Red Chapel

Originally built by Hatshepsut - 1479 BCE to 1458 BCE
Destroyed by: Thutmose III - 1479 BCE to 1425 BCE

Other works initiated by Hatshepsut: Obelisks of Festival Hall West Pair, Palace of Ma’at, 8th Pylon, Amenhotep I Calcite Chapel, Obelisks at Contra Temple, Obelisks of Wadjet Hall, Wadjet Hall, Pylon and Festival Court of Thutmose II

Other works destroyed by Thutmose III: Amenhotep I Calcite Chapel

Other shrines: Amenhotep I Calcite Chapel, Amenhotep II Shrine, Contra Temple, Osiris Catacombs, Osiris Coptite, Osiris Heqa-Djet, Palace of Ma’at, Central Bark Shrine, Ramesses II Eastern Temple, Ramesses III Temple, Sety II Shrine, Taharqo Kiosk, Thutmose III Shrine, White Chapel, Edifice of Amenhotep II, Chapel of Hakoris, Amenhotep I Limestone Chapel, Station of the King and Corridor

Introduction

The “red chapel” was a unique red quartzite bark chapel placed in the sanctuary of the Amun-Ra temple. The two-roomed chapel (consisting of a vestibule and a sanctuary) was raised on a grey diorite platform and accessed by short ramps on either side. The beautifully carved relief decoration on the chapel’s exterior sides includes scenes showing the raising of Hatshepsut’s obelisks in the Wadjet Hall and the festival processions of the Opet and Beautiful Feast of the Valley festivals. A decorative kheker frieze and a series of kneeling Nile gods and female figures adorn the low base. The “red chapel” has been reconstructed in the Open Air Museum at Karnak.

Measurements: The chapel measures 7.2m high, 15m long, and 6.5m wide.

Phase: Hatshepsut

Hatshepsut began construction of the “red chapel” in 17th year of her reign. The chapel was placed within the new sanctuary constructed for the temple by the queen, the palace of Ma’at. The palace seems to have been renovated to accommodate the chapel. The “red chapel” functioned as a bark chapel, a place for the sacred bark (a portable “boat”) of Amun-Ra to rest within the temple.
Construction materials: red quartzite, black granite, gray diorite

**Destruction: Thutmose III**

The king completed the unfinished decoration of the chapel when his aunt died. However, he later decided to disassemble the shrine and replace it with his own bark chapel of red granite. The two black granite exterior doorways of the chapel were incorporated into his renovations of the palace of Ma'at (the main door to the north suite of rooms) and into his court of the 6th pylon (the door leading into the southern columned court) during his continuing renovation of the core of the temple. It seems that the blocks of the “red chapel” were left in a heap somewhere at Karnak. When the proscription of Hatshepsut began, sometime late in the reign of Thutmose III, the image of the queen on some of the blocks was defaced. Other blocks (possibly those less exposed) were left as is.

Later, Amenhotep III used the “red chapel” blocks as part of the foundations for the third pylon.

**About the reconstruction model of this phase**

The model of the “red chapel” was built using the plans and axial drawings of Carlotti (1995: pls. I-III). The reconstructed chapel in the Open Air Museum at Karnak was photographed inside and out. These photographs were used to recreate the appearance of the chapel on the model. All images were laid in the location suggested by the physically reconstructed building.

**Bibliography and Sources Used for Model Construction**


Beiträge zur ägyptologischen Diskussion. vol. 107, 85-86.

Further reading
