

The Southern Room of Amun in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari: epigraphic work between 2014 and 2015

Katarzyna Kapiec

Antiquity of Southeastern Europe Research Centre University of Warsaw

Abstract: The Southern Room of Amun Project is one of the egyptological projects of the PCMA's Polish–Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Mission in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. The paper presents epigraphic work carried out in this room between 2014 and 2015, during which almost the entire wall decoration was recorded. The article is a wall-by-wall presentation, paying special attention to the most important transformations of the reliefs over time.

Keywords: Southern Room of Amun, Temple of Hatshepsut, Deir el-Bahari, epigraphy, wall decoration

The Southern Room of Amun Project, initiated by the author in 2014, is one of the egyptological projects of the PCMA's Polish–Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Mission in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. The project aims to prepare a complete documentation and interpretation of this room, replacing Édouard Naville's publication of this part of the temple (1906: 6–7, Pls CXXX–CXXXVIII) that has been used by generations of researchers.

The first stages of the project encompass epigraphic work based on facsimiles of inscriptions done *in situ*, aimed at determining the various kinds of alterations made to the decoration, and a search of the stock of collected loose temple blocks to identify missing pieces. Considering

that the function of the Southern Room of Amun in the Upper Courtyard complex is an egyptological issue of prime concern, this kind of precise documentation is an important tool for further studies of the decoration of this room and its role in the ritual topography of the temple.

GENERAL REMARKS

The Southern Room of Amun (also known as the Southern Chapel or the Chamber of Amun) is located in the southwestern corner of the Upper Courtyard of the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari [Fig. 1]. Its dimensions at ground level are approximately 3.20 m by 2.70 m. All scenes inside and outside were bordered with a dado, block-border and splay-topped *kbeker*-frieze (Kołodko-Dolińska

1990: 30–52). The polychromy of the inner decoration is remarkably well-preserved, having been conserved in 2006/2007 (Uchman-Laskowska 2010). The outer decoration consists of jambs and a lintel. No name of the room helpful in defining its function can be found on the jambs. The coronation scene above the outer lintel has been reconstructed by the Polish team (Kwaśnica 2001: 81–87). The decoration of the inner walls of the room consists of a single register carved in raised relief; it depicts offerings of oils performed by Hatshepsut before Amun-Ra-Kamutef (west and east walls; Naville 1906: Pls CXXXI–CXXXII), offerings of two different kinds of linen performed by Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III before Amun-Ra (double scene on the south wall;

Naville 1906: Pl. CXXXIII; Sankiewicz 2011: Fig. 8) and a scene of Amun embracing Hatshepsut on the right side of the north inner wall (Naville 1906: Pl. CXXX). A frieze of objects appears on the north inner wall, just above the lintel over the entrance; it presents several vases for oils and chests for linen (Naville 1906: Pl. CXXX; Kapiec 2016b: 96–97, Fig. 2).

Several alterations of the decoration were observed in the course of the epigraphic work. These have been dated to different periods: reign of Tuthmosis III,¹ Amarna² and the late Eighteenth Dynasty/Ramesside period.³ Several graffiti and *dipinti* were added during the Hellenistic and Roman ages (Łajtar 2006: 232–236) and in the Byzantine period (Godlewski 1986: 22, 24–25, 106–107).

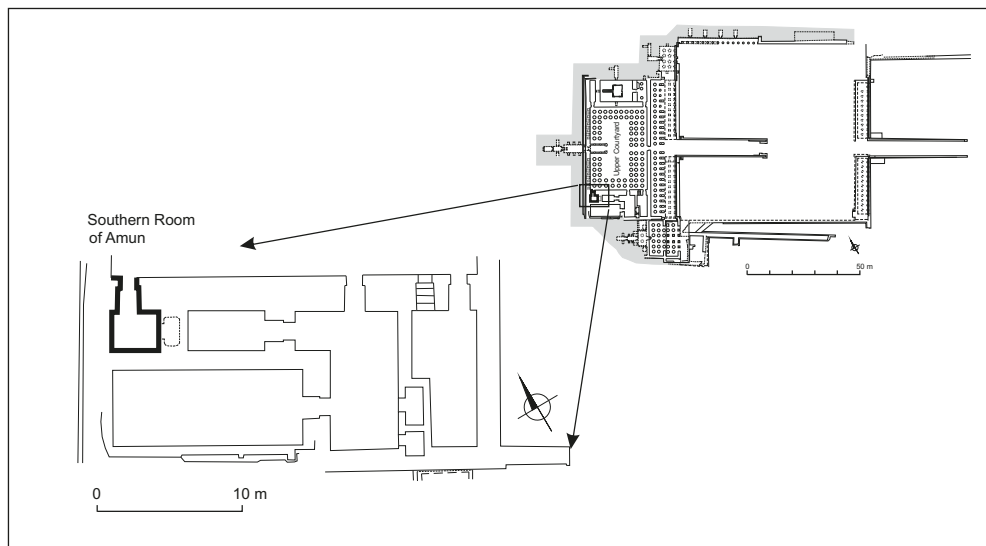


Fig. 1. Plan of the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari showing the location of the Southern Room of Amun (PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/drawing T. Dziedzic, modified K. Kapiec)

¹ More on the Tuthmosis III erasures of Hatshepsut's memory in Dorman 1988: 46–65; 2005; Nims 1966; Roth 2005.

² More on erasures of the figures of gods and epithets in Assmann 2012; Bickel 1997: 92–94; Dodson 2010: 46–47.

³ Restoration of Amarna period mutilations commenced in the reign of Tutankhamun and was continued by his successors up to the Ramesside period (Brand 1999b: 114; 2010: 6–9; Eaton-Krauss 2003: 195–199).

The Southern Room of Amun was recorded in part and published by Naville (as the Chamber of the South-West Corner of the Upper Court, Naville 1906: 6–7, Pls CXXX–CXXXIII). Despite the undeniable value of this early publication, the method applied at the time was not adequate to the task of recording all the details of the decoration, especially in the recarved areas, including traces of original reliefs and the painted layer. These have now been documented using a tracing technique that involves drawing

with permanent markers on plastic foil in 1:1 scale, then scanning the images and digitizing them for use in the ultimate study and publication.

Documentation started with the east wall (spring and autumn of 2014 and in 2015), continuing and overlapping with the south wall (autumn of 2014), and the west and north walls (autumn of 2014 and autumn of 2015). The outer façade and ceiling started to be documented in 2015 (at time of printing in 2017, the façade was completed).

EPIGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

EAST WALL

The original decoration of the east wall depicted Hatshepsut together with her *ka* offering oil(s) in four vases to Amun (-Ra)-Kamutef. Several changes of the relief carving were observed and documented. During the reign of Tuthmosis III the prenomen of Hatshepsut (*M3't-k3-R'*) was replaced with the prenomen of Tuthmosis II (*3-hpr-n-R'*) [Fig. 2 top]. The original relief was damaged, the new signs from Tuthmosis II's name being carved into the old ones, which nonetheless remained recognizable. The sign for *r'* was left untouched. The Horus name of Hatshepsut (*Wsr-t-k3w*), on the head of her *ka*, was also mutilated and replaced by the Horus name of Tuthmosis II (*K3-nht-wsr-phjt*), which was not carved but merely painted in red. Another cartouche in the speech of Amun is mutilated as well, but no new name was carved in its place. Most of the feminine endings *.t*, *.t* and *.s* were left untouched, unlike the texts on the other walls of the discussed room.

Mutilation of the names of gods during the Amarna period was much more

invasive than the alterations in the time of Tuthmosis III, making the identification of the original relief outline more of a challenge. The erased decoration was then restored during the late Eighteenth Dynasty/Ramesside period (Brand 1999b: 114; 2010: 6–9; Eaton-Krauss 2003: 195–199). The image of a protective vulture appears above the figure of Hatshepsut. Tracing the original relief outlines indicates that Nekhbet was shown here originally, but during the post-Amarna restoration the name was changed to one designating Wadjet (*dptj ptj*, She of Dep and Pe) [Fig. 2 bottom].

The figure and the epithets of Amun (-Ra)-Kamutef suffered even worse damage than the names of Hatshepsut altered into names of Tuthmosis II; only small traces of the original relief outline can be recognized. The figure of the god was restored slightly bigger, in a manner typical of the late Eighteenth Dynasty/Ramesside period [Fig. 3]. The affected area of the mutilated decoration was levelled first and then filled with plaster and painted with whitewash (Brand 1999a: 40–44). New

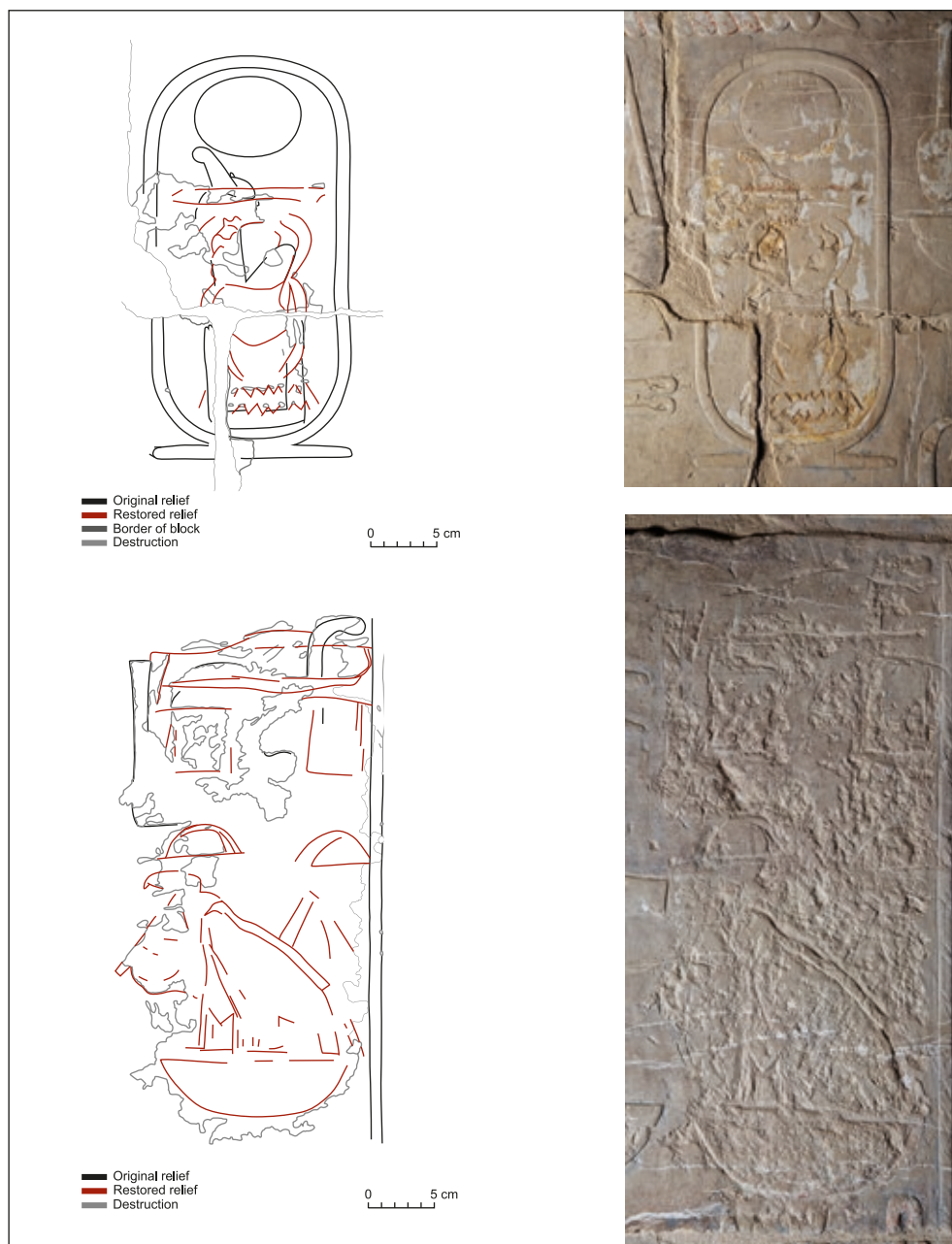


Fig. 2. Top, prenomen of Hatshepsut recarved into that of Tuthmosis II, east wall; bottom, name of Nekhbet recarved into that of Wadjet, east wall (PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/drawing K. Kapiec, photos M. Jawornicki)



Fig. 3. Restored figure of Amun-Ra-Kamutef on the east wall (PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki)

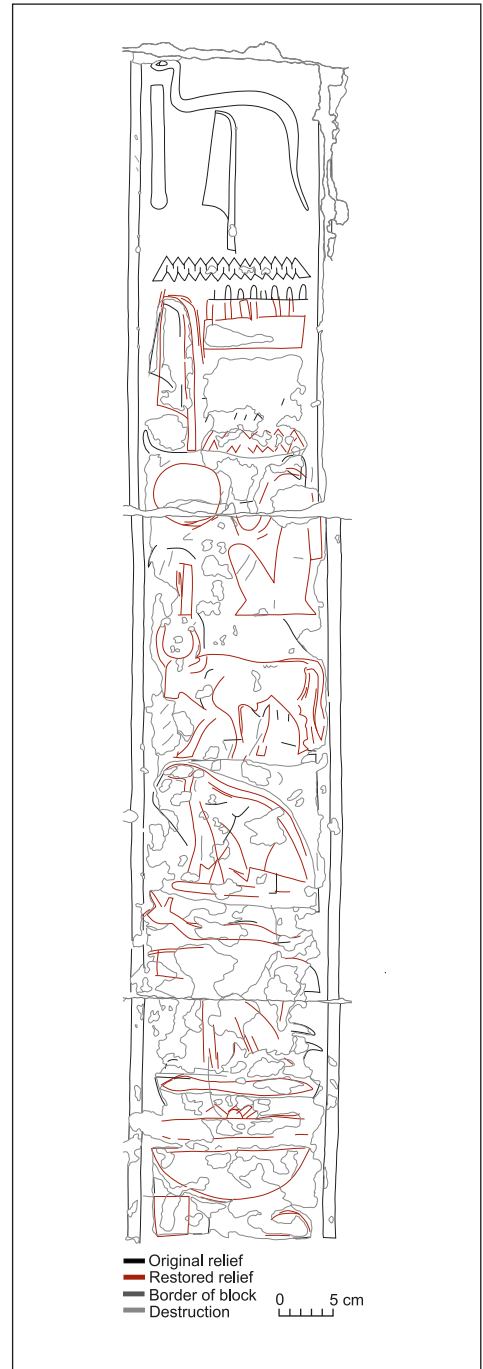


Fig. 4. Recarved fragment of Amun-Ra-Kamutef's epithets with traces of the original relief (PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/drawing K. Kapiec)




*Fig. 5. Text describing the offering scene on the eastern wall
(PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki)*

decoration was carved into the prepared surface, in careless raised relief, painted white, yellow, red and black. The choice of colors was rather limited compared to the original depictions. These repairs were not of the highest quality, hence the plaster showed a tendency to peel away, revealing the Amarna mutilations. Erased names and epithets were also restored in the same manner, usually just as a relief carving but sometimes applying red paint as well. Alterations of the text can be observed: the restored name, originally carved merely as Amun-Kamutef, had been changed into Amun-Ra-Kamutef. Moreover, traces of the original relief indicate that the original epithet here was *hrj st.f wrt nb pt* (One who is upon his Great Pedestal, Lord of the Sky),⁴ changing to *ntr '3 nb pt* (Great God, Lord of the Sky) once it was restored [Fig. 5].

Decoration of the east wall is preserved almost completely, the only missing parts of blocks being between the figures of Hatshepsut and Amun. These are fragments with text describing a scene of offering and of the god's speech. Preserved parts of the signs from the descriptive text can suggest that jbr oil was offered. Judging by the length of the scene caption and a parallel depiction on the west wall (see below), one can assume two kinds of oil being mentioned in the text. The gap between the beginning of the designation for jbr oil and the end of the offering caption is too big to be filled with the name of one oil only [Fig. 4]. Four vases are depicted on the west wall and two oils are listed in the offering text.

SOUTH WALL

The depiction on the south wall consists of an antithetic scene representing Hatshepsut offering the *mnht* linen to Amun-Ra on the left, and Tuthmosis III offering another type of linen to a second figure of Amun-Ra on the right. The gods are represented back to back. Hatshepsut is represented in a white crown while Tuthmosis III is wearing a red one. Although the signs of the caption of Tuthmosis III have vanished nearly completely, the first sign, Gardiner's M17, of the name of the linen has been preserved. There are five different possible names by which this textile could have been described in the text: *jrtjw*, *jtjwj*, *jdmj*, *jnsj* and *jfdj* (Scheele 2005: 9). It is worth noting that a chest with *jrtjw*-linen is depicted in the frieze of objects on the north wall (Kapiec 2016b: 97).

The signs in the scene on the right show some alterations dated to the times of Hatshepsut or Tuthmosis III. The speech of Amun seems to contain a spelling mistake: the sign *mrj* ('beloved') was used twice; this was corrected by means of recarving in the times of Hatshepsut/Tuthmosis III. In one case, the word *mrj* was recarved with a different spelling, , to fill the gap and in the other with the expression *n ht[j]* ('from my body') [Fig. 6]. Such a mistake could have been made under the influence of a parallel text from the scene on the left, where Hatshepsut is mentioned, and where, therefore, the feminine endings, later erased, were used to designate the queen. This made the composition of the text differ from the one without the feminine

⁴ There is one parallel to this epithet in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari – in the northern Lower Portico (Naville 1908: Pl. CLXI). Moreover, this epithet is attested in other buildings dated to the reign of Hatshepsut: in the Eighteenth Dynasty Small Temple at Medinet Habu (Medinet Habu 2009: Pl. 23), in the Chapelle Rouge in Karnak (Burgos and Larché 2006: 153, Block No. 87) and in the Speos Artemidos (Sethe 1906: 282, 15).

endings. To retain the same pattern in both texts, the sign *mrj* was used in the text on the right side unnecessarily in the place where the feminine ending was used in the text on the left. It seems then that it was decided to correct the text and the signs were gently recarved [see *Fig. 6*].

Other alterations applied on this wall bear features similar to those on the eastern one. There used to be three cartouches with the names of Hatshepsut: two with a nomen and one with a prenomen. The lattermost and one of the names with the nomen located next to the figure of the king were

both recarved with names of Tuthmosis II. The cartouche with the prenomen was recarved in a similar technique as on the east wall. In Hatshepsut's nomen her name was recarved with Tuthmosis II's name, but it seems that due to the presence of Amun's name in her nomen, it was decided to leave it and add the *mr*-sign to be read together as *Dḥwtj-ms(j) mr(j) Jmn* (Tuthmosis, beloved of Amun).⁵ During the Amarna period the name of Amun was erased and then restored only in paint. In the second nomen cartouche, only the name of Amun was restored, the rest remained erased.



*Fig. 6. Text above Amun-Ra's figures on the south wall
(PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki)*

⁵ Similar examples are attested in other parts of the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el Bahari (Beaux 2012: Pls 8, 10, 25, 29; Beaux et al. 2016: Pls 3x, 7a, 8a, 8c, 22a, 22b; Naville 1901: Pls XCIII, CI, CIII; 1906: Pl. CXX) and in the Eighteenth Dynasty temple in Medinet Habu (Medinet Habu 2009: Pls 29, 31, 43, 45, 57, 61, 65, 69, 71, 81).

The figures of Amun-Ra, his epithets and the epithets of protective birds were erased during the Amarna period and then restored, in a technique similar to that used on the east wall, during the late Eighteenth Dynasty/Ramesside period. The restored figures of Amun-Ra were bigger: the top part of the god's crown overlaps the text above. In the scene with Tuthmosis III on the right, the figures and the text next to Amun were recarved quite deeply, while the text in the scene on the left was restored in much less visible and very fine relief. The names of the protective goddesses (left scene, Nekhbet, right scene, Wadjet) were correctly restored.

The decoration of the south wall is preserved almost completely; the only missing parts are fragments of inscriptions, small fragments of Amun's figure and the crown of Tuthmosis III, all in the scene on the right.

WEST WALL

The original depiction representing Hatshepsut together with her *ka*, offering oils in four vases to Amun(-Ra)-Kamutef, was comparable to the scene on the east wall. Alterations were similar to those on other walls: the names of Hatshepsut were recarved for Tuthmosis II (two prenomen, one nomen and one Horus name). In Hatshepsut's nomen, the name of Amun was restored in relief, this time along with the nomen of Tuthmosis II, mirroring in this respect the south wall [Fig. 7]. Apart from recarving the names of Hatshepsut, her figure was transformed into an offering table.⁶ Still, the contour of her figure is visible and the description of offerings is



Fig. 7. Figure of Hatshepsut recarved for an offering table, west wall (PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki)

⁶ Similar examples of Hatshepsut's figure recarved into an offering table are attested in the Upper Courtyard of the Temple of Deir el-Bahari (north wall), Karnak (Barguet 1962: 150), Eighteenth Dynasty Small Temple at Medinet Habu (Medinet Habu 2009: Pls 38–41, 50–55, 120, 123–125).

preserved, enumerating two oils: *stj-hb* and *hknw* [Fig. 8]. The figure of Amun together with his epithets was erased and then restored in a similar way as on the previously described walls. The epithet of Wadjet was not entirely erased; only the first sign *d* in her title (*dptj ptj*, She of Dep and Pe) and the determinative depicting a cobra had been mutilated and then restored.

The decoration of this wall is preserved almost completely, missing only some parts of the speech of Amun(-Ra)-Kamutef and the figure of Hatshepsut's *ka*.

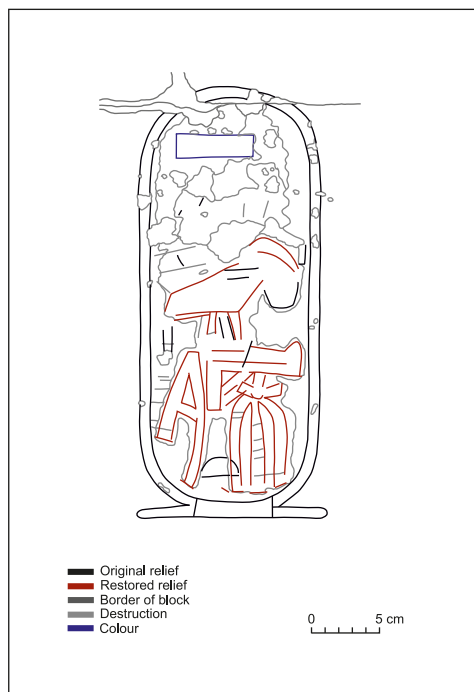


Fig. 8. Recarved nomen of Hatshepsut, west wall (PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/drawing K. Kapiec)

NORTH WALL

The decoration of the wall consists of a lintel and jambs, the so-called frieze of objects located above the lintel and an embracing scene with Amunet and Hatshepsut in the western part of the discussed wall. Hatshepsut's names (two prenomens and one nomen) in the embracing scene with Amunet and on the lintel were changed to those of Tuthmosis II in a similar way as on all the other walls in the room. On the right jamb, the original names were erased and no other names were carved inside the cartouches. Only



Fig. 9. Restored name and epithets of Amunet with traces of original relief, north wall (PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/drawing K. Kapiec)

the name of Amun in Hatshepsut's nomen was restored along with epithets of Amun in the text. On the left jamb, the original names of Tuthmosis III were accompanied by restored epithets of Amun. The figure of Amunet and her epithets were erased and restored in the same way as other figures of Amun in the room. At the end of the accompanying inscription there are remains of the *t* and *pt* signs. This probably indicates that prior to the restored epithet *hr(jt)-jb Jpt-swt* (One who resides in Karnak), the signs *nbt pt* (Lady of the sky)⁷ were placed there [Fig. 9]. The so-called frieze of objects consists of two rows of images, one with vessels with oils and the other one with chests containing linen (Naville 1906: Pl. CXXX; Kapiiec 2016b: 96–97, Fig. 2). Thanks to careful and detailed documentation it was possible to trace the fine decoration preserved on the two chests. This painted decoration was executed in red on a yellow background (Kapiiec 2016b: Figs 2, 3, 5).

Although the general state of preservation of the relief is good, there are some blocks missing, especially from the lintel, jambs and upper parts of the embracing scene with Amunet. A hole in the roof was responsible for washing away part of the polychromy from the frieze of objects, lintel and right jamb.

OUTER DECORATION AND CEILING

The ceiling, painted in blue with yellow stars, started to be recorded. Tracing of the outer façade was started with the recording of the partially preserved cor-

onation scene of Hatshepsut above the lintel (Kwaśnica 2001: 81–87). The scene represents Hatshepsut kneeling in front of an erased figure of Geb seated on the throne in the shrine. In front of them are Iunmutef, Thot and the ancestors of Pe and Nekhen. The reliefs are in quite bad condition as almost the whole scene was erased during the Amarna period and then restored in the late Eighteenth Dynasty/Rameside period. Only the king's figure and a small part of the text were left untouched. Figures of Amun-Ra, Iunmutef, Thot and depictions of the ancestors of Pe and Nekhen were mutilated. As these blocks come from the collapsed wall and were found during excavations, it is natural that the plaster which filled the Amarna erasures dropped out and not all of the reconstructed lines were preserved.

The lintel and jambs are in slightly better condition with more blocks preserved. Fertility figures symbolizing Upper and Lower Egypt, holding a cartouche with a prenomen of Hatshepsut recarved for a name of Tuthmosis II, are to be seen in the centre of the lintel, under a winged sun disc of Horus Behdety. To the left and right of the lintel are depictions of a restored Amun-Ra figure giving the *nh*-sign to Horus sitting on the top of a serekh with the Horus name of Hatshepsut recarved for that of Tuthmosis II. Each jamb bears three columns of text containing the names and epithets of Hatshepsut, almost all of them recarved for those of Tuthmosis II; only the Horus name in the first column from the left on the left jamb was left untouched.

⁷ Both epithets are common for Amunet (e.g., Burgos and Larché 2006: 80 Block No. 23, 121 Block No. 207, 162 Block No. 161, 169 Block No. 153, 184 Block No. 55, 187 Block No. 209).

SUMMARY

During the three seasons under discussion (2013/2014, 2014/2015 and 2015/2016) almost the entire decoration of the room was recorded with the exception of the outer door of the room, Senenmut's figure on both sides of the passage (completed in March–April 2017) and further fragments of the ceiling. The documentation completed so far has enabled a reconstruction of decoration phases and stimulating a search through decorated blocks in the temple block yard to fill in the extant gaps. Studies were initiated on the decoration program and the results were presented by the author at

international conferences (frieze of objects, Kapiec 2015a; 2015b; Amunet scene, Kapiec 2016a) and in article form (Kapiec 2016b).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Ewa Laskowska-Kusztal and Dr. Jadwiga Iwaszczuk for reading the manuscript and their valuable comments. I would like to thank Dr. Zbigniew E. Szafrński for giving me the opportunity to work in the Southern Room of Amun in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. I also thank Sarah Fortune for correcting my English.

Katarzyna Kapiec

PhD Candidate, Antiquity of Southeastern Europe Research Centre University of Warsaw
00-970 Warsaw, Poland, ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28
k.kapiec@poczta.onet.pl

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