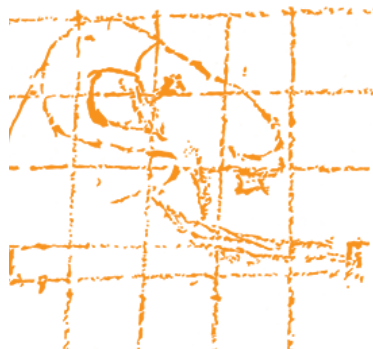


Dipinti in the relieving chamber above the Bark Hall of the Hatshepsut Temple at Deir el-Bahari



Abstract: The paper presents ancient *dipinti*, both hieroglyphic and hieratic, traced in the relieving chamber above the Bark Hall of the Hatshepsut temple in Deir el-Bahari. The material is linked mainly to a group of builders, most probably draftsmen, engaged in the building operations at the site of the temple.

Keywords: Deir el-Bahari, Temple of Hatshepsut, *dipinti*

The reason for a relieving chamber above the Bark Hall of the Hatshepsut temple [Fig. 1] was to ease the pressure exerted by the fill of the platform above the Upper Court of the temple (for this construction, see Wysocki 1980: 14–15, Figs 8, 16; 1983: 248–250, Fig. 2, Pl. 61; 1986: 223; 1992: 245–246; Arnold 1991: 186–187, Fig. 4.122). The protective role of the chamber is not to be underestimated, but other motives behind its construction cannot be overlooked. According to Wysocki, the poor quality of the rock did not let the Bark Hall be hewn as a cave in the rock massif, necessitating instead the opening of the space above it and the subsequent construction of a vaulted ceiling along with a relieving chamber to protect it from above.

The hieroglyphic, hieratic and figural *dipinti* left in the relieving chamber can be deemed contemporaneous with its construction, that is, dated to the reign of Hatshepsut. The *dipinti* are located on the internal surfaces, and in one case on the edge of the inclined limestone slabs forming the relieving construction, as well as on the bedrock (*tafl*) forming the rear wall in the west part of the chamber [Figs 2, 4–5]. The line of symmetry of the chamber was painted in red on the

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rock-cut back wall [see *Fig. 5*]. One can only surmise that three sketches in the form of triangles, Nos 1–3 [*Fig. 3*], might have been connected in one way or another with the planning of the relieving construction. The top apex angle of these triangles is estimated at about 58° (No. 1), about 50° (No. 2), and about 60° (No. 3), thus differing significantly

from that of the upper angle of the actual stone construction, which is roughly 82° . Nevertheless, the drawings may be interpreted as attempts to establish the proper gradient of the stone slabs making up the relieving construction. The drawing of one of the triangles (No. 1) stands out due to its red internal lines, even though it was covered completely



Fig. 1. Chamber above the Bark Hall of the Temple of Hatshepsut: top, external view before reconstruction of the artificial platform, around 1970; right, internal view, 2017 (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photos Archive and M. Jawornicki)





Fig. 2. Location of *dipinti* in the chamber above the Bark Hall: south part of the relieving construction (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki)

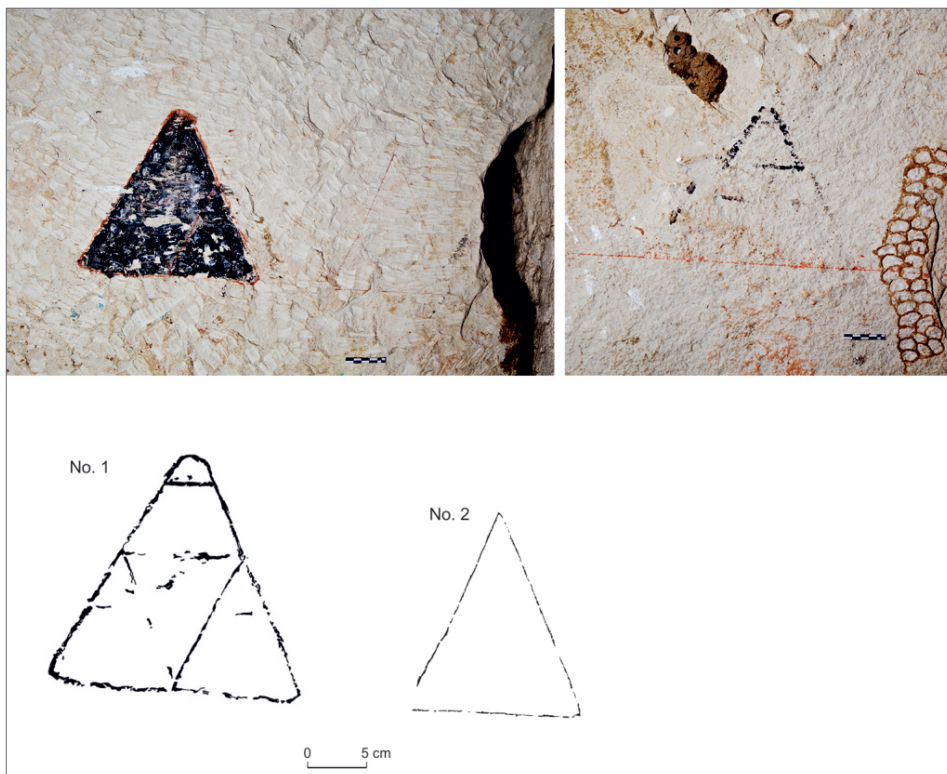


Fig. 3. Triangles on the southern part of the relieving construction (for location, see Fig. 2): top left, two triangles (Nos 1–2), the one on the right barely scratched, 1.76 m above the floor; top right, single triangle (No. 3), 1.50 m above the floor; bottom, drawing of triangles 1–2, showing the internal details of the triangle on the left (No. 1) (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photos M. Jawornicki; drawing M. Czerniec, processing and digitizing M. PuszkarSKI)



Fig. 4. Location of *dipinti* in the chamber above the Bark Hall: north part of the relieving construction (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki)



Fig. 5. Location of *dipinti* on the rock-cut west wall of the relieving chamber above the Bark Hall; arrow indicates the line of symmetry (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki)

with black paint. However, the geometry of these lines cannot be related explicitly to the mathematical formulas for calculating the height of a pyramid, as evidenced by the Rhind Mathematical Papyrus, e.g., problem No. 57 (see Robins and Shute 1987: 47–49; Rossi 2003: 185ff.;

Shaw 2013: 19ff., Fig. 2.2). Whether the internal lines of this triangle served to calculate the distance between the blocks and the baseline, and the mid-height of the planned construction is not evident. It may be surmised, however, that the final result was the outcome of the

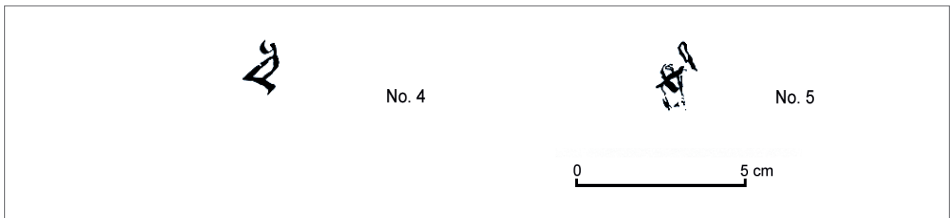
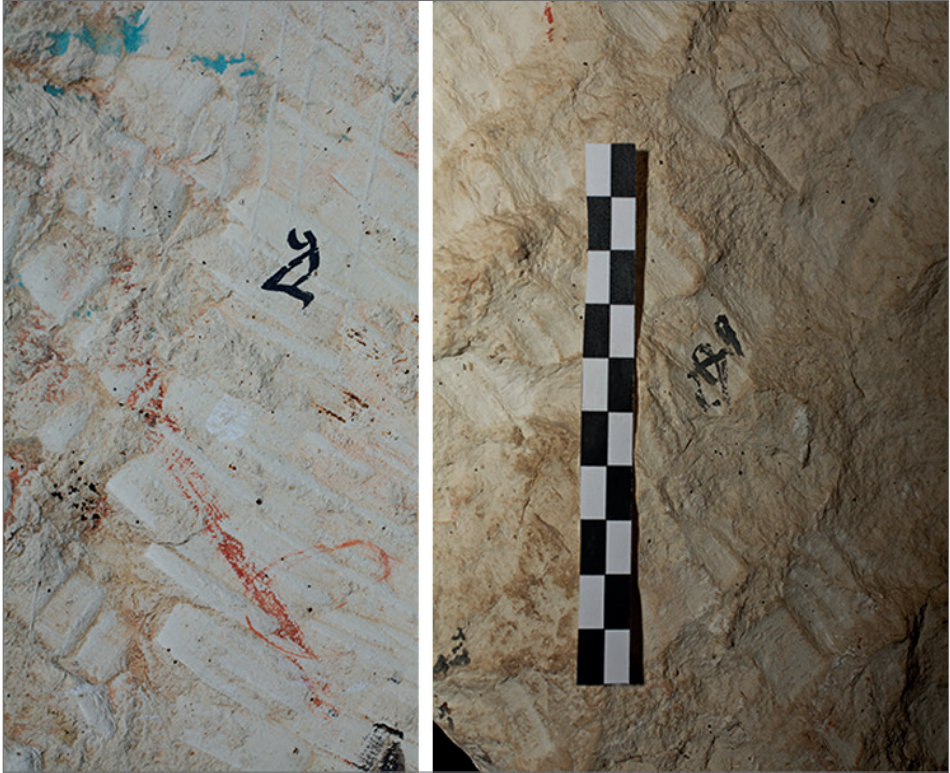


Fig. 6. Hieratic *dipinti* (for location, see Fig. 2): left, the *m* sign (No. 4) on the southern part of the relieving construction, 1.81 m above the floor; right, inscription (No. 5) on the southwestern part of the relieving construction, 1.70 m above the floor (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photos M. Jawornicki; drawing M. Barwik)

applied building technique. Consequently, the present shape of the construction would draw from a pragmatic approach to the construction problem rather than the application of a theoretical mathematical formula originally contrived by the supervisor of the work. In any case, the structure in question proved to be functional regardless of the cracking in the upper part of one of the slabs of the

relieving construction on the south side [see *Fig. 2*].

A group of simple drawing sketches or scribal exercises has also been attested among these *dipinti*. Such is the case of the hieratic sign *m* (No. 4) [*Fig. 6*], written in a professional hieratic script of the early Eighteenth Dynasty (compare Möller 1927: 17, No. 196; 1920: Pl. II). Two hieratic signs (No. 5) [see *Fig. 6*],

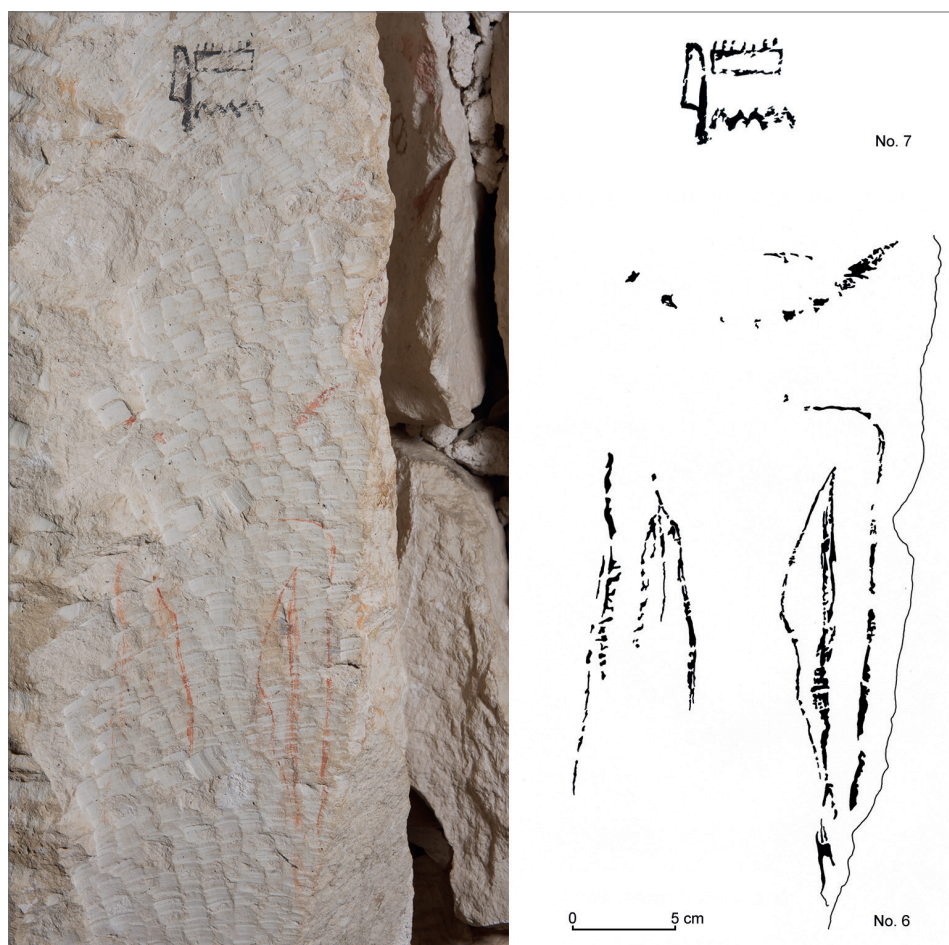


Fig. 7. Figural *dipinto* (No. 6) and hieroglyphic inscription (No. 7; top right) on the southern part of the relieving construction, 1.34 m above the floor (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki; drawing M. Czerniec)

presumably Gardiner's S29 and Q7, are placed a little bit to the right, on the external western edge of the southwestern slab of the construction (the last in the row of slabs forming its southern part).¹ The place, squeezed in between the rock-cut west wall of the chamber and the limestone slab, is itself barely accessible, a circumstance explaining perhaps the slightly rotated axis of this enigmatic inscription. Both graffiti (Nos 4 and 5) were written in black ink.

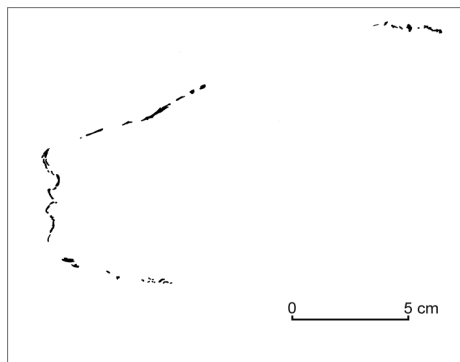


Fig. 8. Figural *dipinto* (No. 8) on the southern part of the relieving construction, 1.33 m above the floor (PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/drawing P. Barford)

Figural sketches drawn on the slabs comprise a headless human figure in red (No. 6), with an adjoining hieroglyphic inscription written in black (No. 7): *Imn* (without determinative) [Fig. 7]. A silhouette of a human face (No. 8) [Fig. 8] was painted also in red. An elaborate drawing of a ram protome, still within the frame of a drawing grid (No. 9) [Fig. 9; in red paint], leaves no doubt about the professional expertise of its maker, possibly one of the draftsmen working on the temple decoration. An empty drawing grid (No. 10) was also traced in red paint on the *tafl* rock, 0.62 m above the floor [Figs 5, 11].

One of the most intriguing motifs among these figural *dipinti* is a drawing of a shield (No. 11) in black ink on the inclined slabs of the northern part of the relieving construction [Fig. 10]. The shield is of a Middle Kingdom type (Petschel and von Falck 2004: 138–139, Nos 140, 141 a–b), although well attested during the New Kingdom as well (see, e.g., Wolf 1926: 76–77; Davies 1930: Pl. XXII).² Just above the shield motif is



Fig. 9. Figural *dipinto* (No. 9) on the northern part of the relieving construction, 1.08 m above the floor (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki; drawing M. Czerniec)

1 Hardly likely for *st(y)* “odour, smell” (Wb. IV, 349f.); more probably an abbreviation for *stf* “temperature” (Wb. IV, 196). For the hieratic form of the second sign in the group, see Möller 1927: 35 (No. 394).

a signature of the scribe Amenhotep written in hieroglyphic signs (No. 12): *ir(.w).n sš'Imn-htp(.w)* "Made by the scribe Amenhotep" [see Fig. 10]. Some red dots and two

rectangles can be seen near it. A concise hieratic docket on the opposite side of the ceiling may be attributed to the same person perhaps, although the handwriting

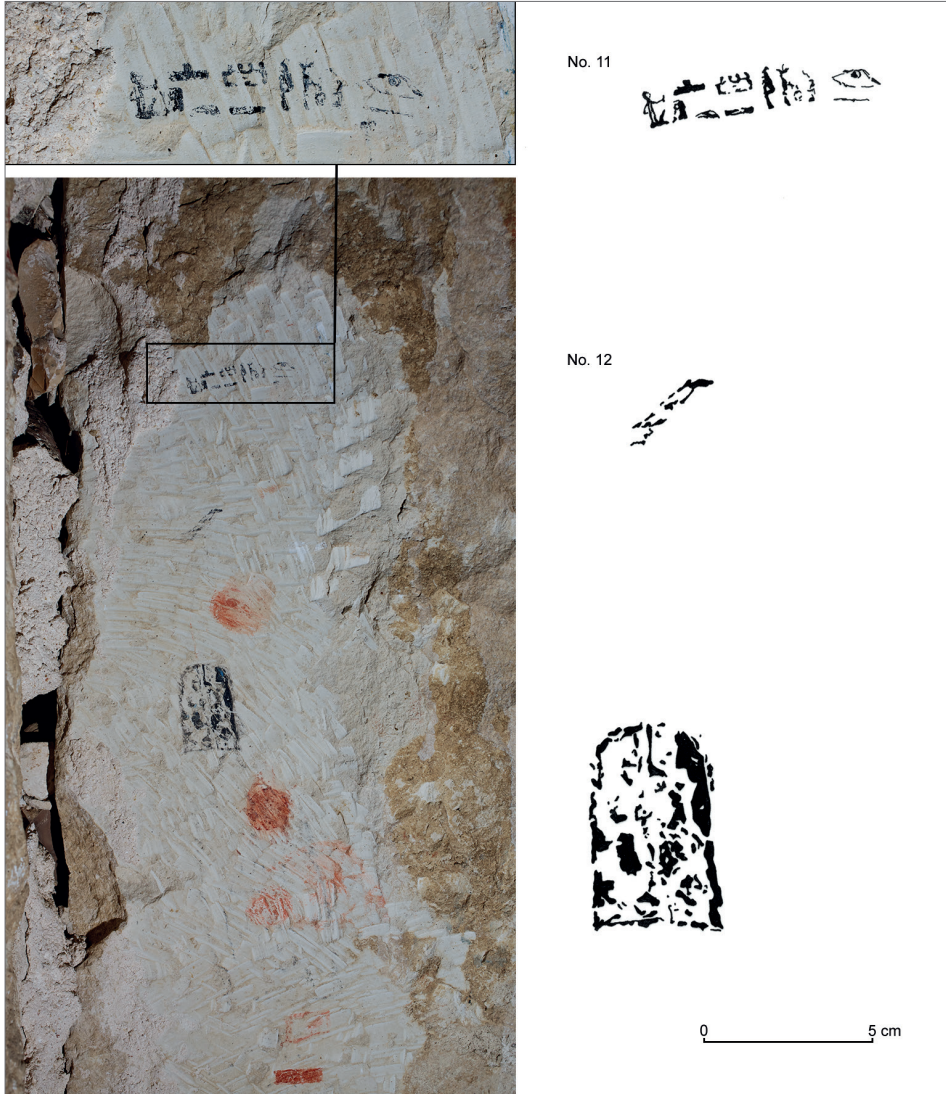


Fig. 10. A group of *dipinti* (Nos 11–12) on the northern part of the relieving construction, 1.55 m above the floor; top left, close-up view of an inscription of the scribe Amenhotep (No. 12) (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photos M. Jawornicki; drawing M. Czerniec, M. Barwik)

2 For the form of a sign of similar shape, see also Möller 1927: 38, No. 434 (the form drawn from papHarris 22, 7).

differs substantially from the preceding one (No. 13): *sš'Imn-htp(.w)* “the scribe Amenhotep” [Fig. 12]. Both signatures are written in black ink.

Two carefully detailed hieroglyphic tableaux were written on the rock of the



Fig. 12. Inscription of the scribe Amenhotep (No. 13) on the southern part of the relieving construction, 1.03 m above the floor (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki; drawing M. Barwick)

back wall at the west end of the chamber. An even surface of the *tafl* was chosen in both cases and the inscriptions painted after whitewashing the background.³

One of them (tableau A) with a multicolor quail chick (*w* sign), drawn in the center between four vertical columns of inscription,⁴ commemorates the scribe



Fig. 11. Empty drawing grid (No. 10) painted on bedrock, 0.62 m above the floor (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki)

- 3 In modern times plaster was applied around both tableaux to strengthen the fragile structure of the rock. A loose fragment of the rock below tableau “B” was also replaced in its proper position at this time. The situation before the conservation work, undertaken there at the beginning of the 1960s, can be discerned in photographs kindly provided by the late Professor Jadwiga Lipińska.
- 4 Surprisingly enough, the motif of a quail chick is attested among the graffiti dispersed in the temple area: it can be found on the lower ramp (north wall; unpublished), in the Birth Portico (see Niwiński 1985: 224, Fig. 19), and on the retaining wall above the Lower Chapel of Anubis (unpublished). It is worth noting that it is also attested on figural ostraca of later periods, see, e.g., Dorn 2011: Pl. 435 (502–503).

Amenhotep, alongside other members of his family. This panel, 8.5 cm by 10.5 cm, is located 2 m above the floor level. The hieroglyphic signs were painted in black [see Fig. 13]:

Transliteration

- (1) *ir.n* [sš] *ʿImn-ḥtp(.w)* s3 [ḥry?] sš-
- (2) *ḳdw.t* [mn?-. . .]
- (3) *sn.f šri*
- (4) *sš-ḳdw.t* [...]

Translation and commentary

“(1) Made by the [scribe?] ^{a)} Amenhotep, son of the [chief?] drafts (2) -man ^{b)} A[men?-. . .]^{c)}; (3) his younger brother (4) draftsman [...]^{d)}.”

- a) Enough of the text has been preserved to interpret the title in this way.
- b) The plural determinative after *sš* remains incomprehensible in itself, unless a group *ḥry-sš.w* is postulated, which would seem to be a plausible solution. A dot of black ink on the right above the group *sš* can be interpreted perhaps as a remnant of Gardiner sign N1 (*hr*).
- c) The reading of the name poses a problem; even the initial *aleph* (prothetic *i*) is doubtful. The determinative of the name has been written a little bit to the left of column 2.
- d) No trace is preserved of the name due to erosion of the rock surface.

The second tableau, B, 11 cm by 8.5 cm, located 1.47 m above the floor, was composed of four vertical columns of inscription [Fig. 14]. The hieroglyphic signs were painted in black:

Transliteration

- (1) *s3(?)* [blank space]
- (2) *sš S3-p3-ir it.f ʿḥ[-ms(.w)?]*
- (3) [*sš-ḳdw.t? ʿ...*]
- (4) [...] *ʿImn-m-ip.t*

Translation and commentary

“(1) Sa(pair?) [blank space]^{a)}; (2) Scribe Sapair; his father: Ah[mose]^{b)}; (3) [draftsman? A ...]^{c)}; (4) [...]^{d)} Amenemope.”

- a) One can presume that the scribe started off with the name, inadvertently omitting the title of the person in question. Upon seeing his mistake, he started anew in the second column, this time attaching the appropriate title. In consequence, the unknown author of this inscription retraced the line bordering the column of inscription.
- b) The present state of the inscription makes the reading of the name Jahmes highly doubtful since only tiny traces of the last sign in the column have been preserved. In photographs from the early 1960s, the reading of the *ms*-sign is definite (see above, note 3) [see Fig. 14 top right]. It is also worth noting that the formula “x, father (of) y” has not been attested, so the reading “x, his father (is) y” seems more appropriate indeed.
- c) Although there are some doubts as regards the reading of the first group of the column, the next word can be read presumably as *ḳdw.t*, with an exceptionally high *w* sign. Assuming a professional draftsman at work, the outcome seems rather astonishing as far as the form and proportions of

the hieroglyphic signs are concerned. Compare, however, apparent irregularities in the proportions of the hieroglyphic signs in column 4 and

to some extent also in tableau A. The preserved traces do not suffice for the name of the person in question to be deduced, except for the obvious

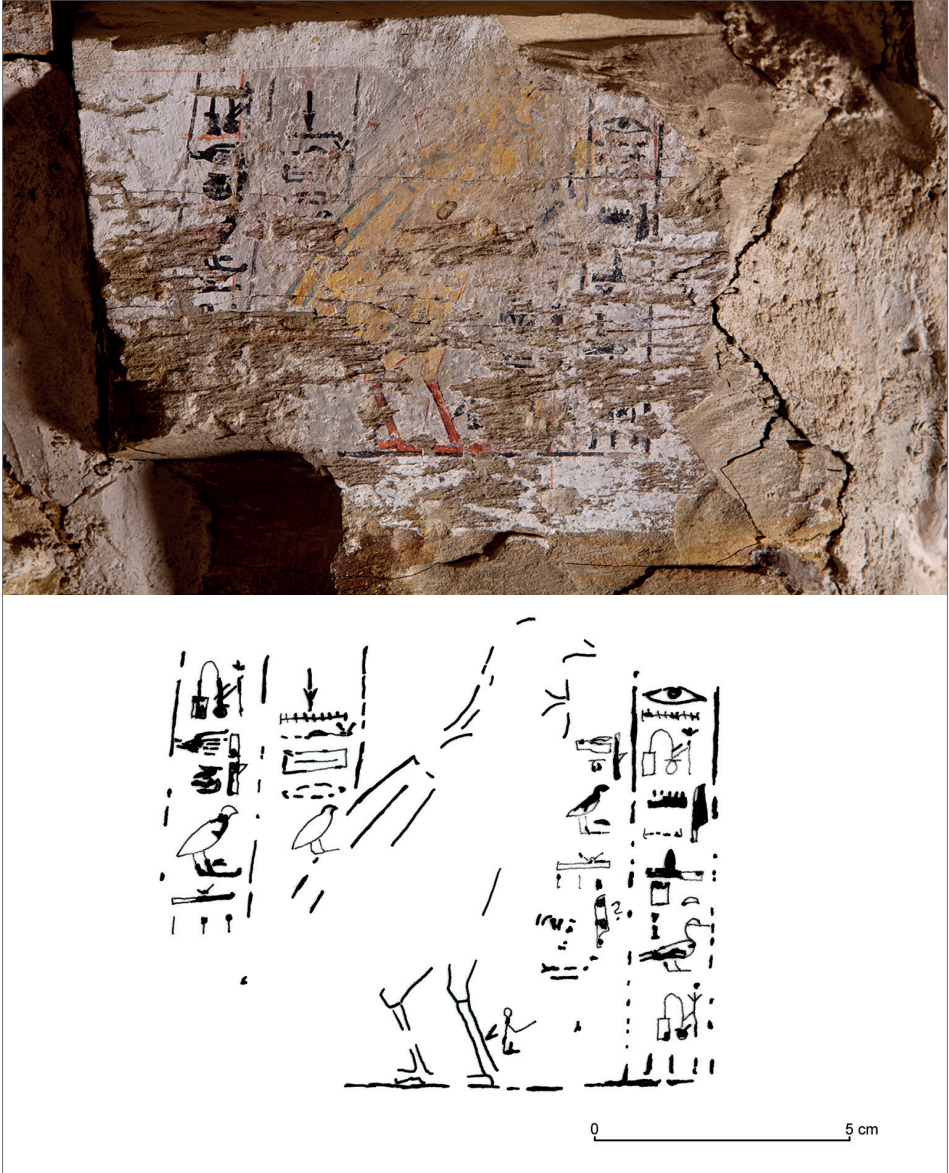


Fig. 13. Hieroglyphic tableau A on the rock-cut west wall of the relieving chamber; the inscription partly restored in the drawing (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki; drawing P. Barford, M. Barwik)

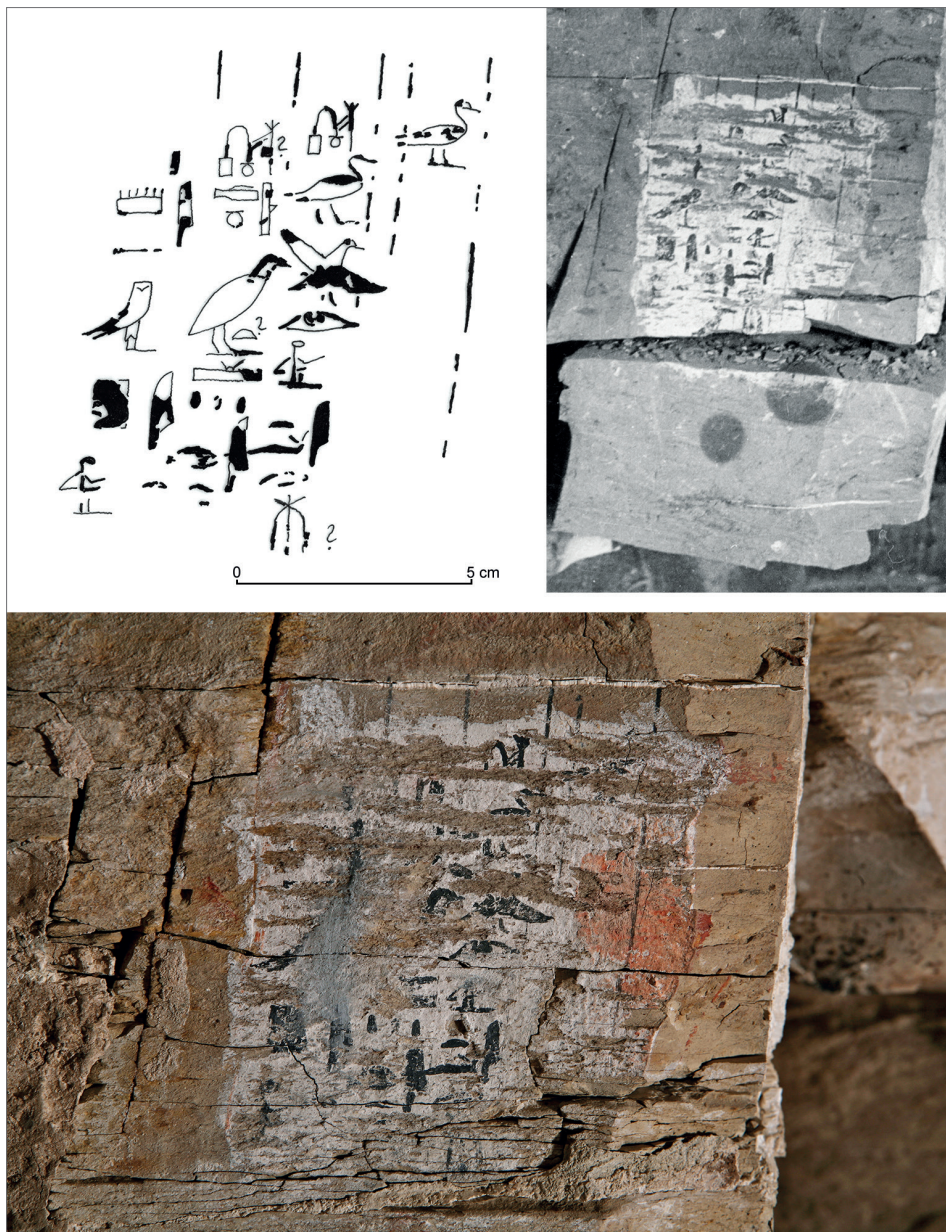


Fig. 14. Hieroglyphic tableau B on the rock-cut west wall of the relieving chamber; the inscription partly restored in the drawing; top right, the panel photographed in the early 1960s (PCMA UW Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photos M. Jawornicki and courtesy J. Lipińska [top right]; drawing P. Barford, M. Barwik)

beginning with the sign *I*. A photograph from the early 1960s [see Fig. 14 top right] shows one more sign at the end of the column: It looks like a bird (perhaps *aleph?*), but no trace of it is now visible except for a stroke in its extreme upper part.

- d) No traces of the title belonging to Amenemope have been preserved, except for a stroke that can be taken perhaps as a remnant of the *sš* sign (“scribe”). Furthermore, a family relation between Amenemope and the individuals mentioned earlier cannot be ascertained satisfactorily.

There is no way to know whether the scribe Amenhotep of the two short

graffiti and the author of the elaborate hieroglyphic tableau were one and the same person. It seems justifiable to recognize him as one of the builders of the temple, perhaps a supervisor responsible for the construction works or else, more probably, a draftsman engaged on the decoration of the temple walls. A scribe of the name is known to have participated not only in the building of the tomb of Senenmut (TT 353), but also of the temple of Hatshepsut, as attested by ostraca found respectively in the vicinity of TT 353 (Dorman 1991: 88, Pl. 47 [26a, vo. 5]), and “in a hollow between the temple avenues of Hatshepsut and Mentuhotpe which had been used until late in the reign of Tuthmosis III



Fig. 15. Red smudges (No. 14) on the rock-cut west wall of the relieving chamber (PCMA Temple of Hatshepsut Project/photo M. Jawornicki)

as a dumping place for debris from the Deir el-Bahri temples” (Hayes 1960: 32, 34, 39, Pl. X [No. 6, ro. 4]). Besides, there is a group of still unpublished ostraca from Deir el-Bahari recording the name of a scribe Amenhotep,⁵ as well as graffiti in tomb MMA 504, located just above the temple of Hatshepsut, where a scribe bearing this name appears again.⁶ However, since the name was fairly common, the identity of these individuals cannot be established unequivocally. Presumably none of the above mentioned sources can be connected directly with the Amenhotep from the relieving chamber, if the person in question was a draftsman, as seems to be the case. Another issue is that the three different inscriptions in the relieving chamber above the Bark Hall commemorating Amenhotep may not match the number of Amenhoteps to be considered. Even less can be said about the scribe Sapair. A person of that name, without any title attached, is mentioned in a single Tuthmoside source from Deir el-Bahari, found in the vicinity of the lower tomb of Senenmut (TT 353) (Dorman 1991: 89–90, Pls 48–49 [26d, ro.12]).

A number of drawing sketches left in the chamber substantiates the idea of the presence here of a group of workers, presumably draftsmen engaged in decorating the temple walls (most prob-

ably the inner sanctuary of the temple). No names of draftsmen are documented for such an early period in the published material from Deir el-Bahari nor from the Theban necropolis in general (see Bogoslovsky 1980). Interestingly enough, lumps of pigments were found by the Polish Mission in the relieving chamber above the Bark Hall in the 1974/1975 season.⁷ In addition, a number of paint drops and patches (red, blue, and black) can be discerned on the surface of the limestone slabs [see, e.g., Fig. 6 left]. Indeed, a series of red smudges (in regular rows) left on the rough surface of the *tafl* bedrock (No. 14) [Fig. 15] may reflect a painter getting his brushes ready, softening them against the rock. In some places (especially on the surface of the bedrock), some irregular red lines or maybe crude drawings appear as well.

There is no way, however, to connect the ostrakon found in the debris covering the chamber floor with this particular context (Marciniak 1978; Barwik 2016). The text of the ostrakon mentions the names of Senenmut and Tjennay, two high-ranking officials of the royal domains, and it relates to the preparation of offerings on some unspecified occasion, thus apparently unrelated to the activities of workers or artists visiting this place.

5 See Hayes 1960: 34 note 2; the unpublished material from the American excavations is currently being prepared for publication by Malte Römer (Freie Universität, Berlin). See also Barwik forthcoming.

6 See Ragazzoli and Froid 2013; Ragazzoli 2017: 60, 186 (O.2.6), 190 (O.2.9), 191 (O.2.10), 209 (P.1.12).

7 J. Karkowski, personal communication (January 2015); compare, however, Wysocki 1979: 209, where only fragments of “ostraca” and a piece of granite with hieroglyphs were mentioned.

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