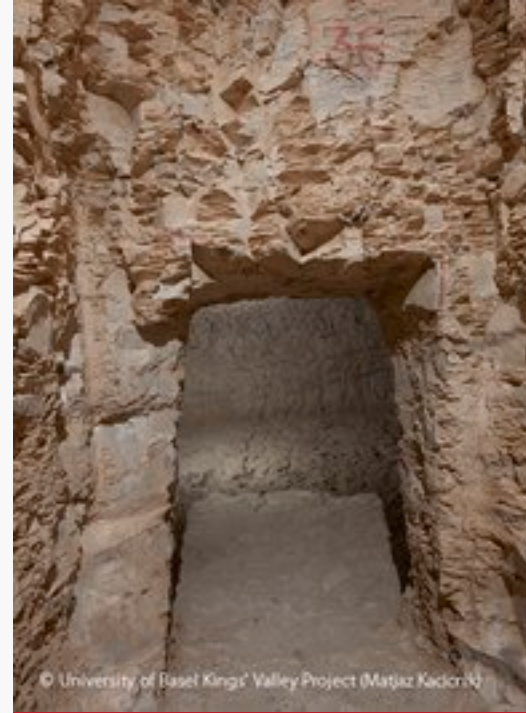


Fig. 7. KV 36. View of entrance passage and burial chamber. (M. Kacicnik)



Fig. 8. Pottery from KV 33 reassembled.



Fig. 9. Pharaonic sock during conservation and consolidation work.

by Prof. Frank Rühli (University of Zurich). The description of the 18th dynasty mummy from KV 64 was refined. The intended x-ray investigation of both mummies from KV 64 had to be postponed.

Study of animal remains from KV 31

KV 31 contained an abundant ensemble of animal remains (mainly bovine and birds). The identification, assessment, and preparation for publication was undertaken by Prof. Salima Ikram (American University, Cairo).